



A WORKSHOP REPORT

FAO – NAMC EXPERT CONSULTATION ON “THE ROLE OF NGOS IN LINKING FARMERS TO MARKETS”

**Somerset West, South Africa
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**National Agricultural
Marketing Council**

Strategic positioning of South African Agriculture
in dynamic global markets





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LIST OF ACRONYMS

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
NAMC	National Agricultural Marketing Council
SUN	University of Stellenbosch
ARDRI	Agricultural and Rural Development Research Institute
CRS	Catholic Relief Service
CUMA	Concern Universal Malawi
NWGA	National Wool Growers Association
SCC	Swedish Cooperative Centre
NGO	Non Government Organisation
FANRPAN	Food, Agriculture, Natural Resource Poverty Alleviation Network
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation



1 OBJECTIVE OF THE WORKSHOP

The objective of this workshop was to bring together, under one roof, a number of experts on the subject of access to agricultural markets, particularly those from the NGO sector. The speakers were asked to show what has worked and why, and to present examples from a number of institutions that have been successful in linking farmers to various markets.

In order to achieve this objective, the theme was further broken down into five sub-themes designed to address specific issues. In short, the workshop deliberated in detail on how to address the following issues of marketing agricultural produce in Southern Africa.

- *How can NGOs strategically position themselves to make a significant contribution? To some extent, this may mean that in choosing beneficiaries to support, NGOs should make sure that they indeed make a difference to the livelihoods of beneficiaries.*
- *How should NGOs select farmers to work with and why? This topic was aimed to stimulate debate about which farmers NGOs should select to make a significant difference. It appeared that there is no single approach to this. Some NGOs choose farmers that are already active in agricultural markets, while others choose the poorest of the poor to make a meaningful impact. It was agreed that different circumstances call for different approaches.*
- *What is the best way of dealing with older farmers and to address issues of ownership? This arose from the fact that many institutions argue that agriculture in Southern Africa is dominated by old people, while the youth choose other sectors to work in. A number of projects presented ways in which youth can be attracted into agriculture by offering other services that are of interest to them.*
- *How do NGOs demonstrate success and how is success quantified? The deliberations showed that one of the ways in which NGOs can demonstrate success is by achieving their set objectives. Secondly, they ought to exit smoothly, leaving the beneficiaries in a position to carry on with their activities and improve the livelihoods of local people.*
- *How can the dependency syndrome of beneficiaries be minimised? It was suggested that no matter how little the recipients contribute to a project, they must contribute in some way. This is argued to be an incentive to get them to work harder and take ownership of their project. The second issue was to set out clearly an exit strategy in the planning of any intervention.*
- *What can NGOs and governments learn from the way in which the private sector operates?*
- *Are there particular features of the business models used by the private sector that need to be adopted by NGOs when linking farmers to the private sector?*





2 RECOMMENDATIONS

After deliberations and conclusions on a number of issues, the workshop made a number of recommendations for the FAO and the NAMC to consider implementing.

■ Recommendation 1

Recommendation 1 was the recognition that NGOs still have a role to play in improving the living standards of Southern Africa people. Their importance can only be felt if their objectives are not in conflict with the objectives of governments and the private sector. Action – formation of multi-stakeholder forums to deliberate and reconcile visions where stakeholders should come together to address identified problems. Committees should be formed to address problems at national, provincial and local levels.

■ Recommendation 2

NGO farmer selection practices, should be based on the probability of success. This involves choosing farmers who are already making efforts to produce, not just members of the community who may not think about agriculture. Agricultural advisory forums at provincial and district levels should be strengthened and supported.

■ Recommendation 3

The FAO-NAMC should consider organising annual workshops for NGOs to share experiences and exchange ideas. This could even involve the establishment of an electronic information linkage, such as a central website where information and contributions from various role players could be sent so that it is accessible to other organisations. Suggestions were that already established organisations such as the FAO could take the initiative as the central body where organisations can contribute information that could be accessed from their website. FANRPAN was also suggested as another vehicle for creation of an information hub for the region where organisations can feed in and access information.

■ Recommendation 4

Recommendation 4 make use of existing organisations like SACU or COMESA to provide a platform to share information through providing website linkages to various organisations on their main websites. Help smallholders to take up collective action and enhance bargaining power.





