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Rural Producer Organisations and Policy Formulation in Uganda

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Abstract: This report is one of four reports in the series of policy reports from the Business Experience Exchange Programme. It analyses the role of rural producer organisations in national policy development and the influence of national policy on the development of the rural institutions in Uganda.

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Preface

The Business Experience Exchange Programme - BEEP – is a collaborative effort of African rural producers' organisations and research institutions to develop small scale commercial agriculture within the national and international economic framework.

The overall objective of BEEP is to enable the participating rural producers' organisations (RPOs) in Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia to exchange business experiences between them, enhance their business performance and thereby contribute to increase income and reduce poverty at farmer level.

A key component of BEEP is to document success stories and failures of the RPOs through applied research and thereby enhance the exchange of information qualitatively and quantitatively. Another objective of BEEP is to strengthen the national research and training capacity in the fields related to commercial agriculture. This can result in improved supply of relevant candidates for the agricultural sector in general and agro-business in particular.

The regional research programme for the period 2003-2006 was designed in collaboration with national RPOs during the first workshops held in 2003. The 2003 research programme focus on gender and policy issues facing the RPOs.

The programme is financed by Norges Vel and NORAD. NIBR is the co-ordinating research institution. More information about BEEP, the involved institutions and research reports can be found and downloaded from the programme web site www.beepafrica.com.

Arvid Strand

Research Director
The Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research

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Executive Summary

Background

Poverty reduction is the key challenge facing the world community, and there is a widely held view that the objective may be attained by policy formulation (Cashin *et al.*, 2001). However, for policy ownership to be meaningful there must be room for choice and increased ownership by local stakeholders. This involves not only government, but also other local interests and ‘civil society’ more generally (Gariyo, 2000). It is a right for ordinary people and the poor people in particular to participate in the design, planning and implementation of programmes and activities that should benefit them. The majority of the citizens in Uganda do not influence policy formulation. This is because the mechanisms are too complex and require skills and knowledge for this to happen. The urban elites have always been better positioned to express their interests and to influence policies due to bigger political power and better organisation than rural smallholders with diffused concentration (Gariyo, 2000; Lipton 1977; Schiff and Valde's 1998). Given this premise, it is hoped that better organisation of smallholders into Rural Producers Organisations (RPOs) will increase their political voice, reduce urban bias in policy formulation, increase economic growth and reduce poverty.

The objective of the current study was to examine the strategies which RPOs use in influencing policy formulation and document best practices and strategies. Three APEX RPOs and one service providing NGO were selected, namely the Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA), the National Union of Coffee Agribusinesses and Farm Enterprises (NUCAFE), and the Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE). The service providing NGO was VEDCO – Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns. Primary data were collected through interviews in form of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and face-to-face interviews for the APEX bodies. This was backed up by secondary data collection used for literature review. The study considered only Poverty Eradication and Market Liberalization policies.

Preliminary Findings

It is hoped that more close collaboration and interfacing will greatly enhance the policy advocacy ability of the study RPOs through strengthening their voices, and sharing ideas and experiences. RPOs should be encouraged to pursue this approach. Basing on the findings of the study, with respect to the levels of organisation, networking and collaboration both vertically and horizontally, RPOs are not yet strong enough to effectively influence policy formulation in Uganda.

However, there has been some limited success in lobbying government through different channels, such as representation on relevant policy making bodies. For example, UNFFE was able to lobby for the removal of tax on imported seeds and the lifting of the ban on imported semen. NUCAFE was able to lobby for the conducting of effective and urgent research in resistant varieties of coffee against the coffee wilt disease and the multiplication of clonal coffee plantlets and elite seedlings for the replanting. UCA

played a role in lobbying for the revival, facilitation and strengthening farmers' organisations.

In order to have RPOs effectively involved in policy formulation, the following ought to be done; (i) the Apex bodies have to sensitise the grass root RPOs to create increased awareness. Grass root members revealed that they do not get informed about new government policies by their executive committees or Apex bodies and how they are likely to affect them. Consultations must be done by the Apex bodies with the grassroots in policy formulation; (ii) RPOs should be encouraged to network horizontally at all levels of organisation as a way of increasing their bargaining power in influencing policy formulation; (iii) Apex bodies ought to institute functional adult literacy programmes for the grassroots RPOs; (iv) Apex bodies should have grassroots RPOs representation.

List of acronyms

ACE	Area Cooperative Enterprise
ACU	Agricultural Council of Uganda
CBO	Community Based Organization
CCA	Canadian Cooperative Association
CECFIS	Community Empowerment Through Cooperative Financial Services
CUDIWU	Credit Union Development in Western Uganda
DANIDA	Danish Development Agency
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FEETAS	Farmers Economic Empowerment Through Agricultural Services
ILO	International Labour Organization
KANADA	Kasawo Namuganga Development Association
LUTENDA	Lutengo Development Association
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
NAACSADEC	N'alina Akatono Ajja Credit and Savings Development Cooperation
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NUCAFE	National Union of Coffee Agribusinesses and Farm Enterprises
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan
PMA	Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture
RADIFA	Rakai District Farmers Association
RPO	Rural Producers Organization
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SCC	Swedish Cooperative Centre
UCA	Uganda Cooperative Alliance
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNFFE	Uganda National Farmers Federation
VEDCO	Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns
YEECO	Youth Economic Empowerment Through Co-operatives

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Poverty reduction is the key challenge facing the world community, and there is a widely held view that the objective may be attained by policy formulation (Cashin *et al.*, 2001). However, for policy ownership to be meaningful there must be room for choice and increased ownership by local stakeholders. This involves not only government, but also other local interests and 'civil society' more generally (Gariyo, 2000). It is a right for ordinary people and the poor people in particular to participate in the design, planning and implementation of programmes and activities that should benefit them.

In Uganda, although Article 38 (2) of the Constitution provides that "Every Ugandan has a right to participate in peaceful activities to influence policies of government through civic organizations", and The Local Government Act, 1997 makes it mandatory for local governments to involve the citizen in policy planning at all levels, the majority of the citizens do not influence policy formulation. This is because the mechanisms are too complex and require skills and knowledge for this to happen. Thus, only a small section of the elite has to date been able to influence this process in Uganda, which is drawn from the NGO sector, the academicians and researchers, and the influential large business concerns (Gariyo, 2000).

The ordinary citizens are mainly represented by the various interest groups. As to whether this representation is adequate is a debatable issue. Most local governments argue that they are limited by budgetary constraints to implement the provision (Gariyo, 2000). Lipton (1977) and Schiff and Valde's (1998) have regarded this as an urban bias in policy formulation due to bigger political power of well organized urban elites relative to that rural smallholders with diffused concentration. The urban elites have always been better positioned to express their interests and to influence policies. Given this premise, better organisation of smallholders, notably through collective action (here referred to as Rural Producers Organizations - RPOs) should increase their political voice, reduce urban bias in policies, increase economic growth and reduce poverty.

The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) of Uganda

According to Mugambe (2000), since 1997 the efforts to eradicate poverty in Uganda have been guided by the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) that establishes the policy framework for the eradication of poverty within two decades (1997-2017). It sets the objective of reducing the incidence of poverty to 10% by the year 2017. The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED) has since early 1999, been engaged in the process of revising the 1997 PEAP document to reflect the new changes in the policy arena and to incorporate new information from the various initiatives that have been undertaken since that time. The revised PEAP has drawn heavily on extensive participatory process under the Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Project

(UPPAP). It draws on the insight that poverty is more than an economic phenomenon also including dimensions of insecurity, disease, ignorance, vulnerability, exclusion and powerlessness. The revised PEAP has 4 main goals:

- (i) Creating a framework for rapid economic growth and structural transformation
- (ii) Ensuring good governance and security
- (iii) Directly increasing the ability of the poor to raise incomes
- (iv) Directly increasing the quality of life of the poor

Uganda Participatory Poverty Assessment Project (UPPAP)

UPPAP was an initiative of the MFPED of the Government of Uganda that sought to bring the perspectives of poor Ugandans, through consultations, into the formulation and the implementation of policies and planning for poverty reduction at both district and national levels. It was established to provide a mechanism for linking the perspectives of the poor to the policy formulation processes. The Government acknowledges that the way forward for eradicating poverty is also to know the needs, interests and concerns of the poor from their own perspective. The study was between the Government of Uganda, selected district authorities, Ugandan NGOs, academic institutions, donors and Oxfam, as the implementing partners. It involved interactions with national policy processes, and facilitation of district capacity development for participatory planning and monitoring. The information derived from the participatory project has now been incorporated into the revised Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), which is Uganda's Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF). Although the PEAP was formulated as a result of a broad consultative process involving central and local government, civil society and the private sector, the poor, for whom the Plan was developed, were not consulted.

The Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA)

The government is committed to transforming agriculture from a predominantly subsistence sector into a commercially oriented one. This is laid down in the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA). The PMA is a holistic, strategic framework for eradicating poverty through multi-sectoral interventions enabling the people to improve their livelihoods in a sustainable manner. The priority areas for Government action are derived from the perspectives of farmers as generated from the existing studies especially the Uganda Participatory Poverty assessment Project (UPPAP) and from consultations which included the central government, local governments, research institutions and universities, donor community, private sector and the civil society which was represented by the NGO Forum, Deniva, Uganda Debt Network, The Uganda Professional Women in Agriculture and Environment and the Food Rights Alliance (MAAIF, 2000). It is part of the broader strategy of poverty eradication contained in the revised Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) of 2000 which is Uganda's Comprehensive Development Framework. The poverty focus of the PMA is based on poor people's perspectives that are contained in various poverty studies in Uganda, especially the Uganda Participatory Poverty assessment Project (UPPAP). It is implemented through decentralized planning processes.

