

IFDC

Report

An update on the work and progress of IFDC

An IFDC Core Competency: Agro-Dealer Development

Agro-dealer development is one of IFDC's core competencies. These dealers play a crucial role in helping farmers access much-needed agricultural inputs (fertilizers, improved seeds and crop protection products). IFDC has trained agro-dealers in a number of developing nations over the years. Articles in this issue of the IFDC Report highlight several current agro-dealer development projects: "An IFDC Core Competency: Agro-Dealer Development" (page 1); "New Agro-Dealer Development Project: COMESA Regional Agricultural Inputs Program" (page 6); and "GADD Project Provides Technical Support to Agro-Dealer Association" (page 10).

Ajay S. Shriram, president of the International Fertilizer Industry Association, recently spoke before the United Nations General Assembly Interactive Hearings with Civil Society on Achieving the Millennium Development Goals. According to Shriram, "The farmers' main point of contact for inputs and advice remains agro-dealers. Including dealers in the extension system and equipping them with sufficient knowledge would definitely improve knowledge transfer." Citing an IFDC project, Shriram said, "In Ghana, IFDC has developed a Dealer Training and Certification Program that benefits 2,000 agro-dealers and 150 seed producers."

Getting quality agri-inputs into the hands of farmers is very difficult in many developing countries, bringing into focus the



A Kenyan agro-dealer gives advice to a farmer about the correct use of inputs.

great need for agro-dealers. IFDC has decades of experience in training agro-dealers to assist their farmer-customers. Moreover, IFDC helps train agro-dealers to manage their businesses more effectively and to launch and manage trade associations that generate additional knowledge transfer.

IFDC's approach to agro-dealer development has evolved over more than 30 years. It has been shaped by a thorough

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FEATURED ARTICLES

Bangladeshi UDP Farmer is Gold Medal Winner of Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award

IFDC and the African Union Sign Memorandum of Understanding

New Study: World Phosphate Rock Reserves and Resources

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IFDC is a public international organization, governed by an international board of directors with representation from developed and developing countries. The nonprofit Center is supported by various bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, private foundations and national governments.

IFDC focuses on increasing and sustaining food security and agricultural productivity in developing countries through the development and transfer of effective and environmentally sound crop nutrient technology and agribusiness expertise.

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Scott Mall

EDITOR

Lisa Thigpen

CONTRIBUTORS

Ketline Adodo, Daniya Baisubanova, Clyde Beaver, Courtney Greene, Ishrat Jahan and Dr. Vo-Tong Xuan

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Patrice Annequin, Daniya Baisubanova, Meg Ross, Dr. Vo-Tong Xuan and *The Destiny*

DESIGN

Heather Gasaway

PRODUCTION COORDINATION

Donna Venable

DISTRIBUTION

Jane Goss



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Agro-Dealer Development

(Continued from Page 1)

understanding of economics and markets and experience in nearly 100 developed, developing and emerging countries. IFDC has provided strategic support that contributed to the creation of agro-dealer/fertilizer businesses and associations in Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Ghana, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan and Nigeria, among others.

Albania

Beginning in 1991 – after nearly 50 years of communist rule and government control of the agricultural sector – IFDC’s work in Albania created a sustainable impact. Dianne Blane, former mission director for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in Albania, said, “The IFDC project in Albania was really the first donor effort to introduce the principles and practices of a free-market economy in Albania. IFDC’s hands-on approach to reviving the agricultural sector by marketing imported fertilizer served to train government officials, private fertilizer dealers and farmers in basic business practices. It was an enormous success – fertilizer applications led to increased crop production, which led to on-farm income generation that stabilized Albania’s rural economy.”

Kyrgyzstan

Business linkage development is critical in enabling agro-dealers to improve both cost and operational efficiency in value chain management, credit management and expanding the scope of dealer operations. In 2002, through the first Kyrgyz Agro-Input Enterprise Development (KAED I) project, IFDC helped establish the Association of Agribusinessmen of Kyrgyzstan (AAK). The AAK represents and coordinates the work of more than 140 producers, suppliers and agro-dealers in the Kyrgyz Republic. The AAK dealer network offers quality inputs through 35 farm stores, serving an average of 2,700 farmers. As a result, the distance traveled by AAK farmer-customers to buy inputs was reduced from seven to two and one-half miles. Through AAK, the KAED I and KAED II projects have reached more than 330,000 farmers.

Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, IFDC conducts many technical transfer activities involving the public sector and private fertilizer dealers. Building agro-dealers’ capacity so that they can provide advisory services to farmers has been very successful. IFDC also helped develop linkages between Bangladeshi manufacturers of fertilizer briquette machines and agro-dealers in Kenya, Nigeria and Rwanda. For

example, Kenya’s Athi Mining Ltd. ordered two briquetters after Kenyan officials visited Bangladesh to study the briquetting business model. IFDC is organizing more study visits and technical workshops to facilitate additional business linkages.

IFDC is currently implementing several agro-dealer development projects in Africa: Agro-dealer Network Development (AND); Extending Agro-Input Dealer Networks (EADN); Ghana Agro-Dealer Development (GADD); Livelihoods and Enterprises for Agricultural Development (LEAD); Mozambique Agro-Dealer Development (MADD); Nigeria Agro-Dealer Support (NADS); and Rwanda Agro-Dealer Development (RADD).

AND

AND is increasing agro-dealers’ capacity in 10 Nigerian states by educating extension officers to further train 100 agro-dealers over 14 months. In 2009, the project piloted a fertilizer voucher program in Kano and Taraba states in which the viability of a targeted subsidy was demonstrated. Farmers will now deal directly with local agro-dealers to purchase inputs. The use of vouchers to provide agri-inputs to smallholder farmers has received favorable reviews among donors. In 2010, the Nigerian program expanded to Bauchi and Kwara states and is assisting over 200,000 additional farmers.

EADN

The EADN project strengthens and extends agro-dealer capacities in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The project focuses on building highly functioning dealer networks that can support the introduction of improved production technologies to smallholder farmers. The project also focuses on improving agro-dealer promotional, distribution and educational capabilities.

GADD

GADD is increasing the agricultural productivity and incomes of 850,000 Ghanaian farmers by increasing the affordability and availability of inputs. The project’s goal is to train and certify more than 2,200 agro-dealers and 150 seed producers, with a standard curriculum developed jointly by GADD and Ghana’s regulatory authorities. To date, the program has not only transformed 1,325 input dealers into the primary points of contact for farmers, but also as carriers of goods, services and information to the farmers. (For more information on GADD, see article on page 10.)

LEAD

IFDC is implementing the input market supply development component of the LEAD project in Uganda. LEAD is raising rural agricultural productivity and incomes for targeted smallholders. Utilizing the value chain approach to maximize agricultural

development, LEAD improves productivity through training and access to quality agri-inputs and increases trade capacity and market competitiveness by building better market linkages.

MADD

MADD is building on the successes of IFDC’s Agricultural Input Market Strengthening (AIMS I and II) projects. The AIMS projects educated and trained over 1,000 dealers, importers and farmers through workshops and demonstration plots. MADD is concentrating its efforts in the Manica and Tete provinces of central Mozambique to promote private sector investment in agri-input technologies and improve farmers’ access to technologies through competitive markets and stronger dealer networks. The project is developing a network of 425 agro-dealers in the urban, semi-urban and rural markets.

NADS

NADS is providing credit and support to 1,400 rural agro-dealers across Nigeria in order to increase the agricultural productivity, incomes and well-being of more than one million rural smallholder farmers. This is achieved by increasing the affordability and availability of seeds and other quality agri-inputs in rural areas. IFDC works with local partners to build dealer capacity and strengthen technical and business knowledge.

The project supports trade associations and assists agro-dealers to access investment capital through risk-sharing. Dealers are also trained in

providing services such as field demonstrations, soil testing and teaching best practices to farmers.

RADD

IFDC was recently awarded the Rwanda Agro-Dealer Development (RADD) project by AGRA. IFDC will work with Rwanda’s agro-dealers, Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, agricultural extension agents and farmer and producer organizations to improve dealers’ capabilities and assist the country’s smallholder farmers.

Shriram stated in his UN speech, “...in most countries the main constraint is not the availability of technology or knowledge but how to deliver the same to the farmer’s gate. We call this ‘last-mile delivery’ – of knowledge, services, tools, innovation and markets.” IFDC’s work with agro-dealer networks across Africa and Eurasia helps ensure last-mile delivery. Agro-dealers and farmers are benefiting from IFDC programs and expertise. These benefits extend throughout the agricultural sector and local and national economies.

