

IFDC

Report

An update on the work and progress of IFDC

AfricaFertilizer.org to Increase Agricultural Productivity and Knowledge Across Africa

AfricaFertilizer.org, a global forum to disseminate and exchange information on fertilizers, soil fertility and related agricultural issues that face Africa, has been launched. The website provides much-needed agricultural information to the citizens of Africa and the world.

AfricaFertilizer.org serves stakeholders in the movement to make Africa self-sufficient in food production. Stakeholders include farm organizations, researchers, policymakers, extension

specialists, the agro-input industry, the private sector, donors, funding agencies and the media.

AfricaFertilizer.org is partially funded by a grant from the Strategic Alliance for Agricultural Development in Africa (SAADA) project of the Netherlands' Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS). IFDC is responsible for creating and maintaining the site, which features an interactive map of nutrient depletion in Africa, numerous

publications available for download, news and other information crucial to agricultural intensification.

According to IFDC President and Chief Executive Officer Amit H. Roy, "the concept of AfricaFertilizer.org grew out of the Africa Fertilizer Summit. Providing information through AfricaFertilizer.org will help initiate and fuel the African Green Revolution that smallholder farmers so desperately need and deserve."



AfricaFertilizer.org



FEATURED ARTICLES

**The Cassava Plus Project:
Shifting a Subsistence Crop
to a Cash Crop**

**MIR Plus Launched by
ECOWAS, UEMOA and IFDC**

**KAED II to Implement Global
Development Alliance
Launched by USAID and
Eurasia Group**

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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.

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IFDC DIVISIONS

EurAsia Division (EAD)

EAD focuses on a broad spectrum of activities related to soil nutrient management, private sector-led agribusiness development and resource conservation. Primary emphases are the development of sustainable agricultural production systems for long-term food security and the introduction of improved technologies to increase crop yields and economic returns to farmers. EAD is led by John Allgood.

East and Southern Africa Division (ESAFD)

ESAFD works to increase agricultural productivity and farmer incomes. These are accomplished by improving farmers' knowledge of best practices for soil fertility management and by improving their access to quality inputs and to output markets. Through collaboration with national governments and regional economic communities, the division supports initiatives to create an enabling environment for agricultural intensification and private sector development. ESAFD is led by J. J. Robert Groot.

North and West Africa Division (NWAFFD)

NWAFFD maintains long-standing partnerships with regional and national organizations to enhance the region's agricultural value chains. Projects address integrated soil fertility management, input and output market development and input policies at regional and national levels. Capacity building of all actors in the value chain and facilitation of enabling environments are key factors for activities. NWAFFD is led by Marjatta Eilittä.

Research and Development Division (RDD)

RDD promotes food security, agricultural growth and environmental stewardship through sound and viable fertilizer and crop production technologies, policies and institutional collaboration. The division conducts research focused on fertilizer materials, soil fertility, nutrient management, socio-economics and market information. RDD is led by John Shields.

CATALIST Project Marks Accomplishments in 2009

In September 2006, DGIS awarded IFDC overall responsibility for implementing the Catalyze Accelerated Agricultural Intensification for Social and Environmental Stability (CATALIST) project in Central Africa's Great Lakes Region (CAGLR). The five-year project aims to reinforce peace and environmental stability by mobilizing local resources and helping farming communities increase agricultural production.

CATALIST uses sustainable agricultural intensification methodologies and commodity value chain development. It also provides for labor-intensive infrastructure improvements such as road-building and agroforestry. These combined efforts promote the development of accessible and profitable markets for agricultural inputs and crop outputs. The project is generating employment and is helping farmers to increase agricultural production and incomes at a time when fertilizer and energy prices are volatile and food security is paramount.