Agricultural Policy Formulation in Uganda

Among the key factors necessary for sustainable agricultural development in Uganda is a conducive environment. The Ministry Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) has been the government institution with the mandate to formulate agricultural and agro-related policies, but in the face of privatisation and liberalization, MAAIF now needs smart partnership with other stakeholders in the tasks of policy formulation,

implementation and evaluation (Agricultural Policy Network Uganda, APONU, 2003), thus the need for the private sector organizations to come together and supplement the ministry efforts in undertaking the tasks for the benefit of stakeholders. Bringing together all interested agricultural stakeholders to identify development issues, design, and implement appropriate development policies that fit the needs of the local, national, and global community may be the best organizational strategic approach that would foster sustainable development. The Agricultural Policy Network Uganda is seen to engage stakeholders in the process of agricultural policies through awareness creation and mobilization and to foster private-public sectors partnerships in the formulation of demand-driven policies. This will ensure long-term effective agricultural development in Uganda, leading to sustainable food and nutritional security as well as poverty reduction.

1.2 The Problem

A potentially important role of RPOs as civil society organisations is voicing the interests of their members in the debate over economic policies. Rural producers have interests in the choice of economic and agricultural policies adopted and implemented by the government. The RPOs may act as their voice in the policy-making process, lobbying for the members' interests. In a liberalised economy, the role of the state is minimised with regard to direct improvement in the welfare of rural producers and the private markets may not solve the problems faced by individual producers. We argue that RPOs are better suited to fill this gap in effectively representing or voicing the interests of their members in the policy making processes in Uganda. In addition, we had hypothesised that different types of RPOs use different strategies in attempting to influence policy with varying degrees of success.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of the current study is to examine the strategies which RPOs use in influencing policy formulation and document best practices and strategies.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 2.1 Study RPOs

Three APEX RPOs and one service providing NGO were selected. The APEX RPOs included the Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA), the National Union of Coffee Agribusinesses and Farm Enterprises (NUCAFE), and the Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE). The service providing NGO was VEDCO – Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns. UCA was selected as a reference RPO by the project administrators, NUCAFE was selected as the commodity RPO, UNFFE was selected because of its long existence, whereas VEDCO was randomly selected. Only 4 organizations were selected due the limited time available for this pilot study.

2.2 Data Collection

Primary data was collected through interviews in form of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and face to face interviews for the APEX bodies. This was backed up by secondary data collection used for literature review. During the FGDs RPO members were separated into two groups; the executive committee and general members. This was done to ensure objective responses. For the APEX bodies one representative was interviewed.

2.3 Study Policies

In this regard, the RPOs were requested to divulge information pertaining to their knowledge of and involvement in Poverty Eradication and Market Liberalization policies. Emphasis was placed on pillars 1 and 3 of the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). Under pillar 1 (‘Creating a framework for rapid economic growth and structural transformation’) the Price and Market liberalization policy was considered. Under pillar 3 (‘Directly increasing the ability of the poor to raise incomes’) the holistic, strategic framework for eradicating poverty, the Plan for Modernisation of Agriculture/National Agricultural Advisory Services ((PMA/NAADS) was considered.

3 Preliminary findings

Focus group discussions were carried out with Apex Bodies and their constituent RPOs instead of administering questionnaires on an individual basis due to the limited time available. The RPOs surveyed so were only four out of the many registered at the various levels (sub-country, district and national). They included those affiliated to Volunteer Efforts for Development Concerns (VEDCO) which is a service providing NGO, and three PRO APEX bodies namely Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA), Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE) and the National Union of Coffee Agribusinesses and Farm Enterprises (NUCAFE).

3.1 Description of the Study RPOs

Table 3.1 gives details of the RPOs under the aforementioned APEX bodies and the service providing NGO that participated in this study.

Table 3.1 Study RPOs

APEX	RPOs	RPOs		
VEDCO <i>Service Providing NGO</i>	Akukwatirako Development Group (Village level RPO)			
	Bwaziba Tukolerewamu Farmers Group (Village level RPO)			
UCA	NAMA Area Cooperative Enterprise (Sub-county level RPO)	Lutengo Development Association- LUTENDA (Parish level RPO of NAMA)		
	Kasawa Namuganga Development Association- KANADA (Sub-county level RPO)	N'alina Akatono Ajja Credit and Savings Development Cooperation- NAACSADEC (Parish level RPO of KANADA)		
UNFFE	Rakai District Farmers Association- RADFA (District level RPO)	RADFA-Kifamba (Sub-county level RPO of RADFA)		
			RADFA-Kisuula (Parish level RPO)	Village RPOs
				Kiddawalime
				Bakyala Kwagalana
				Ngobamaluma
				Kwewaayo
NUCAFE	Kagoye Coffee Farmers Association (KCFA)			
	Buwama Coffee Farmers Association (BCFA)			

3.1.1 RPOs Affiliated to VEDCO

- (i) Akukwatirako Development Group is affiliated to VEDCO. It is located in Kyevunze village, Kikoma Parish, Katikamu Sub-county, Katikamu County and Luwero District. It started in 1995 and got registered at the District Community Services Office in the same year with 30 members, of which 66.7% are women. Its executive is comprised of 7 posts, 4 of which are occupied by women. It has no

Apex body and this has implications on its capacity to lobby for conducive policies.

- (ii) Bwaziba Tukolerewamu Farmers Group affiliated to VEDCO. It is located in Bwaziba village, Bwaziba parish, Luwero Sub-Country, Katikamu County and Luwero District. It was started in 1998 and got registered at the District the same year. It has 30 members, 40% of which are women. Like the former RPO, it also has 7 Executive posts, with only 2 occupied by women. Like Akukwatirako, it has no Apex and it is likely to have problems to influence policy formulation.

3.1.2 RPOs under UCA

- (i) NAMA Area Cooperative Enterprise (ACE) – new type of a Cooperative Union, located in Mukono district. It is one of the ACEs that constitute the Uganda Cooperative Alliance. It was started in January, 2003 and registered in October, 2003 by the Ministry of Gender and Community Development. Registered members are up to 500 with 65% being female. The Executive has 9 posts with women occupying 3.
- (ii) Lutengo Community Development Association (LUTENDA) is a Cooperative Society under NAMA located in Mukono District (Lutengo Bar village, Nama Sub-county). It was started on the 7th November, 2001 and is registered with the district as well as NAADS. It has 50 members (42% are women). The Executive is composed of 7 posts, 2 being women.
- (iii) Kasawo Namuganga Development Association (KANADA) – new type of a Cooperative Union, is located in Kabimbiri, Kasawo Sub-county but operates in 2 sub-counties (Kasawo and Namuganga) of Mukono District. It has paid up membership of 500 members (farmers, artisans and traders of which 40% are women). It was started in April, 2001 and originally had been registered in June, 2001 as a Community Based Organization (CBO) at the District. The Executive is composed of 8 posts (with 2 women).
- (iv) N'alina Akatono Ajja Credit and Savings Development Cooperation (NAACSADEC) is a Cooperative Society under KANADA. It is located in Mukono District. It was started in January, 2001 under KANADA. With 31 members (over 70% being women). The Executive is composed of 9 posts (2 women and 7 men).

3.1.3 RPOs under UNFFE

1. Rakai District Farmers Association-Kifamba (RADFA-Kifamba) is a Sub-county (Kifamba) branch of Rakai District Farmers Association. It is located in Kifamba Sub-county. It was formed in 1992 by then under Uganda National Farmers Association (UNFA), which later became Uganda National Farmers Federation. The RPO got registered in 1998 under this name following decentralization of the Uganda National Farmers Federation to district and sub-county levels. It has 424 registered members from 4 parishes with 320 of the members being female. The Executive is comprised of 11 posts, 3 of which are mandatory posts for female members.
2. Rakai District Farmers Association-Kisuula (RADFA-Kisuula) is a Parish branch of Rakai District Farmers Association. It is located in Kisuula village, Kisuula Parish, Kasasa Sub-county, Kakuuto County in Rakai District. It started at Parish level in 2000. The total membership stands at 80 (over 60% being women and at

the time of the visit, only 25 were fully paid up). The Executive is comprised of 9 posts with 5 being women.

3. Kiddawalime Farmers Association is a Village branch of RADFA-Kisuula. It is located in Kisuula Parish, Kasasa Sub-county, Rakai District, with membership of 25 members. It was registered with RADFA in 2000. Out of the 7 posts on the Executive, 5 of them are occupied by women.
4. Ngoba Maluma Farmers Association is also a Village branch of RADFA-Kisuula, with 12 members. It was registered in 2000 under RADFA. It has 2 ladies on the Executive of 7 posts.
5. Bakyala Kwagalana Farmers Association is also a Village branch of RADFA-Kisuula. It was registered in 1992 with Rakai District Farmers Association (RDFA).
6. Kwewayo Farmers Association is another Village branch of RADFA-Kisuula. It was registered with Rakai District Farmers Association (RADFA) in 1999.

