

CSIR-FRI/RE/A-AWK/2010/014

**REPORT ON TRAINING AND TRAINING-RELATED ACTIVITIES
FOR DESIGNATED FBOS IN WEST MAMPRUSI DISTRICT FOR
LATE PHASE 2 STAGE 1 (T3 S1) FROM 7TH DECEMBER 2009 TO
20TH JANUARY 2010**

**COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR FARMER BASED-ORGANIZATIONS
(CDFO) OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (MIDA)
AGRICULTURAL PROJECT/CSIR-FRI**

BY

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Millennium Development Authority (MiDA)

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Executive Summary

The CSIR-Food Research Institute was contracted as a Training Service Provider by MiDA to train 10 Farmer Based Organizations in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana. The six week Stage 1 Training in Business Capacity Building was to have been carried out in August 2009 but had to be postponed due to heavy rains which rendered most of the roads in that part of the District unmotorable. Training finally started on 7th December 2009 and will end on 20th January 2010.

Majority of farmers participated in the program to access credit for their farming activities as well as access markets for their farm produce. They were motivated to attend the training because of information they had from other groups who had been trained and also from MOFA staff.

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	40%
To access training and information	40%

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

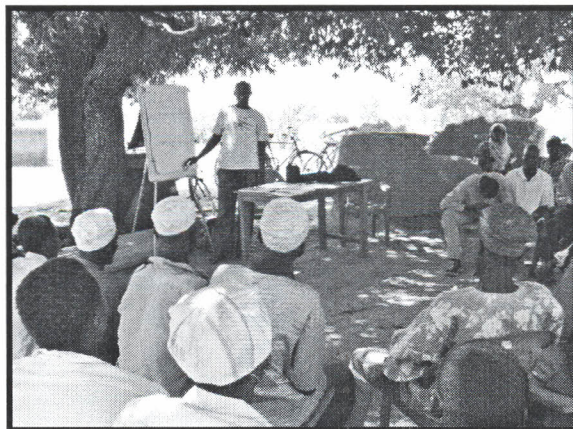
<i>Trainers perception of initial reasons for farmers attending training</i>	<i>Percentage of farmers</i>
To access to credits	100%
To access markets	30%
To access training and information	50%

a. Lessons learned from first Phase 1 training:

- i. The farmers found the 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 their FBOs and the benefits to be derived when they operate as a group rather than as individual farmers. The farmers treasured 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.
- ii. With regard to the training modules, farmers lacked sufficient literacy to enable them fully appreciate some of the modules taught. Greater emphasis was therefore placed on such

topics for the farmers to understand the concepts well. The modules were discussed in such a way that each seemed to build upon the previous one treated and this approach kept up the enthusiasm and understanding of the farmers. The farmers appreciated the vertical and horizontal linkages explained to them and the impact it could have on the improvement of their farming activities. 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 most of farmers could neither read nor write, copious use of flipcharts was boring to them. They preferred and enjoyed the use of group discussions, brainstorming sessions, and role-plays to illustrate points.

- 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.



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

Introduction

The CSIR-Food Research Institute was contracted as a Training Service Provider by MiDA to train 10 Farmer Based Organizations in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana. The six week Stage 1 Training in Business Capacity Building was to have been carried out in August 2009 but had to be postponed due to heavy rains which rendered most of the roads in that part of the District unmotorable. Training finally started on 7th December 2009 and will end on 20th January 2010.

Community Entry

The CSIR Food Research Institute training team led by the Technical Training Manager, Dr. Wisdom Kofi Amoa-Awua and accompanied by Agricultural Extension Agents from DADU, West Mamprusi visited the communities to be trained from 3-4th December 2009. FBOs. In each community the team paid a curtesy call on the chief and held discussions with the assembly man, opinion leaders, the executives and some members of the assigned Farmer Based Organization. During these introductory meetings the training venue and dates and time for training were agreed upon.

FBOs, Trainers and Training Venue

The Farmer Based Organizations to be trained, the training venue and the trainer from CSIR-Food Research Institute assigned to train the FBO are listed in Table 1

Table 1. Named of FBO, training venue and trainer from CSIR-FRI

NO.	FBO NAME	COMMUNITY IN WEST MAMPRUSI	TRAINING VENUE	NAME OF TRAINER FROM CSIR-FRI
1	Duu Tizorilavi women Group	Duu	Duu Primary School	George Anyebuno
2	Jadima Tisungtaba	Jadima	Market Square, Jadema	Cletus Gyato
3	Chabra-fong Suguru Vella	Janga	Apostolic Church, Janga	Joseph Gayin
4	Timonya Irrigation Farmer's Association	Karimenga	Presbyterian Church, Karimenga	Dr. Kwame Vowotor
5	Tichemtoni Production Group	Kperiga	Chief's palace, Kperiga	Dr Charles Tortoe
6	Asiatechaab	Kunkwak	Council, Kunkwak	Dr. (Mrs) Margaret Ottah Atikpo
7	Tinsutaaba farmers Group	Loagri No 1	Roman Catholic Primary School, Loagri No 1	Elvis Baidoo
8	Sunga Vella Farmers group	Loagri No1	Roman Catholic Primary School, Loagri No 1	Mrs Charlotte Oduro-Yeboah
9	Tizadede Woman Group	Sariba	Chairman's House, Sariba	Dr (Mrs) Kafui Kpodo
10	Ti Ning nya	Yizesi	Christian Fellowship Church, Yizesi	Seidu Ali Sampare

