

This report has been prepared in compliance with section 160, sub-section (2) of the 1997 constitution of the Republic of the Gambia and Section 13(e) of the National Audit Office Act 2015.

The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standard of Supreme Audit Institutions (ISSAI 3000-3999) on Performance Auditing.

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3 July 2024

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NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE OF THE GAMBIA

FOLLOW-UP PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

PROVISION OF FARM INPUTS (SEED & FERTILIZER) TO GROUNDNUT FARMERS

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE



JULY 2024



NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE

3 July 2024

In-Confidence

Ref: HA 14/142/01/ (134)

The Honorable Speaker
National Assembly
New National assembly Building
Reg. Pye Lane
Banjul

FOLLOW-UP PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT ON THE PROVISION OF FARM INPUTS (SEED & FERTILIZER) TO GROUNDNUT FARMERS BY THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

In accordance with Section 160, sub-section (2) of the 1997 Constitution of the Republic of The Gambia and Section 13(e) of the National Audit Office Act 2015, I have the privilege to present to you a Follow-up Performance Audit Report on the Provision of Farm Inputs (seed & fertilizer) to Groundnut Farmers by the Ministry of Agriculture.

The primary objective of this follow-up audit was to assess whether the recommendations were adequately addressed by the Ministry of Agriculture and provide feedback to government and the Parliament on the status of implementation of the audit recommendations.

Following a thorough examination, this report outlines key findings and recommendations aimed at enhancing the Provision of Farm Inputs (seed & fertilizer) to Groundnut Farmers by the Ministry of Agriculture.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the dedicated staff who conducted this audit, as well as the ministry of Agriculture for their invaluable support rendered to my team throughout the audit duration.

Modou Ceesay
AUDITOR GENERAL

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List of Acronyms

Abbreviation	Full meaning
AAS	Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer
CBG	Central Bank of The Gambia
CRR/N	Central River Region North
CRR/S	Central River Region South
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GAFFSP	Global Agriculture and Food Security Program
GGC	Gambia Groundnut Corporation
GIRAV	Gambia Integrated Rice and Aquaculture Value Chain Development Project
LRR	Lower River Region
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
NAO	National Audit Office
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institute
NBR	North Bank Region
RVCTP	Rice Value Chain Transformation Project
URR	Upper River Region
NPK	Nitrogen Phosphorus Potassium

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

The Constitution of The Republic of The Gambia (1997), Section 160 (2) (a) states that the Auditor General (AG) *“in the exercise of his or her functions under this constitution or any other law shall at all times carry out an economic, efficient and effective examination to satisfy himself or herself that public funds are spent in such manner as to reduce waste, eliminate inefficiency and maximize the benefits to be gained from the use of resources”*.

A performance audit is an audit of the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness with which the audited entity/entities use its resources to achieve its goals. This type of audit aims to promote better use of resources, improve operations, and better decision-making in reaching policy objectives set by Parliament. It is also within the mandate of the AG to follow up on previous findings, recommendations and the impact of the corrective actions taken by the audited entity/entities.

In 2021 the AG conducted a performance audit on the provision of farm inputs (seed and fertilizer) to groundnut farmers by the Ministry of Agriculture. The report was submitted to the National Assembly for discussion and was published on the National Audit Office (NAO) website (2022). A decision was made to follow up on the level of implementation of the recommendations made to the Ministry.

A follow-up audit was conducted to:

- Assess whether the recommendations were adequately addressed by the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Provide feedback to government and the Parliament on the status of implementation of the audit recommendations.

The following procedures or methodologies were employed:

I. Engagement with the Ministry of Agriculture

A template to facilitate a response on the level of implementation of the audit recommendations was sent to the Ministry on 11 August 2023. They responded on 7 November 2023, after extensive consultation with their departments.

II. Document Review

The following documents which were not provided during the audit were provided and reviewed by the audit team as part of documents review:

1. Fertilizer contract files of GGC
2. Fertilizer delivery notes of GGC from 2020-2023
3. Validated National Fertilizer Policy of the Gambia 2023-2032
4. Extension policy 2019
5. Shipping / Delivery manifest of GGC fertilizers

III. Interviews & focus group discussions

To clarify the actions taken and future planned actions, we had engagement with 92 individuals. These included farmers and key Ministry officers.

