



# Final Report

The Certification and Accreditation Legal Framework for Agriculture Extension Advisory Services (AEAS) and Business Development Services (BDS) Providers in Uganda

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## Executive Summary

This document presents a comprehensive national certification and accreditation legal framework for Agricultural Extension Advisory Services (AEAS) and Business Development Service Providers (BDSPs) in Uganda. The framework establishes structured processes for registration, certification, and accreditation to address persistent challenges in service quality, market trust, and sustainability across Uganda's agricultural sector.

### Context and Rationale

Agriculture serves as a cornerstone of Uganda's economy, contributing significantly to GDP and employment. However, the sector faces substantial challenges in ensuring quality, reliability, and consistency of services from diverse BDS providers. Smallholder farmers and agribusinesses struggle with inconsistent service delivery, information asymmetries, and inefficient resource allocation in a fragmented and under-regulated environment. The absence of standardized qualification systems impedes both domestic competitiveness and international market access.

### Framework Structure and Standards

The framework adopts a hierarchical approach anchored on three key pillars: professional registration through sector-specific associations, certification by Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs), and accreditation by Uganda National Accreditation Services (UGANAS). This structure is complemented by coordination with the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) and relevant government agencies. The framework is built upon internationally recognized standards, including ISO/IEC 17011 for accreditation bodies, ISO/IEC 17024 for personnel certification, and ISO 9001 for quality management systems—ensuring both local relevance and global credibility.

### Evidence-Based Development

The framework anchors itself in specific legislation that clearly defines regulatory authority, similar to Uganda's successful veterinary and surveying models. The framework establishes a clear division between regulatory bodies focusing on registration and enforcement, while professional associations concentrate on member development and advocacy. Regulatory boards include both ministerial appointments and recommendations from professional associations to ensure balanced governance.

The system incorporates different levels of practitioners with differentiated registration requirements based on qualifications, implementing mandatory post-graduation training and apprenticeship programs to ensure quality service delivery. Digital platforms connect certified BDSPs with clients and maintain accessible directories, while partnerships between government agencies, international organizations, and private sector entities provide comprehensive support. Regional branches ensure nationwide coverage and adaptation to local needs.

The framework maintains connections with international professional bodies to facilitate recognition and knowledge transfer while providing continuing professional development, networking opportunities, and professional support services through associations. It aligns with existing agricultural development plans, focuses on sector-specific needs, and establishes quality standards, formal registration procedures, and regular monitoring mechanisms to ensure consistent service quality.

The framework also draws on twelve key lessons from established regulatory models within Uganda and other countries:

1. **Legal Foundation:** Anchoring the framework in specific legislation that clearly defines regulatory authority, similar to Uganda's successful veterinary and surveying models
2. **Complementary Roles:** Establishing clear division between regulatory bodies (focusing on registration and enforcement) and professional associations (focusing on member development and advocacy)
3. **Stakeholder Representation:** Ensuring regulatory boards include both ministerial appointments and recommendations from professional associations
4. **Tiered Qualification System:** Incorporating different levels of practitioners with differentiated registration requirements based on qualifications
5. **Structured Professional Development:** Implementing mandatory post-graduation training and apprenticeship requirements
6. **Technology Integration:** Developing digital platforms to connect certified BDSPs with clients and maintain digital directories
7. **Multi-stakeholder Collaboration:** Fostering partnerships between government agencies, international organizations, and private sector entities
8. **Regional Network Development:** Establishing regional branches to ensure nationwide coverage and adaptation to local needs
9. **International Standards Alignment:** Maintaining connections with international professional bodies to facilitate recognition and knowledge transfer
10. **Comprehensive Association Services:** Providing continuing professional development, networking opportunities, and professional support services
11. **Sector-Specific Adaptation:** Aligning with existing agricultural development plans and focusing on sector-specific needs
12. **Clear Certification Process:** Establishing quality standards, formal registration procedures, and regular monitoring mechanisms

### Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities

The framework delineates roles for key stakeholders. Government Ministries (MAAIF, MTIC, MoFPED) provide strategic direction, policy support, and legislative backing. UGANAS serves as the central authority for accrediting conformity assessment bodies (CABs). Professional associations deliver continuing professional development (CPD) and self-regulation mechanisms. Development partners offer technical assistance, financial resources, and capacity-building support, while educational institutions support the pipeline of qualified professionals for the sector.

### Implementation Roadmap

The implementation strategy is structured in phases spanning several years. In the short term (0-12 months), efforts will focus on supporting UNBS in finalizing BDS standards, creating a comprehensive database of existing providers, establishing a national BDSP association under MTIC leadership, securing development partner funding for policy implementation, launching pilot projects, supporting integration of conformity assessment requirements into legislation, and leveraging ongoing PSFU programs.

Medium-term actions (1-3 years) include developing a dedicated project with UGANAS to enhance the certification framework and establishing fully functional Conformity Assessment Bodies with clear governance structures. Long-term implementation (3-5 years) will involve comprehensive certification requirements through CABs, including compliance monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure ongoing quality.

### **Financial Sustainability and Technology Integration**

A tiered fee structure and strategic public-private partnerships will ensure the financial sustainability of the accreditation system, supporting the transition from donor-dependent models to commercially sustainable, market-driven systems. Digital platforms will enhance operational efficiency through real-time monitoring, assessment tools, and knowledge sharing, making information more accessible to all stakeholders and improving service delivery.

### **Capacity Building and Quality Assurance**

The framework emphasizes tailored training programs, mentorship schemes, and continuous professional development opportunities for service providers. A robust monitoring and evaluation system will track provider performance through periodic assessments, while public accountability mechanisms will ensure consistent quality standards across the sector. This approach creates a culture of continuous improvement and excellence.

### **Conclusion**

This national certification and accreditation framework establishes a clear, legally grounded pathway for professionalizing Agricultural Extension Advisory Services and Business Development Services in Uganda. By harmonizing standards, promoting professionalism, and fostering continuous improvement, the framework creates a modern, sustainable service ecosystem that supports agricultural transformation and economic development. Through robust stakeholder engagement, a coalition of the willing and adherence to internationally recognised standards, this strategic blueprint will strengthen both agricultural and non-agricultural value chains, enhancing service delivery and contributing to Uganda's broader development objectives.

## List of Acronyms

AAS - Agricultural Advisory Services  
ACBDSP - Association of Certified BDS Providers in Nigeria  
AEAS - Agricultural Extension Advisory Services  
AES - Agricultural Extension Services  
AESB - Agricultural Extension Services Bill  
AGRA - Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa  
AMEA - Agribusiness Market Ecosystem Alliance  
AMI - Africa Management Institute  
ATI - Agricultural Training Institute  
BD - Business Development  
BDS - Business Development Services  
BDSP - Business Development Service Provider  
BDSPN - Association of Certified Business Development Service Providers of Nigeria  
BMO - Business Membership Organization  
CAB - Conformity Assessment Body  
CPD - Continuing Professional Development  
DP - Development Partner  
EPRC - Economic Policy Research Centre  
EthioBDS - Ethiopian Business Development Services  
EU - European Union  
EUg – Enterprise Uganda  
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization  
FY – Financial Year  
GDP - Gross Domestic Product  
GIZ - Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit  
GOU – Government of Uganda  
IEC - International Electrotechnical Commission  
IFAD - International Fund for Agricultural Development  
IFC - International Finance Corporation  
IFPRI - International Food Policy Research Institute  
ILO - International Labor Organization  
ISO - International Organization for Standardization  
ISU - Institute of Surveyors of Uganda  
KENAS - Kenya Accreditation Service  
LDC - Law Development Centre  
MAAIF - Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries  
MBA - Master of Business Administration  
MCF - Master Card Foundation  
MoFPED - Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development  
MSME - Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise  
MSME - Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise  
MTIC - Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives  
NCHE - National Council for Higher Education  
NDP - National Development Plan  
NGO - Non-Governmental Organization  
NOGAMU - National Organic Agricultural Movement of Uganda  
OIE - World Organisation for Animal Health  
OPM - Office of the Prime Minister  
PSFU - Private Sector Foundation Uganda

RIA - Regulatory Impact Assessment  
SACC - Savings and Credit Cooperative  
SDM - Service Delivery Model  
SIYB - Start and Improve Your Business  
SME - Small and Medium Enterprise  
SMEDAN - Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria  
SNV - Netherlands Development Organisation  
SRB - Surveyors Registration Board  
TGCU – The Grain Council of Uganda  
TWG - Technical Working Group  
UBOS - Uganda Bureau of Statistics  
UFAAS - Uganda Forum for Agriculture Advisory Services  
UGANAS - Uganda National Accreditation Services  
UNBS - Uganda National Bureau of Standards  
UNDP - United Nations Development Programme  
UNFFE - Uganda National Farmers Federation  
USAID - United States Agency for International Development  
USSIA - Uganda Small Scale Industries Association  
UVA - Uganda Veterinary Association  
UVB - Uganda Veterinary Board  
WB - World Bank

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## Glossary of Key Terms

**Accreditation of conformity assessment bodies (CABs):** Process by which an authoritative body formally recognizes that an organization is competent to perform specific conformity assessment tasks according to international standards (ISO/IEC, 2017).

**Agribusiness Market Ecosystem:** Network of interconnected actors, institutions, and processes that facilitate agricultural production, processing, distribution, and consumption within a specific market environment (FAO, 2020).

**Agriculture Extension Advisory Services (AEAS):** Educational and communication services that assist farmers in improving agricultural methods, increasing production efficiency, and enhancing farm income through agronomy knowledge transfer and skill development (Anderson, 2007).

**Alliance:** Formal agreement between two or more organizations to collaborate toward common objectives while maintaining separate identities, often sharing resources, risks, and rewards (Gulati & Singh, 1998).