Objectives of training

- The objectives of the assignment are:
- To familiarize participants with the structure and objectives of the Compact

- To stress the importance of roles played by Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs) in supporting rural transformation, poverty reduction and economic growth through successful commercialization
- To use value chain thinking as a tool for commercialization and business strategy
- To develop a business vision and set performance targets
- To review the organization's strengths and weaknesses in terms of ability to achieve business vision
- To identify key business strategies and technical approaches needed to achieve vision and move into stages 2 and 3 of the CDFO activities
- To make arrangements for the FBO organization and management of the commercialization process
- To complete the draft Action Business Plan for submission to the Regional Implementation Consultants.

Methodology

Background information of group members was obtained using a questionnaire designed by the trainer. This was administered to each farmer and information gathered included

- Sex
- Age
- Educational background
- Marital status (in the case of the men, how many wives)
- Number of children (their ages as well as number in school)
- Languages spoken
- Crops cultivated and acreage of each crop
- How long the farmer has cultivated each crop
- Yield of each crop during the last farming season
- Use of irrigation, fertilizers, tractors, bullocks
- How crop is marketed
- Problems encountered with farming activities

Additional information was obtained through use of the organization checklist provided in the Trainers Manual, through discussion sessions and other interactions with the farmers.

Training Needs

The training identified for all the FBOs were similar and are presented in the Table below

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><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>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 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>

OCB Module 5	
<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>

1. Lessons from Approaches and Methodology

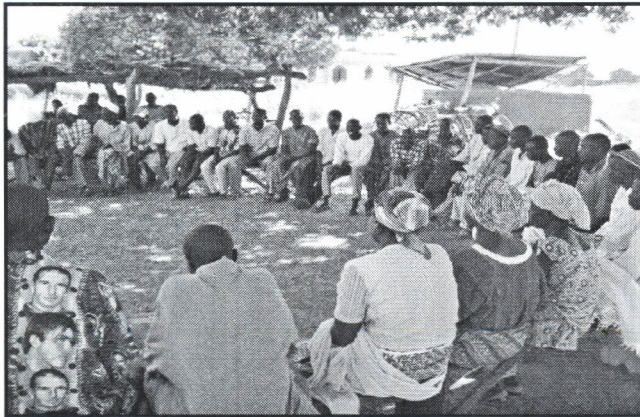
a. Summary of selected modules / topics for each week and a brief outline of methodology used for each in a tabular form

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

Week	MODULE NUMBER & TITLE	TOPIC (if applicable)	TRAINING METHODOLOGY
Week 1	(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	(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 Group Formation And Development What is a Group? Importance of a Group Elements of a Strong Group How groups are formed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participatory Learning Discussions Lectures Brainstorming Experience Sharing

	<p>(BD Module 7) Developing the Action Agenda</p> <p>(BD Module 8) Driving Organization Change</p> <p>(OCB Module 3) Contract and Procurement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying tactics, • 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 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) • 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	<p>(BD Module 9) Action Business Plan</p> <p>(OCB Module 4) Business and Technical Communication</p>	<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	(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



Training sessions

Timonya Irrigation Farmers' Association

Karimenga

Summary

The FBO trained is known as Timonya Irrigation Farmers' Association, based at Karimenga. Timonya Irrigation Farmers' Association is a ten-year old Crop Production FBO with a membership of 50 farmers made up of 29 men and 21 women. 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%

b. Lessons learned from first Phase 1 training:

- i. The farmers heard about the first Phase 1 Stage 1 training being 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 AEAs 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. Lessons from Approaches and Methodology

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

- i. 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.

- ii. 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.

- iii. 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.

- iv. 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 Bangmarigu Community Rural Bank at Walewale 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. 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 good agricultural practices (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.

3. 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
Timonya Irrigation Farmers' Group	Karimenga	West Mamprusi District	43, 42, 41 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	41, 42, 44 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	42, 43, 44 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	41, 44, 44 (FBO Leadership: 100%)
			BD Module 5	BD Module 6	BD Module 7	BD Module 8
Timonya Irrigation Farmers' Group	Karimenga	West Mamprusi District	42, 45, 44 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	44, 42, 43 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	44, 43, 43 (FBO Leadership: 100%)	43, 42, 43 (FBO Leadership: 100%)

4. Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

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

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

5. 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 by the 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.

