

Linking Local Learners for Improved Market Linkages.

*First Mile Project, Tanzania.
Phase One Report.*

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1. About the First Mile Project

SUMMARY

The first mile project a collaboration between the Agricultural Marketing Systems Development Programme of the Tanzania government supported by IFAD and the Swiss Government with Technical Assistance from the International Support Group is all about small farmers, traders, processors and other key players learning how to develop marketing chains from producers to consumers. The project will facilitate the emergence of local group to local group learning to improve market linkages by the development of intermediaries that can link remote rural producers with no electricity or telephones to the internet. The work will be done over two years in three distinct phases. Phase one from May to July 2005 assesses local peoples current access to modern information and communication technologies and explores their interest in learning about marketing chains. There then follows the building of local capacity to organize learning groups and train key players in learning how to develop marketing chains. Working with local learning groups Phase 2 from July to December 2005 equips them with the skills and internet learning support service to use the internet to share experiences between districts and enhance their learning. The phase ends with an assessment of progress in developing marketing chains, access to the internet, and in using linked local learning methods to do this. From January to March 2006 Phase three continues the mentoring of local groups in the development of marketing chains and evaluates the impact of the project in a user's assessment workshop.

1.1. The Collaborating Partners

The First Mile project is a two year pilot initiative supported by IFAD and the Government of Switzerland in collaboration with the Agricultural Marketing Systems Development Programme (AMSDP) of the Government of Tanzania with technical assistance being provided by the International Support Group (ISG).

The First Mile project is all about local people, small farmers, traders, processors, and others from rural villages and towns learning how to build a marketing chain from producers to consumers. Conducted within the Tanzanian Government's Agricultural Marketing Systems Development Programme (AMSDP), the project concentrates on building capacity of small producers, traders, processors and others to form collaborative partnerships across a market chain. Key to their learning will be the exchange of local experiences and good practices across districts and regions. Thus the project will support the emergence of intermediaries that can link remote rural producers with no electricity or telephones to the internet. The project takes its name – the first mile – from this challenge to give rural people access to the internet so that they can learn from their peers how to improve their market linkages.

The First Mile Project encompasses within one effort:

- Facilitation of 'local group-to-local group' learning to improve market linkages;
- Generation of locally developed good practices in building market chains that give meaning to the use of the internet; and
- Empowerment of smallholder farmers to enable them to achieve for themselves greater access to ICT, as their needs evolve.



1.2. Activities of the Project

The First Mile Project comprises three phases of activities. Phase one from May to June 2005 includes:

- Exploratory workshop for AMSDP key players in marketing
- Diagnosis of ICT access and preparation of communication action plans
- Training of Trainers in linked local learning methods
- Development of local learning groups in AMSDP districts

Phase two from July to December 2005 includes:

- Development of an interface for local groups to engage in online learning
- Training of local information brokers on how to use the online learning support service
- Online mentoring of service providers and local learning groups to develop market chains
- Assessment visits to enhance local learning and first mile communication

Phase three from January to March 2006 includes:

- Online mentoring of service providers and local learning groups to develop market chains
- Users' assessment workshop on linked local learning for improved market linkages

1.3. The Phase One Report

This report describes the activities and achievements of the technical assistance provided by ISG over 'Phase one' of the project from May to June 2005. We start our report by highlighting what has been achieved during 'Phase one' of the project. We then go on to describe the present situation of Telecommunications in Tanzania and the kind of access the AMSDP beneficiaries have to modern information and communication technology. How local people can improve their access and an assessment of their capacity to do so follows. From communications we turn to an exploration with local key players of: the challenges they face today in marketing, their future visions of improved marketing, and their practical ideas to realize improved market linkages. Our activity to build local capacity in facilitating the emergence of local learning groups around marketing chains is then described and assessed. We then go on to describe how AMSDP district staff and partners are getting themselves organized to operationalize a linked local learning process. The challenges they face in the immediate future are then identified along with a number of potential threats and the opportunities they provide for success of the project. Our report closes with a description of proposed next steps and budget for Phase two of the project.



2. Achievements of Phase One

SUMMARY

Phase one has achieved the important task of assisting AMSDP staff and beneficiaries see a way for them to get started on improving market linkages. That AMSDP staff see local learning as a way to get their work on developing market chains started is an important achievement for this phase. Moreover, AMSDP staff and key players see learning to work together as a way forward to improve marketing is an important achievement. Local key players realized they can come up with future visions of market chains and identify practical actions to realize them. That ISG has secured a mandate from the local key players to facilitate the building of capacity for learning is another achievement for phase one. Through our diagnosis of ICT access everyone has discovered that access to email and Internet is realistic. Producer groups and key players now realize that email and internet are not beyond their reach. We have left in Tanzania a pool of trainers equipped with training materials and ready to respond to the demands of key players in the districts. Perhaps the most important achievement for Phase one is that AMSDP staff and beneficiaries in both northern and southern zones have all demonstrated a strong commitment to engaging in local learning for improving market linkages.

2.1. Getting Improved Market Linkages Started

Our technical assistance to AMSDP's empowerment and market linkages component came just at the right time. Up to now this component has concentrated on building the capacity of producer groups to organize themselves and manage their finances with special emphasis on setting up savings and loans schemes. On this very necessary foundation work has started on improving producers' access to market information. Bill boards set up in the village on to which Market Monitors and others post market information are an important development initiated and supported by AMSDP. The programme is now ready to develop operational mechanisms for improving market linkages. That AMSDP staff see local learning as a way to get their work on developing market chains started is an important achievement for this phase.

2.2. Working Together is Vital

Our exploration with key players in the marketing chain on present challenges, future visions and practical steps to improve market linkages got them thinking for the first time that collaboration and not competition between players in a marketing chain could bring more profits to all. The idea has got across whether it will be realized is yet to be seen. The idea of learning-by-doing as a way to build trust, and new ways of working, between partners in a market chain also took root. The idea of sharing experiences between learning groups across different districts as a way to speed up learning resonated with the successes they have already experienced on exchange visits for setting up savings and credit schemes. That AMSDP staff and key players see learning to work together as a way forward to improve marketing is an important achievement. Local key players realized they can come up with future visions of market chains and identify practical actions to realize them. That ISG has secured a mandate from the local key players to facilitate the building of capacity for learning is another achievement here.



2.3. Access to Email and Internet is Realistic

Everyone taking part in the exploration saw that improving market linkages by forming chains from producers to consumers and learning with each other how to do this requires good communication. Our ICT diagnostic exercise brought home the fact that there is no technical reason why groups could not access mobile phones and to lesser extent email and internet. Many are familiar with using intermediaries as they communicate with each other through a third person's mobile phone today. The idea of using intermediaries to gain access to email and internet is real. Whether those participating take up the communication possibilities they now see depends on how valuable the information to be exchanged is. Will developing a market chain be valuable enough we do not yet know. Nevertheless, the achievement here is that producers and key players now realize that email and internet are not beyond their reach.

2.4. Fully Equipped Trainers Ready to Respond

We train local trainers so that future demand for capacity building can be met locally. Following our four day training of trainers' course in local learning methods for improved market linkages AMSDP now has twenty eight competent trainers. Trainers fully equipped with training resources in Swahili to build the capacities of key players in marketing chains in AMSDP districts. Moreover, AMSDP could increase this number to thirty five if the sixteen most proficient trainers build the skills of the seven trainees identified as needing more experience. We have also put in place through our Trainers Log Book a mechanism for AMSDP to further enhance the quality of its trainers. Having a pool of trainers equipped with training materials and ready to respond to the demands of key players in the districts is an important achievement.

2.5. Commitment to Engage in Local Learning

Just how busy these trainers become depends on how much demand the districts will make on them. The plans for getting learning groups started in their districts and follow up discussions back home in their districts include the establishment of a 'core' group of committed individuals in the district to 'pull' the producers and other key players into the development of market chains. AMSDP's District Focal Person, Market Monitors and interested partner agencies have committed themselves to forming such 'puller' groups. Demand for training of local key players will come to AMSDP through these so-called 'puller groups'. This is now happening in the four northern zone districts of Arumeru, Bahati, Hai and Muheza we visited after the training. We are confident that plans developed by southern zone regions of Mbeya, Iringa and Ruvuma are being rolled out as well. The achievement here is that AMSDP staff and beneficiaries in both northern and southern zones have all demonstrated interest and commitment to engaging in local learning for improving market linkages.



3. Present Situation of Telecommunications¹

SUMMARY

While there may be a long way to go before all 35 million Tanzanians have universal access to telecommunications with only 2 million telephone customers today the use of mobile phones is soaring. Total ownership of mobile phones may still be low at 10% in rural areas but usage is much higher through friends, neighbours and kiosks at around 70%. This means that almost all of AMSDP's beneficiaries have access to if they do not own mobile phones. Awareness of Email and the Internet was similar. However, most of those who have seen a computer also have a friend or relative who used it and there is considerable interest in the possibilities. Radio is widely owned and listened to (perhaps 90%). Apart from the daily information on market prices, the radio is used mainly for news and music. Local radio is only used for music and religious broadcasts at present. There are no technical reasons why producers and key players could not contact each other regularly by telephone or sms messages. To a lesser, but still significant extent, this is also true of email and Internet. While direct access is non-existent in villages some group members in all groups interviewed had directly seen the operation of email in a nearby town. The bigger problem is not the access to the technology, which is closer and more accessible than thought, but whether enough value is seen in exchange of information to justify the cost. Joint marketing, inputs, storage, new crop production, market prices etc are certainly topics on which costs can be recovered. Building the habit and practice of sharing information between groups on such issues through learning groups is certainly possible and the more directly and cheaply it can be done, the more likely it is to happen.