**Business Development Services (BDS):** Non-financial services that improve business performance, market access, and competitiveness through training, consultancy, marketing assistance, and technology access (Committee of Donor Agencies, 2001).

**Certification of professionals:** A formal process that validates an individual's qualifications, skills, and knowledge in a specific professional field against established industry standards (Kleiner & Krueger, 2013).

**Conformity assessment bodies (CABs):** Organizations that perform conformity assessment services including testing, inspection, and certification to evaluate whether products, services, or systems meet specified requirements or standards (ISO/IEC, 2020).

**ISO 9001:** International standard that specifies requirements for a quality management system, helping organizations demonstrate their ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and regulatory requirements (ISO, 2015).

**ISO 17011:2017:** Standard specifying requirements for accreditation bodies assessing and accrediting conformity assessment bodies, ensuring their competence, consistency, and impartiality (ISO/IEC, 2017).

**ISO 17024:2012:** Standard establishing requirements for bodies certifying persons against specific requirements, promoting global acceptance of certified professional competence (ISO/IEC, 2012).

**ISO/IEC 17021-1:2025:** Updated standard that specifies requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems, ensuring impartiality, competence, and consistency (ISO/IEC, 2025).

**ISO 21001:2018:** Standard for educational organizations that specifies requirements for management systems to enhance learner satisfaction through effective educational processes (ISO, 2018).

**Multistakeholder processes:** Collaborative approaches that bring together diverse actors from different sectors to participate in dialogue, decision-making, and implementation of solutions to complex problems (Hemmati, 2002).

**Professional Apex organisations:** Umbrella bodies that represent, coordinate, and advocate for the interests of professional associations or organizations within a specific sector or industry (World Bank, 2012).

**Why ISO/IEC 17024 is Critical for the Development of an Efficient Business Ecosystem?** ISO/IEC 17024 is essential for creating an efficient business ecosystem as it establishes a global quality certification framework. Recognised by various government agencies for personnel certification in public health, food safety, and other critical areas, it fosters transparency and interoperability. Emphasising a global standard, it supports the professional development of skills, paralleling historical innovations driven by quality standards.

## 1. Introduction and Context

### 1.1 Background and Purpose

Agriculture remains the main thrust of Uganda's economic growth and is among the key sectors highlighted in the Uganda Vision 2040 to greatly contribute to wealth and employment creation. According to the recently concluded Agricultural Sector Status Report (May 2023), the sector contributed 24.1% to the national GDP and continues to employ over 70% of Uganda's population directly or indirectly. In absolute terms, the GDP of the agriculture sector increased from UGX 35,360 billion in the FY 2020/21 to UGX 39,152 billion in the FY 2021/22. The report further indicated that the Agricultural sector grew by 4.4% in the FY 2021/22 as compared to 4.3% in the FY 2020/21. The value of Agricultural exports registered a tremendous growth of 24 per cent from USD 1,678 million in FY 2020/21 to USD 2,085 million in FY 2021/22, thereby contributing 58% to the total exports in the FY 2021/22 compared to 33% in FY 2020/21. The Government of Uganda's newly concluded National Development Plan (NDP IV) 2025/26 – 2029/30 commits to aggressively invest in Agriculture as a strategy to increase the country's competitiveness.

GOU will (a) Continue to invest in increasing agricultural production and productivity, (b) Improve post-harvest handling and storage of agricultural products, (c) Increase Agro-processing and value addition, (d) Increase market access and competitiveness of agricultural products in domestic and international markets, (e) Increase the mobilization, access, and utilization of agricultural finance and (f) Strengthen agriculture sector institutional capacities for Agro-industrialization. Part of the GOU strategy to achieve these commitments is to extend low-cost credit to commercial farmers to increase production and the full implementation of the Parish Development Model (PDM) to support production/productivity for smallholder farmers to elevate them to the money economy. One of the key nuggets to achieving success in these commitments within the sector is to ensure functional, well-streamlined and professional agricultural extension services and Agri-Business Development services (BDS).

Relatedly, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) assessment report (2022) indicated that Uganda's Private Sector is comprised of over 90% Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), the majority of which are informal enterprises. Such enterprises are characterized by weak business management systems and small unsustainable operations, resulting in a weak Private Sector. Despite the high MSME start-up rates, they are equally synonymous with high mortality rates. Most of the start-ups do not last more than two years. Additionally, very few MSMEs operate with internationally recognized certification, due to low levels of technology uptake and limited innovations, which affects their ability to improve product quality. Furthermore, they are plagued with inadequate entrepreneurial abilities, low-skilled labour, and limited access to capital. These challenges apply to both Agricultural and non-agricultural MSMEs. The third National Development Plan (NDP III)'s Private Sector Development Program (PSDP) recognized that the delivery of Business Development Services (BDS) in Uganda is critical for Private Sector Development, but this has remained uncoordinated and fragmented. Risks of duplication abound as different Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and development projects offer some form of BDS support to MSMEs. The delivery of BDS has also not followed any standards, which limits the consistency and impact of the services provided by the different actors.

To address the highlighted challenges above, the GOU has made efforts towards streamlining the delivery of Agricultural Extension Advisory Services (AEAS) and BDS in Uganda which

require both the state and non-state actors to build on. The National Business Development Services (BDS) Framework, developed by the Ministry of Finance in 2022, aims to strengthen the organizational and institutional capacity of the Private Sector and enable mass access to BDS across the country. Also, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), to implement the National Agriculture Extension Policy (2016) developed the Agricultural Extension Guidelines, the Code of Conduct for Agriculture Extension and Advisory Service Providers (AESAPs) and a Registration Guide for the AEASPs in 2019, all aimed at establishing a high quality, well-coordinated and harmonized pluralistic agricultural extension delivery system that would promote professionalism, accountability and ethical conduct among the actors for increased efficiency and effectiveness of the agricultural extension system and sustainable development.

MAAIF and interested non-state actors are currently pursuing the development of the Agricultural Extension Services Bill, which, if enacted into law, will provide the long-awaited regulation, enforcement and implementation of the Extension Policy, Strategy and all attendant guidelines developed by MAAIF. Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS), under the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC), through a consultative process since 2022, has developed two BDS standards on delivery of BDS and building internal capacity which are still undergoing stakeholder review and feedback. MTIC has additionally embarked on the process of formulation of the BDS Policy, which process is at the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) stage.

All the above interventions demonstrate the level of appreciation and commitment by the GOU to harmonize and mainstream delivery of Agricultural extension and Agri-BDS to beneficiaries. The support of development partners will be a critical catalyst towards achieving the set targets in a shorter period.

## 1.2 The Scope of Assessment

Given the assignment duration of one month, the team focused the assessment to enable the development of a practical and sustainable accreditation framework for Agri-BDS providers in Uganda, with evidence-based accreditation mechanisms reflecting best practice and local context – stakeholder buy-in, clear incentive structures, innovation and continuous improvement, among others. To get this information, the team narrowed the research to address the following study questions:

- What are the most suitable Accreditation approaches/mechanisms for AEAS providers, and is there evidence that these have worked in other contexts? This entailed benchmarking against existing similar mechanisms and other professional bodies;
- Would there be sufficient incentives for key stakeholders (government, BDS providers, Agri-SMEs/FOs and donors) to use the accreditation mechanism(s) to find AEAS providers for their work?
- Would the proposed approaches/mechanisms incentivise AEAS providers to improve the quality of their service and find innovative ways to scale up services at an affordable cost?
- What is the proposed business model for the accreditation approaches/mechanisms?
- Can the approaches/mechanisms be sustained? Where should it be hosted?

### 1.3 Methodology and Approach

To arrive at the proposed accreditation framework, the team carried out several activities, in consultation with key stakeholders in a co-creation manner to optimize local knowledge and experience, while also bringing into the process international good practice and lessons.

The research methodology for developing a comprehensive Agricultural Business Development Services (Agri-BDS) Providers' accreditation framework in Uganda employed a systematic four-phase approach that combined rigorous literature review with extensive stakeholder consultation. The initial phase encompassed a comprehensive review of existing accreditation frameworks both within Uganda and internationally, analysing approaches used by various professional bodies to identify best practices and lessons learned. This foundation was followed by bilateral consultations through online and physical meetings with key stakeholders across the agricultural sector, including government agencies such as UGANAS and UVB, active BDS providers, donor organisations, and professional bodies like UNBS, Uganda Grain Council, and HortiFresh Association Uganda Limited. The methodology also incorporated engagement with Agricultural SMEs and Farmer Organizations to ensure their perspectives were captured in the framework design.

The third phase featured intensive field research in Uganda, involving face-to-face key informant interviews with crucial institutions including AMEA LN, UFAAS, and MAAIF's Directorate of Agricultural Extension Services. Focus group discussions with AEAS and BDS providers and selected members of the AEAS Technical Working Group (TWG) complemented these interviews, allowing for in-depth exploration of key research areas: evidence-based accreditation mechanisms, stakeholder buy-in structures, quality improvement processes, sustainable business models, and implementation considerations. A full list of stakeholders that were consulted in this exercise is included in **Annex 1** below.

The final phase focused on framework development and validation through a stakeholder workshop that took place in the Hotel Africana in Kampala on March 6, 2025, ensuring broad acceptance of the proposed framework before refinement and final report preparation. This comprehensive methodology enabled the development of a practical, sustainable, and contextually appropriate accreditation framework that enhanced the capacity and quality of service delivery for AEAS and BDS Providers in Uganda.

## 2. Uganda BDS Provision in the Agriculture Sector

### 2.1 Current Landscape and Market Assessment

The current Agri-business landscape in Uganda is characterized by sporadic interventions due to lack of a regulatory framework that would guide and enforce compliance to standards and best practices. Several actors in the ecosystem have implemented several programs aligned with the professionalization of BDS and private-sector agricultural extension.