3.1.4 RPOs under NUCAFE

- (i) Buwama Coffee Farmers' Association (BUCFA) is a Sub-county level member RPO of NUCAFE. It is located in Buwama Sub-county, Mpigi District. It was formed and registered with NUCAFE (formally UCFA) in 1994. It has 30 members (56.6% of attained primary education, 33.3% secondary and 10% of which attained higher and tertiary education) only 8 are women. The Executive is comprised of 8 members with only 1 woman.
- (ii) Kagoye Coffee Farmers' Association (KACFA) is also a County level RPO of NUCAFE operating in 2 sub-counties (Bbale and Kayunga) of Kayunga District. It was formed in 2000 and got registered with NUCAFE and at district level in 2003. It has 35 members (9 women and 24 men) with 34.4% having attained primary, 34.4% with secondary education and the rest tertiary education. The Executive posts are 8 and half of these are occupied by women.

3.2 Legal Status and Framework of RPOs

The procedure for registration of an RPO is a very important aspect, which creates its legal status (Kabuga, 1995) and provides for operational guidelines. There are clear steps followed prior to RPO registration. The law governing RPO formation in most countries is divided into three categories, namely Act, Rules and Bye-laws. The Act is passed by government and sets out framework upon which the RPOs will function. The rules are details worked out by the implementing or regulating ministry, in form of statutory instruments and bye-laws help to explain and guide the day-to-day operations of the RPO. The bye-laws (e.g. that of the Uganda Cooperative Alliance Limited, 1998) spell out the RPO name and address, vision, mission and objectives, criteria for becoming a member, cessation of membership, funding sources (and how dividends are distributed), the administrative hierarchy, posts and roles of the key players (Annual General Meeting, Board of Directors, and Executive members), proceedings at the AGM and Executive committee members, employees, settlement of disputes and fines attached to defaults, and the liquidation/dissolution of the organization.

Prior to registration, prospective members must first identify their common problem they want to solve, assure themselves that what they are about to do is one of the ways to solve the problem. Then, the group submits an application signed by a specified number of

members to relevant authorities (registrar of companies or cooperatives or community development officer). This is accompanied by resolutions (and constitution or bye-law or articles and memorandum of understanding) made by the potential members accepting to form an RPO. On registering the RPO is obliged to call members to start conducting business including the future.

All the RPOs the research team visited were registered with either the Apex body (e.g. UCA, NUCAFE, UNFFE) or Sub-county or District Community Development Offices or at the National level with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (e.g. NAMA ACE). Registration, as it was observed, was done later, after the inception of the RPOs, after the members had tested the possible viability of the undertaking and its leadership. Registration of an RPO give it a legal backing to operate either as a voluntary organization, profit making company limited (business), non-profit making body limited by shares or a body corporate. Registration certificates are issued once a group or organization is registered as proof of its legality. Further, this acts as an incentive for other people to become members. The RPOs are required to have constitutions or bye-laws prior to their registration.

It was evident that although some members claimed knowledge of their constitutions (or bye-laws), these documents were made mainly at the Apex or higher levels and simply sent to the grassroot level for ratification and “rubber stamping”. The majority of members did not sound positive about all the contents of these constitutions. Much as these constitutions exist and they are readily available, lower level RPO members do not take time to look at them. This is mainly due to ignorance (resulting from low education levels) about the importance of such documents in the running of their institutions. Members need to understand the importance of information and how to get it (Lwasa *et al.*, 2001).

Owing to the importance of constitutions in the proper running of RPOs, executive leaders (at whichever level) as well as Apex bodies need to be encouraged to sensitive their members about constitutions preferably in their local languages, and avail each member with a copy as a way of ensuring transparency in leadership. This will raise members’ awareness on their rights and obligations so that they actively and practically perform their role of being owners, users and controllers of their RPOs (Banturaki, 2000). According to Arnesen *et al.* (2002), the RPO beneficiaries have to learn how to get better organized and control their organizations prior to transformation into tools for economic development in their own interest.

3.2.1 Recommendations

- (i) Owing to the importance of constitutions in the proper running of RPOs, leaders, executives, APEX bodies need to be encouraged to sensitize their members about constitutions preferably in their local languages, and avail each member with a copy as a way of ensuring transparency in leadership.
- (ii) An RPO constitution should be in a simplified and summarized version. Some of the major elements, such as the roles, responsibilities, rights and objectives should be emphasized. In the long run Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) programmes should be instituted by the PROs for the members who can not read and write. Here, the primary responsibility of running these programmes should rest with the APEX bodies.
- (iii) RPOs should regularly review their constitutions in order to accommodate their members’ changing needs as well as the changes in the external environment.

3.3 Originality of Forming RPOs

It is necessary that the idea to form an RPO comes from the group itself (Kabuga, 1995) and undertake activities of their own interest (FAO, 1977; 1979), needs and perceptions (ILO, 1979). Many people are still sceptical about forming and/or joining RPOs following their bad experiences with the old cooperatives, where they were exploited. According to Arnesen *et al.* (2002), cooperatives have a poor reputation in many parts of the developing world due to the historical experience with these – or rather with organizations being called “cooperatives” but which were actually fully under government control.

For most of the RPOs visited by the team, the idea of getting together was mainly externally invoked, except KANADA. This influence was either through intervention by NGOs. For example LUTENDA was formed with the influence of the Farmers Agricultural Research Methods for Eastern and Southern Africa (FARMESA) project for purposes of giving them agricultural loans. If not NGOs it is by the Community Development Officers (e.g. Akukwatirako), or Government Agricultural Extension workers (e.g. Kagoye Coffee Farmers Association) or government policies (e.g. Farmers’ Fora at sub-county level formed under the PMA and NAADS programmes), and church leaders (NAACSADEC).

Those registered with the Uganda National Farmers Federation were all formed with external influence. The RPOs affiliated to VEDCO were in existence prior to its intervention of offering credit to them. They were formed with the aim of accessing credit from NGOs like church micro finance institutions (MFIs). The requirement was to be in groups to be able to access the credit facilities. They got affiliated after they showed interest in receiving agricultural advisory services, and the arrangement has continued since then. The scenario is similar to the UCA member RPOs of NAMA and KANADA which were convinced to join UCA on realization that they were pursuing the same objectives which were mainly produce marketing, rural financial services and institutional development through human resource. This is to be achieved through the Farmer Economic Empowerment Through Agricultural Services project (FEETAS) funded by development partners (Msemakweli, 2000).

According to Kabuga (1995), although there is an increasing feeling that formation of RPOs should be based on the initiative of the people themselves, some governments maintain that people can still be stimulated to form RPOs if their initiative is not forthcoming, because development cannot be postponed. This is the major reason for government intervention to convince them to get together as a poverty reduction strategy. However, where there is government intervention in as far as forming RPOs is concerned, people start associating them with government. Hence, successful RPOs appear to be those established according to the wishes of potential members.

3.3.1 Recommendations

- (i) Where the idea of forming an RPO has been externally invoked, the external influence should only go to as far as stimulating members to form a viable and functional PRO, without interfering with the day to day running of the RPO. This ensures that members do not associate the RPOs with the external force that stimulated their formation. The external influence could also play a role in assisting the newly formed RPOs in developing a structural framework and guidelines for running the RPOs. However, the bottom line is that joining of the

newly formed RPO should be a voluntary process, even though the idea has been externally invoked.

- (ii) Members should see clearly the tangible benefits of working in groups as an incentive. This calls for more transparency, less political intervention in the running of the RPOs, intervention with pragmatic programs and activities to uplift members' incentives.

3.4 Objectives of RPO Formation

RPO formation has basically been echoed as a strategy for poverty reduction and improving members' livelihoods through various interventions (Banturaki, 2000) and African village life has long traditions of cooperation (Arnesen, 2002). According to ILO (1979) activities should be comprehensive in scope of activity. Our investigations showed that interventions like input provision, agricultural advisory services, market access, bulk inputs purchases and access to credit were the major objectives for forming the RPOs. It came out clearly that the major objectives varied with the background to formation of the RPO and the NGO and Apex body it is affiliated or registered under.

The UNFFE approach is capacity building through farmer empowerment by training them in various demand-driven aspects of improved agricultural and animal production technologies. VEDCO provides inputs, training and credit, while UCA's intervention strategy was market access and capacity building. NUCAFE's approach is a multi-faceted one, but generally focusing on the coffee industry, with a series of activities from the production of coffee, to the point when it reaches the final consumer with quality coffee.

However, whatever intervention strategy used, members (who are generally farmers) stand to benefit given that many farming aspects require intervention. The experiences gathered from RPO members and their leaders depict that after a defined intervention, farmers will still continue to make demands to improve their situation. For example, after being trained in many production technologies, the next logical question would be; where are we getting quality and fairly priced seeds, implements or production credit? After utilizing the inputs well and with increased production, the question that would follow would be how and where do we sell the produce?