3.1. The National Picture

Tanzania's National Telecommunication Policy for the period 1997 through 2020 aims at ensuring the accelerated development of an efficient telecommunications network that can provide universal access to telecommunications services by all segments of the population. According to the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority the number of customers accessing communication services has increased dramatically from around 100,000 in 1993 to about 2,100,000 by January 2005. This is attributed to spread of services covering more geographical areas and the gradual fall of tariffs and prices. The demand and needs of the Tanzania population of about 35 million people, however, remain far from being met due to material size of the country, high tariffs and poverty. The challenge to provide universal access is still very large.

Currently, the country's telephone density stands at 0.32 telephones per 100 inhabitants, well below the average for neighbouring Kenya (0.92), and far below the average for the Southern Africa Development Community - SADC (3.4). Perhaps 60% of villages throughout the country now have direct access to mobile phone networks (considerably higher in the North, Dar es Salaam region and Zanzibar and in and around larger urban centres). Total ownership according to Vodacom² remains very low at only 2.5% for the country as a whole. Other figures estimate an ownership rate of perhaps 10% in rural areas. Mobile phone usage though is much higher than this through use of friends and neighbours handsets and kiosks in nearby towns and may be as high as 70% in many areas.

¹ This section is based on the ICT diagnostic study conducted by Jonathan Cook with the assistance of Helen Gilman. For the full report see "Enhancing ICT Connectivity as a Strategic Instrument for Effective Rural Development. ICT Diagnosis Report by J. Cook. ISG/AMSDP First Mile Project. June 2005.

² The Vodafone Policy Paper Series • Number 2 • March 2005 Africa: The impact of mobile phones



3.2. The Situation for AMSDP Beneficiaries

The principle findings concerning ICT use from discussions with producers, processors, traders, partner agencies etc. are the following:

- Use of mobile telephones is high – 70% -90% of group members and 60% of the general population in the Northern regions surveyed. Perhaps twice as many use one as own one.
- Use is lower but still at least 50% in the less connected regions e.g. districts near to Mbeya.
- SMS use is common and increasing.
- The mobile phone is initially used for contact with family and friends but then increasingly for business contact, especially contact with traders, middlemen and transporters and to find costs of inputs and new technology.
- Perhaps one third had seen a computer and very few had yet used one directly (The only producers who reported using one were in Babati town where there is an Internet Café).
- Awareness of Email and the Internet was similar. However, most of those who had seen a computer also had a friend or relative who used it and there was considerable interest in the possibilities.
- Television had been seen by most at some point though was watched regularly by perhaps 20%. The main use was for national and international news.
- Radio was widely owned and listened to (perhaps 90%). Apart from the daily information on market prices, the radio was used mainly for news and music. Local radio is only used for music and religious broadcasts at present.

Access to ICTs in the two districts surveyed confirms the larger surveys conducted by COSTECH/Gamos/ICTDA and UNDP and others³. However, secondary use, ie. through intermediaries, and knowledge of the technologies seems to be higher than is apparent from those surveys. The situation is also changing very rapidly with most respondents only having started using mobile phones in the last 12 to 18 months.

3.3. Improving Exchange of Experiences Within and Between Local Groups.

The findings here suggest that access to mobile telephony amongst groups is better than expected and there is no *technical* reason why groups could not contact regularly by telephone or sms messages. To a lesser, but still significant extent, this is also true of email and Internet, where in most groups, there is already awareness of email and Internet and interest in the possibilities. Direct access was non-existent in villages but some group members in all groups interviewed had directly seen the operation of email in a nearby town. This was true even for representatives from the areas with less access.

³ *ICT Socio economic feasibility study* UNDP, Tanzania January 2005;

Workshop Report on Impact of Telecommunications on Rural Livelihoods June 2005; DfiD, COSTECH, Gamos and ictDA

Creating an Environment for ICT in Tanzania – Policy, Regulation and Markets: Olaf Nielinger, Institute of African Affairs, Sept 2004

National information and communications technologies policy. Ministry of communications and transport, March 2003.



Further developments in mobile phone technology and access are likely to bring GPRS (which will allow email via mobile phone) to increasing areas of the country over the next 6-18 months. Technically, therefore, it could become possible for a group equipped with a GPRS mobile handset and an infra-red printer, to send, receive and print emails directly in villages.

The bigger problem is not the access to the technology, which is closer and more accessible than thought, but whether enough value is seen in exchange of information to justify the cost. To improve communications therefore, costs should be shared through group use of technology and regular contact to build up familiarity and trust between groups will be needed as well as structured learning experiences, rather than expecting free exchange of information initially. Information on issues such as markets and agricultural technology may well then be best provided to all through a web site which can then also act to provide a communication mechanism to other groups (this could be done through further development of the LLL website). The initial use would more likely be to access local information in the LLL knowledge pool and then later to discuss issues with other groups linked to the site.

On the technology side, training in use of email and the Internet will be important, beginning with something as simple as a group visit to an Internet café to introduce the possibilities and open an email address for the group. For those who do not possess a mobile telephone, a group telephone should be bought, specifically for business use; though there is no reason why the cost should not then be covered by hiring out for personal use as happens with a kiosk telephone.

3.4. Assessment of the Capacity of Local Groups to Improve Communications.

In almost all AMSDP's groups, there is at least one person who has seen the Internet in operation though very few have directly used it themselves. Access is not as remote an idea as is often thought. In fact, it is usually only a matter of working through a single intermediary to be able to access the Internet. Many group members are familiar with the concept of an intermediary through use of mobile phones which belong to others – they nevertheless receive messages through them and they are passed on by the owner. Similarly market prices may be collected by sms or mobile phone by one person calling a market trader and then passing this information on to others. In a similar way, information can be sent by email via an intermediary. One anecdotal example is that a digital photograph taken of one woman we interviewed in Hai district was sent to the email address of her son in Arusha who then delivered the photo to his mother. It is therefore perfectly possible for most local groups to open an email account and use this for communication between groups.

Similarly, access to mobile phones is rapidly becoming cheaper and easy such that the majority of group members now have access to (though not yet personal ownership of) a mobile phone. Group purchase of a mobile phone is perfectly possible for group use if they wish. This could also be funded by selling time for non business use to members and others. Further developments in the technology (GPRS) may soon make it practical to send and receive email messages to mobile phone wherever access is possible. The handsets for this may cost more but will still be within reach IF there is sufficient demand for the information which can be received. In short, the technology is not the barrier to more effective communications within and between groups in most areas. It is acknowledged that there are still some areas of the country where there is no access at all and in these cases the need to travel to a nearby town in order to use a mobile phone does limit the usefulness.



The greater issue is what is being communicated between groups. It is generally found that social and economic development works faster through people who are part of groups or at least have a good network of contacts. As such, active intervention to build and strengthen groups can be seen as worthwhile in itself. For groups to remain strong though, they need to be built around an agreed purpose – savings and credit, production, marketing etc. Similarly for groups to share with others there needs to be a strong reason for doing this – joint marketing, inputs, storage, new crop production, market prices etc. Building the habit and practice of sharing information between groups on such issues through learning groups is certainly possible and the more directly and cheaply it can be done, the more likely it is to happen.

4. Current Challenges and Future Vision of Marketing⁴

SUMMARY

The forty five key players ranging from producers, processors, and traders to market monitors, AMSDP partner agencies and district focal persons participating in our exploratory workshop from June 8th to 10th achieved a more complete understanding of the challenges they faced in marketing than they had ever known before. Participants realized that the key players in marketing do not have sufficient understanding of each others problems. Producers have no appreciation of the work of brokers and traders. Distrust and cheating is prevalent. So it appears that it is not marketing information or market access that are the primary bottlenecks, but rather a combination of peoples behaviour, physical infrastructure and access to capital. These key players realized that a future vision of cooperation along the marketing chain can lead to win-win-win for all players. Moreover, these key players showed that they could come up with practical idea how they could initiate cooperation.

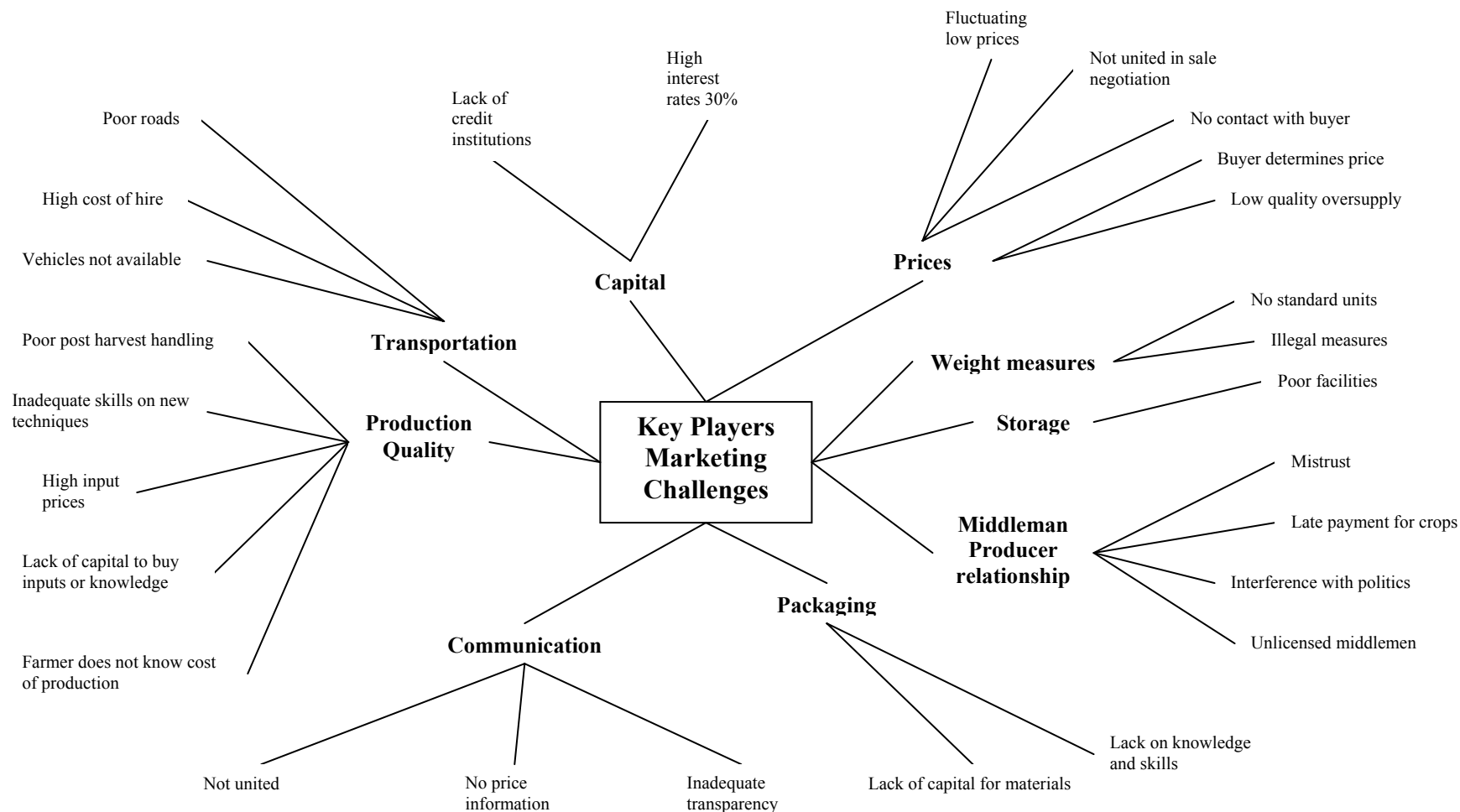
4.1. Key Players Perspectives on Current Marketing Challenges