Appendix 1: The list of individuals interviewed

IV. Site visit / physical verification

We revisited all six (6) regions from the main study to establish the extent of the distribution of procured agricultural inputs (seed and fertilizers), and the challenges encountered in these areas. This helps us to corroborate the evidence obtained from the documents reviewed and interviews done for their validity and reliability. Physical observations of agricultural depots and mixed farming centers were also conducted to ascertain the extent and timeliness at which agricultural inputs were distributed.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Performance audit report followed up

The main results of the audit report on Provision of Farm Inputs (Seed & Fertilizer) to Groundnut Farmers and current status claimed by the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA):

AUDIT FINDING		
Late arrival of fertilizer		
CONCLUSION	RECOMMENDATION	CURRENT STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION CLAIMED BY THE MOA
Groundnut farmers across the country did not receive fertilizer on time during the period under audit. This was due to the absence of a fertilizer policy, delay in getting responses from key players and failure of suppliers to deliver the fertilizer as per the contract agreement.	The Ministry of Agriculture in consultation with relevant stakeholders should formulate a fertilizer policy that would guide the procurement and distribution of fertilizers to deports and farmers.	The Fertilizer Policy is produced and validated with the support of the Rice Value Chain Transformation Project (RVCTP) and all stakeholders were consulted. Though this has not yet been approved by the Parliament.
	GGC should engage the relevant stakeholders in the fertilizer procurement in the earliest possible time to prevent potential delays and to give adequate time to deal with such delay as they begin to show up. This would ensure that fertilizers are procured and made available to farmers in a timely manner.	Following the project restructuring, the fertilizer program, it is progressing with the contract signed with the industrial company; a calendar of delivery agreed; the MoU with Gambian Groundnut Cooperation (GGC) being finalized; dedicated account opened at Central Bank of The Gambia (CBG) and sub-accounts at Reliance and Financial Services and Supersonic to allow proximity with

		<p>farmers for direct payment to get the voucher from the bank or micro-financial institutions before getting the fertilizers; warehouses ready; and the digital platform developed to register the beneficiaries learning from the seed program to ensure targeting, transparency, and efficiency. As at July, project in contract with OCP company has completed the delivery of 5,000 metric tons of NPK, 5,000 Metric tons of 10:20:10 and 5,000 metric tons Urea to all the GGC depots country wide. A total of 9.0 million US Dollar has been paid to OCP company in respect of the 15,000metric tons of fertilizers.</p>
	<p>GGC should award contracts to suppliers that have the capacity to deliver fertilizer as per the contract agreement. Where a supplier failed to deliver as agreed, GGC should forfeited 10% of its performance bond as stated in their contract's files.</p>	<p>The 10% bond as stated in their contract's files is in use for defaulters.</p>
Late arrival of seeds		
<p>Seeds were not supplied on time during the period under audit to the farmers across the country defeating the purpose for which seeds were distributed. Most farmers used their own saved</p>	<p>The MOA should closely work with FAO to cut down the lead time of receiving certified seeds and put in place all the necessary logistic to ensure that these certified seeds are received and distributed to</p>	<p>No seed support from FAO these past three years; rice seeds are locally procured from a private investor, Marou Farm. GAFSP and GIRAV Projects procured seeds and fertilizer this year and all these came</p>

seeds which are low-yielding varieties and low productivity in both the local and international markets.	farmers in a timely manner.	and reached the farmers on time.
	Other options for farmers' access to certified seeds on time without entirely depending on the FAO should be explored.	Response not provided
Dysfunctional seed stores		
Most of the stores are dilapidated due to non-maintenance by the Ministry. Those that were functional lack the standard requirements such as pallets, seed bags and dis-infectable. In addition, the storage arrangements in few of the ones in use failed to be adhered to The standard storage arrangement of ensuring that seed lots are arranged in a way that allow a passage between piles of seed bags to facilitate control.	The Ministry of Agriculture should ensure that seed stores are restored and up to standard for effective storage of seeds.	Response not provided
	The Ministry should have maintenance plan for the seed stores which should be implemented and monitored.	The MOA does not still have maintenance plan for seed stores
Absence of recent comprehensive soil testing result		
Absence of comprehensive soil test result is due to inadequate working tools and substandard laboratories to conduct the test. This has led to GGC procuring fertilizers that are inappropriate for groundnut cultivation.	The MOA should support NARI with appropriate working tools to conduct accurate and appropriate soil testing required to know the nutrient content of different soils to be able to provide soil data to GGC which could be used to procure appropriate	An AA Server; which is a comprehensive soil testing Machine was commissioned. Soil fertility mapping done.