3.4.1 Possible Interventions

- (i) A more pragmatic and holistic long term strategic plan should be designed. This strategy should have phased interventions, which could overlap. For instance, training of members in improved crop and animal husbandry practices followed by access to credit and/or purchased farm inputs as well as access to good markets. Training followed by access to credit/inputs especially planting materials ensures that what has been acquired in terms of knowledge can easily be translated into results, because such knowledge tends to be forgotten over time. Such holistic long term strategic plan could lead to increased farm productivity and ultimately farm incomes.
- (ii) Production credit could be mobilized from within the RPO (e.g. NAMA, LUTENDA, NAACSADEC, NUCAFE).
- (iii) Market access could be improved by bulking the produce and controlling the quality. Access to markets will be an incentive to farmers to engage in production of more and better quality products.

- (iv) PROs should seek timely and vital input and output market information for their members from the various sources (e.g. agricultural extension workers, internet, NGOs).

3.5 Priority Focus of RPO

Based on the fact that the biggest proportion of rural population is agricultural oriented, all the RPOs are focused on improving agricultural production amongst their members. Crops that are being prioritized are selected basing on:

- (i) Climatic and soil conditions of the area (agro-ecological considerations)
- (ii) Household food security
- (iii) Potential to benefit from market opportunities and good prices (e.g. crops like Vanilla and Moringa with good farm gate prices of \$ 50 and \$ 5 respectively have been taken up)
- (iv) The traditional crops (where experiences have been gained over the years (e.g. Maize, Beans).

In general, since the preliminary work was conducted in the Central region, the enterprises were dominated by Coffee, Bananas, Vanilla, Moringa, Pepper, Maize, Cassava and Beans. Animal enterprises are dominated by Cattle, Poultry, Goats and Pigs.

3.6 General Administrative Issues of RPOs

According to the RPO constitutions (or bye-laws) and Kabuga (1995), general meetings are comprised of delegates (for the case of Apex bodies) or all members who are paid up (for grass root RPOs). The ultimate authority of the RPO in which the supreme powers are vested is the general assembly (UCA, 1998). By definition, the general meeting formulates the major policy guidelines, elects and removes executive members and also receives, discusses and accepts or rejects any report from the Executive Committee. Any decision taken by the general meeting has to be arrived at democratically, free from external patronage and become binding to all members (ILO, 1979). Further as stated by Munkner (1984:9) and Verhagen (1987:20) membership participation in RPO issues is crucial.

The findings of the study show that constitutions (or bye-laws) of RPOs clearly define the periods when general and executive meetings should be held and their responsibilities. The former are held at least once a year except under special circumstances, when extraordinary meetings are caused. The latter are held more regularly (some RPOs like RADFA-Kifamba and Akukwatirako have scheduled them on a monthly basis while for other RPOs are fewer). For some RPOs like Kagoye Coffee Farmers Association, no meetings were held since formation in 2000 till 2003 when two meetings were held. The field findings show that there exists a free environment under which meetings are conducted, and all members are free to express their views irrespective of gender and age. This is a healthy situation as the success of the RPO will largely depend on the unity and interaction of the members, influenced by the coincidence of their interests. To achieve their goals, the members should manage their RPO collectively (Kabuga, 1995).

3.6.1 Possible Interventions

- (i) Functional adult literacy programs for members who are not literate should be pursued.
- (ii) Members should be able to derive tangible benefits from their RPOs e.g. better prices for their products than non members.
- (iii) Members need to be sensitized about the importance of meetings in such institutions and encouraged to attend.
- (iv) RPO general and executive meetings should be planned, and members informed well ahead of time.

3.7 RPO Membership

The basic criteria for becoming a member of an RPOs include being: (i) a resident, (ii) trustworthy, (iii) sociable, (iv) a hardworking and active farmer, (v) of the right age (18 years and above), (vi) mentally stable (vii) and ready to abide by the constitution. Other additional criteria for certain RPOs (e.g. Kagoye and Buwama CFA) include being a Coffee farmer. The general steps followed for one to become a member in general are; one applies in writing or verbally and is recommended by 2 members of the RPO (e.g. Akukwatirako). This is supported by Kabuga (1995), that it is important that existing members decide on whether or not to admit a new member.

The applying person appears before the general assembly and presents oneself, is judged and either allowed or denied entry. One then pays a membership fee (Shs. 2000 for NAACSADEC, RADFA-Kisuula and RADFA-Kifamba; 10,000 Akukwatirako and Bwaziba). Some RPOs (e.g. RADFA-Kifamba) require one to attend meetings before being accepted as a member, while others (e.g. LUTENDA) require one to undergo training for 2 months as soon as he is accepted. Members are required to pay annual subscription fees to renew membership while other RPOs do not require any membership (e.g. Buwama Coffee Farmers Association) and subscription. The member is expected to be loyal to the RPO and follow the guidelines. It is an obligation for members to attend meetings, participate in discussing and voting on matters affecting the RPO, should be willing to lead his RPO if elected and be prepared to abide by the decision of the majority (Kabuga, 1995).

Attendance of meetings by members is still weak in most RPOs and this constrains their planning and also implies that many members are left out in the decision making process. It is likely to be either rooted in the education levels of members or problems with the executive committees. Most of the members have received little or no training at all (the majority – 60-80% have only attained primary level education, with only 5-10% having attained secondary education) and this is comparable to national statistics and other studies (FAO, 2003; Lwasa *et al.*, 2001). This low education status points out the existing gaps in managerial and leadership skills among farmers and the general failure to appreciate certain development aspects. Members need to be sensitised about importance of meetings in such institutions and encouraged to attend. This can be done through realization of benefits of working together. Members (through their RPOs) should lobby for consideration to be trained under the adult literacy programs.

3.8 Administrative Hierarchy/Structure

The Executive committee posts, their duties and overall administrative hierarchy should clearly be spelt out in the RPO constitution (or bye-law) (Kabuga, 1995; UCA, 1998). The basic traditional structure of having a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee members was adopted by almost all RPOs mainly from the Apex bodies. The respondents did not seem to know any other structure and asserted that the structure is serving them well. By adopting this structure they seem to realize the need for sound leadership, keeping track of proceedings of Executive and General meetings and other crucial records, the need to monitor financial performance and mobilization of members. Some RPOs modified this traditional structure to allow for a “technical bench” (with professionals and subject matter specialists in the field of Agriculture, Veterinary, Fisheries, Apprenticeship, Marketing, Finance, Industry, Public relations and Accountancy) and posts for interest groups like the youth, disabled and women. This is quite unique and has strengthened the RPOs where it exists (KANADA and RADFA-Kifamba).

All RPOs have adhered to the gender mainstreaming and empowerment policies by strongly encouraging women to participate in leadership. Many of them have at least 3 women on the Executive Committee. In fact, some (e.g. Kifamba RADFA Branch) have a mandatory number of posts in their constitution that must be occupied by women. It was observed from the respondents that women are doing a commendable job as leaders. UCA and UNFFE encourage youth participation. From the aforementioned issues it is clear that the success and failure of an RPO depends on the quality of the executive committee and it is therefore important for members to elect the right people. The criteria used, in general, for one to be nominated in any executive post included:

- (i) Being visionary with analytical capacity to articulate relevant issues and steer the RPO to great heights.
- (ii) Capacity to contribute to formulation of pragmatic plans to develop the area.
- (iii) Capacity to identify and solicit funding from external sources
- (iv) Innovativeness in terms of work planning and crucial activities to benefit the RPO
- (v) One should be educated (can read, write and understand and interpret situations. This is a pre-requisite for one to be elected as a Secretary)
- (vi) Sociable, approachable, with exemplary behaviour
- (vii) Trustworthiness is very crucial
- (viii) Hard working person
- (ix) Experience in leadership and workmanship

There seems to be a general tendency by the some RPOs to dependent on a few people to run them. In their absence, it is highly doubtful if RPOs' existence can be sustained. It creates a dependence syndrome on one particular individual. If he/she leaves, the RPO collapses. The executive members actually testified to this by consenting that they accepted to serve more on a voluntary basis and are committed to development of their people and area at large. Further, the executive committee members are not well facilitated by their RPOs to conduct official duties because of their low capital base. Little facilitation in form of lunch and transport is provided by most RPOs. This has far reaching implications on the motivation of these officials to do a commendable job as they resort to financing the RPO activities from their pockets. This approach cannot be

sustained in the long run and it weakens the RPO over the years as it requires one to be fully committed to serving the organization.

Some RPOs have no limit on the period one should serve on the executive. It is open and as long as one is still interested and able to serve, one is allowed to do so. In fact, many RPOs have not changed the executive since establishment. This is detrimental to the operations of the RPO. The executive members should be encouraged to share out responsibility by delegating, training and encouraging all members to serve in various capacities as a way of building team work, collective responsibility and ensuring institutional sustainability in case anything happens to any member of the executive. Changing leadership regularly will empower other members to serve the RPO at some stage and to realize the challenges of leadership. This is likely to strengthen the RPO.

