

FINAL REPORT DECEMBER 2007

FOR FAO GCP/RAF/401/IFA

"Rural Knowledge Network Pilot Project for East Africa"

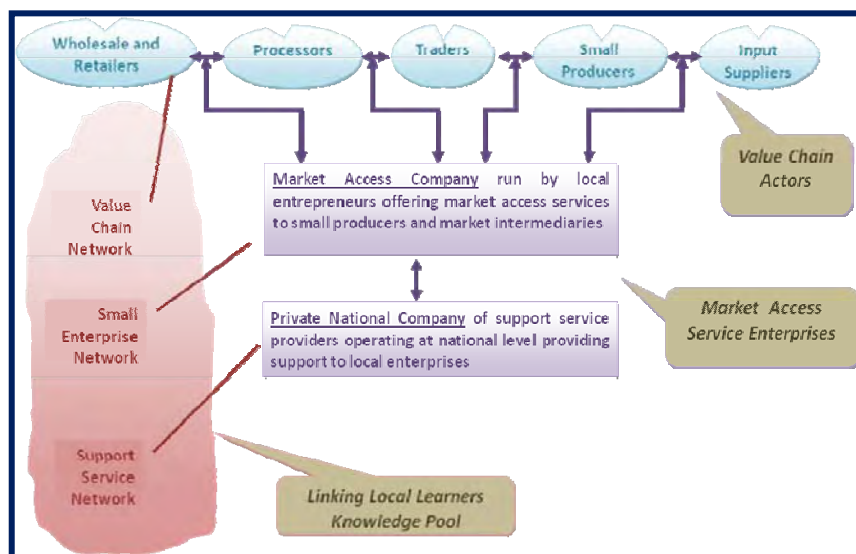


TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
DELIVERABLE 1. MENTORING AND DOCUMENTING LESSONS LEARNED FROM ALL THE FIELD ACTIVITIES.....	1
1) Ten discussion syntheses documented.....	1
2) Five impact stories and five good practices documented.....	2
3) Three case studies made into DVD videos.....	3
DELIVERABLE 2. PROVIDING AND MANAGING THE LLL INTERNET LEARNING SUPPORT PLATFORM.....	3
1) Contact database published.....	3
2) Updated Website published.....	3
DELIVERABLE 3. REVIEWING THE LLL INTERNET LEARNING SUPPORT PLATFORM.....	4
1) Report on online user survey of LLL service.....	4
DELIVERABLE 4. DEVELOPING A PROCESS BY WHICH PRIVATE NATIONAL COMPANIES (PNC) CAN EMERGE.....	4
1) Report of baseline survey of potential PNC's.....	5
ANNEX A: BRIEFING NOTES.....	6
Briefing Note 21: Testing an Operational Strategy for Learning How to Improve Small Holder Farmers' Links to Markets.....	6
Briefing Note 22: Online Mentoring LLL Style.....	8
Briefing Note 23: Learning Agenda for Operating Market Access Companies.....	10
Briefing Note 24: Learning Agenda for Technical Support to MACs.....	12
Briefing Note 25: Market Access Services Going Commercial: Five Questions.....	14
ANNEX B: PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.....	18
How To Get Connected To The Internet.....	18
How To Set Up The Business Of Information Boards.....	21
ANNEX C: LLL TEAM DISCUSSION SYNTHESIS.....	31
Learning How To Prepare Business Plans.....	31
Learning How To Set Up Business Platforms To Support Market Chains.....	33
Learning How To Start Up A Rural Service Company For Market Access.....	35
Learning How To Access The Internet.....	37
Learning How To Organize Information Flows.....	39
Learning How To Operate Information Boards.....	41
ANNEX D: IMPACT STORIES.....	43
KENFAP supports KITEMU marketing group of Nyeri District, Kenya.....	43
Challenges to Improving the Quality of Cattle Hides.....	44
Today's Marketing Services of the Kakamega FFS Network.....	45
Export Oriented Crop Production: Snow Peas and French Beans in the Mount Kenya Region.....	47
The Market Linkage Role of the FFS Network in Uganda.....	48
Needs, Challenges and Initiatives for Sustainable Services to Farmer Field Schools in Tanzania.....	49
Starting a Warehouse Receipt System for Kyere, Uganda.....	50
The Impact of Marketing Support for Umwale Paddy farmers in Arumeru District.....	52
The Need for Effective Marketing: Teso Tropical Fruit Growers' Association.....	53
Gweri Dairy Association Up-Scales its Operation with a Cooling Unit.....	55
Organising Same Beekeepers' Association for Better Market Access.....	57
Women's Group Succeeds as Micro Processors in Same.....	58
Allaken, an Emerging Marketing Services Company.....	59
Keekonyokie, SARD Livestock Field School in Olirein, Kenya.....	61
Marketing Help for Ginger Growers in Same District.....	63
The Marketing of Lablab in Same, Tanzania.....	65
ANNEX E. LLL TEAM MEMBER CONTACT DATA.....	67
ANNEX F. LLL PLATFORM USER ASSESSMENT.....	76

INTRODUCTION

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has made available to the **AGRIDEA-Lindau** a financial contribution in the amount of US dollars 157,700 in support of the development of the Linking Local Learners (LLL) methodology and online platform for the Rural Knowledge Network (RKN) as defined in the project document GCP/RAF/401/IFA - "Rural Knowledge Network Pilot Project for East Africa"

This is a final report on what has been achieved in the project. The report describes the development of deliverables and notes that planned targets have been met in terms of all of the following deliverables:

- 1) Mentoring and documenting lessons learned from all the field activities
- 2) Providing and managing the Linking Local Learners internet learning support platform
- 3) Reviewing the LLL internet learning support platform
- 4) Developing a process by which private national companies (PNC) can emerge

It is, however, noted that during the implementation of the project a new strategy for developing a process by which a commercially viable PNC could emerge replaced the originally designed strategy. Agridea and FAO agreed that insufficient knowledge and data on the business opportunity for the PNC was available to proceed with the originally planned survey. An alternative strategy was developed so that such knowledge and data could be generated to inform the launch of commercially viable PNCs.

DELIVERABLE 1. MENTORING AND DOCUMENTING LESSONS LEARNED FROM ALL THE FIELD ACTIVITIES

The service contract requires Agridea to: Provide mentoring to the DDS team members on how to offer market access services to small farmers and market intermediaries on a commercial basis. Capture and document the lessons learned from all the field activities pertinent to the learning agenda of the local learners involved in the RKN project. Documentation is to include regular synthesis of the debates and discussions on the DDS learning team. Capture of experiences and impacts of the emerging market access companies is to include filming and interviewing local entrepreneurs on the ground for case studies to be written up and made into short 3 to 5 minute videos. Interviewing and gathering information on the ground will also be used to identify and write up good operational procedures of MACs.

1) Ten discussion syntheses documented

Ten discussions have been synthesized of which two have been made into practical suggestions and five made into Briefing Notes. Briefs are for distribution to donors and development organizations and experts in the field of agricultural service provision. The list of briefing notes and practical suggestions are shown below with full texts in Annexes A and B respectively. Mentoring of the learning groups on the Demand Driven Services team started with introducing the learners to the RKN effort and the concept of a Market Access Company. Failure to implement the planned MAC assessment visit, due to delays in the start up of the Traidcraft small grant from IFAD, has slowed the pace of learning among the MACs. Nevertheless, through other visits to MACs in Kenya, Uganda and Firstmile visits in Tanzania as well as the mentor training workshop held in Arusha in November 19th - 23rd MACs are moving forward on getting themselves set up for commercial operations. To assist these 'emerging' MACs useful discussions have been synthesized from developments in the Firstmile team and shared with them. Full texts of each discussion synthesis can be found in Annex C.

The following discussion summaries have been shared:

- Learning How To Prepare Business Plans
- Learning How To Set Up Business Platforms To Support Market Chains
- Learning How To Start Up A Rural Service Company For Market Access
- Learning How To Access The Internet
- Learning How to Organize Information Flows
- Learning How to Operate Information Boards

The following briefing notes have been distributed over the project period:

- 21: Testing an Operational Strategy for Learning How to Improve Small Holder Farmers' Links to Markets¹
- 22: Online Mentoring LLL Style.
- 23: Learning Agenda for Operating Market Access Companies
- 24: Learning Agenda for Technical Support to MACs
- 25: Market Access Services Going Commercial: Five Questions

The following practical suggestions have been distributed:

- How to get connected to the Internet
- How to set up the business of Information Boards

2) Five impact stories and five good practices documented

Lightfoot Consulting has been contracted to undertake the documentation work. Work on documentation combines field visits for meetings and interviews with online development and editing of stories and practices. All impact stories are shared on the LLL website and sent to all members of the DDS team. The following stories have been produced. Full text of all sixteen stories can be found in Annex D.

Lucy Nyambura	KENFAP supports KITEMU Marketing
Michael Kibue	Improving the Quality of Cattle Hides
Habakkuk Khaamala	Marketing Service of Kakamega FFS
James Kanyi	Export Oriented Crop Production
Betty Ajambo	Market Linkage in the FFS Network
Thomas Julianus	Needs and Initiatives for Sustainable Services to FFS
Ejomu Zeblon	Starting a Warehouse Receipt System for Kyere, Uganda
Rebeca Mongi	Impact of Marketing Support for Umwale Paddy Farmers
Gaudesius Opi	Need for Effective Marketing: Teso Tropical Fruit Growers Asso
Joseph Opus	Gweri Dairy Assoc Up-scales its Operation with a Cooling Unit
Jerome Maimu	Organising Same Beekeepers' Assoc for Better Market Access
P Kisse & M Makwasa	Women's Group Succeeds as Micro Processors in Same
James Kanyi	Allaken, an Emerging Marketing Services Company
I Nemuta & P Sintamei	Keekonyokie, SARD Livestock Field School in Olirein, Kenya
E Magohe & M Makwasa	Marketing Help for Ginger Growers in Same District
Enrisha Magohe	Marketing of LabLab in Same, Tanzania.

¹ Briefings 1 – 20 were produced before the project period.

3) Three case studies made into DVD videos

Declan McCormack was contracted to produce three documentation videos. Filming began in Kenya from September 1st to 8th and in Uganda from 9th to 15th September. Post production work was carried out directly afterwards and the following DVDs have been produced:

- “Home on the Range”: Documentation of the Massai Field School. In response to the land crisis Massai livelihood is adapting by a change to ranching in a re-invention of the farmer field school concept.
- “One man MAC”: Documentation of the birth of a market linkage service provider. How a lone Kenyan rural entrepreneur who lives in a wooden shack with no running water or electricity has harnessed the potential of ICT’s to organize farmer groups in a producers association (MOPA) to export vegetables to Europe and is now setting up a MAC to sustain these services.
- “FFS go commercial” Documentation of a Farmer Field School networks setting up a commercial service for its members. The problems Kenyan farmer field schools face in commercializing and gaining access to markets and the efforts they are making to sustain benefits to their members.

All videos can be viewed from the linkinglearners website and have been made available to FAO and IFAD for further copying and distribution.

DELIVERABLE 2. PROVIDING AND MANAGING THE LINKING LOCAL LEARNERS INTERNET LEARNING SUPPORT PLATFORM

Lightfoot consulting has been contracted to provide and manage the Linking Local Learners internet learning support platform at www.linkinglearners.net including hosting and maintenance of the contact person database and the knowledge pool of discussions and library contributions for the DDS team. The www.linkinglearners.net website for sharing lessons learned with any interested parties has been updated on a monthly basis.


1) Contact database published

The last update of the database of contacts on the LLL teams was completed and circulated in November at the mentor training workshop held in Arusha from 19th to 23rd. The database is being continuously updated not only with new people joining the local learning teams but also with updates of contact mobile phone numbers and email addresses as people change their work and move to different towns. The contact database as of December 2007 is published on the linkinglearners.net website and circulated to all members of the LLL teams. A printout of the latest key information: name, organization, district, country, mobile phone number and email address, from the database can be found in Annex E.

2) Updated Website published

The last update of the www.linkinglearners.net website was December 21st. At this time the schedule of the upcoming visits to support the emergence of PNC’s was shared along with the latest stories, brief and proceedings of the LLL mentor training workshop. Also added to the site were the DVD’s of our starting up MAC’s case studies. A snapshot of the latest home page is shown below:

LLL - an Internet Learning Support Service for Linking Local Learners



Log In

Guests:
User ID = "guest"
Password = "readonly".

This internet service supports groups of local learners around the world to share both their expertise and their challenges in a virtual knowledge exchange. Learners produce new ideas for progress through the synergy created by many diverse groups pooling their 'do-ledge', or know-how.

LLL in action:

"One Man MAC" (to see video on Windows Media Player [click here](#))

"Home on the Range" (to see video on Windows Media Player [click here](#))

"Farmer Field Schools Go Commercial" (to see video on Windows Media Player [click here](#))

"I Spy" (to see video click on <http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/english/regions/africa/tza/voices/ispy.htm>)

Linking Local Learners is operated by Clive Lightfoot and Ueli Scheuemeier and supported by a consortium involving: Lightfoot Consulting, Agridea <<http://www.agridea.ch/>> Ideso <<http://www.ideso.ch/>>.

For more information about LLL send enquiries to: clive.lightfoot@linkinglearners.net

- [About Linking Local Learners](#)
- [What is unique about LLL](#)
- [About the LLL service](#)
- [Using the LLL service](#)
- [eLearning tools available](#)
- [LLL service offers you](#)

The Learning Teams:

Demand Driven Services
Learning to run market service enterprises in rural areas

First Mile
Learning to use ICT's for market development in rural areas

Informing Commercial Enterprises
Learning to support the commercialization of rural market

NEWS

21 - 30 January
Meetings in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania on strategies for establishing Private Learning Companies (PLC's) as vehicle to learn how to operate nation back up services to MACs on a commercial basis.

19 - 23 November
Mentor training workshop for RKN, FFS and AMSDP coordinators and RKN mentors was held in Kibo Palace Hotel, Arusha from Monday 19th to Friday 23rd November. Training on LLL mentoring and business counselling was given by Lucy Charrington of Traidcraft with Clive and Ueli. Participants also met with selected MACs from the AMSDP firstmile project on Friday 23rd and Saturday 24th.
(report available as download)

30 October
New briefing note circulated on the learning agenda for technical support to MACs.
(brief available as download)

30 October
New impact story from Kenya on Massai field school for livestock and from Tanzania on Ginger marketing in Same.
(stories available as downloads)

25 October
New briefing note circulated on the learning agenda for operating Market Access Companies.
(brief available as download)

10 October
Seven new impact stories from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania on market access, producer organization, warehouse receipt systems, micro processing and dairy processing.
(stories available as downloads)

DELIVERABLE 3. REVIEWING THE LLL INTERNET LEARNING SUPPORT PLATFORM

The service contract requires Agridea to conduct an online survey of the Linking Local Learners internet learning support platform for identifying areas where the platform can be made more user friendly for the local learners engaged in the RKN project.

1) Report on online user survey of LLL service

Agridea in collaboration with Lightfoot Consulting undertook a user assessment of the LLLservice during the mentor training workshop in late November. The assessment included both novice and experienced users of the service during a 'hands-on' exercise using the LLL online learning support tools. This provided an opportunity for users to critically assess the tools while actually using them. The assessment came up with a number of operational improvements as well as suggestions for improvement to the design of the online learning platform. Suggestions were prioritized into top, second and nice to have. The assessment also touched upon difficulties users in rural areas face in getting access to the internet. A set of questions were developed for sharing with all users via email in the coming year. The findings of the assessment exercise can be found in Annex F.

DELIVERABLE 4. DEVELOPING A PROCESS BY WHICH PRIVATE NATIONAL COMPANIES (PNC) CAN EMERGE

The service contract requires Agridea to conduct a baseline survey to identify the business opportunity and potential PNC's in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania and facilitate 'screening' workshops for presentation of survey findings and business opportunity to private sector (investors and operators) in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. A contract had been prepared for Nkoola International Development Associates (NIDA), Kampala to undertake the survey of potential PNCs and facilitate 'screening' workshops in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. Early on in this work it became evident that we had insufficient knowledge and data on the business opportunity

for the PNC to proceed with a survey. As a result Agridea, FAO and RKN coordinators decided it was prudent to drop the original idea of a survey of potential PNC candidate businesses in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The contract with NIDA was therefore terminated. Work in this period has concentrated on the development of a new strategy for a process for the emergence of a PNC developed.

1) Report of baseline survey of potential PNC's

The new strategy had to address the challenge of getting accurate costing and income data to develop a convincingly detailed description of the business opportunity to share with potential PNC operators in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. What was needed was a way to have some experience of running a PNC for a credible business opportunity to be developed. The new strategy allows us to gain some experience in the business of running a private support service to MACs and thereby come up with credible data on costing and income streams for potential investors in PNC's. In order to gain such business experience we will set up small 'Private Learning Companies' in each country. These companies are to be set up for the sole purpose of learning how to run a private national company to support local Market Access Companies. The companies would close down at the end of the RKN project in 2010 to allow for the successful launching of 'real' Private National Companies. The new strategy will have no effect on the budget set aside for this deliverable. We will still need to work on developing the business opportunity but now for learning how to run a private support company. We will still have to identify potential entrepreneurs to set up and run the learning companies. Instead of screening workshops in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania we will now have workshops to develop the organizational structures and operational procedures of the Private Learning Companies. A report on the learning agendas for the three companies will still be produced.

ANNEX A: BRIEFING NOTES

Briefing Note 21: Testing an Operational Strategy for Learning How to Improve Small Holder Farmers' Links to Markets

Poor Links to Markets

Most small farmers cannot get linked to markets at all. When they do their ignorance is exploited, so they do not get a fair share of the final consumer price. Lack of information and lack of power at the negotiation table (or effective exclusion from it) leaves them open to exploitation by other players in the market chain and particularly unregistered 'petty' traders. Farmers often respond to low prices by cheating which only adds further inefficiencies to marketing. Without better links to markets small farmers have very little chance of ever getting themselves out of poverty and staying out. Beyond the 'one-off' success story nobody really knows how to do this sustainably. However, many do know that for effective market linkage 'know-how' to emerge the principle players on the ground – farmers, market chain actors, service providers, and development managers in government, NGO's and donor projects will have to invent what works for them in their locality and in their specific circumstances. Filling the market linkage 'know-how' gap will require a great deal of on the ground learning by a great many local actors on how to profitably deal with each other to mutual benefit. Local learning must also include key players in market chains: the processors and wholesalers, as well as the development managers in government offices and in donor projects.

New Market Access Service Enterprises

Over the last four years some two hundred local learners: farmers leaders, service providers in district councils, NGO's, Unions and farmer field schools, across Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania have been using the LLL methodology to improve small farmers access to agricultural services including marketing services. In 2006 many of those 'local learners' participating in the IFAD supported FAO-Farmer Field Schools, AMSDP-Firstmile and Knowledge Management Strategies projects came together in a series of assessment workshops where they observed that where small farmers had access to locally relevant market intelligence and brokering services their links to markets significantly improved.

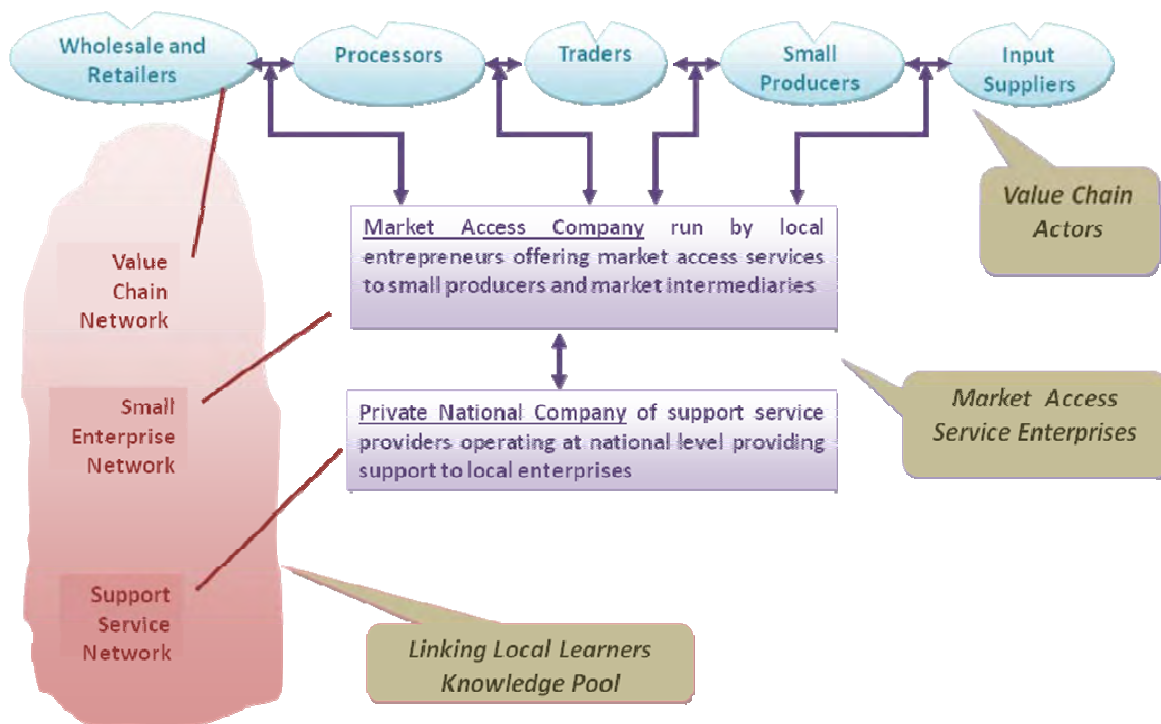
The recent FAO RKN workshop provided an opportunity for these local learners to further develop an operational strategy for the needed learning to occur. They envisaged key players in the market chain collaborating together made possible by the information and brokering services of a local, private, commercial Market Access Company (MAC). The operations of the MAC were in turn made possible by the back up or support services of a Private National Company (PNC).