	fertilizers. This would curb the issue of over or under application of fertilizers.	
Limited level of sensitization about certified seed usage among groundnut farmers		
<p>The Ministry has failed to meet the demand for the required extension service delivery given the rising or increase number of farmers compare to service level delivery by the extension workers. Given the ratios of extension workers to farmers, it is not reasonable to think that these extension workers can effectively deliver on their functions i.e., sensitized and creation of required awareness campaigns and coaching farmers.</p>	<p>The Ministry of Agriculture should ensure that all groundnut farmers receive effective extension service delivery.</p> <p>This could be done by Collaborating with relevant stakeholders to create awareness regarding certified seed usage.</p>	<p>GGC and the beneficiaries/farmers are MoA's key stakeholders when it comes to the issue of fertilizer.</p>
	<p>Ensuring that effective monitoring systems by the extension workers are put in place, implemented, and monitored</p>	<p>The extension workers through the Farmer Field School Concept are able to monitor and disseminate research findings to prove farmers' ways.</p>
	<p>Ensuring that the current extension/farmer ratio is improved with a view of reaching the FAO recommended ratio of 1:500.</p>	<p>The Master Farmer concept used by the Ministry has been very effective in bridging the extension – farmer gap.</p>
Limited coordination between stakeholders involved in the fertilizer procurement.		
<p>There was limited stakeholders' coordination during the period under audit. Fertilizers procured by GGC were not tested by NARI before they were distributed to farmers.</p>	<p>GGC should put in place mechanisms to coordinate all the activities in the fertilizer Procurement and distribution processes. Relevant stakeholders should be contacted on time for the execution of their various responsibilities during the process.</p>	<p>Response not provided</p>

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Findings

The following were the main findings of the follow-up audit

3.1 Late arrival of inputs (seed & fertilizer)

3.1.1 Late arrival of fertilizer

The government should ensure that quality inputs (fertilizers) are made available to the farmers in a timely manner¹. Furthermore, interviews with Department of Agriculture, Regional Agricultural Directors, and groundnut farmers revealed that the ideal time for fertilizers to be available to farmers is in May as they should be applied on the farms two to three weeks after planting.

The MOA's response to this finding indicated that they have developed and validated the Fertilizer Policy with the support of the Rice Value Chain Transformation Project (RVCTP) and with input from all stakeholders. The Fertilizer Policy is awaiting parliamentary approval for its official endorsement and implementation. After a recent restructuring initiative, significant steps were made to advance the fertilizer program.

, such as:

- The signing of contracts with an industrial company;
- the establishment of a comprehensive delivery calendar;
- the finalization of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Gambian Groundnut Cooperation (GGC); and
- the establishment of dedicated accounts at the Central Bank of The Gambia (CBG) and also with affiliated financial services.

The Ministry of Agriculture indicated that to ensure commitment in promoting integrity of the fertilizer procurement process, a 10% performance bond, as detailed in the contractual agreements of GGC, was implemented to address any defaults by the suppliers of fertilizer. The Ministry requested all fertilizer dealers to have 10% performance bond as security in the event of default.

The Fertilizer Policy explicitly mentioned the MOA's commitment to ensuring the importation of fertilizer at the right time². However, the policy remains silent on

¹ Gambia National Development Plan 2018-2021

² National fertilizer policy of the Gambia 2023-2032 page 6 of 15 under specific policy objectives

specifying the particular month of the year or the rainy season that would be designated as the "required time" for fertilizer importation and distribution to farmers. A specific timeframe for importing fertilizers is not provided in the policy.

When we reviewed GGC's contract files for 2020, it was found that Fermagro delivered 5,500 metric tons of NPK 15:15:15 and 4,000 metric tons of NPK 6:20:10. However, there is no documentation indicating the actual delivery dates. As a result, we couldn't determine when these deliveries were made. The expected delivery date was July 21, 2020. This lack of clarity indicates a delay in the fertilizer supply for 2020.

In 2021, Zeine Enterprise delivered 10,000 metric tons of NPK 15-15-15 earlier than expected. On the other hand, Gach Global's delivery was 5 days late according to the contract, but it still arrived in May, which is the recommended time for fertilizer supply.