From June 8th to 10th forty five key players in Marketing explored current challenges to marketing, developed future visions and identified practical steps to improve market linkages. Organized into groups by key player types – producers, processors, traders, partner agencies, market monitors and AMSDP focal person's, participants identified the major challenges they faced in marketing each from their own perspective. Important areas of marketing challenges were: capital, prices, weights and measures, storage, middlemen and producer relationship, packaging, communication, product quality, and transportation. Major challenges can be seen at a glance in Figure One below.

⁴ This section is based on the Exploratory Workshop facilitated by Clive Lightfoot, Anne Dennig and Jonathan Cook. For more detail see the proceedings of the AMSDP Key Players Exploratory Workshop on Market Linkages. June 8th – 10th 2005. Arusha International Conference Centre by C. Lightfoot, A. Dennig and J. Cook. ISG/AMSDP First Mile Project. June 2005.



Figure 1. Key Players Market Challenges at a Glance



Looking at each other across the table key players agreed their marketing was a mess. “Everybody cheats everybody” was their statement on what is going on at present. Magugu rice, for instance, has a good standing throughout Tanzania but it is so frequently adulterated that price advantages are almost totally lost. It would be easy to make a recognized quality product out of this rice, if somehow the prevalent cheating could be stopped. Stopping adulteration would allow traders to pay a considerably higher price, as they will be saving a lot of transaction costs which at present they pass on to producers. The absence of standard weights and measures makes for easy cheating. Production quality is another source of market inefficiency. Absence of grading, poor packing and untimely delivery all conspire to reduce the prices that products can be sold at and therefore the incomes that producers can earn. Much of the cheating is made possible by poor communication. This is not just about market price information but communication between producers and traders. Transportation is another source of challenge with poor feeder roads, high cost of vehicle hire and even availability of vehicles all making marketing very costly. All agree that market prices fluctuate widely as commodities go through boom and bust cycles for simple reasons of seasonality and lack of storage. When producers and processors want to purchase inputs or make investments to improve quality or supplies they are hampered by high interest rates and lack of credit institutions to approach.

So it appears that it is not marketing information or market access that are the primary bottlenecks, but rather a combination of peoples behaviour, physical infrastructure and access to capital that need urgent attention. But today key players in marketing do not have sufficient understanding of each others problems. Producers have no appreciation of the work of brokers and traders. Distrust and cheating is prevalent. The fact that farmers are compelled to go out into the market place as spies (Mkulima Shushu) demonstrates inefficiencies and profit loss in today’s marketing. The idea that cooperation along the marketing chain may actually lead to win-win-win for all players is totally new. Key players have no idea how they could initiate such cooperation.

4.2. Future Vision of Improved Market Linkages

Our exploratory workshop was the first time key players, producers, processors, traders and service providers ever tried to collaborate on improving market linkages. Organized into five groups mixing types of key players their task was to imagine improvements that will overcome the challenges they faced in marketing. Table One below provides some examples of what they came up with.



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Table One. Future Vision of Improved Marketing

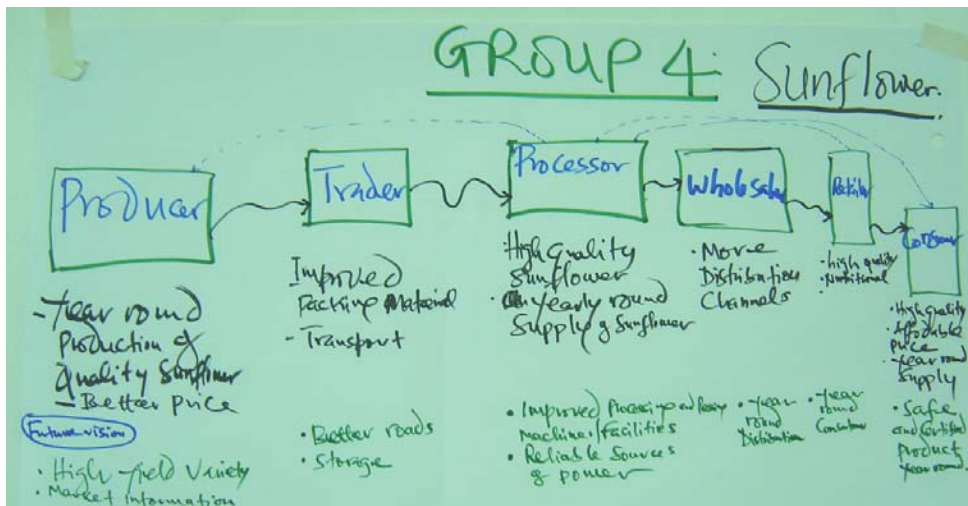
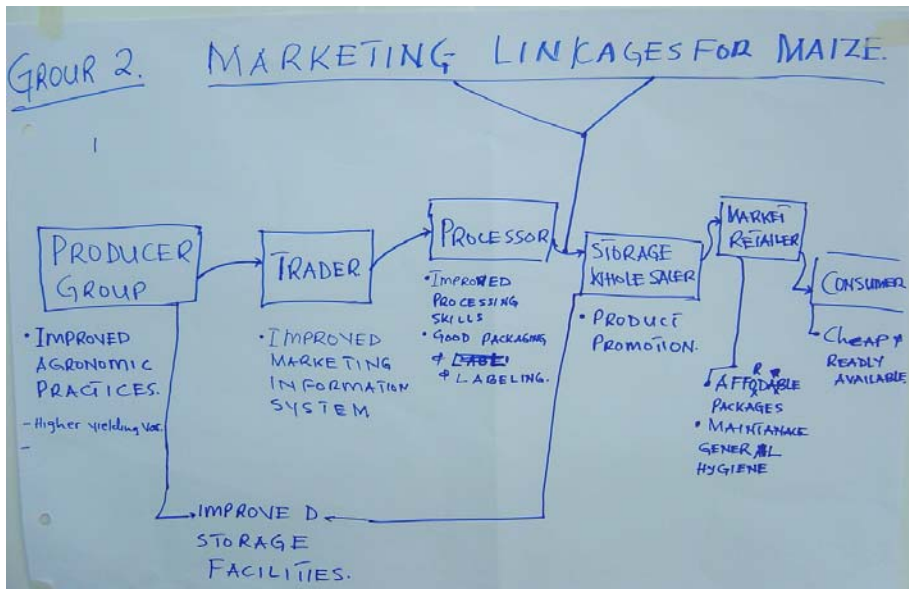
Current Challenges	Future Vision
Inaccurate and untimely price information	Farmers use reliable formal sources eg. Radio, T.V. newspapers Farmers organised to seek for information e.g. “spy farmers” “Mkulima ShuShu” using mobile phones Information networks on marketing information through using mobile phones and websites operating. Market information centre (billboard) with own market research committee linked with District price monitor and with the outside operating. New market places and special days for produce prices to be collected and disseminated operating
Poor quality of produce	Improved quality of crop varieties used Information on quality that is required in the market available. Better production techniques especially spacing and crop protection used Grading of produce Proper post harvest handling and storage
Buyers dictate prices	Production costs and profit make up prepared Regular discussions held with buyers Contracts set up for growing produce Crop storage facilities constructed Savings schemes to cover unexpected expenditures in place Producers united with one voice to buyers
Lack of Processing facilities	Small scale processing facilities that add value to product e.g. Drying, Preservation, Grading, in operation.
Lack of rural based financial services	Rural based financial institutions (SACCOS) operating Training on financial management available Linkages with appropriate financial institutions and financial services in place

While this process of thinking through future improvements to current marketing challenges does produce a great many ideas that would improve market linkages it does not stimulate the emergence of marketing chains. For that a new process was developed for the training of trainers’ course. Here key players were given a generic marketing chain linking producers through traders, processors and retailers to consumers to work from. This market chain template helped the key players identify all the links necessary to get their product from the farm to the consumer. Examples for rice and maize produced by the participants of the training of trainers’ course are shown in Figure Two below. These future visions show much more clearly than Table One what a future market chain might look like.