3 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY SESSION

3.1 WELCOMING: MR RONALD RAMABULANA, NAMC

Mr Ronald Ramabulana, the Chief Executive Officer of the National Agricultural Marketing Council (NAMC), welcomed all the delegates to the workshop. He extended a special welcome to the foreign delegates. In stimulating a robust discussion, Mr Ramabulana asked the delegates to share their experiences, whether they are good or bad, as lessons could be drawn. He further raised the issue that, in most instances, workshops are held and much needed information is gathered but ends up gathering dust in someone's office and is not used at all.

As a remedial measure from the NAMC to this problem, he noted that the NAMC as an advisory institution of government will advise the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, of the outcomes and recommendations of this workshop.

After making this point, he asked that the delegates briefly introduce themselves to each other.

3.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSHOP MR ANDREW SHEPHERD, FAO

As a way of introducing the theme of the workshop to the delegates, Mr Shepherd started his presentation by outlining the trends in marketing internationally. These include, among others, the change in consumption patterns from staples/ carbohydrate foods to meat, dairy products, fruits and vegetables. He attributed this change to increased affluence, improved marketing chains, growing interest in value-added products and considerable interest in organics and fair-trade.

The second trend, Mr Shepherd noted, was that processing is increasingly shifting to Multinational Corporations (MNs) who may take over local processors. There was also growing interest in contract farming arrangements, where firms often provide seeds and other inputs and closely monitor production. There is also the emergence of closer relationships between firms at different stages of production and marketing.

Such trends present a need for farmer associations and other groups to provide a link between supermarkets, processors and farmers. This suggests that farmers need to specialise in a few commodities so as to achieve economies of scale and forge stronger links with buyers in order to meet demanding quality and supply specifications.

He then outlined some of the roles NGOs can play in assisting farmers:

- Link willing suppliers with willing buyers;
- Assist farmers to organise into groups for economies of scale;
- Train farmers to understand markets, and how to supply market demand;
- Promote trust between companies, traders and farmers.

In outlining what the FAO and NAMC expect from the presentations and discussions of the workshop, he noted that the following issues needed to be discussed during the workshop:

- What are the requirements for NGOs to play an effective linkage role?
- What mistakes have been made in the past?
- How can these mistakes be avoided in the future?
- What lessons can be learned from the private sector?
- What support do NGOs need (e.g. from FAO) to develop linkages?
- How can NGOs collaborate on this topic in future?



3.3 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**PROF A.S.M KARAAN,
UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH**

Professor Karaan started his address by noting some of the realities the agricultural sector in South Africa faces. These realities include, among others, failing institutions. A second, is that agriculture is a victim of its own success (the use of GDP as an indicator of sector importance, means that it declines as a percentage as the economy develops).

Furthermore, the agricultural sector is characterised by the failure of projects, by imperfect institutions and paternalism. These problems include efforts to make markets work and build capacity.

In linking the failures of agriculture with the work of NGOs, Prof. Karaan also suggested that, because NGOs are donor-driven, they sometimes pursue the agenda of the sponsor and not necessarily the needs of the target area. Alignment of objectives is important.

He suggested the following points as areas where NGOs can make meaningful contributions in linking farmers to markets:

- Advocacy and advisory role to governments;
- Watchdog role;
- Facilitation (3rd party);
- Technology transfer.

In performing the suggested roles, NGOs can use one of the available linkage models. Presented below are some of the linkage models and other roles for NGOs that he proposed:

- Farmer to farmer;
- Farmer to processor;
- Farmer to customer;
- Contract design and monitoring;
- Subsidising bulky investments;
- Removing information asymmetries;
- Checking on opportunistic behaviour (ex ante & post);
- Managing moral hazard and adverse selection;
- Quality enhancement;
- Value addition;
- Provision of support services (technology, finance, training, etc.)

In executing their vision, NGOs face many challenges. Some of these challenges include the following:

- Lack of good exit strategies;
- Donor dependence – sometimes NGOs pursue the agenda of the donor and fail to address the real needs of the farmers;
- Difficulties in developing entrepreneurship;
- Benefit sharing;
- Crop selection;
- Diversity of needs;
- Complimentary to government programmes;
- Sustainability;
- Collective action problems;
- Dealing with failure;
- Coming up with the right public-private partnership.