In 2022, deliveries from both Zeine Enterprise and Gach Global were delayed. Zeine Enterprise was 217 days late in delivering 7,000 metric tons of NPK 15-15-15. Gach Global was 52 days late in supplying 5,500 metric tons of NPK 6-20-10 as shown in Table 1 below.

Besides suppliers failing to delivered fertilizer on time, the GGC failed to implement the 10% performance bond provided in the fertilizer contract files, which is contrary to what is stated in their response.

Table 1: The number of days that the suppliers of GGC fertilizers were delayed, from 2020-2022

YEAR	SUPPLIER NAME	TYPE OF FERTILIZER	Metric tones	DATE CONTRACT WAS SIGNED	Expected date of delivery	DATE FERTILIZER WAS DELIVERED AT THE PORT (1 ST CONSIGNMENT) (bill of lading)	DATE FERTILIZER WAS DELIVERED AT Sarro) (delivery note)	DATE FERTILIZER WAS DELIVERED AT THE PORT (2 nd CONSIGNMENT)	No DAYS DELAYED
2020	Fermagro	NPK 15-15-15,	5,500	22/4/2020	21/7/2020	Not Presented for audit	Not Presented for audit	Not Presented for audit	Can't be determined
		NPK 6-20-10	4,000			Not Presented for audit	Not Presented for audit	Not Presented for audit	Can't be determined
2021	Zeine enterprise.	NPK 15-15-15	10,000	24/02/2021	24/06/2021 50days after date of contract	Not Presented for audit	25/05/2021	Not Presented for audit	0
	Gach global	NPK 6-20-10	7,000	24/02/2021	15/04/2021 50days after date of contract	Not Presented for audit	10/05/2021	Not Presented for audit	5
2022	Zeine ent.	NPK 15-15-15	7,000 (budgeted 10,000)	1/11/2021	2/2/2022	Not Presented for audit	04/09/2022	Not Presented for audit	217
	Gach global	NPK 6-20-10	5,500 (budgeted 7,000)	29/10/2021	27/01/2022 Within 90days	20/03/2022	20/03/2022	Not Presented for audit	52

Source: GGC contract files

Interviews with farmers in the regions indicated that in 2020, fertilizer was received as per table 2.

Table 2: Receipt of fertilizers by farmers in all the regions of the Gambia

Region	2020	2021	2022	2023	Remarks
NBR	August	August	August	June	Usually late as they prefer fertilizers to be available before planting so they can apply it 2-3 weeks after planting
CRR/S	July	July	July	July	
LRR	June	June	June	July	
CRR/N	July	July	July	July	
URR	July	July	July	June	
WCR	August	August	August	June	

Source: interview with farmers in all the six (6) regions from 8th -11th January 2024

Farmers interviewed at NBR noted that fertilizer is usually late, because they prefer it to be available before planting so that it can be applied 2-3 weeks after planting. In 2021 and 2022, the pattern was similar to 2020, with fertilizer delivered in the regions in June, July, and August. In 2023, there was a change in the pattern where delivery in NBR took place in June, in CRR/S, LRR, and CRR/N in July, and in URR and WCR in June. There is still no adherence to the May target.

3.1.2 Late arrival of seed

The primary goal of the national seed program is to ensure that certified seeds are adequate and available in time to farmers at appropriate locations³.

MOA's response was that, they did not receive seed support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) from 2020 to 2022. Rice seeds were locally procured from a private investor, Marou Farm. The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) and the Gambia Integrated Rice and Aquaculture Value Chain Development Project (GIRAV) procured seeds in 2023 and all these reached the farmers on time.

Interviews with the Regional Directors across the six (6) regions of The Gambia from 8 to 11 January 2023 revealed that in 2020 seeds was received in July and August, which was late. In 2021 and 2022, the URR stood out as an exception, receiving seeds notably earlier in April/May, while the remaining regions received their seed supply late in July. This deviation in timing suggested a strategic effort to align with optimal planting seasons in URR. In 2023, the trend continued with URR again receiving seeds in April, while CRR/N and WCR received their supplies in May. The rest of the regions, including LRR, CRR/S, and NBR, received their seed supply in June.