First Mile Project Phase One Report

Figure Two. Future Visions of Marketing Chains



4.3. Practical Ideas to Realize Improved Market Linkages

Continuing to work in groups that mixed producers with processor, traders and service providers exploratory workshop participants used their table of future visions to come up with ideas for practical action that each key player could take to realise their future vision of improved market linkages. Groups were told to make sure their ideas for practical action were realistic and could be implemented by the key players without additional resources. Table two shows the result of a group working on improving market linkages for rice.

Table Two. Practical Ideas to Realize Future Vision of Better Rice Marketing

Future Vision	Practical Ideas to Try Out	Key Players
Higher paddy rice production	Training of farmers in modern agronomic skills: weeding, fertilizer and pesticide application, harvesting and post harvest techniques Formation of SACCOS to access loans from CRDB, Exim Bank, and Trust Funds with NGO's Improve availability of water through introduction of modern irrigation facilities, improvement of traditional irrigation and rain harvesting Farmers procure more fertile available land i.e. Handeni, Karatu, Turiani	Farmers, Extension officer, Financial Institutions, PAS staff, World Vision, Cooperative officers, Irrigation technicians, Local government.
Better price for quality rice	Planting of improved and high yielding varieties i.e Super Kahogo Packaging and labelling according to market requirement Grading and sorting of rice according to market needs Agricultural exhibition for local quality product Training of farmers in cost benefit analysis before starting production Training of farmers in negotiation techniques Access to godowns to store rice	Farmers, Extension officer, Research institutes, Rice traders, Rice processors, Faida Mali, PAS staff.
Timely and accurate market information	Identify market informers (Mkulima Shushu) and provide them with transport facilities/fare, mobile phones, radios/news papers Start group marketing of rice and specific days and places Solicit information from new sources e.g MVIWATA MCM/Market Monitors, TCCIA Put up and manage price market boards at trading centres Announce rice prices at various gatherings e.g churches, mosques etc. Start group revolving fund contributions from members to pay for market information and market informers Form savings and credit schemes/SACCOS and get training in record keeping, accounting, and financial management	Farmers, Processors, Traders, Community leaders, Religious leaders, Market officers, Afisa Ushirika, TCCIA, MVIWATA, PAS staff.



The forty five key players ranging from producers, processors, and traders to market monitors, AMSDP partner agencies and district focal persons participating in our exploratory workshop achieved a more complete understanding of the challenges they faced in marketing than they had ever known before. These key players also proved that a future vision of cooperation along the marketing chain can lead to win-win-win for all players. Moreover, these key players showed that they could come up with practical idea how they could initiate cooperation.

5. Capacity Building to Improve Market Linkages⁵

SUMMARY

Thirty four trainees attended the Training-of-Trainers' course in linked local learning from the 15th to 18th June at the Arusha International Conference Centre. The first day of the training used a number of games to drive home the concepts of local learning. Role plays on the second and third days gave trainees practical experience in running workshop sessions on: understanding current market challenges, developing future visions of improved market chains, identifying practical ideas and partnerships to develop market chains, and improving communication between partners in market chains. The fourth day was spent examining training resources in planning and managing training workshops, a Trainers Log Book as a way to maintain training standards, guidelines on how to organize local learning groups, and next steps including a timetable of activities. The participants reported that they appreciated the 'good environment for learning', the 'teaching methodology' and the 'transparency of the learning process'. They appreciated the learning games of day one and the role play sessions but felt the topics on the last day were too rushed. The training room was too cramped additional rooms or better still outdoor break out spaces would have been better. The training suffered from too many participants. The intention of providing one-on-one coaching to all trainees shrunk to a concentration on the twenty or so more competent trainees. The course was conducted in English with Swahili translation following each presentation or instruction. While 90% of the trainees were comfortable this caused difficulties for others and some even felt left behind. Participants were in most cases happy with the training materials, the handouts, instructions, etc. Ideally, Swahili translations should be distributed along with the English version at the beginning of the course. Sixteen trainees demonstrated a high level of proficiency to train others in the learning process for improved marketing. Twelve trainees demonstrated capability but did not display the high standard of the more proficient trainees and a further seven trainees we felt needed more experience.

5.1. Training-of-Trainers Course

The aim of our Training-of-Trainers' course was to build the capacity of local trainers from among AMSDP's Partner Agencies and Local Government staff to respond to demands from key players in the districts for training in "Local Learning for Market Chain Development". Thirty four trainees attended the four day course from June 15th to 18th at the Arusha International Conference Centre. All the trainees had experience of training in participatory methods.

⁵ This section is based on the Training of Trainers' Course facilitated by Clive Lightfoot and Mark Farahani with course and trainee assessments conducted by Anne Dennig. For more detail see the proceedings of the AMSDP Linking Local Learners Training-of-Trainers Course. June 15th – 18th 2005. Arusha International Conference Centre by C. Lightfoot, A. Dennig and M. Farahani. ISG/AMSDP First Mile Project. June 2005.



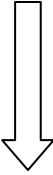
First Mile Project Phase One Report

The first day of the training used a number of games to drive home the concepts of local learning. These included the principles underpinning adult learning, the codes of behaviour necessary for learning to succeed and how to operationalize the learning process itself in the context of marketing. The afternoon was spent preparing for the role plays. Trainees were divided into four teams of eight persons and asked to allocate the roles of chairperson, facilitators, process assessors and facilitation evaluators among themselves. Each team then prepared a detailed timetable for a two hour role play.

The second and third days of the training course saw the conduct of four role plays. Role plays on understanding current market challenges and developing future visions of improved market chains were conducted on the second day while the third day saw role plays on identifying practical ideas and partnerships to develop market chains and improving communication between partners in market chains. During each role play the trainees that were not conducting the role play acted as participants to the training, playing roles of producers, processors, traders and service providers. Following each role play a feedback session discussed the reports of the process assessors and facilitation evaluators with the view to ensuring that the desired outcome of the role play, for example future visions of improved market chains, could be achieved at the district level.

The fourth and last day of the training course was spent in plenary sessions dealing with four important learning objectives. The first session examined training resources that trainees could use to help them plan and manage a training course for key players in the district. There followed discussions on the use of a Trainers Log Book as a way to maintain training standards and offer further support to trainers where needed. The third session dealt with how to organize local learning groups in the districts and around marketing chains. The last session was spent on identifying next steps and developed a timetable of activities for AMSDP participants and for ISG, as shown in Table Three below.

Table Three. Time Frame for Next Steps in First Mile Project

Time frame	ISG Input	AMSDP Participant Action	Action Learning Cycle
June 8-10, 2005	Exploratory Workshop		
June 15-18	Training of Trainers Course		
June 21-24	Learning Organisation Visit	Organise learning groups of market key player for training Identify Internet Information Broker	Preparation
July 25-28	Training on Internet Learning Support Service		
August		Key players' training in district Action – building market chain	Ideas
September			Action
October			
November			
December	Assessment field visits		Result
January 2006			
February			
March	Evaluation Workshop		Reflection
April			



5.2. Assessment of the Training Course

Learning environment and methodology: The participants reported that they appreciated the ‘good environment for learning’; the ‘participatory atmosphere’; the ‘teaching methodology’ and the ‘transparency of the learning process’. They particularly liked the active participation of the course e.g. the local learning mime game, and the emphasis on ‘group discussion rather than lectures’. ‘Learning through practice’ in the role plays was particularly well received. Participants appreciated ‘an atmosphere for learning where everyone’s ideas were accepted’ and the ‘confidence building strategies’ which were used. In their evaluation several participants requested for a repeat of the course ‘for better understanding’ at the districts.

Achievement of learning objectives: The participants’ own evaluation showed that generally they felt that the learning objectives had been met. However this achievement was not even across all objectives. They were pleased with the learning games of day one and the role play sessions but not so satisfied with the learning objectives on the last day. Shortening the programme of day four into just a morning meant that not enough time was given to going over the resources for planning and managing training at the district. Neither was the time spent on organizing local learning groups adequate.

Workshop facilities: The facilitators and some of the participants found the room for the workshop very cramped. There was not enough space to accommodate both tables for group work and sitting space for plenary sessions. Trainees forced to remain at their tables made viewing angles of the Powerpoint presentations poor. Additional rooms or better still outdoor break out spaces would have been better. Arrangements for snacks and meals were very good. More one-on-one coaching would have been possible if participants could have been accommodated at the training venue instead of everyone leaving for town at six.

Participant numbers: Difficulties arose from an increase in participant numbers from the ideal number of twenty five to thirty seven. The intention of providing one-on-one coaching to all trainees shrunk to a concentration on the twenty or so more competent trainees. A further distraction to the course resulted from some participants arriving on the second day of the course. Not only did they miss vital work on local learning and the preparation of the role plays they took up the time of others in catching up. A comment from a participant stated that ‘enrolment of people between training was a weakness in the course and that all should participate from the beginning’.

Language: The training course was conducted in English with Swahili translation following each presentation or instruction. While the Swahili translations of the training materials were appreciated there were some negative comments about the oral translations being ‘sometimes distorted when literal interpretation is needed’. While 90% of the trainees were comfortable this caused difficulties for others and some even felt left behind. Language difficulties also affected the performance of some during the role plays because they could not talk fluently in English and could not show their strengths as facilitators. In their evaluation participants suggested that ‘for smooth running all participants should understand English’ and that the invitation to the training should make that clear.



Length of the course: In their evaluation twelve participants thought that the course was too short; seventeen felt that four days was correct, and nobody thought that the course was too long. Some were, however, unhappy that the workshop included a Saturday. Comments showed that the pace of the course caused 'no boredom', with 'each day a fresh activity'. Participants were very pleased with the strict time keeping the course was very concentrated. The course should be lengthened to all more time for review of the work covered and two of the course objectives were given too little time on the final half day. The lack of time for 'feedback from the previous day's work' could also be overcome in a longer course.

