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Development Communication and its Impact on the Agricultural Sector-Prospects and Challenges: A Case Study of NAADS Programme in Mpenja Sub-County, Gomba District.

This study focused on the prospects and challenges of development communication in the agricultural sector. The study was based on three objectives; to assess the nature of communication between farmers and farming authorities, to establish how communication has changed farming practices and to identify the challenges farmers encounter in receiving relevant information about their work. The research questions included: whether farmers put into practice what is communicated to them; whether local farmers communicate with farming authorities at the sub-county and district levels and; whether farmers get any challenges in receiving communication from relevant sources. The research is mostly qualitative so as to give a proper explanation of the prospects and challenges of development communication. The approach was case study. This enabled the researcher to conduct an in-depth study of a single sub-county, carefully considering developments in a four year time frame. Purposive, simple random and non-proportional quota sampling techniques were used to determine the respondents. Questionnaires and interviews were the tools used to gather data. Tables and charts are used to elaborate information that represents proportion. The findings indicate that there is a gap in communication between the NAADS extension workers and farmers in Mpenja. More to that, radio played a significant role in creating awareness among farmers, which is an indication that farmers do not entirely depend on the advisory services of NAADS. Research identified a lack of market information in Mpenja. The gap is a result of the continuous marginalisation of communication in development initiatives as it was established that extension workers had never talked to farmers about market information. The researcher recommends that government should put in place policies that include communication in all development initiatives.

Key Words: Development Communication, Agricultural Sector, NAADS Programme, Gomba District