

## **Introduction**

Our assessment of the training needs of entrepreneurs developing Market Access Companies will look into the following key areas:

- the kinds of services being offered;
- the levels of capital and resources available to rural entrepreneurs for setting up and operating a MAC;
- the skills and aptitudes needed by people to be successful entrepreneurs; and
- the kinds of experiences they should have to be successful service providers.

Our assessment process for determining the training needs of entrepreneurs developing Market Access Companies includes three steps.

1. The first step is to send out a short questionnaire to each group of entrepreneurs on the DDS team. The questions focus on getting some basic information about the services, clients, income streams and future plans of the emerging MAC. Also included in the questionnaire is a request for each MAC to prepare a short case study featuring one of its success stories. It is anticipated that these cases will be used as 'real life' examples in the workshop.
2. The second step is to visit a number of selected MAC's in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The focus of the visit is to obtain a deeper understanding of how services are being offered and the challenges entrepreneurs face in developing a commercial Market Access Company.
3. The third step is to bring some twenty entrepreneurs who are committed to developing a MAC together in an assessment workshop. Workshops are planned for Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Based on the results of the online questionnaire and the field visits participants will first determine what the attributes of a good Market Access Company are. Following this they will develop their own learning needs based on their understanding of what a good MAC is. Individual learning needs will then be analyzed across all the participants to develop a common learning agenda for the next six months.

The prioritized learning agenda emerging from the assessment exercise will form the basis of the subsequent mentoring work both online and field visits as well as the design and conduct of the formal training workshops.

## **Key Areas for Assessing Training Needs of Potential 'MACs'**

### **Services offered**

- Broker deals
- Organise collection and storage of produce
- Convene market chain players
- Explore new opportunities (Products, Markets, Ways of adding value)
- Gather and share market intelligence

### **Capital and resources available**

- Cash
- Transport
- Staff
- Support network of expertise and fundis
- Customer base
- Computers, office equipment and space with Internet access

**Skills and aptitudes needed**

- Understand the MAC unique selling points of Trust, Honesty, Fair, Transparency
- Entrepreneurial ability to identify opportunities for people to make money; motivated; completer; proactive, creative.
- Know how for negotiating, convening key players, facilitation of learning events
- Networking good communication and many contacts
- Learning attitude and being collaborative
- Organisational, financial, managerial and administrative skills
- IT skills
- Credibility and good customer relations

**Experiences they should have**

- Agricultural marketing/trading - know how it works
- Information gathering, analysis, dissemination
- Agricultural production
- Learning /trying out something new
- Planning- business, project, community
- Working with others in collaboration
- Running a business profitably
- Internet use

**Email Questions sent to DDS team**

To make sure that we meet your specific training needs we would like to hear from you about this. Please answer the following questions which will help us to make the best possible use of the September visit.

**About Your Service:**

- Q1. What services does your business currently offer?  
Q2. Who does it offer services to?  
Q3. Do you charge for your services and if so for which?  
Q4. Has your income changed in the last year and if so in what ways?  
Q5. How has your number of clients changed in the last year?  
Q6. What are the other major difficulties that you have in making your business a success?  
Q7. What services do you plan to offer in the future?  
Q8. How could you do this better in the future?

**A Short Case Study**

We want to base our training on your actual circumstances to make it as realistic as possible (if you have a CV or an information brochure about your business, please attach and send it to us). Please could you prepare A Short Case Study on a particular piece of work that you are proud of. Your case study should answer the following questions:

- A. How did this work come about?
- B. What did you do?
- C. What was the outcome?
- D. What did you learn?
- E. What would enable you to do it better next time?

**Questions for Field Visits to MACs**

Questions to ask the MAC during the September field visits

- What makes you different from other service providers?
- Why are you running a MAC / What risks are you taking / What are your future goals?
- What do you actually do to make the following work: Negotiating, Convening, Facilitating?
- What do your customers want and how do you know this?
- How comfortable are you with sharing your experience?
- What is your most profitable service?
- How much does it cost to run your business / Do you have a business plan?
- How do you get online / Do you have a computer?
- In your experience what are the three key success factors for creating effective, sustainable MACs?
- Are there any barriers which are preventing you from achieving your immediate goals?
- Do you see any gaps in your client market which you (or others) could fill?

**MAC Training Needs Assessment Workshop Programme**

One day workshops in September for DDS team members who are committed to operate a MAC

- Session 1: Introduction to workshop and concept of the MAC
- Session 1: Presentation of attributes of good MAC based on results of online questions and field visit to selected MACs
- Session 2: Group work on what you think your learning needs are based on the ‘good’ MAC target presented.
- Session 2: Plenary to develop priority learning needs using matrix of learning needs by MACs’.
- Session 3: Group work on developing the detailed learning agenda for the priority learning needs of MACs
- Session 4: Plenary to gain commitment to the learning agenda including checklists of MAC resources.

**Checklist of Existing Resource Endowments**

Check list to be filled out by participants attending the one day assessment workshops in September

<p><b>What financial and capital resources do they have?</b>                  Cash, Transport,                  Office space and equipment, Computers and internet access                  Customer base, Client credibility, Support network,</p>	<p><b>What staff human resource do they have?</b>                  Education level                  Employment or work record                  Language proficiency (Spoken/Written/Reading)</p>
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