3.8.1 Possible Areas of Interventions

- (i) The executive members should be encouraged to delegate, train and encourage all members to serve in various capacities as a way of building team work and leadership capacity. This ensures institutional sustainability in the event something happens to the serving chairperson or to any other executive member.
- (ii) Leadership should change regularly to ensure that other members serve in various capacities at some stage so as to gain leadership and administrative skills. This is likely to strengthen the RPO.
- (iii) RPOs should institute better facilitation schemes for their leaders to encourage them to do a better job. Poor facilitation is attributed to the low incomes of RPOs. Here, developing a share capital scheme, charging realistic membership and subscription fees as well as investing in other income generating activities should be undertaken.
- (iv) RPO leaders should regularly undergo trainings in leadership and organizational management.
- (v) RPOs could institute cost-recovery mechanisms for their activities, e.g. administrative operations and members' trainings.
- (vi) APEX bodies ought to carry out a regular monitoring and evaluation process of themselves and the grass root RPOs.

3.9 Benefits Members Derive From RPOs

According to Munkner (1984), Kabuga (1995) and Banturaki (2000), and as pointed out previously, members should perceive benefits accruing from their participation in the RPO. Members' interests is to eradicate poverty in their midst. Participation in RPO activities which results in tangible advantages for the member motivates the member to continue and intensify his or her participation. This attracts others to join. So membership has to be meaningful and this gives the RPO the energy to carry out their activities towards poverty-eradication efforts. Ideally members should be able to derive higher utility levels of social capital from the membership than otherwise. There was a generally positive response towards the issue of benefits of RPOs to members by both members and executives, though some are not tangible. The following benefits were cited.

3.9.1 UNFFE's Benefits to Member Associations

- (i) Training of leaders in organizational management and leadership skills (as trainers of lower cadre staff and farmers) and imparting skills to member farmers in crop and animal production. Over 40,000 members have been successfully trained. Evidence to this was based on a wide range of training manuals (booklets) used in the Farm Management Courses which culminate into yellow, blue and green certificates. The booklets have also been translated into the main local languages (Luganda, Ateso, Runyakitara and Luo).
- (ii) Agricultural advisory services are organized for special interest groups e.g coffee producers (on a demand-driven basis) and conducted by Extension Link Farmers. Initially UNFFE got a lot of financial support from DANIDA but currently, they are conducted on a cost-recovery basis. This approach has been adopted by the Government of Uganda through the NAADS programme.
- (iii) Agricultural study tours (interdistrict and international) with members contributing to the expenses. Places visited include Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, India and Britain. UNFFE Apex body coordinates the organization of the trips and sometimes gets part sponsorship for the members. Under this activity, farmers' competitions are also organized.
- (iv) National agricultural shows are organized annually at the Source of the Nile ground in Jinja and trade fairs. District Agricultural shows are also organized regularly. This gives the members an opportunity to learn more, display and sell their produce.
- (v) Product market and price information is transmitted to farmers through print and electronic media with the assistance of IITA. UNFFE used to contribute Shs. 9 millions per year towards this arrangement but stopped this though IITA continues to transmit the information.
- (vi) Farmers' Voice, a monthly newspaper has been initiated (to replace the quarterly magazine) to inform farmers about critical agricultural issues that may affect them.
- (vii) It links other member organizations to potential donors through vetting and articulating their proposals.
- (viii) Involved in policy lobbying and advocacy to the benefit of all farmers. The examples quoted was their influence in lifting importation of semen (having been stopped due to the mad cow disease threat) and removal of import taxes from seeds and farm machinery spares.
- (ix) Mainstreaming gender in all activities of the Federation with the aim of promotion women and youth involvement in the activities.
- (x) A number of agricultural input dealers are members of UNFFE which has linked them to the district based farmers association that now handle sale of inputs (e.g. seeds) to farmers.

3.9.2 NUCAFE's Benefits to Member Associations

- (i) Coffee farmers have been mobilized to form groups in order to benefit from economies of scale in purchasing inputs and selling products.

- (ii) The members who sell in groups receive slightly better prices for their coffee. Kabonera and Kibinge groups were cited as being able to sell their coffee directly to the consumers.
- (iii) Training of farmers in various modern coffee production techniques. This activity is being supported by FAO, USAID and DANIDA.
- (iv) Wet processing machines were imported into the country and sent to West Nile Women's Association. This processing approach will greatly improve the quality of coffee being marketed.
- (v) Policy advocacy (synergies exist with OXFAM and other NGOs) for direct coffee marketing to improve prices and fight against the coffee wilt disease. It is represented on the Boards of PMA, participate in PEAP revision, hold consultative meetings with PSF 2 of their Board members representing them. The Organisation participated in the Coffee review strategy (report is out). They also work with ACU, UCTF and UCDA in their policy advocacy endeavours.
- (vi) It has played a significant role in provision of clonal and elite coffee planting materials to their members under the Uganda government coffee sector recovery programme.
- (vii) It carried out an extensive Planning and Participatory Needs Assessment Survey in order to come up a Strategic Development Plan, which was a precondition for donor support (EU).

3.9.3 UCA's Benefits to Member Associations

- (i) Capacity building to leaders in managerial, leadership and business management skills.
- (ii) Training of members and leaders in group dynamics, formation, strengthening and sustainability.
- (iii) Agricultural Extension Services to farmers in various technical aspects of agricultural production (agronomy, environmental management, pest management). This has led to increased production of better quality products and better prices. This is under the FEETAS project (10 districts of Masaka, Rakai, Mbale, Sironko, Mukono, Kayunga, Bushenyi, Mbarara, Iganga and Kamuli) sponsored by the Swedish Co-operative Centre (SCC) and the Food Security Project for Northern Uganda through Cooperatives.
- (iv) Savings mobilization and credit schemes have been introduced in some of their ACEs (e.g Nama, Lutenda) to assist farmers with production credit. These are under two projects namely Community Empowerment Through Cooperative Financial Services (CECFIS) and Credit Union Development in Western Uganda (CUDIWU).
- (v) Agricultural Marketing Services through ACEs and Uganda Commodity Exchange (UCE). They both conduct business on behalf of members as brokers. Group marketing (bulking of products like hot pepper, moringa) has been achieved at NAMA ACE to the benefit of farmers and this has led to better prices received by members. For example, a box of hot pepper is sold at Shs. 2,500 compared to Shs. 1,000 on the open market, while a kilogram of processed moringa sells at Shs. 10,000 compared to Shs. 5,000 on the open market. Under this market information gathering and dissemination was emphasized.
- (vi) Input Supply Services which includes training of input dealers and involvement in bulk procurement and selling.

- (vii) Transformation and empowerment of the youth through their groups into well managed and democratically governed organizations able to conduct business. This is being achieved through the Youth Economic Empowerment Through Cooperatives Project (YEECO) which is being piloted in seven district namely Mukono, Kayunga, Jinja, Kamuli, Iganga, Mayuge and Bugiri. The youth are linked to the other projects (FEETAS and CECFIS) to benefit from credit, farm input supply, marketing, training and extension services.

3.9.4 VEDCO's Benefits to RPOs

- (i) Access to training in various technical aspects of Agricultural production (agronomic, pest and disease control, soil and water management) is the major benefit to members.
- (ii) Some have received post-harvest handling equipments (e.g. solar driers) to improve shelf life of their products (e.g. Bwaziba).
- (iii) Provides credit facilities to RPOs through the MFI branch of VEDCO.

It is clear that members and member associations linked to the above apex bodies have received training and exposure to a wide range of production techniques. The snag still remains implementation (which require affordable inputs and production credit) and other related issues like accessing better regional and overseas markets. Members are not fully consulted prior to advocating for specific policies. They are not even informed about the policies that have resulted from advocacy by their Apex organizations. This may lead to a conception that they are not being assisted.

3.9.5 Recommendation

- (i) In order for the RPO to be updated with members' needs, there should be regular participatory needs assessment analyses.

3.10 Capital Base of RPOs

Human and social capital alone, are not adequate enough to run an RPO successfully. An RPO needs sufficient funds in order to run business and to provide services required by members. There are various ways in which funds can be got including share-capital, membership and subscription fees and commission received through business transacted by the RPO for members (Kabuga, 1995) and grants from well wishers mainly politicians, development partners and NGOs. Findings indicate that all RPOs have a weak capital base and besides, those that are strong are dependent on outside support and hence are not able to perform their activities efficiently and effectively and their financial self-sustainability is in balance. This in tandem with earlier findings of studies on RPOs carried out in Uganda (Lwasa *et al.*, 2001), and in other African countries (Banturaki, 2000).

Membership and subscription fees are still meagre. Apart from a few (e.g. NAMA, LUTENDA and Akukwatirako) that were involved in savings mobilization, the majority depend on membership fees to fund up to 65% of their budgets. For example UNFFE members are required to pay Shs. 1,000 (about US\$0.5) per year, of which 40% is remitted to district associations). This has led to failure of some RPOs to acquire assets

like offices (and related equipment and premises), weighing scales, storage facilities. This is partly rooted in the non-orientation for RPOs to nurture capital formation. It is only UCA, the apex body that has its own premises used as offices for their official work. The others either rent (UNFFE and NUCAFE) or use community facilities such as churches or schools.

Apart from membership (Shs. 50,000 or US\$ 30 as registration fees) and annual subscription fees of Shs. 200,000 (or US\$ 120), UNFFE gets financial support from development partners e.g. DANIDA in form of grants (currently funds 55% of their activities) and is diversifying donor support by contacting other development partners such as CTA, Agriterra, the World Bank and the Global Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty. Further, it generates more funds from service delivery (training of farmers), consultancy, hire of the Farmers Hall facilities and remittances from proceeds of the National Agricultural Shows.