Facilitation: Listed in the strengths of the training course was commendation for the 'widely knowledgeable facilitators'. Participants were pleased by the 'attention of the facilitators towards the participants' problems i.e. elaborating on difficult points'. The 'flexibility of facilitation team' was also praised. However some participants thought that the facilitators sometimes spoke too fast and referred to 'high speed presentations'.

Course documentation: A large number of documents were generated during the training course in terms of group outputs. At times participants were taking time during other role play sessions to write up their reports in English and Swahili. Ways need to be found to either reduce the written output or provide time for report writing in the programme. While the ambition of providing participants with the outputs of their work during the training is commendable distribution of these outputs distracts participants from their work. Rather outputs could be typed on the final day and sent out with the proceedings; this would put less time pressure on the participants and the secretaries and stop the duplication of some documents.

5.3. Assessment of the Training Materials

Handouts and guidelines: The handouts on the principles of adult learning and code of behaviour for local learning were clear and succinct with good visual aids to understanding. The learning cycle was clearly illustrated as were the handouts on the importance of role play and the facilitation. The training resource guidelines for planning and managing local learning were well received. It would be a better to bind these materials separately in future for use by the trainers during planning and preparations of workshops.

Instructions: Although the instructions for the mime and behaviour code games were not really necessary during this training, they will be useful for the trainees to refer to in future workshops at the district level. The instructions for planning the role plays were rather lengthy and should be rewritten to avoid repetition. The four sets of instructions to be used during the role play included examples that tended to over influence the participants outputs from the group work. Simpler more 'generic' examples would reduce this tendency. In role play 1 a clearer explanation of the nature of mind mapping and the need for creative thinking would improve participants' appreciation of the importance of this technique.

Participants' Evaluation Form: The comments sections of this form were very useful but the questions sections need some changes. Questions would be better put as statements which could then be rated using only three categories rather than four. The icons of mood would also be clearer if they were represented by 'smiley' graphics.



Trainer's Log Book: The purpose of the trainer's log book was so that AMSDP could: first ensure quality control of training; and second, provide additional coaching to those who needed it. All the participants wanted to use the trainer's logbook but with some alterations. They wanted a better explanation of the evaluation section and they felt that the course notes were unnecessary as the workshop report would include these. Lastly they felt clarification was needed on who would be their mentors. In this trial period the mentors would be ISG and then over time hand on to AMSDP's local mentors.

5.4. Assessment Report on the Trainees

A very high level of involvement and commitment was shown by all thirty four trainees in group work, role play and plenary discussions of the training of trainers' course. This was especially impressive as a few members did not speak English or feel confident to express themselves well. Despite this disadvantage all managed to take a positive part in the course.

Sixteen trainees demonstrated a high level of proficiency to train others in the learning process for improved marketing showing an understanding and appreciation of the concepts covered; group control; ability to initiate discussion; motivate passive participants and focus discussions. Recognition and respect of people's ideas was another key skill, together with the ability to give clear instructions and to keep the group interested, demonstrated by these trainees. Presentation skills displayed by these trainees included: confidence and clarity of voice; use of visual aids; ability to handle questions and good time management. Positive listening skills shown, included the ability: to let speakers finish speaking; to use encouraging and probing words and to assess and evaluate individuals accurately. In group discussion these sixteen proficient trainers displayed the ability to lead a group by sparking interest, asking probing questions and analysing ideas and putting across their messages. In their behaviour they demonstrated readiness to share knowledge and experience; to work without being pushed; commitment to quality work and sensitivity to participants' needs.

Particular strengths of individuals were noted. There were some excellent examples of the role of chairperson. These trainers were sensitive to the need for putting people at their ease yet keeping good control. They displayed clear understanding of the subject matter putting the role plays into practical perspective and being quick to pick up on and clarify any problems. They backed up their facilitators well. Instances of strong facilitation skills included presenters who expected a lot from the participants, demanding their attention and a high standard of creative thinking. This was done without dominating the group work and allowing the participant to struggle to find their own ideas. Proficient facilitators had a clear understanding of the topics; good presentational skills. These trainers showed good rapport with the participants and created a good atmosphere for questions, giving encouragement to participants.

Twelve trainees demonstrated capability but did not display the high standard of the more proficient trainees. There were a further seven trainees who we felt needed more experience. Although we are aware that some were unable to show their abilities due to their difficulties with the English language. In the district setting and in their own language some of these trainees may perform much better.



We recommend AMSDP use a facilitation team made up of two trainers who complement each other in their abilities for their district training. More proficient facilitators should be paired with those with less experience so that they are given a chance to develop their skills with the help of the more experienced trainer.

6. Local Organization for Learning⁶

SUMMARY

Work on local organization for learning to improve market linkages started at the exploratory workshop continued on the last day of the training of trainers' course and was carried forward during the organizational follow up visits to four districts in the Northern Zone from 20th to 25th June. All districts have agreed that the AMSDP District Focal Person, Market Monitor and the Partners Agency will be responsible for getting district core groups formed. The job of this core or 'puller' group is to: a) stimulate formation of market chains for commodities important to the producer groups, processors and consumers in their districts; and b) identify information brokers for training in Internet learning support service for sharing and learning between district core groups in the first instance and then between market chains as they emerge. A core group has already formed in Muheza District. They plan to have a workshop in the first half of July focussing first on oranges and then on milk. Oranges were selected first because Muheza is a main orange growing area, exporting a lot to Nairobi. In Babati district a core group has formed and identified its internet contact person. Their initial focus will be on rice and sunflower. Farm Africa intends to convene a workshop in July on rice and sunflower. A core group has yet to form in Arumeru District but strong leadership exists to get this done. Once organized, they will initiate the convening of key players in the maize chain. A core group has already formed in Hai District and also identified its internet contact persons. They want to concentrate in the beginning on Maize, Sunflower and Tomatoes. Since no follow up visits were made to the Southern Zone we can only report on plans made at the two workshops. Participants at these workshops committed themselves to form core groups in their districts and identify internet contact persons. In Mbeya they decided to concentrate on rice while in Iringa region they expect to be developing marketing chains in Irish potato, processing of jibin, and dairy cattle. Songea district plans to organize key players in market chains for Pidgeon Peas.

6.1. Getting Started on Local Organization

Work on local organization for learning to improve market linkages started at the exploratory workshop, continued on the last day of the training of trainers' course and was carried forward during the organizational follow up visits made by Ueli Scheuermeier from 20th to 25th June. At the two workshops participants organized by districts or regions in the northern and southern zones planned how their district will organize a core group to spearhead the development of market chains in their district. Participants agreed that on their return to their respective organizations in the Districts and Regions they would:

- Conduct awareness raising meetings with colleagues and partners on formation of marketing chains and linked local learning.

⁶ This section is based primarily on an organizational follow up visit conducted by Ueli Scheuermeier in four districts in the northern zone between June 20th to 25th as well as participant outputs from the workshops.



- Organize a core group of people in the district lead by focal persons and partner agencies to prepare key players in the district for training in linked local learning for the development of marketing chains.
- Identify information brokers to facilitate the sharing and exchange of experiences and learning across districts.

It was agreed that the District Focal Person, Market Monitor and the Partners Agency would be responsible for convening key players to get the development of marketing chains moving in their district. The job of this core or 'puller' group is to: a) stimulate formation of market chains for commodities important to the producer groups, processors and consumers in their districts; and b) identify information brokers for training in Internet learning support service for sharing and learning between district core groups in the first instance and then between market chains as they emerge. The District Focal Person would be responsible for articulating the key players' demand for training in linked local learning to the AMSDP zonal and national offices.

The task for the follow up organizational visit was to make sure that district core groups established themselves and had a clear idea of what they were going to do next, how that evolves into a concerted effort for improving market linkages, and identify the internet-contact persons in order to exchange experiences with other districts. The core groups' efforts should focus on the emergence of a mixed learning group of producers, middlemen, traders and processors who together explore win-win-win operations for all players along the marketing chain of the commodity they are involved in. Progress reports on each of the districts or regions that participated in the workshops follows.

6.2. Muheza District, Tanga Region, Northern Zone

At the exploratory workshop participants from Muheza District developed the following objective for their core group:

- Promoting exchange of market information on milk and orange products (price, quality and quantity improvement issues)
- Sensitization of producer organizations/groups to form SACCOS
- Identify alternative milk buyers/consumers
- Promote value addition activities through domestic milk processing
- Ensure a close monitoring system of market price to take advantage of early and later seasonal price

Leadership in getting a core group organized would be provided by Anthony Senkoro, Abu Bakar Malinza, B.K. Kimathe, Steve. S. Steve, Pius Mtangi, and Laurent Kaburire along with representatives of the orange growers BOFACOS and MOFACOS and Milk producers: CHAWAMU, UWAMLI, MADAFCO, JANGA FRESH.

This group plans to have a workshop in the first half of July focussing first on oranges and then on milk. Oranges were selected first because Muheza is a main orange growing area, exporting a lot to Nairobi. Invited people will include producer groups, middlemen who travel out to the villages, agents based in Muheza of traders from outside, processors, CRDB, DAI/PESA project staff. The workshop will explore the following outcomes:

- Role of each player clear with regard to making money along the orange chain, ie. win-win for all.



- Constraints of each player are known to the other players. What the other players can do to help with the constraints of each player is explored and defined.
- An information system is explored including who needs which information at which time, who is going to collect the information and put it together, and how can various players access that information.
- The quality standards and various grades explored, negotiated and maybe agreed upon for future transactions.
- The two people who will be the contact persons to the internet will be designated.

