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Millennium Development Authority (MiDA)

**COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FARMER BASED-
ORGANIZATIONS (CDFO)**

**REPORT ON STAGE ONE TRAINING AND TRAINING-RELATED
ACTIVITIES OF THE FOURTH SET OF FBOS TRAINED BY CSIR-
FOOD RESEARCH INSTITUTE COMPRISING 11 FBOS IN THE
WEST MAMPRUSI DISTRICT**

BY

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Members of Wahala FBO being transported by boat to the training venue at Ygaba during the seasonal floods



Group discussion by members of Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group during training at Yagaba

**KULPAWN
VEGETABLE
GROWERS**

YAGABA

WEST MAMPRUSI

Executive Summary

A six week training programme was conducted for the Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group from Yagaba of the West Mamprusi district. The Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group was one of the eleven (11) groups, CSIR-Food Research Institute trained. This training was part of the consultancy services the Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research was tasked to perform for MiDA. The training was on the development of business capacity and some of the topics taught were MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction, FBOs , rural development and commercialization, Business vision through a value chain lens, a short primer on producer organization principles, developing business expansion strategies, developing the action Agenda, driving the organization change and action business plan. A training needs assessment of the group was conducted in the first week to identify the lapses in the farmers’ knowledge. The objective of the commercial development of farmer based organization was to change the mindset of farmers so that they see farming as a business rather than a way of life. The Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group consists of thirty nine (39) members made up of twenty six (26) males and thirteen (13) females. The training venue for week one was carried out Yagaba R/C JSS. Subsequent trainings will be held at the World Vision Primary School, Yagaba. The training affected the harvesting activities of the farmers.

Dr (Mrs) Mary Obodai was the trainer for the Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group and was assisted by an interpreter Mr Alhassan Abudu and replaced later by Mr Maleo Joseph Dadoo. The content of the modules was very comprehensive. The farmers were motivated to attend the training because of the information they had from previous trained farmers from Loagri No. 1. The farmers were confident that they would gain knowledge through the training and also access credit. The farmers appreciated the knowledge gained and were thankful for the training on commercialization of their farming activities because they agreed that it will help increase their production and profitability.

1.0 Introduction

The Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research has conducted a six weeks training programme for eleven (11) selected Farmer Based Organizations in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana for MiDA. The training in Business Capacity Building was carried out from 7th August to 15th September, 2010. Each FBO received three sessions of four hour duration each per week over the course of six weeks totaling 18 training sessions. Kulpawn Vegetable Growers from the Yagaba community of the West Mamprusi District was one of the farmer based organization to benefit from this training. This part of the northern region is popularly known as “Overseas”. The group has thirty nine (39) members with twenty six (26) males and thirteen (13) females. The group has been in existence for just over a year. It is governed by bye-laws. The leadership structure of the group is made up of a Chairman (Solomon Apina), Secretary (Maleo Joseph Dadoo), Treasurer (Tiah Tidow) and an organiser (Azundow Nabila). The group has a savings bank account at the Agricultural Development Bank, Bolgatanga with account number 9011500088604. The signatories to the account are the

Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer. The group pays monthly dues of GH¢1.00. The group meets on the first Friday of every month.

Farming is their main occupation but some rear and the women also do petty trading. The group support themselves by assisting each other in specific farming activities such as planting and harvesting during the major/minor cropping seasons. Members support each other in the form of donations (cash or kind) to bereaved or sick members and victims of crop failure and natural disasters. The major crops grown are maize, beans, millet and rice. The minor crops are beans and millet. They sell their produce individually at the Fumbisi market. Most members are unable to apply fertilizers because of lack of credits to buy them. Those who do apply the fertilizers do it in minimal amounts which affect the yields. About 90% of members of the FBO are Muslims and the rest are Christians.

2.0 Background of assignment including brief on Training needs

Training needs of Kulpawen Vegetable Growers Farmers Group based on challenges

	No Problems	Some Problems	Many Problems	Cause of Problems / Causes	Training Needs
<p><i>Module 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction • Commercial Development of FBOs (CDFO) • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies • The Beginning of a Process 			<p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p>	<p>Little knowledge, not well informed about MCA.</p> <p>Very little idea about module 1.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crop production: 		x		<p>Very little knowledge of time of land preparation, in- appropriate ploughing methods, soil management is non-existing. Exact measure of an acre is assumed. Fair idea of improved seeds and where to get them. Due to lack of credit, minority of the members go for early maturing, drought and disease resistant varieties.</p>	<p>Yes</p>

				Knowledge of fertilizer but little knowledge on proper application	
<p><i>Module 2:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why FBOs are Important for Rural Development ▪ Functions of Producer Organizations ▪ Functions as Member Services ▪ Unique Characteristics and Challenges of FBOs ▪ Elements of Strong FBOs ▪ Commercialization and Best Practices 		X x		<p>Very little knowledge about rural development, weak knowledge of producer organization. Have bye-laws and meeting times.</p>	<p>Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes</p>

<p><i>Module 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact • Value Chain Framework • Elements of the Value Chain • Why Value Chain Growth is Important to FBO • Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy 			X X X X	<p>Hearing the value-chain concept for the first time.</p>	<p>Yes Yes Yes Yes</p>
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<p><i>Module 4:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It? • How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision • Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan • Developing Vision for your FBO • Practice Using the Value Chain Lens 			X X X X X	<p>Have targets based on subsistence farming to cater for immediate family</p>	<p>Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Visioning Process • Drafting the Vision Statement 						
<p><i>Module 5:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of Board Operation • Review of Key Organization Documents • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders • Importance of Member Services and Meetings • Approaches to Financial Management 		X			<p>leadership is very active, meeting schedules are defined, poor record keeping, lack of knowledge of group activities by some members, lack of group cohesion, have bye-laws, simply lack of planning, organizational and leadership skills.</p> <p>FBO has never taken any financial assistance or loan</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Module 6:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and Challenges • Brainstorming Strategies • Sources and Uses of Funds, • Identifying tactics, • Targets and Strategies 			X		<p>Very weak knowledge of self assessment, do not have any idea of SWOT.</p> <p>The concept is new</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Module 7:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) • Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource Requirements Maximizing Sales) 			X		<p>Very weak knowledge of concepts</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p><i>Module 8</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for change identified by the business planning process • What Organization Changes Need to be made? • Change agenda components • Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) • Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business Plan) 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Very weak knowledge</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Module 9 Action business Plan</p> <p>Financial Management Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro forma cash flow-projection of what the business plan means to show cash inflow and outflow over period of time and is use for internal planning. • Prime interest to a lender to show how one intends to repay loan. • Shows how much and when cash must flow into the business. • Credit Management 			<p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p>	<p>No knowledge</p> <p>No knowledge</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

After the training the farmers gained much knowledge about the various topics in the modules taught. The Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group were very attentive and asked very

relevant questions. They admitted that this was the first time they have had such training on the commercialization drive and they are prepared to move from the subsistence level farming into commercial farming.

3.0 Training venues and logistical challenges

The major logistical problems encountered during the training of the Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group from Yagaba were reduction in attendance to training at during Fumbisi market days.

4.0 Trainers and Training equipment

Table 1: A table, indicating the FBO ID #, the FBO name, the location of FBO and the trainer for the FBO

FBO Identification Number	FBO name	Location of FBO	Names of Trainer(s)
NAZ081216G03Fr	Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers' Group	Yagaba, WEST MAMPRUSI	Dr (Mrs) Mary Obodai

Materials used for training.

The materials used for training are flip-chart board, flip charts, markers because it made teaching and learning easier considering the literacy level of the farmers. Most farmers (87%) can neither read nor write.

5.0 Lessons from Approaches and Methodology

a. Summary of selected modules / topics for each week and a brief outline of methodology used for each in a tabular form

Table 2: The table of the modules for the indicated week

Week (with dates)	MODULE NUMBER & TITLE	TOPIC (if applicable)	TRAINING METHODOLOGY
Week 1 10 th , 11 th & 12 th August, 2010	Module 1: MCA Ghana Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture Project structure • Commercial Development of FBOs(CDFO) • Implementation Arrangements • MiDA- Your Development Partner • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies • Course objectives 	Lectures Discussion Group discussion Demonstration

<p>WEEK 2 16th, 17th & 18th August, 2010</p>	<p>Module 2: FBOs, Rural Development and Commercialization Module 3: Value chain Thinking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Beginning of a process • Why FBOs are important for rural Development • Functions of Producer Organisation • Functions as member services • Unique characteristics and challenges of FBOs • Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and best practices 	<p>Lectures Discussion Group discussion Demonstration</p>
<p>WEEK 3 23rd, 24th & 25th August, 2010.</p>	<p>Module 4: Business vision through a value chain lens</p> <p>Module 5: A short Primer on Producer Organization Principles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why value chains are important for the Ghana compact. • Value Chain framework • Elements of the value chain • Why value chain Growth is important to FBO • Value chain thinking as a tool for business strategy • What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who needs it • How FBOs benefit from Business Vision • Business vision vis-a vis Business Plan • Practice using the value chain lens • The visioning process • Drafting the vision statement • Reviewing concepts of leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of board operation • Review of key organization Documents 	<p>Lectures Discussion</p> <p>Lectures Discussion Group discussion Demonstration</p>

<p>Week 4, 30th, 31st August & 1st Sept. 2010</p>	<p>OCB Modules 1</p> <p>OCB Module 2</p> <p>OCB Module 3</p> <p>Module 6: Developing Business Expansion Strategies</p> <p>Module 7: Developing the Action Agenda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of office holders • Importance of Member Services and meetings • Approaches to Financial Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group formation and development • Credit Management • Contracts and Procurements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and Challenges • Brainstorming Strategies • In-depth Technical Assessment (Production Practices, Harvesting Practices, Approach to harvesting, Post Harvest Handling Practices, Primary processing, storage, value Added practices, organization and Management practices) • Sources and Uses of Funds, • Identifying tactics • Finalizing Strategies • Final check on Vision, Targets and Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) • Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, actions to Tactics and Implement Change. 	<p>s</p> <p>Lectures Discussion</p> <p>Lectures Discussion Group discussion</p>
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<p>Week 5 6th, 7th & 8th Sept., 2010.</p>	<p>Module 8: Driving The organization change</p> <p>OCB Module 4</p> <p>OCB Module 5</p>	<p>Resource Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customizing Training and Technical Support(Technical Training and Maximizing Sales) • A note about Performance Monitoring • From Action Agenda to Business Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for change identified by the business planning process • What Organization Changes Need to be made? • Change agenda components • Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) • Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities (Completing the plan, developing work plan per strategy. Meeting with RICs • Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business plan • • Business and technical communications • Methods for tracking: FBO's progress. 	<p>Discussion Group discussion</p>
<p>Week 6 13th, 14th & 15th Sept., 2010</p>	<p>Module 9: Action Business Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directions for completing the Business Plan • ☐Completing the Business plan (Background to action business plan, the action business plan) • Next steps • Evaluation of training 	<p>Discussion</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of training 	Group discussion
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Module 1: The MCA Ghana Compact

FBO's Knowledge of MCA Ghana before training

It was noted at the beginning of the training that trainees had an idea about the MCA Ghana Compact from other farmers who had been trained earlier. However, it must be emphasized that trainees did not have a thorough understanding of the concept of the MCA Ghana Compact. The three components of the MCA Ghana Compact were not known to them and implementation arrangements and various selected zones to benefit from the Agricultural project. The commercial development of the Farmer Based Organization was also not clear to them. The objective of the session was to emphasize that Agriculture which is the backbone of the country could go a long way to reduce poverty and bring about economic growth if it is commercialized. The training methodology used were lectures and demonstrations.

Crop Budget Analysis

To assist the farmers objectively choose the major crop they would be cultivating under the MiDA programme, the Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group compared the expected profits they would be making with respect to what goes into production of maize, beans, millet and rice . Some of the input costs were also based on the prices of the last cropping season. However, the current prices of commodities as pertains on the major markets around the communities were used. The Kulpawn Vegetable growers Farmers Group settled on cropping maize in the major cropping season.

Farmers' knowledge level of MCA Ghana Compact after training

After the training sessions, trainees understood very well the MCA Ghana Compact, the various components particularly the Agricultural project which presents a unique opportunity for them to reduce poverty through economic growth led by agricultural transformation. This could be achieved through increase in production.

Conclusion/key Message

At the end of the training sessions in Module 1, the participants generally agreed that the training module had greatly increased their knowledge on the MCA Ghana Compact and their drive into commercializing their farming activities.

Module 2: FBO's, rural development and commercialization

Members of the Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group were taken through rural development and commercialization of farmer based organization. The discussion centered on the importance of group and group formation, group functions and services. The characteristic

and challenges of FBO, elements of strong FBO, best practice in commercialization among others were explained.

Value chain

Participants were introduced to value and value chains concepts and its relationship to economic growth and poverty reduction. Participants were taken through how the market system operates with respect to the major crops produced. They were taught how their crops move within the commodity chain and how they could transform commodity chain thinking into value chain thinking so as to take advantage of markets at different levels by repositioning themselves in the chain.

The definition of 'value chain' was given as the path that a crop or product takes as it moves from field or factory to the marketplace. It was pointed out that at each stop or step along the way, value (not just price) is added to the product. The farmers were taught that each vertical step in a value chain is a market for the step below. The value chain includes all activities that it takes to bring a product to the market, including horizontal linkages to suppliers of goods and services.

Value Chains and the Ghana Compact

To achieve economic growth through agriculture, Ghana needs to increase the competitiveness of the value chains which take key crops into international marketplaces. Value chain thinking is practiced worldwide by competitive firms which realize that the key to profitability is the ability to move a product into the market place at prices which both satisfy customers and carry the lowest possible overheads. Participants were made to realize that Ghana's agriculture is key to the country's economic growth and that to achieve economic growth that is sustainable and reduces poverty, value chains must operate with expanded opportunities for Farmer based organization (FBO). For this to happen, FBOs must understand value chains and be able to use this understanding to strengthen their organization and their approaches to doing business. The participants were taught the basic concepts behind value-added thinking. The methodologies used are lectures, demonstration and discussion.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

It was noted at the commencement of the module 3 that trainees had a fair idea about value addition to agricultural produce. Due to lack of resources and understanding of how the market operates is what has delayed their practice of the value chain concept. After this module, the Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group had improved their understanding of the subject and were ready to take advantage of the opportunities in the market as regards the maize the FBO chose to commercialize.

Conclusion/key message

Participants learnt for the first time about rural development through commercial farming. At the end of the module, the farmers' appreciated that value chains can be used as tools for increasing profitability. The farmers appreciated the concept and were poised to add value to their produce in order to by-pass the middlemen in the value chain.

Module 4: Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens

The Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group was taken through the business vision concept. The elements of a good business vision were identified as a vision statement and targets for achievement. The characteristics of a good business vision are that it must be time bound, must be accompanied by specific volume targets and vision must be realistic and considered achievable. The benefits of an FBO having a business vision were looked at. These included group cohesion, ability to design activities which fulfill member expectations and ability to identify and set targets. The participants were later taken through the vision development process. The participants were aided to assess their current performance levels and to set targets which the FBO seeks to achieve over the next two years. During the business vision drafting stage participants were divided into four groups, each presented their vision. Participants were guided to write down draft business vision statements based on the contribution from the four groups.

Module 5: Leadership, Governance and Management

In this module participants were introduced to the complementary nature of the three concepts of leadership, governance and management. It was stressed that individuals within an organization may play one or more of these roles but usually not at the same time. The importance of organizational leadership and how it works within organizations were treated. Other areas discussed were what leadership roles were, characteristics of good leaders and characteristics of effective boards. Governance as the power of making and administering organization policies with regard to programs, relationships and limitations of authority were explained to participants. The methodologies used are lectures, demonstration and discussion.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Module 5 gave the Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group more insight on the different levels of leadership and the roles they play. The understanding of the module motivated them to involve all members in the running of the organization by setting up committees.

Conclusion/ key message

The members of the FBO appreciated that they can only succeed in the commercialization drive if only they work together and support those in leadership, management and governance positions. They also realized the complementary nature of the leadership, management and governance concept.

Module 6: Developing Business Expansion Strategies

In this module key strategies for the FBO business expansion were looked at. Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group was assisted to use the SWOT analysis as a tool to evaluate the factors both internal and external to the organization which can affect its ability to carry out a business venture. The SWOT analysis framework was used by the participants to brainstorm internal factors such as production, marketing and selling practices, finance, post harvest handling and management practices and classify them as strengths or weaknesses. The same thing was done for external factors which were classified into threats or opportunities. Participants reviewed

internal and external factors to identify attributes and challenges. Strengths and opportunities put together form the attributes which work in favor of the organization's ability to achieve its business vision. Challenges are the weaknesses and threats which have the potential to work against the organization's ability to achieve its business vision. Participants were then engaged in identification of attributes and challenges exercise which was followed with a brainstorming session on strategies. A list of strategies was then developed. An in-depth technical assessment of the FBO in the areas of production practices, harvesting practices, post-harvest handling practices, primary processing, storage, value-added practices, marketing practices and organization and management practices was the second form of assessment which the FBO examined.

A short list of tactics that participants felt could be used to guide the FBO activity in each category was noted. The strategies were then finalized using; each strength, addressing each weakness, taking advantage of the opportunities and getting ready to meet each threat.

Module 7: Developing the Action Agenda

The participants worked the strategies and tactics arrived at to develop elements of an action agenda for inclusion in their business plans. The action agenda gives the specific steps the FBO will take at the member, organizational and value chain levels to support achievements of strategies and vision. To move from strategy to action, farmers were assisted to review each strategy and list the tactics which correspond to it. Participants were divided among each strategy and each group reviewed all of its related tactics to make sure that the strategy with which it is working is supported by all of the tactics that it needs. Participants were made to appreciate that for a successful implementation of any business plan, specific actions will be required to bring about what is expected. To ensure that the right actions are chosen, it was important to first identify the changes that would have to take place in the organization.

During discussions, Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group realized that the desired change will have to occur at the member level, organizational level and value chain level.

Module 8: Driving Organizational Change

In this module participants looked specifically at defining an agenda for the management of organizational and technical changes that would support the ability of the FBO to continue with their business planning efforts. It was agreed that requirements for change identified by the business planning process meant that a plan to manage the change is very necessary. The farmers' appreciated that implementation of the change has to be driven through the organization with leadership playing a key role. There was a need to enforce an action assignment, definition of responsibilities and commitments, manage arrangements and define action steps needed to achieve change at member and organization levels. The Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group agreed that at member levels it would be useful to appoint member leaders, set up committees, support implementation and communication, hold meetings to introduce plan, invite members to contribute to training design and structure member feedback channels. At the organization level, development of revenue generation plan, preparation of management plan, analysis of financial impacts of plan implementation and completion of business plan were very important. The methodologies used are lectures, demonstration, group discussion and discussion.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Participants had a very good understanding of what the vision and strategies of the FBO were. They also learnt about practical steps to address the strategies. The modules equipped the farmers to come up with action agendas. The changes that the FBO had to go through were recognized and a management plan put in place. The farmers' knowledge and skill on the two subject areas improved considerably.

Conclusion/key message

The participants appreciated the importance of assessment and the changes at the member, organizational levels in order to achieve the action agenda and improve strategies for business development.

Module 9: Completing the Draft Business Action Plan

Based on the activities carried out in the eight modules, Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group was assisted to put together their business plan. The first part of this exercise dealt with the background to the plan and it covered areas such as background information about the FBO, description of the operating structure, overview of current practices and assessment of environment and opportunities. Part two of the business plan drafting was based on the action agenda and areas such as vision and targets of the FBO, action plans for implementation of each strategy and management plan.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Participants had good understanding of the concept of turning their subsistence farming into a commercial venture before the commencement of Module 9. All the knowledge, information and skills gained in the previous modules were brought to bear on completing the draft action business plan.

Conclusion/key message

Members of the FBO appreciated the business plan development and confessed that they have really gained knowledge through this course. They proved that they had gained knowledge about farming as a business. A draft copy of the business plan was completed.

Module 9: Completing the Draft Business Action Plan

In the final week, Module 9 was continued. The background information about the FBO, their operating structure, overview of current practices and assessment of environment and opportunities collated was confirmed. The vision, strategies, actions and tactics were finally fed into the business plan.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

All the knowledge and skills acquired in the earlier modules were brought to bear on completing the draft action business plan. Participants after going through all the nine (9) modules were very anxious to begin the commercialization their farming activities. The farmers were poised to go through the second stage training in order to come by the starter pack and the Mida loan.

Conclusion/key message

The training session for the week was excellent since the farmers proved that they had gained knowledge to help in their business drive. They greatly showed appreciation for the knowledge gained and the content of the material they had gone through for the past weeks.

Follow-up activities by trainers and trainees

The Agricultural extension Agents (AEAs) accompanied the CSIR-FRI team to visit the executives of the FBOs and opinion leaders in the communities. The AEAs assigned to the Yagaba community supported during the training sessions and will follow up on the performance and challenges of the farmer based organization. The AEAs will assist also in the stage two training.

b. Lessons for improving future training.

- a. The content of the modules were very appropriate because the participants confessed that they had really gained much knowledge which will go a long way in aiding their commercialization drive. The farmers agreed that the content of the modules will immensely help in their farming activities.
- b. Most of the participants were illiterates but they understood the modules because the interpreter did his work well and even gave illustrations to stress the points taught in the various modules. The contents of some of the modules were a bit technical, if simplified will help the farmers because most of them are illiterates.
- c. As a result of this training, do you anticipate that the participating FBOs will?
 - i. The members of the Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group were poised to engage in collective purchase and to be involved in such a process they constituted a purchasing committee who will be responsible for the purchase of inputs, agrochemicals and fertilizers. They also understood the benefits of engaging in collective purchasing through credits.
 - ii. The Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group will definitely engage in collective marketing because it is one of the strategies they adopted in order to achieve their vision of increasing production.
 - iii. The FBO members are ready to engage in collective activities since they are now aware of the benefits of being in a group such as theirs. They became aware about their access to credits and support services as a group.
 - iv. The stage one training was very beneficial to the farmers. However training alone is not enough that is why the stage two training is essential

because that training will be more practical to the farmers and highly appreciated. The Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group will be able to successfully and sustainably become more efficient and productive after the stages one and two training and when they have access to credits.

6.0 Tracking indicators

Table 3: Number and percentage of Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group and leadership trained on various modules .

Name of FBO	Location	District	Number FBO members trained for each module (Percentage of leadership of FBO participating)			
			Module 1	Module 2 OCB modules 1-3	Module 3	Module 4
Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group	Yagaba	West Mamprusi	37(95%), 3(75%)	38(97%), 4(100%)	35(90%), 4(100%)	35(89%), 4(100%)
			Module 5	Module 6	Module 7	Module 8 OCB modules 4&5
			38(97%), 4(100%)	37(95%), 4(100%)	35(90%), 4(100%)	37(95%), 4(100%)
			Module 9			
			34(87%), 4(100%)			

7.0 Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

FBO	Location	District	MODULES	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group	Yagaba	WEST MAMPRUSI	1	Fair	Good	The concept of the MiDA project and the role of FBOs is now very clear to the trainees
			2	Fair	Good	Trainees appreciated the importance of FBOs as key drivers for rural development
			3	Fair	Good	Trainees understood how they could transform commodity chain thinking into value chain thinking which will help them to negotiate for better prices
			4	Fair	Good	Farmers listened attentively
			5	Fair	Good	Farmers appreciated the concept of leadership,

						governance and management.
			6	Fair	Good	Farmers were poised to implement the content of module.
			7	Fair	Good	Farmers gained knowledge on Action Agenda
			8	Fair	Good	Farmers appreciated the need to identify and manage the changes necessary
			9	Fair	Very Good	Farmers were ready to access the MIDA loan.

8.0 Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

The business capacity of the Kulpawn Vegetable Growers Farmers Group was developed because the group gained much knowledge as they went through the various modules. The contents of the modules were relevant and well understood by the farmers. The training methodology and delivery were excellent. Farmer's knowledge and skill increased after training and this affected their thinking, attitude and behaviour towards commercial farming immensely. Farmers showed lots of enthusiasm, though they said most of the subject areas (training modules) were new to them. The business plan which would enable them access MCA funds as loans from banks in order for them to operate as commercial farmers was completed.