The MAC offers brokering, organizing, negotiating and market intelligence services to producers and other market intermediaries (wholesalers and processors in particular) at the local level. The MAC is a commercially viable entity at the "District" level that is careful to avoid being drawn into trading itself in order to build the required trust-relationship with all players and become an honest broker. The main asset of the company is its network of trustful relationships which allows it to explore and develop a wide range of commodities and services for its clients. Services are not restricted to farming and could include ICT access through rentals of mobile phones and laptops as well as solar panels to charge batteries for mobiles, lights and laptops. The PNC is a backup company at the national level that will provide services to the MACs to be commercially successful. Services would include finding market opportunities, arranging financing and facilitating learning and operational research. The PNC is expected to be a commercially viable company, but will probably be a good private partner for Public Private Partnerships with public agencies.

Operational Strategy to Link Farmers to Markets

The emergence of these new market access service companies at local and national level will require a lot of 'learning-by-doing' under real commercial conditions. Therefore, farmers, intermediaries in market chains, and service providers in MAC's and PNC's all need to engage in action learning and peer-to-peer exchanges. This will require intense mentoring to ensure dynamic exchanges not only between peers on the same network but also between networks operating from local to national levels. The operational strategy envisages that action on the ground will be triggered by the demand among market players for services to link up and exploit opportunities for more efficient market chains. The MACs then provide these services locally and the PNC provides services to the MACs to be able to do so. The whole network of services is informed through a Rural Knowledge Network which allows everyone to use the 'Linking Local Learners' knowledge pool to learn their way to fill the market linkage 'know-how' gaps.

Operational Strategy for a Rural Knowledge Network



Testing the Strategy

Over the next two year the local learners in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania using the LLL methodology will test their operational strategy for improving small farmer links to markets. The 'know-how' gaps they have identified for themselves forms the learning agenda for this test as follows.

Farmers and other key players in the market chain need to learn how to:

- Collaborate rather than cheat to improve efficiency along the market chain.
- Develop trust between key players built on price discovery.
- Incorporate value adding technologies along the market chain.
- Communicate on time sensitive market intelligence.

Entrepreneurs in local service provision need to learn how to organize themselves to offer services on a commercial basis in the following areas:

- Exploring new crops, markets and value adding technologies.
- Organizing the collection, bulking and storage of produce and distribution of inputs.
- Convening key players for collaboration along the market chain.

- Brokering deals on crop sales, input supplies and links to sources of financial and technical support.
- Informing clients on market intelligence and facilitating peer exchange and learning.

Consultants in national support services need to learn how to organize themselves to offer services on a commercial basis in the following areas:

- Informing on market intelligence from national and international sources.
- Analysing market opportunities and innovating better procedures for cost effective service delivery.
- Identifying and meeting capacity building needs of local service providers.
- Ensuring good public relations making local services known locally and nationally.
- Exploring financing sources from private and public agencies including operations of private-public-partnerships.
- Networking to ensure documentation and exchange of experiences for learning across all participating local service provider enterprises.

Briefing Note 22: Online Mentoring LLL Style.

Observers of Linking Local Learners (LLL) often ask what mentoring online is all about. What do mentors do? How do mentors stimulate peer-to-peer exchanges over the internet? We always respond with pointing out that mentoring combines face-to-face as well as online exchanges. One will not work as well without the other. Most people know about how to facilitate action learning processes on the ground. What mentors do online is what we explain here.

Making a difference on the ground drives online exchange

1. Brokering new deals between farmer groups and big buyers like wholesalers and processors is an experience many service providers are interested in. The experience of a small group of service providers supported by the AMSDP programme in Muheza Tanzania brokering oranges sparked off successful deal making among other service provider groups. Songea maize farmers, Babati rice farmers, Muheza black pepper and Sumbawanga simsim growers all made successful deals with Mohamed Enterprises and Dodoma Transport in Tanzania following Muheza.

2. The practice of collaboration along a market chain started with Lissa's meat marketing experience in Limuru, Kenya and moved to Mbinga in Tanzania. There wheat producer groups collaborated with Green House Investments wholesalers, Mbinga Diocese Wheat Millers and Mpemba bakery. This more efficient market chain benefited all players.

3. Similarly, the concept of market spies moved quickly from Mufindi to be even more successfully reinvented in Babati, Tanzania. They combined market spies with village billboards and local market information centres.

4. The invention of higher level farmer associations for bulking and joint marketing emerged in Nyeri, Kenya and moved to Uganda and Tanzania. Soroti and Bushenyi now boast umbrella associations of honey, citrus, dairy, banana and sweet potato grower associations. In Mbeya, Tanzania, the

Mbonzo Agricultural Marketing Cooperative Society has been set up for joint maize and bean sales. The innovators, Mount Kenya Producers Association, got sufficiently organized to successfully export snow peas to Europe.

5. Market access groups in Hai and Arumeru pioneered the introduction of new enterprises like mushrooms, flower seed and safflower. Such new enterprises spread not just to others in Tanzania but within the region as well. The Tujikomboe farmer group in Morogoro are following up with Hai service providers on mushrooms. The FFS network in Kakamega, Kenya started a new enterprise in Moringa oleifera, a medicinal plant, which Songea service providers want to learn about.

6. The successfully introduced Warehouse Receipt System of AMSDP in Mbeya and Babati districts has spread. Abuket sweet potato association in Soroti Uganda started exchanges to develop their own set up. They will not be identical systems. Indeed the groups are now in touch with a farmer initiated and owned system in Ruaha Mbuyuni, Tanzania.

Peer-to-Peer exchange does not happen automatically

All these 'successful' experiences tell us that local learners do not copy each others practices or solutions. Rather they pick up on an idea and make up their own practice to fit their own particular circumstances. Learning is not 'instructional' with a manual for others to follow. Rather, peers coach each other in a practice. Learners ask back questions and make their own practice for their own situation.

Experience tells us that learners do not engage with 'top-down' outsider learning agendas. Rather they must decide what it is they want to learn today and be free to change it tomorrow. Learners will only put in the considerable efforts to learn and share if they are going to learn things that are crucially important to them. Even then some find it helpful to enter into a 'learning contract' with their peers to:

- Share any information that you find useful as others may also find it so
 - Share plans for trying out new ideas
 - Share information on achievements at each step of the way
 - Respond to the questions from other groups when you can
 - Aim for at least monthly exchange over the internet
- update learners contact information keeping track of changing email addresses.

Experience tells us that peer-to-peer exchange does not happen automatically. It needs both a trigger to get started and a mentor to keep it going. What learners read online, what they discuss at workshops, or what they talk to each other about on the phone can be triggers. Mentors keep the learning going. They pose questions and present challenges. They coax ideas out as many do not have the skills to convey the richness of their experience. One Swahili speaker observed that in their farmer group “we like English because it makes us think more clearly about our problems and ideas”.

What mentors do

As we said earlier mentors work face-to-face and online. They do facilitate workshops where learners exchange ideas, practices and achievements. They do facilitate the emergence of a ‘common’ learning agenda. After such workshops mentors keep the learning agenda moving by prompting for ideas and experiences, refocusing the discussions and debates to move them forward: “where do we stand, what is the next question”. In addition to keeping the exchanges dynamic mentors must also:

- pull discussion threads together and synthesize what has been learned
- clean up the threading of discussions for others to follow at a later date
- interview and coach learners to write up experiences and practices
- prompt learners to search and make contact with peers who have done interesting things
- connect learners with information and expertise outside their usual sources
- share news, stories, interviews, and practices through the ‘linkinglearners’ website

Mentors serve learners as coaches and networkers. Mentors use the Linking Local Learners methodology as it integrates learning-by-doing on the ground with online peer-to-peer exchange. They value the flexibility of being able to cope with rapidly changing learning topics. They value the transparency and open-access to the learning outcomes. Outcomes are shared through our website at www.linkinglearners.net. The methodology depends on organized exchanges of emails and pooling of knowledge online for which it uses the software called 'Instant Team'. Instant Team is ‘open-source’ software for online exchange developed by Ideso (www.ideso.ch). Both methodology and internet software are well supported by training resources and can be replicated freely by anyone.

Briefing Note 23: Learning Agenda for Operating Market Access Companies

Market Access Companies

Market Access Companies (MACs) are small commercial enterprises that operate in rural areas roughly the size of a district. They are owned by the operators themselves and offer their clients services to: a) get better access to local, national and international markets; b) access locally relevant market information and intelligence; c) access suitable financial sources for R&D and for loans, and d) collaborate with all key players along the market chain for more efficient marketing. Small farmer organizations and market intermediaries buy the companies' services because of its unique:

- Focus on small holder farming families.
- Independence as a broker to key players in the marketing chain.
- Transparency for all players along the chain.
- Fair trade and price discovery between key players.

Over the next twelve months local learning groups using the LLL service in around forty districts in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania will be exploring how to set up and run Market Access Companies. The pioneers have developed the following learning agenda to guide the development of their companies.

Market Information Boards

Information boards have been identified as the key for launching the information network of a MAC for being able to broker the deals between producers and buyers of various commodities and products. Info boards can also become a conduit of information for a wide range of locally relevant information. Info boards are set up at local markets and central district town markets where many people regularly go for trading their products and buying things. They are managed by "board managers" who live and work at the locations of the billboards, and thereby ensure daily supervision and updating. They are crucial for the MACs to be able to grow their network throughout their area and thereby be in a position to broker between large dealers, producers and local transporters for bulking

operations and quality control. Such brokering is the backbone of the MAC business. The learning agenda for MACs to set up and run such info boards explores the following questions:

- What does an info board look like and how can it evolve from simple beginnings?
- Who operates it on the ground and how is ownership arranged?
- What are the efficient and effective mechanisms of ensuring updated commodity price information that is locally relevant?
- What kinds of advertisements can be attracted and how to approach such potential clients?
- How does it work out financially in a way that there is a sufficient incentive for info board managers to keep their boards updated, attractive and effective?
- How can MACs maximize the use of info boards for arranging and servicing deals for time-sensitive bulking operations?

Brokering Deals

The backbone of the MAC business is identified at present to be the brokering of deals between large traders, producers (individuals as well as groups or associations and cooperatives), processors and transporters. MACs need to learn how to broker such deals in an effective, reliable and transparent way in order to build the trust with and among all players along the chain. This requires a very open information strategy that counteracts the prevailing system of hiding information that creates a general environment of distrust. MACs need to stay clear of becoming an interested party in any operation along a chain, ie. avoid becoming a trading link in the chain, and truly remain independent brokers approachable by all players along the whole chain. The learning agenda for MACs to broker successful deals explores the following questions:

- How to approach traders/processors and negotiate bulking deals that are interesting for local producers to contribute to?

- How to successfully organize the information flow to and from producers and transporters for such deals to become successful for all involved on a win-win-win basis?
- How to ensure that the deals remain entirely transparent to all players, thereby building a reputation for the MAC as an independent and trustworthy broker?
- How to discuss with various key players their bottlenecks/headaches in marketing?
- How to bring producers and market players together and let them explain to each other the bottlenecks they face?
- How to facilitate arrangements among players along a chain so that they can help each other and mutually support each other to fairly maximize and stabilize their profits?
- How to analyse the “headaches” and devise solutions that the MAC can provide as a service that clients are glad to pay for?
- How to judge what levels of commissions to accept from their clients?
- How to manage the risks associated with the income streams?

Income Streams

MACs need to develop early income streams that will on the one hand help them build their business while on the other require as little initial capital investments as possible. They need to first concentrate on income streams that they can easily manage, no matter how small they may be. This allows them to build their operational competence and capacity while building their network of clients. They must aim for early successes that build their reputation as trustworthy brokers who can ensure a transparent win-win-win for all players. The challenge will be to change peoples behaviour: At present market players try to maximize their own profits when dealing with their partners. Players will cheat and misinform in their fight for profit margins against each other. A MAC must change this behaviour and show that a service based on full transparency can increase the profits of all players along a marketing chain. The commissions a MAC can make are directly dependent on the profits its clients can make. All clients must feel confident that the deals are fair for everybody along the chain, so that they will continue to make their deals via the MAC. So this means a switch to a genuine ‘fair trade’ service to all players. Fair trade is one of the unique selling points of the MAC. A further reason why clients go to the MAC is because they do not ask for payments before they provide their service. They will only take their commission after the deal is successful. If there is no success, the clients don’t have to pay. No success, no commission, is another unique selling point for MACs. This means MACs must learn to explore what are the “headaches” which the producers, traders, processors, wholesalers and consumers have for improving their businesses, and devise “aspirins” for such headaches. The learning agenda for MACs to develop income streams explores the following questions:

Linking Local Learners

Most local learning groups using the LLL service are at present in the formative phase of designing their companies and registering them. Various options are being explored with regard to composition and ownership. Each MAC will have to be designed to fit its particular situation in its district, but exchange will help a lot to avoid repeating mistakes and learn from interesting arrangements. Local learning groups in the districts involve not only farmer associations and services providers, private, public and NGOs’, but also Farmer Unions, Farmer Field Schools and IFAD supported programmes like NAADS in Uganda and AMSDP in Tanzania. Local learners currently using the LLL service at www.linkinglearners.net are supported by IFAD through the Agridea Firstmile project, FAO Rural Knowledge Network project and Traidcraft Market Services Development project.

Briefing Note 24: Learning Agenda for Technical Support to MACs

Introduction

Our experience indicates that small, isolated, rural, Market Access Companies (MAC) need support from many different service providers at the national level to establish and run profitable businesses.

MACs are small commercial enterprises that operate in rural areas roughly the size of a district. They are owned by the operators themselves and offer their clients services to: a) get better access to local, national and international markets; b) access locally relevant market information and intelligence; c) access suitable financial sources for R&D and for loans, and d) collaborate with all key players along the market chain for more efficient marketing.



An emerging MAC in Babati, Tanzania

The challenge for service providers operating at the national level is to arrange for all these different demands of the MACs to be met in a commercial way. Over the next two years we will be exploring how to organize and run support services through 'Private National Companies' (PNC) to MACs on a commercial basis in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The pioneers have developed the following learning agenda to guide the development of national technical support to MACs.

Accessing market intelligence

MAC's require daily information on commodity prices at the main national markets in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. MAC's will update their 'info-boards' with this information every day rather than use the current sms price information which is one week old. They will offer same day prices. Cost to the PNC for supplying this information could be offset by selling the information. Currently Mobile phone companies use the free, but out of date, public data for their sms services. Another alternative would be for the PNC to operate this system on behalf on the mobile phone company.

Identifying and developing income streams

MAC's require back up from a PNC to help them identify first income streams to get their businesses going. MACs need help in learning how to identify the 'headaches' of their clients and develop appropriate services or 'asprins' to cure them. Saving money for their clients is one quick way to first income streams. Key players all along a marketing chain will gladly pay a commission for being relieved of their headaches. Later, MACs could also get commissions for ensuring quality of produce as well as certification of produce for their clients. The PNC could stimulate the thinking among the emerging MAC's in the various districts, through sharing specific examples in pilot districts for others to learn from.

Deal making with big national traders / processors

MAC's require back up from a PNC for making deals with large traders and processors who operate at the national level. The PNC would approach big traders (eg. Dodoma Transport or Mohammed Enterprises) to negotiate large volume orders on behalf of MACs. PNC would then organize the MACs to handle the bulking and transport of produce as well as payments to farmers. This relieves the big trader of the headache of working with many MAC's and the MAC's of the headache of negotiating with big traders. MAC's could certify small traders/transporters to bring produce from the farm to pick up points, check quality and make payments to farmers. Sharing the costs of negotiating and organizing across MAC's will improve the efficiency of marketing as well as make the MAC's better known to large clients.

Starting new ventures

MAC's require support from a PNC on new crops which farmers could be growing or new ways for their clients to add value to their products. New venture ideas go beyond new crops to new quality standards, new forms of produce, new flows of information, new channels of financing for market chain development. The PNC would conduct R&D on such new ventures for the MACs. R&D could go beyond identifying new income opportunities to cover new operational procedures for MAC's to operate more efficiently or new ways to handle cash flows and finances.

Setting up a commercial enterprise

MAC's require back up from a PNC to help them register their company with the Ministry of Industry Trade and Marketing. MAC's also need guidance in the difficult task of determining the ownership of their company. PNC could also arrange for MACs to register as members of national chambers of commerce like the TCCIA in Tanzania.

Learning and R&D using the LLLservice

MAC's require back up from a PNC to get full value from using the LLL platform learning teams on 'Demand Driven Services' and 'Firstmile'. These teams are the platforms on which MAC's share their experiences and ideas and thereby spread R&D costs for identifying innovations across all MAC's. This is particularly true for retrieving information from the rapidly expanding knowledge pool and engaging in online discussions. The PNC would also assist the MAC's to maintain and update their contact details of mobile phone numbers and email addresses.

Getting appropriate ICT connectivity

MAC's require technical back up from a PNC to ensure effective and efficient ICT connectivity. PNCs must help MACs with regard to getting hold of required equipment and for ensuring reliable equipment maintenance and servicing. If possible PNCs should arrange for rental packages of ICT equipment to MACs that include maintenance and servicing, either directly or through a third party. There is a large array of ICT connectivity options for MAC's to choose from. MAC's will need support by the PNC to decide on the appropriate ICT connectivity option for them. MACs may also find useful partnerships with local ICT 'technicians' working in their district, who can then be the technical contact person for the rental service.

Briefing Note 25: Market Access Services Going Commercial: Five Questions

Introduction

In order to ensure continued flow of benefits to small farmers from better access to markets local market access services need to be commercially operated. Those who are involved in nurturing the emergence of commercial market access companies (MACs) face these key questions: 1) What are the headaches of the MACs clients? 2) What are the ways for MACs to earn money? 3) What are the key characteristics of a MAC? 4) Should MACs be inside or outside the market chain? And 5) How will MACs start?

What are the headaches of the MAC's clients?

- Poor linkages between sellers and buyers
- Dependence on one small buyer or middleman
- Low confidence in always rapidly changing prices
- Low quality of produce
- Big hopes for markets but no follow –up to make it happen
- Unreliable contracts
- Lack of price information
- No knowledge about quality standards of produce
- No way to assess reliability of solutions to market problems
- Strong interest in a technology but cannot assess its likely performance
- Lack of post harvest handling facilities
- Lack of information on marketing opportunities
- Inadequate transport and road access
- Inconsistent supply of produce
- Poor sustainability of the market opportunities
- No access to larger markets

- Friction between informal business operations and formal government systems
- Distrustful attitude towards middlemen and brokers
- False commitments from buyers and sellers
- No trust between buyers and sellers

What are the ways for MACs to earn money?

Making money from information services

- Advertises on the MAC information boards for which the clients pay a placement fee
- Secretarial and internet services for which the clients pay on use basis
- Pre-paid market information for which both sellers and buyers pay because it provides profitable market access for both.
- Advertising and promotion services for which clients pay because it gives them increased sales through awareness creation

Making money from capacity building services

- Innovative business plan preparation paid for by the clients because they want to get a loan and develop their business.
- Training paid for by the clients because they want quality improvements in their product
- Facilitate trainings in Value Addition and Quality control conducted by third parties, paid by training organization.