Tizadede Farmer Based Organization Sariba

Summary

The Early Phase 2 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 Tizadede Farmer Based Organization in Sariba in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region from December 7th 2009 to 20th January 2010. A total number of 50 farmers were trained. Training was conducted by Dr Kafui Kpodo with interpretation assistance offered by Mr Jacob Kwesi, the 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 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	60%
To access information about where to purchase subsidized farming inputs (fertilizer, seed and agro-chemicals)	10%

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 Tizadede 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 all farmers in the group could neither read nor write, copious 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)

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

v. 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.

vi. 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.

vii. 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.

viii. 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 Tizadede 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 3 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 Tizadede Group in Sariba.

The group members have been introduced to Agriculture Extension Officer in charge of Sariba Mr. Abiaduka. 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 Tizadede 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 Tizadede 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 Tizadede 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.

6. Tracking indicators

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

Table 3: Number of Tizadede – Sariba FBO members trained by modules.

Module No.	Number FBO members trained	Number (Percentage) of leadership trained
BD Module 1	45	6 (100%)
BD Module 2	48	6 (100%)
BD Module 3	48	6 (100%)
BD Module 4	50	6 (100%)
BD Module 5	50	6 (100%)
BD Module 6	50	6 (100%)
BD Module 7	50	6 (100%)
BD Module 8	50	6 (100%)
BD Module 9	50	6 (100%)
OCB Module 1	50	6 (100%)
OCB Module 2	50	6 (100%)
OCB Module 3	50	6 (100%)
OCB Module 4	50	6 (100%)
OCB Module 5	50	6(100%)

Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

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

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

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

7. Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

All members of Tizadede 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 Sariba in view of the fact that majority of the members are illiterate.

**Sunga Vella Farmers Group
Loagri No. 1**

SUMMARY

Sunga Vella Farmers Group at Loagri No. 1 in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana was assigned to Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research for MiDA Stage 2 Training. Sunga Vella Farmers Group Based Organisation consists of 40 men and 11 women and was established in 2004. The trainers for the group were Mrs. Charlotte Oduro-Yeboah (CSIR-FRI) and Mr. Abdulai Yakubu (Agric Extension Agent, Walewale). All members of Sunga Vella Farmers Group attended the training except for some absenteeism as a result of market days and funerals. The Sunga Vella Farmers' Group were interested in the training and the information on modern agriculture, while a few were interested in starter pack and credit facilities. The farmers' were pleased about the positive impact of the MiDA Programme because it would help them alleviate poverty and improve their livelihoods. Lessons learnt according to trainee farmers during the MiDA Stage 2 Training were the modern agriculture technologies and post harvest management with emphasis on maize, which is their commercial crop. Sunga Vella Farmers Group did not identify any shortcomings in the MiDA Stage 2 Training. They really welcomed the training and believe it will go a long way to improve their farming activities.

LESSONS FROM APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGY

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.

ix. Topic

The topics studied under Module 11 (Cross Cutting Technologies for Adoption by Farmers) included the following:

- Farm Management
- Integrated Crop Management
- Safe handling and Storage of Plant Protection Products
- Environmental and Social Impacts

The topics studied under Module 4 (Maize Production and Post-harvest Technologies) included the following:

- Crop Production
- Post-harvest Management and Quality Control

The topics studied under Module 8 (Post-harvest Activities) included the following:

- Post-harvest Management and Quality Control

x. Why the Topic

These topics addressed the training needs of Sunga Vella Farmers' Group as enumerated in their Action Business Plan.

xi. Learning objective of current lesson

The learning objective of the topics was to provide technical training on modern Agriculture technologies and post harvest technologies for Sunga Vella Farmers' Group in order to help the farmers to move into growing new varieties and fully adopt Good Agricultural and post-harvest practices into commercial activities.

xii. Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

Sunga Vella Farmers' Group were taught and evaluated on the topics treated under each module. Emphasis was placed on areas trainee farmers were observed to be lacking in knowledge until trainees understood the topic under study.

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

Lectures, discussions, demonstrations and evaluation of topics were the training methods employed for the training of Sunga Vella Farmers' Group.

Conclusion/Key message

Sunga Vella Farmers' Group received the Stage 2 Training as timely and knowledge acquisition experience in their farming business and promised to use all the technologies learnt in their farming activities.

xiv. Follow-up activities by trainers and trainees

Trainers will follow-up on a 2 weeks field demonstration for trainee farmers of Sunga Vella Farmers' Group, which form part of the MiDA Stage 2 Training for the group.

d. Lessons for improving future training

The different modules taught during MiDA Stage 2 Training were very relevant. Participants agreed to use all the technologies acquired in the next 3-6 months to improve their farming activities.

Trainee farmers understood the modules taught very well and it is expected that they will all adopt the good agronomic practices and technologies to upgrade their farming activities. Farmers of Sunga Vella Farmers' Group agreed to engage in group marketing as well as other activities of each other.

The training for group was very appropriate and it is hopeful that the group will be successful in employing the knowledge in their farming activities. However, the farmers' efforts will materialise only by the availability of credit facilities for members to engage in their agriculture activities.