It is recommended that:

- The stage one training is held in the off-season so that the farmers may avail themselves more for the training.
- The content of the training material should be simplified to meet the standard of the farmers
- The Farmer Based Organization must be supervised and strengthen adequately.

- Credit facilities must be extended to farmers to purchase improved seeds, agrochemicals and fertilizers for commercial farming.
- Farmers must be trained on modern production technologies and post harvest technologies.
- Transport services and inaccessible roads must be improved for markets accessibility.
- Farmers must be encouraged to do group marketing for good produce prices.

MALIMANGA
MAIZE
FARMERS
GROUP

KPATUSI

WEST MAMPRUSI

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research was assigned to train Malimanga Maize Farmers Group located at Kpatusi in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana for MiDA Phase IV Stage 1. Malimanga Maize Farmers Group had 40 members (20 males and 20 females). Malimanga Maize Farmers Group was formed in 2008. Forty members of the Malimanga Maize Farmers Group were trained at the end of the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1. The perception of majority of the Malimanga Maize Farmers Group of the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training was to access training and information on modern agriculture, while a few were interested in credit facilities. After training trainee farmers were optimistic of the positive impact of the MiDA Compact Programme as a means to develop the business capacity of the group with emphases on developing Action Business Plan, which will enable the group to access the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) Ghana Compact Funds as loans from participating banks. The loans are to enable the organization function as commercial farmer organization. The Malimanga Maize Farmers Group had received an initial training under the Organization Development of the MiDA program. Malimanga Maize Farmers Group did not identify any weaknesses in the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training.

2.0 BACKGROUND OF ASSIGNMENT

The Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research was tasked by Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) to conduct a six weeks training programme for MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training of the Business Development Capacity for Malimanga Maize Farmers Group, located at Kpatusi, West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana. The MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training for Malimanga Maize Farmers Group was conducted from 9th August 2010 to 15th September 2010. The training days were Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. Each training session lasted for four hours and a total of 72 hours of training (4 hours x 3 days x 6 weeks) were conducted for Malimanga Maize Farmers Group. The Malimanga Maize Farmers Group during the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training identified some training needs.

These training needs as stated in the Malimanga Maize Farmers Group Action Business Plan are as listed in table 1:

Table 1: Training Needs Assessment of the Malimanga Maize Farmers Group

Activity	No Problems	Some problems	Many Problems	Cause of Problems/Causes	Training Needs

<p>Module 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction • Commercial Development of FBOs (CDFO) • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies • The Beginning of a Process 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Malimanga Maize Farmers Group lacked adequate Information MCA Ghana Program as a result of initial insufficient preparation.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Module 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why FBOs are Important for Rural Development • Functions of Producer Organizations • Functions as Member Services • Unique Characteristics and Challenges of FBOs • Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and Best Practices 		<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Malimanga Maize Farmers Group had no constitution and bye-laws. Functions and commercialization not been practiced by the group.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Crop Production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land preparation methods • Seed/ seedling selection, improve varieties, planting spaces • Proper application of Plant protection products (procedure, handling, clothing, hazards and dosages) • Calibration of Sprayers and Pesticides application methods • Harvest and post-harvest handling • Value-addition techniques 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Tractor services unduly delayed. Seeds purchased from open market or uses own seeds. Lack modern farming technologies. PPT information from sellers on the open markets.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Marketing Irrigation /water management techniques 					
<p>Module 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact • Value Chain Framework • Elements of the Value Chain • Why Value Chain Growth is Important to FBO • Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Malimanga Maize Farmers Group completely lacked knowledge on value chains and value chains for business ideas.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Module 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It? • How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision • Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan • Developing Vision for your FBO • Practice Using the Value Chain Lens • The Visioning Process • Drafting the Vision Statement 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Members had inadequate knowledge on business strategies and expansion. Members understand individual production targets but have no group vision.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Module 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of Board Operation • Review of Key Organization Documents • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders • Importance of Member Services and Meetings • Approaches to Financial Management 		<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Malimanga Maize Farmers Group members not implementing leadership, management and governance in the operation of the group. Executive functions and members are</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

		X		not spelt out. The group lacked group activities and managing credit facilities.	Yes
<p>Module 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and Challenges • Brainstorming Strategies • Sources and Uses of Funds, • Identifying tactics, • Targets and Strategies 			X	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group lacked knowledge on the use of SWOT for business activities.	Yes
			X		Yes
			X		Yes
			X		Yes
<p>Module 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) • Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource Requirements Maximizing Sales) 			X	The Malimanga Maize Farmers Group had no idea on identifying, strategies and tactics and subsequent implementation in business activities of the group	Yes
			X		Yes

<p>Module 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for change identified by the business planning process • What Organization Changes Need to be Made? • Change agenda components • Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) • Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business Plan) 			X	The group had no knowledge on identifying change in business planning processes and driving organization change	Yes
			X		Yes
			X		Yes
			X		Yes
<p>Module 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing the Action Business Plan 			X	The Malimanga Maize Farmers Group had no Action Business Plan in place.	Yes

3.0 TRAINING VENUES AND LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES

The MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training for the Malimanga Maize Farmers Group located at Kpatusi was conducted at the premises of the Chief's Palace, Kpatusi.

4.0 TRAINERS AND TRAINING EQUIPMENT

Table 2: Identification of Malimanga Maize Farmers Group and trainers assigned to the group

FBO Identification Number	FBO name	Location of FBO	Names of trainer(s)
NAZ081206	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi, West Mamprusi District	Dr. Charles Tortoe

One trainer was used for the training conducted for Malimanga Maize Farmers Group. The trainer was assisted by a local interpreter. This arrangement became necessary as the trainer could not speak the local dialect of the group members.

Materials used for the training included flip boards and chats, makers and posters. Posters were given to farmer trainees to facilitate training. Generally, the training materials facilitated the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training successfully.

5.0 LESSONS FROM APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGY

Table 3: Summary of modules, topics for each week and a brief outline of the methodology used for each in a tabular form

Week (with dates)	Module number and title	Topic (if applicable)	Training methodology
1			
9-8-2010 10-8-2010 11-8-2010	Module 1	Module 1: The MCA Ghana Compact and course objectives including training policy, analysis of the FBO including organizational structure and activities of the group, training needs assessment, MCA Ghana Compact and course objectives. Emphases on the Ghana Compact included its approach to rural development in the target areas in Ghana and underlined the importance placed on the Compact on FBOs and the significance of their contributions to Ghana's drive towards expanded economic growth and concerted attack on poverty.	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
	Module OCB 1 Module OCB 2	Group Formation and Development Credit Management	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
2			
16-8-2010	Module 2	Module 2: FBO's, Rural Development and Commercialization with emphasis on Topics such as Importance of FBO's for Rural Development, Functions of Producer Organizations, Functions as Member Services, Unique Characteristics and Challenges of the FBO, Elements of a Strong FBO's, Commercialization and Best Practices and a Reality Check of the FBO on their starting position. By the end of the module trainee farmers will identify some of the commercialization challenges faced by their own organization.	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
	Module OCB 3	Contract (content negotiation of contracts with input suppliers, banks, commodity, buyers) and procurement.	
17-8-2010 18-8-2010	Module 3	Module 3: Value Chain Thinking including Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact, Value Chain Frame Work, Elements of the Value Chain, Why Value Chain Growth was important to FBO and	

	Module OCB 4 Module OCB 5	Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy. By the end of the module trainee farmers will look at ways in which value chains provide a tool for defining FBO business strategies. Business and Technical Communication Methods for tracking FBO's Progress	
3			
23-8-2010	Module 4	Module 4: Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens comprises topics such as Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It, How FBO's Benefit from Business Vision, Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan, Developing Vision for the FBO (visioning process), Employ Value Chain Thinking and Practice Using the Value Chain Lens and Drafting the Vision Statement.	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
24-8-2010 25-8-2010	Module 5	Module 5: A short primer on Leadership, Governance and Management including topics such as Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance, Basics of Board Operations, Review of Key Organization Documents, Defining Duties and Responsibility of Office Holders, Importance of Member Services and Meetings and Approaches to Financial Management.	
4			
30-8-2010	Module 6	Module 6: Developing Business Expansion Strategies included topics such as Organization Self-assessment and Team Building, What is SWOT Analysis and How to use it, Defining Attributes and Challenges, Brainstorming Strategies, In-depth Technical Assessment (Production Practices, Harvesting Practices, Approach to Harvesting, Post Harvest Handling Practices, Primary Processing, Storage, Value Added Practices, Organization and Management Practices), Sources and uses of Funds, Identifying Tactics, Finalizing Strategies, Final Check on Vision, Target and Strategies.	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
31-8-2010	Module 7	Module 7: Developing the Action Agenda included topics such as From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock), Defining Resources	

1-9-2010	Module 8	<p>Requirements (Strategies, Tactics, Requirement for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change), Resources Requirement, Customizing Training and Technical Support (Technical Training and Maximizing sales), A Note About Performance Monitoring, From Action Agenda to Business Plan.</p> <p>Module 8: Driving the Organisational Change included topics such as Requirements for Change Identified by the Business Planning Process, What Organization Changes Need to be Made, Change Agenda Components, Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level), Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities (Completing the Plan, Developing Work Plan Per Strategy, Ensuring Carrying out of the Agreed Actions in the Business Plan.</p>	
5			
6-9-2010 7-9-2010 8-9-2010	Module 9	<p>Module 9. Action Business Plan: Directions for Completing the Business Plan (Background to Action Business Plan, the Action Business Plan). Using information generated during the training, the draft Action Business Plan was developed for completion in week 6 by successfully finalising the group's vision and targets. The strategies, tactics and actions to achieve their vision were finalised during the week understudy. The vision statement and targets were agreed for completion in week 6.</p>	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
6			
13-9-2010 14-9-2010 15-9-2010	Module 9	<p>Module 9. Completing the Draft Action Business Plan. Trainee farmers put the information they have developed into the format for an Action Business Plan and define the steps they will take to carry their planning activities forward. At the end of the week, the Malimanga Maize Farmers Group Action Business Plan was largely completed and ready for final packaging. Next steps for completion and moving into implementation were identified. The evaluation of the 6 weeks training was conducted and the training came to an end.</p>	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations

b. Experiences with the usefulness of developing a lesson plan, and usefulness of the different aspects of the lesson plan (items 1-vii below) for learning by FBO members.

i. Topic

Topics studied under Modules 1-9 were as follows:

Module 1: The MCA Ghana Compact and Course Objectives

- Training Policy
- Analysis of the FBO including Organizational Structure and Activities of the Group
- Training Needs Assessment
- MCA Ghana Compact
- Course Objectives

Module 2: FBO's, Rural Development and Commercialisation

- Importance of FBO's for Rural Development
- Functions of Producer Organizations
- Functions as Member Services
- Unique Characteristics and Challenges of the FBO
- Elements of a Strong FBO's
- Commercialisation and Best Practices
- Reality Check of the FBO on their starting position

Module 3: Value Chain Thinking

- Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact
- Value Chain Frame Work
- Elements of the Value Chain
- Why Value Chain Growth was Important to FBO
- Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy

Module 4: Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens

- Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It
- How FBO's Benefit from Business Vision
- Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan
- Developing Vision for the FBO (visioning process)
- Employ Value Chain Thinking and Practice Using the Value Chain Lens
- Drafting the Vision Statement

Module 5: A Short Primer on Leadership, Governance and Management

- Reviewing Concepts of Leadership
- Management and Governance
- Basics of Board Operations
- Review of Key Organization Documents
- Defining Duties and Responsibility of Office Holders

- Importance of Member Services and Meetings
- Approaches to Financial Management

Module 6: Developing Business Expansion Strategies

- Organization Self-assessment and Team Building
- What is SWOT Analysis and How to use it
- Defining Attributes and Challenges
- Brainstorming Strategies
- In-depth Technical Assessment (Production Practices, Harvesting Practices, Approach to Harvesting, Post Harvest Handling Practices, Primary Processing, Storage, Value Added Practices, Organization and Management Practices)
- Sources and uses of Funds
- Identifying Tactics
- Finalizing Strategies
- Final Check on Vision
- Target and Strategies

Module 7: Developing the Action Agenda

- From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock)
- Defining Resources Requirements (Strategies, Tactics, Requirement for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change)
- Resources Requirement
- Customizing Training and Technical Support (Technical Training and Maximizing sales)
- A Note about Performance Monitoring
- From Action Agenda to Business Plan

Module 8: Driving the Organisational Change

- Requirements for Change Identified by the Business Planning Process
- What Organization Changes Need to be made
- Change Agenda Components
- Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level)
- Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities (Completing the Plan, Developing Work Plan per Strategy, Ensuring Carrying out of the Agreed Actions in the Business Plan)

Module 9. Completing the Draft Action Business Plan

- Directions for completion (Background to Action Business Plan, the Action Business Plan)

Organization Capacity Building Modules (OCB Modules)

- OCB Module 1 Group Formation and Development
- OCB Module 2 Credit Management
- OCB Module 3 Contract (Content and negotiation of contracts with input suppliers, banks, commodity, buyers) and procurement
- OCB Module 4 Business and Technical Communication
- OCB Module 5 Methods for Tracking FBO's Progress

ii. Why the Topic

These topics addressed the Business Development Capacity with emphases on developing the Malimanga Maize Farmers Group Action Business Plan as required under MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training.

iii. Learning objective of current lesson

The learning objective of the topics was to develop the business capacity with a focus on an Action Business Plan for the Malimanga Maize Farmers Group, which will provide access to the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) Ghana Compact Funds as loans from participating banks. The loans are to enable the Malimanga Maize Farmers Group to function as commercial farmer organization.

iv. Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

Trainee farmers of Malimanga Maize Farmers Group were taught and evaluated on the topics under study per lesson. Emphasis was placed on areas trainee farmers were observed to be lacking in knowledge until trainees understood the topic under study.

v. Training methodology (Activities/Steps in the provision of learning experiences)

Lectures, discussions, demonstrations and evaluation of topics were the training methods adopted for the training of Malimanga Maize Farmers Group.

vi. Conclusion/Key message

Trainee farmers of Malimanga Maize Farmers Group accepted the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training as timely and knowledge acquisition experience in their business building capacity and farming carrier and agreed to employ all the concepts and technologies learnt in their FBO business capacity building and farming activities.

vii. Follow-up activities by trainers and trainees

There will be a follow-up of 3 weeks MiDA Phase IV Stage 2 Training (Crop Production) for trainees of Malimanga Maize Farmers Group and 2 weeks field demonstration for trainee farmers, which form part of the MiDA Stage 2 Training for the group.

c. Lessons for improving future training

All the modules 1 to 9 taught during MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training for Malimanga Maize Farmers Group was very appropriate. Participants agreed to use all the concepts and technologies acquired in the next 3-6 months to improve their FBO building capacity and farming activities.

Members of Malimanga Maize Farmers Group understood the modules taught very well and it is expected that they will adopt all the concepts and technologies to upgrade their FBO and farming activities. Members of Malimanga Maize Farmers Group agreed to engage in collective marketing.

The MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training for Malimanga Maize Farmers Group was very effective and it is anticipated that the group will be successful in employing it to enhance their FBO business capacity and their farming activities and consequently sustain it. In order for the group to achieve its objective trainee farmers' efforts will be complemented by the availability of credit facilities for members to engage in their FBO building capacity and agriculture activities.

6.0 TRACKING INDICATORS

Table 3: Number of Malimanga Maize Farmers Group trained by districts and modules (Indicate percentage of participation by FBO leadership)

Name of FBO	Location	District	Number FBO members trained for each module (percentage of leadership of FBO participating)	
Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Module 1	20 (50.0 %); 6 (100 %)
			Module 2	20 (50.0 %); 6 (100 %)
			Module 3	39 (97.5 %); 6 (100 %)
			Module 4	40 (100 %); 6 (100 %)
			Module 5	40 (100 %); 6 (100 %)
			Module 6	38 (95.0 %); 6 (100 %)
			Module 7	38 (95.0 %); 6 (100 %)
			Module 8	37 (92.5 %); 6 (100 %)
			Module 9	40 (100 %); 6 (100 %)
			OCB Module 1	20 (50.0 %); 6 (100 %)
			OCB Module 2	20 (50.0 %); 6 (100 %)
			OCB Module 3	20 (50.0 %); 6 (100 %)
			OCB Module 4	20 (50.0 %); 6 (100 %)
OCB Module 5	39 (97.5 %); 6 (100 %)			

7.0 TRACKING INDICATORS

Table 4: Level of knowledge scored for Malimanga Maize Farmers Group for all training sessions

Date	Name of FBO	Location	District	Modal level of knowledge and skills before training	Modal level of knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Week 1						
9-8-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention during all sessions
10-8-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good through all sessions
11-8-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all topics under study

Week 2						
16-8-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers contributed significantly during discussions
17-8-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good in all sessions
18-8-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all topics
Week 3						
23-8-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good during sessions
24-8-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in topics
25-8-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention in all the sessions
Week 4						
30-8-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention in all the sessions
31-8-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good
1-9-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all

						sessions
Week 5						
6-9-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers contributed significantly during the study
7-9-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good in all the sessions
8-9-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all the topics under study
Week 6						
13-9-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good
14-9-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in topics and contributed well
15-9-10	Malimanga Maize Farmers Group	Kpatusi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention during all sessions

8.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE FBO CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGIES

The MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training for Malimanga Maize Farmers Group was well conducted and participants gain enormous knowledge on the concepts and technologies on business capacity building during the 6 weeks training. The members of Malimanga Maize Farmers Group agreed to incorporate their new acquired knowledge in their FBO development and farming activities and share with unfortunate colleague farmers who did not attended the training. The timely release of credit facilities to

members of the Malimanga Maize Farmers Group will enable the early adoption of their new acquired knowledge in their business capacity building, farming activities and subsequently alleviate poverty and improve their livelihoods.

YIZEBISI
SUNGA
VEILA

YIZEBISI

WEST MAMPRUSI

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research - Food Research Institute of the was assigned to train Yizebisi Sunga Veila located at Yizebisi in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana for MiDA Phase IV Stage 1. Yizebisi Sunga Veila had 37 members (20 males and 17 females). Yizebisi Sunga Veila was formed in 2008. All members of Yizebisi Sunga Veila were trained at the end of the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1. The perception of majority of the Yizebisi Sunga Veila of the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training was to access training and information on modern agriculture, while a few were interested in credit facilities. After training trainee farmers were optimistic of the positive impact of the MiDA Compact Programme as a means to develop the business capacity of the group with emphases on developing Action Business Plan, which will enable the group to access the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) Ghana Compact Funds as loans from participating banks. The loans are to enable the organization function as commercial farmer organization. The Yizebisi Sunga Veila had received an initial training under the Organization Development of the MiDA program. Yizebisi Sunga Veila did not identify any weaknesses in the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training.

2.0 BACKGROUND OF ASIGNMENT

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research - Food Research Institute was tasked by Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) to conduct a six weeks training programme for MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training of the Business Development Capacity for Yizebisi Sunga Veila, located at Yizebisi, West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana. The MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training for Yizebisi Sunga Veila was conducted from 9th August 2010 to 15th September 2010. The training days were Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays. Each training session lasted for four hours and a total of 72 hours of training (4 hours x 3 days x 6 weeks) were conducted for Yizebisi Sunga Veila.

The Yizebisi Sunga Veila during the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training identified some training needs.

These training needs as stated in the Yizebisi Sunga Veila Action Business Plan are as listed in table 1:

Table 1: Training Needs Assessment of the Yizebisi Sunga Veila

Activity	No Problems	Some problems	Many Problems	Cause of Problems/Causes	Training Needs
Module 1:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction • Commercial Development of FBOs (CDFO) • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies • The Beginning of a Process 			X	Yizebisi Sunga Veila lacked adequate Information MCA Ghana Program as a result of initial insufficient preparation.	Yes
			X		Yes
			X		Yes
			X		Yes
			X		Yes

<p>Module 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why FBOs are Important for Rural Development • Functions of Producer Organizations • Functions as Member Services • Unique Characteristics and Challenges of FBOs • Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and Best Practices 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Yizebisi Sanga Veila had no constitution and bye-laws. Functions and commercialization not been practiced by the group.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Crop Production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land preparation methods • Seed/ seedling selection, improve varieties, planting spaces • Proper application of Plant protection products (procedure, handling, clothing, hazards and dosages) • Calibration of Sprayers and Pesticides application methods • Harvest and post-harvest handling • Value-addition techniques • Agricultural Marketing Irrigation /water management techniques 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Tractor services unduly delayed. Seeds purchased from open market or uses own seeds. Lack modern farming technologies. PPT information from sellers on the open markets.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Module 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact • Value Chain Framework • Elements of the Value Chain • Why Value Chain Growth is Important to FBO • Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Yizebisi Sanga Veila completely lacked knowledge on value chains and value chains for business ideas.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p>Module 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It? • How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision • Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan • Developing Vision for your FBO • Practice Using the Value Chain Lens • The Visioning Process • Drafting the Vision Statement 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Members had inadequate knowledge on business strategies and expansion. Members understand individual production targets but have no group vision.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Module 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of Board Operation • Review of Key Organization Documents • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders • Importance of Member Services and Meetings • Approaches to Financial Management 		<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Yizebisi Sunga Veila members not implementing leadership, management and governance in the operation of the group. Executive functions and members are not spelt out. The group lacked group activities and managing credit facilities.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p>Module 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and Challenges • Brainstorming Strategies • Sources and Uses of Funds, • Identifying tactics, • Targets and Strategies 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Yizebisi Sunga Veila lacked knowledge on the use of SWOT for business activities.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Module 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) • Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource Requirements Maximizing Sales) 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>The Yizebisi Sunga Veila had no idea on identifying, strategies and tactics and subsequent implementation in business activities of the group</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p>Module 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for change identified by the business planning process • What Organization Changes Need to be Made? • Change agenda components • Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) • Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business Plan) 			X	The group had no knowledge on identifying change in business planning processes and driving organization change	Yes
			X		Yes
			X		Yes
			X		Yes
<p>Module 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing the Action Business Plan 			X	The Yizebisi Sunga Veila had no Action Business Plan in place.	Yes

3.0 TRAINING VENUES AND LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES

The MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training for the Yizebisi Sunga Veila located at Yizebisi was conducted at the premises of Yizesi L/A Primary School, Yizesi.

4.0 TRAINERS AND TRAINING EQUIPMENT

Table 2: Identification of Yizebisi Sunga Veila and trainers assigned to the group

FBO Identification Number	FBO name	Location of FBO	Names of trainer(s)
NAZ081206	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi, West Mamprusi District	Mr. Abdulai Mumuni

One trainer was used for the training conducted for Yizebisi Sunga Veila. This arrangement became necessary as the trainer could speak the local dialect of the group members.

Generally, the training materials facilitated the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training successfully. Materials used for the training included flip boards and chats, makers and posters. Posters were given to farmer trainees to facilitate training.