UCA is also heavily dependent on development partner support (USAID, Swedish government through the Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC) and Canadian Cooperative Association (CCA). Besides this, they collect rental fees from residential houses, offices (23.6% of total income in 2003) and consultancy work. Membership and subscription fees did not even raise 1% of the total income in 2003. Member associations pay Shs. 30,000 for membership and Shs. 20,000 as annual subscription. NUCAFE has also clearly pointed out its weak income generating potential and high dependency on development partner support. Apart from membership fees (Shs. 200,000 membership and Shs. 100,000 annual subscription from members associations), they conduct consultancy work and also get funding of up to Shs. 20 millions per year from UCDA.

3.10.1 Recommendations

As aforementioned, developing a share capital scheme, charging realistic membership and subscription fees as well as investing in other income generating activities should be undertaken.

- (i) RPOs should diversify their operations by venturing into lucrative business (e.g. value addition activities such as agro-processing) enterprises to increase their capital base. A good capital flow encourages investor confidence such that share capital could even be raised from non members of the RPO. Shareholders will only continue making investments into the RPO, only if realistic dividends are realized from their shares.
- (ii) Membership and subscription fees should at least to a break-even point of the RPO's day to day operational costs.
- (iii) Savings mobilization by the RPO should be encouraged as another way of improving the capital base of the organization.
- (iv) RPOs should seek fiscal incentives, e.g. tax relief on imported machinery and agro inputs.

3.11 Networking and/or Collaboration Among RPOs

Networking and/or collaboration with other RPOs, national bodies, NGOs and representation on national policy advocacy bodies is expected to yield positive multiplier effects on the overall well being of members, strengthening it in its programs and

improvement of policy advocacy and lobbying strategies (Arnesen, 2002; Banturaki, 2000). Information was sought about knowledge of other RPOs in the neighborhood (sub-county and beyond) and the level of networking. Although some RPO members cited names of organizations they knew e.g. Farmers Fora at sub-counties (formed under the NAADS program), there was clear indication that networking with other RPOs was either non-existent or very weak. However, members have voiced the anticipated benefits of working with others from whom they can borrow new ideas (and financial support) to improve the smooth running of their RPOs.

At the Apex level UNFFE collaborates with (i) National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), (ii) Uganda Land Act Steering Committee, (iii) PMA, (iv) Presidential Economic Council of Uganda, (v) Uganda National Seed Authority, (vi) Veterinary Services Policy Formulation Steering Committee, (vii) Private Sector Foundation, (viii) Regulatory Services Steering Committee, (ix) Agricultural Chemicals Control Board, (x) Joint UNFFE/Uganda Cooperative Alliance Commodity Exchange, (xi) USAID-IDEA project, (xii) Inter-Institutional Trade Committee on WTO under the Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry, (xiii) Labour Advisory Board (xiv) NAADS, (xv) National Bio-safety Committee, (xvi) National Council for Higher Education, (xvii) Uganda National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, (xviii) Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, (xix) Uganda Vegetable Oil Development Project, (xx) Area-Based Agricultural Programme, (xxi) Uganda Export Promotions Board. It also works directly with MAAIF, MFPED, Makerere University and Agricultural Research Institutes.

Besides the local collaboration, UNFFE works with sub-regional organisations such as the East African Farmers Union and others in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Egypt, and other international bodies including International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), and Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth (RASC). Collaboration also exists with international agencies (and development partners) like the World Bank, DANIDA, USAID, FAO, IFAD, SCC, UNDP and DFID. NUCAFE interfaces with bodies and agencies like Uganda Coffee Traders Federation (UCTF), ACU, PSF, UCDA, MAAIF, USAID, the European Union (EU) and Uganda Cooperative Alliance.

The Uganda Cooperative Alliance also works closely with UNFFE, NUCAFE, Swedish, Canadian and Norwegian aid agencies (SCC, CCA, Norges Vel), PMA, NAADS, MAAIF and IFAP. It is hoped that more close collaboration and interfacing will greatly enhance the policy advocacy ability of the study RPOs through strengthening their voices, and sharing ideas and experiences. RPOs should be encouraged to pursue this approach. Whereas the Apex bodies (possibly due to technical ability) are able to network with other relevant bodies, grass root RPOs networking is still limited or nonexistent.

3.11.1 Recommendations

- (i) RPOs should be sensitized about the importance networking and linkages with other RPOs. This should preferably begin with the APEX bodies or service providing NGOs and trickle down to the affiliated grass root PROs.
- (ii) APEX bodies and service providing NGOs should compliment each other's activities where they have strength, and help each other where there are weaknesses. When they are better organized under one forum, they are better positioned to exploit opportunities and circumvent threats.

3.12 SWOT Analysis of the Study RPOs

A SWOT analysis identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats pertinent to a system or a situation in a manner, which exposes the capacity of the system to address its set goals. In turn, these lead to specific strategies and action plans which can impact on these goals appropriately, thereby directing the initiatives of the system towards the primary objectives or aspirations. In brief, a SWOT analysis objectively links the aspirations to the strategies and action programs. The way forward is to enhance and exploit the strengths and opportunities, respectively and at the same time, formulate mechanisms for eliminating the identified weaknesses or at least drastically minimizing those that cannot be completely removed. Tables 2 to 5 show the SWOT analyses of the study RPOs.

Table 3.2 VEDCO's SWOT

<p><i>Strengths</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained technical staff • Possession of assets (e.g. permanent office, vehicles) • Have already won consultancies with NAADS • Savings and credit programmes operational 	<p><i>Weaknesses</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited area/hinterland where it operates
<p><i>Opportunities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of NAADS (Government policy) • Strong Government support to the Private Sector • Existence of many organized small groups in the area • Existence of other RPOs for networking • Continued Donor support 	<p><i>Threats</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of other Organizations that can offer similar services • Inability to consistently offer services like market information, user friendly credit facilities to farmers

For VEDCO, strengths outweigh the weaknesses, while opportunities are also more than the weaknesses. This depicts continued existence and operation of the Organization if weaknesses and threats are addressed.

Table 3.3 UCA's SWOT

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound management at apex level • Trained technical staff to offer training and advisory services • Possession of assets (e.g. permanent office, vehicles) • Collective marketing of products • Savings and credit programmes operational • Networking and representation on key national policy bodies • Long existence 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over dependency on development partners support. • Limited operational and development capital • Limited number of staff to undertake work at the grass root level.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong government policy on RPOs • Strong Government support to the Private Sector • Potential to solicit funds for strengthening it and continued existence • Existence of other RPOs can improve networking 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of other Organizations that can offer similar services • Inability to consistently offer services like market information, user friendly credit facilities • Some people lost interest in cooperation (bad past experience)

The strengths and opportunities of UCA outweigh the weaknesses and threats. This is favourable for the continued existence of the organization.

Table 3.4 UNFFE's SWOT

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained technical staff to offer training and advisory services • Possession of assets (e.g. permanent office, vehicles) • Formation of a commercial wing of UNFFE (Uganda Farmers' Agribusiness Limited to address marketing) • Savings and credit schemes operational in some branches • Deep rooted (their presence is felt widely – almost entire country) • Has been on the ground for a long period of time. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to generate adequate funds to run the organization (nurtured not to look elsewhere) • Not able to fully address the needs and expectations of the members • Low member retention rates due to lack of tangible benefits
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong government policy on RPOs • Strong Government support to the Private Sector • Potential to solicit funds for strengthening it and continued existence • Existence of other RPOs can improve networking 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of other Organizations that can offer tangible benefits • Some people lost interest in cooperation (bad past experience) • Formation of NAADS (its approach was their approach too)

The strongest benefits have been in the area of training and farmer exposure. Many other areas have not been fully tackled. The creation of Uganda Farmers' Agribusiness Limited is expected to undertake the commercial aspects to improve its major weakness of inability to raise adequate incomes.

Table 3.5 Table 5: NUCAFE's SWOT

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained technical staff to offer training and advisory services • Savings and credit schemes operational in some branches • Strong partnership with UCDA • Ability to organize coffee farmers to lobby for premium prices (price information available) • Have already won consultancies with NAADS 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to generate adequate funds to run the organization • Not able to fully address the needs and expectations of the members yet (e.g. cheap inputs) • Low member retention rates due to lack of tangible benefits • Lack of adequate staff due to limited resources
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong government policy on RPOs • Strong Government support to the Private Sector • Potential to solicit funds for strengthening it and continued existence (EU, FAO, USAID) • Coffee is still a major export crop • Being the only coffee RPO • Plan to undertake a holistic approach (inputs, quality, markets, credit, training) 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some people lost interest in cooperation (bad past experience) • Coffee Wilt Disease may lead to abandonment of the crop by some farmers • Renting main offices from government coffee policy making body (Allegiance to a government – UCDA)

NUCAFE is still strong and has a wide range of opportunities. The threat and weaknesses should be minimized. The strength benefits have been in the area of training and farmer exposure. Many other areas have not been fully tackled. The creation of Uganda Farmers' Agribusiness Limited is expected to undertake the commercial aspects to improve its major weakness of inability to raise adequate incomes.