6.0 TRACKING INDICATORS

Table 3: Number of Sunga Vella 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)		
			Module 4	Module 8	Module 11
Sunga Vella Farmers 'Group	Loagri No. 1	West Mamprusi	46 (91.5 %)	49.6(97.4%)	48.3(94.7%)
			5 (100 %)	5 (100%)	5 (100 %)

Table 4: Level of knowledge scored for Sunga Vella 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
23-2-10	Sunga Vella Farmers 'Group	Loagri No. 1	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention
24-2-10	Sunga Vella Farmers 'Group	Loagri No. 1	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good
25-2-10	Sunga Vella Farmers 'Group	Loagri No. 1	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed much interest in topics

1-03-10	Sunga Vella Farmers 'Group	Loagri No. 1	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers contributed significantly
2-03-10	Sunga Vella Farmers 'Group	Loagri No. 1	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very impressive
3-03-10	Sunga Vella Farmers 'Group	Loagri No. 1	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in topics
8-03-10	Sunga Vella Farmers 'Group	Loagri No. 1	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good
9-03-10	Sunga Vella Farmers 'Group	Loagri No. 1	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in topics
10-03-10	Sunga Vella Farmers 'Group	Loagri No. 1	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention

8.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE FBO CAPACITY BUILDING STRATEGIES

The MiDA Stage 2 Training for Sunga Vella Farmers' Group was conducted successfully and the farmers confessed that they had gained much knowledge on technologies of modern agronomic practices and post-harvest treatment during the entire period of training. Sunga Vella Farmers' Group agreed to use the newly acquired knowledge in their farming activities and share with other farmers who did not benefit from the MiDA training. The Farmers however reiterated that the timely release of starter packs and credit facilities will facilitate the early adoption of their newly acquired knowledge in their farming activities and subsequently improve their livelihoods.

Tichemtoni Production Group

Kperiga

SUMMARY

Tichemtoni Production Group located at Kperiga in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana was assigned to Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research for MiDA Phase III Stage 1 Training. Tichemtoni Production Group had 49 members (41 males and 8 females). Tichemtoni Production Group was formed in 2006. At the end of the training for Tichemtoni Production Group, 47 farmers were trained and two farmers were untrained. The perception of majority of the Tichemtoni Production Group of the MiDA Phase III 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 Tichemtoni Production Group had received an initial training under the Organization Development of the MiDA program. Tichemtoni Production Group did not identify any weaknesses in the MiDA Phase III Stage 1 Training.

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.

xv. Topic

All topics under Modules 1-9 were studied

xvi. Why the Topic

These topics addressed the Business Development Capacity with emphases on developing the Tichemtoni Production Group Action Business Plan as required under MiDA Phase III Stage 1 Training.

xvii. 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 Tichemtoni Production 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 Tichemtoni Production Group to function as commercial farmer organization.

xviii. Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

Trainee farmers of Tichemtoni Production 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.

xix. 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 Tichemtoni Production Group.

xx. Conclusion/Key message

Trainee farmers of Tichemtoni Production Group accepted the MiDA Phase III 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.

xxi. Follow-up activities by trainers and trainees

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

e. Lessons for improving future training

All the modules 1 to 9 taught during MiDA Phase II Stage 1 Training for Tichemtoni Production 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 Tichemtoni Production 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 Tichemtoni Production Group agreed to engage in collective marketing.

The MiDA Phase III Stage 1 Training for Tichemtoni Production 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 Tichemtoni Production 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)	
			Module	Count (Percentage)
Tichemtoni Production Group	Kperiga	West Mamprusi	Module 1	47 (95.9 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 2	46 (93.9 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 3	47 (95.9 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 4	46 (93.9 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 5	46 (93.9 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 6	43 (87.8 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 7	47 (95.9 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 8	47 (95.9 %); 7 (100 %)
			Module 9	47 (95.9 %); 7 (100 %)
			OCB Module 1	47 (95.9 %); 7 (100 %)
			OCB Module 2	46 (93.9 %); 7 (100 %)
			OCB Module 3	46 (93.9 %); 7 (100 %)
			OCB Module 4	47 (95.9 %); 7 (100 %)
OCB Module 5	47 (95.9 %); 7 (100 %)			

7.0 TRACKING INDICATORS

Table 4: Level of knowledge scored for Tichemtoni Production Group for all training sessions

Date	Modal level of knowledge and skills before training	Modal level of knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Week 1			
7-12-09	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention during all sessions
9-12-09	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good through all sessions
11-12-09	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all topics under study
Week 2			
14-12-09	Poor	Very good	Farmers contributed significantly during discussions
16-12-09	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good in all sessions
18-12-09	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all topics
Week 3			
21-12-09	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good during sessions
22-12-09	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in topics
23-12-09	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention in all the sessions
Week 4			
7-1-10	Poor	Very good	Farmers followed with much attention in all the sessions
8-1-10	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good
9-1-10	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all sessions
Week 5			
11-1-10	Poor	Very good	Farmers contributed significantly during the study
13-1-10	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good in all the sessions
15-1-10	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in all the topics under study
Week 6			
18-1-10	Poor	Very good	Farmers discussions was very good
19-1-10	Poor	Very good	Farmers showed strong interest in topics and contributed well
20-1-10	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 III Stage 1 Training for Tichemtoni Production 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 Tichemtoni Production 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 Tichemtoni Production 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.