5.0 LESSONS FROM APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGY

Table 3: Summary of modules, topics for each week and a brief outline of the methodology used for each in a tabular form

Week (with dates)	Module number and title	Topic (if applicable)	Training methodology
1			
9-8-2010 10-8-2010 11-8-2010	Module 1	Module 1: The MCA Ghana Compact and course objectives including training policy, analysis of the FBO including organizational structure and activities of the group, training needs assessment, MCA Ghana Compact and course objectives. Emphases on the Ghana Compact included its approach to rural development in the target areas in Ghana and underlined the importance placed on the Compact on FBOs and the significance of their contributions to Ghana's drive towards expanded economic growth and concerted attack on poverty.	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
	Module OCB 1 Module OCB 2	Group Formation and Development Credit Management	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
2			
16-8-2010	Module 2	Module 2: FBO's, Rural Development and Commercialization with emphasis on Topics such as Importance of FBO's for Rural Development, Functions of Producer Organizations, Functions as Member Services, Unique Characteristics and Challenges of the FBO, Elements of a Strong FBO's, Commercialization and Best Practices and a Reality Check of the FBO on their starting position. By the end of the module trainee farmers will identify some of the commercialization challenges faced by their own organization.	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
	Module OCB 3	Contract (content negotiation of contracts with input suppliers, banks, commodity, buyers) and procurement.	
17-8-2010 18-8-2010	Module 3	Module 3: Value Chain Thinking including Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact, Value Chain Frame Work, Elements of the Value Chain, Why Value Chain Growth was important to FBO and	

	Module OCB 4 Module OCB 5	Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy. By the end of the module trainee farmers will look at ways in which value chains provide a tool for defining FBO business strategies. Business and Technical Communication Methods for tracking FBO's Progress	
3			
23-8-2010	Module 4	Module 4: Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens comprises topics such as Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It, How FBO's Benefit from Business Vision, Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan, Developing Vision for the FBO (visioning process), Employ Value Chain Thinking and Practice Using the Value Chain Lens and Drafting the Vision Statement.	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
24-8-2010 25-8-2010	Module 5	Module 5: A short primer on Leadership, Governance and Management including topics such as Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance, Basics of Board Operations, Review of Key Organization Documents, Defining Duties and Responsibility of Office Holders, Importance of Member Services and Meetings and Approaches to Financial Management.	
4			
30-8-2010	Module 6	Module 6: Developing Business Expansion Strategies included topics such as Organization Self-assessment and Team Building, What is SWOT Analysis and How to use it, Defining Attributes and Challenges, Brainstorming Strategies, In-depth Technical Assessment (Production Practices, Harvesting Practices, Approach to Harvesting, Post Harvest Handling Practices, Primary Processing, Storage, Value Added Practices, Organization and Management Practices), Sources and uses of Funds, Identifying Tactics, Finalizing Strategies, Final Check on Vision, Target and Strategies.	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
31-8-2010	Module 7	Module 7: Developing the Action Agenda included topics such as From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements-for Change, Move to Taking Stock), Defining Resources	

1-9-2010	Module 8	<p>Requirements (Strategies, Tactics, Requirement for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change), Resources Requirement, Customizing Training and Technical Support (Technical Training and Maximizing sales), A Note About Performance Monitoring, From Action Agenda to Business Plan.</p> <p>Module 8: Driving the Organisational Change included topics such as Requirements for Change Identified by the Business Planning Process, What Organization Changes Need to be Made, Change Agenda Components, Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level), Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities (Completing the Plan, Developing Work Plan Per Strategy, Ensuring Carrying out of the Agreed Actions in the Business Plan.</p>	
5			
6-9-2010 7-9-2010 8-9-2010	Module 9	<p>Module 9. Action Business Plan: Directions for Completing the Business Plan (Background to Action Business Plan, the Action Business Plan). Using information generated during the training, the draft Action Business Plan was developed for completion in week 6 by successfully finalising the group's vision and targets. The strategies, tactics and actions to achieve their vision were finalised during the week understudy. The vision statement and targets were agreed for completion in week 6.</p>	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations
6			
13-9-2010 14-9-2010 15-9-2010	Module 9	<p>Module 9. Completing the Draft Action Business Plan. Trainee farmers put the information they have developed into the format for an Action Business Plan and define the steps they will take to carry their planning activities forward. At the end of the week, the Yizebisi Sunga Veila Action Business Plan was largely completed and ready for final packaging. Next steps for completion and moving into implementation were identified. The evaluation of the 6 weeks training was conducted and the training came to an end.</p>	Lectures, discussions and demonstrations

b. Experiences with the usefulness of developing a lesson plan, and usefulness of the different aspects of the lesson plan (items 1-vii below) for learning by FBO members.

viii. Topic

Topics studied under Modules 1-9 were as follows:

Module 1: The MCA Ghana Compact and Course Objectives

- Training Policy
- Analysis of the FBO including Organizational Structure and Activities of the Group
- Training Needs Assessment
- MCA Ghana Compact
- Course Objectives

Module 2: FBO's, Rural Development and Commercialisation

- Importance of FBO's for Rural Development
- Functions of Producer Organizations
- Functions as Member Services
- Unique Characteristics and Challenges of the FBO
- Elements of a Strong FBO's
- Commercialisation and Best Practices
- Reality Check of the FBO on their starting position

Module 3: Value Chain Thinking

- Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact
- Value Chain Frame Work
- Elements of the Value Chain
- Why Value Chain Growth was Important to FBO
- Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy

Module 4: Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens

- Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It
- How FBO's Benefit from Business Vision
- Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan
- Developing Vision for the FBO (visioning process)
- Employ Value Chain Thinking and Practice Using the Value Chain Lens
- Drafting the Vision Statement

Module 5: A Short Primer on Leadership, Governance and Management

- Reviewing Concepts of Leadership
- Management and Governance
- Basics of Board Operations
- Review of Key Organization Documents

- Defining Duties and Responsibility of Office Holders
- Importance of Member Services and Meetings
- Approaches to Financial Management

Module 6: Developing Business Expansion Strategies

- Organization Self-assessment and Team Building
- What is SWOT Analysis and How to use it
- Defining Attributes and Challenges
- Brainstorming Strategies
- In-depth Technical Assessment (Production Practices, Harvesting Practices, Approach to Harvesting, Post Harvest Handling Practices, Primary Processing, Storage, Value Added Practices, Organization and Management Practices)
- Sources and uses of Funds
- Identifying Tactics
- Finalizing Strategies
- Final Check on Vision
- Target and Strategies

Module 7: Developing the Action Agenda

- From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock)
- Defining Resources Requirements (Strategies, Tactics, Requirement for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change)
- Resources Requirement
- Customizing Training and Technical Support (Technical Training and Maximizing sales)
- A Note about Performance Monitoring
- From Action Agenda to Business Plan

Module 8: Driving the Organisational Change

- Requirements for Change Identified by the Business Planning Process
- What Organization Changes Need to be made
- Change Agenda Components
- Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level)
- Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities (Completing the Plan, Developing Work Plan per Strategy, Ensuring Carrying out of the Agreed Actions in the Business Plan)

Module 9. Completing the Draft Action Business Plan

- Directions for completion (Background to Action Business Plan, the Action Business Plan)

Organization Capacity Building Modules (OCB Modules)

- OCB Module 1 Group Formation and Development
- OCB Module 2 Credit Management
- OCB Module 3 Contract (Content and negotiation of contracts with input suppliers, banks, commodity, buyers) and procurement
- OCB Module 4 Business and Technical Communication
- OCB Module 5 Methods for Tracking FBO's Progress

ix. Why the Topic

The studied topics addressed the Business Development Capacity with emphases on developing the Yizebisi Sunga Veila Action Business Plan as required under MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training.

x. Learning objective of current lesson

The topics learning objective was to develop the business capacity with a focus on an Action Business Plan for the Yizebisi Sunga Veila, which will provide access to the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) Ghana Compact Funds as loans from participating banks. The loans are to enable the Yizebisi Sunga Veila to function as commercial farmer organization.

xi. Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

Yizebisi Sunga Veila trainee farmers were taught and evaluated on the topics under study per lesson. Emphasis was placed on areas trainee farmers were observed to be lacking in knowledge until trainees understood the topic under study.

xii. Training methodology (Activities/Steps in the provision of learning experiences)

Lectures, discussions, demonstrations and evaluation of topics were the training methods adopted for the training of Yizebisi Sunga Veila.

xiii. Conclusion/Key message

Yizebisi Sunga Veila trainee farmers accepted the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training as timely and knowledge acquisition experience in their business building capacity and farming carrier and agreed to employ all the concepts and technologies learnt in their FBO business capacity building and farming activities.

xiv. Follow-up activities by trainers and trainees

There will be a follow-up of 3 weeks MiDA Phase IV Stage 2 Training (Crop Production) for trainees of Yizebisi Sunga Veila and 2 weeks field demonstration for trainee farmers, which form part of the MiDA Stage 2 Training for the group.

d. Lessons for improving future training

The Yizebisi Sunga Veila trainee farmers were taught modules 1 to 9 during MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training, which was very appropriate. Trainee farmers agreed to use all the concepts and technologies acquired in the next 3-6 months to improve their FBO building capacity and farming activities. Trainee farmers of Yizebisi Sunga Veila understood the modules taught very well and it is expected that they will adopt all the concepts and technologies to upgrade their FBO and farming activities. Members of Yizebisi Sunga Veila agreed to engage in collective marketing for the benefit of the group members.

Yizebisi Sunga Veila received an effective MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training and it is anticipated that the group will be successful in employing it to enhance their FBO business capacity and their farming activities and consequently sustain it. In order for the group to achieve its objective trainee farmers' efforts will be complemented by the availability of credit facilities for members to engage in their FBO building capacity and agriculture activities.

6.0 TRACKING INDICATORS

Table 3: Number of Yizebisi Sunga Veila trained by districts and modules (Indicate percentage of participation by FBO leadership)

Name of FBO	Location	District	Number FBO members trained for each module (percentage of leadership of FBO participating)	
Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Module 1	31 (83.78 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 2	34 (91.89 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 3	34 (91.89 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 4	31 (100 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 5	31 (100 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 6	14 (100 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 7	14 (100 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 8	28 (100 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 9	37 (100 %); 7 (100 %)
			OCB Module 1	31 (83.78 %); 7 (100 %)
			OCB Module 2	31 (83.78 %); 7 (100 %)
			OCB Module 3	34 (91.89 %); 7 (100 %)
			OCB Module 4	34 (91.89 %); 7 (100 %)
OCB Module 5	34 (91.89 %); 7 (100 %)			

7.0 TRACKING INDICATORS

Table 4: Level of knowledge scored for Yizebisi Sunga Veila for all training sessions

Date	Name of FBO	Location	District	Modal level of knowledge and skills before training	Modal level of knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Week 1						
9-8-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good through all sessions
10-8-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all topics under study
11-8-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention during all

						sessions
Week 2						
16-8-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers contributed significantly during discussions
17-8-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good in all sessions
18-8-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all topics
Week 3						
23-8-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good during sessions
24-8-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in topics
25-8-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention in all the sessions
Week 4						
30-8-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention in all the sessions
31-8-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good
1-9-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all

						sessions
Week 5						
6-9-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers contributed significantly during the study
7-9-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good in all the sessions
8-9-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all the topics under study
Week 6						
13-9-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good
14-9-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in topics and contributed well
15-9-10	Yizebisi Sunga Veila	Yizebisi	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention during all sessions

8.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE FBO CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGIES

Yizebisi Sunga Veila trainee farmers received a well conducted MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training and participants gain enormous knowledge on the concepts and technologies on business capacity building during the 6 weeks training. The trained farmers of Yizebisi Sunga Veila agreed to incorporate their new acquired knowledge in their FBO development and farming activities and share with unfortunate colleague farmers who did not attended the training the skills gained during the MiDA Phase IV Stage 1 Training. The timely release of credit facilities to members of the Yizebisi Sunga Veila will enable the

early adoption of their new acquired knowledge in their business capacity building, farming activities and subsequently alleviate poverty and improve their livelihoods.

BOMANGA
MAIZE
FARMERS'
GROUP

KURUGU

WEST MAMPRUSI



Executive Summary

Bomanga Maize Farmers Group from the Kurugu community of the West Mamprusi district were trained for six on Business Capacity. The Farmers Group was one of the eleven(11) groups, CSIR-Food Research Institute trained. This training was part of the consultancy services the Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research was tasked to perform for MiDA. The training was on development of business capacity and some of the topics taught were MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction, FBOs , rural development and commercialization, Business vision through a value chain lens, a short primer on producer organization principles, developing business expansion strategies, developing the action Agenda, driving the organization change and action business plan. A training needs assessment of the group was conducted to identify the lapses in the farmers' knowledge. The objective of the commercial development of farmer based organization was to change the mindset of farmers so that they see farming as a business rather than a way of life. The Bomanga Maize Farmers Group consists of forty-five (45) members consisting of twenty-two (22) males and twenty-three (23) females. The training was held at Kurugu District Assembly Primary School at Kurugu. The training affected the harvesting activities of the farmers.

Mrs. Charlotte Oduro-Yeboah was the trainer for the Bomanga Maize Farmers Group and was assisted by an interpreter Mr. Yin Gurindow. The content of the modules was very comprehensive. The farmers were motivated to attend the training because of the information they had about the benefits other trained farmers had obtained. The farmers were confident that they would gain knowledge through the training and also access credit. The farmers appreciated the knowledge gained and were thankful for the training on commercialization of their farming because they agreed that it will help increase their production and profitability.

1.0 Introduction

The Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research has conducted a six weeks training programme for eleven (11) selected Farmer Based Organizations in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana for MiDA. The training in Business Capacity Building was carried out from 9th August to 15th September, 2010. Each FBO received three sessions of four hour duration each per week over the course of six weeks amounting to 18 training sessions or 72 hours of training. Bomanga Maize Farmers Group from the Kurugu community of the West Mamprusi District was one of the farmer based organization trained. Kurugu is –km from Wulugu near Walewale. The group has forty-five (45) members with twenty-two (22) males and twenty-three (23) females. The group has been in existence for the past three years. The group is governed by bye-laws. The leadership structure of the group is made up of a Chairman (Sampa Yahaya), vice –chairman (Ibrahim Alhassan) Secretary (Lahari Zangina), Treasurer (Yin Gurindow) ,Vice- Secretary (Tongu Sandow) and Organizer(Fudu Adam). The group has a savings bank account at the Bangmarigu Community Bank with account number SLOT 22- 098. The signatories to the account are the Chairman, the secretary and the Treasurer. The group pays yearly dues of 50 pesewa. The group meets fortnightly at the chairman's house.

Farming is their main occupation but they rear animals and guinea fowls as well and the women also do trade and burn charcoal and pick sheanuts. The group support themselves by assisting each other in specific farming activities such as planting and harvesting during the major/minor

cropping seasons. Members support each other in the form of donations (cash or kind) to bereaved or sick members and victims of crop failure and natural disasters. The major crops grown are maize, beans, groundnut and millet. The minor crops are beans, okro and soyabean. They sell their produce individually at the Pwalugu and Wulugu markets. Most members are unable to apply fertilizers because of lack of credits to buy them. Those who do apply the fertilizers do it in minimal amounts which affect the yields. About 50% of members of the FBO are Muslims, 45% are Christians and 5% are traditionalist.

2.0 Background of assignment including brief on Training needs

Training needs of Bomanga Maize Farmers Group based on challenges

	No Problems	Some Problems	Many Problems	Cause of Problems / Causes	Training Needs
<p><i>Module 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction • Commercial Development of FBOs (CDFO) • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies • The Beginning of a Process 			<p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p>	<p>Little knowledge, not well informed about MCA.</p> <p>Very little idea about module 1.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crop production: 		x		<p>Very little knowledge of time of land preparation, in- appropriate ploughing methods, soil management is non- existing. Exact measure of an acre is assumed. Fair idea of improved seeds and where to get them. Due to lack of credit, minority of the members go for early maturing, drought and disease resistant varieties. Knowledge of fertilizer but little knowledge on proper application</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Module 2:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Why FBOs are Important for Rural Development ▪ Functions of Producer Organizations ▪ Functions as Member Services ▪ Unique Characteristics and Challenges of FBOs ▪ Elements of Strong FBOs ▪ Commercialization and Best Practices 		<p>x</p> <p>x</p>		<p>Very little knowledge about rural development, weak knowledge of producer organization. Have by-laws and meeting times.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p><i>Module 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact • Value Chain Framework • Elements of the Value Chain • Why Value Chain Growth is Important to FBO • Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Hearing the value-chain concept for the first time.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Module 4:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It? • How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision • Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan • Developing Vision for your FBO • Practice Using the Value Chain Lens • The Visioning Process • Drafting the Vision Statement 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Have targets based on subsistence farming to cater for immediate family</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Module 5:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of Board Operation • Review of Key Organization Documents • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders • Importance of Member Services and Meetings • Approaches to Financial Management 	<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>			<p>leadership is very active, meeting schedules are defined, poor record keeping, lack of knowledge of group activities by some members, lack of group cohesion, have bye-laws, simply lack of planning, organizational and leadership skills.</p> <p>FBO has never taken any financial assistance or loan</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Module 6:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and Challenges • Brainstorming Strategies • Sources and Uses of Funds, • Identifying tactics, • Targets and Strategies 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Very weak knowledge of self assessment, do not have any idea of SWOT.</p> <p>The concept is new</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p><i>Module 7:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) • Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource Requirements Maximizing Sales) 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>No knowledge at all</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Module 8</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for change identified by the business planning process • What Organization Changes Need to be made? • Change agenda components • Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) • Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business Plan) 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>No knowledge at all</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>Module 9</p> <p>Action business Plan</p> <p>Financial Management Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pro forma cash flow-projection of what the business plan means to show cash inflow and outflow over period of time and is use for internal planning. • Prime interest to a lender to show how one intends to repay loan. • Shows how much and when cash must flow into the business. • Credit Management 			<p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p>	<p>No knowledge</p> <p>No knowledge</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>yes</p>

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After the training the farmers gained much knowledge about the various topics in the modules taught. The Bomanga Maize Farmers Group was ready to learn and asked very important questions. They admitted that this was the first time they have had such teaching on commercialization drive and they are prepared to move from the subsistence level farming into commercial farming. The Farmers appreciated the knowledge they had acquired.

3.0 Training venues and logistical challenges

The major logistical problems encountered during the training of the Bomanga Maize Farmers Group from Kurugu accessing the location during raining days.

4.0 Trainers and Training equipment

Table 1: A table, indicating the FBO ID #, the FBO name, the location of FBO and the trainer for the FBO

FBO Identification Number	FBO name	Location of FBO	Names of Trainer(s)
NAZ081202G04FR	Bomanga Maize Farmers' Group	Kurugu, WEST MAMPRUSI	Mrs. Charlotte Oduro-Yeboah

Materials used for training.

The materials used for training are flip-chart board, flip charts, markers because it made teaching and learning easier considering the literacy level of the farmers. The farmers can neither read nor write as a result no material was given to them.

5.0 Lessons from Approaches and Methodology

d. Summary of selected modules / topics for each week and a brief outline of methodology used for each in a tabular form

Table 2: The table of the modules for the indicated week

Week (with dates)	MODULE NUMBER & TITLE	TOPIC (if applicable)	TRAINING METHODOLOGY
Week 1 9, 10, 11th August 2010	Module 1: MCA Ghana Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture Project structure • Commercial Development of FBOs(CDFO) • Implementation Arrangements • MiDA- Your Development Partner • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies • Course objectives • The Beginning of a process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why FBOs are important for rural Development • Functions of Producer Organisation • Functions as member services • Unique characteristics and challenges of FBOs • Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and best practices <p>Reality check: Where is your FBO starting from?</p>	Lectures Discussion Group discussion Demonstration
WEEK 2 16th,17th & 18th August,2010	Module 2: FBOs, Rural Development and Commercializ ation Module 3: Value chain Thinking OCB Modules 1 OCB Module 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group formation and development • Credit Management • Contracts • Business and technical 	Lectures Discussion Group discussion Demonstration Lectures Discussion

<p>WEEK 3 23rd, 24th & 25th August 2010.</p> <p>Week 4 30th, 31st</p>	<p>OCB Module 3</p> <p>OCB Module 4</p> <p>OCB Module 5</p> <p>Module 4: Business vision through a value chain lens</p> <p>Module 5: A short Primer on Producer Organization Principles</p>	<p>communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods for tracking FBO's progress. • Why value chains are important for the Ghana compact. • Value Chain framework • Elements of the value chain • Why value chain Growth is important to FBO • Value chain thinking as a tool for business strategy • What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who needs it • How FBOs benefit from Business Vision • Business vision vis-a vis Business Plan • Practice using the value chain lens • The visioning process • Drafting the vision statement • Reviewing concepts of leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of board operation • Review of key organization Documents • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of office holders • Importance of Member Services and meetings • Approaches to Financial Management 	<p>Lectures Discussion Group discussion Demonstration S</p>
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<p>August & 1st September 2010</p> <p>Week 5 6th, 7th & 8th September, 2010.</p>	<p>Module 6: Developing Business Expansion Strategies</p> <p>Module 7: Developing the Action Agenda</p> <p>Module 8: Driving The organization change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and Challenges • Brainstorming Strategies • In-depth Technical Assessment (Production Practices, Harvesting Practices, Approach to harvesting, Post Harvest Handling Practices, Primary processing, storage, value Added practices, organization and Management practices) • Sources and Uses of Funds, • Identifying tactics • Finalizing Strategies • Final check on Vision, Targets and Strategies • From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) • Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource Requirements • Customizing Training and Technical Support(Technical Training and Maximizing Sales) • A note about Performance Monitoring • From Action Agenda to Business Plan • Requirements for change identified by the business planning process • What Organization Changes 	<p>Lectures Discussion Group discussion</p>
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<p>Week 6 13th, 14th & 15th September, 2010</p>	<p>Module 9: Action Business Plan</p> <p>Module 9: Action Business Plan</p>	<p>Need to be made?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change agenda components • Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) • Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities (Completing the plan, developing work plan per strategy. Meeting with RICs • Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business plan <p>• Directions for completing the Business Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing the Business plan (Background to action business plan, the action business plan) • Next steps • Evaluation of training • End of training 	<p>Discussion Group discussion</p> <p>Discussion Group discussion</p>
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Module 1: The MCA Ghana Compact

FBO's Knowledge of MCA Ghana before training

The Bomanga Maize Farmers' group had an idea about the MCA Ghana Compact from other farmers who had been trained in other communities in the district. However the trainees did not have a thorough understanding of the concept of the MCA Ghana Compact. The three components of the MCA Ghana Compact were not known to them and implementation arrangements and various selected zones to benefit from the Agricultural project. The commercial development of the Farmer Based Organization was even not clear to them either. The objective of the session was to emphasize that Agriculture which is the backbone of the country could go a long way to reduce poverty and bring about economic growth if it is commercialized. The training methodology used was lectures, discussions and sighting of examples to stress the various important points in the topic.

Crop Budget Analysis

To assist the farmers objectively choose the major crops they would be cropping under the MiDA programme, the Bomanga Maize Farmers Group compared the expected profits they would be making with respect to what goes into production of maize, beans, groundnut and millet. Some of the input costs were also based on the prices of the last cropping season. However, the current prices of commodities as pertains on the major markets around the communities were used. The Bomanga Maize Farmers Group settled on cropping maize in the major cropping season.

Farmers' knowledge level of MCA Ghana Compact after training

After the training sessions, trainees understood the MCA Ghana Compact, the various components particularly the Agricultural project which presents a unique opportunity for them to reduce poverty through economic growth led by agricultural transformation. This could be achieved through increased production.

Conclusion/key Message

At the end of the training sessions in Module 1, the participants generally agreed that the training module had greatly increased their knowledge on the MCA Ghana Compact and their drive into commercializing their farming.

Module 2: FBO's, rural development and commercialization

Members of the Bomanga Maize Farmers Group were taken through rural development and commercialization of farmer based organization. The discussion was based on the importance of group and group formation, group functions and services. The characteristic and challenges of FBO, elements of strong FBO, best practice in commercialization among others were examined.

Value chain

Participants were introduced to value and value chains concepts and its relationship to economic growth and poverty reduction. Participants were taken through how the market

system operates with respect to the major crops produced. They were taught how their crops move within the commodity chain and how they could transform commodity chain thinking into value chain thinking in order to take advantage of markets at different levels by repositioning themselves in the chain.

The definition of 'value chain' was the path that a crop or product takes as it moves from field or factory to the marketplace. It was pointed out that at each stop or step along the way, value (not just price) is added to the product. The farmers were taught that each vertical step in a value chain is a market for the step below. The value chain includes all activities that it takes to bring a product to the market, including horizontal linkages to suppliers of goods and services.

Value Chains and the Ghana Compact

Ghana needs to increase the competitiveness of the value chains which take key crops into international marketplaces in order to achieve economic growth through agriculture. Value chain thinking is practiced worldwide by competitive firms which realize that the key to profitability is the ability to move a product into the market place at prices which both satisfy customers and carry the lowest possible overheads. The farmers were made to realize that Ghana's agriculture is key to the country's economic growth and that to achieve economic growth that is sustainable and reduces poverty, value chains must operate with expanded opportunities for Farmers based organization (FBO). For this to happen, FBOs must understand value chains and be able to use this understanding to strengthen their organization and their approaches to doing business. The trainees were taught the basic concepts behind value-added thinking. The methodologies used are lectures, demonstration and discussion.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Bomanga Maize Farmers Group had a fair idea about value addition to agricultural produce when module 3 was introduced. Due to lack of resources and understanding of how the market operates is what has delayed their practice of the value chain concept. After this module, the Bomanga Maize Farmers Group had improved their understanding of the subject and was ready to take advantage of the opportunities in the market as regards the maize.