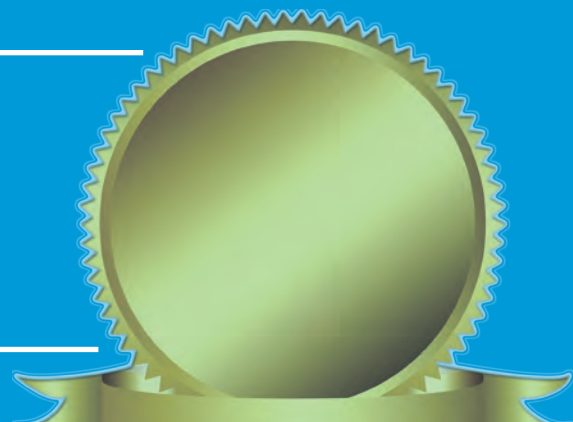
More information on each of these nations and projects can be found at www.ifdc.org/nations and www.ifdc.org/projects.

“USAID/KAED II is the most effective project in Kyrgyzstan in terms of leveraging the USAID investment in agriculture.”

Pat Shapiro

USAID country director for Kyrgyzstan

Bangladeshi UDP Farmer is Gold Medal Winner of Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award



Usharani Goswami, a Bangladeshi farmer featured last year in the *IFDC Report* (Vol. 34, No. 2), has been awarded the Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award for her contribution to Bangladesh's agriculture sector. She was one of five to receive a Gold Medal from Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.



Usharani Goswami (left) receives the Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award Gold Medal on July 26 from Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina (right). Also present is Minister of Agriculture Begum Matia Chowdhury.

A widow, Usharani was responsible for her family's welfare, but she knew little about farming. She received technical training in urea deep placement (UDP) from the local Agricultural Extension Department (DAE) and IFDC. Usharani raised rice on only 0.10 hectare in 2008-2009. She applied UDP during the Boro (irrigated) season, yielding 8.4 metric tons of paddy rice, generating a net income of US \$150 in a nation where the average annual income is \$520. She then applied UDP technology to her crop during the Aman (rain-fed) season with similar success.

Her crop yields motivated area farmers to apply UDP to their crops. About 80 percent of the farmers in her village are now using UDP. In addition to UDP, she has influenced area farmers to use integrated pest management as well as IFDC's Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM), applying organic fertilizer to increase soil health.

To read more about Usharani, go to the Changing Lives section of the IFDC website: http://www.ifdc.org/Changing_Lives.

Translated by IFDC's Resident Representative in Bangladesh, Ishrat Jahan, from the July 27, 2010, edition of The Destiny, a daily Bengali newspaper.

KATALYST Develops Private Sector Markets in Bangladesh

The Market Development in the Fertilizer Sector of Bangladesh (KATALYST) project follows a pro-poor, market development approach to promote economic growth. The project is implemented by Swisscontact and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation under the umbrella of the Bangladesh Ministry of Commerce. KATALYST is jointly funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and the United Kingdom Department for International Development.

The project began on January 1, 2010, and will continue until September 30, 2011. As a co-facilitator for the project, IFDC's key initial activity was to assess the policy environment and identify constraints to systemic, market-led development.

Dr. A.M.M. Shawkat Ali, former senior advisor to the government of Bangladesh and also secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, is leading the policy component of the project.

KATALYST supports the development of the Bangladeshi fertilizer industry, emphasizing private sector market participation. The project also strengthens and supports agricultural development systems. Key focus areas are the fertilizer policy framework and the removal of barriers to private investment in the fertilizer sector. Strategic areas of intervention are being identified to improve the performance of the fertilizer value chain. Areas of emphasis include promoting appropriate fertilizer management practices, improving farmer access to quality inputs and creating a market-friendly regulatory framework.

KAED II Project Hosts Agricultural Machinery Field Days

"I have worked with many development projects over the years. None has been more effective than the USAID/KAED II project in providing support that produces quick results and lasting impact. The project has helped me increase my wheat yields and net income."

*Turatbek Ukubaev
Large-scale wheat farmer and GDA partner*

The Kyrgyz Agro-Input Enterprise Development (KAED II) project, funded by USAID, in cooperation with Eurasia Group Kyrgyzstan LLC, recently hosted two agricultural machinery demonstration field days. The events were held in Ivanovka and Novopokrovka villages of Issyk-Ata rayon (sub-district), Chui oblast (district).

Both field days showcased the benefits of agricultural machinery and the adoption of other modern technologies to improve cereal and fodder crop cultivation. Field day participants were exposed to information about the main characteristics, advantages and benefits of new agricultural machinery.