Tisuntaaba Farmers Group

Loagri No.1

Summary

The Tisuntaaba Farmer Based Organization is made up of fifty-one (51) members made of of forty-two (42) men and nine (9) women. Some challenges faced by the trainer are dusty roads to the training center from Walewale and the unfavorable weather conditions due to harmattan.

Members of Tisuntaaba 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 treasured 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.

Farmers gained much knowledge and sharpened their skills after completion of the training sessions on all the modules. The Tisuntaaba 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.

8. Lessons from Approaches and Methodology

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. The general consensus was that the modules had immensely increased their knowledge on the MCA Ghana Compact and are eager to learn more to commercialize their farming activities.

Participants had a fair understanding 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, members of Tisuntaaba 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.

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 5 offered members of Tisuntaaba 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.

Members realized 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.

Members of Tisuntaaba 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.

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.

Members of the Tisuntaaba 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.

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 Agents 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 Loagri No.1 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.

d. 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 proves that the content of the modules were very appropriate. The farmers agreed that the content of the modules will help them massively 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 inputs 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 Tisuntaaba farmer group will be able to successfully and sustainably become more efficient and productive after the stages one and two training and when they obtain the necessary credit and services at the right time of the farming calendar.

4.0 Tracking indicators

Table 3: Number and percentage of Tisuntaaba 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
Tisuntaaba Farmer Based Organization	Loagri No.1	West Mamprusi	49(96.1%), 6(100%)	50(98%), 6(100%)	50(98%), 6(100%)	50(98%), 6(100%)
			Module 5	Module 6	Module 7	Module 8
			50(98%), 3(50%)	49(96%), 6(100%)	49(96%), 6(100%)	49(96%), 6(100%)
			Module 9 50(98%), 6 (100%)			

5.0 Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

MO DUL ES	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
1	Poor	Satisfactor y	Farmers followed rapt 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. Farmers contributed in discussions and followed with rapt attention. Farmers treasured the concept of leadership, governance and management and pledged to make changes in leadership of the group accordingly. Farmers followed with interest and were eager to implement content of the module.
4	Satisfactory	Very good	Members were eager to implement changes and were happy to develop tactics to achieve their vision. Farmers followed with much attention and were eager to implement organization changes to achieve their vision.
5	Fairly good	Good	Participation in discussions for this last module was very encouraging. Members were ready to access the MiDA loan.
6	Fairly good	Very good	
7	Poor	Good	
8	Fairly good	Very good	
9	Weak	Very good	

6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

The business capacity of the Tisuntaaba 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 were 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 should be in pictures to increase understanding of the modules since majority are illiterates.
- 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.

Ti Ning Nya FBO Yizesi

Executive Summary and Introduction

The MiDA Commercial Development Training Phase Three Stage One conducted by the Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (FRI-CSIR) took place on the 7th December, 2009 to 20th January, 2010 at the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region of Ghana.

There were ten selected FBOs in the West Mamprusi District for the FRI-CSIR Training Services Provider. This report is based on Ti Ning Nya Farmer Base Organization (FBO) that was assigned to the Trainer. The Ti Ning Nya FBO of Yizesi is made up of 49 trainees on the whole.

The training in Commercial Development covered, The MCA Ghana Program and Course Objectives, FBOs Rural Development and Commercialization, Value Chain Thinking, Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens, A short Primer on Producer Organization Principles, Assessing FBO Business Requirements, Developing the Business Strategy, Organizing and Managing for Business Success, Completing the Action Business Plan and Next Steps, Financial Analysis. Others were, Group Formation and Development, Credit Management, Contracts and Procurement, Business and Technical Communication, Methods for Tracking FBOs Progress.

Perception of reasons farmers attended training are as tabulated.

Trainers perception of initial reason for farmers attending training	Percentage of farmers
To access credit	100%
To access information	25%
To access markets	30%
Monitor farm size and output for probable taxation	15%
Form farmers into cooperation groups to easily obtain information about them	40%

Participants were content with the Business Development program and were sincere in suggesting that the learning objectives and outcome of the training program would be met. Lessons such as mindset change, empowerment, new way of doing things and taking farming as business should be strengthened.

Some lessons learnt from the phase three training that needs to be strengthened are, managerial skills to plan and organize members to access the loan facility which is very crucial to the survival of the program. More emphasis to guidance on credit acquisition and management, post harvest and value addition practices in commercialization activities.