In 2013, the International Labor Organization in Uganda (ILO) initiated a training program - Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB), for Business Development Service Providers (BDSPs) to offer entrepreneurship skills, mentorship and coaching to youth and potential or existing entrepreneurs across all 5 regions of West Nile, Central, Western, Eastern, and Northern regions of Uganda. In 2014, the ILO trainees were supported to form a member-based organization composed of ILO-certified and Licensed Master Trainers and Trainers, which is legally registered as a non-profit making organization under the laws of Uganda. The

association currently boasts over 300 certified ILO Master Trainers, Lead Trainers, and Trainers in the network. These trainers are, however, not recognized by the GOU due to a non-existent regulatory framework.

Similarly, professionals under the Agricultural Extension Advisory services are currently organised under one platform – The Uganda Forum for Agriculture Advisory Services (UFAAS). The platform is well-recognised in the industry. The Forum, with a membership of over 300 subscribers, brings together a broad range of actors in AEAS from all sectors, which include the public sector, Academia, Private sector, Civil Society, Farmer Organizations, Donor Community and Media in the country. Launched in May 2011, UFAAS aims to improve the overall provision of agricultural advisory services in Uganda through coordination and harmonization of AAS. A key role of UFAAS is to increase the overall investment in agricultural advisory services in Uganda and its integration with research and training.

UFAAS also takes on as its Mission to promote an effective, efficient and innovative AAS system through advocacy, capacity building, information sharing and increased professional development among AAS actors in Uganda. The key objectives of the forum are: (i) establishing and sustaining an effective platform for AAS in Uganda, (ii) promoting professional interactions, information sharing and networking among AAS actors, (iii) strengthening capacity of the Uganda AAS stakeholders to provide innovative and client-oriented services, (iv) promoting professionalism, and ethical conduct in AAS systems, and (v) lobbying for conducive organization and national policies for AAS.

Uganda's agricultural sector stands at a critical crossroads. As the backbone of the nation's economy, agriculture employs approximately 70% of the population and contributes nearly 24% to the GDP (UBOS, 2023). Yet, despite its significance, the sector remains largely underdeveloped, characterized by low productivity, limited value addition, and restricted market access—particularly for agri-MSMEs including smallholder farmers who constitute the majority of agricultural producers.

Business Development Services (BDS) emerged in the late 1990s as a vital support mechanism to address these challenges. These services encompass a range of non-financial interventions designed to enhance business performance, access to markets, and competitive capacity. In Uganda's agricultural context, BDS provision includes training in agricultural techniques, business management, market linkages, quality assurance, certification, and technology adoption.

The current BDS landscape in Uganda's agricultural sector reveals a fragmented market with significant supply-demand mismatches. According to a 2023 assessment by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), while over 200 organizations claim to provide agricultural BDS in Uganda, only 35% demonstrate a measurable impact on farmer productivity and market access. This disparity signals deep structural issues within the BDS ecosystem.

International organisations and large NGOs, including the EU, MCF, EKN, AGRA, GiZ, TechnoServe, SNV, Trias, Agriterra, Rikolto, and Mercy Corps, serve as the primary funders of Business Development Services (BDS) in the agriculture sector in Uganda. These entities typically focus their interventions on organised farmer organisations or micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) with limited capacity and resources. This targeted approach

addresses a critical market failure in agricultural development, as MSMEs demonstrate a very low willingness to pay for such services despite their potential benefits (Poulton, C., Dorward, A., & Kydd, J. (2010). Recent studies by the World Bank (2023) suggest this reluctance stems from uncertainty about return on investment, information asymmetry, and cash flow constraints rather than a lack of perceived value. According to FAO data (2024), donor-funded BDS programs that gradually transition to partial cost-recovery models show improved sustainability, with client retention rates increasing by 37% when MSMEs contribute even nominal fees toward services received (Devaux, A., & Milder, B. (2022).

Market segmentation reveals two tiers of BDS providers operating in Uganda's agricultural space:

1. **Tier 1: Local NGOs and Private Consultants** – These mid-level providers, like Enterprise Uganda (EUg), African Management Institute (AMI), ILO-trained BDS Provider's Network, Goldstone and Shona, offer more accessible services but struggle with the harmonisation of BDS service delivery models (SDM), consistency in quality of BDS and specialisation. A 2022 FAO study found that only 22% of local BDS providers in Uganda's agricultural sector maintain standardised methodologies or quality assurance systems.
2. **Tier 2: Community-Based Organizations and Informal Providers** – These grassroots actors, often trained by international organisations and large NGOs, private consultants and PSFU, or through learning by doing, offer highly accessible but often technically limited services. While they demonstrate strong contextual understanding, their impact remains constrained by capacity limitations.

Market dynamics reveal critical inefficiencies. Demand-side challenges include agri-MSMEs including smallholder farmers' limited awareness of available services, inability to articulate specific needs, and reluctance to pay for intangible services. On the supply side, providers struggle with inadequate technical capacity, poor market orientation, and unsustainable business models that rely heavily on donor funding (USAID Feed the Future, 2023).

The financial sustainability of agricultural BDS provision presents perhaps the most significant challenge. A 2023 study by the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) found that less than 18% of BDS providers in Uganda's agricultural sector operate financially sustainable models independent of donor support. This dependency creates service disruptions when project funding ends, undermining long-term impact and market development.

Value chain analysis further reveals that BDS provision remains concentrated in traditional export crops like coffee, cotton, and tea while neglecting emerging high-value sectors such as horticulture, aquaculture, and livestock. According to Agriprofocus Uganda (2023), 75% of specialised agricultural advisory and extension focus on good agronomy practice (GAP) in primary production, with minimal support for BDS on value addition, processing, and marketing—areas with potentially higher returns for agri-MSMEs including smallholder farmers.

## 2.2 Stakeholder Ecosystem Mapping

The agricultural BDS ecosystem in Uganda comprises a complex network of actors whose interactions, alignments, and conflicts significantly impact service delivery effectiveness. Understanding this ecosystem is crucial for addressing systemic gaps and leveraging potential synergies.

### 2.2.1 Primary BDS Stakeholders:

1. **Government Institutions** – The Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC), Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), and Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development (MoFPED) constitute the BDS and AES policy development and infrastructure as they shape the enabling environment for agricultural BDS through policies and regulations. While possessing extensive outreach capability through district agricultural officers and extension workers, these ministries face severe resource constraints concerning BDS and AES institutional strengthening. A 2023 parliamentary budget analysis revealed that only 11% of required extension positions are currently filled, creating a massive service gap (Parliament of Uganda, 2023).
2. **Private Sector BDS Specialists** – A growing but still limited number of specialised agricultural consultancy firms, technology companies, and individual consultants offer commercial BDS. These include entities like Africa Management Institute (AMI), Agribusiness Management Associates, EzyAgric, and Kudu Limited. Their market penetration remains concentrated in higher-value chains and geographic areas with better infrastructure.
3. **Embedded BDS Providers** – Agribusinesses, input suppliers, and off-takers increasingly incorporate BDS into their business models to strengthen supply chains. Companies like Mukwano Industries and Kakira Sugar provide technical assistance to contracted farmers. While potentially sustainable, these services are narrowly focused on specific value chains and company interests.
4. **Sector and Farmer Organizations and Cooperatives** – Entities like the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE), Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS), HortiFresh Association Uganda Limited, The Uganda Grain Council, and different commodity-specific associations provide member-based services. Their effectiveness varies widely based on organisational capacity and resource access.
5. **Certification and Accreditation Authorities** – The Uganda Veterinary Board (UVB) plays a critical role in ensuring standards and quality within the livestock sector, adding another layer to the AES ecosystem. The Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) and Uganda National Accreditation Services (UGANAS) ensure compliance with quality measures, essential for building trust within the BDS and AES ecosystem in Uganda. Organic certifiers like NOGAMU, and international standards organizations provide quality assurance frameworks essential for market access but operate with limited coordination with BDS providers.

### 2.2.2 Secondary Stakeholders and Enablers:

6. **Financial Institutions** – Banks, microfinance institutions, and SACCOs indirectly influence BDS effectiveness by determining access to complementary financial services. Institutions like Centenary Bank, DFCU Bank, Equity Bank and Opportunity Bank have developed agricultural finance products, but financing for BDS utilization remains limited.
7. **Academic and Research Institutions** – Makerere University's College of Agricultural Sciences, Uganda Martyrs University, and other institutions train agricultural professionals and generate research but maintain limited connections to practical BDS delivery.

### 2.2.3 Donors and Funders:

8. Development Partners and International NGOs – Organizations including USAID, GIZ, SNV, TechnoServe, FAO, IFAD, and World Bank, the European Union (EU), Netherlands Embassy, aBi Development, TRIAS, Rikolto, Master Card Foundation (MCF), International Finance Corporation (IFC), and Feed the Future, fund and implement significant agricultural development programs with BDS components. These actors wield substantial influence through their financing power but often operate within project-based timeframes that limit sustainable market development.

### 2.3 Interaction Dynamics

The ecosystem suffers from fragmentation and limited coordination. The 2023 Agricultural Sector Strategic Plan mid-term review identified "siloeed interventions" and "duplicative efforts" as key challenges undermining BDS effectiveness (MAAIF, 2023). While platforms like the Agriculture Sector Working Group and the National Agriculture Extension Policy Implementation Committee exist, their effectiveness in harmonizing approaches remains questionable.

Power dynamics within the ecosystem tend to favour donor-funded initiatives over market-driven approaches. This creates distortions where BDS design responds more to donor priorities than farmer needs. A recent IFPRI study noted that "demand-driven BDS remains more rhetorical than practical in Uganda's agricultural development landscape" (IFPRI, 2022). Information asymmetries persist throughout the ecosystem. The absence of a comprehensive database of BDS providers, their specializations, and performance metrics makes it difficult for agri-MSMEs including smallholder farmers to make informed choices and for policymakers to identify critical gaps.