Making money from brokering deals

- Arrange for deals for which sellers and buyers pay because they want to reduce costs and achieve quality control
- Producers and buyers pay for brokerage through a commission based on the profits they make.
- Information about where to find products and markets paid by buyers and sellers
- Facilitate electronic trading paid for by users
- Facilitate branding and packaging paid for by producers and buyers wanting to share the increased premium price gain
- Facilitate certification paid for by producers because they want to earn a premium price
- Negotiate contract farming arrangements paid for by both contracting parties
- Business mediation paid for by clients locked in contractual disputes
- Links to transportation paid for by buyers and producers because it reduces losses and helps access distant markets

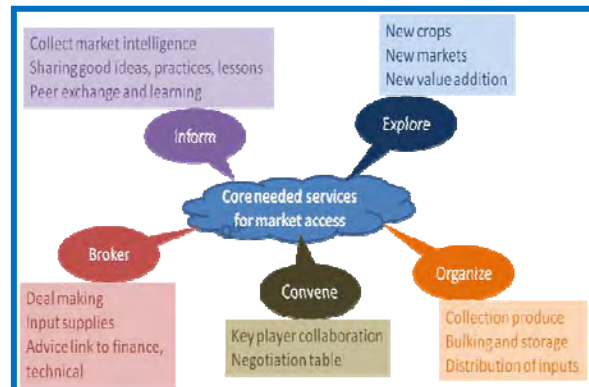
Making money from R&D services

Explore and develop innovations that increase the security of transactions all along the marketing chains. For instance:

- New packaging technologies paid for by the buyer and the producer to meet market requirements
- New product or enterprise development paid for by producer groups
- Market surveys contracted by clients.
- New standardizing and grading requirements paid for by clients wanting to benefit
- New warehouse receipt systems paid for by producers and buyers because it allows storage so they can negotiate better prices
- Commodity sector analysis paid for by public and non-profit organizations
- Finding produce suppliers for processors and exporters to contract paid for by contractors because it meets their supply needs
- New funding channels and mechanisms for reliable transactions, paid for by financial services.

What are the key characteristics of a MAC?

The unique selling proposition of the MAC is to provide security and transparency for the transactions among its clients all along a value chain.



Business operations

- Manage market intelligence and market information systems
- Analyse market situation and pick the right enterprises/commodities
- Convene and facilitate negotiations for contracts between farmers and contractors
- Broker deals between clients all along the value chains
- Introduce clients to sources of funding, of inputs, and of legal advice
- Facilitate clients to reach required standards/qualities /certification
- Ensure security of transactions from producer to consumer
- Provide tracking of deals to guarantee quality and accountability for poor performance
- Provide business development and business plan preparation for clients
- Convene key players to improve efficiency in the whole chain

Business competencies

- Interpreting market situations and explaining them to clients
- Efficient and effective networking with market support services such as financial, legal, agric inputs, agric research, etc)
- Researching new opportunities and ventures for clients
- Good internal business management skills

Business values

- Entrepreneurial drive focussing on earning money because clients earn money
- Trustworthy relationships with all clients
- Transform information, knowledge and networks into increased income for all clients
- Practice fair-trade leading to shared profits of all clients along the market chain
- Practice transparency through price discovery mechanisms along the market chain
- Competitive pricing of services largely based on commission taking on client profits only: No profit by client, no payments by client
- Fast decision making and fast reaction to changing circumstances
- Base business on local and national markets before exploring regional and global export markets
- Don't make profit on providing information. Rather earn money by arranging successful deals based on the information that is made available

Should MACs be inside or outside the market chain?

Inside the market chain

MAC's become one of the key players in the market chain when they own the product being marketed. This makes them a buyer of the product with the purpose of adding value to the product through storage, processing or packaging. Being inside the chain allows the MAC to make money from direct sales as well as from brokering deals. The implications of buying product are that:

- a) the MAC will need a lot of capital which will be tied up for long periods of time and
- b) the MAC will not be seen as an independent 'honest' broker to potential clients playing the same role in the market chain. Producer groups may start wondering if the MACs will not become exploiters!



Outside the market chain

MAC's are outside the market chain when they do not own the product and do not engage in adding value to the product. They remain outside the chain when their roles are in organizing and brokering deals. Being outside the chain allows MACs to offer independent 'honest' brokering services to all clients. Such a service is desperately wanted by producers, wholesalers and processors. The implications of honest brokering outside the market chain are that:

- a) the MAC will have to show how it is different from the much distrusted middlemen, and
- b) the MAC will not be able to make money from buying and selling the product itself.



How will MACs start?

Seeing and seizing the business opportunity

Local entrepreneurs need to first see the business opportunity before they can launch a MAC. Small farmers are desperate to do business with 'brokers' who will treat them fairly and be honest with them. Larger traders and processors are desperate to do business with reliable suppliers. Funding agencies are desperate to find good and reliable investment opportunities. Meeting these needs and solving the headaches of the many clients in a market chain from producer to consumer is the business opportunity. But just seeing the opportunity is not enough; it must also be seized. To seize the opportunity entrepreneurs have to organize themselves and the human and financial resources they need, get legally registered and begin selling services that solve their clients' headaches.

Top down or bottom up emergence

MACs can emerge 'top down' as part of the operations of donor funded projects with government and NGO's. Such projects can establish local project teams within a district and start offering market access services to local clients. Such teams, however, find it difficult to operate on a commercial basis because clients think of them as 'subsidized' operations. MACs can emerge 'bottom up' where local entrepreneurs see and seize the business opportunity. Such MACs find it difficult to cope with unfilled orders and broken contracts and still grow their businesses fast enough to break even. Will MACs just emerge without a push from outsiders?

Types of ventures

Local entrepreneurs run MACs. However, to get started they need clients and a network of support. Thus a tension exists between two business necessities: flexibility and dynamism on one hand and networks of clients and support on the other. So we find many different types of ventures emerging as MACs:

- a) We find the one man MAC where one entrepreneur has the courage and resources to bear the risks of starting a MAC. Such ventures face the challenge of building a client base.
- b) We find members of existing farmer associations, cooperatives, field schools, and unions either establishing a commercial branch to their operations or set up independent commercial companies to first meet the needs of their farmer clients. Such ventures face the challenge of diversifying their client base.
- c) We find NGO and government project staff reinventing their project teams into commercial enterprises. Such ventures face the challenge of getting clients to pay enough to cover their large overhead costs.

ANNEX B: PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

How To Get Connected To The Internet

What kind of Internet Connectivity does a MAC need and why?

Connecting at the office

A MAC needs a reliable internet connection for its own head office. Remember that your office can also be the home of one of the members! Wherever the connection is it must be reliable which means that it is there at any time and fast enough. For some this might mean you need a generator to have reliable electricity. The MAC needs a good internet connection in order to:

- manage the daily updating of market information on the internet that is accessible over the SMS
- stay in contact with dealers and with the national support company in order to follow up on the brokered deals
- exchange with other MACs and with the national support.
- manage its own website
- use the skype internet telephone to talk with other MACs and clients who are also connected.

Connecting on the move

This connection is for members of the MAC who are moving around in their area and can access the internet in the field using their laptops or 'GPRS' enabled mobile phones. A mobile solution with a laptop can also be a bridge until a main connection is achieved. The MAC needs a mobile connection in order to:

- do all the things that are mentioned above in the main connection
- updating or calling up important information when out in the field
- showing clients out in the villages about things that are happening elsewhere by calling up the websites
- for international calls over the internet.

Suggestions on getting connected

For the main office connection

The ideal option is for a cabled ADSL connection. Ask the Telecommunications providers operating in your area to tell you if they can put an ADSL connection to your premises, and when they can do it. Ask them to make you an offer how much it will cost to install. Once installed, the ADSL is by far the cheapest and most reliable internet connection.

If this option is not available to use explore the following alternatives:

- a) If you have a reliable internet cafe nearby make an arrangement with them. They may give you a good lumpsum price for 10 or 20 hours of internet surfing per month.
- b) Celtel and other providers offer PCM/CIA and USB modems for laptops using sim cards and pay-as-you-go or subscription based services for accessing the internet wherever you find their mobile phone access. You can, of course, also use it at home until you get the much cheaper ADSL.

For the mobile connection:

You can access the internet through your laptop. To use your laptop you must buy a USB or PCM/CIA modem. That is already enough. You can pay for the connection using normal airtime vouchers to load your SIM card, or you can pay monthly subscriptions. Then you transfer your SIM

card to the modem and connect it to your laptop. The signal is the same as the one that the mobile phones use. So wherever you have a good mobile signal, you can also connect to the internet.

Suggestions on technical support

Training

It is no use being connected to the internet if you don't know how to log in and use the Email and Surf. It is not difficult to learn. But you need some training. Check out in your area where you can get some training. If you need training on how to use the LLL service get in touch with your national RKN coordinator who will assist in your training.

Equipment

If you do not have any equipment yet, then you must think carefully about what you need. For the office you need a normal computer, with screen and keyboard and printer. You will also need a modem (if it does not come with the computer) and equipment to protect against power surges. If your electricity supply is very poor you may even need to purchase a small generator. If you have access to a good internet café think hard if it really makes sense to buy this costly equipment for yourself. For the mobile connection you will need to buy a USB mobile modem and sim card for your laptop. Also if you are visiting places with no electricity you will need one or two reserve batteries for the laptop.

Servicing

Do not buy any equipment at all if it is not clear to you who will come and check it and service it regularly. Make sure this technician 'fundi' is reliable and trustworthy. Of course servicing costs quite a lot, but we know from experience that paying for a good fundi is much cheaper over three years than losing business because your equipment breaks down.

Rental Services

Check out in your area whether there is a possibility for not buying the equipment, but for renting it. A rental fee should include maintenance, servicing and replacements. So when you rent ICT equipment you pay a fixed price. For that price the rental company makes sure your equipment works and is always connected to the internet. If there is a problem, the rental company has to fix it at their own costs. If the system is down, you don't pay rent. You only pay rent when and if it works. If you no longer need it or want to change to another system, you can hand it back. But you are accountable to keep the equipment safe. We are currently promoting the development of rental services in Tanzania. If you want to know about technical details or rental services contact Amour Usi in Daressalaam Tanzania at amourusi@yahoo.com or +255 784 613 658. Amour can help you identify suitable computers, laptops, USB modems and with rental arrangements.

Online support

We have started a discussion on the LLL service 'Firstmile' Team in which you can tell us about your experiences with connecting to the internet. Tell if you face any problems. We can discuss them there.

If you need any help on using the LLL service or accessing the firstmile team you can contact your national RKN coordinator as follows:

Uganda – Paul Nyende	Email: pvnyende@yahoo.com
Kenya – Churchill Amatha	Email: churchill.amatha@fao.org
Tanzania – John Kossima	Email: johnmazotz@gmail.com

If you have general questions or suggestions about this, send an Email message to dds@linkinglearners.net or send a mobile message to Ueli Scheuermeier in Switzerland at +41 76 426 38 70. We can ring you back.

Clarifications on some technical terms

What is an internet provider?

This is somebody who connects you to the internet and charges you for this connection.

What is "broadband"?

This means there is more information coming through the internet. It is like a water pipe: If you have a big water pipe, then you get a lot of water. If you have a small pipe you get less water. A broadband connection means you get a lot of information faster so you do not have to wait and wait until your email or website is downloaded onto your computer so that you can see it. When you share a broadband connection of course it is also like a pipe that has a lot of taps: When everybody turns on the taps at the same time, you get less water in one tap and it takes longer to fill the bucket. This is what happens in an internet cafe where everybody surfs at the same time. Having broadband is important for speedy surfing and emailing attached files with graphics and photos.

What is a wireless connection?

Here the connection is via a wireless signal coming from an antenna, like the mobile phone. It is difficult and therefore expensive to get good broadband through wireless.

What is a cable connection?

This is when you have a real cable coming from the internet provider to your computer. Cables can carry much more bandwidth and are therefore much cheaper than wireless. In Tanzania TTCL is presently building a lot of capacity in many districts to provide ADSL cable connections.

What is a VSAT?

This is a satellite connection. It is a wireless connection where the antenna is not a tower on a nearby hill but on a satellite. The antenna is a satellite 36'000 km above the equator in space. You need a satellite dish to pick up that signal. Satellite television works like this. VSAT can get us connection anywhere, but it is expensive.

What is a modem?

A modem is a piece of equipment that converts a specific kind of signal into a standard signal that your computer can read, and vice versa. The modem is what you need for your computer to link to the internet. Many modern laptops already have some kind of modem installed inside them.

How To Set Up The Business Of Information Boards

Introduction

This Practical suggestion tells you about the business of information boards for marketing. Such information boards are the main tool for Market Access Companies (MACs) to stay in regular contact with the many rural trading points in their area. It also helps MACs to stay in contact with the producers and tell them about the opportunities for marketing. It is therefore very important that MACs fully understand this business. Information boards are a precondition for operating a MAC. Useful and profitable information boards are the first thing a new MAC must learn to operate. A MAC needs to be able to calculate this business. There is an example of the Excel calculation sheet called "IB-businessplans.xls" for the business calculations at the end of this document. You can download a copy of the Excel file from the DDS team library 'Practices' shelf on www.linkinglearners.net.

The business

The business of information boards is very simple. Information boards are installed which have daily updated and important information for the people in the local area. This makes the board attractive and many people come regularly to inform themselves. Providing this attractive information is the expense of the business. Because many people come to have a look, it is also a place where notices can be put, like advertisements and posters and general information. Anybody who wants to put up a notice has to pay, like for an advertisement in the newspaper or on the radio. So this is the income of the business. Actually there are two businesses. One for the MAC, and the other for the Information Board Manager, ie. IBM.

1. The MAC rents the space from the owner of the wall and sets up the board, then rents it out to the IBM.
2. The IBM keeps the information board attractive and sells notices.

For launching the business here is the procedure that a MAC can follow:

1. Identify places where many people regularly meet at least once per week, or where many people who are interested about marketing regularly pass. This is usually at local markets.
2. At such places identify a wall where a board can be installed. Sometimes an own structure has to be made, but it is preferable that this is a wall.
3. Identify a person who works at the place or near the place where the information board is installed, and who wants to become an Information Board Manager (IBM).
4. Make an agreement with the owner of the wall to rent the whole wall. This is important because we don't want other posters to be placed near our information board. We also want to later to make the information board bigger.
5. Buy a board and install it on the wall.
6. Make an agreement with the IBM who will rent the information board from the MAC and who will be trained to collect market information daily and send it to the MAC. The IBM will also get market information from other locations from the MAC and post it on the information board which s/he rents.
7. Train the IBM on collecting the market information and sending and receiving it via mobiles. Train the IBM on how to organize the information board.

Business Calculations of Market Access Company MAC

For calculating the business of the Market Access Company and of the Information Board Manager you will need the Excel Sheet "IB-businessplans.xls". You can download this from the DDS team library 'Practices' shelf on www.linkinglearners.net. The following explains how to use this spreadsheet:

1. First for safekeeping make a copy of the "IB-businessplan.xls". Leave the original in a file and only work on the copy. Open it.
2. You will see black figures and red figures. When a figure is black it means you can click on it and then change it according to your own information and assessment of costs and prices in your area. The red figures are automatically calculated from the black figures in other boxes. So do not touch them. When you change some black figures the red ones automatically also change according to the calculation.
3. You also see that there are two businessplans. One is for the MAC, the other is for the IBM. You can switch between these two businessplans if you click on the two boxes on the bottom left corner of the window called "MAC" and "IBM".

Now you are ready to go through the instructions below. When you are finished save your copy of the Excel sheet. Please tell us about your experience on the DDS team by sending an email to dds@linkinglearners.net. Please also attach your copy of your businessplan so we can discuss it.

MAC Start-up costs

These are the costs that must be covered before the information boards can even start to function. This is what the owners of the MAC must invest themselves at their own risk. Cash expenses should be reduced as far as possible. As much as possible should be covered by own work and using own assets like own mobile, public transport or combining with other trips, etc.

Budget heading 1 and 2: Own invested time

The time that members of the MAC invest to achieve all this is not calculated.

Budget heading 3: Mobile charges

There will be a lot of phones over the mobile to organize all this. I have taken here a lumpsum.

Budget 4: Travel costs

Column C explains the figures in the columns D, E, F. So the expenses per trip are entered as 5000, there are 3 locations for starting, and we plan for 3 trips to each location. Column G calculates what this costs. It is red, because it calculates this from the numbers in D11, E11 and F11. It calculates $5000 \times 3 \times 3$. If you change the black figures from 3 trips to 2 trips, or if you change the costs per trip from 5000 to 3000, then the red figure in G11 automatically changes too.

Budget heading 5: Material for boards

We are calculating here the minimal basic unit of board. I have calculated it to be able to hold 32 pages of A4 (see below at the lines 38-53). When there is need for more space another unit can be added. But for starting the business in three locations we just calculate one basic board unit for each location. Here we also calculate the yearly depreciation. We assume a board can be there for 5 years before it has to be replaced with a new one. That figure is in H12. So each year we have to save one-fifth of the costs of the boards in order to be able to replace them. Of course you can change from 5 years to 4 years, and then it automatically calculates one fourth.

Budget heading 6: Transport and installation

Of course these costs also return again when we have to replace an old board, so the same lifetime applies like in H12

Budget heading 7: Other

Here you can add any further start-up costs that have not been considered in this list

Line 16: Totals

So the total start-up costs are in G16, which is the total of all the numbers above it. For recovering all the costs of start-up we have to calculate again the costs over the full lifetime of an information board. So we get the figure in I16 that needs to be recovered each year.

Operating costs for MAC

Keep in mind, that the boards shall be in the ownership of the MAC, and the MAC rents them out to the information board managers. It is also important that the MAC can decide where to put the board. That is why it is the MAC which rents the space to put the board.

Budget heading 8: Rent for the wall

Note that this is the biggest regular expense of the MAC. The more you pay rent for the space on the wall, the more you can demand from the owner that the wall is also well maintained and clean.

Budget heading 9: Depreciations

The money from the depreciations is used to make any repairs. That way the boards are always in top order. If there are further negotiations and trips that are needed, then these too have to be paid for. The figure in G20 takes care of this. It is taken from I16

Budget heading 10: Other

Here you can add any further operating costs for MACs that have not been considered in this list

Line 22: Total costs per year.

So these are the total expenses that a MAC has to pay each year when the information boards are functioning, ie. after the initial start-up costs.

Income for MAC:

There is only one income: The rent from the information board managers. This rent must be part of an agreement between the MAC and the information board managers that includes not only the rent itself, but also quality standards and the tasks that the information manager must do for the MAC. For instance the MAC must provide the daily local market information to the MAC, and put up on the board the daily market information coming from the MAC about prices in the other locations.

Budget heading 11: Franchise rent for the whole business

Of course the question is: Can the information board managers pay this much rent for a board, ie. what is in D25? It depends on how good is their business. We have a look at that in the next sheet called "IBM" (see at the bottom left corner of this window).

Budget heading 12: Other

Here you can add any other income source that has not been considered in this list.

Line 29: Profit for MAC.

This is total income per year minus total costs per year

Line 30: Cashflow for MAC

The cash that the MAC is getting is more than the profit, because in the costs is also the depreciation costs. So we can add those depreciation costs in G19 to the profit. This gives us an idea how much cash the MAC can use per year to further build the business.

Some further calculations

This Excel sheet allows us to make some further interesting calculations.

Line 33

The money that comes back to the MAC, the MAC may want to use to expand the business to other locations. If the MAC wants to do this only with the income from the information boards themselves, how many new locations can it add to the already existing 3 after one year? In this example it is even a little bit more than 1. It is calculated as the cashflow in G30 divided by the total start-up costs G16

Line 35

Or another question is: How many new board units can the MAC add at the existing locations after one year? In this example it is 6. This is calculated by taking the cashflow in G30 and divide by the costs for one board, which is D12 plus D13.

Business Calculations of Information Board Manager IBM

Start-up costs

These are the costs to start the operation until it begins to function

Budget heading 1: Own invested time

The time the IBM is investing to prepare everything is not calculated

Budget heading 2: Purchase of mobile

The mobile phone is crucial for the business with the information boards. An IBM without a mobile phone cannot do this business. So maybe s/he already has one, or has to buy one. However, the mobile is only partly used for this business, because it is also used for private and other purposes by the IBM. So there is a percentage in E9. Of course a mobile has to be replaced after some years, so put the figure in H9. This gives us the depreciation costs in I9

Budget heading 2: Other

Here you can add any other start-up costs that have not been considered in this list

Operating costs for the IBM

These are the regular recurring costs

Budget heading 4: Franchise rent

This is the rent the IBM has to pay the MAC in a full year. It is the same like it is calculated in the MAC business plan on the other MAC sheet in D25

Budget heading 5: Depreciation

This of course is also a regular yearly cost. It is the same figure as in I9

Budget heading 6: Mobile use

The IBM needs the mobile to provide daily information to the MAC about the prices of products at his or her location, and to also receive from the MAC the prices from all the other locations. Of course these prices will not be for each of the 365 days of the year. For instance we can deduct the Sundays and major holidays. Note that this is the biggest expense of the IBM.

Budget heading 7: Paper

The IBM needs nice white clean paper A4, ie. photocopy paper. This is what he can use to make photocopies or printouts of price-lists, and for giving to people who want to make a nice notice for the information board.

Budget heading 8: Felpens, Pins, etc

The IBM needs this to make the information board nice, but also to give to clients who want to make a nice notice. Of course some clients will bring their own notices or even printed advertisements and posters.

Budget heading 9: Photocopies, Printouts

The IBM may need to make photocopies or printouts of various things to put on the information board.

Budget heading 10: Contribution to security

The information board will be at a location that is also being watched by watchmen at night. This is for contributing to the security provided by these watchmen.

Budget heading 11: Other

Here you can add any other operating costs of the IBM that have not been considered in this list.