While orange producers may be learning how to grow oranges better, marketing appears to be largely disorganized. Amazingly oranges are never put into crates (as with tomatoes), but transported in bulk even up to Nairobi. Apparently the middlemen are making very small margins and are taking big risks. Farmers complain about prices of course. Traders complain about poor access roads, and particularly that no grading is done. They have to do all the grading, as farmers simply dump heaps of oranges on them of all qualities and varieties. Transport costs are high, and illegal border transactions reduce the prices that farmers ultimately get. Producer groups have registered their own trading company, but it has not yet started operations. Trading capital is a bottleneck. A few small processors have bought equipment for juice and jam and plan to begin production. CRDB bank is interested to finance production and trade but the general situation is very unclear for them. They would probably be interested in getting a better understanding of the whole chain and the potential for leveraging that chain. One point of leverage might be in packaging. When trucks transport oranges in bulk to Nairobi there are considerable transport losses. Furthermore costs of sorting and transferring arise at each transaction point. It appears that a small project that explores useful packaging for oranges may have a huge impact on efficiency of the chain. Imagine producer groups packing graded oranges (varieties, qualities) into labelled crates and putting it on an information system how much they have ready at which place and of which qualities; all in crates that allow tracing back to the individual producer and/or packager. This will definitely attract higher prices, as traders will see a lot of their costs reduced, if they can trust graded and crated oranges.

6.3. Babati District, Arusha Region, Northern Zone.

At the exploratory workshop participants from Babati District developed the following objectives for their core group:

- Organize key farmers from group to learn how to keep record in order to establish the cost of production of paddy
- Increase negotiations skills of producers
- Register farmers willing to keep records and calculate the profit margins
- Mobilize farmers groups into existing SACCOS
- Identify and link with market partners – Traders, Processor, Super Market

Leadership in getting a district core group organized will be the responsibility of: Issa Magguo, Athumani Karunde, William Swai, Stanley Mchome, Anatoly Pomoni, and M. Singisha along with representatives from producer groups and TCCIA. The internet-contact points for the District will be:

William Swai, Partner Agency <willyswai@yahoo.com> or <williams@iwayafrica.com>
M.Singisha, District Focal Person <msingisha@hotmail.com>



This group considers itself as the District core group that intends to launch the market chains. A member of TCCIA will be invited too, as it is envisaged that TCCIA will continue with the functions as initiated by the core group. Initial focus shall be on rice and sunflower. Farm Africa intends to convene a workshop in July on rice and sunflower with the following participants: The core group itself, producer groups, the four market committees, local itinerant traders and processors, wholesale traders from Dar es Salaam, Arusha, and Moshi. The outcome of this workshop is decided to be twofold:

- Agreements on communication channels and type of information that will be needed at each point. How to store that information, how to make it retrievable for all stakeholders
- Agreements on quality standards to be adhered to for trading in various defined grades.

Rice is an important commodity in Bahati. At present paddy is being harvested and milled. Wherever you mill, you can then store the rice for free in the godown. Farmers rarely go to the mill with their rice, but rather sell it to the itinerant traders/brokers who then take the rice to the mill. The innovation of AMSDP has been the warehousing, where quality control is possible and where rice is stored individually. Farmers can store their rice and get a receipt which allows them to approach a credit institution to get a short-term loan. However, the financial arrangements between AMSDP and rural credit institutions have not yet reached the point where farmers can actually get a credit. This is a strong disappointment for farmers, who can not sit on their rice much longer, but will have to sell it as always to the brokers. Farmers are complaining that delays in financial arrangements may have a negative impact on the whole effort of warehouse receipts.

Babati group also plans to improve information flows by working with established trading centres in Magugu, Babati, Dareda and Gallapo. These are traditional weekly market places. In each trading centre a market committee will be set up with 4-5 people who work on a voluntary (and rotational) basis to start with. Farm Africa intends to equip each committee with one mobile. The committee will set up and manage a signboard with market information at each trading centre. Producers will get information that is relevant for them at these trading centres. Some of these centres also have godowns operating. It is intended to further develop these to operate the “warehouse receipt” system offered by AMSDP. Big outside rice and sunflower traders that Farm Africa has identified (4 in Dar es Salaam, 3 in Arusha, 2 in Moshi, and 2 in Nuwanga) will be connected to these centres. So the information network to be established is among the four trading centres, the producer groups and the big outside traders. How exactly the market information will be distributed within this network still needs to be sorted out in detail. SMS, signboards and radio are the envisaged communication tools, but the channels are not yet clear, and the repository of information is not too clear either. However, the trading centres will be the important innovation in the existing disorganized market linkages. At present itinerant traders buy rice and sunflower directly from the farmers. Farmers regularly cheat the traders, and vice-versa.



6.4. Arumeru District, Arusha Region, Northern Zone

The participants from Arumeru District at the exploratory workshop decided on the following objectives for their core group.

- Ensure availability of reliable marketing.
- Formation of marketing committee to collect information on marketing, inform on market availability and set agreement/contracts for production to start as per the agreement/contract.

Leadership for the formation of a district core group in Arumeru will be provided by: Asha Muya, Edina Kahembe, Nailejileji Mbaga, Samuel Mbise, Loserian Laizer, Elly Zakaria, Joseph Mkwama, Martin Macha and Joseph Mkwama. The group decided that they would meet in the middle of July at the Nkoarang village office. This meeting will address the following outcomes:

- The core group will initiate at first the convening of the stakeholders in the maize-chain. So the producer groups will be invited, businessmen (traders), broker-transporters. Possibly also the agriculture extensionist will be asked to join.
- The core group will submit the need for a market-chain training for maize to AMSDP
- The selection of an internet contact person which for the time being will be Joseph Mkwama <mkwamajoseph@yahoo.co.uk>

Arumeru producers group “Muvikita” in Ndururama ward grows primarily maize, tomatoes and watermelons. Half the maize and almost all the tomatoes and watermelons are sold to itinerant traders. Prices fluctuate terribly, to the point where they have to leave tomatoes to rot. Off season vegetable production is difficult, as they have a water shortage and lack irrigation facilities. Looking into alternatives to the crops they are growing is talked about. The idea that cooperation along the marketing chain may actually lead to win-win-win for all stakeholders is totally new. Distrust and cheating is prevalent. The producer group “Raha Leo” in Bwawani ward is in a very similar situation. However this group has some experience in contract farming for flowers. These contracts are quite close, with regular visits by the company to see the production. Maize and beans are their other crops. Again, they have a very poor idea of what could be done with regard to cooperating along marketing chains. They do have some ideas on individual and collective storage, processing at village level, and building godowns as a means to attract traders.

6.5. Hai District, Kilimanjaro Region, Northern Zone

The participants at the exploratory workshop from Hai District developed the following objectives for their district core group:

- To organize key farmers, processors and traders to access finance.
- Conduct exchange visit into successful SACCOS in the other areas
- Help farmer groups form SACCOS at village level.
- Link those SACCOS with CRDB, Exim bank NGO’s.
- Facilitation of group networking.

Leadership in the formation of a district core group will be the responsibility of: Mathilda Mfoi, Cecilia Mushi, Bonifasi Mariki, Twaha Abdala, Masasa Makwasa Eva Mallya and Kain Mvanda. The internet-contacts of this launching group are:

Eva Mallya <eva@yahoo.com>

Kain Mvanda <kmvanda@yahoo.com> or <faida@faida.org.tz>



This group wants to concentrate in the beginning on Maize, Sunflower and Tomatoes. The main players they have identified to be involved in the training workshops are: producers themselves, middlemen who buy directly at the farm gate and sell in the six big market centres in the district, agents of traders in Dar es Salaam and Tanga who bulk produce for the traders, small processors for tomato-sauce, groups of vegetable processors (drying) who have been trained but fail to find a market, and traders and brokers in the main trading centres. Further partners to pull into the effort include TCCIA and SIDO. There are virtually no contacts with the TCCIA, as none of the groups is registered with TCCIA. However, in the long run it may be necessary to involve them. The same applies for the Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO), particularly when it comes to local processing. The first workshop will be with producer groups, middlemen, processors, traders (or their local agents) in Maize, Sunflower, and Tomatoes. It will take place as soon as possible in July. The outcomes aimed for the workshop are:

- Agreements on quality standards/grades of produce and its packaging (the size of crates for tomatoes for instance is a constant quarrel)
- Agreements on which information to make available for all to see.
- The establishment of a mixed group of producers, middlemen, processors, traders (or their local agents) who will together learn how to arrange win-win situations for all along the chain.

Faida Mali the AMSDP partner agency in Hai is a non-profit organization specializing in market linkages. They have recently finished a market survey which still needs to be analyzed in detail. They have mainly looked into Maize (which has suffered in the last three years due to the draught), Sunflower and Tomato. Apparently some of the Maize from Hai reaches big mills in Mombasa, where it gets processed into animal feed. Many of their Tomatoes reach Dar es Salaam and from there apparently even the Comoros. But the data still needs to be analysed to see what the volumes and percentages of total produce are that reach these faraway markets. Some efforts have been discussed to diversify cropping away from tomatoes as this has a boom-bust cycle. Vanilla was mentioned in this regard, Safflower too appears to be a crop that has an interest, particularly because it withstands draughts. However the constraints to successful marketing are mainly the very low level of trust among the market partners and that middlemen would often buy more if they had the capital. Information is apparently not a prime problem, as often people know the prices of the various commodities at various places. But they have no chance of exploiting the potential margins, as they lack the resources for transport etc. Furthermore farmer groups who have tried to bypass middlemen and directly reach the faraway markets have been faced with boycotts by the traders.

6.6. Mbeya District, Southern Zone

The participants from Mbeya district at the exploratory workshop developed the following objectives for their core group:

- To achieve better price of rice crop so as to raise farmers income.
- Help in the use of improved rice seeds.
- Promote standardization of weighing scales.
- Organize the formation of a rice production group/society.
- Ensure availability of notice board to tell pricing and any other relevant information,
- Help with legal registration of producer groups and SACCOS societies.