The John Deere Company (USA) displayed several models of farm machinery at the first field day. The exhibit included modern tractors, disk harrows, seeding machines and cultivators that perform cost-effective field operations while satisfying the highest agronomic demands.

At the second field day, Turkey's Muzaffer Kagitcioglu Agricultural Machinery Industry and Foreign Trade Ltd. and Germany's LEMKIN and CLAAS exhibited their machinery. These exhibits included

modern plows, cultivators, spreaders, tractors and spraying and seeding equipment.

Participants at both field days visited demonstration fields sown with new varieties of corn, sunflower, wheat and barley. The participants learned of new genetic capacities, planting techniques, seeding rates and modern soil preparation techniques. The demonstration fields are part of a public-private partnership, under the framework of USAID's Global Development Alliance with the Eurasia Group.

Kubatbek Kaseyinov, former Minister of Agriculture of the Kyrgyz Republic, attended one field day; Nurlan Duisheev, Acting Minister of Agriculture of the Kyrgyz Republic, Temir Sariev, Acting Minister of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic, and Pat Shapiro, USAID Kyrgyz Republic Country Director, attended the other field day event. Farmers and representatives of local governments, agricultural cooperatives, financial institutions, international organizations and service companies attended both field days.

Photo: IFDC's KAED II project recently hosted two well-attended agricultural machinery field days.

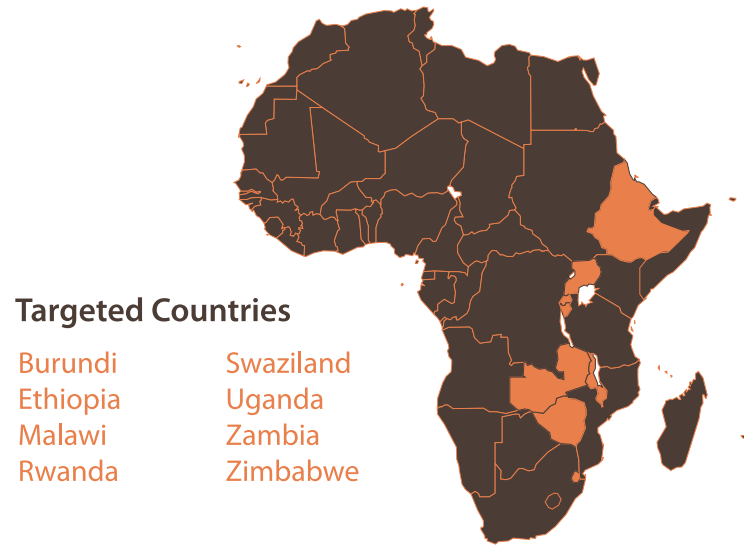


New Agro-Dealer Development Project: COMESA Regional Agricultural Inputs Program (COMRAP)

More than 60 percent of the population in eastern and southern Africa is undernourished. Moreover, the prices of staple foods doubled during 2007-2008, threatening food security for over 250 million people in the region (and over one billion worldwide). The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) is alleviating poverty by promoting regional agricultural integration and removing trade and investment barriers.

COMESA's Regional Agricultural Inputs Program (COMRAP) is responding to rising food prices by increasing agricultural productivity through improved access to finance, fertilizer and seeds. Over the course of its implementation, the project will reach about three million smallholder farmers in Burundi, Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

As a facilitating partner in the project, IFDC is implementing the agro-dealer development component of COMRAP in association with the Agricultural Market Development Trust. Agro-dealers play a crucial role in bringing inputs closer to farmers and are critical to the success of the project. IFDC, in collaboration with farmer organizations, will conduct baseline surveys on agri-input distribution, fertilizer and seed use and the identification of appropriate agro-dealers. IFDC will then help assess training needs, develop a curriculum and hold courses for selected



Targeted Countries

- Burundi
- Ethiopia
- Malawi
- Rwanda
- Swaziland
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

agro-dealers. A network of nearly 5,800 agro-dealers in the eight countries will be trained. After completing six months of training, trainees will receive agro-dealer certification. Follow-up courses then will be held on agricultural extension and marketing.

COMRAP is a two-year project implemented by the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) and funded by the European Union Food Facility Program.