During April-September 2009, CATALIST accomplished the following:

- Agro-input trade increased in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda. Fertilizer use in Rwanda increased at an average of 1,000 metric tons (mt) per year. Significant increases also occurred in Burundi and the Kivu provinces of the DRC. Assistance was provided to the government of Rwanda to negotiate fertilizer purchase prices, resulting in more than US \$2 million in savings. Training was provided to 1,028 agro-dealers in Burundi, DRC and Rwanda (with approximately 25 percent being women). The Second Regional Fertilizer Conference was organized in July 2009 with 74 participants from six countries.
- Income opportunities for farmers and others increased. On average, agricultural intensification increased incomes three-fold in Rwanda. Labor-intensive activities associated with road-building and woodlot and agroforestry establishment generated 191,146 man-days of employment and injected \$340,358 into local economies. The CATALIST small grants cost-share program resulted in approximately 740 applications with 29 awards totaling \$378,891. Support provided to applicants resulted in loans totaling \$206,274.

- New technologies were introduced. Preliminary tests were conducted to determine the potential for using urea deep placement (UDP) for lowland rice production in Rwanda and Burundi. CATALIST developed plans for the expansion of UDP testing for lowland rice in the Ruzizi Plain (common to all three project-focus countries). Collaboration was initiated with Vietnamese researchers to identify suitable rice varieties for cooler mountain regions of the CAGLR. Participatory on-farm trials were established involving over 2,300 farmers to validate and improve current fertilizer recommendations for selected agro-climatic zones. Over 50 percent of farmers exposed to the participatory tests adopted one or more of the agricultural intensification methodologies.

- Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) training of trainers was completed. These trainers will reach thousands of farmers. Activities were initiated to identify intermediate mechanization options that could ease the farm labor shortage, particularly in areas where most farming activities are carried out by women. Contracts to facilitate the development of 44 value chains were signed. These contracts will help CATALIST reach over 90,000 farmers cultivating 27,000 hectares (ha). Crop intensification protocols were developed for 14 value chains. A total of 67 associations and cooperatives with more than 3,000 members were trained in the establishment, management and laws governing cooperatives.

- The CATALIST website (www.ifdc-catalist.org) was launched, providing information about the project to site visitors in English and French. The report "Solving Agricultural Problems Related to Soil Acidity in Central Africa's Great Lakes Region" was published. It will be disseminated in both English and French. A manual for crop/livestock integration was drafted.

CATALIST
project for the great lakes region of africa

CATALIST Road Rehabilitation: An IFDC/Helpage Partnership

Contributed by Ketline Adodo, IFDC communications officer, Africa



IFDC and Helpage are working together to mobilize rural communities to improve roads in the CAGLR. Helpage, an IFDC partner in the implementation of the CATALIST project, is a non-governmental development organization based in Kigali, Rwanda.

CATALIST aims to increase food security, reduce poverty and improve regional collaboration to foster peace and security. At a time when the world food crisis is the focus of national and international development efforts, CATALIST is enabling farmers to increase their production and incomes through an integrated approach that combines sustainable agricultural intensification technologies with farm-to-market linkages and infrastructure construction.

Through CATALIST, Helpage and IFDC are improving access to remote areas with high agricultural potential through road rehabilitation. This should develop inter-community and cross-border trade and increase rural incomes.

Helpage uses the labor-intensive work (HIMO) approach to reduce poverty by creating temporary jobs (primarily road and other infrastructure development) for rural communities. The organization also contributes to environmental stability and the improvement of production systems through reforestation and agroforestry techniques.

"I am a farmer. I used to grow beans, sweet potato and cassava," says Liberatte Siyonarera, an 18-year-old woman from Burundi working at the Mparamirundi-Buvumo road project site. The road cuts through a major potato production region in Burundi and links to Rwanda. It was once impassable, but rehabilitation of the road will facilitate the movement of goods and services and enhance trade between Burundi and Rwanda while providing jobs for farmers like Siyonarera.

"I have been working here for the past five months," Siyonarera says. "With my pay, I was able to buy a cow that produces milk for my family and manure for our farm. I can also afford to buy clothes and other things that I like."

On the combined road rehabilitation and environmental protection project sites, 8,926 people were employed: 4,557 in Burundi, 664 in the Democratic Republic of Congo and 3,705 in Rwanda, according to Bonaventure Uwimana, Helpage regional program director. This labor force included a high percentage of women as well as poor farmers, widowers, displaced persons and demobilized soldiers.