Income for IBM

Keep in mind that the price information about all the other local markets and the big national markets is for free to the clients of the IBM. This market price information is what makes the information boards attractive to everybody and that is why they always come and have a look. And because many people come there to have a look, it is also interesting to put up notices there. It costs to put up notices, and that is the only real income for the IBM.

Budget heading 12: Income from notices

The basic unit of an information board has space for 32 sheets A4. Let us assume that the market price information which is updated each day uses the space of about 12 sheets of A4 (maybe that is even a surface where you can use chalk, or it is a whiteboard). The rest is therefore 20 sheets of A4. Not all this space will be filled with notices. If it is, then a next board unit needs to be installed alongside the first one.

How to calculate the income? Actually the pricing is something the IBM can decide him- or herself. All s/he needs to do is what is fixed in the contract, ie. the services concerning the providing of market price information and paying the monthly rent. The prices for the notices are not fixed by the MAC, they are fixed by the IBM. Of course the prices should be as low as possible in order to get as many notices as possible. The IBM earns more if s/he has a cheap price with many notices, than if the price is high and only few notices. In the beginning the rates should be low until the board is very well visited. Of course and IBM can also provide discounts for clients who want their poster or advertisements to be there all the time.

But let us make some suggestions to the IBM for beginning:

We must assume an average price for the space of an A4. Of course some notices will be only A5, ie. half an A4, so they can be only half price. A6 (which is half the size of an A5 and is as big as a standard postcard) will cost only one fourth. But in general let us enter a number for the space of an A4 sheet. So that price for an A4 can go into D25. Or course this average price also is per week, not a full year.

Then, in order to calculate an average income, we need to see how many notices will be there all the time. Of course they always change and are replaced. But we can calculate an average number of notices that together cover the space of a number of A4. That is in E25. Of course we have 52 weeks per year. So this gives us the projected income for the IBM each year in G12

Budget heading 13: Other

Maybe there are also other sources of income that can be added which are not considered in this list.

Line 30: Profit of the IBM

This of course is total income per year minus total costs per year. How much is this per month? See line 31. But is this a good source of income? Let us see: Let us assume that an IBM has to work a number of hours for the information board each day. That is in D33. So how many hours does s/he work per month? That depends on how many days s/he works per month. That is in D34 (ie. without the Sundays). So this allows us to calculate what the IBM earns each hour. That is the monthly profit in G31 divided by the number of hours s/he works on the IB business each month, which is the hours per day times the number of days, ie. $D33 * D34$. The result is automatically calculated in G35. How does this compare with a normal daily wage? Well, if we calculate 8 hours per working day, we get the figure in G36. Is this a good daily wage?

Line 37: Cashflow for the IBM

To the profit we must add the depreciation of the mobile, ie. G15, because that too is cash which s/he has in the pocket.

Further calculations

This Excel sheet also gives us the opportunity to calculate other interesting figures. For instance:

Line 40: Breaking even

How many A4 need to be on the information board at all times in order to make sure the IBM is breaking even, which means he is not making a loss? It is calculated from the total operating costs per year in G22, divided by the price of an A4 for one full year, which is $D25 * F25$. The number of A4 that have to be paying notices on the board at all times in order to break even are automatically calculated in C40. Of course the MAC will also place notices on the information boards. It is a good idea if the MACs pay for these notices in order to encourage the IBM. If the MAC can guarantee to buy this minimal number of notices space from the IBM at the beginning, then this will encourage him or her even more.

Line 41: Buying a new mobile

How many months does an IBM have to wait until s/he can afford to buy a new mobile with the profit s/he is making and if s/he does not calculate the own time? Of course this depends on what kind of mobile, but we have assumed a price for a new mobile in D9. So how long does it take to earn enough to buy such a mobile? It is the price of the mobile in G9 divided by the profit s/he can make each month, which is in G31. The result is automatically calculated in C41.

Business Calculations for operating Information Boards

These are primary variables: You can change them and see what the effects are on the other

black figures = figures.

red figures = These are calculated from other figures. Do not touch them

Business of the MAC				TSH	Life years	Depreciation each year
Start-up costs until information boards operate:						
1	Own invested time for organizing not calculated			0		
2	Own invested time for instructing and training the local information board managers IBM not calculated			0		
3	Mobile charges for getting it all organized	lumpsum		20,000		
4	Travel costs for negotiations	Expenses per trip / No. of locations / No. of trips per location				
			5,000	3	3	
5	Material for first boards (One unit per location at 1.8m x 1.4m, providing space for 32 A4)	cost per unit / No. of locations	20,000	3		
					5	12,000
6	Transport and installation of boards	transport costs / No. of locations	10,000	3		
					5	6,000
7	Other....			0		
	Total start-up costs for MAC			155,000	5	31,000
Operating costs for MAC						
8	Rent for the wall on which the board is	rent per month / No. of locations	10,000	3		
						360,000
9	Depreciations, replacements					31,000
10	Other....					0
	Total costs per year			391,000		

Income for MAC					
11	Franchise rent for the whole business from IBMs	monthly rent / No. of IBMs	15,000	3	540,000
12	Other...				0
	Total income per year				540,000
	Profit for MAC				149,000
	Cashflow for MAC				180,000
	After one year of operation the cashflow allows the MAC to add X new locations.... X =				1.16
	or: After one year of operations the cashflow allows the MAC to add Y new board units to existing locations... Y =				6

Calculation for size of Information Board Unit:		
A4 is the basic unit, ie. a photocopy sheet.		cm
	Short side	21
	Long side	29.7
A0 is 16 sheets of A4, ie		
	4 times short side of A4	84
	4 times long side of A4	118.8
A basic unit is 2 A0 side-by-side, ie. 32 sheets A4:		
	2 times short side of A0	168
	1 time long side of A0	118.8
Add 10cm margin for frame (both sides), etc.		
	Information board unit short side	138.8
	Information board unit long side	188

Business of IBM manager				TSH	Life years	Depreciation per year
Start-up costs until information board operates:						
1	Own invested time for organizing not calculated			0		
2	Purchase of mobile phone. Only partly because it is not fulltime for the IB business	costs of mobile / % of costs for IB	50,000	50	25,000	3
3	Other...			0		
	Total start-up costs				25,000	
Operating costs for IBM						
4	Franchise rent to the MAC	see MAC business plan			180,000	
5	Depreciation of mobile				8,333	
6	Mobile use for price information	costs per day / No. of information days per year	1,000	300	300,000	
7	Paper	price of rims of A4 / no. per year	20,000	4	80,000	
8	Feltpens, etc.	lumpsum			20,000	
9	Photocopy	price per copy / No. per month	50	20	12,000	
10	Contribution to security of location (market guards)	lumpsum per month	5,000		60,000	
11	Other...				0	
	Total operating costs per year				660,333	

Income for IBM						
12	Income from notices	Price for one A4 notice for one week / average No. of A4 notices on the board / No. of weeks per year				
			2,000	10	52	1,040,000
13	Other...					0
		Total income per year				1,040,000
		Profit for IBM per year (excluding own invested time)				379,667
		Profit for IBM per month (excluding own invested time)				31,639

Calculate work remuneration:

Average time spent on IB business per day	hours	1	
Days per month (excluding sundays and holidays)	days	26	
Fee per hour of work			1,217
Equivalent to daily wage at 8hrs per day of			9,735
Cashflow for IBM per year			388,000

For breaking even, how many notices A4 must be on the board throughout the year?	6.3
The cashflow allows the IBM to buy a new mobile after X months.... X =	1.6

ANNEX C: LLL TEAM DISCUSSION SYNTHESIS

Learning How To Prepare Business Plans

Key Points

1. Business plans help you manage your business successfully.
2. Business plans help you see the weaknesses in your business that need your attention.
3. Business plans help you avoid having to take out loans
4. Business plans help you reduce the amount of money you need to borrow from the bank to the minimum.

Suggestions on process for developing business plans

1. Understand why you need a business plan
2. Understand what information is needed for a business plan
3. Identify the local 'experts' you need to help you develop the business plan particularly for the financial sections.
4. Gather the information you need for the plan
5. Prepare a first draft of the plan 'in house'
6. Share your first draft with your business counsellor/mentor and other experts.
7. Prepare a second draft of the plan
8. At all stages share your ideas and drafts on the DDS team discussion on business plans.

Understanding the business plan

Mbinga team in searching of information on how to prepare business plan for rural services have reviewed various documents and interviewed key persons in the following financial institutions: Mbinga Kurugenzi SACCOS, Jimbo SACCOS, National Microfinance Bank and Mbinga Community Bank. We have learnt that a business plan is an operating tool towards management of the business. It helps businesses to work effectively towards its success. Also the process of putting together a business plan, including the thought you put in before beginning to write it, forces you to take an objective view of the business. The plan helps to identify areas of weakness and strength, opportunities, business issues and planning on how to achieve business goals. It also helps to identify problems before they grow, sources to the problems and suggests ways to solve them. Business plans provides information needed by others, like bank managers, to evaluate your ventures, especially when you need a loan. (Bernard Semwaiko)

Business plans and understanding loans

In general new businesses have a lower chances of obtaining loan due to lack of experience and realistic expectations of incomes and costs. Businesses that have been operating for several years have higher chances to be financed because they have a track record of cash turnover. Even with well written business plans financiers will refuse loans if plans do not have realistic implementation schedules or improper documentation of collateral. However many rural financiers, for example MCB, will provide advice on how to improve your business plans. (Bernard Semwaiko)

The Building Blocks for a Business Plan

All business plans are build on five blocks of information as follows:

- 1) Your future vision for the business. This is your goals and objectives as well as your mission and value. It is the unique selling proposition of your business.
- 2) Your business environment. This is your customers or clients, the opportunities and threats you face and who your competition is.
- 3) How your business operates. This is the products and services offered, your business strengths and weaknesses as well as all your resources(human and capital) and capabilities.
- 4) Your business finances. This is your financial analysis and includes your cash flow, profit/loss, balance sheet, and budget and forecast for your business.
- 5) Your action plan to improve the business. These are your activities and schedule of operation as well as the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in your business.

Learning How To Set Up Business Platforms To Support Market Chains

Key Points

- Key player workshops stimulate joint marketing among producer groups to meet the needs of wholesalers and processors in the chain.
- Key player workshops are more likely to succeed if the key players have been visited before the workshop to better understand their situation.
- Key player workshops can provide opportunities for collaboration between producer groups across several districts to meet demands of big buyers.

Suggestions on process for setting up business platform

- 1) Undertake rapid market analysis to identify key market chain actors.
- 2) Convene one business platform meeting involving all concerned stakeholders.
- 3) Conduct follow up meetings with relevant key players to enhance functioning of market chain.
- 4) Evaluate performance of business platforms with concerned stakeholders after first round of sales.

Supporting wine producers in Nkasi

Among successful traders groups in Nkasi District is Mvimwa wine producer. They started by producing banana and pineapple wines at a rate of 120 litres annually. Production never went up as they lacked a reliable market. In April 2006 we conducted key players workshop, wine producers being among invitees. After the workshop producers signed a preliminary contract with two hotels in Sumbawanga and one in Namanyere town for banana wine supply. As a result the production increased to 400 Litres with a price of 1,000/= Tsh. per bottle of 300 ml. Now they are facing a shortage of containers, corks and labels. (Salvatory Mayoka)

We would like to know where you get raw materials for this purpose, i.e. bananas and pineapples, possibly varieties of bananas mostly used. In Rungwe district we produce various varieties of banana and pineapples. There are about five producer groups of banana and two producer groups of pineapples which market these products jointly. We hope that it will be better if we link your processors with our producer groups to increase production, marketing and processing among our clients. (Hezekiah Mwakasungulah)

The problem of packing materials also faces the group in Muheza. However, you didn't mention whether the problem is the availability of packing materials in the market or lack of capital. For Muheza lack of capital is the problem. (Justin Senkoro)

It is disappointing that you experience shortage of containers, corks and labels. We in Rungwe and Mbeya Districts also have processor groups who, among other products, process wine from banana and pineapples. The groups were trained by the Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO). They now place their orders for packing materials from SIDO in Mbeya who order the packaging materials for them. In addition, they purchase these materials from other agents like Mrs. Msina whose mobile phone number 0754-301836. (Hezekiah Mwakasungulah)

Muheza maize groups networking

Muheza core team organized a workshop for thirteen maize producer group representatives to discuss on how farmers fail to sell maize in the market where they can fetch good price. Forty three key players attended the workshop including representatives from TCCIA and District Council Extension service. They found out that the main reason for farmers fails to get good markets were because they lack capital and lack collective marketing. It was suggested that the network should be formed to organize collective marketing. The groups selected two "wakulima shushushu" to search for markets before harvesting season (August-September). The wakulima shushushu already searched the market at Dar es Salaam. (Justin Senkoro)

Ludewa conducts marketing stakeholders workshop.

Ludewa district core team has conducted marketing stakeholders workshop, whereby forty two producer group representatives were involved, along with two agricultural officers, one community development officer, and three NGO field staff. The objective of the workshop was to discuss on how groups shall sell their produce during this season. The main crops discussed were maize, paprika and artimesia. Discussions focussed on maize production and production costs, market prices trends and market chain actors, as well as post harvests techniques for paprika and artemisia. Strategies were laid down on how to sell these crops for the current season. Negotiations were made for farmers to sell over 400 hundreds tons of maize, 0.7 tons of artemisia and small amount of paprika grown initially as trial. (Deonice Mshida)

Mbeya market chain study

Through experience in Mbeya and Mbarali we have found out that a market chain stakeholders' workshop works well if it is preceded by a marketing chain study in which the key players of a given commodity along the chain are identified. It is these key players who matter and who are invited to the workshop to initiate linkages and hence find ways of improving the marketing system of a given product in the future. If this is not done you could end up with a political kind of stakeholders workshop such as the one held, as our first attempt, in Mbeya in 2004 that was before AMSDP had conducted that workshop on "Key Players Exploratory Workshop on Market Linkages". (Christian Mwakyembe)

Learning How To Start Up A Rural Service Company For Market Access

Key points

- Commercial enterprises start with one or two entrepreneurs who invest their own time and money into getting the business going.
- Large multi-stakeholder committees find it very difficult to set up and run small businesses.
- Market access services set up as non-profit organizations find it difficult to sustain their activities without continuous injections of public funds.
- Successful small businesses start with a clear idea of how they are going to sell and how they are going to make their money.

Suggestion on process for learning to start up commercial services

As with any business the first questions are "What are you selling?" What is services is your service company offering? Are you offering marketing information, market chain brokering, and others? As you are answering this question you will also need to think about who are your customers going to be? Who is going to pay for the services you are selling? Once the business idea is clear you need to turn your attention to the question of who are the entrepreneurs/investors that are going to take up the business idea. Like any small business it needs to be owned by the entrepreneurs who are going to invest their time and money to make it work. Small businesses cannot afford to have owners who are not actively involved in the day to day running of the business. Matters of registration of the business and acquisition of a TIN number, tax clearance, licence, etc need only be addressed once the business idea and owners are settled.

Hai experiences in setting up a rural services company

Hai District farmers formed a task force to prepare the guidelines or initial thoughts on how the market service company could look like. An appointed task force came up with a draft Constitution and shared it with the farmer representatives for approval. They named the organisation MTAHUMAHA that is Swahili for Marketing Service Network in Hai District. The next step will be to register the network and prepare a three year Strategic Plan. The network is owned by farmers groups. The forty groups supported by AMSDP are founder members. The basic services to its members will be to facilitate the marketing of the farmers' products and the provision of market information from different information platforms. The network will also have the task of sharing of Hai District Farmers' products information with the rest of the district market access companies. (Kain Mvanda)

Nkasi district formation of a rural service company

Nkasi has set up a rural service company for the purpose of sustenance of both District Core Group and AMSDP activities in the district. The District Core Group in collaboration with Market Information Centre committees in focal areas formed a Company naming it Nkasi Rural Services Company. The Company was formed after intensive joint discussion with trade officers, cooperative officers and community development officers. Thereafter, we all reached a consensus of forming this company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. In general, the company is formed for public purposes and it shall be not for profit sharing and

non-partisan. The Memorandum of Association of a Company has already been developed. The objects for which the Company is established are:

- To empower groups of smallholder farmers and small to medium-scale traders and processors
- To facilitate access to credit by smallholders for storing produce and medium scale traders and processors for increasing size and efficiency of their business
- Establishment and equipping effective market information dissemination
- To conduct market researches and disseminate information to various stakeholders
- To link with market and promote the use of market information media i.e. radios, newspapers, internet etc.
- To provide capacity building on market linkages and networking to groups of small to medium-scale processors and traders
- Conduct various training specifically on; Business management skills, marketing issues, post-harvest technology.

The founding members of this company in pursuance of the Memorandum of Association are: Mr.Pirmin Matumizi, Mr.Salvatory Mayoka, Mr.Desderius Mipata, Mr.Beatus Kasililwa, Mr.Sebastian Mwamboja, Ms.Esther Mshindo, Mr. George Sadalla, Ms. Marietha Mbwilo, Mr. Hipolito Kaninga, Ms. Yunus Yordan, Mr. Ally Kessy, and Mr. Mahmoud Dodo. (Salvatory Mayoka)

Formation of rural service company in Sumbawanga District.

To start with members of District core group visited an independent NGO known as Rukwa association for Non Governmental Organisations (RANGO) so as to gain experience on how to form a company. The second step was to conduct a meeting which involved stakeholders whom could be future members. The meeting involved DALDO, District trade officer, TCCIA executive, SGR Manager, DFP, PA, District RFSP coordinator and District Market Monitor. The meeting ended by assigning the District Focal Person, PA and Market Monitor the task of preparing a draft constitution for the company. The draft constitution should have been submitted to the members before the end of September. We managed to form the drafting team and contact RANGO as well as the District Trade offices on setting up a private services company. Unfortunately they had no idea on that issue. (Hosea Mwaisaka)

Learning How To Access The Internet

Internet cafes

Many members pointed out that they must often travel to the nearest internet access, mostly internet cafes in major towns. Some groups even organized to make such visits in turns (Betty Ajambo).

However, it was also pointed out that such trips are a drain on resources and time, and therefore the wisdom of launching internetcafes nearby was explored. It emerged, that a nearby internet access can save a lot of time and money, provided one knew what to do in the internet (Edward Bakka).

A strong case was made that internet access can actually earn money for those who use it for marketing purposes. But it was clear: Internet is only a tool. One has to know what to do with it to make it worth the effort and the money to use it. The challenge is to show how farmers can make money by visiting internet cafes (James Kanyi)

The economic conditions for rural internet cafes were explored, given the fact that many community telecenters actually collapse after external funding ceases. Cafes need to be self-sustaining (Caesar Enzama). The challenge goes in three directions (Paul Nyende):

1. There needs to be content on the internet that is worth accessing for farmers and traders
2. There needs to be enough demand-density, ie. it is no use having 20 people with a strong need to access the internet in a town. That is not enough.
3. The internet cafes must operate commercially, and may become ISP providers also to government agencies. It is therefore important to also involve community leaders in the efforts to launch internet cafes (James Kanyi).

District and NGO offices

Some members mentioned that they can access the internet for free in the offices of nearby NGOs or even in the District offices. (Churchill Amatha, Betty Ajambo). However, this was recognized as not being a sustainable solution.

Independent direct access

It became increasingly clear that independent access to the internet would save a lot of money and time for knowledge workers (Atim Harriet). But this then immediately means: Where do we find the equipment, and how do we pay for it? There is the opportunity to find donated second hand computers (Churchill Amatha, Anne Chegugu) .

Most recently however, it was pointed out that with GPRS modems becoming accessible for laptops, it become possible to access the internet very easily wherever there is a sufficient GPRS signal. The coverage is expanding rapidly. Furthermore the prices for laptops are tumbling, particularly for rebranded second hand laptops. So such a laptop with a GPRS modem is becoming the solution to aim for (Churchill Amatha).

Training the skills

No matter how good the access, it is no use without good skills to use the net. There is a recognized need for adapted possibilities for intensive and continuous training (Habakkuk Khaamala). How this can be organized remains to be seen. Classroom trainings themselves will not be enough.

Mobile phone revolution

The communication revolution with mobile phones has almost overtaken the discussion about the internet as a source of market information. It is now recognized that internet access may not be as important for straight market information, as this can be taken care of by mobile phones and SMS (Willy Swai). The internet therefore becomes more like the place to organize all the data, but the mobiles and SMS will be the main interface to access that data.

Most recently even cash transfers can be made via mobile phones (Willy Swai).

Present situation concerning internet access

The situation is fast changing and very dynamic. Internetcafes continue to be the main access and will be the main fallback.

For offices in towns the ADSL cabled broadband access will be by far the cheapest solution. Cabled broadband is being aggressively pushed by various providers even out into rural areas.

For internet access on the road and in areas away from reliable cabled broadband access, the laptop plus GPRS-modem appears to be the easiest and most reliable solution. It is not very cheap, but the costs saved in time and effort to reach the towns have a good chance of justifying the higher expenses – provided of course one is skilled in using the internet for profitable gain.

