



**STRENGTHENING RURAL ADVISORY SERVICES IN THE ASIA-
PACIFIC**

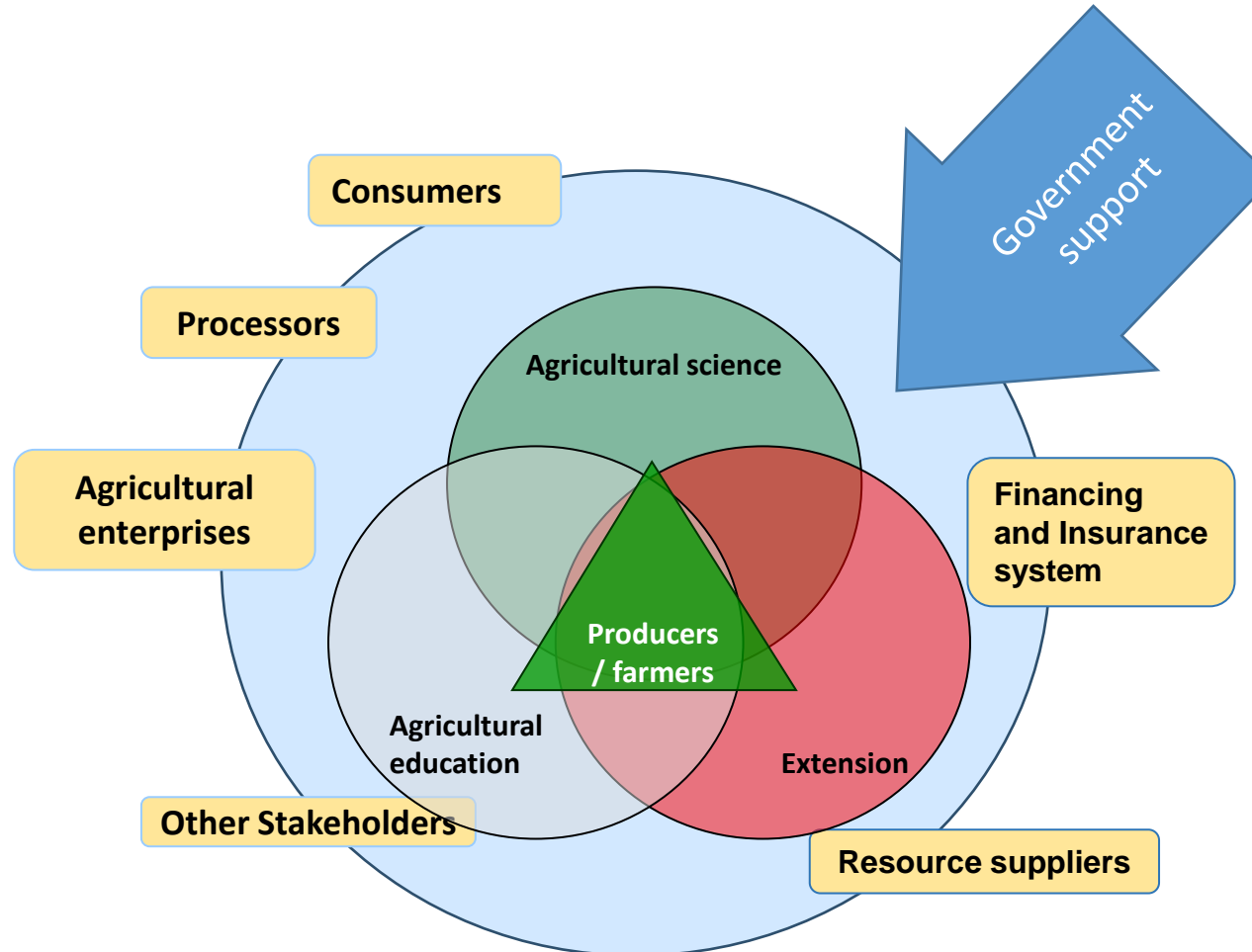
APIRAS Learning Workshop,

Bangkok, Thailand