"Laborers work at the sites from two to seven months for a daily wage of nearly \$1.50,*" Uwimana explains. "With such incomes, the farmers are able to invest in their farms and crops, family health and children's education."

**Annual incomes in the three project countries average between \$100 - \$250.*

Photo: Young farmer Liberatte Siyonarera (left) bought a cow after five months of work on the Mparamirundi-Buvumo road in Burundi.

ECOWAS, UEMOA and IFDC Launch MIR Plus

Contributed by Francis Dabiré, MIR Plus communications specialist

The MIR Plus project (Marketing Inputs Regionally) was launched on November 13, 2009, at the ECOWAS headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria. The project will facilitate the development of a regional agro-input market in West Africa, enabling smallholder farmers to have greater access to quality fertilizers, seeds and crop protection products at affordable prices.

Since the great majority of rural dwellers in West Africa earn their living from agriculture, the sector's development must be the focus of efforts aimed at significantly reducing poverty in the member states. The project seeks to increase farmers' opportunities for economic participation by improving their productivity and access to markets and basic services. Improving the region's low agricultural productivity through greater use of agro-inputs is critical for poverty reduction in the region.

"MIR Plus will link about 2.23 million farmers to agro-dealers, who have been trained by Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)-funded projects to better serve their farmer customers," according to Dr. Georges Dimithe, project coordinator. "The project is expected to increase yields of maize and rain-fed rice by 20 percent for targeted farmers."

The project has four main components:

- Improving policy and regulatory environments for agro-input production and trade.
- Supporting innovative approaches that increase agro-input use and efficiency.
- Improving the availability of technical and market information to the region's farmers and agro-dealers.
- Linking producers' organizations with agro-dealers to improve access to quality and affordable agro-inputs.

MIR Plus is a joint effort of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) — a coalition of 15 countries — and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), which has eight member nations. Both share an ongoing mission to create a common market based on free movement of persons, goods and services with the objective to foster an environment that is dynamic, competitive and likely to increase access to a more diverse and competitive range of products.

Funded by DGIS, IFDC provides technical assistance to implement the program, while the operational costs are borne by ECOWAS and UEMOA, with an additional contribution from DGIS.

ECOWAS and IFDC Sign MOU to Coordinate Development Activities

IFDC and ECOWAS signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on November 12, 2009. The MOU reinforces cooperation in their work to further promote agricultural development, improve economic growth, reduce poverty, enhance food security and stop the degradation of natural resources through appropriate and sustainable soil fertility management practices and agricultural policies.

The MOU highlights the fundamental role of farmers' access to agricultural inputs and efficient markets in West Africa's agricultural development. Areas of partnership between the two organizations include integrated soil fertility management, sustainable agricultural intensification, development of agricultural input and product markets, agricultural policy reforms, information systems on agricultural markets, institutional development for farmers' organizations and the private sector and training/strengthening of capacities for farmers' organizations.

African Union Commissioner Rhoda Peace Tumusiime Joins IFDC Board of Directors



African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, the Honorable Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, has accepted an invitation to join IFDC's board

of directors for a three-year term, effective January 1, 2010.

In her position with the African Union, Tumusiime works to promote policies and strategies aimed at improving agricultural productivity and growth and enhancing rural development in Africa. Tumusiime has served in this position since May 2008.

During an interview at the 2008 African Green Revolution Conference, Tumusiime stressed the need for a holistic approach

to achieve rural development in Africa. "The Green Revolution cannot be achieved unless there is sustainable development," Tumusiime said.

In previous positions Tumusiime served as Commissioner for Agricultural Planning and Development and Commissioner for Women and Development for the federal government of Uganda, her native country.

She was instrumental in developing Uganda's Poverty Eradication Action Plan and a gender mainstreaming policy that has propelled women and girls to greater heights in education and politics.