2 Lessons from Approaches and Methodology

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

i. Topics

These were the topics covered:

Organization Capacity Building

1. Group Formation and Development
2. Credit Management
3. Contracts and Procurement
4. Business and Technical Communication
5. Methods for Tracking FBOs

Guide to Business Planning

1. The MCA Ghana Program and Course Objectives
2. FBOs, Rural Development and Commercialization
3. Value Chain Thinking
4. Business Vision through a Value Chain Lens
5. A short Primer on Producer Organization Principles
6. Assessing FBO Business Requirements
7. Developing the Business Strategy
8. Organizing and Managing for Business Success
9. Completing the Action Business Plan and Next Steps
10. Financial Analysis

ii. Why the Topic

The purpose for selecting these topics was to assist the FBOs to develop their ability to do commercial agriculture

iii. Learning objective of current lesson

The learning objectives was to change the participants

- Mindset
- Empowering them
- To take farming as a business
- Adopt new ways of doing things

- Make learning participatory

iv. Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

- Objectives
- Overview/recap
- Introduction
- Topics
- Presentation, discussion, participatory, experience sharing, exercises
- Summary and evaluation

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

Training methodology as describe in table-2 includes presentation, discussions, practical exercises, group works, and brainstorming. Relevant topics were scheduled for selected days for weekly delivery. This was to assist the training program so as to enhance learning and understanding.

VI. Conclusion/Key message.

Establishing the trainings needs has helped to fill in the gaps. Business Development and Organizational Capacity Building Modules has been very relevant to the course and program. The training logistics provided made the delivery approaches very effective for the learning process. The training venues used, were reasonably spacious and conducive for the discussions and presentation.

The topics were relevant and appropriate in the commercial development of farming, expansion and growth. It is believed that the participants would use the knowledge gained to address many of the challenges.

One key message that was agreed by participants during the evaluation of the training was that there was a sense of mindset change and farming should be taken as a commercial venture than as a way of life.

vi. Follow up activities by trainers and trainees

The RICs would be required to make some follow-up schedules. There should be communication channels between the trainer and trainees even after the program.

e. Lessons for improving future training.

Training modules were appropriate and participants understood the modules very well.

As a result it was envisaged that farmers would adapt and:

- i. Engage in collective purchasing
- ii. Engage in collective marketing
- iii. Engage in activities with all or most members of the FBO
- iv. However, training alone may not necessarily be able to successfully and sustainably make participants more efficient and productive enough. Other services such as evaluation and monitoring which should include periodic follow-ups by agents such as MiDA, MoFA, and NGOs etc, would be needed to give technical directions and the transfer of the acquired knowledge for a reasonable length of time. In otherwise a Hand-Holding Programme.

3 Tracking indicators

Table 3: 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)									
			Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Module 6	Module 7	Module 8	Module 9	Module 10
Ti Ning Nya	Yizesi	West Mampusi	48 Leadership: 100%	46 Leadership: 100%	45 Leadership: 98%	45 Leadership: 100%	45 Leadership: 100%	48 Leadership: 98%	47 Leadership: 98%	45 Leadership: 100%	46 Leadership: 100%	45 Leadership: 100%

4 Participants knowledge and skills Evaluation

Level of knowledge scored for each of the FBOs for all training sessions.

FBO	Location	District	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Ti Ning Nya	Yizesi	West Mamprusi	Below Average	Average	Farmers' participatory role was encouraging and was enthusiastic in their contribution.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

It was observed that trainees agreed to the needs assessment that was identified and the decision to fill these gaps in a comprehensive curriculum i.e. (Business Development and Organization Capacity Building) in the CDFO program.

Areas covered Included: the elements of the commercialization strategies, plans to growth and expansion that lead to identifying the value addition thinking, visions statements and SWOT analysis.

Other factors were: Financial structure, management approaches to assist in building-up the knowledge base to produce an Action Business Plans. Mindset change, empowerment and new ways of doing things were considered.

All these have proven to be very useful and as such there is no doubt that farmer's are waiting eagerly to go through the Stage Two Training so as to be able to access the credit facility.

It is recommended however that a lot more emphasis in any future training should stress more on input and input supplies. Arrangement and Negotiations with Buyers should be timely.

To build trust, the Banks should be very responsive. The necessary arrangements to honour agreements between farmers and input supplies so as not to breakdown the enthusiasm of the farmers must also considered.

The Banks plays a key role in this whole arrangement and must be pushed by any supervising agency to be on time; however their powers should not be circumvented. A look at the powers of the Banks by MCA program could turn things around.

**CHABRAN-FONG SUGURU VELLA FARMERS'
GROUP
JANGA**

Summary

The 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 after completing 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. 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.

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.

f. 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.

- vii. Topic
- viii. 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

- ix. Learning objective of current lesson

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

x. Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

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

xi. 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.

xii. Conclusion/Key message

xiii. Follow up activities by trainers and trainees

g. 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.

1. Tracking indicators

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

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
(100)	(98)	(98)	(96)	(96)	(90)	(90)	(96)	(94)	(96)
(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)

2. 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)

Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
fair	very good	Trainees appreciated the knowledge gained. It was clear they had undergone a change of mindset and were poised to operate with a more commercial approach to their farming activities.

3. 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.