Table 3: The time when Regional Agricultural Directors received seeds for subsequent distribution to farmers

³ National seed policy under "PRIMARY GOAL OF THE NATIONAL SEED PROGRAMME "page 11

Region	2020	2021	2022	2023
NBR	No handing over note on this	No handing over note on this	No handing over note on this	June/July
CRR/S	July	July	July	June
LRR	July	July	July	June
CRR/N	July	No groundnut seed received	No handing over note on this	May/June
URR	August	April/May	April/May	April/May
WCR	July	July	July	May/June

Source: interview with farmers in all the six (6) regions from 8th -11th January 2024

3.2 Dysfunctional seed stores

Seed storage is the preservation of seeds under controlled environmental conditions that maintain seed viability for long periods⁴. Strategic intervention for seed security and emergency response in the national seed plan validated in 2018 stated that all village seed stores must be restored by the MOA. All seed storage facilities must have an appropriate temperature and humidity. They must be kept tidy for effective seed conservation. In addition, storage facilities must be disinfected regularly, seed bags placed on pallets and seed lots arranged in a way that allows a passage between piles of seed to facilitate control⁵.

During the main study, 21 of the 49 seed stores visited were functional, and 28 were dysfunctional. For the follow-up audit, the seed stores that were identified as functional were visited and one had changed to being dysfunctional

Of the 28 dysfunctional seed stores, 14 were randomly selected for the follow-up audit. All 14 remained in a dysfunctional state.

The primary cause of dysfunctionality in these seed stores was the absence of a maintenance plan by the MOA. Consequently, these facilities were left without necessary repairs or regular maintenance, leading to their continued deterioration.

The dysfunctional seed stores are visually represented in the accompanying image. The implications of these non-functional facilities are significant, as farmers are compelled to store seeds in suboptimal conditions. Issues such as irregular disinfection, the absence of standard pallets, and inappropriate temperature and humidity levels prevail in these storage spaces, exposing the stored seeds to the risks of insect and rodent attacks, potentially impacting their germination.

⁴ https://croptgenebank.sgrp.cgiar.org/images/file/procedures/chapter_6_2seedstorage_genebankmanual8.pdf

⁵ Seed Regulation March 2016, CHAPTER XXII: STORAGE

Picture 1: The condition of the seed stores visited during the follow-up audit



Source: Picture taken by the audit team from 8 -11 January 2024 across the six regions

3.3 Absence of recent comprehensive soil testing result

Based on the principle of Integrated Plant Nutrition Systems, soil fertility research needs to explore all possible sources of plant nutrients in an integrated manner appropriate to each farming situation⁶.

The MOA indicated that an Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer (AA Server), which is a comprehensive soil testing machine, was commissioned and soil fertility mapping was done.

Physical verification at the National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI) soil testing lab confirmed that in 2022, the FAO procured an AA Server machine, which was installed at the NARI head office. The MOA also acquired an AA Server in 2022 but its installation was delayed as a designated space needed preparation in Sapu at CRR/S. The AA Server obtained by FAO has a higher capacity compared to the one acquired by the MOA. At the time of our verification, neither of these AA Servers was operational due to limited technical capacity among NARI personnel. Despite FAO organizing a three-day training session, NARI reported that this duration was insufficient to adequately equip the staff with the necessary skills to operate such sophisticated machinery, ultimately defeating the intended purpose behind the procurement of these advanced servers.

The proof requested from NARI for the training activities included in their budget from 2021 was not provided. It is imperative for NARI to expedite adequate training and support to ensure the proper functioning of this advanced equipment.

NARI officials also confirmed that they have not conducted soil fertility mapping in the past 30 years. The last soil fertility mapping was done in 1990 under the GAAP project. According to NARI, they are in the process of setting up essential equipment, including the installation of the AA server machine, to initiate soil fertility mapping activities as part of their agricultural research endeavors. This crucial step will facilitate the accurate assessment and spatial analysis of soil properties for informed decision-making in agricultural practices and land management.

They are trying to establish the necessary equipment in order to start the soil fertility mapping which includes the installation of the AA server machine.