Tumusiime has been particularly involved in the implementation of the four pillars of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP): extending

area under land and water management; improving rural infrastructure and trade capacities for market access; increasing the food supply and reducing hunger; and agricultural research, technology dissemination and adoption.

She has chaired high-level committees on policy issues such as trade, agriculture, environment, gender and HIV/AIDS.

Tumusiime earned a master's degree in economics (focusing on planning and management of rural development) from the University of Manchester in the United Kingdom. She received a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics from Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda.

Photo: Rhoda Peace Tumusiime (Photo courtesy of IISD/Earth Negotiations Bulletin)

Two views:

Do Value Chains Help Farmers Out of Poverty?

The two viewpoints presented here were first published in Leisa Magazine 25.2 in June 2009.

Many current global policies propose that farmers can get out of poverty by being better linked to markets. Thus, government and NGO programs often promote cheap agricultural input supplies and support farmers to sell their products through "value chains." Value chain refers to all the steps that a product takes, from its point of origin (in this case, farm products) to the consumer. Many professionals think that improving conditions along the whole chain stimulates farmers to become more entrepreneurial and to increase their incomes.

Does an emphasis on value chain development indeed lead to farmers becoming more entrepreneurial? And is it the key to poverty reduction in rural areas? Here are two views on these questions, both referring to Ghana, West Africa.

This point of view was written by Victor A. Clottey, IFDC postdoctoral scientist and coordinator of the Network to Support Agricultural Intensification in sub-Saharan Africa, based in Accra, Ghana.

Developing value chains reduces poverty in rural areas

Agricultural value chain development is about linking farmers to people who can process, package, market and eventually buy the food they produce. In Ghana, the agriculture sector employs at least 55 percent of the working population, and most of them are small-scale farmers. This increases to more than 75 percent in the rural areas. Over 35 percent of the country's gross domestic product comes from agriculture. This pattern is not different from other economies in sub-Saharan Africa. Despite the enormous contribution from agriculture to national economies, the rural folk whose main livelihood activity is agriculture happen to be the most poverty-stricken in the developing world.

Rural farmers have always taken opportunities to trade their products, to improve their ability to create wealth. However, how can farmers' inherent entrepreneurial capacities be enhanced even further? This is where value chain development as part of the overall development agenda has an answer.

Markets do not fall from the skies

Markets have to be created by the farmers and agribusiness people themselves and not by outsiders for them. Only then will they feel the pain and the gain from their transactions. This does not mean that the government should not provide a favorable environment for enterprises to thrive. After all, the state also gains and loses depending on the direction of the country's economic growth.

Nevertheless, small-scale farmers need coaching to play gainful roles in the agro-food industry. Coaching on chain development techniques is a sure way



Victor Clottey

of empowering small-scale farmers to engage with suppliers and buyers of their produce to develop a common strategy from which farmers and buyers both benefit.

For example, pepper-growing communities in Northern Ghana wanted to make the most of the market for peppers. They were already producing fresh peppers to bring in much needed revenue at the start of the cropping season. However, they also needed extra income to get them through the long dry season. Farmers were thus supported to break into the high value domestic and export market of dried pepper. The Savanna Agricultural Research Institute and its partners introduced the farmers to appropriate varieties, drying technologies and linkages to markets. Today, pepper drying has become a specialized enterprise in the communities, linking primary producers to assemblers who sort, grade and sell the dried pepper on both the domestic urban and export markets.

But farmer empowerment through value chain development does not only come through promoting innovations in production and processing technologies. Improving the way a business is organized, managed and regulated is also necessary. Rural farmers can then shift from largely subsistence vocations to more business-like ones, integrating themselves into sustainable markets for their products.