Conclusion/key message

Participants learnt for the first time about rural development through commercial farming. At the end of the module, the farmers' appreciated that value chains can be used as tools for increasing profitability. The farmers appreciated the concept and were poised to add value to their produce in order to by-pass the middlemen in the value chain.

Module 4: Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens

The Farmers Group was taken through the business vision concept. The elements of a good business vision were identified as a vision statement and targets for achievement. The characteristics of a good business vision are that it must be time bound, must be accompanied by specific volume targets and vision must be realistic and considered achievable. The benefits of an FBO having a business vision were looked at. These included group cohesion, ability to design activities which fulfill member expectations and ability to identify and set targets. The participants were later taken through the vision development process. The participants were helped to assess their current performance levels and to set targets which the FBO seeks to

achieve over the next two years. During the business vision drafting stage participants were divided into two groups, each presented their vision. Participants were guided to write down draft business vision statements based on the contribution from the two groups.

Module 5: Leadership, Governance and Management

In this module participants were introduced to the complementary nature of the three concepts of leadership, governance and management. It was stressed that individuals within an organization may play one or more of these roles but usually not at the same time. The importance of organizational leadership and how it works within organizations were treated. Other areas discussed were what leadership roles were, characteristics of good leaders and characteristics of effective boards. Governance as the power of making and administering organization policies with regard to programs, relationships and limitations of authority were explained to participants. The methodologies used are lectures, demonstration and discussion.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Module 5 gave the Bomanga Maize Farmers Group more insight on the different levels of leadership and the roles they play. The understanding of the module motivated them to involve all members in the running of the organization by setting up committees and was ready to consult with some dignitaries to serve on the board of the organization.

Conclusion/ key message

The members of the FBO appreciated that they can only succeed in the commercialization drive if only they work together and support those in leadership, management and governance positions. They also realized the complementary nature of the leadership, management and governance concept.

Module 6: Developing Business Expansion Strategies

In this module key strategies for the FBO business expansion were looked at. The Farmers' Group was assisted to use the SWOT analysis as a tool to evaluate the factors both internal and external to the organization which can affect its ability to carry out a business venture. The SWOT analysis framework was used by the participants to brainstorm internal factors such as production, marketing and selling practices, finance, post harvest handling and management practices and classify them as strengths or weaknesses. The same thing was done for external factors which were classified them into threats or opportunities. Participants reviewed internal and external factors to identify attributes and challenges. Strengths and opportunities put together form the attributes which work in favor of the organization's ability to achieve its business vision. Challenges are the weaknesses and threats which have the potential to work against the organization's ability to achieve its business vision. Farmers' were then engaged in identification of attributes and challenges exercise which was followed with a brainstorming session on strategies. A list of strategies was then developed. An in-depth technical assessment

of the FBO in the areas of production practices, harvesting practices, post-harvest handling practices, primary processing, storage, value-added practices, marketing practices and organization and management practices was the second form of assessment which the FBO examined.

A short list of tactics that participants felt could be used to guide the FBO activity in each category was noted. The strategies were then finalized using; each strength to address each weakness, taking advantage of the opportunities and getting ready to meet each threat.

Module 7: Developing the Action Agenda

The participants worked the strategies and tactics arrived at to develop elements of an action agenda for inclusion in their business plans. The action agenda gives the specific steps the FBO will take at the member, organizational and value chain levels to support achievements of strategies and vision. To move from strategy to action, farmers were assisted to review each strategy and list the tactics which correspond to it. Participants were divided among each strategy and each group reviewed all of its related tactics to make sure that the strategy with which it is working is supported by all of the tactics that it needs. Participants were made to appreciate that for a successful implementation of any business plan, specific actions will be required to bring about what is expected. To ensure that the right actions are chosen, it was important to first identify the changes that would have to take place in the organization.

During discussion, Bomanga Maize Farmers Group realized that the desired change will have to occur at the member level, organizational level and value chain level.

Module 8: Driving Organizational Change

In this module farmers' looked specifically at defining an agenda for the management of organizational and technical changes that would support the ability of the FBO to continue with their business planning efforts. It was agreed that requirements for change identified by the business planning process meant that a plan to manage the change is very necessary. The farmers' appreciated that implementation of the change has to be driven through the organization with leadership playing a key role. There was a need to enforce an action assignment, definition of responsibilities and commitments, manage arrangements and define action steps needed to achieve change at member and organization levels. The Bomanga Maize Farmers Group agreed that at member levels it will be useful to appoint member leaders, set up committees support implementation and communication, hold meetings to introduce plan, invite members to contribute to training design and structure member feedback channels. At the organization level, development of revenue generation plan, preparation of management plan, analysis of financial impacts of plan implementation and completion of business plan were very important. The methodologies used are lectures, demonstration, group discussion and discussion.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Participants had a very good understanding of what the vision and strategies of the FBO were. They also learnt about practical steps to address the strategies. The modules equipped the farmers to come up with action agendas. The changes that the FBO had to go through were recognized and a management plan put in place. The farmers' knowledge and skill on the two subject areas improved considerably.

Conclusion/key message

The participants appreciated the importance of assessment and the changes at the member, organizational levels in order to achieve the action agenda and improve strategies for business development.

Module 9: Completing the Draft Business Action Plan

Based on the activities carried out in the eight modules, Bomanga Maize Farmers Group was assisted to put together their business plan. The first part of this exercise dealt with the background to the plan and it covered areas such as background information about the FBO, description of the operating structure, overview of current practices and assessment of environment and opportunities. Part two of the business plan drafting was based on the action agenda and areas such as vision and targets of the FBO, action plans for implementation of each strategy and management plan.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Participants had good understanding of the concept of turning their subsistence farming into a commercial venture before the commencement of Module 9. All the knowledge and information and skill gained in the previous modules were brought to bear on completing the draft action business plan.

Conclusion/key message

Members of the FBO appreciated the business plan development and confessed that they have really gained knowledge through this course. They proved that they had gained knowledge about farming as a business. A draft copy of the business plan was completed.

Module 9: Completing the Draft Business Action Plan

In the final week, Module 9 was continued. The background information about the FBO, their operating structure, overview of current practices and assessment of environment and opportunities collated was confirmed. The vision, strategies, actions and tactics were finally fed into the business plan.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

All the knowledge and skills acquired in the earlier modules were brought to bear on completing the draft action business plan. Participants after going through all the nine (9) modules were

very anxious to begin the commercialization their farming activities. The farmers were poised to go through the second stage training in order to come by the starter pack and the Mida loan.

Conclusion/key message

The training session for the week was more excellent since the farmers proved that they had gained knowledge to help in their business drive. They greatly showed appreciation for the knowledge gained and the content of the material they had gone through for the past weeks.

Follow-up activities by trainers and trainees

The Agricultural extension Agents (AEAs) accompanied the CSIR-FRI team to visit the executives of the FBOs and opinion leaders in the communities. The AEAs assigned to the Kurugu community supported during the training sessions and will follow up on the performance and challenges of the farmer based organization. The AEAs will assist also in the stage two training.

e. Lessons for improving future training.

- a. The content of the modules were very appropriate because the participants confessed that they had really gained much knowledge which will go a long way in aiding their commercialization drive. The farmers agreed that the content of the modules will immensely help in their farming activities.
- b. Most of the participants were illiterates but they understood the modules because the interpreter did his work well and even gave illustrations to stress the points taught in the various modules. The contents of some of the modules were a bit technical, if simplified will help the farmers because most of them are illiterates.
- c. As a result of this training, do you anticipate that the participating FBOs will?
 - i. The members of the Bomanga Maize Farmers Group were poised to engage in collective purchase and to be involved in such a process they constituted a purchasing committee who will be responsible for the purchase of inputs, agrochemicals and fertilizers. They also understood the benefits of engaging in collective purchasing through credits.
 - ii. The Bomanga Maize Farmers Group will definitely engage in collective marketing because it is one of the strategies they adopted in order to achieve their vision of doubling production.
 - iii. The FBO members are ready to engage in collective activities since they are now aware of the benefits of being in a group. They became aware about their access to credits and support services as a group.

- iv. The stage one training was very beneficial to the farmers. However training alone is not enough that is why the stage two training is essential because that training will be more practical to the farmers and highly appreciated. The Bomanga Maize Farmers Group will be able to successfully and sustainably become more efficient and productive after the stages one and two training and when they have access to credits.

6.0 Tracking indicators

Table 3: Number and percentage of Bomanga Maize Farmers Group and leadership trained on various modules .

Name of FBO	Location	District	Number FBO members trained for each module (Percentage of leadership of FBO participating)			
			Module 1	Module 2 OCB modules 1- 5	Module 3	Module 4
Bomanga Maize Farmers Group	Kurugu	West Mamprusi	44 (98%), 6(100%)	43(96.3%), 6(100%)	43(96.3%) , 6(86%)	45(100%), 6(100%)
			Module 5	Module6	Module 7	Module 8
			45(100%), 6(100%)	44(98%), 6(100%)	44(98%), 6(100%)	44(98%), 6(100%)
			Module 9 45(100%), 5 (83.3%)			

7.0 Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

FBO	Location	District	MODULES	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Bomanga Maize Farmers Group	Kurugu	WEST MAMPRUSI	1	Weak	Good	Farmers followed with much passion and assurance.
			2	Weak	Very Good	Farmers followed with much concentration and great expectations
			3	Poor	Excellent	Farmers appreciated the concept of value chain and realized that they were the starting point in the chain.
			4	Fairly good	Very good	Farmers listened attentively
			5	Fair idea	Good	Farmers appreciated the concept of leadership, governance and management.
			6	Fairly good	Very good	Farmers were poised to implement the content of module.

			7	Poor	Good	Farmers gained knowledge on Action Agenda
			8	Fairly good	Very good	Farmers were ready to implement the changes to achieve their vision.
			9	poor	excellent	Farmers were ready to access the MIDA loan.

8.0 Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

The business capacity of the Bomanga Maize Farmers Group was developed because the group gained much knowledge as they went through the various modules. The contents of the modules were relevant and well understood by the farmers. The training methodology and delivery were excellent. Farmer's knowledge and skill increased after the training and this affected their thinking, attitude and behaviour towards commercial farming. Farmers showed lots of enthusiasm, though they said most of the subject areas (training modules) were new to them. The business plan which would enable them access MCA funds as loans from banks in order for them to operate as commercial farmers was completed.

It is recommended that:

- The stage one training is held in the off-season so that the farmers may avail themselves more for the training.
- The content of the training material should be simplified to meet the standard of the farmers
- The Farmer Based Organization must be supervised and strengthen adequately.
- Credit facilities must be extended to farmers to purchase improved seeds, agrochemicals and fertilizers for commercial farming.
- Farmers must be trained on modern production technologies and post harvest technologies.
- Transport services and inaccessible roads must be improved for markets accessibility.
- Farmers must be encouraged to do group marketing for good produce prices.

MALINMANGA MARKETING GROUP

KPASENKPE

WEST MAMPRUSI

1. Executive Summary and Introduction (2 pages maximum)

The Phase 2 Stage 1 training was conducted in the West Mamprusi District.

The FBO trained is known as Malinmanga Marketing Group, based at Kpasenkpe. The FBO has 35 members who are all females.

Trainer and farmer perception of the reasons for the training are summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below:

Table 1. Trainer perception of the reasons for the training

<i>Trainers perception of initial reasons for farmers attending training</i>	<i>Percentage of farmers</i>
To access to credits	100%
To access markets	50%
To access training and information	50%

Table 2. Farmer participant perception of the reasons for the training

<i>Trainers perception of initial reasons for farmers attending training</i>	<i>Percentage of farmers</i>
To access to credits	100%
To access markets	30%
To access training and information	50%

a. Lessons learned from first Phase 1 training:

- i. The farmers found the training very useful and had become optimistic that the MiDA Compact Programme could improve their standard of living significantly and alter their approach to farming and way of doing things. This is because they had heard a lot from the farmers who benefitted in cash and kind from the first Phase 1 training.
- ii. The modules are good documents to use to train the FBO but one weakness inherent in the training is that since the most of the FBO members are illiterates, there has to be follow up training sessions in order to have them grounded in the training content, since they can forget easily the materials they were taught. This could be done by AEA's of MoFA.
- iii. It is suggested that adult education classes in literacy and numeracy be conducted by the FBO members in order for them to properly assimilate and relate better with some of the subject matter of the modules.

2. Background of assignment including brief on training needs (present in table format)

The six-week Stage 1 training on Commercial Development for Farmer-Based Organisations (FBOs) and Enterprise Development For Farmer-Based Organisations was conducted by the Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research for the Malinmanga Marketing Group, a Farmer-Based Organization based at Kpasenkpe in the West Mamprusi

District from 12th August to 15th September 2010. This Stage 1 Training was conducted for the Millennium Development Authority (MiDA). For each FBO, 3 sessions each of 4 hour duration was conducted each week over the course period of 6 weeks amounting to 18 training sessions or 92 hours of training. The training was based on Business Development (BD) and Organizational Capacity Building (OCB) modules developed by MiDA for Stage 1 training and training needs assessment of the FBO which was carried out the week earlier. The needs assessment showed that the FBO would require training in topics of the modules shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Training needs assessment identified

Business Development (BD) Modules	Training Required
<p><i>BD Module 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction • Commercial Development of FBOs (CDFO) • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies • The Beginning of a Process 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>BD Module 2:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why FBOs are Important for Rural Development • Functions of Producer Organizations • Functions as Member Services • Unique Characteristics and Challenges of FBOs • Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and Best Practices 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>BD Module 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact • Value Chain Framework • Elements of the Value Chain • Why Value Chain Growth is Important to FBO • Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>BD Module 4:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It? • How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision • Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan • Developing Vision for your FBO • Practice Using the Value Chain Lens • The Visioning Process • Drafting the Vision Statement 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p><i>BD Module 5:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of Board Operation • Review of Key Organization Documents • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders • Importance of Member Services and Meetings • Approaches to Financial Management 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>BD Module 6:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and Challenges • Brainstorming Strategies • Sources and Uses of Funds, • Identifying tactics, • Targets and Strategies 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>BD Module 7:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) • Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource Requirements Maximizing Sales) 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>BD Module 8</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for change identified by the business planning process • What Organization Changes Need to be Made? • Change agenda components • Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) • Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business Plan) 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p><i>OCB Module 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Formation And Development ● What is a Group? ● Importance of a Group ● Elements of a Strong Group ● How groups are formed ● Group Constitution/Bye-laws-Making Process ● Roles and Responsibilities of group Leaders and members ● Procedure for Conducting Effective Meetings ● Team building ● Group Leadership Skills Development ● Financial Records Keeping ● Decision Making Process ● Conflict Management ● Cooperative Development 	<p>Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes</p>
<p><i>OCB Module 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is Credit? ● Types of Credit ● Sources of Funds ● Principles of good lending ● Stages of credit delivery ● Loan Management ● Accessing the MiDA Micro Credit 	<p>Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes</p>
<p><i>OCB Module 3</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is a contract? ● Importance of Contract ● How to Enter into a Contract ● Types of Contract ● Business Contract Outline ● What is Procurement? ● How is Procurement Done? 	<p>Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes</p>
<p><i>OCB Module 4</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is Communication? ● Importance of Effective Communication in Farmers' Associations ● Forms of Communication ● Tools of Communication ● Barriers to Effective Communication ● How to Improve Communication in Farmers' Associations 	<p>Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes</p>

<p><i>OCB Module 5</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking Progress of FBOs • When is Progress Tracking Done? • Indicators and mechanism for Monitoring Progress • Sample Tracking Tools 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
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At the end of the 6-week training most of the farmers had acquired sufficient knowledge about the subjects which had been identified as their training needs. They became appropriately primed /oriented for MiDA-CDFO Project with the view to become commercial farmers.

3. Training venues and logistical challenges (Please comment if there were particular logistical challenges faced including but not limited to accessing training sites, appropriateness of site, etc. Use tabular form with brief comments if you need to comment on more than 3 FBOs) (PUT A PICTURE WHICH SHOWS YOUR LOGISTICAL CHALLENGE)

Training was conducted in the L/A Primary School Classroom in the Kpasenkpe community. One major problem encountered was commutation from Walewale, where trainers were based and commuted to the training venue, a distance of about 60 km. Kpasenkpe is off the Walewale-Bolgatanga highway, branpart from the long distance travelled, the road was also very bad and became un-motorable during the rains.

4. Trainers and Training equipment

The name of the FBO, its location and trainer is shown in Table 1.

Table 4. Name of FBO, its location and trainer

FBO Identification Number	FBO name	Location of FBO	Names of Trainer(s)
NAZ081217G01Fr	Malinmanga Marketing Group	Kpasenkpe	Dr. Kwame A. Vowotor

The FBO was trained because of the trainers background in Crop Science and Post Harvest Technology. The trainer was also able to apply his knowledge in delivery of materials in these two subjects to rural illiterate farmers.

Materials used for the training included attendance registers, flip boards and chats, makers, MiDA training manuals on the various modules and posters.

The materials used for training were to assist the farmers to have a good understanding of the subject areas presented.

The training materials used were standardized training materials of FBOs in the MiDA programme. The other FBOs in the District also used the same materials in order to have uniformity and consistency across.

5. Lessons from Approaches and Methodology

f. Summary of selected modules / topics for each week and a brief outline of methodology used for each in a tabular form

Table 5: Weekly schedule of modules/topics and course content

Week (with dates)	MODULE NUMBER & TITLE	TOPIC (if applicable)	TRAINING METHODOLOGY
Week 1 10/08/10 To 12/08/10	(BD Module 1): The MCA Ghana Program and Course Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction • Commercial Development of FBOs (CDFO) • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies • The Beginning of a Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Learning • Discussions • Lectures • Brainstorming • Experience Sharing
Week 2 16/08/10 To 18/08/10	(BD Module 2): FBOs, Rural Development and Commercialization (BD Module 3): Value Chain Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why FBOs are Important for Rural Development • Functions of Producer Organizations • Functions as Member Services • Unique Characteristics and Challenges of FBOs • Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and Best Practices • Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact • Value Chain Framework • Elements of the Value Chain • Why Value Chain Growth is Important to FBO • Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Learning • Discussions • Lectures • Brainstorming • Experience Sharing

	(OCB Module 1) Group Formation and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Formation And Development • What is a Group? • Importance of a Group • Elements of a Strong Group • How groups are formed • Group Constitution/Bye-laws-Making Process • Roles and Responsibilities of group Leaders and members • Procedure for Conducting Effective Meetings • Team building • Group Leadership Skills Development • Financial Records Keeping • Decision Making Process • Conflict Management Cooperative Development 	
Week 3 23/08/10 To 25/08/10	(BD Module 4) Business Vision Through a Value Chain Lens (BD Module 5) Leadership, Governance and Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It? • How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision • Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan • Developing Vision for your FBO • Practice Using the Value Chain Lens • The Visioning Process • Drafting the Vision Statement • Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of Board Operation • Review of Key Organization Documents • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Learning • Discussions • Working Exercises • Lectures • Brainstorming • Experience Sharing

	(OCB Module 2) Credit Maagement	<p> Holders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of Member Services and Meetings <p> Approaches to Financial Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Credit? • Types of Credit • Sources of Funds • Principles of good lending • Stages of credit delivery • Loan Management • Accessing the MiDA Micro Credit 	
Week 4 30/08/10 To 01/09/10	(BD Module 6) Developing Business Expansion Strategies	<p>BD Module 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and Challenges • Brainstorming Strategies • Sources and Uses of Funds, • Identifying tactics, • Targets and Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Learning • Discussions • Working Exercises • Lectures • Brainstorming Experience Sharing
	(BD Module 7) Developing the Action Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) • Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource Requirements • Customizing Training and technical Support (Technical Training and Maximizing Sales) • A Note About 	

	(BD Module 8) Driving Organization Change	<p>Performance Monitoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Action Agenda to Business Plan • Requirements for change identified by the business planning process • What Organization Changes Need to be Made? • Change agenda components • Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities (Completing the Plan, Developing Workplan per Strategy, Meeting with RICs) • Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business Plan) 	
	(OCB Module 3) Contract and Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a contract? • Importance of Contract • How to Enter into a Contract • Types of Contract • Business Contract Outline • What is Procurement? • How is Procurement Done? 	
Week 5 06/09/10 To 08/09/10	(BD Module 9) Action Business Plan (OCB Module 4) Business and Technical Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directions for Completing the Business Plan • What is Communication? • Importance of Effective Communication in Farmers' Associations • Forms of Communication • Tools of Communication • Barriers to Effective Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Learning • Discussions • Working Exercises • Lectures • Brainstorming Experience Sharing

		How to Improve Communication in Farmers' Associations	
Week 6 13/09/10 To 15/09/10	(BD Module 9) Action Business Plan (OCB Module 5) Methods For Tracking Progress of FBOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing the Business Plan • Next Steps • Evaluation of Training • Tracking Progress of FBOs • When is Progress Tracking Done? • Indicators and mechanism for Monitoring Progress • Sample Tracking Tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Learning • Discussions • Working Exercises • Lectures • Brainstorming Experience Sharing

g. Experiences with the usefulness of developing a lesson plan, and usefulness of the different aspects of the lesson plan for learning by FBO members.

xv. Topic

The topics (BD and OCB Modules) studied were designed by MiDA to enable the FBO to become strengthened in order to grow economically and reduce poverty among its members. Through this, the FBO members begin seeing as a business and not just a way of life. Nearly all the topics studied were new to them.

xvi. Why the Topic

The objective for selecting the topics was to help in the commercial development of the FBOs so that ultimately the members will undertake farming as a business rather than as a subsistence activity. To achieve the objectives of the CDFO programme the training needs of the FBOs had been assessed and the topics were selected to address these requirements based on the Modules which had been developed by MiDA.

xvii. Learning objective of current lesson

The learning objective was to provide technical training on modern agriculture technologies and practices consistent with commercial farming and also post harvest technologies and handling of produce which will lead to significant reduction in postharvest loss of farmers produce. These are considered necessary to upgrade farming activities from subsistent level to commercial production.

xviii. Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

- i. Objective of lesson
- ii. Outline
- iii. Introduction

- iv. Relevant topics/practical demonstrations
 - v. Experiences sharing
 - vi. Discussions
 - vii. Question time
 - viii. Summary
- v. Training methodology (Activities/Steps in the provision of learning experiences)**

Lesson plans were developed to ensure that the time allocations for the various topics were adequate. The lesson plans enabled materials to be used for training to be assembled, and also facilitated logical, and consistent flow of information during teaching. This enhanced understanding of FBO members, and made learning easy and interesting for the farmers. Lessons were prepared using what, why, when, and how approach, and prepared to give in-depth training, knowledge, and understanding on the technical aspects of the subject matter. Training methodology included group discussions, teaching, illustrations, examples and case study and sharing of experiences, etc. Important information was recapped at the end session and questions asked to make sure farmers had understood the topics well.

vi. Conclusion/Key message

It is the general observation and conviction that farmers have acquired invaluable knowledge during the course of six weeks training. Training content has been appropriate and relevant and it is believed that farmers will apply the knowledge acquired. They learnt new approaches in order to farm commercially. One of its most significant accomplishments is that the programme helped the farmers to move from subsistence to more tactical and then more strategic thinking. Another significant outcome is that through the learning process, attitudes and behaviours that strongly support the adoption of the principles of lifelong learning were promoted.

v. Follow-up activities by trainers and trainee

The six-week training will be followed up with a three-week Stage 2 training on Crop Productivity. Before this Stage 2 training, the Trainer is expected to complete the write up on the Action Business Plan which will be submitted to the Community Rural Bank where the FBO has its account.

e. Lessons for improving future training

Appropriateness of training content/modules

The modules and topics discussed were very relevant because they addressed specific needs of the FBOs based on the vision of the FBO and what they hoped to achieve as documented in their Business Plans. These are paths that the FBOs have chattered for themselves and training was conducted to move them along these paths to the expected goals. It is expected that a significant percentage of the farmers will apply the knowledge that they have acquired to improve their farming operations and maximize their yields and profits based on the value-chain thinking. Some areas such as value-chain thinking and developing business expansion strategies, farmers requested that the topics be repeated for a thorough understanding and grasp of the content. This will be taken into account in future training programmes.