IFDC and African Union Sign Memorandum of Understanding



IFDC President and CEO Dr. Amit Roy shakes hands with Her Excellency, Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, the African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture (and newest IFDC board member), after the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding June 28 at the African Union Commission (AUC) headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The MOU formalizes the collaboration between the AUC and IFDC in their mutual goal of transforming African agriculture.

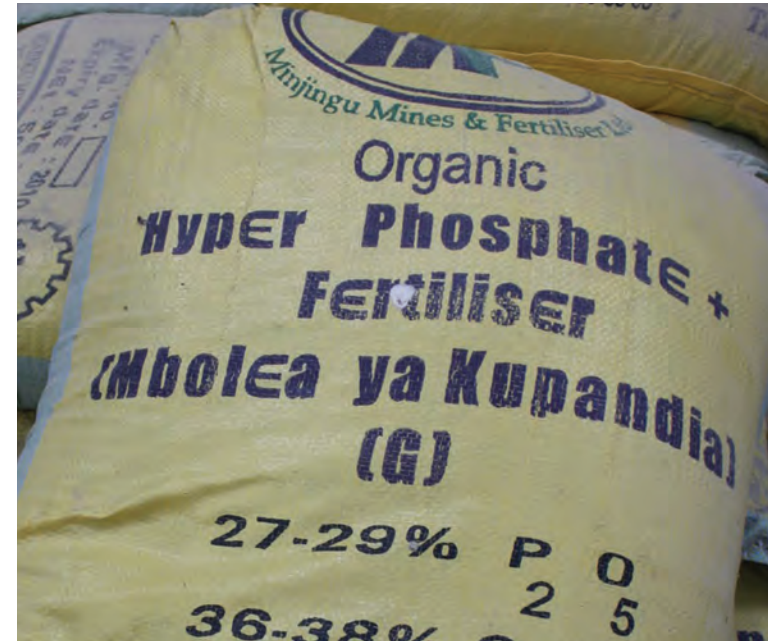
IFDC and EAC Hold Policy Workshop to Improve Fertilizer Supply in Africa

In collaboration with the East African Community (EAC), IFDC held a policy workshop to discuss the fertilizer supply in Africa through improved production and trade. Nearly 100 participants and speakers from 17 countries attended the workshop in Arusha, Tanzania, June 28-July 1, 2010. The event was an activity of the Strengthening Trade at the Regional Level in Agricultural Inputs in Africa (STAR) project (2007-2010).

Participants focused on production, trade, market linkages and the policy environment with special attention on subsidies and voucher systems. Key stakeholders in attendance included fertilizer production engineers, marketing specialists, entrepreneurs, policymakers and policy analysts. COMESA and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) were also represented, and key IFDC staff participated and made presentations.

The workshop included discussions on fertilizer production and procurement, highlighting the economies of scale in production and the removal of restrictions on fertilizer exports. It was also stressed that the implementation of a farmer support program should not discourage the participation of the private sector in fertilizer production and marketing.

Participants agreed that non-conducive policy environments remain a hurdle to fertilizer production, trade, investment and



Phosphate fertilizer

market development, as well as fertilizer use by smallholder farmers. Policymakers and development partners were called upon to create an enabling environment to promote fertilizer use and supply to spark a Green Revolution in Africa.

The event coincided with the implementation of the Protocol on the East African Common Market, setting the stage for the establishment of a regional fertilizer market without borders.

Market linkage presentations included discussions of two agri-input market information systems – www.africafertilizer.org and www.amitsa.org (AMITSA). AfricaFertilizer.org is an IFDC-created and managed global Internet forum, which disseminates and exchanges information on various aspects of fertilizer, soil fertility and related agricultural issues that impact Africa. AMITSA provides market and technical data on agricultural inputs and crop-related information in eastern and southern Africa.

On a field trip to the Minjingu Mines and Fertilizer Company, participants learned about mining and commercializing the direct application of phosphate rock for crop growth.

The policy workshop marks one of STAR's final activities. Funded through a William and Flora Hewlett Foundation grant, the project has promoted food security and agricultural growth through improved regional trade in agricultural inputs in eastern and southern Africa.



Workshop attendees visited phosphate rock deposits at the Minjingu Mines and Fertilizer Company.

The 1000s+ Project Improves Livelihoods of One Million Rural Farm Families in West Africa

The From Thousands to Millions (1000s+) project is changing agribusiness in West Africa. 1000s+ is a component of the Strategic Alliance for Agricultural Development in Africa (SAADA), funded by the Netherlands Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS). The project has improved the livelihoods of one million rural farm families in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Togo.