Linking farmers to markets improves their livelihoods

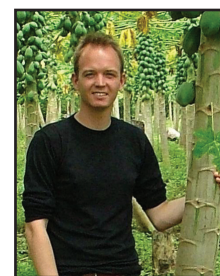
By setting up commodity-based value chains, farmers in rural Northern Ghana steadily increased the average income from pepper from \$199 in 2005 to \$482 per farm household in 2008. Income of soybean farmers increased from \$113 to \$434. Small ruminant farmers made a 15 percent increment to \$330 in 2007/08. These increases helped households to change their roofs from thatch grass to aluminum sheets, acquire TV sets running on car batteries and allowed family heads to own mobile phones. Similar outcomes can be found in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Togo.

This point of view was written by Gertjan Beex, researcher, Centre for Sustainable Development and Food Security, Wageningen University, the Netherlands, and Hans Eenhoorn, associate professor of Food Security and Entrepreneurship, Wageningen University and Research Centre and member of the UN Taskforce on Hunger.

Value chain development is an important concept for poverty reduction because it implies a broad approach, embracing the complete agricultural system from planning to production to market. Programs with an integrated value chain approach have a better chance of success than interventions based on production or marketing alone. However, increasing the efficiency of a value chain does not automatically result in benefits for poorer farmers. Smallholder farmers need support to become more entrepreneurial and enter agro-value chains to improve their abysmal economic conditions.

We performed an analysis of rural livelihoods in distinct regions of Ghana, including some value chain analyses of main food crops. More than 1,200 smallholder farmers were interviewed to understand the constraints they face when wanting to become more entrepreneurial. We define entrepreneurship as 'planned production for a defined market with a profit objective.'

In our Ghanaian investigation we discovered four clusters of interconnected constraints that restrict entrepreneurial development of smallholder farmers. The first cluster includes constraints related to production and processing. Lack of capital, little access to (micro-) credit, poor soil or seed quality, lack of water, uncertainty about land entitlement, shortage of adequate labor, lack of traction and lack of knowledge and technology, all hamper productivity increases. Moreover, because of chronic hunger, people are mentally and



Gertjan Beex
(Photo courtesy of BiD Network)

physically weak and are unable to work to their full capacity.

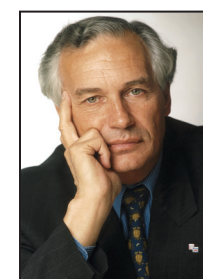
The second cluster contains the risks and uncertainties farmers face, like the erratic climate, lack of information, fluctuating markets, corruption, crime and hostile institutions. Farmers feel highly vulnerable and see little chance of organizing themselves, to be able to withstand the risks and achieve sufficient production for a value chain.

The third cluster relates to the lack of incentives to invest. Often, rural agriculture is not profitable enough for farmers to invest in improvements. Farmers who do not own land have little incentive to invest in it. Moreover, farmers perceive that if they can make a profit, their extended family, patrons and the government (through tax) will claim most, if not all, of the fruits of their activities. Inadequate investment in rural infrastructure is also a serious constraint.

The fourth cluster deals with the mindset of subsistence farmers. Culture and religion often restrict them from exploring new opportunities. Farmers are inclined to consume rather than to save and invest. Most importantly, subsistence farmers deeply mistrust their local, regional and national governments.

We found that poor farmers have difficulties with long-term planning, markets and profit because many of them have developed 'coping strategies' in response to difficult circumstances. In a stable environment there is nothing wrong with coping strategies. However, in sub-Saharan Africa the environment is not stable; population growth, soil depletion and climate change require farmers to keep adapting and investing in their farms.

We concluded that agricultural entrepreneurship is necessary for small-scale farmers to escape the cycle of continuing poverty. But this will only be possible if they organize themselves into



Hans Eenhoorn
(Photo courtesy of Worldconnectors)

farmer-based organizations. Value chain development must take the constraints described above into consideration if they are to work for poorer farmers. Value chains can only overcome the cycle of poverty if they are deliberately designed to improve farmer livelihoods.



IFDC Pilot Plant Achieves 1,000-Day Milestone

On January 19, 2010, IFDC's largest pilot plant reached its 1,000th day of operation. Opened in 1978, the plant has a continuous production capacity of one metric ton per hour and is one of six pilot plants on the IFDC campus.

