

## SENSITIZATION WORKSHOP FOR EXTENSION WORKERS IN UGANDA ON 21-23 FEBRUARY 2007, HOTEL AFRICANA, KAMPALA

The global debate about biotechnology is often misdirected, misinterpreted and often restricted to scare-mongering by its critics and over optimism by its proponents. This has left many stakeholders unclear and undecided on issues of biotechnology particularly on the subject of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). As such, although substantial achievements, in food security and improved national economies, are being recorded with of this technology in some developing and developed countries, other countries including Uganda are still undecided. It is therefore important for Uganda to bring all stakeholders on board as we analyze, communicate and advance biotechnology application in this country.

This workshop was thus organized by Program for Biosafety Systems (PBS) a USAID funded project and Uganda National Council on Science and Technology (UNCST) to contribute towards addressing this challenge. The major objective of the workshop was to strengthen the capacity of extension workers, who are the main source of information on agricultural technologies for the farmers, to communicate and advise on biotechnology in a more confident and credible manner.

The workshop was attended by over 60 participants, majority of who were extension workers from NAADS, local government, NGOs and seed companies in various districts.



*Some participants paying attention to a presentation*



*Participants receiving resource material*

After presentations and field visits, the participants raised a number of concerns about biotechnology which were later addressed by the resource persons. The way-forward suggested by the workshop included:

- Need for more awareness campaigns and identification of cadres to front the campaigns
- Providing participants with updated information on a regular basis and circulation of Newsletter at district level
- Organizing trainings at regional level and inviting political leaders to attend.
- Producing translated communication materials for farmers in the different regions