⁶ Research Master Plan page 166

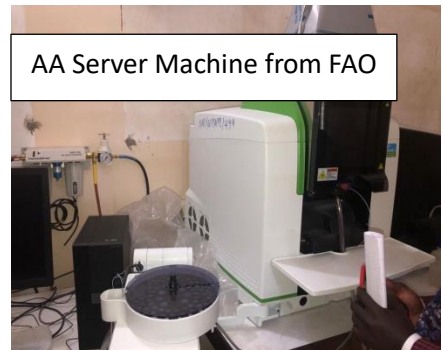
Picture 2: The AA server machines procured by FAO and MOA



AA Server Machine from MOA unpackage



AA Server Machine from MOA in a package



AA Server Machine from FAO



Source: Picture taken by the audit team 21st November 2023

3.4 Limited level of sensitization with regards to certified seed usage among groundnut farmers

Government should support the private sector marketing effort with appropriate extension and promotional programs such as farmer field visits and seed fairs to enhance farmers' seed utilization. This effort will involve advertisement on recommended and available varieties on radio, television, and newspapers etc. with the aim of enhancing seed demand levels which are needed for enhancing investments in the seed sector⁷. In addition, the National Agricultural Extension Policy stated that the Department of Agriculture was established in The Gambia to provide extension services to groundnut farmers to improve the quality and quantity of the groundnut cultivated for export⁸.

The MOA indicated that they have adopted the farmer field school and the master farmer concept to monitor and disseminate research findings to ascertain farmers' method and bridge the extension /farmer gap.

During our site visit, we found that the MOA, through extension workers, employs the farmer field school and master farmer concept. However, this approach primarily targets women in vegetable gardening, not groundnut production. Our interviews with regional directors and extension workers revealed that they currently monitor and sensitize farmers on the use of certified seeds. Despite these efforts, there is room for improvement in the extension services, particularly in addressing the groundnut production aspect and enhancing the overall effectiveness of certified seeds usage.

Interviews with sixty-seven (67) groundnut farmers revealed that, 94% lacked knowledge about the importance of using certified seeds and had not received any sensitization on it. Only 6% reported having received sensitization on certified seeds. Indicating limited improvement in this area as compared to the main audit. Ineffective sensitization efforts by regional directors and extension workers have led to many groundnut farmers using their own saved seeds, which are of low quality and consist of seeds from different varieties with varying maturity dates compared to certified seeds.

Table 4: Level of sensitization about certified seeds usage.

Region	Names of villages	Farmers sensitize on Certified Seeds	Extension workers conducting Sensitization	Regional Directors conducting Sensitization
NBR	Munyagen	No	No	Yes
	Kuntair	No	No	
	Makka Farafenni	Yes	yes	

⁷ National Seed policy under extension promotion 12.2.1

⁸ National Agricultural Extension Policy.

	Alkali Kunda	No	No	
	NJawara	No	No	
	Kerewan	No	No	
CRR/N	Njau	Yes	No	No
	Kerewan sitokoto	No	No	
CRR/S	Sambang Wollof	No	No	Yes
URR	Nawdeh	No	No	Yes
	Sutukoba	Yes	Yes	
LRR	Kiang Karantaba	No	Yes	Yes
WCR	Tambakunda	No	Yes	Yes
	Wassadu	No	Yes	
	Nyofelleh	No	No	

Source: Discussions with Regional Directors and Extension workers 8th -11th January 2024

Limited usage of certified seeds among groundnut farmers was attributed to the insufficient level of sensitization by extension workers, reflecting the challenges arising from a higher number of farmers compared to the limited number of extension workers. Our interviews revealed that the extension worker/farmer ratios exceed the FAO recommended ratio of 1:500 in most of the visited regions⁹.

Table 5: Farmer/extension ratio across the regions

Region	Names of villages	Extension farmer ratio
NBR	Farafenni	1:500 or 9 villages
CRR/N	Njau	16 villages
	Kerewan sitokoto	15 villages
CRR/S	Sambang Wollof	1:1000
URR	Naudeh	1:3000 or 60 villages
	Sutukoba	1:1500
LRR	Kiang Karantaba	1:2000
WCR	Tambakunda	1:1000
	Wassadu	1:500 or 7 villages
	Nyofelleh	1:2000 or 5 villages

Source: Discussions with Regional Directors and Extension workers 8 -11 January 2024.

3.4.1 No written monitoring schedule by extension workers

Regional Directors and extension workers interviewed by the audit team, admitted to not having a written monitoring schedule for farmer visits, despite claiming to conduct

⁹ National Extension Policy page 8.

monitoring visits. The lack of a written monitoring schedule has led to irregular monitoring of extension workers and ineffective delivery of extension services to farmers.