"All who have been associated with the pilot plant should feel a sense of pride for their accomplishments," said Dr. Amit Roy, IFDC president and CEO, as he congratulated the plant's operators, engineers and partners. "I am already looking forward to the next 1,000 days!"

The steady production schedule indicates no slowdown in sight. The plant has proven indispensable in the research and development of new organic and inorganic fertilizer products and will continue to play an integral part in the development of improved fertilizer technology.



The Cassava Plus Project: Shifting a Subsistence Crop to a Cash Crop

A new advancement in technology will bring processing closer to more than 160,000 cassava farmers in Nigeria, the largest cassava-producing country in the world. IFDC has teamed with the Dutch Agricultural Development and Trading Company (DADTCO) and DGIS to launch Cassava Plus, a public-private partnership to commercialize cassava production by linking farmers to value-added markets.

More than 38 million mt of cassava roots are harvested in Nigeria every year. The crop is popular among African farmers because it is relatively drought-resistant and can survive in poor soils. Cassava is grown mainly for home consumption and to sell in local markets, but it has not been widely produced as a commercial crop because it requires extensive labor for planting and harvest. Also, cassava roots have a short shelf-life. Within 48-72 hours of harvest, cassava quality rapidly deteriorates, making it difficult for traditional processing companies to collect and process the tubers in a timely manner. These constraints have slowed the shift of cassava from a subsistence crop to a cash crop.

However, DADTCO has developed an Autonomous Mobile Processing Unit (AMPU), which reduces the need for farmers to transport the easily perishable tubers over long distances. The rationale behind the AMPU is "if the farmer cannot come to the factory, let the factory come to the farmer." The technology is self-supporting in energy requirements, which allows it to move to within about 20 kilometers of farmers. The AMPUs will create both a stable demand for cassava crops and village-level employment opportunities for the units' operation.

"There is a huge unmet demand in the region for high-quality cassava flour because it can serve as a partial substitute for



imported wheat flour," says Scott Wallace, IFDC country representative in Nigeria. The Nigerian market for cassava flour is now more than 300,000 mt.

Nigeria imports large quantities of starch for industrial purposes and starch derivatives such as sugars (high fructose syrup) for the soft drink industry. Because cassava roots have high starch content, cassava could be used as a substitute for the imports, creating a total demand for about 2.2 million mt of fresh cassava roots.

"Farmers are guaranteed to receive payment for cassava delivered. For farmers to benefit from this market opportunity, they must be able to supply cassava on time to the AMPUs and DADTCO flour mills," Wallace says. "IFDC's role is to organize farmers and help them arrange the harvest, transport and supply of cassava tubers to ensure that the demand is met."

IFDC will help farmers access agro-inputs (fertilizers, seeds, crop protection products and water) and adopt better farm practices to replace nutrients depleted from the soil. IFDC will also train agro-input dealers in improved production practices and the supply of high-quality inputs. Agro-dealers will then be able to introduce new technologies and teach their farmer customers how to correctly use inputs.

Cassava Plus will focus initially on Benue, Osun and Taraba states in Nigeria. Cassava farmers in the targeted areas produce about 13 mt/ha. Through the project, production will increase to at least 23 mt/ha, and annual net income will rise by about \$250 per farmer (most smallholder farmers in Nigeria make less than \$400 a year). Cassava Plus will also help farmers increase income from rotational and other crops such as soybean and pigeon pea, raising annual incomes by at least \$500 per farmer. Cumulatively, the project will generate an additional \$81 million in net income for farmers.

Once the project's test phase is completed, successes and lessons learned will be transferred to Ghana, Togo and other West African countries. The three-year project is financed by the Schokland Fund, which was established by DGIS to help meet the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals through partnerships among public and private sectors and civil society organizations.

DADTCO is a Netherlands-based company that creates guaranteed markets for crops grown by smallholder farmers in West Africa. DADTCO focuses on crops that generate finished products that are imported in large volumes and have the potential to provide farmers with increased incomes if processed locally.