4 LINKING FARMERS TO MARKETS AND THE ROLE OF NGOS

4.1 DETERMINANTS OF SUCCESS FOR MARKET LINKAGE PROJECTS: MR ANDREW SHEPHERD, FAO

Mr Shepherd began his presentation by noting that projects aimed at linking farmers to markets are there because the production push focus is no longer a viable option. Ad hoc sales of small surpluses are not a realistic long-term approach. This presents the need for linking farmers to sustainable markets. He further noted that projects to link farmers to markets provide opportunities for long-term business partnerships and such partnerships in turn offer greater scope for increased earnings.

Hence, there is a need for the identification and understanding of profitable markets as a starting point of support. The private sector is critical for the success of market linkage projects. There is a need to note that some NGOs are not commercially oriented and are often suspicious of the private sector, but for the linkages to be successful they require that NGOs work with the private sector, not against it.

The other issue noted by Mr Shepherd is that the negative impacts of subsidies and direct provision of services cannot be ignored. Firstly, he noted that subsidies are generally incompatible with efforts to develop sustainable business ventures. Subsidies can provide unfair advantages to the selected farmers or businesses, to the detriment of others. Secondly, direct service provision, such as marketing services, can squeeze out existing commercial services. As such, he suggested that available resources should be spent on linkage development, training, market assessment, etc., but not on farm inputs or marketing for farmers, or on equipment for processors, etc.

Trust between parties is essential for sustainable long-term linkages and the NGOs should try to build this trust. He also pointed out the need for building sustainable projects since many projects collapse once the NGOs pull out. He further noted that another problem that leads to projects not being sustainable is that many external linkage activities have a large number of partners who may not always share the same

approaches or motives. He concluded by noting that sustainable small improvements are better than unsustainable large ones.

4.2 LINKING FARMERS TO MARKETS: MR DUNCAN STEWARD (LIMA)

In introducing his presentation Mr Steward outlined the functions of his organisation. He noted that LIMA is presently working with 15,000 farmers in three provinces in the vegetable, cereals and poultry sectors. It works on a geographical basis, in particular in Local Municipal Areas. Initially, linkage development was left to field officers, but transaction costs proved very expensive and now linkages are developed through Head Office.

The services offered by LIMA include agricultural support, land reform and post settlement support, engineering and construction, planning and feasibility studies, local economic and enterprise development, job creation and vocational training. His organisation also offers community health and home based care, targeted support to orphan and vulnerable children and disabled persons.

He outlined all the farmer support services that are important to farmers from the perspective of Lima. These include,

- Input supplies
- Credit
- Mechanisation
- Information
- Water, and
- Organisational support.

Mr Duncan argued that the first five are the spheres for linkage that farmers are looking for. It is also vital to note that all the services are equal in importance and all have the potential to be limiting factors. However, he noted that credit is probably the most limiting factor.

The speaker noted that smallholder out-grower systems for sugar, eucalyptus and cotton in Kwazulu Natal have collapsed in recent years.



He attributed this to lack of investment in the agricultural sector, as well as to poor market conditions.

He then gave some examples of the programmes that are currently running. These include input supply linkages where Lima helps farmers to access day-old chicks, vegetable seedlings, and seed potatoes, for example. Retailers and packers are showing considerable interest in these programmes. Mr Duncan called for government and agri-business re-orientation since bad policies can undermine markets.

He also pointed out that smallholder farming is a profitable enterprise choice for poor rural people. Hence, there is need for outsourcing of extension services and formation of agri-business joint ventures. There will be limited growth without credit services. He also confirmed a point made by other speakers from South Africa; to the effect that bad debt was a significant problem in sales at village level. Attempts to develop linkages to supermarkets also ran into problems, as farmers could not handle delayed payment by the companies.

LIMA organises farmers into groups, which are supposed to carry out marketing. However, farmers often prefer to sell individually, thus avoiding paying dues to the group. The speaker also pointed out that farmers often agreed to form groups just to get short-term benefits and that groups often collapsed after project funding ended.

4.3 LINKING SMALL-SCALE FARMERS TO MARKETS: DR P. J. MASIKA (ARDRI)

Dr Masika, noted that the Agricultural and Rural Development Research Institute (ARDRI) of the University of Fort Hare was started 1977 and its main activities involve:

- Socioeconomic surveys,
- Livelihoods surveys,
- Agricultural development initiatives,
- Training and mentoring.

Dr Masika shared three of ARDRI's experiences with three projects. He noted clearly that ARDRI's roles in these projects are:

- Project initiation,
- Project management,
- Research (baseline surveys) and
- Support services.