Understanding of participants

At the end of every training session evaluation was conducted to assess the understanding of the farmers. Generally it seemed that a fair proportion of the farmers had grasped a fair understanding of topics which had been discussed. Certainly farmers had improved their knowledge of topics which had been discussed.

Adoption of Good Agronomic Practices

As a result of the training, it is anticipated that most of the trained farmers will adopt good agronomic practices and technology to upgrade their farming activities. These are intensive training of fairly long duration and it will be surprising that a farmer will sit through and not adopt any of the things he or she has learnt even if his/her initial objective had been to obtain the MiDA loan.

Collective marketing, etc

The farmers have realized the advantages in engaging in collective marketing as it will give them better bargaining power and higher returns. It is expected that the FBOs will adopt these measures and other collective activities which will be to their advantage as individuals and also as a group.

Adequacy of training

Over 98% of the farmers trained have never been to school and though have considerable experience in farming, this lack of formal training will affect their ability to adequately understand the higher technical content of the training. Farmers should be assisted during farming by technical personnel, AEAs, etc to implement GAP and this may be necessary step in the adoption of technologies by the farmers. The FBOs will have to be supported and directed for a reasonable length of time before they may be able to operate as desired by the project.

6. Tracking indicators

The number of FBO members trained during Phase 2 Stage 1 training at West Mamprusi is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Number of FBO members trained by districts and villages and modules.

Name of FBO	Location	District	Number FBO members trained for each module (Percentage of leadership of FBO participating)			
			BD Module 1	BD Module 2	BD Module 3	BD Module 4
Malinmanga Marketing Group	Kpasenkpe	West Mamprusi District	33, 33, 33 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	33, 34, 33 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	32, 33, 29 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	31, 32, 34 (FBO Leadership: 100%)
			BD Module 5	BD Module 6	BD Module 7	BD Module 8
Malinmanga Marketing Group	Kpasenkpe	West Mamprusi District	35, 35, 35 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	35, 35, 35 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	35, 35, 35 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	35, 35, 35 (FBO Leadership: 100%)

7. Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

An evaluation by trainers of the knowledge and skills acquired by FBO members during the Stage 1 training on Business Development (BD) and Organization Capacity Building (OCB) is summarized and presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Evaluation by trainers of the knowledge and skills acquired by FBO members during the Stage 1 training

FBO	Location	District	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Malinmanga Marketing Group	Kpasenkpe	West Mamprusi District	Fair	Good	Farmers asked much questions, were enthusiastic, gained considerable knowledge in new approaches to farming and followed with much attention

8. Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

The choice of the topics in the Business Development and Organizational Capacity Building Modules has some strategic considerations in building the FBO to become commercial farmers. One of its most significant accomplishments is that the programme helped the farmers to move from operational to more tactical and then more strategic thinking. The methods (participatory learning, discussions, working exercises, lectures, brainstorming, experience sharing) employed to train the FBO has increased the famers' abilities in terms of both management techniques and business skills. This, together with positive experiences gained with farmers, suggests that these same instruments could be used to confront other major challenges/situations in their rural communities. Since most (about 98%) of the farmers are illiterate, it is important to also add further training in literacy and numeracy if the impact of the MiDA training is to become more sustainable.

SUNGA
VEELA

YAGABA

WEST MAMPRUSI

9. Executive Summary and Introduction

The Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) contracted CSIR-Food Research as a Technical Training Service Provider (TTSP) to build the capacity of ten (10) Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs) in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region in commercial farming. This six-week Business Capacity Building training is aimed at equipping the farmer groups with production and business skills to increase production of high value cash crops. It is expected that at the end of the training, the FBO would have developed a business action plan which will enable it access funds from the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) Ghana Compact as loans from participating financial institutions. The loans are to assist the FBOs in their pursuit of commercializing their farming activities to access local, regional and international market prospects.

Four-hour training sessions were held on each training day for the FBOs. The trainees were aware of a similar training programme their colleague farmers had been through last year and the immense benefits in terms of knowledge they had gained. The trainees were therefore eager to gain access to the training and information but also looked forward to receive credit to expand their farms.

The farmers were able to understand most of the concepts in the training modules, though for some with a little difficulty. The more difficult but very important modules were recapped very often to help the farmers to understand so they can apply the knowledge gained to their farming and group activities. It was also observed that the farmers were able to assimilate more when teaching aids and practical examples pertaining to everyday life were used to explain some concepts. The content of the training modules is excellent for commercial development of the farmer groups except that few of the modules seem to be quite above the level of the caliber of trainees in question.

10. Background of Assignment Including Brief on Training Needs

CSIR-Food Research as a Technical Training Service Provider (TTSP) was contracted to build the capacity of ten Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs) in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region in commercial farming. This six-week Business Capacity Building training is aimed at equipping the farmer groups with production and business skills to increase production of high value cash crops. The training needs as identified during interaction with the trainees include the following:

- Land preparation and soil fertility management
- Access to improved seeds/varieties (early maturing, drought and disease resistant varieties)
- Suitable planting densities for increased yield
- Accurate time of planting
- fertilizer application (right types, application doses, mode of application)
- Proper application of PPPs (appropriate types, correct doses, time and mode of application, protective clothing and hazards)
- Times of maturation of crops cultivated
- Proper harvesting and post harvest handling practices
- Storage practices
- Marketing (Pricing of produce, weight measurements)

- Credit management
- Group formation, cohesion, leadership, governance and management

Community: Yagaba		Name of FBO: Sunga Veela	
Basic Information: Membership: 40		Male:14	Female: 26
Core Business: Food crop production			
Part 1: Organizational Capacity			
Module	Gap	Comments	Remarks & Recommendation
1. Group Formation / Development	poor meeting schedules, poor record keeping, lack of knowledge of elements of strong group, poor knowledge of responsibilities of leaders, weak group cohesion	most members lack adequate knowledge of what makes groups function well	Training in group dynamics needed
2. Credit Management	types, sources of credit, good lending principles, loan management	Group has never taken and managed a loan or any financial assistance	training in basic financial management needed
3. Contracts & Procurement	contracts and their importance, types of contract, business contract outline, procurement and how it is done	lack basic idea of importance of contracts in group marketing	technical training in how to enter contracts and deliver
4. Business & Technical Communication	basic communication structure, effective communication, forms and tools of communication, barriers to effective communication		training in technical communication to enhance business
Part 2: Business Planning & Development			
1. Knowledge of MCA / MiDA Project	knowledge on Ghana compact projects, the Agricultural project and the CDFO, stages of CDFO training, program	participants are not aware of the objectives of the MiDA project and the Agricultural project	Facilitate their understanding of the MiDA project and their role in MiDA

	implementation arrangements		
2. Role of FBO as drivers of change in Agriculture Commercialization and Rural Development	why FBOs are important for rural development, importance of FBOs and the potential benefits, unique characteristics and challenges of FBOs, FBOs and business expansion,	members lack knowledge on developing business linkages and sustaining revenue generation	training in business expansion needed
3. Knowledge of Value Chain Concept	what value is, value chain, value chain thinking w.r.t commodity chain thinking, value chain analysis	trainees have a basic understanding of value addition	trainees' understanding of the value chain concept needs to be strengthened
4. Vision, Objectives and Target Setting	what vision is, how FBOs benefit from business vision, developing a business vision process, drafting vision statements	trainees lack basic understanding on what vision is	the capacity of the group should be built to master this concept
5. Analysis of Organizational Structure	leadership, characteristics of good leadership, management, FBO core programs	trainees had basic knowledge of leadership	the three concepts of leadership must be emphasized
6. SWOT Analysis of FBO	SWOT analysis and how it works, attributes and challenges and how they can be used to achieve vision, developing strategies and tactics	SWOT analysis concept is new to most trainees	Facilitate their deeper understanding of the SWOT analysis and how it can be used to develop their business
7. Developing the Action Agenda	actions needed to implement tactics – member level, FBO level, value chain level, resource requirements	allowing trainees to work in groups will enhance their understanding of actions needed to address tactics and strategies	assist trainees to come up with relevant actions that will address tactics
8. Driving Organizational	where change is needed, how to go about such changes	trainees realized the need for change	trainees will need detailed steps of how and when

Change			such changes will be made
9. Defining Action Steps/ Business Plan/Map Development	detailed structure of business plan	trainees need to know the roles each one may have to play	facilitate trainees' understanding of all aspects of the business plan especially the financial projection
10. Financial and Credit Management			

After the initial training the knowledge of trainees about the modules has seen remarkable improvement. The group appreciated the new things learnt and insight into how they can use farming to transform their lives. The group is tuned up for commercial agriculture.

11. Training Venues and Logistical Challenges

FBO Id. Number	FBO name	Location of FBO	Log. Challenges
	Sunga Veela	Yagaba	the training venue was accessible, training site was good but chairs and tables used were inappropriate, appropriate teaching aids

4. Trainers and Training Equipment

FBO Id. Number	FBO name	Location of FBO	Names of Trainer(s)
	Sunga Veela	Yagaba	Joseph Gayin

Materials used for the training comprised MiDA training manuals on organization development and business development, attendance registers, flip boards and chats. No materials were given to the trainees since majority could neither read nor write.

Lessons from Approaches and Methodology

The various approaches adopted were helpful to get the trainees understand most of the modules. Depending on the topic treated, brainstorming sessions, discussions, group work and presentation, role plays, experience sharing and lectures were held. This stirred up their interest to follow through and actively engage in the lessons.

h. Summary of selected modules / topics for each week and a brief outline of methodology used for each in a tabular form

Table 2: Insert the table of the modules for the indicated week on the cover page

Week (with dates)	MODULE NUMBER & TITLE	TOPIC (if applicable)	TRAINING METHODOLOGY
week 1 13 -17 July, 2009	<p>1. Welcome and introduction of trainers and brief objectives of training programme and MiDA</p> <p>2. Self introduction of participants</p> <p>3. Training policy:</p> <p>1. Rules and regulations for the training sessions</p> <p>2. Background information of each participant</p> <p>4. Analysis of FBO: organizational structure and activities by Leaders and group discussion</p> <p>5. Needs Assessment</p> <p>6. Module 1 The MCA Ghana Project</p>	<p>Training Needs Assessment</p> <p>Systematic gathering of data to find out:</p> <p>1. Gaps in the knowledge and skills of the FBO.</p> <p>2. What FBO needs to learn in order to achieve the objectives of the the MiDA project.</p> <p>Module 1:</p> <p>1. The MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction</p> <p>2. Agriculture Project structure</p> <p>3. Commercial Development of FBOs (CDFO)</p> <p>4. Implementation Arrangements</p> <p>5. MiDA—Your Development Partner</p> <p>6. Implementation Support</p> <p>7. Key Compact Constituencies</p> <p>8. Course Objectives</p> <p>9. The Beginning of a Process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations • Discussions • Participatory learning
Week 2 20-24 July, 2009	<p>Module 2: FBOs, Rural Development and Commercialization.</p> <p>2. Module 3: Value Chain Thinking</p>	<p>Module 2:</p> <p>1. Why FBOs are Important for Rural Development</p> <p>2. Functions of Producer Organizations</p> <p>3. Functions as Member Services</p> <p>4. Unique Characteristics and Challenges of FBOs</p> <p>5. Elements of Strong FBOs</p> <p>6. Commercialization and Best Practices</p> <p>Reality Check: Where is your FBO Starting From?</p> <p>Module 3:</p> <p>1. Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact</p> <p>2. Value Chain Framework</p> <p>3. Elements of the Value Chain</p> <p>4. Why Value Chain Growth is Important to FBO</p> <p>5. Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations • Discussions • Brainstorming • Experience sharing • Participatory learning
Week 3 27 -31, July, 2009	<p>Module 4: Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens</p> <p>Module 5: A Short Primer on Producer Organization Principles</p>	<p>Module 4:</p> <p>1. What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It?</p> <p>2. How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision</p> <p>3. Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan</p> <p>4. Developing Vision for your FBO</p> <p>5. Practice Using the Value Chain Lens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations • Discussions • Brainstorming • Participatory learning

		<p>6. The Visioning Process</p> <p>7. Drafting the Vision Statement</p> <p>Module 5:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance 2. Basics of Board Operation 3. Review of Key Organization Documents 4. Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders 5. Importance of Member Services and Meetings 6. Approaches to Financial Management 	
<p>Week 4</p> <p>3 -7,</p> <p>August,</p> <p>2009</p>	<p>Module 6: Developing Business Expansion Strategies</p> <p>Module 7: Developing the Action Agenda</p> <p>Module 8: Driving the Organization Change</p>	<p>Module 6:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building 2. What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It 3. Defining Attributes and Challenges 4. Brainstorming Strategies 5. In-depth Technical Assessment (Production Practices, Harvesting Practices, Approach to harvesting, Post Harvest Handling Practices, Primary Processing, Storage, Value Added Practices, Organization and Management Practices - where applicable to FBO 6. Sources and Uses of Funds, 7. Identifying tactics, 8. Finalizing Strategies, 9. Final Check on Vision, Targets and Strategies <p>Module 7:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) 2. Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change,, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource Requirements 1. Customizing Training and Technical Support (Technical Training and Maximizing Sales) 2. A Note about Performance Monitoring 3. From Action Agenda to Business Plan <p>Module 8</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requirements for change identified by the business planning process 2. What Organization Changes Need to be Made? 3. Change agenda components 4. Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) 5. Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities (Completing the Plan, Developing Workplan per Strategy. Meeting with RICs 6. Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations • Discussions • Brainstorming • Participatory learning

		in the Business Plan)	
Week 5 10 – 14 August, 2009	Module 9: Action Business Plan	Directions for Completing the Business Plan (Background to action business plan, the action business plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations • Discussions • Participatory learning
week 6 17 – 21 August, 2009	Module 9: Action Business Plan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completing the Business Plan (Background to action business plan, the action business plan) 2. Next steps 3. Evaluation of training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations • Discussions • Brainstorming • Experience sharing • Participatory learning

i. Experiences with the usefulness of developing a lesson plan, and usefulness of the different aspects of the lesson plans (items i-vii below) for learning by FBO members.

- i. Topic
- ii. Why the Topic

The topics were focused on commercial development of the FBOs and the capacity building of the group to respond to the change of mindset from subsistence to commercial agriculture

- iii. Learning objective of current lesson

To see farming as business and how group approach to commercial farming will be of benefit to members

- iv. Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

- Outline of topic
- Objectives
- Introduction
- Teaching/Experiences sharing
- Discussions
- Question time
- Summary
- Recap

- v. Training methodology (Activities/steps in the provision of learning experience)

Lesson notes were made from manual and other sources of information on topics treated. The delivery was planned to allow for consistency in the flow of information and group participation. Illustrations were made where necessary and group work and presentation were allowed. This sustained the trainees' interest in following through the learning process.

- vi. Conclusion/Key message
- vii. Follow up activities by trainers and trainees

j. Lessons for improving future training.

- a. How appropriate were the different modules? (will participants use the content from these modules in the next 3-6 months to improve their activities?)

The modules were very relevant because they were designed towards farmers having a change of mindset to see farming as business to make enough money to better their lives. The OCB modules also sought to strengthen group cohesion so the farmers could go about their activities collectively to achieve much. It is highly envisaged that the farmers will apply the knowledge gained in the attainment of their vision.

- i. How well were these modules understood by participants?

At the end of every training session there was an evaluation to ascertain how well the lesson was understood by participants. Judging from the responses by randomly selected respondents, it was clear the message had sunk well. The contributions from members during lessons also gave clues. In addition scenarios bothering on some key concepts and organizational changes necessary to effect were created and committees/individuals given the opportunity to enact. Their actions were reviewed by the group to see if what they had learnt was brought to bear on the situations at hand.

- b. As a result of this training, do you anticipate that the participating FBOs will?

- i. Engage in collective purchasing

Yes, because the group discussed and saw the advantage in pursuing this. Subsequently it was put down as a major tactic.

- ii. Engage in collective marketing

Yes, it is one of the key strategies the group will embark upon to realize its vision.

- iii. Engage in activities with all or most members of the FBO (the alternative is that they would engage in activities with some members of the FBO or none at all.

The group has formed various committees with specific responsibilities to perform. There are nine committees and each member belongs to at least one of such committees. The committees will work closely with the executive committee and will give updates to the entire membership of the group periodically.

- iv. Is training alone enough? As a result of receiving training, do you think that the participating FBOs will be able to successfully

and sustainably become more efficient and productive or are other services needed? If so which?

Training alone is not enough. The FBOs will have to be supported and directed for sometime before they are weaned off. This stems from the fact that some of the new practices being introduced are too technical to be mastered within a short time.

12. Tracking indicators

Table 3: Number of FBO members trained by districts and villages and modules. (Indicate percentage of participation by FBO leadership)

Name of FBO	Location	District	Number FBO members trained for each module (Percentage of leadership of FBO participating)										
			Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6	Module 7	Module 8	Module 9	Module 10	
Sunga Veela	Yagaba	West Mamprusi	(100) (100)	(100) (100)	(100) (100)	(100) (83.3)	(100) (83.3)	(100) (83.3)	(100) (83.3)	(100) (83.3)	(98) (83.3)	(100) (83.3)	(100) (83.3)

13. Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

Please do this based on the modal (most frequently observed) level of knowledge scored for each of the FBOs for all training sessions (An example is indicated below)

FBO	Location	District	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Sunga Veela	Yagaba	West Mamprusi	fair	very good	Trainees showed a lot of interest in the topics treated. It was clear they had undergone a change of mindset. The group was thrilled to have a vision and showed determination to work hard to achieve set targets.

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14. Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

The training has proved very useful to the farmers. They have appreciated how group action can help them achieve much to better their lot. It is recommended that more follow up/monitoring be done to assist the group put what they have learnt into practice.

PANTAKI
FBO

KPARIPIRI

WEST MAMPRUSI

1. Executive Summary and Introduction

The Phase Four Stage 1 MiDA training in Business Capacity Building and Enterprise Development was conducted by the Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research for the Pantaki Farmer Based Organization in Kparipiri in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region from August 9th to 15th September 2010. A total number of 53 farmers were trained. Training was conducted by Dr Kafui Kpodo with interpretation assistance offered by Mr Azundow Alhassan, the Assistant Secretary to the group.

- a. Majority of farmers participated in the program to access credit for their farming activities as well as access markets for their farm produce. Trainers perception of the reasons why farmers agreed to attend the training initially is summarized in Table 1 below:

<i>Trainers perception of initial reasons for farmers attending training</i>	<i>Percentage of farmers</i>
To access credits	100%
To access markets for their produce	49%
To access information about where to purchase subsidized farming inputs (fertilizer, seed and agro-chemicals)	19%

b. Farmer participant perception of training

The farmers found the Stage 1 training very useful and are confident that the knowledge acquired will help them improve upon their farming activities and ultimately improve upon their standard of living. The farmers now have a clear understanding about how to strengthen the Pantaki Farmers Group and the benefits to be derived when they operate as a group rather than as individual farmers.

- c. It was realized that the farmers showed a lot of interest in modules which had a direct practical link with their farming activities and issues related to group formation. Since majority of farmers in the group could neither read nor write, excessive use of flipcharts was boring to them. They preferred and enjoyed the use of group discussions, brainstorming sessions, and role-plays to illustrate points.

LESSONS FROM APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGY (PUT A PICTURE OF A TRAINING SESSION)

k. Summary of selected modules / topics

The weekly schedule of modules/topics taught and course content are presented in Table 2

Table 2: Weekly schedule of modules/topics and course content

Period	Program/Module/Topic	Content	Training methodology
Week 1			

	<p>Introduction, training Policy, Needs Assessment</p> <p>MCA Ghana Project (Module 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of Trainer and participants • Establishment of rules and regulations for training sessions • Background information of each participant • Needs assessment for the Suguru Yiri FBO • The MCA Ghana Program-economic growth and poverty reduction • Commercial development of FBOs • Implementation arrangements and support • Key Compact constituencies and course objectives • Beginning of a process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions • Lectures
Week 2	<p>FBOs, Rural Development and Commercialization (Module 2)</p> <p>Value Chain Thinking (Module 3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why FBOs are important for Rural Development • Functions of Producer Organizations • Functions as Member Services • Unique characteristics and Challenges of FBOs • Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and Best Practices • Where is your FBO starting from • Why Value chains are important for the Ghana Compact • Value Chain Framework • Elements of Value Chain • Why Value Chain Thinking as a tool for Business Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations • Discussions • Presentations • Participatory learning • Discussions
Week 3	<p>Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens (Module 4)</p> <p>A short Primer on Leadership, Governance and Management (Module 5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Business Vision for an FBO and who needs it • How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision • Business vision vis-a vis Business Plan • Developing Vision for your FBO • Practice Using the Value Chain Lens • The visioning Process • Drafting the Vision Statement • Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of board Operation • Review of Key Organization documents • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders • Importance of Member Services and meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures • Discussions • Brainstorming • Participatory learning • Lectures • Discussions • Brainstorming

	Group Formation and Development (OCB Module 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approaches to Financial Management and Credit Management What is a Group Importance and elements of a strong group How groups are formed Group Constitution/Byelaws-making Process Roles and responsibilities of group Leaders and members Procedure for conducting effective meetings Team Building Group Leadership Skills Development Financial Records Keeping Decision Making Process Conflict Management Cooperative Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures Discussions Experience sharing
Week 4	<p>Developing Business Expansion Strategies (Module 6)</p> <p>Developing the Action Agenda (Module 7)</p> <p>Credit Management (OCB Module 2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building What is SWOT Analysis and How to use it Defining Attributes and challenges Brainstorming Strategies In-depth Technical Assessment Sources and uses of Funds Identifying Tactics Finalizing Strategies Final Check on Vision, Targets and Strategies From Strategy to Action (Review of Strategies and Tactics, Identification of requirements for Change, Move to taking Stock) Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change, Resource Requirements) Customizing Training and Technical Support (Technical Training and Maximizing Sales) Moving from Action Agenda to Business Plan What is Credit Types of Credit Sources of Funds Principles of Good Lending Stages of Credit Delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lectures Discussions Brainstorming Participatory learning Working exercises (Group work) Discussions Brainstorming Experience sharing Participatory learning Lecture Discussion

	Contracts and Procurement (OCB Module 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loan Management • Accessing the Millennium Development Authority Micro (MiDA) Credit • What is a Contract • Importance of a Contract • How to enter into a Contract • Types of Contract • Business Contract Outline • What is Procurement • How is Procurement Done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture • Discussion
Week 5	Driving Organization Change (Module 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of Requirements for Change by the Business Planning Process • What Organization Changes Need to be Made • Components of Change Agenda • Defining Tasks/Steps at Member and Organization Levels • Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion • Brainstorming • Participatory learning
Week 6	<p>Draft Action Business Plan (Module 9)</p> <p>Business and Technical Communication (OCB Module 4)</p> <p>Tracking Progress of Farmer-Based-Organization (OCB Module 5)</p> <p>Evaluation of Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing the Business Plan • Next Steps • What is Communication • Importance of Effective Communication in Farmers' Associations • Tools of Communication • Barriers to Effective Communication • How to improve communication in Farmers' Associations • Tracking Progress of FBOs • When is Progress Tracking Done • Indicators and Mechanism for Monitoring Progress • Sample Tracking Tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion • Lectures • Discussion • Presentation • Discussion • Discussion

I. Experiences with the usefulness of developing a lesson plan, and usefulness of the different aspects of the lesson plan for learning by FBO members.

xix. Topic

The topics selected provided the group members with an overview of the MCA Ghana Compact and its objectives (Module 1). The other topics (Modules 3, 4, 6 and 7) were aimed at strengthening the farmers' ability to operate with a commercial focus using appropriate business practices that will bring expanded economic benefit to families and communities. Modules 2, 5, and the OCB Modules were studied because they helped in the development of the group as well as focused on enterprise management.

xx. Why the Topic

The objective for selecting the topics was to help in the commercial development of the group so that ultimately the members will undertake farming as a business rather than as a subsistence activity. To achieve this objective the main purpose of the Modules was to train the farmers to be able to draw up a Business Plan which will enable them access a loan facility under the MiDA program.

xxi. Learning objective of current lesson

The learning objective was to familiarize the farmers with the Ghana Compact, undertake a needs assessment of the group and their farming activities and provide them with training which will enable them view and take up farming as a commercial enterprise and not just as a way of life.

xxii. Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

- ix. Objective of lesson
- x. Outline
- xi. Introduction
- xii. Relevant topics
- xiii. Role-play
- xiv. Discussions
- xv. Question time
- xvi. Summary

vii. Training methodology (Activities/Steps in the provision of learning experiences)

A Training Plan was drawn up to ensure that time allotted to various topics was adequate. This also enabled adequate preparation for each training session. Training methodology used included presentations/lectures, group discussions, role-play, brainstorming and experience sharing. Important information was recapped at the end of the session and questions asked to ensure farmers understood the topics well. Complicated topics were broken down and taught in

very simple language to ensure members understood the lesson. Where appropriate, role-play was used with members occupying and playing various roles to help make the lesson more interesting for the participants. This approach also enhanced the participants' understanding of the topic.

viii. Conclusion/Key message

Members of the Pantaki group were very content with the six-week training program. All members were very appreciative of the program and said they had gained a lot of knowledge which was going to help them improve upon their farming activities and also strengthen their group. They also indicated that they are anxiously looking forward to the Stage 2 training and the Bank approval of their loans.

ix. Follow-up activities by trainers and trainee

The Phase 4 Stage 2 Training on Crop Productivity covering Farm Management, Production of maize, Postharvest Technologies, Integrated Crop Management, Integrated Pest Management, Harvesting and Postharvest Management, Quality Standard Control, Safe Handling, Application and Storage of Plant Protection Products and Environmental Issues will soon be conducted for the Pantaki Group members based in Kparipiri and Suhuluya.