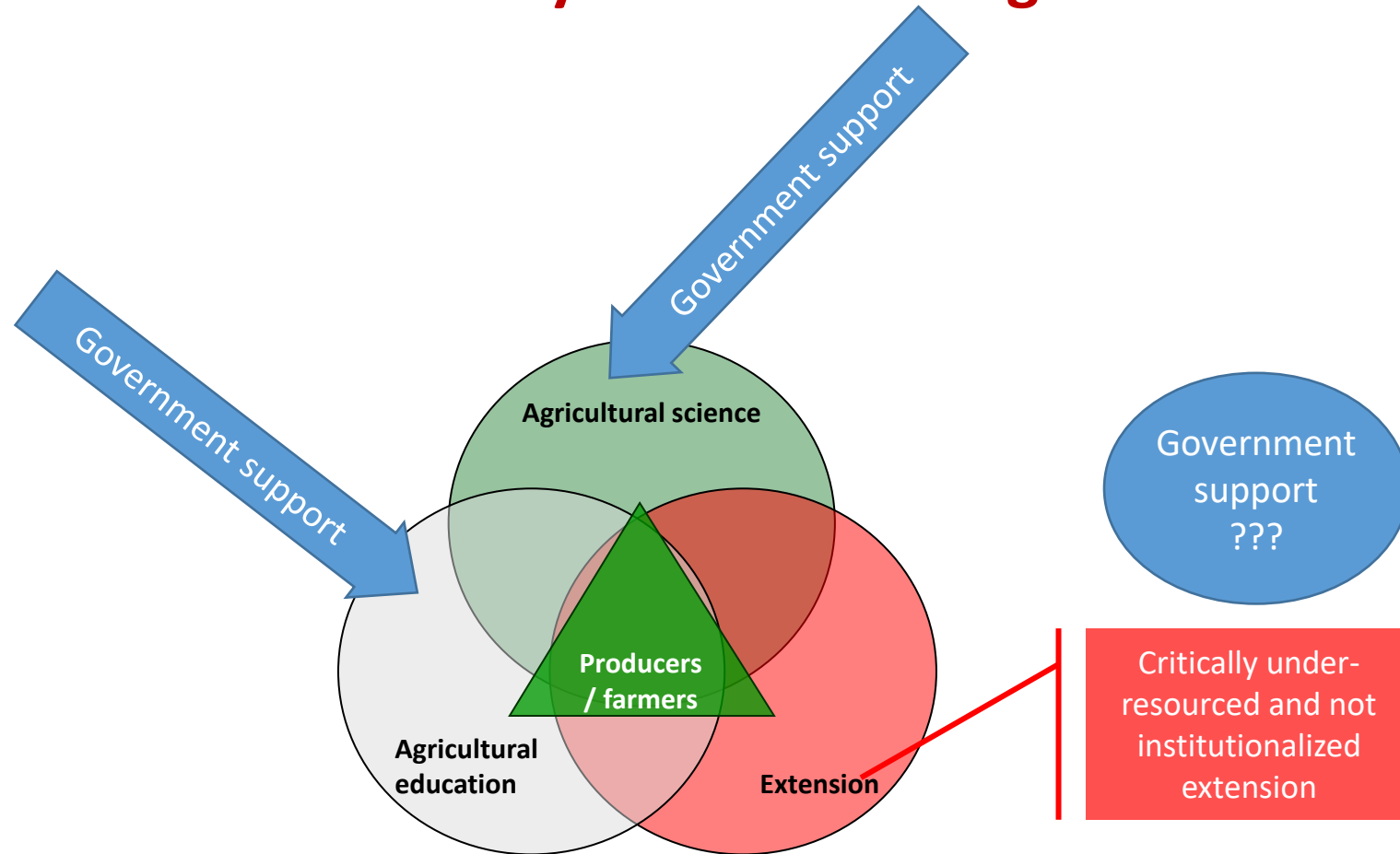
24-26 January 2023

RAS and Innovations

National Agricultural innovation System Approach in CAC:

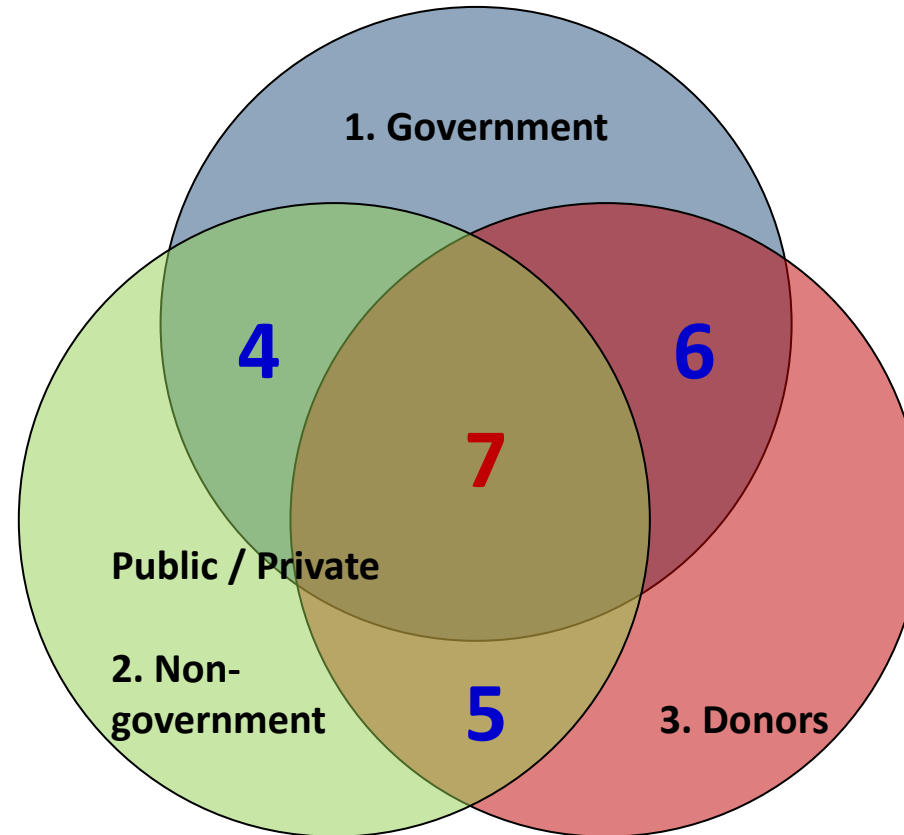


AKIS system in CAC region



Institutionalization and operationalization of RAS as a system at national level

In CAC region there RAS are highly
heterogeneous:



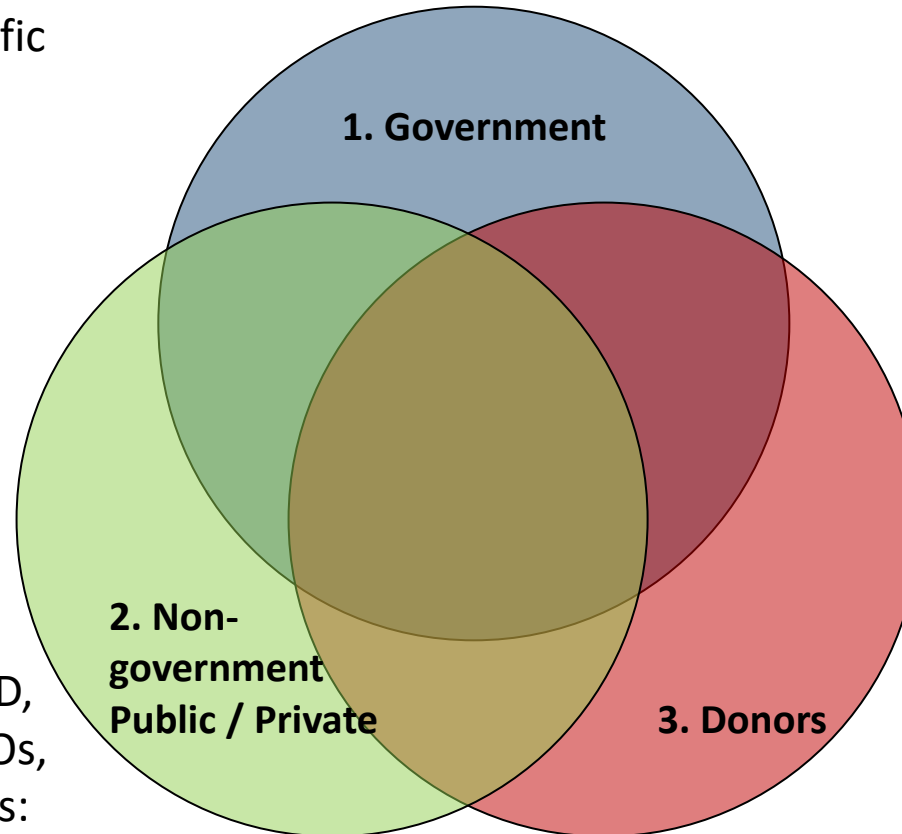
Three main types of Rural Advisory Services in CAC:

1. Government: Ministry of Agriculture, Agency on Land Reclamation, Academy of agricultural sciences, Scientific Production Center, etc.

2. Non-Government/ Public and private:

Association of farmers, professional agricultural consultants, water users, agro business, cooperatives of agronomists, independent consultancy centres, specialized NGOs, agro shops (suppliers of productions equipment), local distributors of people`s knowledge.

3. Donors` projects: World Bank, FAO, ADB, GIZ, USAID, FAO, JICA, UNDP, EU, Agakhan Fund, International NGOs, Mercy Corps, ACTED, Care, Oxfam, Helvetas and others: Project/Program based Consultancy services to households and farmers



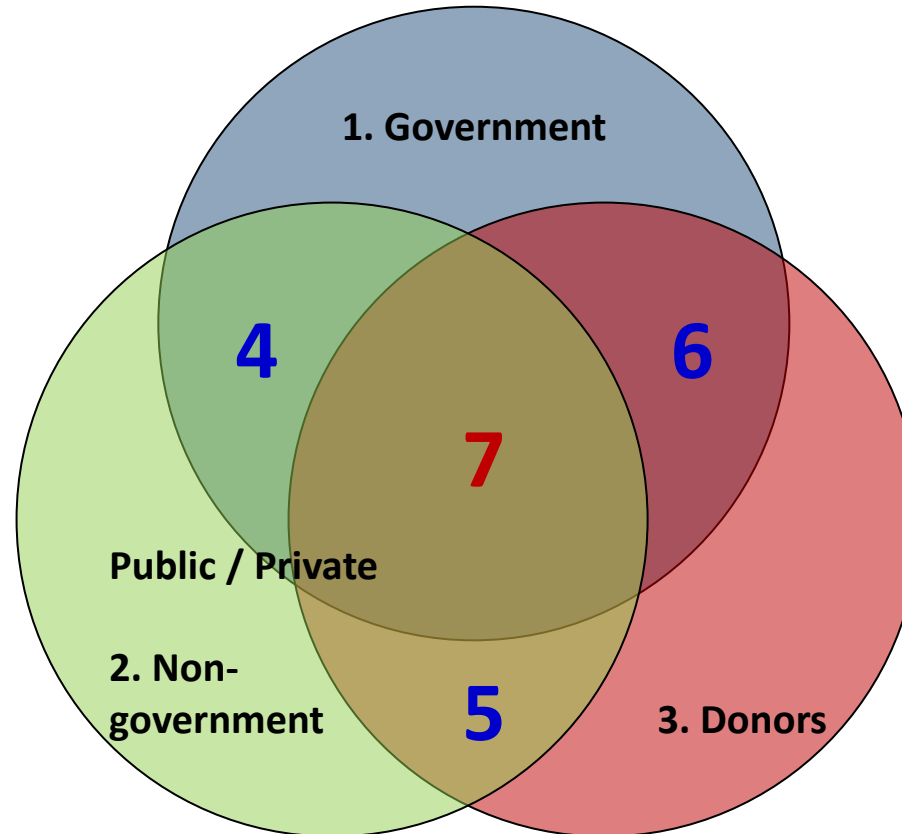
Other types of Rural Advisory Services in CAC:

4. Public Private Partnerships

5. Donors supported initiatives leading by NGO

6. Sector-wide and large investment projects

7. Plurastic RAS System



Regional Conference on Rural Advisory Services (RAS) in Central Asia and the Caucasus, Autumn 2014, Issyk Kul, Kyrgyzstan / Organisation - CACAARI and CAC-FRAS

Objectives:

- Establish a common understanding on status, strengths and weaknesses of the rural advisory services systems in the CAC region by sharing and discussing the results of a mapping of the RAS systems in the different countries, and prepare the ground for a comprehensive assessment of the rural advisory service systems in the CAC region.
- Share evidence of the effectiveness and importance of rural advisory services through the presentation of a number of case studies.
- Discuss models of government policies and support for rural advisory service systems and their advantages and disadvantages in different frame conditions, and provide recommendations to the governments in the region.
- **Determine the future form of CAC-FRAS.**
- Agree on actions leading up to the global GFRAS Annual Meeting 2015, which will take place in the Kyrgyz Republic.



CAC-FRAS " Rural advisory services (RAS) towards more sustainable food security and nutrition"

e-discussion on the Role of Rural advisory services (RAS) in Central Asia and Caucasus (CAC) region

["The role of Agricultural Innovation Systems in Central Asia and Caucasus countries and China towards more sustainable food security and nutrition"](#) 6 May - 9 June 2015.

The key objectives: Identifying challenges, opportunities and collective actions towards strengthening Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS), and particularly of the RAS systems in countries of Central Asia and Caucasus (CAC) and China.

- 83 comprehensive contributions
- 48 experts: Ministries of agriculture, rural / farm advisors scientific and research institutions, higher education and post-graduate institutions, and farmer's organizations among many other actors from the agricultural sector
- 18 countries of different regions as well as from developed and developing economies.
- 73 countries viewed the discussion's webpage
- More than 10,000 people received information on the consultation.
- 35% of the participants women
- 17% young professionals.



Central Asia and Southern
Caucasus Forum for Rural
Advisory Services

Public / government support & investments in AKIS

Recommendations of online discussions on the **role of Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS)** in CAC, concerning RAS:

To be short (two key recommendations):

1. Enhance public / government support & investments
2. Institutionalization and operationalization of RAS as a system at national level

6th GFRAS Annual Meeting: Global Good Practices in Rural Advisory Services, 14 - 17 September 2015, Issyk Kul, Kyrgyzstan

1. Gender in RAS Practice: Challenges and Ways Forward
2. Using ICTs in RAS: Challenges and ways forward
3. Agricultural innovation systems and RAS practice: Challenges and ways forward
4. Professionalisation of RAS: Challenges and ways forward
5. Community-based RAS: challenges and ways forward

Discuss Country Fora: An overview of the role, functions, challenges and opportunities of country fora for regional networks



Training workshop on: **Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension and Rural Advisory Services (RAS)**, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, May 2-4, 2016

The Central Asia and the Caucasus Forum on Rural Advisory Services (CAC-FRAS) in collaboration with the INGENAES project (USAID-funded Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services)



Best RAS Competition, 2016

#	Name of the winner / applicant	Nomination area	Geographical Area
1	Non-profit public organization Neksigol Mushovir	Best Rural Advisory Services in Central Asia and the Caucasus Region in 2016	Tajikistan, Central Asia and the Caucasus
2	Mrs. Kanykei Irysbekovna Tursunbaeva	Best extension agent in Central Asia and the Caucasus Region in 2016	Kyrgyzstan, Central Asia and the Caucasus
3	Mrs. Tahmina Sayfulloeva	Best extension agent among women in Central Asia and the Caucasus Region in 2016	Tajikistan, Central Asia and the Caucasus
4	Mr. Nodar-Guram Toxosashvili	Best young extension agent in Central Asia and the Caucasus Region in 2016	Georgia, Central Asia and the Caucasus
5	Kyrgyz Public Fund "Training, Advisory and Innovation Center"	Best Rural Advisory Services in Agronomy in Central Asia and the Caucasus Region in 2016	Kyrgyzstan, Central Asia and the Caucasus
6	Ganja Agribusiness Association	Best Rural Advisory Services to promote organic agriculture in Central Asia and the Caucasus Region in 2016	Azerbaijan, Central Asia and the Caucasus