The names of these three projects are Gqumashe Co-operative Limited, Zanyokwe Irrigation Scheme and Lenye Paprika Project.

Gqumashe Co-operative Limited is composed of twenty five farmers. They are involved in piggery (20 breeding sows), broiler (batches of 400) and vegetable (15 ha) enterprises. They are faced with the problem of fetching good prices for their piggery products. They also face the problem of bad debts since they have been selling some of their products on credit.

Broiler production also faces the problem of bad debts. For vegetable production the farmers grow potatoes, cabbages, maize, spinach, and butternuts on their individual plots and sell the produce individually. They faced challenges in doing this, because there was no prior arrangement of a market. He stressed that prior arrangement of the market is very important.

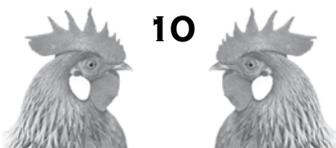
The **Zanyokwe Irrigation Scheme** is composed of twenty farmers doing vegetable production (mainly cabbages). He noted that they sell their high grade produce to Pick and Pay Supermarkets and their low grade produce to the Fruit and Veg franchise, the municipal market and hawkers. Some of the challenges they face include the inability of some farmers to produce expected quantities, long distances to the market and long periods waiting for payment.

The **Lenye Paprika Project** is made up of twenty-five farmers who are growing paprika. They have been able to increase their area under paprika, as well as quality and yield. They market their produce to Unilever.

Dr Masika outlined the following lessons they had learnt:

- Securing a market prior to production;
- Capacity building improves farmers' abilities;
- Quality control at each stage of production is important;
- Distance to markets is a curtailing factor;
- Selling on credit is attractive but can lead to high bad debts; it takes longer to get all payments.

He concluded by giving the challenges they are facing in the above projects. These challenges include the need for farmers to take ownership, the dependence on external support, (farmers do not feel they own the project), access to finance, the age of farmers (some of the farmer are over 70 years old) and organisational limitations.



4.4 DISCUSSION OF THE ABOVE THREE PRESENTATIONS

Following the presentations the following discussion points were raised

- How do you select farmers to put in groups to work with?
- What is the best way of dealing with ownership and age, such as faced in the projects?

Mr Duncan pointed that some farmers get into groups due to government intervention in order to get funding. Such individuals don't necessarily share the same goals. Once the funding is gone, that group will cease to exist. He further added that it is better to concentrate on those individuals who are willing to learn and have the potential to produce.

For the problem of ownership there is need for a gradual taking over of the project by the farmers. It was suggested that the NGOs should work *with* the farmers not *for* them. The farmers should contribute towards the running

of the project so that they feel that they own it. It was noted by Dr Masika that in their projects the youth started joining in when computer training was introduced. He added that there is a need for farmers to encourage their families to participate in such projects.

Some of the other issues that were raised during the discussions were as follows:

- The need to promote entrepreneurship skills so that the farmers can treat farming as a business.
- The need for NGOs to advise the farmers, especially when they sign contracts, since most farmers do not honour their contracts. It was noted that some farmers practice side marketing.
- It was also pointed out that there is no evidence that big companies exploit the small farmers, although it that is the prevailing wisdom. This was a response to a question that was posed by one of the participants who claimed that big companies exploit farmers.





5 EXPERIENCES OF NGOs WITH ACTIVITIES TO LINK FARMERS TO MARKETS

5.1 STUDY CIRCLE METHODOLOGY: MR NQABAYEZWE MOYO (SCC)

The Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC) is an international non-profit-making, non-governmental organisation that works in collaboration with partners in Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Southern and Eastern Africa. It supports farmers in self-help development projects that are aimed at mitigating drought and assisting vulnerable groups, mainly HIV infected members of the community. The organisation uses study circles to reach out to farmers in its market-based agriculture development strategy.

Mr Moyo explained that, in a study circle, farmers are organised into small groups of 7-12 people and the NGO plays the role of facilitator in helping farmers study, plan, identify their own problems, and take corrective measures to address problems in a democratic manner. The approach organises participants with similar problems and provides a platform for them to learn from each other on how to solve their problems.

He indicated that organising farmers into groups enables them to plan together on what to produce, where to source their inputs, where to access information on markets and where and when to sell as a group.