### 2.4 Problem Statement – Why Certification and Accreditation are Needed

The fragmented nature of Uganda's agricultural BDS market, characterized by quality inconsistencies, information asymmetries, and sustainability challenges, creates an urgent need for a robust certification and accreditation framework. The absence of such systems perpetuates several interrelated problems:

**Quality Assurance Vacuum:** Currently, no standardised mechanisms exist to verify BDS provider competence or service quality. A 2023 survey by the Uganda Small Scale Industries Association found that 68% of agricultural SMEs reported receiving "inadequate or misleading business advice" from unvetted service providers. Without quality standards, agri-MSMEs including smallholder farmers make uninformed service procurement decisions, often with costly consequences. The ongoing BDS Standards development by UNBS is going to contribute to solving this problem.

**Market Trust Deficit:** The prevalence of underqualified providers has created widespread scepticism about BDS value. According to a 2023 Sasakawa Africa Association study, 71% of Ugandan agri-MSMEs including smallholder farmers expressed distrust in paid advisory services, citing previous disappointing experiences with self-proclaimed "experts." This trust deficit suppresses legitimate market demand and undermines willingness to pay, creating a negative feedback loop that compromises service quality further.

**Inefficient Resource Allocation:** Without a certification and accreditation legal framework and working systems, development partners and government programs lack objective criteria for

selecting implementing partners. This leads to resource misallocation, with funds often directed to organisations with strong proposal-writing capabilities rather than demonstrated field effectiveness. The 2023 National Development Plan III Progress Report highlighted "poor targeting of agricultural service providers" as a key factor in underperforming interventions.

**Barriers to Professional Development:** The absence of recognised professional standards and enforced certification and accreditation legal framework discourages investment in specialised agricultural BDS skills. Unlike sectors such as accounting, veterinary, law, surveyors or engineering with clear professional pathways, agricultural extension and BDS advisors lack incentives for continuous improvement or specialisation. This constrains the development of a sophisticated service market capable of addressing complex value chain challenges.

**Market Access Limitations:** International markets increasingly demand compliance with specific production standards and business practices. Without certified BDS providers capable of guiding agri-MSMEs including smallholder farmers through compliance processes following international standards, Ugandan agricultural products face growing non-tariff barriers. The European Union's strengthened due diligence requirements for agricultural imports, effective 2024, exemplify how uncertified production systems increasingly translate to market exclusion.

**Sustainability Crisis:** The current donor-dependent BDS model proves environmentally and financially unsustainable. Without certification and accreditation systems that facilitate the transition to commercial service provision, interventions remain project-based rather than market-driven. A longitudinal study by Makerere University's Economic Policy Research Centre found that 83% of donor-funded agricultural initiatives "failed to establish commercially viable service delivery mechanisms beyond project timelines" (EPRC, 2023).

Certification and accreditation systems would address these challenges through several mechanisms:

1. **Creating quality benchmarks** against which providers can be evaluated and continuously improved.
2. **Enabling informed choice** by providing agri-MSMEs including smallholder farmers with reliable information on provider capabilities.
3. **Facilitating appropriate matching** between specific agricultural challenges and appropriately qualified service providers.
4. **Incentivizing professional development** by establishing clear pathways for advancement and specialization.
5. **Promoting sustainability** by helping providers transition from donor dependency to commercial viability through enhanced market recognition.
6. **Enhancing international competitiveness** by building capacity to implement globally recognized agricultural practices and standards.

The National Development Plan III (NDP III/IV) and the Agricultural Sector Strategic Plan both emphasize agricultural commercialization and value addition as national priorities. Without a functional certification and accreditation system for BDS providers, these objectives remain unattainable. As global agricultural markets evolve toward greater emphasis on traceable, sustainable production systems, Uganda risks relegation to low-value market segments unless it develops the sophisticated BDS infrastructure that certification would enable.

The establishment of a nationally recognised, internationally aligned certification and accreditation legal framework for agriculture extension and advisory services (AEAS) providers as well as agricultural and non-agricultural business development services (BDS) providers thus represents not merely a technical improvement but a strategic imperative for Uganda's agricultural transformation and economic development.

### 3. Emerging Certification and Accreditation Legal Framework in Uganda

#### 3.1 Introduction: Clarifying Essential Terminology

In professional practice across various sectors, the terms *registration*, *certification*, and *accreditation* are frequently used interchangeably, causing confusion and potential misapplication of these important concepts. This improper usage undermines the distinct purposes and processes each term represents within the certification and accreditation legal framework.

- 1) **Registration** typically refers to the basic entry-level recognition where professionals are formally listed by statutory bodies or professional associations, permitting them to practice.
- 2) **Certification**, by contrast, is a more rigorous process conducted by Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) that evaluates and confirms a professional's competence against specific standards, often resulting in formal credentials that require periodic renewal.
- 3) **Accreditation** operates at a higher level, where an authoritative body (like UGANAS) assesses and formally recognises the CABs—as competent to perform specific conformity assessment activities according to international standards.

These distinctions are not merely semantic but represent fundamentally different levels of quality assurance and regulatory oversight. While registration establishes identity and basic eligibility, certification validates competence, and accreditation ensures the credibility of the organizations that certify others.

The certification and accreditation legal framework follows a hierarchical structure that begins with professional registration and builds toward institutional accreditation:

1. Professionals register with apex organizations (establishing a sense of belonging).
2. Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) certify these professionals.
3. Uganda National Accreditation Service (UGANAS) accredits the CABs.

This framework is grounded in statutory provisions, with CABs established through specific legislation as shown in **Figure 1** below:

- The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1958, Cap 277 and the Veterinary Practitioners' Act 2024, which aims to transform the Board into a Council
- The NCHE is enacted by the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act of 2001
- UGANAS is enacted by the Accreditation Service Act 2021

These legal instruments establish the authority for CABs to operate and provide certification services within their domains, ensuring that certification processes have legal standing and enforcement mechanisms.

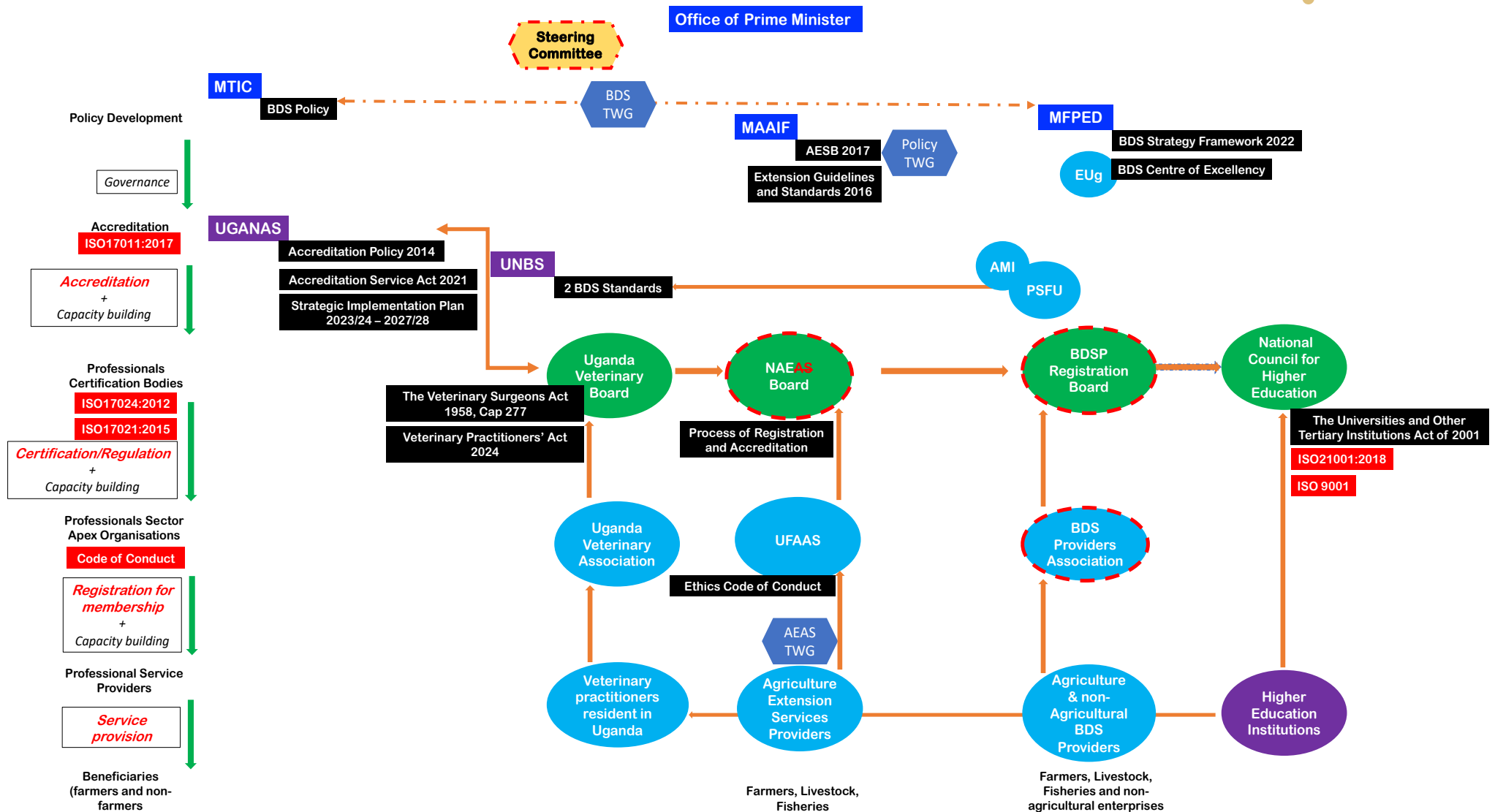


Figure 1: The emerging certification and accreditation legal framework for professionals and services in Uganda

### 3.2 International Standards Compliance

For international recognition and standardization, both UGANAS and CABs must comply with specific ISO standards:

#### **For UGANAS (The Accreditation Body):**

- ISO/IEC 17011:2017 - Requirements for accreditation bodies that assess and accredit conformity assessment bodies

#### **For Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs):**

- ISO/IEC 17024:2012 - For bodies certifying persons/professionals
- ISO/IEC 17021:2015 - For bodies providing audit and certification of management systems
- ISO 21001:2018 - For educational organizations management systems
- ISO 9001 - For quality management systems

This compliance structure ensures that:

1. Regulatory bodies shown in the diagram, like UVB, NCHE, and emerging AEAS and BDS providers' CABs, operate under statutory authority
2. CABs follow internationally recognized standards for certification processes
3. UGANAS maintains international credibility by adhering to ISO 17011
4. The entire system has both legal authority and technical credibility

### 3.3 The Role of NCHE Within the Framework

The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) was established by the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act of 2001 as the official statutory body empowered to regulate higher education institutions in Uganda. While NCHE itself accredits higher education institutions, it can also be subject to accreditation by UGANAS for its management systems and processes.