Table 6: Extension workers with written monitoring schedule and extension/farmer ratio.

Region	Names of villages	Written monitoring schedules
NBR	Farafenni	No
CRR/N	Njau	No
	Kerewan sitokoto	No
CRR/S	Sambang Wollof	No
URR	Nawdeh	No
	Sutukoba	No
LRR	Kiang Karantaba	No
WCR	Tambakunda	No
	Wassadu	No
	Nyofelleh	No

Source: Discussions with extension workers 8 -11 January 2024.

Table 7: Regional Directors with written monitoring schedule.

Region	Conduct Monitoring	Written monitoring schedules
NBR	Yes	No
CRR/N	Yes	No
CRR/S	Yes	No
URR	Yes	No
LRR	Yes	No
WCR	Yes	No

Source: Discussions with Regional Directors 8 -11 January 2024.

3.5 Limited coordination between stakeholders involved in the fertilizer procurement.

NARI as the supreme research institute of the Gambia should conduct research (soil test analysis) on land devoted to agriculture production and recommend to GGC upon request the appropriate type of fertilizer to procure. In addition, GGC should also request data from the planning service on the area of land under cultivation, to determine the quantity of fertilizer to procure based on the recommended fertilizer application rate per hectare. After procurement, GGC should inform NARI to test the fertilizers procured before distribution are finally made to farmers¹⁰ .

The MOA noted that they have strengthened the level of coordination between stakeholders by engaging them through the Agriculture and Natural Resources policy group (ANRS) in the development and validation of a fertilizer policy. Despite this effort the fertilizer sector in the country remains uncoordinated¹¹. The MOA stated that the fertilizer procurement process is now the responsibility of GGC, centrally.

The site visit to the regions and interviews with regional directors revealed that coordination between the stakeholders involved in the fertilizer procurement process is still weak. Only two out of the six regional directors interviewed were consulted to take part in the development and validation of the fertilizer policy, which includes the fertilizer procurement process. Our interview with NARI revealed that they are still not involved in the fertilizer procurement process. They are not consulted by GGC to test the fertilizers procured before distribution to farmers. The lack of testing poses a risk of applying the wrong types of fertilizer that could affect both plant growth and productivity.

Table 8: Stakeholder engagement with regards to the Fertilizer Policy

Region	Designation	Stakeholders Involve in Validating the Fertilizer Policy (Yes /No)
NBR	Regional Director	No
CRR/N	Acting Regional Director	Yes
CRR/S	Regional Director	Yes
URR	Acting Director	No
LRR	Acting Director	No
WCR	Acting Director	No

Source: Discussions with Regional Directors 8 -11 January 2024.

¹⁰ Meeting with NARI & MOA officials.

¹¹ Natil Fertilizer Policy of the Gambia 2023 to 2032 validated page 3.

4.0 Conclusion

The follow-up audit on the provision of farm inputs to groundnut farmers by the Ministry of Agriculture reveals a mixed bag of progress and persisting challenges. While efforts have been made to address some issues, such as the development of a fertilizer policy and the procurement of seeds and fertilizers, significant shortcomings persist, including dysfunctional seed stores, limited coordination among stakeholders, and inadequate sensitization efforts regarding certified seed usage. Overall, sustained efforts and improved coordination among stakeholders are essential to ensure timely provision of quality inputs and enhance agricultural productivity in The Gambia. Hence this would require the NAO to do another follow up audit on this in the future.

Appendix 1: The list of individuals interviewed

Rank/Designation	Region	Number of interviewees
Regional Directorates	NBR	1
	CRR/N	3
	URR	3
	CRR/S	1
	LRR	3
	WRC	1
Sub Total		12
Depot Managers	NBR	1
	CRR/N	1
	CRR/S	1
	LRR	1
Sub Total		4
District Extension Workers	NBR	1
	CRR/N	1
	CRR/S	0
	LRR	1
	WCR	1
	URR	1
Sub Total		5
Extension Workers	CRR/N	2
	WCR	2
Sub Total		4
Farmers	NBR	9
	CRR/N	44
	CRR/S	2
	LRR	2

	WCR	6
	URR	4
Sub Total		67
Grand Total		92

Source: regional trek 8-11 January 2024