The 1000s+ intervention strategy is based on two key IFDC programs – Competitive Agricultural Systems and Enterprises (CASE) and Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM). CASE develops sustainable linkages among key stakeholders along specific agricultural value chains. ISFM improves soil fertility through the combined use of mineral and organic fertilizers and other soil- and yield-enhancing practices.

“The project creates an empowering environment through the agribusiness cluster system that drives the development of profitable value chains,” said Dr. Andre de Jager, agribusiness program leader for IFDC’s North and West Africa Division. “Local input suppliers, farmers and their organizations, traders, processors, bankers, microfinance institutions and business support services work together within these clusters. They learn to explore markets, manage their businesses, advocate for needed policy changes and measure results against objectives.”

Benin

According to Mathias Ahounou, cluster advisor in Benin, “With the adoption of ISFM technology, average maize yields shot up causing market gluts, and farmers were unable to sell production surpluses at a profit.

“Producing agreed-upon amounts to satisfy a specific market is a key principle of CASE,” Ahounou stressed. “This has made a great difference. For example, farmers were producing white maize until they learned that yellow maize was more profitable because of demand, particularly from poultry farmers.”

Bernardin Toto, representing the Network of Farmers’ Organizations and Agricultural Producers of West Africa, said 1000s+ has enabled its partners to play a major role in national agricultural policy development. “That is one of the project’s significant impacts, due to targeted trainings that emphasize individual skills and organizational learning,” Toto said.



Women farmers in Mali use their cell phones to check current market prices.

Burkina Faso

Stephane Bayala, cluster advisor representing the Federation of Agricultural Produce Processors, noted that farmers’ organizations are increasingly attracted by the 1000s+ vision and approach. “Innovative ideas emerge and the project assists in formulating, planning and implementing,” Bayala said. “The value chain creates a market circuit for a product from the farm to the consumer’s plate across the country and even abroad.”

Regional cluster advisor Asseta Diallo cited an animal-fattening cluster that gained access to animal feed. “Before, only traders had access to commercial feed,” Diallo said. “Cluster-organized advocacy efforts led to the government facilitating animal feed availability to livestock breeders throughout the country. The members developed linkages with micro-finance institutions and industrial units and mobilized the funds needed to construct two hay barns to stock animal feed.”

Ghana

Gabriel Mills, a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) facilitator, explained how 1000s+ stimulates and supports business development. “Farmers are striving to reduce their production costs. For instance, a Ghanaian farmer’s family transformed old diamond mining pits into fish ponds but abandoned the business for 10 years due to high production costs. The farmer requested support from 1000s+ to revive the family business. Her efforts to reduce expenses led to the creation of a fish cluster in Kade in eastern Ghana. Through the cluster, she hired

an engineer to build a machine to mix fish feed, which reduced costs by about 60-70 percent compared to the cost of market brands. Many have joined the cluster to learn how to maintain and manage fish ponds and to process fish that cannot be sold when fresh.”

Mali

Highlighting the success of the 1000s+ project in the soybean sector, M&E facilitator Arouna Bayoko said, “Diversification became a pressing need for many farmers because of the cotton crisis. The soybean cluster was developed to help farmers exploit the advantages of this profitable alternative.”

Bayoka continued, “Because seed cotton availability is increasingly problematic, some processing companies are switching to soybean. An animal feed-producing enterprise in Koutiala is seeking sources of soybeans to replace cotton seeds. Now, the challenge is to organize more producers to satisfy increasing demand.”

Niger

“1000s+ is very beneficial to the rural communities in the Dosso and Tahoua regions of Niger,” said Issaka Morou, M&E facilitator. 1000s+ identified and distributed improved cassava varieties that generate higher yields. Morou continued, “Cassava, a staple food, was formerly sold as a raw product and/or was consumed boiled. At harvest, a 150-kilogram (kg) bag of cassava sells for 2,500 to 3,000 CFA (US \$5-\$6).”

Following a study tour to Benin, farmers learned how to process cassava into gari, a popular West African food, tapioca and starch. Farmers now dry and stockpile cassava for future consumption or further processing.

