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Press Release:

Title

Agricultural Information Sources and their Effect on Farm Productivity in Kenya

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Key messages

- The three major sources of agricultural information in Kenya are Public, Private nonprofit and private for-profit. Public sources include Government extension agents and Research organizations; Private nonprofit include Non-governmental Organizations, Farmer Organizations, Community Based organizations, other farmers, while Private for-profit include Private firms, processing and marketing enterprises among others.
- Farmers' preference of any source is significantly influenced by a number of socio-economic characteristics including age, household land size, group membership, value of assets and ownership of a mobile phone
- Despite a wide variety of agricultural information sources available, a relatively low number of smallholder farmers are accessing agricultural information
- Public extension is still the most utilized source of agricultural information in Kenya
- Gender differential is evident, where a relatively small proportion of female headed households received extension services compared despite their vital role in the agriculture sector
- Although the public extension has been criticized for its inefficiency, this depends on the enterprise in question
- Farm visits are the most common utilized communication channel by public and public for - profit service providers. This partly explains the low extension coverage since there are limited number extension workers in the country.

Policy Recommendations

- Increased investment in extension is necessary to achieve the desired results of transforming smallholder agriculture
- It is necessary of disseminate gender sensitive technologies & interventions to enhance adoption
- There is need to strengthen the coordination between public and private extension service providers to enhance efficiency in delivery of extension service
- Extension service providers need to adopt appropriate dissemination channels (or a combination of different channels) to reach more farmers e.g. *group approach*
- Integration of ICT in extension, especially the use of mobile phones can increase coverage
- Other ICT platforms like internet can also be used to improve coverage. However, adequate capacity building is needed for both extension staff and farmers who are the end users.

For further assistance, more information or if you would like to conduct interviews with any of the authors, presenters or Tegemeo Institute staff, please contact: Judy Kimani, 0720 96 33 48, jkimani@tegemeo.org.

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