This potential relationship would work as follows:

- NCHE regulates higher education institutions
- UGANAS could accredit NCHE's quality management systems, ensuring they meet international standards like ISO 21001:2018 or ISO 9001

Such an arrangement would strengthen the overall quality assurance framework by ensuring that even regulatory bodies like NCHE adhere to internationally recognized standards in their operations.

### 3.4 Understanding AEAS and BDS in the Certification Framework

#### **Distinguishing Between AEAS and BDS**

Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS) and Business Development Services (BDS) represent two distinct yet complementary approaches to supporting agricultural development. As shown in **Figure 1** above, both service types require proper certification and accreditation within the quality assurance framework.

#### 3.4.1 Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS)

AEAS focuses on improving farm-level productivity and sustainability through agricultural technical knowledge transfer. AEAS providers work directly with farmers, bringing technical expertise about agricultural production techniques and natural resource management. They serve as a crucial bridge between agricultural research and farmers, translating complex scientific findings into practical applications. According to the recent report published by the

National Planning Authority (2023) ahead of the formulation of NDPIV, the proportion of households with access to agricultural extension services increased to 49% in the FY2021/22 from 11.7% in FY2017/18, which is still below average. The report further highlighted that most of these extension workers lack training tailored to the dominant value chains in their area of operation and lack adequate logistical support to cover their entire area of jurisdiction. This is partly attributed to ineffective & unsustainable extension approaches, and limited adoption of modern technologies, with only 20% of farmers utilising modern agricultural technologies. Whereas:

The core function of AEAS is to enhance farmers' agronomy technical capabilities through:

- Teaching soil and water management techniques
- Demonstrating proper irrigation technologies
- Guiding climate-smart agricultural practices
- Training on sustainable crop planning strategies
- Teaching animal husbandry skills including breed selection and health management

### **Specific AEAS Training Examples for Farmers**

#### **Agronomy Training**

Farmers benefit from advanced soil management techniques, including testing soil water retention capacity across diverse field conditions. This knowledge helps farmers optimize irrigation scheduling and drainage systems. Comprehensive organic crop planning training equips farming operations with sustainable methods, including mulching strategies, water conservation, integrated pest management, and organic nutrient application. These practices help farmers meet the growing market demand for certified organic products. Agroforestry training introduces commercial farmers to profitable hedgerow and grass strip systems that provide multiple revenue streams while improving environmental sustainability.

#### **Animal Husbandry Training**

Strategic animal selection training helps livestock-focused farmers choose species and breeds that maximize productivity within their specific environmental constraints and infrastructure capacity. This selection process directly impacts operational efficiency and profitability. Animal health management training teaches farmers how to design appropriate housing, implement preventive care protocols, and maintain biosecurity measures specific to different livestock species. These practices reduce mortality rates, veterinary costs, and production losses while increasing product quality for market access.

#### **AEAS Delivery Methods:**

- **Classroom training:** The MAAIF Handbook (2019) on the Process of Registration of Agricultural Extension Advisory Services Providers (AEASPs) defines a professional as an individual that holds a degree (at Bachelor, Master or PhD level) in agriculture (crop, animal, soil), environment, forestry, food science and nutrition, land management, and other areas relevant to agricultural value chain development. The handbook further recognizes paraprofessionals as individuals who hold a certificate or diploma in the same fields. University Graduates in Agriculture undergo a four-year training with a full year of practical training at the university farm to qualify for the basic level. Paraprofessionals undergo one year of training for a certificate and two years for a diploma with integrated practical sessions at designated farms.

- **Field visits:** The learning curriculum at all levels (certificate, diploma or degree) incorporates field visits in Uganda and beyond on successful farms and peer institutions to offer students practical sessions and peer-to-peer learning in the field of study.
- **Mentorship programs:** Throughout the period of training, students receive guest lectures to expose them to the actual situations in the field for early adaptation. Guest lecturers attach reality to the theory taught in the classroom. The Guest lectures can also absorb some of the graduates in their firms/farms for apprenticeship after graduation and can be retained after exhibiting excellent performance.
- **Online training:** Academic institutions have equally adopted digital transformation across the globe, with lectures held online. Online lectures and webinars are supplemented by physical classroom training and practical training on selected farms.

#### Important Considerations:

- **Contextualisation:** In the current context, agricultural graduates from academic institutions are assumed to be ready to take on employment challenges without any additional training that could make them more employment-ready. Graduates are, however, encouraged to take on internship opportunities at farms or Agri-enterprises when opportunities are available. This is, however, not mandatory and therefore Agricultural graduates often find their way to learn on the job. With the existence of a national regulatory body, special training and tailor-made programs would be designed to prepare graduates to competently serve the farming communities. This is the case with other existing professional bodies in the country and beyond, for example the Law Development Centre (LDC) for the legal fraternity, among others.
- **Participatory Approach:** The regulatory body and a functional, well-recognized agricultural professional association would together hold the responsibility of encouraging cross-learning among the Agricultural professionals to deepen understanding and improve service delivery to the intended beneficiaries. Continuous and well-structured peer-to-peer learning would become part of the assessment mechanism for professional development.
- **Follow-up Support:** With a well-established communication and feedback mechanism in place, the professional member-based association, together with the regulator, would obtain feedback from their members and beneficiaries on the quality-of-service delivery, adherence to standards and best practices, challenges and what needs to be done differently. The feedback gathered online or through physical workshops would then be utilised to structure the necessary technical support to be offered to members. The feedback therefore informs the design of short-term courses for members, mentorship and coaching sessions. Such programs would equally be sources of revenue for the association and the regulatory body.

#### 3.4.2 Business Development Services (BDS)

BDS by contrast, approaches agriculture through an enterprise lens. BDS providers primarily work at the enterprise level, engaging with agri-SMEs and farmer organizations involved in collective business activities. Their expertise centres on strengthening the business dimensions of agricultural ventures, treating farming as an economic enterprise rather than merely a production activity.

BDS encompass a broad spectrum of non-financial services that entrepreneurs use to address challenges effectively, enhance business performance and competitiveness, gain market

access, accelerate growth, and achieve larger scale. These services include acceleration, incubation, technical assistance, coaching, consulting, and other forms of non-financial support designed to improve corporate strategy, management, marketing, financial management, and organizational and human resource management.

## **Specific BDS Training, coaching and mentorship Examples for Agri-MSMEs**

### **Financial Literacy**

Agri-MSMEs and commercial farmers need solid accounting principles to manage complex operations. Cash flow management training addresses seasonal revenue fluctuations unique to agricultural businesses. Budgeting and financial forecasting help agri-MSMEs plan for expansion and equipment investments. Access to specialized agricultural loans and grants provides critical growth capital. Production cost analysis enables these enterprises to optimize profitability across different crop or livestock lines.

### **Market Analysis and Marketing**

Agri-MSMEs benefit from identifying lucrative market segments beyond traditional outlets. Market research techniques help enterprises understand buyer requirements for both local and export markets. Differentiated pricing strategies allow these businesses to maximize returns across wholesale, retail, and direct-to-consumer channels. Professional branding positions agri-MSMEs as reliable suppliers to larger buyers. Digital marketing training connects these enterprises with broader customer bases and premium markets.

### **Post-harvest Management and Quality Control**

For commercial farming operations, proper post-harvest handling directly impacts marketability and price. Training on quality standards and certifications helps agri-MSMEs meet requirements for formal market access and export opportunities.

### **Supply Chain Management**

Building strong buyer relationships helps agri-MSMEs secure consistent sales contracts. Transportation and logistics management reduces costs for enterprises moving significant product volumes. Inventory control systems prevent losses in storage facilities. Contract negotiation skills help these businesses secure favourable terms with larger market players.

### **Business Planning and Development**

Comprehensive business planning provides agri-MSMEs with roadmaps for scaling operations. Strategic growth planning helps enterprises expand their market reach. Operational efficiency improvements increase productivity and competitiveness. Risk management strategies protect agricultural businesses from market volatility and production challenges.

### **Technology Adoption**

Modern agricultural technology tools increase productivity for commercial operations. Precision farming techniques optimize inputs and reduce costs for larger farms. Smart irrigation systems improve water efficiency for commercial cropping. Data analysis capabilities help agri-MSMEs make evidence-based business decisions.

### **BDS Delivery Methods:**

- **Classroom training:** Structured lectures, group discussions, and case studies
- **Field visits:** Hands-on learning at the business premises and processing facilities
- **Mentorship programs:** Pairing agri-SMEs with experienced business advisors
- **Online training:** E-learning modules and webinars

Important Considerations:

- **Contextualisation:** Tailor training content to specific agricultural products, local market conditions, and regulatory frameworks.
- **Participatory Approach:** Encourage active engagement and sharing of experiences among participants.
- **Follow-up Support:** Provide ongoing guidance and technical assistance after the training program.