Formation of such groups allows farmers to buy inputs in bulk and farmers benefit from discounts offered by input suppliers for bulk buying as well as reduction in transport costs through transporting inputs in bulk and delivering produce to markets in bulk. He added that farmer groups allow collaboration and sharing of information as well building trust amongst farmers. Formation of cohesive groups helps protect farmers from falling prey to unscrupulous people pretending to be genuine traders.

Mr Moyo outlined the following advantages of the Study Circle Methodology:

- Farmers share knowledge on what to produce, when to produce, and how to produce;

- Farmers discuss prevailing agricultural policies on production and marketing;
- Farmers share information on marketing and market their produce together and this gives them power to negotiate for better prices for their products;
- Farmers organise field days on farms where a farmer has produced crops of high quality and gives other farmers a chance to learn from his experience;
- Farmers have a chance to interact with NGOs, input suppliers, private sector players and buyers who are invited to the field days and are asked to provide information on inputs and markets for their products;
- Farmers are trained in groups on value addition and processing.

Mr Moyo also indicated that the SCC intends to link farmers to regional markets by establishing tele-centres, where farmers can send text messages asking for market information and all the information on regional markets is sent back to the farmer from the centre (a concept that has worked well in Zambia). Agribusinesses also register with the tele-centre and regularly provide information to the centre.

He also mentioned some of the successes achieved and the challenges faced with the study circle methodology:

Successes

- Change in farmers' perception on the role of NGOs, which has led to expansion of the concept and to the formation of 12,500 study circles in 17 districts in Zimbabwe.
- The SCC has also managed to establish 62 technology centres and intends to establish 3 tele-centres.
- Increased production of sweet potatoes by smallholder farmers.

Challenges:

- Cell-phone networks are problematic in Zimbabwe and some farming areas are not covered by existing network providers.
- There are low literacy levels among farmers



that might make it difficult for them to access information from the internet even if a website is set up and information provided on the internet.

5.2 NWGA WAY OF LINKING TO EMERGING FARMERS: MR LEON DE BEER (NWGA).

The National Wool Growers' Association (NWGA) of South Africa is a producers' organisation that seeks to promote profitable and sustainable sheep's wool production in South Africa. Mr de Beer indicated that the association aims to achieve the following six strategic objectives:

- Improved policy and legislative environment;
- Improved institutional environment;
- Improved market environment;
- Improved production environment;
- Constructive training and development programmes;
- Strong producer organisations.

Mr de Beer outlined that in linking wool producers in communal areas to markets, the organisation focuses on infrastructure development, training and mentorship, resource management and genetic improvement of sheep flocks in communal areas. He indicated that the association considers that agriculture plays a vital role in rural economies and wool as an export product can make a significant contribution in developing rural economies. He noted, too, that successful communal wool producers may also be considered for future beneficiaries of the Land Reform programme.

He outlined the following results achieved by the organisation in communal areas of Kwa-Zulu Natal and Eastern Cape:

- Communal production has increased both in quantity and quality. For example, the quantity of wool produced increased from 222,610 kg in the 1997/98 season to 2,756,441 in 2008/2009.
- Increase in income for farmers from sales of wool and mutton.
- Farmers are getting better prices for their wool due to improved quality.
- Improvement in social indicators for the period 2004 to 2009, such as household savings accounts, which have increased from 56.9 % to 77.3 % of the population, and the fact that the number of households borrowing money for school fees has

decreased from 78.4 % to 52.3 %.

- Market Support: the organisation has managed to link farmers to brokers as well as formal markets, especially export markets where farmers earn foreign currency.
- Increase in the number of sheds receiving wool of better quality as a result of collective marketing.
- Increased participation in decision-making of producers at all levels through provincial, regional and national congresses.
- Improved flocks in communal areas due to genetic improvement and improved animal health management.
- Improved infrastructure in communal areas, especially sheep housing, sheds, equipment and roads.
- Improved relations between NWGA, government departments, municipalities and other stakeholders.

Mr de Beer also outlined new initiatives to be undertaken by the organisation as:

- A code of best practice that will enable self assessment against the code;
- Vendor declarations;
- Establishment of study groups;
- Economic analyses of communal production;
- Improvement of wool classing standards;
- Prevention of contamination of the wool.