The group members have been introduced to Agriculture Extension Officer in charge of Kparipiri and Suhuluya Mr. Yakubu Abudulai. While awaiting the approval of their loans from the Bank, the course participants have been advised to contact this officer to help and direct them on issues regarding their farming activities and also direct them on where to purchase good seed material and other inputs for their farms.

Lessons for improving future training

Appropriateness of training content/modules

The modules and topics taught were very relevant to the farmers because they gave them an insight into what the MiDA program is about and the opportunities in store for them if they participated in the training sessions. The modules also gave the farmers an opportunity to learn how to improve their farming activities and view farming as a commercial enterprise rather than just a way of life and also to appreciate the benefits to be derived from a strong and active farmers' group. It is anticipated that the farmers will start applying the knowledge they have acquired to improve their farming activities even before the Stage 2 training takes off.

Understanding by participants

At the beginning and end of every training session, evaluation was conducted to assess the farmers' knowledge before and after teaching the various topics. Generally, it appeared majority of the farmers were ignorant about the topics before the session but appeared to have a good grasp of the topics after the sessions.

Adoption of Collective Purchasing and Marketing

As a result of the training, it is obvious that members of the Pantaki group are going to engage in collective purchasing especially of farming inputs since this had been a major problem for the group. They were ignorant about where to purchase good seed material and agrochemicals and therefore resorted to purchasing these items from the open market.

Regarding marketing of their produce it is anticipated the Pantaki group will engage in group marketing because they are now convinced that, that way they will overcome exploitation by middlemen and also problems with non-payment for produce purchased from members. Group members welcomed the idea of signing contracts with the buyers and have resolved to practice this to ensure they are not cheated.

As a result of this training, it is anticipated that all members of the Pantaki group will participate in all activities of the group. It is also envisaged that the group will be able to successfully and sustainably become more efficient and productive. This will however be enhanced after the loans have been approved and the Stage 2 training has been conducted.

2. Tracking indicators

The number of Pantaki FBO members trained during Stage 1 training at Kparipiri, West Mamprusi District is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Number of Pantaki – Kparipiri FBO members trained by modules.

Module No.	Number FBO members trained	Number (Percentage) of leadership trained
BD Module 1	46	6 (100%)
BD Module 2	53	6 (100%)
BD Module 3	53	6 (100%)
BD Module 4	51	6 (100%)
BD Module 5	52	6 (100%)
BD Module 6	53	6 (100%)
BD Module 7	50	6 (100%)
BD Module 8	53	6 (100%)
BD Module 9	51	6 (100%)
OCB Module 1	53	6 (100%)
OCB Module 2	53	6 (100%)

OCB Module 3	53	6 (100%)
OCB Module 4	53	6 (100%)
OCB Module 5	53	6(100%)

Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

An evaluation of the knowledge and skills acquired by the Pantaki_FBO members during the Stage 1 training is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Evaluation of knowledge and skills acquired by members of the Pantaki FBO

FBO	Location	District	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Pantaki	Kparipiri / Suhuluya	West Mamprusi	Poor	Good	Farmers followed training sessions with much attention, asked questions and were excited to learn new things

3. Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

All members of Pantaki Farmers Group were appreciative of the six-week MiDA Stage 1 training program. They have acquired both technical and management knowledge which they are hopeful will help them improve upon their farming activities and ultimately transform their lives. They also indicated that they are anxiously looking forward to the MiDA Stage 2 training program and the Bank loans. For the group members to derive maximum benefit from the program, they should be encouraged to interact more with the AEA responsible for Kparipiri / Suhuluya in view of the fact that majority of the members are illiterate.

SUGURU
MAALIYELLI
FARMER BASED
ORGANIZATION

BUGYENGA

WEST MAMPRUSI

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND INTRODUCTION

The Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research conducted a six weeks training in Business Capacity Building for 10 selected Farmer Base Organizations in various communities the West Mamprusi District in the Northern Region. Suguru Maaliyellii Farmer Base Organization was one of the selected FBOs that benefited from the training which started from 10th August to 15st September 2010. The FBO received three sessions of four hour duration each per week for the six weeks, amounting to 18 training sessions or 72 hours of training.

The training program started on the 6^h of August, and the first two days, the 6th and 10th August 2010 devoted to the community entry and validation of the FBO. The community entry of the FRI staff was feasible through the aid of the District Director of Agric. (DDA), and the Agric. Extension Agent (A.E.A.)

The purpose of the training was to develop the business capacity of the FBO and assist the FBO develop business plan which would enable FBO members access MCA funds as loans from banks to enable them operate as commercial farmers. The training focused on the MCA Ghana Program and course objectives in Business Capacity building in the area of Business Development (BD) and Organizational Capacity Building (OCB).

Farmer participant perception and reasons for attending the training is summarized as below.

To access to credits	100%
To access training information	30%
To access markets	30%
Monitor their farm size and outputs for probable taxation	70%
Form farmers into cooperative groups for easy information about them	60%

However after the Stage 1 training, farmers were no longer afraid of being monitored for taxation etc, but rather their perception to access credits, training information and markets to make them successful commercial farmers were heightened.

To access to credits	100%
To access training information	800%
To access markets	80%
To make them successful commercial farmers	80%
Monitor their farm size and outputs for probable taxation	0%
Form farmers into cooperative groups for easy n information about them	50%

Members of the Suguru Maaliyelli Farmer Base Organization found the Stage 1 training very useful and pledged to use the knowledge gained to strengthen the group and improve their farming and marketing of their farm produce, and improve their standard of living.

3. Training venues and logistics

FBO Identification Number	FBO name	Location of FBO/Training Venue	Names of Trainer(s)
	Suguru Maaliyelli Farmer Base Organization	Bugyenga/ Venue: Jadema L/A. Primary School (Under trees & in one of the classrooms in bad weather (rainy days).	Cletus K. Gyato (Trainer) Kairm Lective (Local Resource Person as interpreter)

1. Lessons from Approaches and Methodology.

Experiences with the usefulness of developing a lesson plan and usefulness of the different aspects of the lesson plan for learning by the FBO.

i Topic.

The topics selected provided the group members with an overview of the MCA Ghana Compact and its objectives (Module 1). Modules 3, 4, 6, and 7 were to strengthen the farmers' ability to operate with a commercial focus using appropriate business practices that will bring expanded economic benefit to families and communities. The other topics Modules 2, and 5, and the OCB modules were also taught to develop and focus the group on enterprise management .

ii Why the Topic

The objective for selecting the topics was to help in the commercial development of the Suguru Maaliyelli Farmer Base Organization so that members undertake farming as a business rather than as subsistence activity and a way of life. The topics also aimed in training farmers to be able to draw a Business Plan which will enable them access loan under the MiDA program, and also serve as working tool for the group.

iii Learning objective of current lesson

The learning objective was to familiarize the farmers with the Ghana Compact, undertake a needs assessment of the group in re with relation to their farming activities and provide them with the necessary training that will make them undertake farming as a business.

iv. Steps in knowledge / skills acquisition.

- I Objective of lesson
- li Outline
- lii Introduction
- iv Relevant topics
- v Role-play
- vi Discussions
- vii. Question time

v Training Methodology (Activities/Steps in the provision of learning experiences)

A training plan was developed to ensure that the time allocations for the various topics were adequate. The lesson plans enabled materials to be used for training to be assembled, and also facilitated logical, and consistent flow of information during teaching. This enhanced understanding of FBO members, made learning easy and interesting for the farmers. Lessons were prepared using what, why, when, how approach, and prepared to give in-depth training, knowledge, and understanding on the technical aspects of the subject matter.

Training methodology included group discussions, teaching, illustrations, examples and case study and sharing of experiences, etc. Important information was recapped at the end session and questions asked to make sure farmers had understood the topics well.

Table 4: Training Days Indicating Modules Taught.

Week (with dates)	MODULE NUMBER &TITLE	TOPIC (if applicable)	TRAINING METHODOLOGY
Week1 10 th /08/ 10 11 th / 08/10 12 TH /08/10	Module : BD. 1 The MCA Ghana Compact Module: BD. 2 FBO Rural Development and Commercialization	The MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction. Agriculture Project Structure. Why FBOs are Important for Rural Development . Functions of Producer Organizations. Functions as Member Services. Unique Characteristics and Challenges of FBOs. Elements of Strong FBOs Commercialization and Best Practices	Introduction of topic. Quizzing members of the FBO to find out their knowledge and perception about the topic. Discussions and teaching on the topic and giving examples /illustrations to support teachings and etc. Recapping what has been taught and discussed. Assessing /Evaluation

			the degree of learning and understanding of topic.
<p>Week 2</p> <p>16th /08/10</p> <p>17th /08/10</p> <p>18th /8/10</p>	<p>Module: BD.3 Value Chain Thinking</p> <p>Module: 4 Business Vision through Value Chain Lens</p>	<p>Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact. Value Chain Framework . Elements of the Value Chain . Why Value Chain Growth is Important to FBO. Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy</p> <p>What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It?</p> <p>How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision. Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan. Developing Vision for your FBO. Practice Using the Value Chain Lens. The Visioning Process .</p> <p>Drafting the Vision Statement</p>	<p>”</p>
<p>Week 3</p> <p>23th /08/10</p> <p>24th /08/10</p>	<p>Module: BD. 5. Leadership, Governance and Management.</p> <p>Module: (OCB.) 1. Group Formation and Development</p> <p>Module: (BD) 6. Developing Business Expansion Strategies</p>	<p>Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance .</p> <p>Basics of Board Operation. Review of Key Organization Documents. Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders. Importance of Member Services and Meetings. Approaches to Financial Management.</p> <p>Importance of Group, Elements of a Strong Group, Group Constitution / Bye-laws, Roles & Responsibilities of Group Leaders and members, Team building, Financial Record keeping Conflict Management and etc.</p> <p>Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building. What is SWOT Analysis and</p>	

25 th /08/10		<p>How to Use It. Defining Attributes and Challenges . Brainstorming Strategies. Sources and Uses of Funds</p> <p>Identifying tactics. Finalizing strategies. Final Check on Vision, Targets and Strategies</p>	”
<p>Week 4</p> <p>30th /08/10</p> <p>31st /08/10</p>	<p>Module: (BD). 7. Developing Action Agenda.</p> <p>Module: (BD) 8. Driving the Organizational Change.</p> <p>Module :(OCB) 2. Credit Management</p>	<p>From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock). Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource Requirements. Customizing Training and Technical Support (Technical Training and Maximizing Sales)</p> <p>Performance Monitoring . Action Agenda to Business Plan Development</p> <p>Requirements for change identified by the business planning process</p> <p>What Organization Changes Need to be Made? . Change agenda components. Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level).</p> <p>Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities (Completing the Plan, Developing Workplan per Strategy.</p> <p>Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business Plan</p> <p>What is Credit, Types of Credit, Sources of Funds, Principles of good Lending,</p>	”

1 st /09/10			
<p>Week 5</p> <p>6TH /09/10</p> <p>7th /09/10</p> <p>8th /09/10</p>	<p>Module: (OCB) 2. Credit Management</p> <p>Contracts and Procurement.</p> <p>Module: (OCB) 3. Business and Technical Communication.</p> <p>Module: (OCB) 5. Methods for Tracking Progress of FBO.</p>	<p>Loan Management, Accessing MiDA Micro Credit etc.</p> <p>What is contract, Importance of Contracts, How to enter into Contracts, Business Contract Outline, What is Procurement, How Procurement is done etc.</p> <p>What is communication, The Importance of Effective Communication in Farmers' Associations, Forms of Communication, Tools for Communication. Barriers to effective Communication, How to Improve Communication in farmers' Associations, etc.</p> <p>Tracking the Progress of FBOS, why When is Progress tracking Done, Indicators and Mechanism for Monitoring Progress , and Sample Tracking Tools.</p>	<p>”</p>

Week 6 13 th /09/10 14 th /09/10 15 th /09/10	Module: 9. Completing the Draft Business Plan.		”

vi. Conclusion/ Key message

In general members of the Suguru Maaliyelli Farmer Base Organization acknowledged that they have acquired extensive knowledge during the course of training. Training context was appropriate and relevant and it is hoped that it will help farmers to change by moving from subsistence farming to a more tactical and more strategic commercial farming. Farmers also acknowledged the adoption of attitudes and behaviors that strongly support group actions for success in their farming business with the ultimate of improved livelihood.

v. Follow-up activities by trainers and trainee

The six-weeks business capacity building training will be followed up with three-weeks Stage 2 training on Crop Productivity. The Trainer is expected to complete the write up on the Action Business plan which will be submitted to the Community Rural Bank where the FBO has its account.

c. Lessons for improving future training

Appropriateness of training content/modules

The modules and topics discussed were very relevant because they addressed specific needs of the FBOs based on the vision of the FBO and what they hoped to achieve as documented in their Business Plans. It is expected that members of the Suguru Maaliyelli Farmer Base Organization will apply the knowledge that they have acquired to improve their farming operations and maximize their yields and profits based on the value-chain thinking.

Some members of the Suguru Maaliyelli Farmer Base Organization suggested more time allocation for topics such as value-chain thinking and developing business expansion strategies. This will be taken into account in future training programmes.

Understanding of participants

Evaluation was conducted to assess the understanding of the farmers at the end of every training session, indicated that the farmers have a good understanding of topics and materials discussed and taught

Adoption of Good Agronomic Practices

As a result of the training, it is anticipated that most of the trained farmers will adopt good agronomic practices and technology to upgrade their farming activities. These are intensive training of fairly long duration and it will be surprising that a farmer will sit through and not adopt any of the things he or she has learnt even if his/her initial objective had been to obtain the MiDA loan.

Collective marketing, etc.

The farmers have realized the advantages in engaging in collective marketing as it will give them better bargaining power and higher returns. It is expected that the FBOs will adopt these measures and other collective activities which will be to their advantage as individuals and also as a group.

Adequacy of training

Over 98% of the farmers trained have never been to school and though have considerable experience in farming, this lack of formal training will affect their ability to adequately understand the higher technical content of the training. Farmers should be assisted during farming by technical personnel, AEAs, etc to implement GAP and this may be necessary step in the adoption of technologies by farmers. The FBOs will have to be supported and directed for a reasonable length of time before they may be able to operate as desired by the project

2 Tracking indicators

Number of Suguru Maaliyelli Farmer Base Organization members trained by modules

Module No..	Number of FBO members trained	Number (% age)of leadership trained
BD Module 1	53	6 (100%)
BD Module 2	51	6 (100%)
BD Module 3	53	6 (100%)
BD Module 4	53	6 (100%)
BD Module 5	51	6 (100%)

BD Module 6	51	5 (83.3%)
BD Module 7	50	6 (100%)
BD Module 8	52	6 (100%)
BD Module 9	52	6 (100)%
OCB Module 1	51	6 (100)%
OCB Module 2	52	5 (83)%
OCB Module 3	52	6 (100)%
OCB Module 4	51	6 (100)%
OCB Module 5	51	6 (100)%

Participant's knowledge and Skill Evaluation

An evaluation by trainers of the knowledge and skills acquired by FBO members during the Phase 2 Stage 1 training on Business Development (BD) and Organization Capacity Building (OCB) is summarized and presented in Table 3.

FBO	Location	District	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Suguru Maaliyelli Farmer Base Organization	Bugyenga	West Mamprusi District	Fair	Good	Farmers asked much questions, were enthusiastic gained considerable knowledge in new approaches to farming and followed with much attention

Conclusions and Recommendation for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

The choice of the topics in the Business Development and Organizational Capacity Building Modules has some strategic considerations in building the FBO to become commercial farmers. One of its most significant accomplishments is that the programme helped the farmers to move from operational to more tactical and then more strategic thinking. The methods (participatory learning, discussions, working exercises, lectures, brainstorming, experience sharing) employed to train the FBO has increased the farmers' abilities in terms of both management techniques and business skills. This, together with positive experiences gained with farmers, suggests that these same instruments could be used to confront other major challenges/situations in their rural communities. Since most (about 98%) of the farmers are illiterate, it is important to also add further training in literacy and numeracy if the impact of the MiDA training is to become more sustainable.

TISUNTABA-
TIMARITABA
FARMERS
GROUP

SUHULUYA

WEST MAMPRUSI

Executive Summary

A six-week training course was carried out for the Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmers Group in the community of Suhuluya in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana. Tisuntaba-Timaritaba farmers group was one of the eleven (11) farmer groups Food Research Institute trained.

The training was based on the development of Business Capacity of the farmers and some of the subject areas discussed included the following MCA Ghana Program—economic growth and poverty reduction, FBOs group formation and strengthening, rural development and commercialization, Business vision through a value chain lens, a short primer on leadership, governance and management, developing business expansion strategies, developing the action Agenda, driving the organization change and action business plan. The objective of the commercial development of farmer based organization was to change the mindset of farmers so that they do farming as a business rather than the subsistence farming which they currently practice.

Mr. Elvis Baidoo was the trainer for the Tisuntaba-Timaritaba group and was assisted by an interpreter Mr. William Wuni who is an opinion leader in Suhuluya a teacher in the community school. The training venue was one of the classrooms of the Suhuluya L.A. Primary School, Suhuluya. Training Needs Assessment of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba farmers group was performed to identify the gaps in the farmers' commercial knowledge. The Tisuntaba-Timaritaba farmer based organization is made up of thirty nine (39) men. Some challenges faced by the trainer are unmotorable roads from Wulugu to to the community which worsened on rainy days. The rains also caused floods making the trainer to use canoe at a point in the last three weeks of training to access the community.

Members of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba FBO were certain that they would gain knowledge through the training and also to access credit to do farming. The farmers were motivated to attend the training because of the information they had from the MOFA staff and members of other farmer based organizations that have been trained previously. The farmers cherished the knowledge they acquired and were grateful for the training on Commercialization of their farming because they were highly optimistic that it will help increase their production and profitability in their farming business.

1.0 Introduction

The Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research has completed a six-week training course for eleven (11) selected Farmer Based Organizations in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana for MiDA. The training in Business Capacity Building commenced on 9th August 2010 and ended on 16th September 2010.

Each FBO was taken through three sessions of four hour duration per week over a period of six weeks adding up to 18 training sessions. Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmer Based organization from the Suhuluya community of the West Mamprusi district was one of the farmer based organization trained. Suhuluya is located to the north-east of Walewale and 11 kilometers from Wulugu. The group has an all male membership of thirty nine (39) men. The group was formed in the year 2006 and is governed by bye-laws. The leadership structure of the group is made up of a Chairman (Mr. Joe Wuni), Vice Chairman (Mr. Kofi Bugri), Secretary (Mr. William Wuni), Assistant Secretary (Mr. Sumani Nabla), Treasurer (Mr. Mangdow Moari), Assistant Treasurer (Mr. Bigbla Sugri). Others are Organizer (Mr. Pannya Wuni) and Assistant Organizer (Mr. Dawuda Moari). The group has a Savings Bank account currently holding an amount of GHC

200 at the Bangmarigu Community Bank with account number SLOT23-002 and the signatories to the account are the Chairman, Secretary and the Treasurer. Members of the group meet once in a month at the Chief's palace at Suhuluya to deliberate on current issues and pay dues of GH¢1 per member per month.

Farming is their main occupation but in addition the off-season activities for earning a living for the women in the group are shea-butter fruit collection and processing, petty trading and selling of paddy rice; the men however go fishing in the White Volta and its tributaries and sell their livestock. The group supports themselves by assisting each other in specific farming activities such as planting and harvesting during the major/minor cropping seasons. Members support each other in the form of donations (cash or kind) to bereaved or sick members and victims of crop failure and natural disasters.

Members of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmers Group individually cultivate maize, millet, soybeans, and groundnuts as major season crops and tomatoes, watermelon, pepper and okro in the minor growing season. The nearest markets are Wulugu and Walewale markets which operate on a 3-day cycle. Farmers sell their produce individually and therefore unable to negotiate for higher prices. Members generally buy seeds from unapproved sources from the Wulugu and Walewale markets. Majority of members of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba farmers group know about fertilizer application to their farms but due to lack of credit they do not apply the right amounts per acre of land. Some farmers also obtain fertilizer from unapproved sources in the markets.

15. Background of assignment including brief on training needs

Table 1. Training needs of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmers group based on challenges

Module	No Problems	Some Problems	Many Problems	Cause of Problems / Causes	Training Needs
<p><i>Module 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction • Commercial Development of FBOs (CDFO) • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies & The Beginning of a Process 			<p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p> <p>x</p>	<p>Little/no knowledge, about MCA and MiDA Project. Scanty information about Module 1.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crop Production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Preparation Equipment • Variety Choice & Cultural practices • Safe handling, storage and application of Plant Protection Products • Calibration of Sprayers and Pesticides application methods • Integrated methods of pest control • Irrigation /water management techniques • Post-harvest handling techniques • Value-addition techniques • Agricultural Marketing • FBO Organization and Management Practices 		<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>		<p>Insufficient knowledge on Crop Production and best practices.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Module 2:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why FBOs are Important for Rural Development • Functions of Producer Organizations And Member Services • Unique Characteristics and Challenges of FBOs, Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and Best Practices 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>x</p>	<p>Little knowledge of Topics in this Module</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Module 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact • Value Chain Framework & Elements of the Value Chain • Why Value Chain Growth is Important to FBO& Value Chain Thinking as 			<p>X</p> <p>X</p> <p>X</p>	<p>Little knowledge on this module, being introduced for the first time.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

a Tool for Business Strategy					
<p><i>Module 4:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Business Vision for an FBO Who Needs It & How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision • Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan & Developing Vision for your FBO • Practice Using the Value Chain Lens • The Visioning Process & Drafting the Vision Statement 			X X X X	Insufficient knowledge on business strategies and expansion.	Yes Yes Yes
<p><i>Module 5:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of Board Operation, Review of Key Organization Documents & Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders • Importance of Member Services and Meetings • Approaches to Financial Management 			X X X	Little knowledge on topics on this Module	Yes Yes Yes Yes
<p><i>Module 6:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and Challenges • Brainstorming Strategies • Sources and Uses of Funds 			X X X X X X	Poor knowledge on topics of this Module	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying tactics, Targets and Strategies 					
<p><i>Module 7:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource Requirements Maximizing Sales) 			X	No knowledge on topics on this Module	Yes
			X		Yes
<p><i>Module 8</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for change identified by the business planning process What Organization Changes Need to be Made? Change agenda components Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business Plan) 			X	No knowledge on topics on this Module	YES
			X		YES
			X		YES
			X		YES

Farmers gained much knowledge and sharpened their skills after completion of the training sessions on all the modules. The Tisuntaba-Timaritaba FBO was very attentive and asked very relevant questions and made suggestions. Farmers of the group were happy and very optimistic that the training will help them increase profitability and production and thus move them from subsistence to commercial farming.