Learning How To Organize Information Flows

Main Insights

1. Information about marketing is more in demand and apparently of more immediate importance to farmers than information on production.
2. Farmer groups who intend to buy computers must not underestimate the headaches of managing the equipment
3. ICT-access in offices of government departments and NGOs may not be sustainable. Therefore aim for own equipment.
4. Newsletters with paid advertisements go beyond the typical meetings, field days, trade fairs and exhibitions. But still too slow to organize trading deals.
5. Local radio may turn out to be a good communication tool, but needs to be more interactive.
6. Notice boards are an interesting venture if they can be linked with fast information access (ie. mobiles).
7. Advertisements on notice boards, radio, newsletters may earn the money to maintain the information flow on a sustained basis.
8. Information flow will become a main task of Market Access Companies.

From production information to market information

At first the debate concentrated on providing farmers the production information they need. The big question was: Why so little of the available information actually is relevant for them. So participatory methods for analysis and application were discussed, also how to interact with the research system.

Soon this was overturned by the realization that interacting with the research system is apparently less important than getting information about the markets to farmers.

ICT-access requires backups

During the discussion mobile access exploded across East Africa. A major breakthrough was being able to surf the net via mobiles (Churchill Amatha). But this turned out to be expensive. In the meantime GPRS-modems on laptops have emerged as the way to go for remote internet access.

Some FFS-groups considered buying computers (Churchill Amatha), but it was soon pointed out that reliably managing the equipment is crucial and needs to be organized before investing in any equipment (Mark Farahani).

The same applies to ICT-access via local offices of the Ministries or NGOs. It was again pointed out that access can be tricky if the equipment is not owned, and sustainability may not be achieved (Churchill Amatha and Mark Farahani). Therefore it is advisable to either use available internet cafes or aim for own equipment.

Known media for information flows

The worth of well managed meetings among stakeholders (Charles Aben)

Field days, trade fairs, exhibitions (Patrick Kuria Waidhima)

Newsletter (eg. "Farmerscope" in Soroti Uganda): Farmers advertise their products while input dealers and produce buyers also advertise theirs (Charles Aben). It turns out that advertisements can be sold to sustain the provision of the information. First pointer to this mechanism.

Making use of radio for market info and success stories (Phillip Mwaisobwa). But radio was considered too general, not available for all farmers, and most importantly it was considered as not interactive enough. The challenge therefore is how to make local radios more interactive (Dorothy Magesse, Issae Madundo)?

Information boards

They are a well known traditional means of information delivery at sub county and administrative offices and local markets. However, adding mobile numbers on notices can make them very interactive, which is a new phenomenon (Charles Aben). So the interaction of mobile information with notice boards is something new to explore.

Busia plans to have notice boards at market places, (Wilson Oduori)

Iringa still uses notice boards (Grace Shile)

Commercial opportunities

It was discovered that providing information might actually earn money (Mark Farahani). But maybe not by directly selling the information. Rather advertisements in the media that carry the attractive information can pay for operating the media, eg. on the newsletters (Charles Aben) or the notice boards.

Finally the first ideas for brokering services emerged, that would use the information that is being generated to bring the right people together for profitable deals for all involved (Charles Aben, Peter Kisambira)

Learning How To Operate Information Boards

Insights

The discussion finally ended up with this general view of the operations of an information board:

1. It is set up at market places where many farmers and traders regularly meet. For instance central markets at district main towns and in "Gulios" in the major villages. They may also be at specialized markets such as for instance livestock markets or timber markets.
2. An information board is managed by a person who lives or works at the location of the information board and has a daily supervision of the board. We can call such a person a "information board manager".
3. In a district several such information boards cover all the important local markets.
4. The information board manager collects the information about prices in her market and writes them up on the board. She then uses her mobile to send that information to the MAC.
5. All the price-information from all information boards come together at the MAC. There all board managers can ask for the price information from the other markets in their area. They then write them up on their own information board in their own market. In such a way on all information boards there will be the prices for important commodities in all important local markets in the area. Prices in the main national markets can then also be added, such as for instance Kariakoo. This will be daily updated.
6. If somebody wants to use the information boards for advertisements, they can bring their ad to the info board manager and pay a fee for putting up a notice. For instance suppliers of seeds and other inputs may want to do that.
7. If people want to sell something, for instance a bicycle, they can also put a notice on the info board and pay a fee. Of course they add their mobile number on the notice so that interested buyers can call them.
8. Transporters may also use the info boards to advertise their transport capacities and prices. That way farmers can check what capacity is available and make arrangements by mobile. Of course the transporters also pay a small fee to put their regularly updated notice on the info board.
9. The MAC too will use the info boards to make advertisements. For instance if there is a large order from a trading company to buy 300 tons of Maize of a certain quality, the MAC will inform the farmers through such a notice and add the mobile number of the MAC. Then the individual farmers and farmer groups can use their mobiles to tell the MAC that they are interested to contribute to filling that large order by the trading company.
10. The MACs can also use the info boards to advertise trainings and excursions.
11. Of course any other organisations that want to inform farmers about programs and events can use the info board and pay a fee.

Furthermore a simple Excel Sheet was developed for first calculations of the operations. See in the archives: IB-businessplans.xls, and IB-instructions.doc

A well-known medium, but newly operated:

It was pointed out that billboards have been used for a long time, however with mixed results (Clarence Chitemi, Willy Swai). But when they are used in conjunction with SMS from mobiles to make the information always up-to-date, then this becomes interesting for marketing purposes (Joseph Sekiku).

For reasons of clarity, such boards should not be called billboards or notice boards, but INFORMATION BOARDS (Joseph Sekiku).

Placements

Correct placement of such information boards is crucial. For marketing purposes they should be where many people regularly go. The most strategic places will be local markets and trading points (Yessaya Mwakyalanda, Job Mushi).

Information Board as a small business

The issue of sustainable funding was raised (Anthony Senkoro, Clarence Chitemi, Mark Farahani). The solution turned out to be to develop the IBs as small enterprises operated by independent „Information Board Managers“ who have to invest only a little capital (for the mobile). Their business expense is to organize the information on the board, and their income stream are the fees from advertisements (Kessam Maswaga, Kigozi Kyasi, Job Mushi).

Importance for MACs

For MACs this turns out to be a very good way to network information about possible deals and connections that the MAC can broker. The challenge will however be to make sure all the middle costs are also transparently made clear on the IBs (Michael Kibue).

Radio-SMS-Internet

The question was explored how local radio, IBs, SMS and the internet can interact (Mark Farahani). This still needs further exploration. It appears however, that the IBs can be the template for internet-based market intelligence that can be accessed via SMS (Ideso), and radio may help to bring the IBs to the attention of the population and vice versa (Mark Farahani)

ANNEX D: IMPACT STORIES

KENFAP supports KITEMU marketing group of Nyeri District, Kenya

By Lucy Nyamburu²

KITEMU Marketing Group

KITEMU is the short name for **Kieni, Tetu, and Municipality**; the three divisions of Nyeri district where Farmer Field Schools were started by the Ministry of Agriculture assisted by KENFAP and sponsored by FAO. Initially there were 12 groups these have now with KENFAP support expanded to 48 groups. The facilitators of these groups are drawn from the extension officers of the Ministry of Agriculture plus some farmer members of KENFAP. In 2000 six facilitators, five extension officers and one farmer were trained in Mabanga FTC, Bungoma and later at KARI in Thika. The six facilitators were mandated to start two schools each. This programme was in central province e.g. Nyeri, Muranga and Kiambu with Muranga acting as the coordinating centre. Each school was given 68,000/ KSh which was to run the school for 40 weeks.

Marketing Organisations

At the end of the learning period all the F.F.S. beneficiaries in the three Districts decided to start a marketing organisation to help them market the crops which they had learnt to grow well in their schools. For Nyeri beneficiaries KITEMU was started with a membership of about 1000 farmers. The Programme mainly addressed local subsistence crops. Export marketing did not succeed, mainly because of lack of resources.

But today KITEMU has taken a new dimension, by responding to the local market demand for: soya beans, pumpkins, sweet potatoes, sunflower, garlic, and chillies. To grow these crops the farmer need only few guidelines on how and when to grow them and linkage to their local market. The farmer gets additional technical advice from the Ministry

of Agriculture on best seeds with high yield and good crop husbandry.

The marketing of the group is overseen by the KITEMU executive committee. The committee has twelve members drawn from the original twelve Farmer Field Schools. The committee has a secretariat comprising a Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer, who do the work of coordinating the marketing. Presently the former KNFU Chairman, Nyeri District Mr. Moses Kirugumi Ndegwa is the Chairman.

The secretariat is involved in collecting information on the availability of the market and commodity bulking. This meets all our members marketing needs. The farmers are asked to finance these services in terms of registration fees. However, KITEMU is faced with some problems concerning access to modern information handling equipment e.g. telephone, internet services, a computer for data collection. Purchasing these equipments requires more funds than the cash collected from the farmers.

Ideas from Other Local Learners

We very much wish to welcome ideas on how to raise the funds we need. We have set up our email address at kitemumarketing@yahoo.com to share ideas with other Field Schools engaged with finding ways to expand the work of the group. We are particularly interested in learning how the FFS can make money from marketing the crops of its members.

² Interviewed by Anne Dennig in August 2006

Challenges to Improving the Quality of Cattle Hides

By Michael Kibue³

The Challenges

Thirty percent of the loss in leather quality occurs when cutting away the hide from the carcass. To overcome knife damage UNIDO developed a simple machine for pulling off the hide: the SFF machine. The machine is simple in design, manually operated and ideal in even the most rural situation. It is affordable and can be constructed in local workshops. It was hoped that local abattoirs would use the equipment to produce quality hides and skin. Surprisingly despite great benefits, local communities have not adopted the innovation.



The SFF hide drawing machine

LISSA experience

In Lissa, we maintain a positive attitude to new ideas that add value. We installed the SFF machine in our abattoir in Limuru. We provided space and staff to test it out in real working situations. We gained the following experiences:

- The SFF machine is easy to install and use under local conditions.
- Over 80% of leather production defects are reduced.
- The quality of meat products are enhanced due to minimum contact between the meat and dirty hides.
- Hide removal need not slow production process if operations are well organized.

Why Poor Adoption of SFF machine?

We have learnt that improving farmers practice is more than just technological advancement. It is an integrated process occurring in a particular social, cultural and economic context. In the case of our

leather industry we identified the following contextual problems.

- Massive ignorance among farmers about leather quality, production procedures and preservation. All these years our communities and livestock farmers have been kept in the darkness about the real value and potential of this valuable resource.
- There is no incentive for good quality leather. Importers pay the same price for all grades of leather. This is a most retrogressive aspect of the leather trade which has hindered efforts to produce quality leather and given opportunity to the exploitive trade practices by importers who are happy to buy a most valuable hide at a very low price.
- We lack clear policy and commitment on the part of government to safeguard leather quality and production practices.

Calling for Joint Efforts

To ensure good quality in leather production and to get back the lost incomes for livestock farmers; LISSA would like to explore with others interested the following:

1. Partnerships and linkages for communication and information exchange for improved leather production. Possible partnerships between farmers groups, leather associations, tanneries, importers, government and development agencies (NGOs, UNIDO etc)
2. Coordinated stakeholder education and training to utilize the low cost SFF machine to improve leather quality. Already interest has been expressed by the leather Associations in Tanzania and Sudan.
3. Lobbying and advocacy for better policies and employment of producers to better manage leather resources.

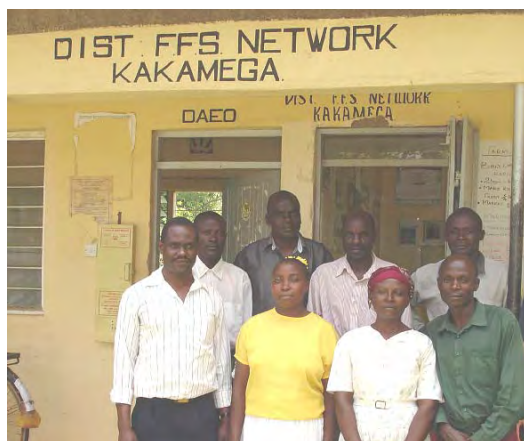
A better organized leather industry has the potential to rescue many African livestock producers from poverty. This will only happen if the full potential of this valuable resource is realized. The impressive SFF machine developed by UNIDO is available but not used because of social ignorance and exploitive trade practices. This is a serious gap that cannot be addressed by present extension services alone. Partnerships are needed with all key players in the livestock market chain. We would like to use our lesson learning initiative to explore how we can make it happen!

³ Story based on presentation of Michael Kibue, LISSA and edited by Anne Dennig, April 2007

Today's Marketing Services of the Kakamega FFS Network by Habbakuk Khaamala⁴

Our Marketing Challenges

We have virtually no access to markets other than local village markets within 5 km. Farmers are selling individually with no group cooperation. There is a lack of information about crops the field school groups as a whole are growing. The farmers are exposed to exploitation by brokers and poor information on market prices. There is poor communication between group members due to distances and infrastructure and no focal point for market information or general coordination.



Kakamega FFS network officers

Developing Marketing Services

The Network has been helping the farmers to work together to access markets using the existing FFS organisation of the Executive Committee, Zone Officers, and Field School Representatives. We have collected crop information through a Crop Inventory sheet into a Crop Database. A Marketing Office has been opened to support members with marketing and organizational information. Kenya Agricultural Commercial Exchange (KACE) is used for daily prices and automatic bids.

Providing market price information helps to “inoculate” farmers against bad price information from petty traders. The Network helps farmers to make offers to sell through KACE whilst developing other buyers. We are involved in DrumNet, a company which links buyers, sellers, stockists, and financial intermediaries. We are promoting the Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato as the first Network-sponsored cash crop.

Already our leadership has been trained on business and marketing. Farmer members have been trained on quality needs, recognition and practice. Value-adding equipment (chippers) have been purchased and the members trained in their use. Over time we will build the business and marketing capacity of the general membership.



Demonstrating the Sweet Potato Chipper

Initial Setbacks

Attempts at large-scale sales of the orange fleshed Sweet Potato have been unsuccessful. We have found that KACE market prices do not reflect prices given to farmers from brokers. The Cartel-like behaviour of brokers makes it difficult to access large scale markets profitably and the network has had continued difficulty in accessing information and linkage to profitable markets.

⁴ Story based on presentation by Habbakuk Khamala FFS, Kenya and edited by Anne Dennig in April 2007

Lessons Learned

- Proper market research is critical.
- Production driven marketing does not work; demand should drive production.
- You cannot rely on second hand information.
- Start small and ensure that the market is as promised on a smaller scale.
- Commercial farming should be contract farming; it is important to negotiate a contract guaranteeing that if farmers grow to a certain quantity and quality then a buyer will pay.
- Make sure that you diversify your crops as markets come and go and prices fluctuate.
- Promote and educate on more than just one type of cash crop.



Members visiting the office

Services Offered by the Network Today

Today we are engaged in the promotion and education of members for crop diversification in the following 'buyer demanded' cash crops:

- Sunflower Seeds (Bidco),
- Chili Peppers (MACE foods),
- Artemisia (East Africa Botanicals),
- Sweet Potato Chips (Unga Millers).

We are also trying some sample plots for Moringa, Jatropha and Roselle/Hibiscus. Currently we are occupied with the facilitation of buyer/producer contracts for growing, harvesting, and delivery of farm produce.



We are helping with access to credit, information, and market support for FFS groups. We are also stockist of various farm inputs, including maize seed and fertilizer.

We are now a registered company limited by shares. This allows us to provide a legal voice for farmers in contractual agreements and enables large scale for-profit income generating activities. Our profits are divided among shareholder farmers. We are now drafting a business plan to determine profitable and sustainable means of income generation.

Export Oriented Crop Production: Snow Peas and French Beans in the Mount Kenya Region

By James Kanyi⁵

The MOPA Alliance

The Mount Kenya Producers Association (MOPA) was founded by MUMUKA Horticultural Group as a result of considerable challenges due to daily visits to snow peas and French beans producers in this vast region. Equipped with the knowledge shared through Linking Local Learners the members of MUMUKA embarked on a task to build alliances with networks of other farmers organizations across Mt. Kenya region involved in export oriented crops. MOPA's scope is in the Districts around Mt. Kenya region i.e. Nyandarua, Laikipia, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Meru and Embu.

MOPA Activities

Our main activity is the production and marketing of snow peas and French beans. Alliance building with farmers and farming groups is done through field visits, mobile phone communication/SMS and limited internet services. Here MOPA has a key brokering role. To market efficiently we are establishing and strengthening marketing parameters based on ICT and through Linking Local Learners. MOPA representatives have also attended training seminars on web-based marketing.

Our Successes

- MOPA has been able to meet and share ideas with the agro-chemicals, fertilizer companies and inspection & certification bodies in Kenya (EM Technologies, EnCert Organic).
- MOPA has been able to meet the requirements of export companies and enter into contracts with them.
- MOPA's farmers have access to knowledge about market information from the internet.

- MOPA has developed a cheap and convenient infrastructure such that farmers are able to communicate easily amongst each other and expose marketing constraints and current prices.



Members tend their beans

The Difficulties and Constraints

MOPA has experienced some difficulties including: 1) the gap between producers, processors, wholesalers/retailers and consumers which is a major barrier in understanding the market chain; 2) the lack of a private internet facility to access marketing information from the web; and 3) lack of information particularly on the EURO-GAP regulations, FAO's codex alimentarius and other related international marketing standards. Constraints include the need for facilitation to aid business meetings with all key players to understand the chain and the red tape between export companies and the producers. MOPA's experience has been that there is no cordial relationship to discuss business with the export companies.

Future Challenges

MOPA would like to see the establishment of advisory centers in rural towns for farmers to access all the information in agriculture production & marketing. It would also like to initiate Agro-Tourism to enable the interaction of producers, wholesaler and consumers. It would also like to see more government support for small farmers to access the internet and attend regular business meetings with key players in the market chain.

⁵ Story based on presentation by James Kanye, MOPA and edited by Anne Dennig, May 2007

The Market Linkage Role of the FFS Network in Uganda

By Betty Ajambo and Jennifer Hire⁶

The Market Linkage Business

In the FFS we are working towards becoming a business unit supporting better market links for our members. We are expanding our current work in market research and carrying out pre-season planning and enterprise selection for members. We will do more work in ensuring quality controls and negotiating with potential buyers as well as organising storage and transport for the products of our members. Our new market linkage work is based on our past achievements in:

- Formalised structure of members
- Successful FFS operational manual
- Growing number of savings & credit pass books issued
- Emerging commodity associations
- Access to agro-processing & storage structures
- Contracts to supply sorghum to Nile Breweries in Jinja
- Ongoing negotiations to supply maize to WFP

Information Brokerage Service

Most FFS are established where there is minimal contact with potential markets and inadequate information along the market chain.

We now provide information to the FFS on:

- Prices of commodities in different markets
- Quantities, quality and related conditions
- Potential markets of what is available

A Revolving Fund Service

The disbursement process for the fund is that members must apply for the loan which must be repaid with interest of 5%. A loans committee verifies and identifies beneficiaries; these must have at least 10% of the amount requested in savings. Each member guarantees the loan. The beneficiary group must have an operational savings plan in place, viable

income generating activities and a member co-guarantee.



One of our multi purpose buildings

Capacity Building Service

We have carried out the following training for our FFS members:

- Farming as a business
- Enterprise selection
- Record keeping
- Financial management
- Revolving fund management
- Savings and credit
- Marketing and market information

Challenges and Opportunities

But we still have challenges. Some farmer groups are still sceptical about the revolving loan. Farmers themselves are engaged in many programmes which sometimes leads to confusion and conflicts of interest. Information flow is still a problem with limited ICT infrastructure and capacity. Insecurity is yet another challenge. On the other hand we do have opportunities that we can benefit from:

- NAADS support for higher level farmer organizations
- Possible collaboration with initiatives like LLL, RKN, Firstmile, NUSAF and ICIPE
- New Government drive to promote savings and loans organizations

Reliable market linkage is vital to our members. The FFS Networks in Uganda are trying to improve farmers' links to markets but potential for investment in FFS Networks has not yet been fully exploited and documented.

⁶ Based on presentation made by Betty Ajambo edited by Anne Dennig in April 2007

Needs, Challenges and Initiatives for Sustainable Services to Farmer Field Schools in Tanzania
by Thomas Julianus⁷

- Technical support for quality production

The Scope of the FFS Network

The Network area includes the Bukoba, Missenyee, and Muleba districts of the Kagera Region. In this area we have over 300 Farmer Field School groups producing banana, cassava, maize, horticultural products, livestock. We have over 6,000 farmers involved in the schools with three district networks and six divisions composed of ward networks.

Our Needs and Challenges

Our challenges include unstable production, which is at present falling. Unfavourable weather conditions, especially unseasonal and erratic rains, which are causing difficulties to our farmers. In addition to this there are emerging diseases and pests such as:

- Banana (BBW)
- Cassava (CMD)
- Coffee (coffee wilt)
- Livestock (Newcastle, RVF!)