The main challenge faced by the association is its limited capacity to reach all farmers and there is need for funding to finance projects that will improve the organisation's capacity, especially for the organisation to work with extension workers. He also indicated that the experience gained from working with emerging farmers can be expanded to other emerging farmers if the organisation can increase its training capacity.

5.3 LINKING POULTRY FARMERS TO MARKETS: MR HIGINO MARRULE (TECHNOSERVE)

According to Mr Marrule, the main objective of Technoserve in Mozambique is to have the best possible impact in the fight against poverty by increasing rural farm incomes through:

- Building effective, accountable and sustainable farmer associations;
- Creating profitable rural enterprises across the targeted value chains;
- Business development through training



and technical assistance for production, marketing, sales, linkages and access to credit;

- Supporting the four main industries, i.e.
 - confectionary nuts (groundnuts, cashew, and sesame),
 - horticulture (vegetables, mangoes, and bananas),
 - grains (soy beans),
 - forestry (plantations).

Through setting up and management of quality systems, financing, policy development and agro support services, Technoserve make a meaningful contribution.

In developing the poultry industry in Mozambique, Technoserve began by carrying out a market analysis that showed that Mozambique had a high demand for chickens. With an annual consumption of 38 million chickens, a large share of which was imported, there was a great need to develop the domestic chicken industry.

This was done through focusing on five industries (value chain) that had a flow-on effect in poultry production, i.e. the chicken industry, hatcheries industry, farming industry, oil seed processing industry and feed mill industry.

He indicated that development of the Mozambican chicken industry was achieved through:

- Capacity building of small-scale farmers through technical assistance, training and establishing formal linkages between small-scale farmers, commercial producers and extension services;
- Matching grants for small-scale producers with those awarded to large scale producers;
- Bio-security and disease-prevention training;
- Improved marketing and promotion of locally produced chickens;
- Capacity building for government ministries;
- Development of domestic input industry through provision of grants.

Achievements

He indicated that Technoserve had managed to:

- Increase domestic poultry production in Mozambique fourfold since 2004;
- Train 868 small-scale producers and assist

12 commercial producers, creating 2,617 jobs in the poultry industry;

- Increase by 40 % the number of domestically produced frozen chickens and increased consumption of locally produced chickens as a result of an extensive marketing campaign on radio and television that reached 21 cities in Mozambique;
- Provide grants for the local feed input industry to upgrade facilities and acquire new technology and increased capacity to meet feed demand from the expanding chicken production industry;
- Increase production of soya beans and maize from smallholder farmers to meet the demand from the feed processing industry;
- Reduce disease prevalence in the poultry sector due to training that was implemented;
- Improve price competitiveness of locally produced chickens that led to a decrease in imports of chickens in Mozambique;
- Provide technical assistance to policy makers through training. The government has now enacted three poultry policies, although there are still problems with enforcement.

He concluded that Technoserve has managed to assist in development of the five industries that have a flow-on effect from the chicken industry, and to link the industry along the value chain of poultry production. The Mozambican government had to intervene to protect the domestic industry from imports that were finding their way into Mozambique at prices that were far below those needed by farmers from locally produced chickens. He indicated that chickens were now imported during high demand seasons, especially in December during the festive season.

5.4 ECI AFRICA WAYS OF LINKING FARMERS TO MARKETS: MR PHILIP NEL (ECI)

ECI Africa is a South African company that works primarily with donor and government funding to promote market-led development. It was originally set up under a USAID-funded project by Development Associates, which subsequently did something similar in Zambia with ZATAC.

The overriding philosophy of the company is one of market-led development. Interventions begin with a market scoping study to select



appropriate sub-sectors and this is followed by a detailed sub-sector analysis. The speaker described ECI support to the Eastern Cape Red Meat project.

He noted that there is a significant “hand-out” mentality among some farmers pointing out that “beneficiaries even want to be employed to off-load inputs and harvest outputs!” He also highlighted a major problem faced by small farmers in South Africa, that of criminals masquerading as traders who “buy” produce or animals on credit and never return to pay for them. Several other speakers mentioned the same problem.

ECI stresses sustainability, arguing that farmers must pay for all services provided (e.g. animal fattening).

Operating in more than 10 countries in Southern, Eastern and West Africa ECI’s overriding philosophy is one of market-led development / public-private partnerships. ECI’s main areas of focus are; project design; implementation and management; value chain/sub sector analysis; business linkages (Strengthening SMME competitiveness and Promoting access to markets); monitoring and evaluation, including impact analysis; as well as policy design and evaluation (SMME policies and strategy development).