Leadership for the establishment of a District core group will be provided by: Crispin Mtaru – Chair/person, Wilbrod Kawapa – Secretary, and Members: Salvatory Manyoka, Festo Kapewa, Credo Kuziliwa, Jairo Mpatama, Eliud Simfukwe, Rabon Njema, and Christian Mwakyembe. The group decided that the chairperson will convene group meetings and supervise all group matters while the secretary will organize all group matters and keep records of the group. The group will also appoint a treasurer if one becomes necessary. The information person, yet to be appointed, will be responsible for making follow up on market price information and informing the group through notice board and meetings. This person will also provide the internet link with other district core groups. The group will also include an extension officer to provide information on improved rice production.

The group decided that they would hold a business meeting once per month but whenever there is a burning issue the chairperson can call a meeting. No follow up visit to assist on organizational issues was made to this group.

6.7. Iringa Region, Southern Zone

Iringa region participants at the exploratory workshop proposed the following objectives for their district core groups:

- Raise farmer's income.
- Achieve better price of the round potato crop.
- Look for better and reliable market of jibin and jam.

The responsibility of forming a district core groups will be taken up by the following people at the regional level: Edeni Fungo, Polikarpy Mlelwa, Henry Magenya, Peter Mwandilandi, and Zipporah Mwakatanga. In the first week of July this group will meet on how to get core groups formed in their districts. They will also identify their internet link person at that time. This group expects to be developing marketing chains in their districts for Irish potato, processing of jibin, and dairy cattle. No follow up visit to assist on organizational issues was made to this group.

6.8. Songea District, Ruvuma Region, Southern Zone

Participants from Songea District at the exploratory workshop developed the following objective for their district core group:

- Organise key players in market chain for Pidgeon Peas as an alternative crop

Leadership in the development of a district core group will be the responsibility of: John Bosco, Job Elisuhi Mushi, Arry Mlingi and Harry Mwela. They will also draw on representative from the twenty three producer groups in the district including women's group representatives. In addition Agricultural Extension officers from group's centres and Village Executive Officer from the group's sites will be invited.

The group decided that the chairperson will call the group meetings, remind group members of the date, venue and time of the meetings, as well as facilitate the discussions. The group's secretary will keep the group's records, take minutes of their meetings and send out invitations. The info broker will be responsible for linking the group to other districts and outside sources of desired information. The group decided to meet on the first Friday of each month as from July 2005 at 9.00 am at district HQ in TechnoServe, Songea office. No follow up visit to assist on organizational issues was made to this group.



7. Some Challenges, Threats and Opportunities

SUMMARY

Success in the First Mile project is about improving farmers' access to the internet. Figuring out how private entrepreneurs can work with government agencies to enhance public access to the internet is the emerging challenge for us. Present levels of exchange between AMSDP districts is very low so getting the core group members of each district networking with each other is an immediate challenge. The level of organization of district core groups in the Northern Zone was greatly lifted during our follow up visits to their offices. Getting core groups from the Southern Zone to the same level of development is an immediate challenge for AMSDP. If Partner Agencies are to facilitate the launching of mixed learning groups of producers, middlemen and traders / processors they will need to develop a useful attitude and stance towards middlemen and traders. AMSDP is challenged to remove this bias. Overcoming cheating and lack of trust between key players in the marketing chain poses a further challenge. The trick here will be to get just very first agreements for very simple things which can begin the process of building trust between producers and traders and processors. The challenge of hunting up marketing information is likely to be so great that AMSDP may well have to organize an independent info-system for each district. Market linkages appear to be the most serious bottlenecks and potential leverage points AMSDP is challenged to keep its focus on this. We talk of threats in our report not only to warn of things that could happen but also to highlight the opportunities they present to the AMSDP. The Confusion about market chains that could occur at district workshops provides an opportunity to confront the huge behavioural change required for market chains to emerge successful. The widespread ignorance about consumers we see prompts the question: Why not air programmes on consumer likes and dislikes? The weak links to finance and planning offer an opportunity for integration across AMSDP programme components and integration with district planning processes. The potential for public private collaboration in information brokering rather than competition provides AMSDP with the opportunity to demonstrate how collaboration between public officers and private entrepreneurs can speed up privatization of marketing services. The slide into dependency mindsets challenges the programme to run on a demand driven basis. Limited mandates and artificial splits of development programmes presents AMSDP with opportunities to establish links with other agencies, projects or programmes such as the ASSP that offer complementary services that will result in market chain development.

7.1 Main Emerging Challenges

Improving Internet Access: While all district core groups have people who regularly access the internet around once a week at least most of this access is unfortunately tied up in NGO or project offices that are not accessible to the public at large, and certainly not outside the office hours. While this may be workable for those district core group members it will not satisfy the demands of the many key players in marketing chains. This is a huge waste of potential and should be addressed. Both in Hai and in Muheza the idea emerged to promise a private entrepreneur to regularly buy bandwidth in order for him/her to launch a publicly accessible internet service, as opposed to installing an own link in the government office. Such arrangements would allow operating costs to be shared with the public at large. Figuring out how private entrepreneurs can work with government agencies to enhance public access to the internet is an emerging challenge for us.



Present and future networking: Amazingly at present AMSDP's Partner Agencies and even their District Focal Persons appear to have little regular contact among each other that would allow systematic exchange of experiences. What exchanges that do occur are mostly during meetings and infrequent cross-site visits, and even then often only on the sidelines. For a systematic exchange of experiences to happen the first priority will be to link up the core groups with each other and facilitate their exchange of experiences in launching their workshops and the ensuing follow-up. This can be done almost immediately in some Districts, namely Hai, Babati, Arumeru, and Muhesa. The others can join as soon as they have their core-groups established. In the meantime the District Focal Persons and Partner Agencies of all AMSDP districts can be linked. Systematic exchange of experiences also between the face-to-face events can then be launched. The "second wave" of exchange will come, when mixed learning groups of market players along a chain are established, who can then exchange their experiences in exploring and arranging for higher efficiencies along the market chains that lead to win-win-win for all involved. Getting the core group members of each district networking with each other is an immediate challenge to be addressed.

Organizing District 'Core' Groups: Each district has to develop a core or puller group that will pull the key players in marketing chains together and stimulate the development of marketing chains. Participants at the workshops decided that leadership in the development of such 'core' groups would come from the District Focal Persons, Market Monitors and Partner Agencies. These are the people who will stimulate the marketing within the district who will demand the training from AMSDP to do support this and who will mobilize the trainers to do the training. Much progress was made in Northern Zone Districts during the learning organization follow up visits of Ueli Scheuermeier. Getting core groups from the Southern Zone to the same level of development is an immediate challenge for AMSDP.

Launching market chain learning groups: There appears to be a very strong bias in the development scene in Tanzania for producers and against middlemen and traders. In all core groups the concerns and constraints of middlemen and traders were poorly understood. The proposition that successful cooperation along the chain would increase the income of all players appears to be new. The proposition is all the more valid, as distrust along the chains is prevalent today. If Partner Agencies are to facilitate the launching of mixed learning groups of producers, middlemen and traders / processors they will need to develop a useful attitude and stance towards middlemen and traders. Removing this bias among Partner Agencies and the various programs and projects is a challenge that needs to be worked on.

Cheating and poor quality: "Everybody cheats everybody" is what everyone says is going on along the marketing chains at present. It is agreed that quality standards (grading, packaging, timeliness of delivery and payments, etc) that need to be worked on. If key players can just define very simple and achievable quality standards that can be agreed upon by all the invited players, and agree on mechanisms for control and penalties, that would make a big difference. Imagine a tamper proof standard crate, basket, bin, or bag that can be labelled and which allows tracing back to the original producer or packager in case there are complaints. This would allow traders to pay a considerably higher price as they will be saving a lot of transaction costs which at present they have to pass on to farmers. The challenge here is to get just very first agreements for very simple things which can begin the process of building trust between producers and traders and processors.



Hunting up market information: It appears to be counterproductive to suggest that the all players along the chain should gather and share their information. It is too early to assume everybody will be open with what they know about the market. In this situation it appears to be a better idea to think of an independent entity that hunts up the information about the market for the various links in the chain and makes it accessible for all players. Who is willing to pay what where for which qualities? Who is interested in reaching what kind of contracts? is the kind of information that all would find valuable. Of course sustainable sources of funding need to be explored to keep these independent information ‘brokers’ operating to the benefit of all players along the chains. Organizing such an independent info-system for each district will be a further main challenge of the district core groups to think about.

Focus of effort on production, information and market chains: Many programs and projects appear to be operating that try to improve the production among farmers. But little is done in marketing. Whatever is done in marketing appears to concentrate providing them with price information or educating producers about how to sell their products. However, this will in most cases be of little use, if the present inefficient market linkages continue. This effort of AMSDP for doing something with the market linkages therefore appears to be aiming at the most serious bottlenecks and potential leverage points. The challenge for AMSDP is to keep its focus on stimulating the emergence of market chains bringing key players together and building skills in collaborative learning.

7.2. Threats and Opportunities for Success

Confusion about market chains at district workshops: The facilitators training key players in the districts need to avoid participants mixing up visions of market chains with practical action to realize their visions. The future vision or where do we want to be in five years refers to a final state - the storage facility is operating, while the practical actions of how to get there refer to activities to be undertaken – raising funds to build a store house. Facilitators will also need to make sure that participants avoid the tendency to make their market chains too long. While all who handle the product (transport, storage), who add value to the product (producer, processor), and who provide services (technical advice, market info, finance) to the chain need to be identified they do not all need to be in the chain. Who is in and who is out must allow for maximizing profit sharing from short efficient chain cutting out unnecessary middlemen while including those who add value. Lastly, facilitators need to avoid the trap of thinking that marketing is about what individuals can do to get info and comparative advantage over others rather than what individuals can do in collaboration with other key players. Key players need to take this opportunity to confront this huge behavioural change if market chains are to emerge successful.