Another major challenge is information exchange on market information. This is due to remoteness, poor roads and electrification. Most ward Field Schools are far from necessary facilities. The local sources of information come from: local markets, churches, village meetings and travelling individuals, farmer to farmer. But there are good prospects for overcoming the information challenge. These include mobile phones, emerging FM radios and local newsletters. The FFS networks exchange information through the Kibegwe Rural Community Telecentre Cooperative Society.

Knowledge of market demand is improving through better information flow. Getting better prices for our farmers is helped by:

- Middlemen from Uganda for maize and vanilla
- Quality control (inputs, processing)
- Fluctuations in commodity supply



*Kibengwe Rural Community Telecentre
Cooperative Society*

It is still a challenge for farmers to get access to credit. The opportunities arising here are the emerging SACCOS organizations. Our other challenges are land constraints, storage facilities and labour. The latter challenge is due to rural urban migration of youths and the health issues of HIV and malaria.

Network Initiatives

The Field schools within the divisions of Rubale and Bunazi, perform collective marketing for export to Uganda. We collect harvest information and keep it in a database. Then we look for a common buyer from Uganda and broker the actual selling process. Two divisional networks have managed to organise contract farming with the Kagera Sugar Company; one divisional network has started a development with the MALI juice factory in Muleba. With support from IITA and CIP we are also involved with the processing of cassava, maize and sweet potato flour and labelling and packaging of the products.

An ICT initiative is The Kibenge Rural Community Telecentre. This is registered as a cooperative society with the objective of improving rural communication access and development. We hope that this will help to provide and receive relevant information. We are pleased that some community members have started seeing its importance and use for information on: coffee wilt, BXW, and the vanilla market. However, some farmers lack the willingness to use this 'new thing'! They are frustrated by websites with out-of-date market information and expense is also a major constraint for them.

⁷ Based on presentation by Thomas Julianus, FFS Tanzania and edited by Anne Dennig in June 2007

Starting a Warehouse Receipt System for Kyere, Uganda⁸
By Ejomu Zeblon, SOSPPA

A new phase for SOSPPA

Soroti Sweet Potato Producers and Processors Association, SOSPPA, is a district wide farmer organisation with an office in Kyere sub-county. It is comprised of thirteen sweet potato FFS groups. Since 2004 it has been registered with the Soroti District Community Development Department as a farmer association. It has a member inventory of 300 farmers of which more than half are women.



Ejomu Zeblon in the SOSPPA office

In Kyere Village we are producing and processing sweet potatoes, particularly the orange fleshed variety with their high level of vitamin A. There is a high demand for flour made from this variety because it can be used at the feeding stations in nearby refugee camps. Now we are picking sweet potato vine cuttings which are to be sent to Katakwi where they have experienced bad floods. Many crops have been spoiled so we are providing relief agencies with thirty-five kilos of cuttings for 8,000 Ush.

It is a busy time in Kyere Village where SOSPPA is heading for a new phase in their

development with both a new warehouse and a processing building close to completion.



Weighing Sweet Potato cuttings for flood relief

The Warehouse Receipt System

Building the warehouse was arranged by NAADS through the Kyere Sub-County Farmer Forum and financed through a NUSAF grant. The farmers have all contributed to the warehouse, providing building material and labour. Each farmer group contributes 10,000Ush per financial year to maintain the association. In the warehouse we have offices and storage space.

For our new warehouse we will use a receipt system which will be the first in Soroti and is being piloted with direction from the District Commercial Officer. The system allows us to bulk and store produce to gain power in negotiation. Our farmers will not have to sell their produce when the family needs money. They can borrow from Stanbic bank using the receipt from our warehouse. We will start the warehouse receipt system with two banks Stanbic and Centenary. Both provide collateral managers who will work with our warehouse manager. The manager will issue a negotiable receipt against the current value of the produce stored at the warehouse. With his receipt the farmer group can go to the bank and borrow up to 80% of the worth of the receipt. The balance 20% goes to pay the costs of our warehouse manager, maintenance, etc. We do not yet have any experience, but our

⁸ Interview with Ejomu Zeblon by Anne Dennig in September 2007

farmers say they will be happy with 20% going to the warehouse.

We will also need a broker who will be looking for the market for the produce in the warehouse. We have room for 600 tons of storage. The warehouse is open to all commodities but most likely for the storage of ground nuts, cassava, sweet potatoes, maize, honey and rice. We should be in operation by December.



The SOSPPA Warehouse, Kyere

The Processing Centre

Our new processing centre consists of three rooms, for processing, packaging and an office. There will be a drum washer for the tubers and chipper machines.



A chipping machine

The chips will then be dried on racks in the sun ready for packaging or further processing into powder. There will be an office for records and product display.



The new processing centre

We exchange our experiences with other sweet potato growers and processors and with those LLL members operating warehouse receipt systems. We hope to visit Babati in Tanzania to learn how they succeeded in starting up their warehouse receipt system.



Ejomu Zeblon with Clive Lightfoot in the new processing centre

The Impact of Marketing Support for Umwale Paddy farmers in Arumeru District⁹

By Rebeca Mongi

Arumeru Core Group's Help

In Arumeru the AMSDP core group have been helping with market training for Umwale farmers' group. Before the training the farmers were selling as individuals and getting low prices; now they sell as whole group. We have helped them to find a good market by:

- visiting market in Dar Es Salaam;
- using mobiles to get market information;
- attending Agricultural shows to advertise their products;
- and visits to other AMSDP groups to learn from their experience.

Uwamale Farmer Group now has a market research committee: In July 2005, representatives of the committee went to Dar es Salaam to look for markets. They went to Tanadali to look at beans and cereals to learn how to penetrate the market. They found the varieties they needed. In the case of beans they found out the varieties required and that it was important to keep these separate and not mixed as they have been told by the middlemen. The group found out that they could miss out the middleman and arrange for transport to Tandali market. If a group have a product to sell, they can use transport provided from the market and that cost will be subtracted from the sale. This helps the farmers as they don't have to pay the transport before the produce is sold.

Improved Paddy Prices and Storage Space

After the market research what farmers have done is to change the type of rice they grow. First they grew the IR54 variety which produced a good quantity but was difficult to market as it was not popular with consumers. Then they switched to the Wahiwahi variety which gave a lower output but was easily marketed as consumers preferred this variety. Now they are trying the SARO TXD 306 as this has a higher production than the Wahiwahi and is also popular with consumers. With the new SARO

variety they will be able to produce 80 bags of 84 kilograms each year per acre. With the old variety they only produced 60-66 bags per year. The price each year differs but if they keep it until in December they should be able to get about 35,000Tsh per bag. When they sell early in April/May the same bag is worth only 24,000 Tsh. By storing the paddy they can sell at a higher price. Sometimes there is not enough space in the houses to store and sell, so they must sell at a lower price. The Uwamale farmer group are aware that a warehouse with a receipt system would solve this problem. They have already been over to Babati to learn from their experience and have now set up a SACCOS for the group.

Impact in the Village

Evidence of improved incomes from modern marketing can be seen in the area. The incomes in the village have risen and some of this has been used for school expenses, and even for sending children to English medium schools. Nearly all households have access to a mobile phone. The village is also on the way to have clean water (this is partly paid by our local community); they have laid pipes to the start of the village and intend to connect soon. A primary school is also being constructed for the village. Now the children walk to the next village to school but they will soon have their own.



The new primary school building and Sebastian's new house

Although in Lekitatu village there is no electricity there are now thirteen homes with solar power. The biggest impact to the villagers is that they have been able to improve their homes. Sebastian Moshi built his new house in stages from each harvest (there are 2 harvests each year). First the foundations, then the brickwork and roof, then he rented some more land to expand the area that he could use for growing paddy. He will use the money from his next harvest to finish off the house.

⁹ Interviewed by Anne Dennig in August 2007

The Need for Effective Marketing: Teso Tropical Fruit Growers' Association¹⁰

By Gaudesuis Opio and Ezekiel Eliuno



Gaudesuis Opio explains the association's marketing challenges

Teso Potential for Orange Production

Our association has 220 registered members. At the last AGM we elected representatives in each subcounty. The districts are: Soroti, Kumi, Katakwi, Lira, Kaberamaido. A further 500 growers have a loose affiliation. They sell their oranges with us but are not members. They are on the edge of joining, so our membership could soon go up to 770. Between us we have 250,000 trees, giving about 120 kilos per tree per year. With the extra members in our group we could have as many as 500,000 trees producing 60,000 tons of oranges a year. 30 Ush per kilo is the farm gate price and the middlemen offer 20 Ush per kilo, but if we broker deals with big companies we can double the price; a potential gross income of 3,600million Tsh which is just over two million US dollars! So you can see that organised marketing is an important challenge to solve in Gweri with the potential for a real improvement in incomes for our farmers.

Marketing Challenges

The system for marketing has not been good for farmers. Before we dealt with middlemen but now through the association we are selling together in bulk. A big problem we have is the non standard unit. Oranges have been sold by the bag with no standard bag size. This has enabled middlemen to cheat in the market. We

are now changing over to weights and standard 80 kilo bags. Where farmers have no scales we want to calculate in plastic basins by calculating the average weight within a basin. Until now it has been very difficult for the association to estimate the produce exactly because they could not track in kilos and tons. The association negotiates for the members with the buyers and takes a commission of 2%.



Gaudesuis Opio discusses marketing challenges.

The Market Opportunities

As an association we have worked on quality and production. Following training from NAADS, both quality and quantity are improving. Quality matters to the Kampala market of Nakasero and for the supermarkets and hotels. Shopright want yellow oranges, which means we have to pick them later. The problem with this is that if oranges get too large and ripe they get fruit fly easily. They are also more difficult to transport so we must crate the yellow ones; this adds to our transport costs.

We also sell to Sudan and some buyers from Rwanda have got through to this region despite the local traders trying to block them. Local traders spread misinformation about the region, saying that there are few trees which are spread out, to discourage outside buyers.

If we supply to juice processors in Kampala the quality is not such a problem. With help from NAADS, Jakana foods visited the association and signed a memorandum of understanding with us. Jakana wanted exclusivity and 600 tons of oranges a year; that is twelve and a half tons per week from the whole Teso region. But Jakana kept changing the amount they needed so the arrangement fell through. We will now try to renegotiate with Jakana.

¹⁰ Interviewed by Anne Dennig in September 2007

Britannia Foods have also expressed an interest in our oranges and are coming to look at the quality and discuss prices etc. We also have a possible link to a Spanish NGO which is interested in processing the fruit for export. They want to take video coverage of the region to take to Spain to show the investors. We have made contacts with big buyers in Kampala and made an agreement to make a good price if they form into a group. Then we can will deal with them and get away from the fluctuation of prices that we suffer from at the moment.



Oranges for sale by the roadside, Soroti; plastic basins are used for measurement

We want to organise an investment conference in the region so that we can try to interest investors in constructing a processing factory. A problem is that no land has been set aside for industrial growth so maybe it will be necessary to use existing buildings which are situated next to the roads and power.

Oranges giving new income



Paul Nyende and Charles Aben talk to Ezekiel Eliuno

An example of the impact of the Citrus Association and the added income for farmers can be seen at the Dokolo Gweri Farmers' Initiative as explained by Ezekiel Eliuno.

“We have thirty-five farmers in our group, ten women and twenty-five men. We started growing oranges in 2002 and since then have planted over 3,700 trees. Some of these are now fruiting. Each farmer plants in his home. In 2003 we had to leave the farm for the town due to the threat from Lord's Resistance Army but in 2004 we came back. We can produce 2 bags from each of the 3,700 trees and have now started to sell in kilos. From the money we have made we have been able to improve our houses. We used to live in traditional dwellings but now have brick houses and metal roofs and have also been able to send our children to boarding school.”

Gweri Dairy Association Up-Scales its Operation with a Cooling Unit ¹¹

By Joseph Opus



The Gweri Dairy collection centre

Gweri Dairy Association

Our association is up-scaling its marketing potential through the purchase of a cooling unit. There are twenty-eight households in the association producing 3,000 litres per day. The cows are mainly Zebu but there are also increasing numbers of Friesian cross breeds. Dairy farming is still on a small scale with the average number of cows per household of five. Records are kept by the farmers of the daily milk output. We encourage zero grazing and cross breeding to improve the milk production.



Milking a Friesian cross

Members transport their milk daily in jerry cans by bicycle to the collection points along poor roads and over long distances. From this farm the distance to the collection centre is about 10 kilometres and then a further 8 kilometres to Soroti.



Transport of milk to the collection centre

At the collection centre, records are also kept of the quality and quantity of milk from each household. Then the milk is taken by bicycle in metal churns to the Soroti Dairy which takes 200-300 litres per day from Gweri Dairy Association. At the dairy the milk is sold as fresh milk, pasteurized or made into yogurt. Our association buys the milk at 400 Ush per litre from the members and sells at 450 Ush per litre to Soroti Dairy. The association pays the farmers one month later when the money is put into their account.



At Collection centres the milk is strained, measured and tested with a Lactometer for the water/butter milk content

¹¹ Interviewed by Anne Dennig in September 2007

With no cooler at the collection centre the temperature of the milk goes so high that sometimes it is sour when it arrives at the dairy in Soroti. When sour milk is not accepted in Soroti farmers receive no money Association members will avoid loses through spoilage with a cooler.



The new Gweri marketing collection centre which will house the cooler

A New Cooler means Greater Marketing Capacity

With assistance from NAADS we have purchased a cooler through a NUSAF grant. We will install it in a new building right next to the highway. The cooler has 1,500 litres capacity.

Although the distance from farm to cooler will still be far for some of the farmers to travel, the milk will no longer have to travel all the way to Soroti in one day. A cooler will allow the association to have a lot of milk to market. Some milk will continue to go to Soroti Dairy but we will also sell to institutions like the Flying school and Nurses training school. With the cooler we will be able to grow the association and attract the sub counties of nearby districts, like Katakatiwi and Kumi, to send their milk to our cooler.

At present Gweri Dairy make Bongo, a yoghurt drink, which we sell at the collection centre. With the new cooler we will be able to consider other value addition to our milk. For marketing we will need a commercial arm of the association. If we generate enough money at the centre we may be able to get a vehicle which we can use for picking up milk and distributing our milk products.

Organising Same Beekeepers' Association for Better Market Access¹²
by Jerome Maimu

Helping Traditional Beekeepers to Market their Products

The Same Beekeepers' Association "SABEA" in Same district in the Northern part of Tanzania, have been supported by VECO, ELCT, SNV, FaidaMali and their partners to make good progress in the production of good quality honey. In this area the acacia trees add a distinctive flavour to the honey.



Training for the beekeepers

Now there are 14 groups in the network with a membership of 280. We have a field beekeeping extension officer Nandi Rupia who is supporting the beekeeping network. The groups have had training which has involved showing them how to make modern beehives and how to extract and purify the honey. Six presses have been distributed, for which the groups pay 10% of the total cost. With these presses the beekeepers are able to extract their honey and sell it at a higher price than when they sell the crushed combs. The honey is bottled and labelled with the SABEA brand.



Our honey press

Getting Better Organised

Up until 2004 the beekeepers in Same were operating individually and were all using traditional beehives. Now there are 13,000 hives of which 300 are of a modern design.



A modern hive built by the Makanya group to a design seen at the training

Until recently it has been very difficult to find out how much honey was being produced in the region as no records were kept. Now the network has the data for the last two years. 18,000 litres of honey has been sold at the local market at a price of 4,000-5,000 Tsh per litre. When the honey is packaged it is sold for 2,000 Tsh per 500g jar. AMSDP is helping SABEA towards improving the marketing of honey in Same. We need to analyse the market chain so that each partner can develop responsive strategies. The challenge is to produce the volume needed for large deals and to ensure a quality product.



Mr Nandi Rupia (Extension Officer) with Mr Mgonja White (Chairperson of the Makanya Beekeepers' Association)

Success at the Nane Nane

SABEA are pleased with their success at the agricultural show, the Nane Nane (Tanzania National Farmers' Day) in Arusha, where our honey was highly demanded. Honey sold on the comb was also very popular. At the exhibition we found that bees wax is in demand for polish, candles, batik making and for templates for the honey combs used in the Top Bar and other modern hive designs.

¹² Interviewed by Anne Dennig in August 2007

Women's Group Succeeds as Micro Processors in Same¹³

By Penuel Kisse and Masasa Makwasa

The Mwenge Women's Group

We have seven women working in our group which is involved in micro processing in Same.



Penuel Kisse showing the banana and potato chips

We are processors of banana chips, potato chips, cassava biscuits and banana and beetroot wine. Our ingredients come for the local area and we supply the town of Same and up as far as Himo. Our beetroot wine takes one and a half months to produce; banana wine takes three months; we produce 240 bottles per cycle. In the last three years we have exhibited at the Nane Nane, and our products were very popular. We received the first prize in the world food day in Same in 2005 and again in 2006. We are supported by the AMSDP core group which includes the Chamber of Commerce TCCIA, FaidaMali and VEKO.



Mr John Ngomoi (TCCIA) with Mwenge group members showing their awards

Challenges and Future Plans

One challenge is that we do not have good packing materials. We re-use glass bottles for our wine which we seal with metal Fanta tops. We really need our own labels and bottle tops. We belong to a SACCOS and plan to get a loan to buy labels and materials for bottling and sealing.



Banana wine production

We make batches of chips and cassava biscuits to order. These are packed in plastic bags that we get from Dar es Salaam and sealed with a candle and hot knife. We don't have enough capital for machinery for packaging. This year we plan to start producing a nutritious beetroot juice. With help from AMSDP Same 'core group' we hope to move to a new industrial estate which is being built in Same. There we will have a plot with other food and drink processors.



Members of the Mwenge Group share a joke outside their processing room

The Secret of Success

The secret of our success is that we are innovative; we get ideas for new products at the trade fairs that we attend and put those ideas into practice.

¹³ Interviewed by Anne Dennig in August 2007

Allaken, an Emerging Marketing Services Company¹⁴
By James Kanyi

Mumuka Farmers' Group

Mumuka, our farmers' group operating in the Mount Kenya region, is now producing snopeas, sugarsnap peas, French beans and some baby corn, all under contract for Everest Enterprises. We have sixty-five members with approximately two acres per member producing up to three tons per picking with picking three times per week. Everest needs a constant supply and therefore the groups must be coordinated on the times of planting and harvesting.



Picking snopeas in the Wanaruona region

Linking with Everest

After the produce has been graded by the farmers and taken to collection points it is taken by Everest trucks to Nairobi. We get a price of seventy shillings per kilo which is paid to the Mumuka secretariat; there one shilling per kilo sold is subtracted for costs of administration, including my travel and telephone expenses. In the future I think they could pay two shillings so that one shilling goes as commission for market services. I will negotiate with Everest to pay me a commission for the work I do for them in finding and linking the farmers.

MOPA

I am playing a linking role for the other farmers groups in the Mount Kenya Producers Association (MOPA) of which Mumuka is a member. MOPA wants to improve the income of farmer members through contract farming

and bulk marketing. It covers the Mt Kenya Region including the districts of Nyandarua, Laikipia, Nyeri, Kirinyaga, Meru and Embu.



Farmers in Wanaruona discuss their challenges with James

We have formed ten groups of twenty-five to thirty farmers who belong to MOPA. Each of the groups has a representative and in total there are 300 farmers in MOPA. If all the farmers in the region are well organised we can pick three days per week and get about twenty tons per week in the peak season. I am linking mainly with Everest but also with Indu Farm, Home Fresh Exporters, Home Grown and SunRipe. Not all the farmers know about the Eurogap standards, so I give this information and arrange training. I link them to a market for their produce and help them to get agricultural supplies. Up until now my linkage work has only been covered at cost.

Market Challenges and Contacts Needed

I can see many ways to help the farmers in the region. Recently I met farmers in the Wanaruona area who are not in the MOPA group they discussed their challenges with me. They would like to have more information about the prices of beans and peas and I suggested that we could put up a billboard in the village that would give this information to them. This is an idea that I heard about from the Tanzanian members of the LLL. In Mumuka, in order to produce quality peas and beans our farmers practice a crop rotation. We grow cabbages, onions and tomatoes for the local market. Until now these crops have been marketed individually. I would like to try to organise group marketing and sell to the local supermarkets. I hope that the new LLL RKN project coordinator in Nairobi will be able to help us here. We operate over a large area and the roads are poor. The mobile phones and the Internet help a lot. SMS is efficient for contact

¹⁴ Interviewed by Anne Dennig in September 2007

with our farmers but I need the Internet for accessing International information which is expensive because I have to travel to the Internet and then pay for browsing and printing.

Allaken Market Access Service



James interviewed by Declan McCormack at Allaken

In April 2007 I registered my own business and opened an office in Othaya for my marketing service called Allaken. I have three people working with me, Mary Kanyi (computing skills trainer), Samuel Muriuki (technical agricultural advisor) and Peter Theuri (assistant coordinator in marketing). We have a fax machine with a photocopier, three computers and a mobile telephone charging service.