Tizorilavi Women FBO

Duu

Summary

FBO Name	Perception of reasons for attending training			
	To access credit	To access markets	To access training and information	
Tizorilavi Women FBO(Duu)	√ (49)			

Members of the Tizorilavi Women FBO (Duu) were elated to be beneficiaries of the MiDA training programme. The primary reason for attending the stage one training was to access credit which they indicated was their most pressing need.

b) The participants believe the training has been extremely useful. They believe the training will have a huge impact on their farming activities and result in increased crop yield.

c) Discussions of the various modules facilitated greater understanding and appreciation of the concepts. Group exercises were also very helpful in explaining some of the concepts to the participants.

i. Value chain thinking and group formation activities

ii. Strengths –Though modules were quite adequate, it was sometimes difficult for participants to understand subjects since most of them were illiterate

iii. Training venue was not the best. Sometimes participant got distracted because the training was done in the open due to passing vehicles and disturbances from school Pupils on break.

b) The training plan was extremely useful. It facilitated effective teaching and learning. It also promoted effective preparation for training lessons.

B. Lessons for improving future training

a) The modules were appropriate for training of the participants. It required time to get the participants to understand the various concepts since they were illiterate. The four hour

duration for each training session was adequate to achieve this objective. Modules 2,3, and 4 needed more time to teach so more time was allocated to them.

The participants have resolved to use the contents of the modules to improve their activities because they have recognized the inherent benefits.

b) The participants followed with much attention so were able to understand most of the modules. This was possible because the training dwelt on activities they were already engaged in.

c) As a result of this training, the FBOs have resolved to

i. Engage in collective purchasing of inputs and services

ii. Engage in collective marketing

iii. Engage all members of the FBO in all activities in furtherance of the objective of the FBO

iv) Training alone is not enough for the FBOs. Provision of credit, irrigation pumps, and the establishment of linkages to other industry players are very critical for the survival of the FBOs. Success and sustainability can only be assured if the farmers are able to do more than one cropping in a year. Provision of irrigation facility is something that must be taken seriously.

Tracking indicators

Name of FBO	Number of FBO members trained for each module (Percentage of leadership of FBO participation)								
	Mod. 1	Mod.2	Mod. 3	Mod. 4	Mod.5	Mod.6	Mod.7	Mod.8	Mod.9
Tizorilavi Women FBO	48 (95%)	48 (95%)	48 (95%)	48 (95%)	48 (95%)	48 (95%)	48 (95%)	48 (95%)	48 (95%)

FBO	Location	District	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Tizorilavi Women FBO	Duu	West Mamprusi	Poor	Very Good	Farmer were very attentive and understood the modules

Conclusion

The training was very successful. Enthusiasm was very high. Participants expressed gratitude to MiDA for the training.

Recommendations

Credit facility should be made available to the participants to enable them realize their expectation of reducing their poverty levels.

Kunkwak Asiatechaab FBO
Kunkwak

Summary

The Early Phase 11 Stage I training of Kunkwak Asiatechaab FBO involved business capacity building of members through an integrated approach of methods to reduce poverty and increase economic growth through increased crop productivity of selected maize crop, rural development, business vision through value chain concept, leadership, governance and management, business expansion strategies, developing action agenda, and completion of a business plan. With regards to perception, the most important reasons why members of the FBO agreed to attend the training was to access credit for their farming activities and also receive starter packs as they had learnt from farmers who had been trained in previous MiDA Training programme.

Table 1. Perception of farmers with percentage scores

<i>Perception of reasons farmers attended training</i>	<i>Percentage of farmers (%)</i>
To access credit	100
To access markets	20
To access training and information	40
To store produce in bulk	10
To market produce in bulk	20
To access starter pack	100
To form cooperative groups	80

With regard to the training modules, farmers lacked literacy to enable them fully appreciate some of the modules taught. Greater emphasis was therefore placed on those topics for the farmers to understand the concepts well. The modules were discussed in such a way that each seemed to build upon the previous one treated and kept up the enthusiasm and understanding of the farmers. The farmers appreciated the vertical and horizontal linkages explained to them and the impact it could have on the improvement of their farming activities. There were no adverse outstanding issues to be resolved. There was cohesion among the farmers at all times of the training.

Lessons from Approaches and Methodology

b. 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

The BD and OCB Modules introduced under the MiDA project were exciting and new to members of Kunkwak Asiatechaab FBO. It made them realize that farming can be commercialized and seriously taken as a business to improve their economic status and reduce poverty, rather than as a subsistent activity

- Why the Topic

The topics were selected to help in the commercial development of the FBOs such that the members interest will be geared towards undertaking farming as a business venture 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.

- Learning objective of current lesson

The learning objective of current lesson was to provide technical training on modern and new 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.