KAED II to Implement Global Development Alliance Launched by USAID and Eurasia Group

Contributed by Daniya Baisubanova, IFDC/KAED II public relations/outreach specialist

On December 18, 2009, USAID and Eurasia Group LLC Switzerland signed an MOU aimed at strengthening the public-private sector partnership through a Global Development Alliance (GDA). The goal is to increase agricultural productivity of edible oil and corn to enhance food security in Kyrgyzstan. IFDC's Kyrgyz Agro-Input Enterprise Development II (KAED II) project and Eurasia Group – Kyrgyzstan will implement the Alliance.

Participants in the GDA will share their strengths, experiences, technologies, methodology and resources to break the low input-low output cycle by boosting yields for corn and sunflower, thereby generating higher incomes for Kyrgyz farmers.

It is estimated that by the end of 2010, an additional 8,000 mt of corn for livestock fodder and 480 mt of processed edible sunflower oil will be added to Kyrgyzstan's food stocks at a reduced cost to the consumer. This will narrow the supply gap for both commodities, but more importantly, the GDA will set the stage for significant foreign and domestic investment by the private sector in Kyrgyz agriculture.

The projected investment by USAID under the GDA amounts to \$400,000. The Eurasia Group will invest about \$550,000 on high-quality hybrid corn and sunflower seed, modern agricultural machinery, crop protection products and qualified expertise. Implementation of the initiative by KAED II and Eurasia Group will lead to the production of high-quality seed by Kyrgyz seed producers, a significant achievement in the development of the Kyrgyz agricultural sector.

Kyrgyzstan at a Glance

Location:
Central Asia, west of China

Total Land Area:
199,951 sq. km

Comparable Area:
Syria or the U.S. State of
South Dakota

Arable Land: 6.55 percent

Climate: From dry continental in
mountains to subtropical in
southwest

Freshwater Use:
94 percent for agriculture

Agricultural Products:
Tobacco, potatoes, vegetables,
grapes, fruit/berries, livestock, wool

Population: 5.43 million
Rural: 64 percent

GNI Per Capita
(average annual income): US \$740

Statistical data compiled in part from the CIA World Factbook

Photo (left to right): USAID's representative to Kyrgyzstan, Pat Shapiro, shakes hands with Omer Doganci, director general for Eurasia Group – Kyrgyzstan, after signing an MOU aimed at strengthening the public-private sector partnership through a Global Development Alliance.

Tajikistan Increased Productivity Project Underway



Productive Agriculture in Tajikistan (PRO-APT) is a five-year joint project of USAID and Agricultural Cooperative Development International/Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA). PRO-APT is designed to increase the productivity of traditional agricultural crops and strengthen the capacity and profitability of private sector agribusinesses.

The Intensify Farm Productivity (IFP) component of PRO-APT is being implemented by IFDC and Mennonite Economic Development Associates. The aim is to increase crop and beef production along with market-driven opportunities to improve farmers' living standards through increased income.

IFP will also include public outreach campaigns to increase program awareness by thousands of farmers. The campaigns will feature information on improving productivity and income, private sector voucher programs and collaborating with public and private donor projects to leverage resources.

Due to the seasonality of crop production, IFDC initiated a rapid program startup in November 2009, focusing on field operations in the provinces of Sughd and western Khatlon as well as districts near the capital of Dushanbe. Each region involves different strategies, crop/livestock production patterns and returns on investment.

"We have a great deal of experience in the region," said John Allgood, director of IFDC's EurAsia Division. "Because of that, we were able to start quickly and efficiently. We expect very good results from our efforts," he added. IFDC will work with USAID and ACDI/VOCA on the project through October 2010.