Sorting snopeas for collection by brokers in Wanaruona

In my market access service, I would like to solve some of the headaches that the farmers have. These are low prices, quality control (the number of rejections), and the uncertainty of production contracts. To give you an example of the rejects issue there are a lot of snow peas wasted because they are either the wrong size or too curly. Now they are just thrown away by the traders. To avoid this waste we need to show the farmers how to sort and grade their peas correctly and to find alternative markets for the peas which are not suitable to export. For

example these beans can be given as a feed for cows. I also want to find out from the brokers and exporters what their headaches are and to provide a beneficial linking job which will help all market chain members.

In the Allaken office in addition to the marketing service we deal with computer training. The computers are old but we are able to give computer courses on Word, Excel, Access, Pagemaker and computer maintenance. We teach about three students each month with courses lasting about three weeks. There is a slow increase in students which has been done without advertising, just through word of mouth.



Mary Kanyi, computer skills trainer

I also have a small library for the farmers so that they can borrow books, handouts and magazines



The Allaken Library

I also want to develop other income streams for Allaken. I will follow up with the idea of contacting companies for farming equipment and supplying this to the farmers. As a rural service provider I would also like to supply solar equipment as many of our farmers are without electricity. Agro tourism is another possibility that I think we could offer in this area.

Keekonyokie, SARD Livestock Field School in Olirein, Kenya¹⁵

By Isaac Nemuta and Peninah Sintamei



Isaac and Peninah at the entrance to their new field school

The Need for a Field School for the Maasai Pastoralists

The change in the lifestyle of the Maasai pastoralists has led to many challenges. In this area we no longer migrate and so our farming methods have to change from the traditional pastoralist way to a ranching approach. We opened our Livestock Field School in March 2007 and since then we have had 150 pastoralists visiting us for training. We are open every Friday and men and women ranging in age from fifteen and seventy-five have come to discuss our challenges and ways that we can solve them. Many of the pastoralists have not been to school so the best way we have found to stimulate discussion is by using murals. We found an artist in Nairobi and paid him to paint both the challenges we face and some of the solutions we have found successful.

Three Learning Objectives

We have three huts which are centres of learning for: 1) natural resource management; 2) animal husbandry and marketing; 3) knowledge management and advocacy.

Natural Resource Management

Drought is a real threat to our lives. Our life style has changed; we no longer migrate so we have to learn to adapt our farming to cope with this. Also the climate seems to be changing, in 2000 there was a drought and then again in 2005. We have learned that it is very important to store enough water and fodder for our animals

so that we can survive a drought without migrating.

Drought



A painting presenting a challenging discussion for the field school

At our school we can show the pastoralists practical examples of ways that fodder can be stored. We can show them our barn and how to make silage. These methods of fodder storage have enabled our animals to survive in times of drought. Also we can use the fodder to fatten the cattle before sending them to market.



Wilfred Odungo outside his barn and silage pit

By digging deep pits into existing water pools we have been able to increase the amount of stored water to give our cattle throughout the year.



Keeping a good water supply is essential

¹⁵ Interviewed by Anne Dennig in September 2007

Afforestation

Afforestation is another vital learning area. Many trees have been lost through too much cutting for charcoal, fires etc. We want to show our pastoralists both exotic species like eucalyptus which can provide our farmers with wood for building, fencing and fuel, and indigenous trees.



Isaac and Nemuta showing some seedlings of indigenous trees

Learning about breeds of cattle is important. We are planning to cross our traditional Maasai breeds with the exotic breeds so that we can produce animals that are resistant to drought but which are faster growing animals.

Animal Management

Good animal care is so important; we would like members of our field school to train as community animal health workers. This will help us to keep our animals healthy by inoculation, and provide more knowledge of illnesses such as Rift Valley Fever which affected us badly this year. We need to understand the symptoms of the diseases that affect the animals in our community.

With healthy animals reared in a well managed environment, quality milk and meat products can be produced and marketed. Healthy meat gets better prices at the market. The effects of our learning here in the field school will be seen at the abattoir in Kiserian and in the markets.



A circle discussion amongst the field school members



The Keekonyokee Abattoir at Kiserian

Knowledge Management

Good knowledge management is another main learning area for the field school. We encourage dialogue by women and men on our important challenges, both at our school in our open circle discussion area and at home with family and friends. We want to support our members to attend workshops to gather new information.



Issac and Peninah at a marketing workshop

Finally we want to make our members aware of getting into dialogue with the government and carefully analysing new livestock policies so that we can advocate our own positions. There has been a very good reaction to our field school. Most of the pastoralists attending have not been to school and were a little anxious at first but enjoy the practical, visual approach that we take. Through the LLL we have already had interest from another group in Tanzania who would like to learn from our experience and we have plans to continue to develop our school.

Marketing Help for Ginger Growers in Same District

By Enirisha Magohe and Masasa Makwasa¹⁶

Ginger Growing in the Same District

Ginger was introduced in Same District over ten years ago. Current yearly production is around six thousand tons. A third of its population are involved in ginger production. They also grow some cardamom coffee and cinnamon.

In August and September ginger plots are prepared and the ground is dressed with manure. From September to November small pieces of sprouted ginger are planted with one foot between each plant and 2 feet between rows. The ginger is planted before rains on floodable terraces which can be irrigated. A complex system of pipes and ditches connect the mountain streams to the terraces.



Irrigation for the ginger terraces

Between September and October the terraces are flooded. Then the fields are weeded and irrigated as the ginger grows. After 8 months the ginger is ready and about one kilo per small piece of ginger planted can be harvested. The raw ginger is harvested from April to August and put into 250 kilo bags ready for sale.

The crop is increasing yearly at an average of 46%. In 2005/2006, six thousand tons were produced from six hundred hectares. The yield per hectare is low farmers as farmers are only getting 10 tonnes per ha instead of a possible 20 tonnes. About 90% of the ginger is cultivated organically only using farm yard manure for inputs.



Harvesting ginger

Marketing Ginger

At the moment the ginger is being sold to the middlemen from Kenya and Dar es Salaam and sent to Zanzibar. The middlemen go direct to the farmers and the price range is from 260-400 Tsh per kilo for raw ginger. Also Ugandans take ginger from Same when they cannot get enough to fulfil their export quota.

There are various selling points for the raw ginger along the road where the trucks pick up the ginger. We have between seven and eight trucks per week collecting fresh ginger from Same Here up in the hills the roads can be badly affected in the rainy season. A few farmers instead of selling as individuals now sell as group to get a better price.



250 kilo bags ready for collection

Our marketing is very inefficient. Farmers are disorganized, getting no reliable market information and domination by speculative middlemen. Moreover, there is no quality management, no quality standards, and no grading.

¹⁶ Interviewed by Anne Dennig in August 2007

The ginger market chain appears to be in a deadlock. Farmers are reluctant to invest because their market outlets are unreliable, and market agents are reluctant to invest because farm production is sub-optimal.

AMSDP Coordinating Marketing

The district is attended by local service providers in finance (RFSP), water management (TIP) and marketing (Faida Mali). Considering these resources it can be expected that coordinated action by the chain actors and supporting agencies will give a decisive push to the ginger chain and trigger significant economic growth and poverty alleviation in the district. The AMSDP core group in Same has started bringing key players together with farmers to improve marketing.

As a result new potential buyers have been found in Unifine (a Dutch export company) and Kenya Jambo biscuits in Nairobi. The biscuit company needs powdered ginger and demands 1.5 tons per month. Unifine needs dried and chopped ginger.

A better price has been negotiated with Unifine. In farm gate prices it offers 567 Tsh/kg versus the local price of 349Tsh/kg. Farmers can double their profits from 218 to 475 Tsh per kilo.

Future Potential with Value Addition

To realize these new market opportunities farmers must dry and slice their raw ginger product. Recently, AMSDP has organized training for producers in processing sliced, dried ginger with Devotu Shenyu the Food Processing Trainer from the Small Industry Development Organisation.



Packed dried ginger ready for market

Dried ginger gets a better price. It is sent to the local markets of Dar, Moshi, Tanga and Arusha

where the price per kilo of chopped dried ginger is 1,000 Tsh.

SIDO started with training for forty producers on chopping, drying and packing ginger. Already more than ten solar driers have been bought and installed through SIDO loans. The resulting dried produce has been shown at the Nane Nane in Arusha. Price for the dried sliced ginger sold at the Nane Nane was 1,500 Tsh for 100g!



In Myamba – lady cutting ginger for drying

AMSDP' core group in Same are now helping farmers draw up plans for processing equipment which will enable the farmers to produce ginger powder in the ward. This will ensure a higher price and lessen the problems of transporting the raw ginger. The farmers have set out plans for the business explaining the market research they need from AMSDP.

Possible Impact

Ginger provides 50% of the income in the district. Any improvement in the ginger market chain will have huge impacts on the local economy and quality of life. Villagers would like to have water in the village and would like to use any extra income for schools and a dispensary. Finding ways to sustain the coordination, collaboration and other roles played by AMSDP's core group in Same becomes a critical challenge.

The Marketing of Lablab in Same, Tanzania

By Enirisha Magohe¹⁷

Lablab in Same

Lablab originated from Central Province in Kenya and is now widely grown in East Africa. It is a suitable crop to be grown in a semi arid area as it is drought resistant. It was first introduced in Same in 1990. Same District is the poorest District in Kilimanjaro Region. It is large covering 5,152 sq km and is home to 44,000 households living in 83 villages. This population is growing at a rate of 2% per year.

By 1997 there was about 100ha under cultivation now more than 450ha are cultivated in Hedaru, Makanya, Ruvu, Same and Njoro Wards. The area cultivated is increasing yearly at an average rate of 20%. Production from Same has risen from 200 tons in 1997 to 900 tons in 2006. In Same we have planted a new variety, a black lablab, for the Kenyan market instead of the brown local variety that the Tanzanians prefer to eat.

A Market Research Visit to Nairobi

Lablab farmers need a sustainable supply chain for their lablab as it is one of their main cash crops. Until recently the lablab supply chain was not harmonized as farmers sold individually and were exploited by middle men and traders. We are trying to change this through the formation of farmers groups and a SACCOS. The farmer groups in Mwangaza were formed in 2006. The aim of the groups is to give the farmers more power in market access and price negotiations.

The Same District core group arranged and accompanied representatives of these groups to Nairobi to find out about the market for lablab. Demand for lablab is high in Kenya because it is needed by industries, hotels and supermarkets. It is used particularly for celebrations and for nursing mothers and is commonly called Njahi.



Mwangaza group representatives visit Nairobi

We visited the Jambo biscuit factory, Procter and Allan Industry Ltd, Jerry traders, Kaora traders and the Mama Ngina shop. We were able to establish that Jambo Biscuits needed powdered lablab which means we would need to process the beans to take up this market opportunity. They wanted supplies of one ton per month at a price of 3,000Tsh per kilo. Procter and Allan were interested in lablab beans subject to laboratory testing which the District core group are organising. Jerry and Kaora traders and Mama Ngina shop required between 25,000kg to 30,000kg of lablab beans which they would purchase for 600 Tsh per kilo.

¹⁷ Interviewed by Anne Dennig in August 2007

We also conducted research at the Kenya Open market (Nyamakima). We found buyers and they want us to send our harvest with local vehicles. At the Nairobi market they asked for the lablab to be sorted and graded in size by the farmers. We found out that the best prices were in December when it is wanted for use at ceremonies. The challenge is storage as lablab is prone to insect attack; therefore we need airtight containers or some kind of insect protection. To enable the farmers to store their beans we needed a SACCOS as well.

The Mwangaza SACCOS



Mwangaza SACCOS Offices

A SACCOS had already been set up in this area of Hedaru. The general manager and secretary is Ezra Suleiman and Hassan Doo is the Loan officer. 537 people are using the SACCOS to save their money and the loans they receive are from between one to ten months. Outside the SACCOS the District core team have set up a market information board which gives the monthly prices for a variety of crops in the markets of Arusha, Moshi and Dar. Farmers look at the notice board or phone up for the information. The SACCOS chairperson Waeli Elitumain visited the Nairobi markets with the farmer representatives.



The market centre being constructed in Mwangaza

Just down the road from the Saccos a market centre is under construction, built with help from AMSDP. This will benefit our farmers groups as here they will be able to meet with traders from Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Dodoma and Tanga. The traders will pay a levy to trade in the market centre; this will make the market centre sustainable.

ANNEX E. LLL TEAM MEMBER CONTACT DATA

First Name	Last Name	Organization	District	Country	Mobile Phone	Email Address
Patrick	Waidhima	KENFAP	Bungoma	Kenya	00254 720275128	waidhimapk@yahoo.com
Carol	Kamau	MOA	Bungoma	Kenya		carolnetia@yahoo.com
Peter	Waboya	FFS	Bungoma	Kenya	00254 726759578	peterwaboya@yahoo.com
Solomon	Mulindi	FFS	Bungoma	Kenya	00254 734618314	smulindi@yahoo.com
Benson	Chibinda	FFS	Bungoma	Kenya	00254 723312997	bungomaffs@yahoo.com
Christopher	Magoba	MOA	Busia	Kenya	00254 722348194	omumbira@yahoo.com
Wilson	Oduori	FFS	Busia	Kenya	00254 736249348	oduoriwils@yahoo.com
Lillian	Tiony	FFS	Busia	Kenya	00254 724405257	lilojep@yahoo.com
Marystella	Wabwoba	FFS	Busia	Kenya	00254 735259126	wabstella@yahoo.com
Gamaliel	Olucjili	FFS	Busia	Kenya	00254 724946464	oluchili@yahoo.com
George	Akhulo	FFS	Busia	Kenya	00254 725772533	oakhulo@yahoo.com
Emma	Obuya	FFS	Busia	Kenya	00254 734773961	emmaobuya@yahoo.com
Johnstone	Ngondi	FFS	Busia	Kenya	00254 725740427	johnsonouma@yahoo.com
Agnes	Barasa	FFS	Busia	Kenya	00254 728366961	aegesa@yahoo.com
Herold	Ruggut	KENFAP	Eldoret	Kenya	00254 721571085	heroldrugutt2004@yahoo.co.uk
Judy	Sang	KENFAP	Eldoret	Kenya	00254 720700066	judyasang@peasantsworldwide.net
Godrick	Khisa	FAO FFS	Kakamega	Kenya	00254 722813719	khisagodrick@yahoo.co.uk
Habakkuk	Khaamala	FFS	Kakamega	Kenya	00254 720833431	hkhaamala@yahoo.co.uk
John	Inganga	FFS	Kakamega	Kenya		jinganga@yahoo.com
Lucas	Nguluu	FFS	Kakamega	Kenya		nguluu1@yahoo.com
Rose	Akhonya	FFS	Kakamega	Kenya		akhonyarose@yahoo.com
John	Kalayi	FFS	Kakamega	Kenya	00254 723714384	kalayjohn@yahoo.com
Elizabeth	Kariuki	MOA	Kakamega	Kenya	00254 722290993	bethkaris@yahoo.com
Stanley	Nyongesa	FFS	Kakamega	Kenya		stanleynyongesa@yahoo.com
Michael	Kibue	SARDL	Kiserian	Kenya	00254 727613311	sardlivestock06@yahoo.com
Patrick	Mushangi	SARDL	Kiserian	Kenya		pmushangi@yahoo.com
Samuel	Saiton	SARDL	Kiserian	Kenya	00254 724150139	sasaiton@yahoo.com
Isaac	Nemuta	SARDL	Kiserian	Kenya	00254 724536721	isaacnemuta2@yahoo.com
Penina	Sintamei	SARDL	Kiserian	Kenya	00254 726570515	penisintah@yahoo.com
Fatuma	Nyanjong	KENFAP	Kisumu	Kenya	00254 721685975	nyanjong2005@yahoo.com

First Name	Last Name	Organization	District	Country	Mobile Phone	Email Address
Janet	Omollo	KENFAP	Kisumu	Kenya	00254 723713622	jomollo2006@yahoo.com
Grace	Ngambi	KENFAP	Nairobi	Kenya	00254 733392954	producers@kenfap.org
John	Mutunga	KENFAP	Nairobi	Kenya	00254 721222828	mutunga@kenfap.org
Lucy	Nyambura	KENFAP	Nairobi	Kenya		lunyamwa@peasantsworldwide.net
Prisca	Githuka	KENFAP	Nairobi	Kenya	00254 733713270	githuka@kenfap.org
Churchill	Amatha	RKN	Nairobi	Kenya	00254 723717009	amathacj@yahoo.com
Bonaventure	Achonga	MOA	Nairobi	Kenya	00254 733236641	bonachonga@yahoo.com
Godfrey	Kariuki	MOA	Nairobi	Kenya		godfreymkariuki@yahoo.com
Abraham	Okolla	KACE	Nairobi	Kenya	00254 721573874	okolla69@yahoo.com
Sylvia	Mburugu	KENFAP	Nairobi	Kenya	00254 720991074	sylvia@kenfap.com
Pamela	Liech	MOA	Nairobi	Kenya	00254 720512827	pamliech@yahoo.com
Fatuma	Akumu	KENFAP	Nyanza	Kenya		mwajuma@peasantsworldwide.net
Lucy	Mwangi	KENFAP	Nyeri	Kenya	00254 723240428	lunyamwa_2006@yahoo.com
Basilus	Kagwi	MOPA	Nyeri	Kenya	00254 721746107	basiliusk@yahoo.com
Bernhard	Mwangi	MOPA	Nyeri	Kenya		benamwash2006@yahoo.com
James	Kanyi	MOPA	Nyeri	Kenya	00254 720922103 ,	jwkanyi@yahoo.com
Moses	Gichuru	MOPA	Nyeri	Kenya	00254 722343166	peninahg2002@yahoo.com
Peter	Theuri	MOPA	Nyeri	Kenya		harqso@yahoo.com
Kaholifa Youth	Group	Farmer Group	Nyeri	Kenya		kaholifayouth@yahoo.com
Peter	Ngunjiri	MOPA	Nyeri	Kenya		ngunpeter@yahoo.com

First Name	Last Name	Organization	District	Country	Mobile Phone	Email Address
Alex	Birigita	UNFEE	Bushenyi	Uganda		birigitalex@yahoo.co.uk
Allan	Agaba	NAADS	Bushenyi	Uganda	00256 712572432	agabaalan@yahoo.co.uk
Patrick	Kamwezi	NAADS	Bushenyi	Uganda	00256 772342657	kamwezipatrick@yahoo.co.uk
John	Ndamira	Bushenyi Banana Plantain Assoc	Bushenyi	Uganda	00256 772566709	budcof2005@yahoo.com
Missango	Mutungu	Farmer group	Bushenyi	Uganda	00256 782475226	budcof2005@yahoo.com
Betty	Ajambo	Mahono Mahalabani FFS	Busia	Uganda	00256 77578564	ajambob2004@yahoo.com
Jennifer	Hire	FFS	Busia	Uganda	00256 772486005	hirejennifer2002@yahoo.com
Francis	Alacho	NAADS	Busia	Uganda		bpspc@utlonline.co.ug
Jessica	Nambuya	UNFFE	Iganga	Uganda		nambuyajessica@yahoo.com
Joseph	Baliraine	UNFFE	Iganga	Uganda		jbaliraine@yahoo.com
Peter	Kisambira	UNFFE	Iganga	Uganda	00256 77602035	antonykisambira@yahoo.com
Godfrey	Wambazo	DATICS	Kabarole	Uganda	00256 77915215	godfreywambazo@yahoo.co.uk
Loy	Nyamijumbi	DATICS	Masaka	Uganda		nyamijumbiloy@yahoo.com
John Peter	Opio	FFS	Mbale	Uganda		opiojp70@yahoo.com
David	Lule	UNFFE	Mpigi	Uganda		lule_d@yahoo.com
Edward	Bakka	UNFFE	Mpigi	Uganda		e_bakka@yahoo.com
Perez	Kawumi	UNFFE	Mpigi	Uganda	00256 772625465	p_kawumi@yahoo.com
Geoffrey	Ouma	Sihubira Farmers Organisation	Soroti	Uganda		sihufarorg@yahoo.co.uk
Charles	Aben	NAADS	Soroti	Uganda	00256 775162066	stnaads@yahoo.co.uk
Joseph	Egabu	NAADS	Soroti	Uganda		egabujoseph@yahoo.com
Joseph	Opus	NAADS	Soroti	Uganda	00256 782155656	opusjoseph@yahoo.co.uk
Dan	Edepu	Teso Private Sector Dev Center	Soroti	Uganda	00256 782127402	edeputim@yahoo.com
Eugene	Ekinyu	AOSPPA	Soroti	Uganda	00256 782687648	eugene_ekinyu@yahoo.com
Francis	Otim	NAADS	Soroti	Uganda		francisotim@yahoo.co.uk
John	Oleja	Across Jordan Foundation	Soroti	Uganda		acrossjordanfoundation@yahoo.com
John	Onangole	NAADS	Soroti	Uganda	00256 77557686	onangolejohn@yahoo.com
Samuel	Ejoku	SODIFA	Soroti	Uganda	00256 772531309	samuelejoku@yahoo.co.uk
Winnie	Asege	Dakabela Rural Women Dev. Assoc	Soroti	Uganda		asegewinnie@yahoo.com
James	Ocan	NAADS	Soroti	Uganda		jrocan@hotmail.com
Peter	Ochepa	Farmer group	Soroti	Uganda		peterochepa@yahoo.com
James	Okodi	NAADS	Soroti	Uganda		surudaorg@yahoo.com