16. Training venues and logistical challenges

The roads to training venue were very narrow and became unmotorable when it rained around the time of training. The floods caused by the overflow of the White Volta demanded the use of a canoe in the third to sixth weeks of training at the verge of the community. Some members of

the Tisuntaba-Timaritaba FBO had difficulty in understanding some module topics and remembering what was discussed in previous lessons owing to high illiteracy and showing how complicated adult learning is.

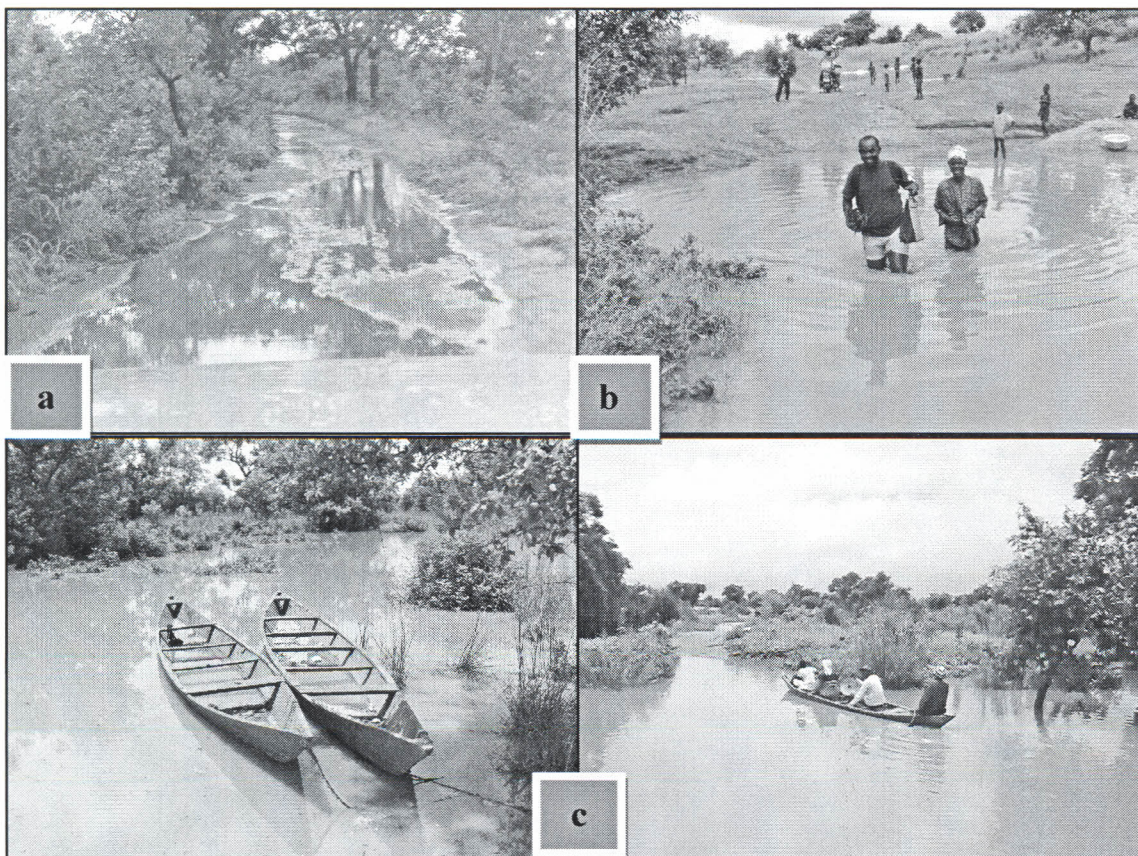


Plate 2: Pictures showing challenges faced by trainer (a) narrow and inaccessible roads to community which worsened on rainy days (b) trainer having to cross stream before entering community in the second and third weeks of training (c) trainer having to use canoe in the 3-6th weeks of training.

Trainers and Training equipment

Table 1: indicating the FBO ID #, the FBO name, the location of FBO and the trainer for the FBO

FBO Number	Identification	FBO name	Location of FBO	Names of Trainer(s)
NAZ081202G08FR		Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmers Group	Suhuluya, West Mamprusi District	Elvis Baidoo

Materials used for training.

The materials used for training are flip charts, flip-chart board and markers. It makes teaching and learning easier because of the high illiteracy level of the farmers. None of the group members can neither read nor write except the Secretary and thus no material was given to them.

17. Lessons from Approaches and Methodology

Table 2: Table of the modules for each week.

Week /dates	MODULE NUMBER &TITLE	TOPIC (if applicable)	TRAINING METHODOLOGY
Week 1 9th,10th,11th August 2010	Module 1: MCA Ghana Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture Project structure • Commercial Development of FBOs(CDFO) • Implementation Arrangements • MiDA- Your Development Partner • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies • Course objectives • The Beginning of a process 	Discussion Lectures Group discussion Demonstration
WEEK 2 16 th ,17 th ,18 th August 2010	Module 2: FBOs, Rural Development and Commercialization Module 3: Value chain Thinking OCB Module 1 OCB Module 2 OCB Module 3 OCB Module 4 OCB Module 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why FBOs are important for rural Development • Functions of Producer Organization • Functions as member services • Unique characteristics and challenges of FBOs • Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and best practices <p>Reality check: Where is your FBO starting from?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group formation and development • Credit Management • Contracts • Business and technical communications • Methods for tracking FBO's progress. 	Group discussion Lectures Discussion Demonstration Discussion Lectures
WEEK 3 23 rd ,24 th ,23 th August 2010.			Lectures Discussion

<p>Week 4 30th, 31st August 2010 and 1st September 2010.</p>	<p>Module 4: Business vision through a value chain lens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why value chains are important for the Ghana compact. • Value Chain framework • Elements of the value chain • Why value chain Growth is important to FBO • Value chain thinking as a tool for business strategy 	<p>Group discussion Demonstrations</p>
	<p>Module 5: A short Primer on Producer Organization Principles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who needs it • How FBOs benefit from Business Vision • Business vision vis-a vis Business Plan • Practice using the value chain lens • The visioning process • Drafting the vision statement 	<p>Lectures Discussion Group discussion Demonstrations</p>
	<p>Module 6: Developing Business Expansion Strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basics of board operation • Review of key organization Documents • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of office holders 	<p>Lectures Discussion Group discussion</p>
	<p>Module 7: Developing the Action Agenda Module 8: Driving The organization change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of Member Services and meetings • Approaches to Financial Management • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and 	

<p>Week 5 6th, 7th & 8th September 2010</p>	<p>Module 9: Action Business Plan</p>	<p>agreed actions in the Business plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directions for completing the Business Plan 	<p>Group discussion</p> <p>Discussion Group discussion</p>
<p>Week 6 14th, 15th & 16th September 2010</p>	<p>Module 9: Action Business Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing the Business plan (Background to action business plan, the action business plan) • Next steps • Evaluation of training • End of training 	

Module 1: The MCA Ghana Compact

FBO's Knowledge of MCA Ghana before training

From the beginning of the training the farmers had a fair idea about the MCA Ghana Compact from the Agricultural Extension Agents and other farmers who were trained previously. The objective of the session was to emphasize that Agriculture which is the backbone of the country's economy could go a long way to reduce poverty and bring about economic growth by commercialization. Methodology applied during the training was lectures and citing of examples to stress the various relevant points in the module topics. The trainees had hazy ideas about the project and understanding of the concept of the MCA Ghana Compact. The three components of the MCA Ghana Compact were not known to them and implementation arrangements and various selected zones to benefit from the Agricultural project.

Crop Budget Analysis

Tisuntaba-Timaritaba farmers were guided to compare the expected profits they would be making with respect to total expenditure in production of maize, millet and soybeans and cowpea. Some of the input costs were also based on the prices of the last farming season. However, the current prices of commodities as pertains on the major markets around the communities were used for costing. The FBO settled on cropping maize in the major cropping season.

Farmers' knowledge level of MCA Ghana Compact after training

After the training sessions, members of the group understood the MCA Ghana Compact and its components especially the application of knowledge of the Value Chain to improve upon produce by adding value and gaining a higher market share which represents a unique opportunity for them to reduce poverty through economic growth.

Conclusion/key Message

At the end of the training sessions of Module 1, the general consensus was that the module had immensely increased their knowledge on the MCA Ghana Compact and are eager to learn more to commercialize their farming activities.

Module 2: FBO's, Rural development and Commercialization

Members of the Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmer Based Organization were taken through rural development and commercialization of farmer based organization. The module centered on the importance of groups and group formation, group functions and services.

Value chain

Members were introduced to the value chain concept and its relationship to economic growth and poverty reduction. Participants were taken through how the market system operates with respect to the major crops produced. They were taught how their crops move within the commodity chain and how they could transform commodity chain thinking into value chain thinking so as to take advantage of markets at different levels by strengthening their FBO positioning in the value chain.

The definition of Value Chain was given as the path that product takes as it moves from farm or factory to the marketplace. It was made clear that at each step along the way value (not just price) is added to the product. The farmers were made to know that each vertical step in a value chain is a market for the step below. The value chain includes all activities that it takes to bring a product to the market, including horizontal linkages to suppliers of goods and services.

Value Chains and the Ghana Compact

To achieve economic growth through rural agriculture, Ghana needs to increase the competitiveness of the value chains which take key crops into international markets. Value chain thinking is practiced worldwide by competitive producer groups which understand that the key to profitability is the capacity to move a product into the market at prices which both satisfy customers and carry the lowest possible expenditure. Participants were made to know that Ghana's agriculture is key to the country's economic growth and that to achieve economic growth that is sustainable and reduces poverty, value chains must operate with expanded opportunities for farmer based organizations. For this to happen, FBOs must understand value chains and be able to use this understanding to strengthen their organization and their approaches to doing business. The participants were made to understand the basic concepts behind value-added thinking by discussion, lectures and demonstrations.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Participants had a fair understanding about value addition to agricultural produce. Lack of resources and understanding of how the market operates is what has delayed their practice of the value chain concept. After this module, members of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmers Group had improved in their understanding of the subject and were ready to take advantage of the opportunities in the market as regards the maize the group chose to commercialize.

Conclusion/key message

Participants learnt for the first time about rural development through rural commercial farming. The farmers appreciated the concept and were ready to add value to their produce in order to avoid the middlemen in the value chain and increase their market share.

Module 4: Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens

Members of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmers Group were taken through the business vision concept. The elements of a good business vision were identified as a vision statement and targets for achievement. The characteristics of a good business vision are that it must be accompanied by specific volume targets and vision which is time bound. It must be realistic and achievable. The benefits of an FBO having a business vision were looked at. These included group cohesion, ability to design activities which fulfill member expectations and ability to identify and set targets. The participants were later taken through the vision development process. The participants were guided to evaluate their current performance levels and to set targets which the group seeks to achieve over the next two years. During the business vision drafting stage participants were divided into three groups with each group presenting their vision. Participants were guided to write down draft business vision statements based on the contribution from the three groups.

Module 5: Leadership, Governance and Management

In this module members were introduced to the nature of the three concepts of leadership, governance and management. It was pointed out that individuals within an organization may play one or more of these roles but usually not at the same time. The importance of organizational leadership and how it works within organizations were also treated. Other areas discussed were what leadership roles were, characteristics of good leaders and characteristics of effective boards. Governance as the power of making and administering organization policies with regard to programs, relationships and limitations of authority were explained to participants. The methodologies used are lectures, demonstration and discussion.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Module 5 offered members of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba FBO the understanding on the different levels of leadership and the roles they play. The module motivated group members to involve

all members in the running of the organization by setting up committees with responsibilities and were ready to discuss with some dignitaries to serve on the board of the FBO with time.

Conclusion/ key message

Members became conscious of the complementary nature of the leadership, management and governance concept in organization. The members of the FBO appreciated that the group will succeed in commercialization farming if they only worked together and supported those in leadership, management and governance positions.

Module 6: Developing Business Expansion Strategies

The key strategies for the FBO business expansion were discussed in this module. Members of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmers Group were assisted to use the SWOT analysis as a tool to evaluate the factors both internal and external to the organization which can affect its ability to arrive at its vision. The SWOT analysis framework was used by members to devise internal factors such as production, marketing and selling practices, post harvest handling, management practices and credit acquisition and classify them as strengths or weaknesses. This was also done for external factors and was classified into threats or opportunities.

The group members reviewed internal and external factors to identify attributes and challenges. Strengths and opportunities put together form the attributes which work in favor of the organization's ability to achieve its business vision. Challenges however were compiled from the weaknesses and threats which have the potential to work against the organization's ability to achieve its business vision. Members were then made to identify attributes and challenges and then a discussion on developing strategies to achieve the vision resulting in the developing of a list of strategies. A technical assessment of the group in the areas of production practices, harvesting practices, post-harvest handling practices, primary processing, storage, value-added practices, marketing practices and organization and management practices was the second form of assessment which the group examined.

A list of tactics that members thought could be used to guide the group activity in each category was listed and finalization was done using each weakness each strength taking advantage of the opportunities and getting ready to meet each threat.

Module 7: Developing the Action Agenda

Using the strategies and tactics, members developed elements of an action agenda for inclusion in their business plans. The action agenda is the specific steps the FBO will take at the member, organizational and value chain levels to achieve strategies and vision. Members were assisted to review each strategy and list the tactics which correspond to it. Members were made to know that for a successful execution of any business plan, specific actions will be required to bring about what is expected and to ensure that the right actions have to be chosen

Module 8: Driving Organizational Change

In this module members of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba addressed the challenges associated with identifying the ways in which the organization will tackle the job of moving forward to implement changes which are required to support the ability of the FBO to continue with their business planning efforts that a plan to manage the change is very necessary. The farmers' appreciated that implementation of the change has to be driven through the organization with leadership playing a key role. The Tisuntaba-Timaritaba farmers group agreed that at member levels it will be useful to appoint member committees to support implementation and communication of plans and ideas, hold meetings invite members to contribute to training design and structure member feedback channels. At the organization level, development of revenue generation plan, preparation of management plan, analysis of financial impacts of plan implementation and completion of business plan were very important.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Members of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmers Group had a very good understanding of what the vision and strategies of their group was. The module prepared the farmers to devise action agendas to achieve their vision. They also learnt about realistic steps to address the strategies. The changes that the FBO had to go through were recognized and a management plan put in place and the farmers' knowledge and skills on the two subject areas enhanced considerably.

Conclusion/key message

The participants appreciated the importance of assessment and the changes at the member, organizational levels in order to achieve the action agenda and improve strategies for business development.

Module 9: Completing the Draft Business Action Plan

Farmers were assisted to put together their business plan. The first part of this plan dealt with the background to the plan and covered areas such as background information about the FBO, overview of current practices, description of the operating structure, and assessment of environment and opportunities. Part two of the business plan draft was based on the action agenda and areas such as vision and targets of the FBO, action plans for implementation of each strategy and management plan.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Participants had become well informed of the concept of changing from subsistence farming into commercial farming. All the awareness and skills gained in the previous modules were uncovered on completing the draft action business plan.

Conclusion/key message

Members of the Tisuntaba-Timaritaba farmer group appreciated the development of the business plan and declared that they have really gained knowledge through the course.

Module 9: Completing the Draft Business Action Plan

In the final week, the last part of Module 9 was completed. The background information about the FBO, their operating structure, overview of current practices and assessment of environment and opportunities were collated and confirmed. The vision, strategies, actions and tactics were finally fed into the business plan.

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

Members of the Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmers Group were ready to apply aspects of commercial farming after going through all the nine (9) modules and were prepared with the second stage training in order to get the starter pack and the MiDA loans to improve upon their farming and entire livelihood.

Conclusion/key message

Farmers appreciated the knowledge and awareness discovered so far and displayed some of them during the discussions. The training sessions for the week were outstanding as the farmers showed confidence and readiness to commercialize their farming activities.

Follow-up activities by trainers and trainees

The Agricultural extension Agent responsible for the area accompanied the CSIR-FRI team to the communities to visit the executives of the FBOs, Chiefs, Assemblymen and elders. The AEAs assigned to the Suhuluya community supported during the training sessions and will do same in the second stage training. They will follow up on the performance and application of what was learned by the farmer group at the first stage training.

m. Lessons for improving future training.

Members of the group admitted that they had really gained much knowledge that will go a long way in enhancing their farm commercialization drive and proved that the content of the modules were very appropriate. The farmers agreed that the content of the modules will help them particularly in their attempt at doing commercial farming and pledged to do group marketing and transportation on the produce at the next harvest. Members promised to do all of its business collectively to attain cohesion in the group. Some more of these are that the

production committee will arrange and negotiate with input suppliers and buy all inputs in bulk to effectively reduce the cost per unit. The tractor services committee also promised to start work immediately to negotiate for the cost per acre of ploughed land.

The stage one training was very successful to trainers and very beneficial to the trainees. However it is suggested that training alone is not enough that is why the stage two training is essential to practicalize the awareness to the farmers. The Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Group will be able to successfully and sustainably become more efficient and productive after the stages one and two trainings and when they obtain the necessary credit and services at the right time of the farming calendar.

9.0 Tracking indicators

Table 3: Number and percentage of Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmer Group members and leadership trained on various modules.

Name of FBO	Location	District	Number FBO members trained for each module (Percentage of leadership of FBO participating)			
			Module 1	Module 2 OCB modules 1-5	Module 3	Module 4
Tisuntaba-Timaritaba Farmer Based Organization	Suhuluya	West Mamprusi	39(100%), 7(88%)	38(97%), 6(75%)	34(87%), 8(100%)	36(92%), 7(88%)
			Module 5 36(92%), 7(88%)	Module 6 37(95%), 8(100%)	Module 7 37(95%) 8(100%)	Module 8 37(95%), 8(100%)
			Module 9 39(100%), 8(100%)			

10.0 Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

FBO	Location	District	MOD ULES	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
TISUNTABA-TIMARITABA	SUHULUYA	WEST MAMPRUSI	1	Poor	Satisfactory	Farmers followed attention and were enthusiastic.

			2	Weak	Very Good	Farmers were excited about the MiDA project and were eager to find out more about commercialization
			3	Weak	Excellent	Discussions were very interactive and livelier and resulted in concrete practical suggestions for the group's implementation of its value chain position to achieve a higher market share for their produce.
			4	Satisfactory	Very good	Farmers contributed in discussions and followed with rapt attention.
			5	Fairly good	Good	Farmers treasured the concept of leadership, governance and management and pledged to make changes in leadership of the group accordingly.
			6	Fairly good	Very good	Farmers followed with interest and were eager to implement content of the module.
			7	Poor	Good	

			8	Fairly good	Very good	Members were eager to implement changes and were happy to develop tactics to achieve their vision.
			9	Weak	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention and were eager to implement organization changes to achieve their vision. Participation in discussions for this last module was very encouraging. Members were ready to access the MiDA loan.

11.0 Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

The business capacity of the Tisuntaba-Timaritaba FBO was developed as the group's awareness was increased in commercial farming. The training methodology used and delivery were very good. Members of the group gained much knowledge and were eager to apply what they learnt. The contents of the modules were applicable and went down well with the farmers. The business plan was completed and are ready to access the MiDA loans from banks to enable them do commercial farming. The following are some of the suggestions for alternative FBO capacity building strategies.

- The content of the training material could be in pictures to further boost understanding of the modules since majority of rural farmers cannot read or write.
- Construction of feeder roads linking communities to make purchase of inputs, service acquisition and marketing of produce easier.

- Some additional loans should be given to the farmer group in the form of equipments such as maize and rice shellers to reduce post harvest losses and improve quality of produce.

WAHALA
FBO

GBIIMA

WEST MAMPRUSI

4. Executive Summary and Introduction

The MiDA stage one training in Business Capacity Building and Enterprise Development for phase four was conducted by the Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research for the Wahala Farmers group in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region from August 9th to 15th September 2010. The training had to be conducted at Loagri No.1 RC primary school because the Gbiima community was rendered inaccessible due to flooding. Loagri No.1 is about 4km from Gbiima. A total number of forty (40) farmers were trained. Training was conducted by George Anabila Asolmia Anyebuno with interpretation assistance offered by Mr Abukari Abdulai, a youth organizer and opinion leader in Loagri No.1.

- a. All the farmers participated in the program to access much needed credit for their farming activities as well as access markets for their farm produce. Trainers perception of the reasons why farmers agreed to attend the training initially is summarized in Table 1 below:

<i>Trainers perception of initial reasons for farmers attending training</i>	<i>Percentage of farmers</i>
To access credits	100%
To access markets for their produce	0%
To access information about where to purchase farming inputs (fertilizer, improved seeds and agro-chemicals)	0%
To receive starter pack	100%

b. Participants perception of training

The participants found the Stage 1 training extremely beneficial and are very confident that the knowledge acquired will help them improve upon their farming activities, lead to increased productivity, and reduce poverty levels. The farmers now recognize how working as a group will be beneficial to them and have resolved to strengthen the Wahala Farmers Group.

- c. It was observed that the farmers showed a lot of interest in modules which had direct practical links with their farming activities and matters related to group formation. They were particularly enthused about decision taking processes. Since an overwhelming majority of the participants could neither read nor write, they appreciated the use of flipcharts for illustrations and explanations. They enjoyed the use of group discussions, brainstorming sessions, and role-plays to illustrate points. Occasionally, there were heated exchanges which the trainer helped to calm down tempers with reference to relevant training modules.

