

Introduction of a fee based extension model and cooperation with public extension services

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Settings

- 1. Cropping pattern very much oriented on mono culture (cotton)**
- 2. Increase in number of farms due to intensive land reform and farm restructuring process = over 160 thousand farms**
- 3. Insufficient access to quality inputs and knowhow**
- 4. Lack of agricultural knowledge and skills amongst the “new” farmers, leading to low productivity and income**



Food security

Self sufficiency

- Promoted by a number of strategic documents
- In light of changing agricultural patterns, most of the agricultural production is conducted on rather small plots of land, combining wheat (on rainfed fields), starch and oil crops on irrigated plots
- Diversification towards necessary food commodities ensuring production levels for internal consumption - requires severe investments in quality, storage and processing infrastructure

Accessibility

- Similarly promoted by the Government in parts related to export promotion
- Impossible to compete with countries producing key food commodities in the neighboring countries (wheat, sugar, oil etc).
- High potential due to agro-climatic conditions and potential on niche markets (organic etc). So far, the export market is dominated by the low quality low price products



Income generation

Economies of scale

- GIZ supports advisory system for farmers to increase economic activities in rural areas since 2011 - SAROB/Biokishovarz (umbrella organisation) of private agronomists
- Business model of SAROB has been successful (higher yields) in the lowlands. In pre-mountainous and mountainous regions, the success story could not be replicated
- Challenges due to different production and marketing conditions

Outreach

- Scattered land plots and mixed agro-pastoral patterns dominate land use in the mountainous regions of Tajikistan. Growing wealth disparity, lack of trust making joint/cooperative production aimed at ensured economy of scale
- Many rural households produce mainly for subsistence on plots smaller than 0.5 ha with only occasional income from the selling of crops.
- New forms of dependencies between local households, which cannot be ignored by an advisory service trying to promote good agricultural practices



Public and private extension services

Public extension

- A public system is essential for small-scale farmers focusing on food security and improved livelihoods
- A public or subsidized system needs resources and the willingness of permanent institutions to continuously support
- Limited resources, insufficient quality of advice and the absence of incentives for agronomists to proactively support farmers

Private extension

- Private systems are opting for better quality of advice, since no farmer will pay the price demanded by the advisor if he or she is not satisfied with the service offered. Information itself is difficult to sell, words and knowledge being difficult to monetize.
- Frequently, the provision of inputs and other services, combined with the transfer of know-how, are a means of generating profit, focusing especially on bigger, more commercially-oriented farms
- This approach points to the fact that poorer farmers or farmers with difficult production conditions will be further disadvantaged as they lack the resources to pay for private services.



Lessons learnt

- 1. Increased costs and decreased efficiency of advisory in remote areas**
- 2. Successful advisory system = public-private partnerships. Public - disseminating knowledge among agronomists, Private - providing actual advice**
- 3. Necessary combination of advice and external services, such as access to inputs, support in marketing, etc**
- 4. Agricultural advisory services are contributing directly to economic growth and poverty reduction.**
- 5. In agriculture-based economies advisory services have also been an instrument for diversifying production and increasing the yield and income of rural farmers**
- 6. Hence enhancing the food security**



Achievements

- 1.** Private network of 260 consultants consulting on 34 thousand ha.
- 2.** Crops covered: cotton, apricot, onion, sunflower, maize, potato, tomato, wheat, vegetables etc.
- 3.** Introduction of modern crop cultivation technologies, improved the condition of soil, and as a result increase yields and income of farmers.
- 4.** Facilitated access of farmers to agricultural inputs and machinery
- 5.** Demonstration fields of new varieties of cotton, maize and sunflower, showing significant yield increase.
- 6.** Support in initial processing, marketing is provided to clients
- 7.** Introduction of Better Cotton Initiative standard. At the moment 1955 ha of cotton were certified under this standard by international Secretariat.
- 8.** Introduction of Bio production.
- 9.** Close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture on testing and dissemination of new technologies and crops



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Next steps

Development of :

- 1. External Services:** agricultural services (pruning, spraying), input provision, access to machinery and credits and natural resource management.
- 2. Natural resource management (NRM):** Strengthen cooperation with organizations promoting NRM and the Government.
- 3. Livestock Management:** Advisory services covering livestock as well as the development of an appropriate approach to pasture management.
- 4. Value Chains:** Enhance the link between producers and downstream value chains.



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Thank you