To make gari, cassava tubers are peeled, washed and grated or crushed to produce a mash. The mash is placed in a porous bag and allowed to ferment; weights are placed on the bag to expel water. It is then sifted and roasted in a heated bowl. The resulting dry, granular gari can be stored for long periods. After such processing, a bag of gari can sell for 12,000 CFA (\$24). When cassava is made into starch, a 100-kg bag can sell for about 140,000 CFA (\$280). “Traders come from Nigeria and Benin to buy the starch, which is widely used in clothing and hat manufacturing,” said Morou.

“The animal-fattening sector has also benefited from 1000s+,” Morou stated. “Livestock farmers often feed their animals expensive products, such as vitamins or honey. After selling the livestock, they thought they had made a profit, but had actually sold at a loss because they could not fully evaluate their production costs. By professionalizing their business operations, they have learned to calculate costs so in the case of a deficit, they can review their strategy. The animals are now weighed when they are bought and before being sold. Thus, contracts are finalized with buyers from Benin on the basis of weight, which is a more logical way of doing business.”

Nigeria

Lazarus Yerima, M&E facilitator from the Organization for Sustainable Community Development, said, “Our NGO is comprised of farm groups including producers, processors and traders. The partnership with 1000s+ helped sharpen our vision and make the services we provide to members more relevant through capacity building and the provision of input loans.”

Yerima continued, “The impact was immediate. Formerly maize was not grown as a food crop; sorghum was the food crop. Last year, we saw a dramatic change. Members began growing maize and it has now become a staple food. In terms of food security, the difference is clear – sorghum harvested in September can feed the population (about 30,000 people) until March, while maize harvested in September can feed them for a year.

“The project’s ISFM component is also very important because we have rocky soils and most lowland soils are exhausted. Last year we adopted ISFM techniques using poultry droppings. The farms flourished and became sites of attraction within the community. Now there is a market for this organic fertilizer,” Yerima added.

1000s+

Improves Livelihoods of Rural Families in:

Benin	Niger
Burkina Faso	Nigeria
Ghana	Togo
Mali	

Togo

CASE has generated a new dynamic among the clusters’ participants, according to Totétiébe Dametougue, M&E facilitator in Togo. “1000s+ has triggered a revolution with the introduction of formal business contracts between traders and producers,” Dametougue said.

Another benefit of 1000s+ is its stimulation of the food processing sector, which adds value to agricultural products. Three processor groups are now making couscous and spaghetti from maize and are producing dried tomato products. The project has strengthened their production capacities by providing institutional support and assistance in buying processing equipment.

Wim van Campen, 1000s+ project leader, stated, “We have succeeded in developing capacities and creating critical mass to further advance the 1000s+ project. Some clusters are well articulated and strong enough to target greater markets – for example, local beer industries offer tremendous market opportunities for cereal producers.”

GADD Project Provides Technical Support to Agro-Dealer Association

The three-year Ghana Agro-Dealer Development (GADD) project (2008-2011), funded by AGRA, is building on the success of IFDC's Ghana Agricultural Input Marketing Systems (GAIMS) project, implemented during 2002-2004. GAIMS trained more than 400 agro-dealers and 60 extension agents in business skills and product information. Soon after the training, participants formed the Ghana Agricultural Input Dealers Association (GAIDA). GAIDA had an initial membership of 500, and those early members established nearly 400 new shops in rural areas, providing accessibility to inputs for roughly 260,000 farmers.



A Ghanaian farmer goes to local agro-dealer for information and agri-inputs.

IFDC's GADD project is working to extend those early successes, focusing on building strong agro-dealer networks and providing direct technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of GAIDA members. As a sign of the association's growing strength, GAIDA recently joined the Ghana Agricultural Associations Business and Information Center (GAABIC), a consortium of agricultural associations in Ghana.

GAIDA uses modern communication and service delivery channels to reach its members and customers.

For example, GAIDA has partnered with BusyLab (a private software company in Ghana) to use more modern communication methods based on information and communication technology (ICT). ICT is the merging of telephone networks with computer networks through a single link system.

Given their high level of market penetration in Ghana, cellular telephones have become a major medium of information exchange between agro-dealers and farmers. GAIDA has developed databases of input dealers, farmers, buyers and processors. The databases are loaded onto the "esoko" platform (www.esoko.com) and linked to each other to conclude business deals. Esoko means "electronic market" in Kiswahili.

GADD has regularly provided adult education programs on national television. The programs are used to educate the general public on the correct use of inputs and to increase

"Working with our partners, IFDC would like to improve, deepen and broaden this concept, expanding coverage to new regions and include new, innovative aspects that have further potential to accelerate agribusiness in Africa."

