

Notes from the Field: A Rapid Assessment of Malawi's Strengthening Agricultural and Nutrition Extension (SANE) Project

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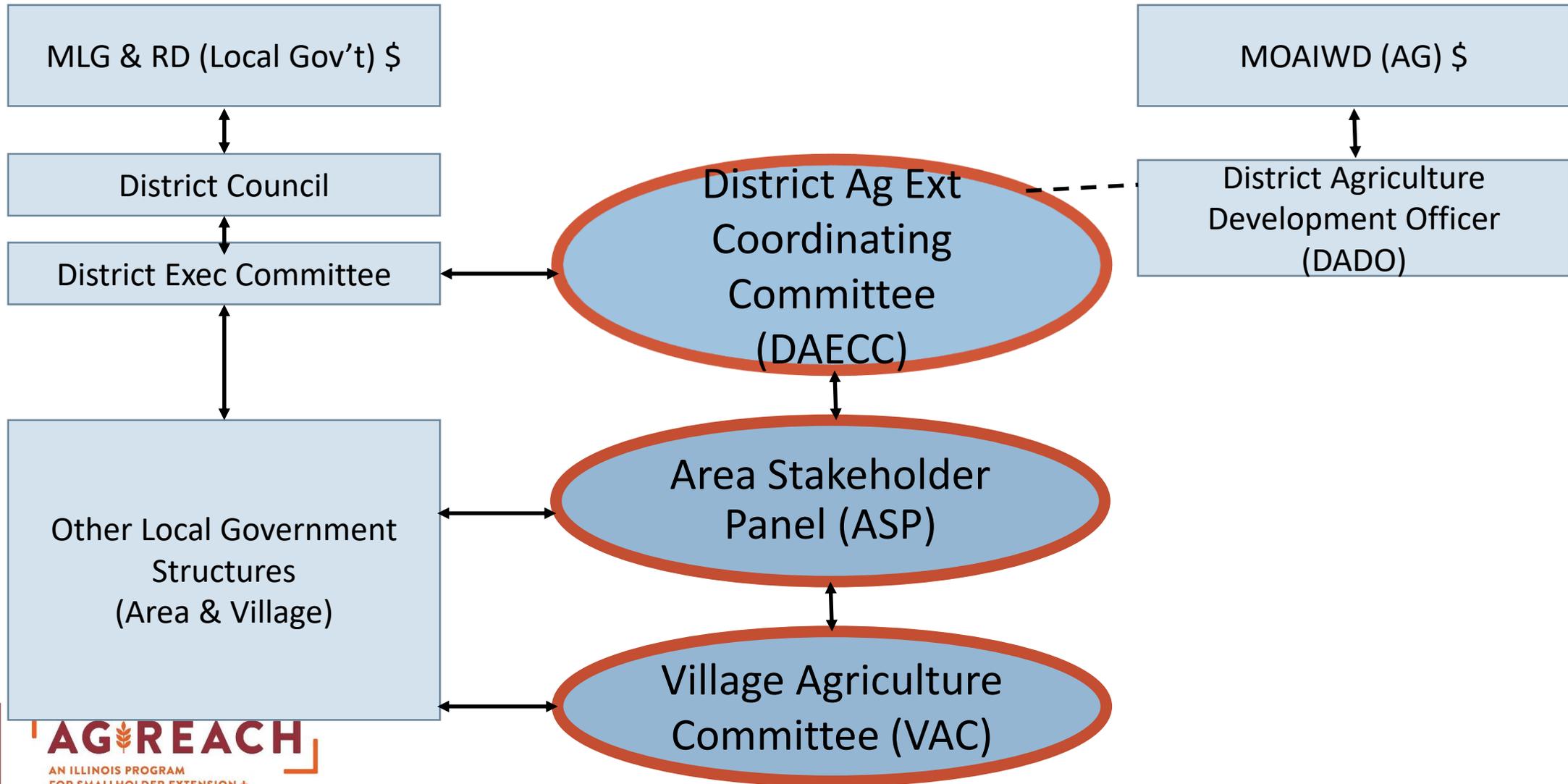


Introduction

- SANE Project – strengthen pluralistic extension service providers
- Implementers
- Qualitative rapid assessment – purpose
- FGs and KIIs, 121 interviewees (3/5 M, 2/5 F)
- Preliminary results
 - Department of Agricultural Extension Services System (DAESS)
 - Farmer Voice



District Agricultural Extension Services System (DAESS) Selected Key Elements of the System



- Key point
 - Services coordinated, demand articulated, responses channeled
- 2012, 2014 studies – Not Working
- SANE tasked to make it work.
- Question: Is it?



Preliminary Findings

- PARTICIPATION IN AND EFFECTIVENESS OF DAESS PLATFORMS
- Capacity Development and Distribution of Learning Materials
 - About DAESS itself
 - Revamping structures
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Based on: Revised Guidelines, Standard Operating Procedures
- DAESS not new ‘the village committee was a waste of time before, now we see the benefit’



- ASP response ‘SANE has strengthened our ASP because in the past our organization was not done properly SANE has helped us to re-establish using proper procedures’
- ASP response ‘SANE helped train us on this idea that farmers could come together and purchase - in the past we couldn’t mobilize resources to purchase inputs – with the establishment of the new committee we can buy inputs and deliver the resources on time for planting’



- FARMER VOICE
- Female farmer: ‘we meet as a VAC to discuss problems, then these are brought to the ASP’
- Male Farmer: ‘what we say now carries more weight’
- Extension agents:
 - ‘there is a system’ “SANE has helped because of revamping the VACs, before we didn’t understand fully (about DAESS)
 - ‘SANE has helped the flow of information from the bottom to the top because it has assisted in organizing the different structures’
 - ‘the demand goes through these structures’
 - ‘the demand now is different, farmers are demanding more because they have channels with some problems solved at the VAC level –this is the change’



Preliminary Conclusion

- Just a few results we heard about, also: more coordination, mapping and its benefits, improved access, and nutrition extension
- Focus today is on the system and farmer voice

SANE has built on and strengthened government extension structures largely through capacity development and learning materials distribution which in turn has positively influenced the extent to which farmers are able to effectively demand and receive extension services.



- The strategic focus, and the strength of the SANE project, is that SANE works directly and collaboratively with government extension systems and staff, adding value to and leveraging government, not project, driven and owned efforts. This facilitates other service providers to work through and complement the strengthened government system.



Thank You