Formalization of CAC-FRAS, 25 April, 2018



CAC-FRAS launching event

28-29 August, 2018, Issuk-kul, Kyrgyz Republic

Strengthening the linkages between extension, education
and research and other AIS actors

The **vision** of the CAC-FRAS is that rural advisory services (RAS) effectively contribute to more productive, profitable and sustainable development of agriculture and food security.

The CAC-FRAS **mission** is to provide assistance and technical leadership on rural advisory services in accordance with regional and national development priorities.

CAC-FRAS provides a **platform** for leadership, professionalization, knowledge sharing and mobilization of RAS, aimed at developing more efficient and sustainable agricultural innovation systems.

Member countries:

8 countries:

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia,
Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan,
Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

The **vision** of the CAC-FRAS is that rural advisory services (RAS) effectively contribute to more productive, profitable and sustainable development of agriculture and food security.

The CAC-FRAS **mission** is to provide assistance and technical leadership on rural advisory services in accordance with regional and national development priorities.

CAC-FRAS provides a **platform** for leadership, professionalization, knowledge sharing and mobilization of RAS, aimed at developing more efficient and sustainable agricultural innovation systems.



The main obstacles to enhancing extension system CAC:

1. **Limited group of actors involved in the RAS system.** Not only advisory services providers, but also research organizations, farmers, universities, ministries, financial and insurance sectors, input suppliers, consumers, ICT and mobile services providers, and other actors should also find their niches in RAS system.
2. **Weak enabling policy and transitional institutional environment for extension system.** In CAC, there is a persisting gap between technology inventions and out and up-scaling innovations - an issue that was recognized in developing countries in the 1980s. Legal and institutional frameworks should be reviewed and modernized to enable rendering services for better impact, Policies and institutions must change.
3. **Lack of motivation and incentives to use knowledge and innovative practices** in agricultural development among RAS suppliers and providers. The time when agricultural knowledge was created only by science alone has gone. Young people master ICT based services faster than aging farmers. Creating wider access to the agricultural information and knowledge is an urgent issue in CAC region.
4. **Low and reluctant interaction among RAS providers and users or services.** The simple model extensionist-farmer is not working effectively anymore. That is why interactive learning, i.e. knowledge sharing|| among all actors should substitute the traditional technology transfer mechanism.
5. **Poorly organized communication between the various actors in agricultural value chain.** Measures to establish better communications include creating and strengthening agricultural information centres and enabling ICT infrastructure, so that stakeholders could freely share knowledge with each other.
6. **Lack of willingness to change behaviour and mind-set.** In the changing world, when new challenges appears and more commitment required from society to address the needs the resource-poor and vulnerable groups - willingness and true commitments to change are key factors of progress

Common RAS needs across CAC countries:

- Low / undeveloped institutional mechanism for implementing agricultural extension services;
- Insufficient financial, institutional and policy support for sustaining extension system to promote innovations in agriculture;
- Absence and/or undeveloped capacity building mechanisms to support extension agents and service delivery organizations;
- Absence or inadequate regulative incentives for extension sector.

The integration of ICT in RAS would have following perspectives:

- fostering the ICT solutions focusing on providing reliable and affordable connectivity and integrating ICTs in rural development;
- demonstration and putting into practice approaches, good practices and the adoption of single platforms for effective and equitable use of ICTs for sustainable agriculture and rural development;
- creation and adaptation of data and information, good practices in local languages and contexts from reliable and trusted sources for use of farmers;
- promoting the use of ICTs to strengthen the resilience capacity of farmers and rural communities to mitigate and adapt the existing farming systems to the climate change, challenges caused by natural disasters; population growth, changes in demography, urbanization, economic crises and political courses.

Thank you!