LESSONS FROM APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGY (PUT A PICTURE OF A TRAINING SESSION)

n. Summary of selected modules / topics

The weekly schedule of modules/topics taught and course content are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Weekly schedule of modules/topics and course content

Period	Program/Module/Topic	Content	Training methodology
Week 1	<p>Introduction, training Policy, Needs Assessment</p> <p>MCA Ghana Project (Module 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of Trainer and participants • Establishment of rules and regulations for training sessions • Background information of each participant • Needs assessment for the Suguru Yiri FBO • The MCA Ghana Program-economic growth and poverty reduction • Commercial development of FBOs • Implementation arrangements and support • Key Compact constituencies and course objectives • Beginning of a process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions • Lectures
Week 2	<p>FBOs, Rural Development and Commercialization (Module 2)</p> <p>Value Chain Thinking (Module 3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why FBOs are important for Rural Development • Functions of Producer Organizations • Functions as Member Services • Unique characteristics and Challenges of FBOs • Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and Best Practices • Where is your FBO starting from • Why Value chains are important for the Ghana Compact • Value Chain Framework • Elements of Value Chain • Why Value Chain Thinking as a tool for Business Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions • illustrations • Participatory learning • Discussions
Week 3	<p>Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens (Module 4)</p> <p>A short Primer on Leadership, Governance and Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Business Vision for an FBO and who needs it • How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision • Business vision vis-a vis Business Plan • Developing Vision for your FBO • Practice Using the Value Chain Lens • The visioning Process • Drafting the Vision Statement • Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of board Operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions • Brainstorming • Participatory learning • Discussions • Brainstorming

	<p>(Module 5)</p> <p>Group Formation and Development (OCB Module 1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review of Key Organization documents ● Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders ● Importance of Member Services and meetings ● Approaches to Financial Management and Credit Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is a Group ● Importance and elements of a strong group ● How groups are formed ● Group Constitution/Byelaws-making Process ● Roles and responsibilities of group Leaders and members ● Procedure for conducting effective meetings ● Team Building ● Group Leadership Skills Development ● Financial Records Keeping ● Decision Making Process ● Conflict Management ● Cooperative Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lectures ● Discussions ● Experience sharing ● Mock practice/observation
Week 4	<p>Developing Business Expansion Strategies (Module 6)</p> <p>Developing the Action Agenda (Module 7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building ● What is SWOT Analysis and How to use it ● Defining Attributes and challenges ● Brainstorming Strategies ● In-depth Technical Assessment ● Sources and uses of Funds ● Identifying Tactics ● Finalizing Strategies ● Final Check on Vision, Targets and Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● From Strategy to Action (Review of Strategies and Tactics, Identification of requirements for Change, Move to taking Stock) ● Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change, Resource Requirements) ● Customizing Training and Technical Support (Technical Training and Maximizing Sales) ● Moving from Action Agenda to Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussions ● Brainstorming ● Participatory learning ● Group assignment/exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussions ● Brainstorming ● Participatory learning

	<p>Credit Management (OCB Module 2)</p> <p>Contracts and Procurement (OCB Module 3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Credit • Types of Credit • Sources of Funds • Principles of Good Lending • Stages of Credit Delivery • Loan Management • Accessing the Millennium Development Authority Micro (MiDA) Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a Contract • Importance of a Contract • How to enter into a Contract • Types of Contract • Business Contract Outline • What is Procurement • How is Procurement Done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture • Discussion • Experience sharing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion
Week 5	Driving Organization Change (Module 8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of Requirements for Change by the Business Planning Process • What Organization Changes Need to be Made • Components of Change Agenda • Defining Tasks/Steps at Member and Organization Levels • Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion • Brainstorming • Participatory learning
Week 6	<p>Draft Action Business Plan (Module 9)</p> <p>Business and Technical Communication (OCB Module 4)</p> <p>Tracking Progress of Farmer-Based-Organization (OCB Module 5)</p> <p>Evaluation of Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing the Business Plan • Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Communication • Importance of Effective Communication in Farmers' Associations • Tools of Communication • Barriers to Effective Communication • How to improve communication in Farmers' Associations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking Progress of FBOs • When is Progress Tracking Done • Indicators and Mechanism for Monitoring Progress • Sample Tracking Tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion

- o. Experiences with the usefulness of developing a lesson plan, and usefulness of the different aspects of the lesson plan for learning by FBO members.**

xxiii. Topic

Module 1 provided the participants with an overview of the MCA Ghana Compact and its objectives. Modules 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 sought to equip the farmers with the necessary know how to enable them operate as commercial entities to bring about economic growth and reduce poverty. Module 5, and the OCB Modules were tailored to group development and enterprise management.

xxiv. Why the Topic

The topics were appropriately selected to help in the commercial development of the group so that the members will have a business-like approach to farming rather than as a way of life. The main objective of the Modules was to train the farmers and facilitate them to draw up an Action Business Plan which will enable them access much needed credit under the MiDA program.

xxv. Learning objective of current lesson

The learning objective was to inform the farmers about the Ghana Compact and what it seeks to achieve. Undertake a needs assessment of the group and their farming activities in order to address gaps through training to change their mind set and enable them view and take up farming as a profitable business enterprise.

xxvi. Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

- xvii. Objective of Topic
- xviii. Introduction
- xix. Discussions
- xx. Evaluation
- xxi. Summary

x. Training methodology (Activities/Steps in the provision of learning experiences)

The Training Plan drawn up ensured that adequate time was allotted to the various modules. The training plan also enabled adequate preparation for the training session. Training methodology used included lectures, group discussions, brainstorming and experience sharing. A recapped of salient points of topics was done at the end of each session and again at the start of the next session. Training effectiveness was ascertained through pre and post scores of questions posed to the participants. Complicated topics were taught in very simple language with the aid of illustrations to ensure that participants understood the topics. Role-play was particularly appreciated as they relished the different roles assigned to them. This approach made the training very interesting and less monotonous.

xi. Conclusion/Key message

Members of the Wahala Farmers group were very happy and grateful for the six-week training program. The general feeling was that of contentment among all the participants. They believed that the training was going to help them improve upon their farming activities and also foster group cohesion. They also indicated how anxiously they are looking forward to the Stage 2 training and the prompt delivery of their loans.

xii. Follow-up activities by trainers and trainee

The Stage 2 Training on Crop Productivity which covers Farm Management, maize production, Postharvest Technologies, Integrated Crop Management, Integrated Pest Management, Harvesting and Postharvest Management, Quality Standard Control, Safe Handling, Application and Storage of Plant Protection Products and Environmental Issues will soon be conducted for the Wahala Farmers Group members based in Gbiima.

The group members have been advised to get in touch with the Agriculture Extension Officer assigned to Gbiima for help and direction on their farming activities.

Lessons for improving future training

Appropriateness of training content/modules

The training modules and topics were very relevant to the farmers because they gave them an insight into what the MiDA program is about and the benefits to be derived if they participated in the training sessions. The modules were very appropriate for effective training of the farmers. The training offered the participants an opportunity to enrich their knowledge to increase productivity, promote economic growth and reduce poverty. It is believed that the participants will adopt the acquired technologies to improve their farming activities immediately.

Understanding by participants

Learning effectiveness was conducted at the beginning and end of every training session. This involved posing questions to assess the farmers' knowledge before and after teaching the various topics. Generally, the pre-test scores were very low as most of the farmers were ignorant about the topics before the session. Post-test scores indicated a good grasp of the modules after the training sessions.

Adoption of Collective Purchasing and Marketing

Exploitation by middlemen and women was of great concern to the participants so after the training it is expected that members of the Wahala farmers group are going to engage in group purchasing of farming inputs and services. They had little knowledge about where to purchase improved seeds and agrochemicals and therefore resorted to purchasing these items from the open market. They did not appreciate the need to always go in for certified improved seeds as against replanting seeds from the previous harvest.

It is anticipated that the group will also engage in group transportation and marketing of their produce. Group members were delighted at the idea of signing contracts with buyers, input suppliers and tractor service providers and have resolved to adopt the practice to ensure firm commitment on both sides.

As a result of this training, it is believed that the entire membership of the Wahala farmers group will participate in all activities of the group. To ensure that this is carried through, every member belongs to at least one of the committees formed during the training. It is also envisaged that the group will become progressively more efficient and increase productivity. This will however depend on how promptly the loans are received and how soon the Stage 2 training is conducted.

5. Tracking indicators

Table 3 below shows the number of Wahala Farmers group (Gbiima) members trained during Stage 1 training at Loagri No.1, West Mamprusi District.

Table 3: Number of Wahala Farmers group members trained by modules.

Module No.	Number FBO members trained	Number (Percentage) of leadership trained
BD Module 1	40	6 (100%)
BD Module 2	40	6 (100%)
BD Module 3	40	6 (100%)
BD Module 4	40	6 (100%)
BD Module 5	40	6 (100%)
BD Module 6	40	6 (100%)
BD Module 7	40	6 (100%)
BD Module 8	40	6 (100%)
BD Module 9	40	6 (100%)
OCB Module 1	40	6 (100%)
OCB Module 2	40	6 (100%)
OCB Module 3	40	6 (100%)
OCB Module 4	40	6 (100%)
OCB Module 5	40	6(100%)

Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

An evaluation of the knowledge and skills acquired by the Wahala_Farmers group members during the Stage 1 training is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Evaluation of knowledge and skills acquired by members of the Wahala FBO

FBO	Location	District	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Wahala Farmers	Gbiima	West Mamprusi	Poor	Good	Farmers were very attentive and understood the modules. They were also very happy to have enriched their knowledge.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

Members of the Wahala Farmers Group were very grateful for the six-week MiDA Stage 1 training program. They have acquired a great deal of technical and managerial knowledge which hopefully will enhance their farming activities and lead to improved standard of living. They wait anxiously for the MiDA Stage 2 training program and the prompt disbursement of the loans. The group was advised not to hesitate to contact the Agriculture Extension officer for any assistance regarding their farming activities. The training was very successful.

TININ KANYA
WOMEN
GROUP

KPASENKPE

WEST MAMPRUSI

1. Executive Summary and Introduction

The Phase 4 Stage 1 training was conducted in the West Mamprusi District.

The FBO trained is known as Tinin Kanya Women Group, based at Kpasenkpe. The FBO has 40 members made up of 38 females and 2 males.

Trainer and farmer perception of the reasons for the training are summarized in Tables 1 and 2 below:

Table 1. Trainer perception of the reasons for the training

<i>Trainers perception of initial reasons for farmers attending training</i>	<i>Percentage of farmers</i>
To access to credits	100%
To access markets	50%
To access training and information	50%

Table 2. Farmer participant perception of the reasons for the training

<i>Trainers perception of initial reasons for farmers attending training</i>	<i>Percentage of farmers</i>
To access to credits	100%
To access markets	40%
To access training and information	50%

b. Lessons learned from first Phase 1 training:

- iv. The farmers found the training very interesting and useful to improve their perception of engaging in farming activities. They realized the seriousness and appropriateness of the MiDA Compact Programme structured to aid them in reducing poverty in the community, make them see farming as a business and improve their standard of living. They were enthusiastic and optimistic of great success because previous training given to other farmers in the same community had yielded enviable results. Also the daily monetary gains for feeding and starter pak issued to the previous farmer group in the community had encouraged them significantly.
- v. The modules used for the training programme are useful to the FBO; however it is only with constant follow up training that will help maintain their focus and enthusiasm

because the level of illiteracy seems to make them forget some salient issues. Such follow'-up training could be organized by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture extension staff in collaboration with Food Research Institute MiDA trained personnel.

- vi. It is also suggested that the MiDA training materials and modules be used to train literate youth in the communities so as to have maximum sustainability and impact.
- vii. It is further suggested that adult education classes in literacy and numeracy be organized for the FBO members so as to make them better understand the training modules and appreciate it better.

18. Background of assignment including brief on training needs

The six-week Stage 1 training on Commercial Development for Farmer-Based Organizations (FBOs) and Enterprise Development For Farmer-Based Organizations was conducted by the Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. The training was conducted on behalf of the Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) for Tinin Kanya Women Group, a Farmer-Based Organization based at Kpasenkpe in the West Mamprusi District from 12th August to 15th September 2010. For each FBO, 3 sessions each of 4 hour duration was conducted each week over the course period of 6 weeks amounting to 18 training sessions or 72 hours of training. During the first week, training needs assessment of the FBO was conducted. The main focus of the training was based on Business Development (BD) and Organizational Capacity Building (OCB) modules developed by MiDA for Stage 1 training. The needs assessment showed that the FBO would require training in topics of the modules shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Training needs assessment identified

Business Development (BD) Modules	Training Required
<p><i>BD Module 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction • Commercial Development of FBOs (CDFO) • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies • The Beginning of a Process 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p><i>BD Module 2:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why FBOs are Important for Rural Development • Functions of Producer Organizations • Functions as Member Services • Unique Characteristics and Challenges of FBOs • Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and Best Practices 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>BD Module 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact • Value Chain Framework • Elements of the Value Chain • Why Value Chain Growth is Important to FBO • Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>BD Module 4:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Business Vision for an FBO and Who Needs It? • How FBOs Benefit from Business Vision • Business Vision vis-à-vis Business Plan • Developing Vision for your FBO • Practice Using the Value Chain Lens • The Visioning Process • Drafting the Vision Statement 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>BD Module 5:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing Concepts of Leadership, Management and Governance • Basics of Board Operation • Review of Key Organization Documents • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders • Importance of Member Services and Meetings • Approaches to Financial Management 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>BD Module 6:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and Challenges • Brainstorming Strategies • Sources and Uses of Funds, • Identifying tactics, • Targets and Strategies 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p><i>BD Module 7:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) • Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource Requirements MaYesimizing Sales) 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>BD Module 8</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for change identified by the business planning process • What Organization Changes Need to be Made? • Change agenda components • Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) • Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business Plan) 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>OCB Module 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Formation And Development • What is a Group? • Importance of a Group • Elements of a Strong Group • How groups are formed • Group Constitution/Bye-laws-Making Process • Roles and Responsibilities of group Leaders and members • Procedure for Conducting Effective Meetings • Team building • Group Leadership Skills Development • Financial Records Keeping • Decision Making Process • Conflict Management • Cooperative Development 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>OCB Module 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Credit? • Types of Credit • Sources of Funds • Principles of good lending • Stages of credit delivery • Loan Management • Accessing the MiDA Micro Credit 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

<p><i>OCB Module 3</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a contract? • Importance of Contract • How to Enter into a Contract • Types of Contract • Business Contract Outline • What is Procurement? • How is Procurement Done? 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>OCB Module 4</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Communication? • Importance of Effective Communication in Farmers' Associations • Forms of Communication • Tools of Communication • Barriers to Effective Communication • How to Improve Communication in Farmers' Associations 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p><i>OCB Module 5</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking Progress of FBOs • When is Progress Tracking Done? • Indicators and mechanism for Monitoring Progress • Sample Tracking Tools 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>

At the end of the 6-week training most of the farmers had acquired sufficient knowledge about the subjects which had been identified as their training needs. They became appropriately primed /oriented for MiDA-CDFO Project with the view to becoming commercial farmers.

19. Training venues and logistical challenges

Training was conducted in the L/A Primary School Classroom in Kpasenkpe. The training venue was adequate; but the road from Walewale to Kpasenkpe was difficult to ply during the rainy season as portions of the road were flooded (Fig. 1).



Fig 1. Part of the flooded road to Kpasenkpe

20. Trainers and Training equipment

The name of the FBO, its location and trainer is shown in Table 4 below:

Table 4. Name of FBO, its location and trainer

FBO Identification Number	FBO name	Location of FBO	Names of Trainer(s)
NAZ081217G03Fr	Tinin Kanya Women Group	Kpasenkpe	Dr. Margaret Ottah Atikpo

The FBO was trained because of the trainers background in Food Science and Post Harvest Technology. The trainer was also able to apply his knowledge in delivery of materials in these two subjects to rural illiterate farmers.

Materials used for the training included attendance registers, flip boards and chats, markers, MiDA training manuals on the various modules, and posters.

The materials used for training were to assist the farmers to have good understanding of the subject areas presented.

The training materials used were standardized training materials provided by the MiDA programme. The other FBOs in the District also used the same materials in order to have uniformity and consistency for all FBOs.

21. Lessons from Approaches and Methodology

- p. Summary of selected modules/topics for each week and a brief outline of methodology used for each in a tabular form

Table 5 shows the selected modules/topics for each week.

Table 5: Weekly schedule of modules/topics and course content

Week (with dates)	MODULE NUMBER & TITLE	TOPIC (if applicable)	TRAINING METHODOLOGY
Week 1 10/08/10 To 12/08/10	(BD Module 1): The MCA Ghana Program and Course Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MCA Ghana Program – economic growth and poverty reduction • Commercial Development of FBOs (CDFO) • Implementation Support • Key Compact Constituencies • The Beginning of a Process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Learning • Discussions • Lectures • Brainstorming • Experience Sharing
Week 2 16/08/10 To 18/08/10	(BD Module 2): FBOs, Rural Development and Commercialization (BD Module 3): Value Chain Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why FBOs are Important for Rural Development • Functions of Producer Organizations • Functions as Member Services • Unique Characteristics and Challenges of FBOs • Elements of Strong FBOs • Commercialization and Best Practices • Why Value Chains are Important for the Ghana Compact • Value Chain Framework • Elements of the Value Chain • Why Value Chain Growth is Important to FBO • Value Chain Thinking as a Tool for Business Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Learning • Discussions • Lectures • Brainstorming • Experience Sharing

	(OCB Module 2) Credit Management	<p>Organization Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining Duties and Responsibilities of Office Holders • Importance of Member Services and Meetings <p>Approaches to Financial Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Credit? • Types of Credit • Sources of Funds • Principles of good lending • Stages of credit delivery • Loan Management • Accessing the MiDA Micro Credit 	
Week 4 30/08/10 To 01/09/10	(BD Module 6) Developing Business Expansion Strategies	<p>BD Module 6:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization Self-Assessment and Team Building • What is SWOT Analysis and How to Use It • Defining Attributes and Challenges • Brainstorming Strategies • Sources and Uses of Funds, • Identifying tactics, • Targets and Strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Learning • Discussions • Working Exercises • Lectures • Brainstorming Experience Sharing
	(BD Module 7) Developing the Action Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Strategy to Action (Review Strategies and Tactics, Identify Requirements for Change, Move to Taking Stock) • Defining Resource Requirements (Strategy, Key Steps/tactics, Requirements for Change, Actions to Tactics and Implement Change. Resource 	

	<p>(BD Module 8) Driving Organization Change</p> <p>(OCB Module 3) Contract and Procurement</p>	<p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customizing Training and technical Support (Technical Training and Maximizing Sales) • A Note About Performance Monitoring • From Action Agenda to Business Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for change identified by the business planning process • What Organization Changes Need to be Made? • Change agenda components • Defining Tasks/Steps (Member level, Organization level) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigning and Agreeing on Responsibilities (Completing the Plan, Developing Work plan per Strategy, Meeting with RICs) • Ensuring carrying out of the agreed actions in the Business Plan) • What is a contract? • Importance of Contract • How to Enter into a Contract • Types of Contract • Business Contract Outline • What is Procurement? • How is Procurement Done? 	
<p>Week 5 06/09/10 To</p>	<p>(BD Module 9) Action Business Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directions for Completing the Business Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Learning • Discussions

08/09/10	(OCB Module 4) Business and Technical Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Communication? • Importance of Effective Communication in Farmers' Associations • Forms of Communication • Tools of Communication • Barriers to Effective Communication • How to Improve Communication in Farmers' Associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Exercises • Lectures • Brainstorming • Experience Sharing
Week 6 13/09/10 To 15/09/10	(BD Module 9) Action Business Plan (OCB Module 5) Methods For Tracking Progress of FBOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing the Business Plan • Next Steps • Evaluation of Training • Tracking Progress of FBOs • When is Progress Tracking Done? • Indicators and mechanism for Monitoring Progress • Sample Tracking Tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory Learning • Discussions • Working Exercises • Lectures • Brainstorming • Experience Sharing

q. Experiences with the usefulness of developing a lesson plan, and usefulness of the different aspects of the lesson plan for learning by FBO members.

xxvii. Topic

The topics (BD and OCB Modules) studied were designed by MiDA to enable the FBO to be empowered to become economically stable and also to reduce poverty within its membership. The topics enlightened the FBO members to see farming as a business instead of just a way of life. The topics also made them realize that the farming must be on a commercial scale instead of the subsistence small holdings they were used to. Most of the topics studied were new to members of Tinin Kanya Women Group.

xxviii. Why the Topic

The objective for selecting the topics was to help in the commercial development of the FBO so that ultimately the members will undertake farming as a business rather than as a subsistence activity. To achieve the objectives of the CDFO programme the training needs of the FBO had been assessed and the topics were selected to address these requirements based on the Modules which had been developed by MiDA.

xxix. Learning objective of current lesson

The learning objective was to provide technical training on modern agriculture technologies and practices consistent with commercial farming and also post harvest technologies and handling of produce which will lead to significant reduction in postharvest losses of farmers produce. These were considered necessary to upgrade farming activities from subsistent level to commercial production.

xxx. Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

- xxii. Objective of lesson
- xxiii. Outline
- xxiv. Introduction
- xxv. Relevant topics/practical demonstrations
- xxvi. Experiences sharing
- xxvii. Discussions
- xxviii. Question time
- xxix. Summary

xiii. Training methodology (Activities/Steps in the provision of learning experiences)

Lesson plans were developed to ensure that time allocations for the various topics were adequate. The lesson plans enabled materials to be used for training to be assembled, and also facilitated logical, and consistent flow of information during teaching. This enhanced understanding of FBO members, and made learning easy and interesting for the farmers. Lessons were prepared using what, why, when, and how approach, and prepared to give in-depth training, knowledge, and understanding on the technical aspects of the subject matter. Training methodology included group discussions, teaching, illustrations, examples, case studies and sharing of experiences, etc. Important information was recapped at the end of each session and questions were asked to make sure farmers had understood the topics well.

xiv. Conclusion/Key message

It is the general observation and conviction that farmers have acquired invaluable knowledge during the course of the six weeks training. Training content has been appropriate and relevant and it is believed that farmers will apply the knowledge acquired. They learnt new approaches in order to farm commercially. One of its most significant accomplishments is that the programme helped the farmers to move from subsistence to more tactical and strategic thinking. Another significant outcome is that through the learning process, attitudes and behaviours that strongly support the adoption of the principles of lifelong learning were promoted.

vi. Follow-up activities by trainers and trainee

The six-week training will be followed up with three-week Stage 2 training on Crop Productivity. Before this Stage 2 training, the Trainer is expected to complete the write up on the Action Business Plan which will be submitted to Bangmarigu Community Rural Bank in Walewale where the FBO has its account.

f. Lessons for improving future training

Appropriateness of training content/modules

The modules and topics discussed were very relevant because they addressed specific needs of the FBO based on the vision of the FBO and what they hoped to achieve as documented in their Business Plans. These are paths that the FBO has chattered for themselves and training was conducted to move them along these paths to the expected goals. It is expected that a significant percentage of the farmers will apply the knowledge that they have acquired to improve their farming operations and maximize their yields and profits based on the value-chain thinking.

Farmers were particularly interested in such areas as value-chain thinking and developing business expansion strategies.

Understanding of participants

At the end of every training session evaluation was conducted to assess the understanding of the farmers. Generally over 90 % of farmers had good understanding of topics discussed daily. At the end of the training, assessment of the farmers showed they had improved their knowledge of topics discussed.

Adoption of Good Agronomic Practices

As a result of the training, it is anticipated that most of the trained farmers will adopt good agronomic practices and technology to upgrade their farming activities.

Collective marketing, etc

Members of Tinin Kanya Women Group appreciated the benefits of engaging in collective marketing as it will give them better bargaining power and higher returns. It is expected that the FBO will adopt these measures and other collective activities which will be to their advantage as individuals and also as a group.

Adequacy of training

The percentage of illiterate farmers in the FBO was 70 %. Despite this setback, they had acquired considerable experience in farming over the years to make them appreciate the contents of the training. Limitations was however in their lack of understanding with ease the more difficult technical areas of the training package. Efforts were therefore made to break it down to their level for easy assimilation. Members of the FBO therefore need to be further assisted and directed by technical personnel, AEA's, etc to implement GAP and this may be necessary step in the adoption of technologies by the farmers.

22. Tracking indicators

The number of FBO members trained during Phase 4 Stage 1 training at West Mamprusi is as shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Number of FBO members trained by districts and villages and modules.

Name of FBO	Location	District	Number FBO members trained for each module (Percentage of leadership of FBO participating)			
			BD Module 1	BD Module 2	BD Module 3	BD Module 4
Tinin Kanya Women Group	Kpasenkpe	West Mamprusi District	38, 38, 38 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	38, 39, 38 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	37, 38, 36 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	35, 36, 38 (FBO Leadership: 100%)
			BD Module 5	BD Module 6	BD Module 7	BD Module 8
Tinin Kanya Women Group	Kpasenkpe	West Mamprusi District	40, 40, 40 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	40, 40, 40 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	40, 40, 40 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	40, 40, 40 (FBO Leadership: 100%)

23. Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

An evaluation by trainers of the knowledge and skills acquired by FBO members during the Stage 1 training on Business Development (BD) and Organization Capacity Building (OCB) is summarized and presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Evaluation by trainer of the knowledge and skills acquired by FBO members during the Stage 1 training

FBO	Location	District	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Tinin Kanya Women Group	Kpasenkpe	West Mamprusi District	Fair	Good	Farmers were enlightened by the training; they became enthusiastic, asked many questions, contributed with their personal experiences, and participated greatly in all activities. They indicated that they had gained considerable knowledge in new approaches to farming.

24. Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

The choice of the topics in the Business Development and Organizational Capacity Building Modules has some strategic considerations in building the FBO to become commercial farmers. One of its most significant accomplishments is that the programme helped the farmers to move from operational to more tactical and then more strategic thinking. The methods (participatory learning, discussions, working exercises, lectures, brainstorming, experience sharing) employed to train the FBO has increased the farmers' abilities in terms of both management techniques and business skills. This, together with positive experiences gained with farmers, suggests that these same instruments could be used to confront other major challenges/situations in their rural communities. Since 70 % of the farmers are illiterate, it is important to also add further training in literacy and numeracy if the impact of the MiDA training is to become more sustainable.

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