### 3.4.3 Integration into the Certification Framework

As shown in the diagram, both AEAS and BDS providers should have their Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) established through appropriate legislation. Currently, as the diagram indicates, these CABs are under development through the Agricultural Extension Services Bill (AESB) and BDS policy development initiatives.

The certification process would follow the same hierarchy as other professions in the framework:

1. AEAS and BDS professionals would register with their respective professional apex organizations
2. Specialized CABs would certify these professionals according to established standards
3. These CABs would be accredited by UGANAS to ensure they meet international standards. UGANAS cannot on its own, as yet accredit but it works in partnership with KENAS, as it continues on its path towards being formally accredited.

### 3.4.4 Educational Pathways Supporting the Framework

The effectiveness of both AEAS and BDS providers hinges significantly on their educational background and continuous professional development (CPD). Educational institutions regulated by NCHE play a crucial role in preparing professionals for certification through:

**For AEAS providers:**

- Short courses in specialized agricultural topics
- Certificate programs in agricultural extension methods
- Diploma programs in agricultural extension
- Bachelor's degrees in Agricultural Sciences or Extension
- Postgraduate qualifications in Agricultural Extension or Rural Development

**For BDS providers:**

- Approved and/or peer-reviewed short courses in business coaching or enterprise development from recognised institutions or firms.
- Certificate programs in agribusiness management or agricultural marketing
- Diploma programs in business administration
- Bachelor's degrees in Agribusiness Management or Agricultural Economics
- Postgraduate qualifications in Agribusiness or MBA programs with agricultural specialization

These educational pathways, when properly regulated and quality-assured by NCHE, create a pipeline of qualified professionals ready to be certified under the framework shown in the diagram.

### 3.5 Comprehensive Quality Assurance Ecosystem

This comprehensive framework combines legal authority with international technical standards to create a robust quality assurance ecosystem across professional fields. By clearly distinguishing between registration, certification, and accreditation, and by establishing proper legal structures and compliance with international standards, Uganda can ensure professionalism and quality service delivery across sectors.

The diagram illustrates how this structured approach creates a complete pathway from individual professional registration through to international recognition, ensuring that all service providers—whether in veterinary services, higher education, agricultural extension, or business development—operate within a cohesive quality assurance framework.

## 4. National and International Best Practices and Benchmarking

### Comparative Analysis of Successful Models

#### Introduction

To establish an effective regulatory framework for the standardised delivery of agricultural extension services (AES) and Business Development Services (BDS), several successful models exist within Uganda and internationally that relevant ministries—including the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC), and Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED)—can adapt without duplicating efforts. This section examines three case studies with direct relevance to the proposed framework: (1) Uganda Veterinary Board and the Uganda Veterinary Association, (2) Uganda Surveyors Registration Board and the Institute of Surveyors of Uganda, and (3) The Association of Certified Business Development Service Providers in Nigeria.

#### 4.1 Case Study 1: Uganda Veterinary Board and Uganda Veterinary Association

##### Regulatory Framework

The Uganda Veterinary Board functions as the primary regulatory body established through legislative action (The Veterinary Surgeons Act 1958, Cap 277), with recent amendments under the Veterinary Practitioners Act (2024) (MAAIF, 2024). A significant modification to the original legislation was the formal recognition of para-veterinarians alongside veterinary surgeons, expanding the professional scope under regulation.

The Board comprises seven veterinarians appointed by the Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries with Cabinet approval. Its core mandate centres on ensuring animal health services are delivered exclusively by qualified, registered, and licensed veterinary professionals under appropriate regulatory oversight.

##### Key Regulatory Functions of UVB

The Uganda Veterinary Board executes several critical regulatory functions:

- Registration and licensing of veterinary surgeons and para-veterinarians
- Inspection and accreditation of veterinary practice facilities and establishments
- Development and enforcement of professional practice standards and ethical guidelines
- Investigation of professional misconduct allegations and implementation of disciplinary measures
- Approval of curriculum for veterinary training institutions
- Validation of foreign veterinary qualifications
- Issuance of annual practice licenses and permits for specialized procedures

- Regulation of veterinary drug distribution and usage
- Conducting professional competency assessments
- Coordination with international veterinary regulatory bodies (OIE, 2023)

#### Professional Association

The Uganda Veterinary Association (UVA) operates as a legally registered professional body with over 950 members distributed throughout Uganda. The association maintains a fully operational secretariat with five regional branches strategically positioned across the country.

UVA's primary activities include:

- Implementation of community development programs
- Promotion of animal welfare initiatives
- Policy advocacy at national and regional levels
- Advancement of professional standards
- Enhancement of members' welfare

#### Key Services to Members by UVA

The Uganda Veterinary Association provides valuable services to its members:

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) through workshops, seminars, and conferences
- Professional liability insurance at negotiated group rates
- Legal support and representation for practice-related disputes
- Access to scientific journals and veterinary publications
- Networking platforms through regular regional and national meetings
- Career development and mentorship programs
- Advocacy for improved remuneration and working conditions
- Emergency relief support during professional crises
- International exchange programs with partner associations
- Digital platforms for technical consultations and knowledge sharing.

The association collaborates extensively with government entities, local organisations, and international institutions to facilitate knowledge exchange and advocate for an enabling environment for veterinary practitioners. UVA maintains international affiliations with the World Veterinary Association, Commonwealth Veterinary Association, and holds membership in the Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU) to strengthen professional capacity development and advocacy efforts.

Membership eligibility extends to all veterinary practitioners resident in Uganda who are registered, licensed, or provisionally registered under the relevant legislation.

## [4.2 Case Study 2: Surveyors Registration Board and Institute of Surveyors of Uganda](#)

### Regulatory Structure

The Surveyors Registration Board (SRB) was established under the Surveyors Registration Act Cap 275 to regulate and control the professional activities of Registered Land Surveyors, Quantity Surveyors, and Valuation Surveyors while providing advisory services to the government.

The board consists of a chairperson and nine members appointed by the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, selected from a list of registered surveyors recommended by the Institute of Surveyors of Uganda.

#### Key Regulatory Functions of SRB

The Surveyors Registration Board performs essential regulatory functions:

- Registration of qualified land, quantity, and valuation surveyors
- Setting and enforcing professional practice standards and codes of conduct
- Accreditation of surveying education programs and training institutions
- Validation and recognition of international surveying qualifications
- Licensing of surveying firms and practice establishments
- Regular competency assessments and recertification processes
- Implementation of disciplinary actions for professional misconduct
- Oversight of mandatory professional indemnity insurance
- Regulation of surveying equipment calibration and usage
- Development of technical guidelines for specialized surveying activities.

#### Professional Association

The Institute of Surveyors of Uganda (ISU) functions as a member-based professional association uniting qualified surveyors throughout Uganda. A distinctive feature of this framework is the requirement that all graduates from accredited institutions must register with the Institute to complete mandatory short-term training and a two-year apprenticeship under senior surveyors before recommendation to the Board for registration and practice licensing.

#### Key Services to Members by ISU

The Institute of Surveyors of Uganda provides comprehensive services to its members:

- Professional skills development through structured training programs
- Mentorship matching with experienced practitioners
- Technical resources including software, equipment, and reference materials
- Knowledge repositories of surveying precedents and case studies
- Annual scientific conferences and specialized symposia
- Publication opportunities in the Uganda Surveying Journal
- Professional networking through regional chapters
- Mediation services for client-surveyor disputes
- Career placement services and job opportunity notices
- Representation in international surveying organizations
- Group health insurance and retirement benefit schemes.

### 4.3 Similar ongoing initiative

#### 4.3.1 Association of Business Development Service Providers (NBDSP) of Nigeria

The study team reviewed the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) [portal](#) and established that in 2018, the Federal Government of Nigeria, through the SMEDAN, established a National Framework for the Registration and Certification of Business Development Service Providers (BDSPs). This framework aimed to establish quality standards for BDS interventions through a registration and certification process that ensures consistent quality delivery to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The portal connects National Business Development Service Providers (NBDSPs) with Micro, Small and

Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) across Nigeria, offering a comprehensive range of business-related services to help SMEs grow and succeed.

Through the platform, certified BDSPs can provide tailored support, from strategic consulting and financial planning to training, mentorship, and market access. SMEDAN's goal is to create a reliable network of expert service providers who are committed to empowering Nigeria's MSME sector. By fostering high-quality service delivery and sustainable partnerships, the NBDSP platform aims to drive entrepreneurial success and support the broader economic growth of Nigeria.

#### 4.3.2 BDS guidelines and BDSP Association in Tanzania

The AMEA local network in Tanzania was officially launched in July 2024 and has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Economic Empowerment Council (NEEC) to improve the Business Development Services ecosystem in Tanzania's agriculture sector. NEEC is a Government Agency under the Prime Minister's Office, established by Act No. 16 of 2004 to accelerate Tanzanians' economic empowerment. The Council is responsible for facilitating, designing, planning, supervising, monitoring, evaluating, and coordinating all economic empowerment activities.

Hosted by Agriculture Non-State Actors Forum (ANSAF), AMEA Tanzania works with members and partners across the agriculture sector, including crops, livestock, and fisheries. The network aims to contribute to the government's vision, as outlined in the Tanzania Agriculture Sector Development Plan-Phase II (ASPD II), of commercializing the agriculture sector by supporting agri-SME development and the professionalization of farmer organizations and cooperatives through quality, cost-effective Business Development Services. Through the AMEA-NEEC partnership, Tanzania has developed BDSP Guidelines, and AMEA is working toward forming a BDSP association. NEEC will create and manage an agricultural and non-agricultural BDSP and beneficiaries portal similar to the SMEDAN portal in Nigeria and the EthioBDS portal in [Ethiopia](#)—a community of certified Business Development Service Providers focused on enhancing BDS quality and commercial viability.