4 RPOs' influence in policy formulation

Governments are obliged to formulate conducive policies that will create an enabling policy and legal environment for improving livelihoods of the needy population with positive multiplier effects to overall development of the country. Basing on the findings of the study as outlined above (with respect to the level of organization, networking and collaboration in both vertical and horizontal integration, as well as the SWOT analyses), RPOs are not yet strong enough to adequately influence policy formulation in Uganda. This could be largely attributed to the following:

- (i) Lack of awareness by the RPOs, hence misinterpretation of policies
- (ii) Policy making methods do not involve RPO participation
- (iii) Resource constraints on the side of the policy makers
- (iv) Low levels of literacy, hence misunderstanding of policies

However, findings of the study show some limited success in lobbying government through different channels has been registered as outlined below. Clearly, as expected *a priori*, RPO apex bodies and the service providing NGO were well informed about the policies and some (UNFFE, NUCAFE) pointed out clearly their contributions. This is attributed to their participation in the policy formulation, facilitated by their representation on relevant policy formulating bodies, active interaction with policy makers, ability to access policy and other relevant documents and overall general enthusiasm to get to know how they are supposed to fit in the national development framework.

Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE) has been able to successfully influence policy formulation. The channels used to influence policy include (i) representation on relevant committees, for example, the President of UNFFE is a member of the PMA Steering committee and the Vice President is a member of the PMA Technical and implementation Committees. (ii) the President is a member on one of the committees of the PSF, and the General Secretary is an alternate member. UNFFE's representation on these crucial committees has enabled them to successfully undertake crucial policy lobbying and advocacy. (iii) networking, collaboration and linkages with local, regional and international bodies, (iv) consultative meetings with key national bodies.

UNFFE has also set up a Policy Department to improve on its policy lobbying capacity. Further, they have National Executive Committee meetings quarterly and pre-season workshops attended by member associations chairpersons, coordinators and advisors. In these fora, they are able to get inputs on key issues that need advocacy and lobbying. Otherwise, they do not directly request their grass root (member) associations to submit their key policy issues prior to their lobbying exercise. One of the achievements in policy advocacy is representation at the sub-county level where the Farmers fora are dominated by UNFFE members and as such they are able to lobby for the interests of their apex

body. From this background and basing on their strong networking and collaboration approach, they have been able to influence a number of policies.

UNFFE's cited success stories in policy influence:

- (i) The need for improved farm mechanization (with emphasis on ox-cultivation) as one of the means to modernize agriculture. Unavailability of inputs (tractors, ploughs and other implements among others) was one of the 12 constraints to increased productivity cited by farmers. It ranks fourth among the poor farmers' priorities for action (out of seven) (MAAIF and MFPED, 2000). UNFFE's position is that it would be impossible to modernize agriculture without having the capacity to open up large tracts of land much more cheaply and timely to enable further operations to also be timely leading to increased production, with the ultimate aim of increasing farmers' incomes which is the PEAP pillar that PMA is addressing. They were able to have the issue included in the PMA and they are still struggling to have it prioritised (it is not yet an area of priority). With the on-going PEAP revision (were not involved in drafting the initial version), they will continue to lobby for its inclusion.
- (ii) Removal of tax on imported seeds has been achieved. The reasoning behind this was that we are likely to continue importing seeds because of shortage of improved seeds in Uganda. It becomes expensive to farmers to purchase such seeds. This was done through PSF. Normally before the budget, PSF writes to member organizations to submit key issues that need to be addressed.
- (iii) Lifting of the ban on imported semen was also achieved. The ban was a result of the mad cow disease, an epidemic then in Britain where most of the semen for artificial insemination used to be obtained from. The ban was a blanket one stopping importation of semen into the country irrespective of the country of origin. The ban was lifted by the President in a speech during the closing of an Agricultural show and at least importation semen from Israel was allowed.

Cases where UNFFE has not yet registered success:

- (i) Removal of tax on farm machinery (tools, implements) spares e.g. tyres as one of the ways of reducing their prices and increase importation of relevant spares. This is likely to improve the useful life of these machines for the benefit of the users. It is problematic currently to maintain farm machinery in sound mechanical and running condition. This is being lobbied for through PSF.
- (ii) Removal of taxes on imported fertilizer as one of the ways of reducing prices and encouraging fertilizer usage to improve productivity. This is being lobbied for through PSF.
- (iii) Revival of the tractor hire services to encourage mechanized agriculture for improved production. This is lobbied for through with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Committee is chaired by the Director of Crop Resources.

NUCAFE's channels used to influence policy formulation include: (i) networking with a number of relevant national bodies, (ii) representation on some committees e.g. two members of NUCAFE are represented on the UCDA Board, (iii) linkages with development partners like USAID (worked with COMPETE and SPEED Projects) and EU, (iv) consultative meetings with PMA and PSF. They are currently involve in PEAP revision (were not involved in the original drafting). They have also had to by-pass the

established bureaucratic channels for purposes of lobbying key institutions to influence policy, like the fight against the coffee wilt disease.

NUCAFE's cited success stories in policy influence:

- (i) playing a clear role and influencing the policy on the fight against the coffee wilt disease (*Tracheomyces*). NUCAFE reported the first cases of the disease to MAAIF and NARO. This led to establishment of a Steering Committee under the National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) to gather adequate information (done by NUCAFE) which was used to trigger off the fight against the disease through research into resistant varieties (being conducted by the Coffee Research Institute at Kituuza) and multiplication of clonal coffee plantlets and elite seedlings for the replanting exercise to replace the diseased coffee plants. The coffee wilt disease problem was used to justify government intervention (given its crucial role in the economy) and was partly used to formulate the Strategic Exports Programme which emphasises rejuvenation of the coffee industry. This was done with PSF and UCTF.
- (ii) With the agitation of NUCAFE and UCTF they influenced formation of a task force by the government of Uganda under the auspices of the World Bank, PMA and PSF on revival of the coffee sector. This led to the development of the government's Coffee Sector Review Report.
- (iii) They lobbied and participated generally in the formulation of the PMA through PSF and UCTF. The Chairperson of NUCAFE is a board member of PSF and this improves their lobbying capacity.
- (iv) Participated in the review of PEAP by providing information from their Member Associations Needs Assessment Survey that had been carried by them.
- (v) Through OXFAM (an international NGO) they have lobbied international roasters to improve on the coffee price environment.
- (vi) The channels through which policy lobbying and advocacy is done include meetings, seminars, workshops and through speeches of guests of honour at special functions when an opportunity arises (as was cited by UNFFE).

The Uganda Cooperative Alliance has also played a significant role in policy advocacy and lobbying for the benefit of its members. Like other APEX organizations described above, the channels UCA has used to influence policy formulation include representation on various policy formulating bodies. Currently UCA is represented on the Committee to Review the National Economy headed by the Vice President's office and on the Microfinance Review Forum under the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED). UCA networks and collaborates with other apex organizations like UNFFE and NUCAFE. Although UCA has participated in advocating for major agricultural policies, they claim not to have any major specific policy that can be attributed to their lobbying activities since many were pushed collectively as a group mainly through their apex body, PSF.

Some of the contributions by UCA to policy formulation include:

- (i) Playing an active role in lobbying relevant government institutions to reconsider revival, guide, facilitate and strengthen farmers' organizations. According to rankings of causes of poverty (UPPAP, 1999), lack of cooperation was mentioned (17% of the sites visited). Government has realized the importance of farmers' organizations in poverty reduction but that there are no effective grassroots/village based commercially oriented institutions capable of mobilizing

the production capacity of small producers for the production of income-generating commodities. This has been achieved through dialogue with the Vice President's office (and also in PEAP formulation) and currently government and development partners are stressing the need to have farmers' in groups in order to benefit from economies of scale in marketing and input procurement, advisory services (pre-requisite to accessing assistance from NAADS) and accessing credit. Many groups (RPO) have been formed in response to this.

- (ii) UCA has played a role in the formulation of the PEAP revision exercise in which they are advocating for increased support to the agricultural sector as a way of improving the livelihood of rural population. Their participation in PMA and PEAP formulation (through workshops and consultative meetings) has significantly led to importance being attached to issues like access to production credit and micro finance services (this was ranked number one by poor farmers as a priority area for action), market access and increased productivity. (MAAIF and MFPEP, 2000).

Cases where UCA has not yet registered success:

- (i) Mechanisation of agriculture, i.e., discouraging use of a hand-hoe, which is so stressful. Their position is that productivity and market opportunities cannot be improved without mechanization (same position as UNFFE). In fact, the hand-hoe is discouraging the youth from taking up agricultural oriented ventures. Their concept is that if people are in a cooperative, they can agree to pool some production resources such as land to make mechanization more viable. Their position is against promoting ox-cultivation which is obsolete technology, not gender sensitive and this is partly why it has not spread throughout the country.
- (ii) Development of irrigation systems (water for production) to encourage year round agricultural production. The climatic conditions are not predictable anymore. Farmers have had to suffer from the vagaries of nature, sometimes loosing all their crops. Many policy makers seem to be getting interested in this issue now and positive results are expected.

