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An Assessment of the Contribution of Input Support in Promoting Sustainable Agriculture: A Case Study of Buwunga Sub-county, Masaka District.

The objective of this study was to assess the contribution of input support in promoting sustainable agriculture in Buwunga sub-county Masaka district. The reason for undertaking the study was to establish why, in spite of several interventions by both the government and NGOs in providing input support, sustainability of agriculture remains wanting. The study involved the principle of purposive sampling fused with simple random sampling among farmers who had benefitted from input support from either government, NGOs or from both, and from employees of institutions offering input support. It was guided by research objectives, and the questionnaire method was applied in data collection. Tables, frequencies, percentages bar graphs and pie charts were used in data analysis. The findings indicated that positive impact agricultural input support is contributing towards farmers" output although some demands by input support providers are unsustainable and costly to the farmers. There are no genuine strategies designed to help farmers; instead, institutions providing input support stipulate a variety of conditions to foster their own business acumen and survival. There are many challenges that emanate from conditions for accessing input support, which are a harbinger for corruption and have the capacity to cause conflict among farmers. The following are the suggested recommendations: Needs Assessments, using the principle of Participatory Rural Appraisal, should be an integral and indispensable factor of input support prior to rolling out any inputs. In order to remedy the problem of seeds rotting away for lack of efficient storage facilities, institutions should preserve perishable inputs for farmers to collect them at the opportune time. Institutions in partnership with groups and district departments of production should redesign the groups and set rules governing them, and the groups should be given more powers as bases upon which to build cooperative and marketing initiatives.

Key Words: Input Support, Sustainable Agriculture, Masaka District.