*Dr. André de Jager
IFDC NWAFFD agribusiness program leader*

GAIDA membership. This strategy increased GAIDA membership from 500 to 1,400.

One very important accomplishment for GAIDA has been the geographic information system (GIS) mapping of about 3,500 agro-dealers and sales points. The GIS map shows what distance a farmer must travel to have access to an agro-dealer.

As another successful component of GADD, IFDC has developed a standardized curriculum, endorsed by Ghana's Environmental Protection Agency and Ministry for Food and Agriculture, for technical and business development training of agro-dealers. The regional chapters of GAIDA are now responsible for organizing dealer training and providing administrative and logistical support.

"Agro-dealers occupy a unique position in input supply and product value chains," said Dr. Kofi Debrah, IFDC country representative in Ghana and project manager of the Linking Farmers to Markets

project, also funded by AGRA. "While agro-dealers are the last link in the fertilizer supply and marketing chain, they are the first link in the agricultural product value chain. Our business development strategy is to fortify business linkages between agro-dealers and those who directly impact their businesses – farmers, processors, wholesalers, bankers and transporters in the local, national, sub-regional and global markets."

New Study: World Phosphate Rock Reserves and Resources

Numerous sources have forecast that the world's supply of phosphate rock, a non-renewable resource, is nearly depleted. Some say phosphate rock production will reach a peak between 2030 and 2035 and then decline.

In contrast to this speculation, IFDC research indicates phosphate rock is available in quantities three to four times that of commonly quoted reserve figures.

A study conducted by Steven J. Van Kauwenbergh, principal scientist and project leader of the IFDC Phosphate Resource and Research Initiative (PRRI), estimates that phosphate rock for fertilizer and other products will be available for centuries, based on current use levels.

The IFDC study includes a review of existing literature, past and current reserve and resource estimates and methodologies used to obtain the estimates. Because there has been no significant field research in nearly 25 years, the report is a preliminary evaluation of world reserves and resources.

IFDC is urging a collaborative, multi-disciplinary effort to more precisely gauge current deposits. Such an effort would include the participation of phosphate rock producers, government agencies, international organizations, academia and other stakeholders to engage in further analysis.

(To order a copy of the study, visit www.ifdc.org/Media_Info. Then click Publications, then Publications for Sale, then Technical Bulletins.)

Fertilizer Deep Placement in Northern Vietnam



Rice farmers in northern Vietnam are seeing the benefits of fertilizer deep placement (FDP) through field experiments implemented by International Development Enterprises in Vietnam (IDE Vietnam).

IDE is a non-profit development organization that implements market-driven projects that utilize new ideas and technologies. The field experiments in these photos were monitored by IFDC board member Dr. Vo-Tong Xuan.



IFDC introduced FDP in Vietnam in 2000. FDP is a more efficient and environmentally responsible method of fertilization than the traditional broadcasting of fertilizer. FDP involves the placement of fertilizer briquettes in the soil, near the plant root zone.



The benefits of FDP technology are significant – a 25 percent increase in crop yields and a 40 percent decrease in the amount of fertilizer used. With this success, IDE Vietnam has extended FDP into the mountainous areas of Yen Bai province, where about 10,000 families have adopted the technology.



P.O. Box 2040 Muscle Shoals, AL 35662 USA

Phone: +1(256) 381-6600

Fax: +1(256) 381-7408

Website: www.ifdc.org

E-mail: general@ifdc.org

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2010 International Training Calendar

Training Program	Dates	Location	Program Fee (USD)
Designing and Implementing Agro-Inputs Marketing Strategies (Training and Study Tour)	October 4-15	USA (Muscle Shoals, Alabama; Washington, D.C.; and St. Louis, Missouri)	\$1,800
Developing Private Sector Agro-input Markets - Designing and Implementing Targeted Subsidy Programs	October 25-29	Yankari National Park, Nigeria	\$1,200
Fertilizer Granulation and NPK Production Alternatives	November 1-5	Bangkok, Thailand	\$1,500
The Fertilizer Value Chain - Supply System Management and Servicing Farmers' Needs	November 8-12	Bangkok, Thailand	\$1,500
Improving Agricultural Productivity and Net Returns Among Smallholder Farmers Through Efficient Use of Nutrients and Water	December 6-10	Can Tho City, Vietnam	\$1,500

For further information regarding IFDC's training programs, please visit www.ifdc.org.