Tajikistan at a Glance

Location:
Central Asia, west of China

Total Land Area:
143,100 sq. km

Comparable Area:
Bangladesh or the U.S. State of Wisconsin

Arable Land: 6.52 percent

Climate: Semiarid

Freshwater Use:
92 percent for agriculture

Agricultural Products:
Cotton, grain, fruits, grapes, vegetables, livestock

Population: 7.35 million
Rural: 74 percent

GNI Per Capita
(average annual income): US \$600

Statistical data compiled in part from the CIA World Factbook

Awards Ceremony Recognizes Farmers' Outstanding Performance in Bangladesh

Contributed by Ishrat Jahan, IFDC resident representative and team leader, Bangladesh

On October 28, 2009, an awards ceremony was held at the Bangladesh Research Council in Dhaka. The event was organized by the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) and IFDC with the support of Bangladesh's Ministry of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The purpose was to recognize 146 farmers for their efforts to utilize UDP technology in the cultivation of their rice crops. Others recognized were field-level DAE officials and subdistrict agricultural officers. Farmers were awarded certificates of achievement, plaques and monetary prizes. Officials and officers were also honored.

UDP technology continues to be a superior alternative to widespread urea broadcast methods for the country's 658,000 ha of rice crops. Farmers attending the event reported that they used about 40 percent less urea when utilizing UDP briquettes and increased



Ishrat Jahan, IFDC resident representative (left), and Bangladesh Agriculture Secretary C.Q.K. Mustaq Ahmed (center) present awards.

their yields as much as 40 percent. Special guests at the ceremony included Bangladesh Agriculture Secretary C.Q.K. Mustaq Ahmed and Dr. Wais Kabir, executive chairman of the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council. DAE's Director General Md. Sayeed Ali chaired the event.

TRAINING

IFDC Conducts Fertilizer Production Technology Workshops for IFA

On behalf of the International Fertilizer Industry Association (IFA), IFDC conducted workshops for fertilizer engineers on nitrogen and phosphate fertilizer production technologies.

Marrakech, Morocco, was the location for the Phosphate Fertilizer Production Technology Workshop held October 19-23, 2009. The Nitrogen Fertilizer Production Technology Workshop was held June 15-19, 2009, in Penang, Malaysia. Both workshops were considered very successful.

The objective of these workshops was to improve the technical knowledge of engineers and other specialists who are involved in the production of chemical fertilizers globally.

"After a very turbulent year in the fertilizer industry, including higher production costs and the global financial credit crisis, it is more important than ever that the industry strives to improve efficiency through use of the latest technologies,"

said Ramón Lazo de la Vega, IFDC senior specialist – engineering. "These programs help engineers better understand the fertilizer industry and improve the operation and profitability of their plants."

The workshops included interactive discussions with industry experts, visits to fertilizer production plants and an overview and outlook of the fertilizer industry. Other topics were the economics of the industry; chemical and physical specifications of fertilizer and product quality; energy, environmental and safety issues; and packaging, transportation and handling.

Link to 2010 Training Calendar and descriptions of programs: http://www.ifdc.org/New_Layou/Training/Training_Calendar/index.html.



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2010 International Training Calendar

Training Program/Workshop	Dates	Location	Program Fee (USD)
1. Decision Support Tools for Agricultural Production, Fertilizer Recommendations and Climatic Variability	March 8-19	Nairobi, Kenya	\$1,200
2. Managing Risks in the Fertilizer Value Chain in West Africa	April 27-May 1	Accra, Ghana	\$1,200
3. Improving Agricultural Productivity and Net Returns Among Smallholder Farmers Through Efficient Use of Nutrients and Water	May 24-28	Hanoi, Vietnam	\$1,500
4. Developing Private Sector Agro-Input Markets - Designing and Implementing Targeted Subsidy Programs	July 26-30	Abuja, Nigeria	\$1,200
5. Developing Fertilizer Supply and Marketing Strategies for the Future (with FSSA)	August 23-27	Pretoria, South Africa	\$1,500
6. Designing and Implementing Agro-Inputs Marketing Strategies (Training and Study Tour)	October 4-15	USA	\$1,800
7. Fertilizer Granulation and NPK Production Alternatives	November 1-5	Bangkok, Thailand	\$1,500
8. The Fertilizer Value Chain - Supply System Management and Servicing Farmers' Needs	To Be Determined	To Be Determined	\$1,500