#### 4.3.3 BDS multistakeholder platform in Ethiopia

GiZ is implementing the 'Strengthening the Business Development Service Market in Ethiopia' project as part of the Private Sector Development in Ethiopia (PSDE) initiative. The project aims to improve growth opportunities for SMEs, start-ups, and SGBs by strengthening public institutions, chambers, associations, intermediaries in the innovation ecosystem, and business development service providers (BDSPs). Output 4 of the project specifically focuses on improving the quality of management consultancy services offered to MSMEs and SGBs in Ethiopia. The project has created a BDS multistakeholder platform called [EthioBDS](#) where BDSPs and MSMEs come together to thrive and grow, including a comprehensive directory designed to connect businesses with the development services they need.

For BDSPs, this platform offers a valuable opportunity to showcase their expertise, skills, and solutions to a wide range of businesses actively seeking support. Whether specializing in marketing, finance, strategy, or other areas of business development, the directory helps BDS providers connect with appropriate customers and expand their client base. This connection system recognizes the vital role that BDSPs play in helping SMEs reach their full potential, creating a strategic link between these two important pillars of the business ecosystem.

#### 4.4 Key Lessons for Uganda's BDSP registration and certification Framework

Based on the case studies and ongoing similar initiatives in Uganda and beyond presented in the document, the study team identified twelve (12) key lessons that would be valuable for Uganda's initiative to develop a framework for registration through professional associations and certification through conformity assessment bodies (CABs) for Business Development Service Providers (BDSPs).

##### 4.4.1 Legal Foundation and Regulatory Authority

The successful models in Uganda (veterinary and surveying) are anchored in specific legislation that establishes regulatory bodies with clear mandates. For BDSPs:

- Develop specific legislation or regulations that formally establish the regulatory framework
- Clearly define the scope of services and professionals covered under the framework
- Ensure the regulatory body has appropriate authority to enforce standards

##### 4.4.2 Complementary Roles of Regulatory Bodies and Professional Associations

Both Ugandan case studies demonstrate effective division of responsibilities:

- Regulatory bodies (UVB, SRB) focus on registration, licensing, and enforcement
- Professional associations (UVA, ISU) focus on member development, advocacy, and community building
- This separation prevents conflicts of interest while ensuring comprehensive support

##### 4.4.3 Stakeholder Representation in Governance

The composition of regulatory boards includes:

- Ministerial appointments with cabinet approval (UVB)
- Recommendations from professional associations (SRB)
- This ensures both government oversight and professional expertise

##### 4.4.4 Tiered Qualification and Registration System

The veterinary model shows how to incorporate different levels of practitioners:

- Recognition of both full professionals and para-professionals
- Differentiated registration requirements based on qualifications
- This approach could accommodate various types of BDSPs with different levels of expertise and specialisations

##### 4.4.5 Structured Professional Development Pathway

The surveyors' model demonstrates a clear progression:

- Mandatory post-graduation training
- Required apprenticeship under experienced practitioners
- Final registration only after completing these steps
- This ensures quality control and mentorship

##### 4.4.6 Integration with Technology Platforms

The Nigerian, Tanzanian, and Ethiopian models highlight the importance of digital platforms:

- Online portals connecting BDSPs with clients (SMEDAN, EthioBDS)
- Digital directories of certified providers
- These platforms increase the visibility and accessibility of services

##### 4.4.7 Multi-stakeholder Collaboration

The Ethiopian and Tanzanian examples show the value of:

- Partnerships between government agencies and international organizations

- Involvement of multiple ministries and private sector entities
- These collaborations bring diverse expertise and resources

#### 4.4.8 Regional Network Development

The veterinary model demonstrates how to establish:

- Regional branches of the professional association
- Decentralized service delivery
- This approach ensures nationwide coverage and adaptation to local needs

#### 4.4.9 International Recognition and Standards Alignment

All models emphasize:

- Connections with international professional bodies
- Alignment with global standards and practices
- This facilitates international recognition and knowledge transfer

#### 4.4.10 Comprehensive Service Offered by Professional Associations

Successful associations provide:

- Continuing professional development (CPD)
- Networking opportunities
- Professional insurance and legal support
- Knowledge resources and publications
- These services create value for membership and strengthen the profession

#### 4.4.11 Specific Adaptation for the Agriculture Sector

The AMEA Tanzania example shows how to:

- Align with existing agricultural development plans (ASPD II)
- Focus on specific sector needs (crops, livestock, fisheries) – agBDS
- This approach ensures relevance to Uganda's agricultural priorities

#### 4.4.12 Clear Certification Process

The Nigerian model demonstrates:

- Establishment of quality standards for BDS interventions
- A formal registration and certification process
- Regular monitoring and evaluation
- This creates consistency and reliability in service delivery

By incorporating these lessons, Uganda can develop a comprehensive framework that leverages successful elements from existing models while addressing the specific needs of its BDSP ecosystem, particularly in the agricultural extension services sector.

## 5. Strategic Recommendations

### 5.1 Establishing Evidence-Based Accreditation Mechanisms

The Uganda National Accreditation Services (UGANAS) requires strengthening through adequate financing and human resources to fulfil its legal mandate effectively. Despite its anchoring in law, UGANAS remains under-resourced and largely invisible to stakeholders who should benefit from its services. Funding should be secured from the Government of Uganda and ongoing development partner projects, with a dedicated long-term project established for sustainable financing. Beyond its current staff of seven (who are seconded from line ministries and not fully deployed), UGANAS needs full-time professionals with expertise in accreditation procedures, IT, communications, business administration, and fundraising.

Activating relevant committees with regular meetings will be crucial for implementing the established roadmap.

Concurrently, establishing a Business Development Services (BDS) providers association is imperative through collaboration between the *coalition of the willing* that would include Private Sector Foundation Uganda (PSFU), AMI, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC), Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), HortiFresh, development partners e.g. Trias, MasterCard Foundation (MCF), AGRA and BDS providers, with strong support from the Agribusiness Market Ecosystem Alliance (AMEA). This association will enable standardization and quality assurance across the sector. The importance of aligning the Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS) with the Business Development Services (BDS) provider certification within the policy and legal framework cannot be overemphasised. This alignment will enhance coherence and effectiveness. To achieve this, the Agriculture BDS Technical Working Group (TWG) members under MAAIF, should join the MTIC-led BDS Technical Working Group. This collaboration will create a stronger and more inclusive team, helping to avoid fatigue and resource duplication.

As UGANAS works toward accreditation by building experience and collaborating with the Kenya Accreditation Service (KENAS), all AEAS and BDS providers should be required to join professional associations before practising. The need to form certification bodies for both BDS and AEAS providers is key for this process. The enabling laws need to be put in place. Implementation timelines should be established, with earlier deadlines for government and development partner contractors, and later dates for private providers. A public roster of registered service providers should be created to enhance transparency, while associations should implement **Codes of Conduct** as self-regulatory measures to govern member service delivery.

## 5.2 Ensuring Stakeholder Buy-in through Incentive Structures

Implementing effective incentive structures, both financial and non-financial, is essential to secure stakeholder commitment to the accreditation system. A recognized certification significantly enhances provider **credibility in the marketplace, establishing trust with potential clients and partners**. This improved reputation serves as a powerful motivator for providers to pursue and maintain accreditation standards. Certification creates tangible market access opportunities by connecting accredited providers with organizations specifically seeking high-quality Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services (AEAS) and Business Development Services (BDS) providers, effectively expanding their client base and partnership potential.

The accreditation process itself delivers value by identifying specific areas for **operational improvement, leading to enhanced service quality and delivery efficiency**. Through structured assessment and feedback mechanisms, providers can address weaknesses and strengthen their service offerings, resulting in better client outcomes and increased satisfaction. This continuous improvement cycle builds institutional capacity and professional development within the provider organization.

For businesses engaging with certified service providers, the benefits are equally compelling. The certification system provides **essential quality assurance, giving businesses confidence** that their selected AEAS and BDS providers meet established standards and can deliver reliable, effective support. This quality guarantee reduces the risk of engaging with

underqualified providers and ensures consistent service delivery. Additionally, the certification framework enables informed decision-making by allowing businesses to systematically compare and evaluate providers based on objective certification status and tier levels rather than subjective claims or marketing materials.

When properly implemented, these incentive structures create a virtuous cycle where providers are motivated to achieve and maintain certification, businesses preferentially select accredited providers, and the overall quality of AEAS and BDS provision in the market improves. This results in stronger agricultural and business outcomes, contributing to broader economic development objectives while establishing a sustainable, quality-focused service ecosystem.

### 5.3 Promoting Quality Improvement and Innovation

To foster quality improvement and innovation based on exemplary local and international practices, a comprehensive approach incorporating several critical elements is essential.

**Capacity-building programs** must be implemented through deliberate and sustained initiatives that enable continuous learning, knowledge exchange, and professional retooling. These programs should evolve in alignment with emerging trends, changing priorities, and lessons learned from implementation. Establishing continuous learning programs with regular assessment components will maintain high standards across the sector. Drawing inspiration from established professional fields provides valuable models—the legal profession demonstrates effective implementation through mandatory annual learning requirements with prescribed hourly minimums and attendance at specific courses and practical activities for knowledge accumulation. Similar frameworks in engineering, veterinary science, and surveying offer additional templates that can be adapted to agricultural extension and business development services.

**Knowledge management systems** are fundamental in the modern service environment, potentially increasing revenue generation while enhancing service quality. Implementing shared platforms, and virtual libraries, and leveraging social media tools such as WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and X (formerly Twitter) ensures that valuable knowledge is efficiently acquired, stored, shared, and utilized by community members. These systems facilitate rapid information exchange in user-friendly formats, creating a collaborative ecosystem where best practices and innovations spread quickly among practitioners. By centralizing resources and enabling peer-to-peer learning, these systems accelerate professional development while standardizing approaches to common challenges.