4.1 Ensuring Enhanced Participation of RPOs

In order to have RPOs effectively involved in policy formulation, the following ought to be done:

- (i) Sensitization of grass root RPOs to create increased awareness.
- (ii) Policy making bodies should solicit resources from government and donors to boost consultation and dissemination activities with the grass root RPOs.
- (iii) RPOs should be encouraged to network as a way of discussing policy issues that affect them.
- (iv) Functional adult literacy programmes for RPOs should be promoted.

5 Grassroot RPOs and policy formulation

5.1 Perception and Participation in Policy Formulation

The price and market liberalization policies were well known to most farmers. They realized the implementation and impact of these policies especially in coffee marketing because firstly, the stores where they used to market stopped receiving the coffee, the price floors and ceilings were no longer being set during budget speeches and broadcasted over the radios and also they were being approached by a number of traders (contrary to the earlier situation). This stopped them from even listening to budget speeches.

The debate on which scenario (before and after Structural Adjustment Programme - SAP) is better still rages on. The overwhelming majority, however, prefer the current situation because the prices received by farmers fluctuate with world prices (sometimes very high prices are received) and they receive cash for their sweat unlike in the past. The major negative comment about the liberalization policy was about the deterioration of the quality of the products being sold, which is in line with earlier findings (Lwasa *et al.*, 2001). The majority of focus group discussants were not aware of the background of these policies but sounded positive about the likely reasons for their formulation (which of course included reduction in government expenditure, increased competition among the traders, and hence better farm gate prices and improved farmers' share of the world prices).

Poverty Eradication strategies, like PMA are not well known by most grass root RPOs members.

Members could only mention acronyms PMA, NAADS and PAF and did not know what they stand for or the areas of focus. The others that were mentioned are not policies *per se* but projects and activities falling under NGOs or development partners programs. The following were mentioned: Household Agricultural Support Programme (HASP) under DANIDA (in Rakai), Farmers Agricultural Research Methods for Eastern and Southern Africa (FARMESA) (in Mukono), Farmers Empowerment Through Agricultural Services (FEETAS) (in Mukono), Lake Victoria Environment Management Programme (LVEMP) under the World Bank (in Rakai). Whereas these projects and/or activities are in line with government policies, they are not policies in themselves. Members were also not very clear on what the policies are intended to achieve, apart from a few and their leaders. Secondly, those who enumerated these projects were mainly men, with a clear indication that the women did not have a clear understanding of government policies (possibly due in part to their low education level).

Those who knew (or had some knowledge about) the policies revealed that they got to know them through print and mass media, vehicle with project names, researchers, civil servants (especially at Sub-county levels), seminars and workshops and their leaders, a few years ago. They get involved in their implementation without a clear understanding of their origin and likely benefits since they are conceived and formulated from “above”. They did not recall any participation in formulation of any and simply embrace what they are being told to do as long as they perceive some tangible benefits at the end of the day. However, RPOs claimed that the participation could be stopping at the lower arms of local governance e.g. councillors at the district/sub-county and local councils.

Members revealed that they do not get informed about new government policies by their executive committees or apex bodies and how they are likely to affect them. This results from failure to understand these policies. Even some executive committee members do not understand these policies. Following the decentralization policy, a number of services were decentralized and funds (65% of total revenue) are remitted by the central government to the sub-county level. Residents are then supposed to access these funds for developmental work according to their priorities. They are also supposed to participate in the budgetary processes of their sub-county but they do not. It is hoped that organized RPOs should be in position to access these funds to supplement on other funding sources to implement their activities. There is clear evidence that there is limited knowledge of what happens at the sub-county level. Few leaders of RPOs were in position to tell the level of funding and votes for the funds at that level and so they have never bothered to solicit for funding from the sub-county or district levels. Some RPOs revealed that they have tried to pursue these funds but in vain. Local government officials are not always willing to cooperate in this area.

6 Concerns of grassroots RPOs

The major problems cited by RPOs at grassroots, where they thought they needed help from their APEX bodies include:

- (i) Lack of production credit (many RPOs have no savings and credit schemes from which members can access affordable loans). Microfinance institutions are not able to meet the needs of the farmers adequately.
- (ii) Low capital base attributed to inadequate income generation capacity (some of them are not very old and still have income generation plans), limited membership and subscription fees.
- (iii) Lack of good and consistent markets (many of them sell individually).
- (iv) Volatility of prices for the products that members sell
- (v) High prices of inputs (inputs are available but not affordable)
- (vi) Limited number of members with capacity to be leaders is likely to culminate into RPOs that are dependent on a few individuals, which is an unsustainable arrangement in the long-run.

The solutions to the problems above that were suggested by the grass root RPO members themselves include:

- (i) Raising the capital base of the RPOs through increased membership, lobbying for funds from well wishers and NGOs and income generation through doing businesses like marketing for the members and establishment of communal gardens.
- (ii) Getting involved in accessing affordable inputs for their members through bulk purchasing of inputs.
- (iii) Getting involved in bulk selling of members' products, so that they are able to sell to niche markets as a group and benefit from better prices.

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Appendix 1

List of currently active RPOs registered with the agricultural council of uganda (ACU)

Name of the Organisation	Focus Activity	Coverage
Uganda Fisheries and Fish Conservation Association (UFFCA)	-Fish Production -Processing and Marketing -Service delivery -Training	National
National Union of Coffee Agribusinesses and Farm Enterprises (NUCAFE)	-Policy and Advocacy -Training at farm level -Organisation development -Agribusiness development	National
Uganda Bee-Keepers' Association (UHBA)	-Promoting and development of -Honey bee keeping -Training honey bee processing	National
Uganda Beef Processors' Association (UBPA)	-Production -service delivery -Processing and Marketing	National
Uganda Oil Seeds Producers and Processors' Association (UOSPA)	-Production -service delivery -Processing and Marketing -Training	National
Uganda National Farmers' Federation	-Training of general purpose farmers -Organising National agric Shows	National
Uganda Tea Association (UTA)	-Production -Training of outgrowers -processing -Marketing	National
Uganda Co-operative Alliance (UCA)	-Training of cooperative societies and union members -Service delivery	National
Kibanda Country Farmers' Forum	-Production -Marketing of Produce	National
Center of Advancement of Smallholders Farmers in	-Training of market oriented members ie farming as business	National

Name of the Organisation	Focus Activity	Coverage
Uganda		
Uganda Seed Trade Association(USTA)	-Trade in improved seeds -Training/ demonstration	National
National Organic Movement of Uganda	-Promoting organic farming in Uganda -Training	National
Federation of Uganda Women Business Organisations Industry and Agriculture	-Capacity building to farmers and consultancy -Technical assistance -Finance, market and information	National
Uganda National Dairy Farmers' Association(UNDFA)	-Production -Processing -Marketing	National
Uganda Floriculture Association (UFA)	-Production -Processing -Marketing	National
Horticulture Exporters' Association (HORTEXA)	-Exporting -Training of traders	National
Namalere Agro-Field Workers Co. Ltd	-Training -Research -Service delivery	National
Uganda Wetlands and Resource Conservation Association	-Service delivery -Training -Promoting soil conservation	National
Appropriate Technology for Enterprise creators(APPROTEC)	-Research -Service delivery -Input supplies	National

Appendix 2

potential development partners members of the agricultural council of Uganda

1. Cotton Development Organization (CDO)
2. Dairy Development Authority (DDA)
3. Focus on Rural Development (FORDE)
4. Forum for Kalongo Parish Women Association (FOKAPAWA)
5. Namalere Agro-Field Workers Co. Ltd
6. Poultry Development Association of Uganda (PFAU)
7. Professional Women in Agriculture
8. Semuliki Rural Development Foundation
9. The House of DAWDA
10. Uganda Beef Processors' Association (UBPA)
11. Uganda Coffee Development Authority (UCDA)
12. National Union of Coffee Agribusinesses and Farm Enterprises (NUCAFE)
13. Uganda Coffee Trade Federation (UCTF)
14. Uganda Commercial Farmers Association (UCFA)
15. Uganda Cooperative Fishing Union (UCFU)
16. Uganda Dairies Industries Stakeholders Association
17. Uganda Fisheries and Fish Conservation Association (UFFCA)
18. Uganda Floriculture Association (UFA)
19. Uganda Floriculture Exporters' Association (UFEA)
20. Uganda Bee-keepers Association (UHBA)
21. Uganda Horticultural Association (UHA)
22. Uganda National Farmers Association (UNFA)
23. Uganda National Livestock Farmers Association (UNLA)
24. Uganda Oil Seeds Producers and Processors Association (UOSPA)
25. Uganda Sugarcane Technologists Association (USTA)
26. Uganda Tea Association (UTA)
27. Western Uganda Dairies Association (WUDA)
28. Uganda Consumer Protection Association

29. ACIDI/VOCA
30. Foodnet Market Information Services(MIS)
31. Magri (U) Ltd
32. Uganda National Bureau of Standards(UNBS)
33. Uganda Co-operative Alliance(UCA)
34. Saimmco (U) Ltd
35. Sasakawa Global 2000
36. Development Network of Indigenous Voluntary Organisation(DENIVA)
37. Sukura Agro Institution
38. Appropriate Technology (U) Ltd
39. Commodity Export International
40. Toil and Promote Agriculture
41. 41. Kibanda Country Farmers Forum