Widespread ignorance about consumers: Producers, processors and other key players as well have only a vague idea of who their consumers are and what they want. Most see consumers as a general public with no differentiation of who they are, where they make their purchases (farm gate, local, town, central, within and cross district, regions, neighbouring countries), or what types of consumers there are (institutions, wholesalers, supermarkets). Reducing this widespread ignorance provides an opportunity for radio. Rural people all have radios and they are a main source of information for them. Why not air programmes on consumer likes and dislikes for farmers to better understand consumers.



Weak links to finance and planning: Most if not all future visions of market chains require some kind of financing for their realization. Where new roads or buildings or other infrastructure are indicated some kind of planning will be required. Realising future visions will require strong links to finance institutions and local planning processes. Forging these links provides an opportunity for integration across AMSDP programme components. It also provides opportunities for integration with district planning. Such linkages could result in more District resources flowing to agriculture than is currently the case with the O&OD planning process.

Public private competition or collaboration: Today AMSDP behaves like a government programme offering a service to end users (some of which is contracted out to NGO's) but one day it must become a government programme helping private service providers to emerge. The information and brokering services provided by District Focal Persons and market monitors must eventually be privatized. These services can be imagined either as a stand alone business or as a service offered by a private sector organization such as TCCIA. The longer these services are offered by public institutions the harder it becomes for private entrepreneurs to set up businesses. Competition between public and private vets has stifled private sector development in Veterinary services. Similar stifling of private sector development happens when a public tele-centre operates in a rural town. The opportunity to demonstrate how collaboration between public officers and private entrepreneurs can speed up privatization of marketing services is one AMSDP must seize.

Dependency mindsets: Government development programmes supported by donors run the risk of their implementers and beneficiaries falling into dependency mindsets. The implementers impose their operations and wills on the beneficiaries. In their turn the beneficiaries wait for the help to arrive. Everyone waits around until the money arrives and nothing happens until it does. Market chain development cannot happen with such a dependency mind set. Beneficiaries must engaged for their own profit and not because there is public money to be spent. Implementers must engage in response to demand and not because they have targets to meet. Beneficiaries should not wait for government approvals but take leadership and responsibility for the development of their own marketing chains. Governments should be flexible and able to respond to demand. The opportunity to run a programme on a demand driven basis is the only way for AMSDP to successfully stimulate the development of market chains and improve market linkages.

Limited mandates and artificial splits: Like all government programmes AMSDP comes with a mandate on zones of operations and areas of intervention. Thus AMSDP concentrates on marketing and not production even when quality and regular supply are issues. Similarly AMSDP covers milk but not meat even though opportunities may arise in this commodity. As far as producers and key players in marketing chains are concerned these are all artificial splits. Key players in a market chain must work on their weakest link regardless of whether it is in production, processing or information. Similarly, chains must develop in any commodity that can make rural people a profit. The opportunity for AMSDP here is to establish links with other agencies, projects or programmes such as the ASSP offering services that will result in market chain development.



8. Proposed Next Steps and Budget

SUMMARY

While AMSDP staff and beneficiaries are busy setting up 'core' groups within each district to whose main task is to stimulate the development of market chains for the important commodities in their districts ISG will provide the following assistance. We will continue our work on a user friendly interface for local groups to engage in online learning and will have a prototype for testing at the LLL internet training from 25th to 28th July. This training will build the capacity of twenty district 'information brokers' in using the LLL internet learning support service. Following the July training and through to December we will mentor or coach district core group members and local information brokers in how to stimulate the development of market chains. Mentors will help them nurture discussions between district core groups and key players and share experiences through documented good practices and impact stories using the tools on the internet learning support service. Captured in the LLL knowledge pool these data will be freely accessible to all who can access the internet. We will join IFAD communications division in the presentation of the first mile project at the WSIS summit this November in Tunis. At the end of the year ISG will visit AMSDP to assess progress made on how to develop market chains and identify the constraints district core groups and key players face in their attempt to put a linked local learning process into action as well as improve their access to internet.

8.1. The Local Context

The local context in which we take our next steps is as follows. AMSDP national and zonal offices are assisting their districts set up 'core' groups charged with the job of stimulating the emergence of marketing chains. As they develop, these groups will start preparing producer groups, processors and other key players in the marketing chains of important commodities in their districts for training in local learning. Training will be supplied on a demand driven basis. So producers and key players in specific commodities will demand that the core group organizes their training. As they develop, district core groups will also identify information brokers to attend the training on how to use the LLL internet learning support service.

8.2. Next Steps for ISG

Develop an interface for local groups to engage in online learning: We will continue our work on developing an interface for district core groups and key players to use the LLL internet learning support service to enhance their local learning activities. Local groups will interact with the internet learning service via print outs of emails. We will have a prototype of the user friendly interface ready for testing at the LLL internet training in July. The potential technical breakthrough of GPRS mobile phones equipped with infra red or blue tooth print ports will deliver this interface right to the village. Additional resources to secure collaboration with mobile phone makers could speed up this much needed and exciting development.

Training in using the LLL internet learning support service: We will conduct this training from 25th to 28th July in Arusha. This training will build the capacity of twenty district information brokers to train others how to use the LLL internet learning support service. We will also develop action plans for how district core groups will manage their information and connect to the internet on a regular basis.



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Online mentoring of learning groups: Following the July training and through to December we will mentor or coach district core group members and local information brokers in how to stimulate the development of market chains. Mentors will help them nurture discussions between core groups and key players and share experiences through documented good practices and impact stories. This will begin to fill the local knowledge pool on how to improve marketing linkages. The knowledge pool is provided by the LLL internet learning support service and is an open access internet data base allowing open dissemination of best practices.

Presentation at WSIS summit: From the 15th to 19th November we will join IFAD communications division in the presentation of the lessons learned and impact of first mile project at a WSIS summit side event in Tunis.

Assessment visit on progress in learning and connectivity: At the end of the year we will conduct a ten day assessment exercise in AMSDP's northern and southern zones making taped interviews and photographs recording the changes on the ground in pictures and in the local voice. We will document the impact as well as the 'good practices' that have emerged from the field. We will assess progress made on how to develop market chains and recommend what support AMSDP can most usefully provide. We will assess the constraints that district core groups and key players face in their attempt to put a linked local learning process into action as well as improve their access to internet and recommend what support AMSDP can most usefully provide.

8.3. Technical Assistance Budget

Category	Description	Cost (USD)
Fees	Interface for farmers to engage in online learning	15,000.00
	Training in using LLL internet learning service	8,500.00
	Online mentoring of learning groups	15,500.00
	Assessment visit on learning and connectivity	10,000.00
	Presentation at WSIS summit in Tunis	2,500.00
Sub total Fees =		51,500.00
Travel	London-Tunis-London	1,000.00
	London-Dar-Arusha-London x 2	2,066.00
	London-Rome-Dar-Arusha-London x2	2,618.00
	Visa/airport tax/miscellaneous	900.00
	Terminal expenses local taxis	960.00
Per Diem	Rome \$309 x 2nights	618.00
	Tunis \$160 x 3nights	480.00
	Dar \$128 x 14nights	1,792.00
	Arusha \$99 x 12nights	1,188.00
Miscellaneous	Elswhere \$56 x 4nights	224.00
	Communications/stationary/local travel	2,000.00
	LLL internet service charge	1,500.00
Contingency Phase 1 and 2		2,154.00
Sub total Expenses =		17,500.00
TOTAL COST ESTIMATE =		69,000.00



Further Reading

C. Lightfoot, A. Dennig and M.Farahani. *Proceedings of the AMSDP Linking Local Learners Training-of-Trainers Course, June 15th – 18th 2005, Arusha International Conference Centre.* ISG/AMSDP First Mile Project. June 2005.

C. Lightfoot, A. Dennig and J. Cook. *Proceedings of the AMSDP Key Players Exploratory Workshop on Market Linkages, June 8th – 10th 2005, Arusha International Conference Centre.* ISG/AMSDP First Mile Project. June 2005.

J.Cook. *Enhancing ICT Connectivity as a Strategic Instrument for Effective Rural Development: ICT Diagnosis Report.* ISG/AMSDP First Mile Project. June 2005.

Annexes

- A. Participants of Exploratory Workshop
- B. Trainees on Training of Trainers' Course
- C. Training Resources on CD Rom
- D. Photo Record of Exploratory Workshop
- E. Photo Record of Training of Trainers' Course



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Annex A. Participants of Exploratory Workshop

Name	Organization/Designation	Address		
		Box. No	Tel.	Email
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Annex C. Training Resources on CD Rom

Handouts	Instructions	Guidelines/Templates	Slides
Training objectives	Principles mime game	Training Guidelines for:	Learning principles
Training programme	Behaviour team game	How to Plan a Learning Workshop	Learning behaviour
Learning principles	Preparing role plays	How to Prepare a Learning Workshop	Action Learning Cycle
Learning behaviour	Facilitation assessment	How to Develop a Learning Framework	Marketing Learning Cycle
Action Learning Cycle	Role play process assessment	Trainer's Log Book	Sharing Experiences
Marketing Learning Cycle	Instructions role play: Current Marketing Challenges	Templates for:	LISSA Cattle Market Chain
Value of role play	Instructions role play: Future Vision Market Linkages	Learning Framework	
Key facilitation skills	Instructions role play: Partnerships and Practical Ideas	Evaluation Forms	
Organizing a Learning Group	Instructions role play: Communication in Market Chain	Registration Forms	
LISSA Cattle Market Chain			
Sharing Experiences			
Negotiating Partnerships			

NOTE: Handouts, Instructions, Guidelines and Templates are in English and Swahili



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Annex D. Photo Record of Exploratory Workshop



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Annex E. Photo Record of Training of Trainers' Course