First Name	Last Name	Organization	District	Country	Mobile Phone	Email Address
Gaudesius	Opio	TESO Trop Fruit Growers Soroti	Soroti	Uganda	00256 772488690	opioga@yahoo.com
John	Olupot	SOSPPA	Soroti	Uganda	00256 772370987	johnolupot@yahoo.com
Norman	Ojamuge	District Council	Soroti	Uganda	00256 782015143	normanoja@yahoo.com
Francis	Inyalio	FFS	Soroti	Uganda	00256 774219311	inyaliofrancis@yahoo.com
Ejumu	Zeblon	SOSPPA	Soroti	Uganda	00256 782261330	sosppa@yahoo.com
Nelson	Omoding	Gweri Dairy Assoc	Soroti,	Uganda	00256 774948874	nelsonomoding@yahoo.com
Tonny	Agobe	NAADS	Soroti,	Uganda		agobetonny@yahoo.com
George	Wandera	DATICS	Tororo	Uganda		wandera40@hotmail.com
Akaziah	Masereje	DATIC	Tororo	Uganda		akaziahmasereje@yahoo.co.uk
Flavia	Asiimwe	Africa 2000 network	Tororo	Uganda		asiimweflavia@yahoo.com
Dan	Kisauzi	NIDA	Kampala	Uganda	00256 77708593	dankisauzi@nida.or.ug
Asaph	Kato	DATICS	Kampala	Uganda	00256 77427897	asaph.kato@asps.or.ug
Bob	Mugerwa	DATICS	Kampala	Uganda	00256 77220066	bob.mugerwa@asps.or.ug
Caesar	Enzama	UNFEE	Kampala	Uganda	00256 77565892	enzama_c@yahoo.com
Harriet	Atim	FFS	Kampala	Uganda		atim_harriet@yahoo.com
James	Okoth	FAO FFS	Kampala	Uganda	00256 772442773	james.okoth@fao.org
John	Ereng	FFS	Kampala	Uganda		erengatyang@yahoo.co.uk
Paul	Nyende	RKN	Kampala	Uganda	00256 772495950	pvnyende@yahoo.com
Anthony	Mugenyi	NAADS	Kampala	Uganda	00256 772493168	amugenyi@yahoo.com
John	Wakikona	NAADS	Kampala	Uganda	00256 77484396	jwakikona@naads.or.ug
Max	Olupot	AFAAS	Kampala	Uganda	00256 782848225	maxolupot@yahoo.co.uk
Steven	Kagora	Abamwe Welfare Assoc	Kampala	Uganda	00256 77422413	kagorostephen@yahoo.com
Chebet	Maikut	UNFEE	Kampala	Uganda	00256 77409414	chmaikut@yahoo.com
Godfrey	Katwere	DATICS	Kampala	Uganda		godfrey.katwere@asps.or.ug
Mathias	Mulumba	UNFEE	Kampala	Uganda		unfa@starcom.co.ug
Kigozi	Kyasi	Tech Services for Rural Dev	Kampala	Uganda		ts4rd@yahoo.com
Sarah	Mayanja	Africa 2000 Network	Kampala	Uganda	00256 782806750	tanyibwa@yahoo.com
Susan	Ayamo	NAADS	Kampala	Uganda		sueayamo@yahoo.com

First Name	Last Name	Organization	District	Country	Mobile Phone	Email Address
Samuel	Mbise	Farmer Group	Arumeru	Tanzania		spmisho@yahoo.co.uk
Rebeca	Mongi	DFP	Arumeru	Tanzania	00255 748588478	rebemongi@yahoo.co.uk
Edina	Kahembe	DMM	Arumeru	Tanzania	00255 744568394	edinakahembe@yahoo.com
Asha	Muya	TIP	Arumeru	Tanzania	00255 741 433693	shmuya@yahoo.com
Mussa	Msakamali	AMSDP N zone	Arumeru	Tanzania		mmsakamali@yahoo.com
William	Swai	Farm Africa	Babati	Tanzania	00255 787 414161	willyswai@yahoo.com
Stanley	Mchome	Mishikamano SACCOS	Babati	Tanzania	00255 748359182	stanley2004@yahoo.com
Mussa	Singisha	DFP	Babati	Tanzania	00255 748413311	msingisha05@yahoo.com
Mohammed	Hamisi	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		mshikamano12005@yahoo.com
Stephen	Samo	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		kigima12005@yahoo.com
Juli	Reuben	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		inuka12005@yahoo.com
Ayubu	Hamisi	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		kifumangashi2005@yahoo.com
John	Uche	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		bigema12005@yahoo.com
Shannel	Arra	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		upendo12005@yahoo.com
Rukia	Mustapha	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		meqabin2005@yahoo.com
Thomas	Meena	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		mapambano12005@yahoo.com
Michael	Sikay	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		mamire12005@yahoo.com
Maulidi	Issa	Farmer Group	Babati	Tanzania		mawematu2005@yahoo.com
Asia	Mtibua	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		manyara12005@yahoo.com
Ally	Rashidi	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		hamasa12005@yahoo.com
Salim	Saidi	farmer group	Babati	Tanzania		kirusix2005@yahoo.com
Kivungu	Miombo	Kilangali SACCOS	Babati	Tanzania		sacostz@yahoo.com
Denis	Ndamugoba	FFS	Bukoba	Tanzania		dennisgoba@yahoo.co.uk
Mica	Mwakajumba	MAFS	Chunya	Tanzania		eluya1970@yahoo.co.uk
Matilda	Mfoi	DFP	Hai	Tanzania	00255 744497648	mmfoi63@yahoo.com
Eva	Mallya	Faida Mali	Hai	Tanzania	00255 744699613	evajmallya@yahoo.co.uk
Clarence	Chitemi	Faida Mali	Hai	Tanzania	00255 754632745	chitemic@yahoo.com
Labron	Kibona	MAFS	Ileje	Tanzania		labronakibona@yahoo.com
Adam	Swai	MAFS	Iringa	Tanzania	00255 748414738	adamswai@hotmail.com
Dorothy	Magesse	MAFS	Iringa	Tanzania	00255 744336457	magessedn@yahoo.com
Issae	Madundo	COOPS	Iringa	Tanzania		ismadundo@yahoo.com

First Name	Last Name	Organization	District	Country	Mobile Phone	Email Address
Shakwanande	Natai	MAFS	Iringa	Tanzania		soilises2000@yahoo.com
Zacharia	Mnyetti	MAFS	Iringa	Tanzania		mnyetti@yahoo.co.uk
Joseph	Sekiku	FADECO	Kagera	Tanzania		fadeco@satconet.net
Dina	Ndanguzi	FFS	Kagera	Tanzania		dndanguzi@yahoo.co.uk
Judith	Ndamugoba	FFS	Kagera	Tanzania		jacklinegoba@yahoo.co.uk
Thomas	Julianus	FAO FFS	Kagera	Tanzania	00255 784 233423	ffskagera@hotmail.com
Anna	Farahani	ASPS	Kilosa	Tanzania	00225 784623164	annaftz@yahoo.com
Onesmo	Mlelwa	MAFS	Kilosa	Tanzania	00255 748 819009	mlelwatz@yahoo.com
Juhudi	Kidoma	farmer group	Kilosa	Tanzania		juhudit@yahoo.com
Mwanzo	Mgumu	farmer group	Kilosa	Tanzania		mwanzotz@yahoo.co.uk
Kiwasomi	Msimba	farmer group	Kilosa	Tanzania		kiwasomi@yahoo.com
Kilosa	MIP Msimba	farmer group	Kilosa	Tanzania		mipmkm@yahoo.com
Neema	Vikwembe	farmer group	Kilosa	Tanzania		neemamkm@yahoo.com
Tumaini	Mikumi	farmer group	Kilosa	Tanzania		tumainimkm@yahoo.com
Upendo	Msimba	farmer group	Kilosa	Tanzania		upendomikumi@yahoo.com
Usagara	Muungano	farmer group	Kilosa	Tanzania		usagaratz@yahoo.com
Joseph	Mkwama	farmer group	Kilosa	Tanzania		mkwamajoseph@yahoo.co.uk
Umoja	Kidoma	KIRSEC	Kilosa	Tanzania		umojagrptz@yahoo.com
Epheta	Nkya	MAFS	Kilosa	Tanzania	00255 755979159	ephetankya@yahoo.com
Willy	Chisengo	Farmer group	Kilosa	Tanzania		wchisengo@yahoo.com
Shamsi	Mhina	MAFS	Kilosa,	Tanzania		mfusi2001@yahoo.com
Richard	Sirili	DFP	Ludewa	Tanzania	00255 262790097	rshongoy@yahoo.com
Amas	Chacha	Farmer Group	Ludewa	Tanzania		amaschacha@yahoo.com
Mussa	Sechonge	MAFS	Ludewa	Tanzania	00255 784980347	msechonge@excite.com
M	Chatto	PA	Ludewa	Tanzania	00255 786 037197	chattomr@yahoo.co.uk
Aminiel	Kitutu	farmer group	Ludewa	Tanzania		aminielkitutu@yahoo.com
Deonice	Mshida	DFP	Ludewa	Tanzania	00255 755091170	deonice@yahoo.com
John	Mdoe	DFP	Lushoto	Tanzania		johnmdoe_2002@yahoo.com
Lukas	Shemndolwa	MAFS	Lushoto	Tanzania		lucasshem@yahoo.com
Anyubatile	Seme	DFP	Mbarali	Tanzania	00255 754091847	semanyubatile@yahoo.com

First Name	Last Name	Organization	District	Country	Mobile Phone	Email Address
Rose	Konga	PA	Mbarali	Tanzania		kongarose@yahoo.co.uk
SC	Kifike	core group	Mbarali	Tanzania	00255 744553364	groupnuru@yahoo.com
Uliuidi	Semfukwe	core group	Mbarali	Tanzania	00255 787919896	ubamcos@yahoo.co.uk
Nicolous	Malema	PA	Mbeya	Tanzania	00255 755063028	n_malema1971@yahoo.com
Michael	Matambi	DFP	Mbeya	Tanzania	00255 784623280	mmatambi@yahoo.co.uk
Hezekia	Mwakasungula	Farmer Group	Mbeya	Tanzania	00255 744479243	hezekiahsamuel@yahoo.co.uk
Hassan	Mhando	PA	Mbeya	Tanzania	00255 755661054	mhandohr@yahoo.com
C	Mwakyembe	ABD/DASS	Mbeya	Tanzania		cmwakyembe@yahoo.co.uk
Fadhila	Mturi	MAFS	Mbeya	Tanzania		fmturi@yahoo.com
Lema	Ninatubu	MAFS	Mbeya	Tanzania	00255 744300584	nlema@raha.com
Tawa	Meramba	MAFS	Mbeya	Tanzania		tmeramba@hotmail.com
Samson	Mangasin	DFP	Mbeya	Tanzania		mangasin@yahoo.com
Zipporah	Mwakajwanga	AMSDP S zone	Mbeya	Tanzania	00255 744520336	zipmwakajwanga@yahoo.com
Gabriel	Nkenzi	farmer group	Mbeya	Tanzania	00255 748354381	nkenzigs58@yahoo.com
Frida	Mhanza	Jiendeleze SACCOS	Mbeya	Tanzania		jiendeleze1998saccos@yahoo.co.uk
Ima	Kazumba	Mbonzo SACCOS	Mbeya	Tanzania		mbonzomkos@yahoo.com
Charles	Mwkatobe	farmer group	Mbeya	Tanzania		ngoha@yahoo.com
Halima	Kwikwega	AMSDP -MES	Mbeya	Tanzania		halimahamza@hotmail.com
Bernhard	Semawaiko	DFP	Mbinga	Tanzania	00255 752202410	ben_mwaiko@yahoo.com
Isaac	Ibrahim	DFO	Mbinga	Tanzania	00255 756582444	isaac.ibrahim@tinstanzania.org
Pius	Mwashikumbulu	PA	Mbozi	Tanzania	00225 745816722	piusmwash@yahoo.com
Deogratias	Rwechungura	DFP	Mbozi	Tanzania	00255 744641607	deorwehy@yahoo.com
Mwang'ombola	Mwaikambo	farmer group	Mbozi	Tanzania	00255 787189826	mwaikombog@yahoo.com
Richard	Kombo	DFP	Monduli	Tanzania	00255 744753643	mdhiwarikombo@yahoo.com
Mark	Farahani	KIRSEC	Morogoro	Tanzania	00255 784705034	mfarahanitz@yahoo.com
Faustus	Lekule	SERUDE	Morogoro	Tanzania	00255 754690023	lekule@suanet.ac.tz
Loyce	Kaitira	TIP	Moshi	Tanzania		loyce@tiptz.org
Nuswe	Nanzali	DFP	Mufundi	Tanzania	00255 748665353	nyanzalitz@yahoo.co.uk
John	Kamballa	PA	Mufundi	Tanzania		johnkamballa@yahoo.com
Violet	Cheti	DMM	Muheza	Tanzania	00255 748893782	chetiviolet@yahoo.co.uk

First Name	Last Name	Organization	District	Country	Mobile Phone	Email Address
Steven	Steven	PA	Muheza	Tanzania		stevesam@yahoo.com
Lucy	Chomba	Processors W.T.C.P	Muheza	Tanzania	00255 787418358	mwakanitz@yahoo.co.uk
Anthony	Senkoro	DFP	Muheza	Tanzania	00255 744682190	jsenkoro@yahoo.com
Silvester	Miziray	farmer group	Muheza	Tanzania	00255 744863080	sylvestermiziray@yahoo.com
Sipora	Liana	MAFS	Njombe	Tanzania		siporaliana@yahoo.co.uk
Salvatory	Mayoka	DFP	Nkasi	Tanzania		salvatorymayoka@yahoo.com
Chikira	Mcharo	DFP	Rombo	Tanzania	00255 744942673	chikira_2003@yahoo.com
Rungwe	Core Group	Core Group	Rungwe	Tanzania		nkalisisamaki@yahoo.com
Neema	Farmers	Neema Farmers	Rungwe	Tanzania		neema@yahoo.com
Juhudi	Farmers	farmers group	Rungwe	Tanzania		juhudiukatakinyala@yahoo.com
Jipemoyo	Farmers	Jipemoyo Group	Rungwe	Tanzania		jipemoyo@yahoo.com
Angetile	Nocha	DFP/DMM	Rungwe	Tanzania	00255 752557383	nangetile@yahoo.com
Noel	Rutagarama	PA	Rungwe,	Tanzania	00255 744635904	noelruta2006@yahoo.com
Enirisha	Magohe	DFP	Same	Tanzania	00255 754835276	magoheenirisha@yahoo.com
Masasa	Makwasa	core group	Same	Tanzania	00255 713496589	makwassa@yahoo.com
Jerome	Maimu	core group	Same	Tanzania	00255 784860484	veco-same@iwayafrica.com
Thomas	Ngapomba	farmer group	Songea	Tanzania	00255 784629796	ngapomba@yahoo.com
Mohamed	Waziri	farmer group	Songea	Tanzania		mwaziri64@yahoo.com
Job	Mushi	Technoserve	Songea	Tanzania	00255 784537162	mushijob@yahoo.com
Nakahuga Irri	Farmers	Nakahuga Irri Farmers	Songea	Tanzania		mkalimoto2006@yahoo.com
Wilbrod	Kansapa	DMM	Sumbawanga	Tanzania	00255 756257372	kansapa4@yahoo.com
Alfan	Mohamed	Farmer Group	Sumbawanga	Tanzania	00255 745771335	kifumbaalfan@yahoo.com
Hosea	Mwaisaka	DFP	Sumbawanga	Tanzania	00255 754776841	mwaisakah@yahoo.com
Kain	Mvanda	UDSM	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania	00255 742623 46	Kmvanda@yahoo.com
Judith	Mrema	TMLA	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania		judithmrema@yahoo.com
Augustine	Lamosai	MAFS ASDP	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania	00255 744444002	alamosai@yahoo.com
Erasto	Mlay	TMLA	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania		erastoemlay@yahoo.com
Francis	Shao	FANRM	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania	00255 744270682	fshao@muchs.ac.tz
Grace	Shile	Pathfinders International	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania		grace2shile@yahoo.com
Renalda	Shiyo	AMSDP	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania		renaldashiyo@yahoo.com
Fidea	Mgina	MAFS ASDP	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania		fideamgina@yahoo.com

First Name	Last Name	Organization	District	Country	Mobile Phone	Email Address
Shekaria	Bisanda	MAFS	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania		sbisanda@hotmail.com
Tertula	Swai	PADEP	Dar es Salaam	Tanzania	00255 744605019	tmswai@yahoo.com.au
Sophia	Mwenda	AMSDP	Arusha	Tanzania		sophiamwenda@yahoo.com
Stephenson	Ngoda	AMSDP	Arusha	Tanzania	00255 744486380	scngoda@hotmail.com
Vincon	Nyimbo	AMSDP	Arusha	Tanzania	00255 754291789	vnyimbo@yahoo.co.uk
Gibson	Kisamba	TFA	Arusha	Tanzania	00255 754461988	gibson542002@yahoo.com
John	Kossima	RKN	Arusha	Tanzania	00255 715457171	johnmazotz@gmail.com
Leonard	Muhoni	AMSDP	Arusha	Tanzania	00255 784372995	muhoni@yahoo.com
Yusuf	Kajenje	AMSDP/IFAD	Arusha	Tanzania	00255 713542121	kajenje2002@yahoo.com

ANNEX F. LLL PLATFORM USER ASSESSMENT

Improvements on the conditions:

Right now the problems of going online – and its costs – are a much bigger problem for MACs than the issues of using the LLL platform. What we discuss here is for MACs who have no problems of regularly accessing the internet.

Some MACs still need training and practice on how to use the internet and the LLL platform efficiently.

Operational improvements:

There is a strong need for regular synthesizing of discussions in order to cut down on the bulk of information in all the messages. The bulk of messages are becoming too big to systematically search for useful information. Synthesizing shall be a task of mentors.

Discussion topics should be started by mentors, who then encourage MACs to join in and exchange, ie. mentors moderate and then synthesize the discussion topics they introduce. The topics need to take into account both immediate and strategic concerns of MACs.

There needs to be some coordination among mentors about who will moderate and synthesize which topic.

Design issues of the platform (to be taken up with IDESO):

Top priority:

- A fast link to ask for the password in case it was forgotten
- A fast way to send a document on the LLL platform to a particular Email address.
- A message at the top of the entry window “CAUTION: System logs you out after 5 minutes inaction. If it takes you more than 5 minutes to respond, write on a separate Word or Text document, then log in again, and copy-paste your contribution here into this window”.
- When replying to a post, the post to which I am replying should be in the reply window with the possibility to edit it.)
- A possibility of attaching more than one attachment per post.
- For new entries and responses: Eliminate the options “mark private” and “archive” at the bottom.
- Scrolling for names in the People section of the InstantTeams takes too long. Maybe use an alphabetic range, ie. click on “s” for all names starting with S (like in the knowledge pool).
- Clicking on people in the knowledge pool should lead straight to their profile

Second priority:

- Make synthesizing easier: I can take a whole thread or range of threads and make a synthesis of that discussion. Then the synthesis goes on top, and all the posts leading to it can be grouped behind that synthesis and are hidden. A link on the synthesis opens the posts that lead to it < -- > The posts leading to the synthesis each have a link to their synthesis. But all posts always remain searchable in the whole knowledge pool.
- Possibility of break-out groups for sub-discussions, where the posts of that group are not sent by mail to everybody but only to those who are in that group. But all their posts can be seen and searched on the platform like all the rest.
- An easy way to make links in the message texts to URLs outside the platform.
- Rethink the use or non-use of the "News" feature. If not immediately useful, cancel it and replace with a window on the frontpage that can be managed by the editors.

Nice to have:

- "Thread" in the new post window actually means "Discussion".
- "Library" in the new document window actually means "Shelf".
- A fast way to see who is registered on which platforms
- Language: The need for a solution on the Swahili-English interface.
- A way to recall a document if it was falsely posted

Questions for email follow up with LLL users

- 1) When did you last go to <http://www.linkinglearners.net/login>? Can you log in and open the Demand Driven Services platform? If not, tell me what the problem is.
- 2) Can you add to an ongoing discussion from the linkinglearners website? If not, tell me what the problem is.
- 3) Can you upload a document to the Demand Driven Services team library? If not, tell me what the problem is.
- 4) Can you find yourself on the "People" list? Click on your name. Is the information there correct? Can you edit it? If not, tell me what the problem is.
- 5) Can you check through all the Briefs in the linkinglearners website? Can you find them? Can you also find the stories? If you cannot find the Briefs and the Stories, tell me what the problem is.
- 6) What would make the LLL online learning tools easier for you to use?