- Steps in knowledge/skills acquisition

- Objective of lesson
- Outline
- Introduction
- Relevant topics/practical demonstrations
- Experiences sharing
- Discussions
- Question time
- Summary

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

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

- vi. Conclusion/Key message

The six weeks MiDA training in commercial and business development for all members of the Kunkwak Asiatechaab FBO have been useful and has imparted knowledge to them. The training modules have been carefully selected; and well taught to address the needs of the farmers. The farmers were therefore exposed to new technologies in agronomy that will address the gap and inform them about commercial farming. Consequently the attitudes, mindset and behaviour of

the FBO members were significantly changed to move from subsistence farming for domestic consumption to a more strategic and tactically planned commercial oriented business regime that will remove them from their poor status and increase their economic power individually and also the country as a whole.

vii. Follow up activities by trainers and trainees

The trainer will also complete and submit the Action Business Plan to be evaluated by MiDA before final submission to the West Mamprusi Community Rural Bank where Kunkwak Asiatechaab FBO operates its account.

The six-weeks of the Stage one training will be shortly followed by the Stage 2 technical training on Crop Productivity.

Lessons for improving future training

a. Appropriateness of training content/modules

The content of the training modules and all specific topics imparted to Kunkwak Asiatechaab FBO were relevant because they addressed their specific needs and their vision of the group. The farmers have indicated that they will use the knowledge acquired to improve upon their farming activities so as to maximize yields and profits based on the new trend of value-chain thinking.

b. Understanding of modules by participants

During training, participants were asked questions to assess their understanding of the modules. At the beginning of every training session, important areas of previous topics are recapped to test the knowledge of the farmers. Also evaluation was conducted at the end to assess the understanding of the farmers. Most of the farmers understood most of the topics well, though about 10 % did not.

Adoption of Good Agronomic Practices

Most of the trained farmers said that they would adopt good agronomic practices to improve their farming operations. Although the initial objective of the members of the FBO was to obtain MiDA starter packs and loan, it is doubtful any farmer will submit him/her self to such rigorous and useful training and not adopt the good practices that will lead to poverty reduction and economic growth.

Bulk purchases and Group marketing

Members of Kunkwak Asiatechaab FBO have indicated they will engage in bulk purchases of inputs and collectively marketing through their group to improve the profitability of their farming operation.

Adequacy of training

Lack of formal education of most members of Kunkwak Asiatechaab FBO contributed in difficulty in understanding certain topics. Though members had considerable experience in the

rudiments of farming some of the topics had to be repeated and explained several times to them.

Tracking Indicators

Participants Knowledge and Skills Evaluation

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

FBO	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Kunkwak Asiatechaab FBO	Fair	Good	Farmers were asked many questions, listened attentively, were enthusiastic, gained considerable knowledge in new approaches to farming, were excited about commercialization and or business concept

8. Conclusions and Recommendations for alternative FBO capacity building strategies

The Business Development and Organizational Capacity Building Modules were carefully chosen and appropriate to the training needs of the Kunkwak Asiatechaab FBO. This is because the modules entailed some strategies in providing the FBO with skills to go into commercial/business venture in their farming activities. The training enlightened the FBO about moving from commodity to commercial ventures using more tactical and strategic knowledge in planning every stage of the activities.

The methods employed to train the FBO has increased the farmers' abilities and outlook in terms of both management techniques and business skills. Consequently for sustainability of the processes taught the FBO, there should be follow up reviews and training especially in the technical aspects to strengthen their capabilities. Since more than 90 % are illiterate, it would be suggested that training in literacy and numeracy will impact greatly on their achievement.

Jadema Tisung Taba Group

Jadema

Summary

The Early Phase 2 Stage 1 MiDA training in Business Capacity Building and Enterprise Development for the Jadema Tisung Taba Group, Jadema in the West Mamprusi District of the Northern Region, was Carried out by the Food Research Institute of the Council for Scientific & Industrial Research from 10th to 21st August 2009. A total of 48 farmers were trained, with two absent. The training was conducted by Mr. Cletus Gyato with interpretation assistance by Mr. Richard Baba and Gilbert Arku.

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 Jadema Tisung Taba Group 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.

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 Jadema Tisung Taba Group 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
- vii Summary.

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.

vi. Conclusion/ Key message

In general members of the Jadema Tisung Taba Group 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 Jadema Tisung Taba Group 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 Jadema Tisung Taba Group 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 Jadema Tisung Taba Group members trained during the Early Phase 2 stage 1 training at Jadema is shown in table 2 below.

Number of Jadema Tisung Taba Group members trained by modules

Module No..	Number of FBO members trained	Number (% age)of leadership trained
BD Module 1	41	6 (100%)
BD Module 2	43	6 (100%)
BD Module 3	43	6 (100%)
BD Module 4	45	6 (100%)
BD Module 5	42	6 (100%)
BD Module 6	33	5 (83.3%)

BD Module 7	38	6 (100%)
BD Module 8	35	6 (100%)
BD Module 9	39	6 (100)%
OCB Module 1	42	6 (100)%
OCB Module 2	45	6 (100)%
OCB Module 3	33	6 (100)%
OCB Module 4	32	6 (100)%
OCB Module 5	32	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.

Table 3.

FBO	Location	District	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills before training	Modal Level of Knowledge and skills after training	Remarks
Jadema Tisung Taba Group	Jadema	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.

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