**Technology adoption** represents another critical component, particularly for monitoring service delivery and maintaining accreditation standards. Extensive implementation of technological tools enhances communication, monitoring capabilities, and knowledge sharing across the framework. Online platforms incorporating codes of conduct, assessment tools, standardized checklists, field reporting systems, traceability information, and comprehensive listings of recommended products and qualified service providers contribute to standardizing and improving real-time service delivery. These technological solutions enable service providers to achieve wider coverage and accomplish more with fewer resources, ultimately reducing overall costs while enhancing operational efficiencies. The resulting digital ecosystem supports continuous improvement through data-driven decision-making and rapid dissemination of innovations throughout the provider network.

#### 5.4 Sustainable Business Model and Institutional Arrangements

The sustainability of Uganda's accreditation framework must be developed within the context of government rationalization efforts, which aim to reduce costs and improve coordination efficiency. A lean yet effective structure that combines internally generated resources, central government allocations, and strategic partnership funding is therefore essential. This approach ensures the framework can operate effectively while aligning with broader governmental efficiency objectives.

Stakeholder consultations revealed several critical components for **resource mobilization and sustainable operations**. Establishing independent, merit-based conformity assessment bodies (CABs) with balanced representation from industry, academia, and government provides the foundation for credible oversight. These bodies should be supported by specialized technical committees focusing on standards development, stakeholder engagement, research and innovation, resource mobilization, and appeals and grievance mechanisms—each contributing to the framework's institutional resilience.

**A tiered fee structure** for certification and accreditation services represents key **revenue and inclusivity components**, with different levels reflecting the diverse capabilities of AEAS and BDS providers. The framework should prioritize cost recovery through assessment and monitoring fees while offering value-added services such as training, consulting, and research for additional revenue. Starting with modest fees will encourage broader participation, with subsequent adjustments as service value increases. Importantly, the UGANAS Act (Section 18(c)) already provides for the retention and utilization of collected funds, establishing a legal basis for financial sustainability.

**Strategic public-private partnerships** offer substantial funding potential through collaboration with research institutes, foundations, and corporate entities. Organizations like Stanbic Incubator/Foundation, Centenary and DFCU Foundations, MTN, Airtel, and Total Energies—as major users or beneficiaries of agricultural business development services—often maintain substantial corporate social responsibility budgets that could be leveraged to support the framework. Similarly, close collaboration with development partners and international non-governmental organizations such as the EU, the Netherlands, Swisscontact, Enabel, aBi, IFC, MasterCard Foundation, and TRIAS can provide additional resources and expertise.

Ensuring **institutional sustainability requires alignment with government priorities** like the National Development Plan IV, the Parish Development Model, and Operation Wealth Creation. Anchoring the accreditation framework within key government institutions such as the Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, and Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries establishes relevance and creates essential linkages. This government integration, combined with public-private partnerships and self-regulation mechanisms, creates the foundation for an effective and self-sustaining accreditation system for Uganda. Table 1 below brings out suggestions for some of the key roles and responsibilities envisioned:

**Table 1:** Key roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders

S/N	Institution	Responsibility
1	<b>UGANAS</b>	Deliver top notch services (including accreditation, training, reports) and charge fees for the services. Prepare branding and promotional materials, fundraising proposals. Engage in outreach and high visibility events. Leverage and learn from sister Accreditation Bodies. Establish strategic partnerships, joint fundraising initiatives, and lobby for funding allocations, etc.
2	<b>CABs</b>	Leverage and support UGANAS to reduce future cost of accreditation by reducing reliance on international accreditation bodies. Pay fees for service delivery by UGANAS, hold joint trainings and awareness creation activities to promote accreditation and build partnerships.
3	<b>MoFPED, MTIC, MAAIF, OPM</b>	Inter-ministerial coordination and information sharing on the policies, strategies, and institutional framework, and will enhance efficiency and avoid duplication. To ensure government buy-in and alignment, with anchorage in the OPM.
4	<b>Development Partners (DPs)</b>	DPs such as EU, MasterCard Foundation, aBi, IFC, WB, FAO, UNDP, TRIAS, Netherlands – should be leveraged for funding, international good practice, secondment of experts, knowledge exchange and peer to peer learning opportunities. Include accreditation framework and institutional development in their project design and budgeting.
5	<b>Associations</b>	Lift standards and professionalism, through self-regulation, capacity building and awareness creation among members. Use of code of conduct is essential, and alternative dispute resolution and discipline mechanisms, will all contribute to overall professionalization of the ag-BDS service sector, and enhance quality and sustainability.
6	<b>Large BDS promoters and beneficiaries</b>	Leverage large BDS users and beneficiaries like the banks, NGOs, Foundations, Oil companies, etc, which have a special interest in improving the quality and scale of BDS service provision across the country. Public Private Partnerships, joint fundraising, training and awareness creation campaigns.

## 6. Implementation Roadmap

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP	STAKEHOLDERS' COALITION OF THE WILLING
<b>Short-term Actions (0-12 months)</b>	
1. <b>Support UNBS to finalise the standards development</b> - Support UNBS finalize the BDS standards and promote their adoption across the sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTIC, AEAS TWG, AMEA, UFAAS, PSFU, AMI, EUg, UGANAS, UNBS</li> </ul>
2. <b>Map existing BDS Providers (BDSPs)</b> - Create a comprehensive database of BDS providers currently supported by ILO, AMI, PSFU and other institutions and build their capacity to align with the newly approved standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTIC, PSFU, UNBS, AMI, HortiFresh, BDS Providers (BDSPs), TGCU, AGRA, AMEA and MCF</li> </ul>
3. <b>Establish a BDSP association</b> - MTIC to lead the creation of a national Business Development Services Providers association to unify the sector and improve service coordination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTIC, PSFU, AMI, HortiFresh, BDS Providers (BDSPs), TGCU, AGRA, AMEA and MCF</li> </ul>
4. <b>Secure funding for BDS policy implementation</b> - Obtain development partner funding to help MTIC complete the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) for the BDS policy, accelerating formal implementation. Ensure the policy recommends a BDS Act to regulate interventions nationally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PSFU, AMI, HortiFresh, BDS Providers, TGCU, AGRA, AMEA and MCF</li> </ul>
5. <b>Launch pilot projects</b> - Initiate fundraising for pilots that demonstrate how BDSP registration, certification and accreditation frameworks function in practice. Leverage existing projects for support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AGRA, AMEA, UFAAS, MAAIF, AMEA, AMI, TRIAS, HortiFresh</li> </ul>
6. <b>Support agricultural extension services</b> - Assist the Policy Technical Working Group (TWG) under MAAIF to incorporate conformity assessment requirements into the Agricultural Extension Services Bill. Provide MAAIF with financial resources for acceleration of the bill development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAAIF, UFAAS, AMEA, Policy, lobby and advocacy TWG</li> </ul>
7. <b>Leverage PSFU programs</b> - Build on ongoing PSFU programs to enhance synergies and attract funding for this critical agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTIC, PSFU, AMI, HortiFresh, BDS Providers (BDSPs), TGCU, AGRA, AMEA and MCF</li> </ul>
<b>Medium-term Actions (1-3 years)</b>	
8. <b>Strengthen national certification and accreditation framework</b> - Develop a dedicated project with Uganda National Accreditation Services (UGANAS) to enhance the certification framework and ensure consistent quality standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTIC, UGANAS, AMEA, UNBS, PSFU, AMI, EUg</li> </ul>
9. <b>Establish operational assessment bodies</b> - Create fully functional Conformity Assessment Bodies (CABs) for BDS with clear governance structures. Integrate agricultural BDS as a component within the larger BDS framework.	
<b>Long-term Actions (3-5 years)</b>	
10. Implement comprehensive certification requirements through the CABs, including compliance monitoring, promotional campaigns, incentive programs, and enforcement mechanisms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CABs, MAAIF, MTIC</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation Framework</b>	
11. <b>Track provider performance</b> - Monitor certified AEAS and BDS provider performance through the CABs while implementing continuous professional development (CPD) programs to continuously improve service quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CABs, MAAIF, MTIC, MoFPED, DPs, Agri-enterprises, Large BDS promoters.</li> </ul>

## Annexes:

### Annex 1: Stakeholders Engaged During this Exercise

ORGANIZATIONS MET DURING AGRI-BDS ACCREDITATION FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE		
<b>MINISTRIES</b>		
Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives (MTIC)	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF)	Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development (MoFPED)
<b>ACCREDITATION BODY</b>		
Uganda National Accreditation Services (UGANAS)		
<b>STANDARDS BODY</b>		
Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS)		
<b>CERTIFICATION/REGULATORY BODIES</b>		
Surveyors Registration Board (SRB)	Uganda Veterinary Board (UVB)	
<b>SECTOR &amp; MEMBER BASED ORGANISATIONS</b>		
The Grain Council of Uganda, TGCU	Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE)	Private Sector Foundation of Uganda (PSFU)
HortiFresh Association Uganda Limited	Law Society	AMEA Local Network Coordinator Uganda
Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS) & Representatives of the AEAS TWG		
<b>BDS PROVIDERS (PRIVATE SECTOR)</b>		
Agribusiness Management Associates	FGD with Agri BDS Service Providers	Enterprise Uganda (EUg)
<b>AGRICULTURE EXTENSION SPECIALIST</b>		
Subject matter Specialist, Beatrice Byarugaba (Agriculture Extension Services)		
<b>DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS</b>		
European Union (EU)	Netherlands Embassy	aBi Development
TRIAS	Master Card Foundation (MCF)	International Finance Corporation (IFC)
<b>FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS</b>		
Stanbic (Incubator)	Centenary Bank	DFCU Foundation

## Annex 2: Participants at Validation Workshop, March 6, 2025.

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