Mr Nel highlighted the main lesson learnt from ECI’s experience in linking farmers to markets (especially at the design stage): Target beneficiary definition and knowledge of the target sub-sector (by the intervention agent, the client and the beneficiary) were necessary and the client must know “the art of the possible”. Mr Nel highlighted how the Government has a socio-economic and political mandate to support the poorest of the poor and how this is not necessarily compatible with business development.

ECI Africa uses market scoping to select appropriate target sub-sectors. It carries out sub-sector analysis and develops linkage programmes to suit client needs while trying to emphasise the art of the possible. Mr Nel concluded by stating that ECI has learned that projects with a short time span (less than 12 months) do not allow for effective targeted enterprise support nor effective monitoring or evaluation.

Through experience, ECI recognises the need to roll out a long-term project with a clear exit strategy that includes:

- More enterprises supported
- Enhanced post-transaction evaluation
- Enhanced skills transfer to client officials
- Sustainable market-based support to farmers/enterprises, and
- Enhanced monitoring and evaluation.

5.5 CONNECTING RED MEAT PRODUCERS TO MARKETS: DR XOLILE NGETHU (COMMARK TRUST)

Dr Ngethu began his presentation by providing a picture of livestock farming in the Eastern Cape. Although the Eastern Cape has a dominant livestock population (23 % of the national population), the province is a net importer of red meat. When ComMark began the project, they made audacious assumptions about the state of affairs in the province, including:

- The need to target farmers who are adequately institutionally capacitated;
- That prices are stable and will continue to improve;
- That stock-theft is not a big problem;
- That the required infrastructure is in place;
- That an active role is played by the Department of Agriculture.

Yet the reality, argues Dr Ngethu, is that there was massive fragmentation and underdevelopment. There was no existing infrastructure, the target farmers had a mistrust of formal markets and the Department of Agriculture was playing an altogether undefined role.

Operating at varying levels in five of six Eastern Cape district municipalities, ComMark works with emerging/communal farmers to increase cash income earned from raising cattle through greater participation in formal red meat markets.

Dr. Ngethu argued that they had a policy of “NO HAND-OUTS”

ComMark aimed to assist communal farmers by:

- Building farmers’ understanding of structure and operation and requirements of formal markets through guided visits to:
 - Auctions;
 - abattoirs;
 - feedlots; and by
 - on-site training; and



- ongoing dissemination of information on grading, pricing and current prices.
- Reducing distance to markets in emerging/communal farming areas by:
 - establishing auction pens;
 - assisting farmers to organise auctions and buyers' days;
 - pioneering "custom feeding programmes";
 - negotiating pre-slaughter sale agreements between farmers and retailers.
- Giving training, and practical assistance to align the age, health and breeding of animals more closely with market demands.

In this project, there were substantial, unexploited opportunities to increase cash income from the existing livestock asset base by participating more extensively in formal markets and taking informed decisions. So ComMark works with the intention to improve access to opportunities and the capacity to benefit from opportunities on an open-to-all, incremental, self-selecting basis. Farmers gain an increased understanding of the red meat value-chain and an opportunity also to use market information to improve and expand their livestock asset base.

Dr Ngethu revealed that ComMark, in partnership with Eastern Cape Department of Agriculture, is formalising discussions with one of the major retailers on direct sourcing (Custom Feeding Programme, Direct sales). Dr Ngethu emphasised the importance of partnerships and cooperation. He said that ComMark works with

- Emerging/communal farmers' primary stakeholders. Genuine buy-in is essential for sustainability.
- Provincial/local government, other public entities and key stakeholders. Solid positive relationships are essential for access to farmers and districts.
- Partnerships with the private sector are very important. Dr Ngethu uses platforms such as radio (Umhlobo Wenene FM).

On the issue of sustainability of the project, Dr Ngethu, outlined a strategy founded on thorough research, solid buy-in from farmers, key external stakeholders and continuous development. Before phased withdrawal, ComMark aims to ensure fully functioning low cost infrastructure, systems and procedures; ensure that established initiatives have

broken even; that farmer communities have experienced income benefits; that farmers are fully aware of the technical, financial, managerial and organisational requirements for sustainability; that farmers' associations are strongly organised; and that key public/private sector role-players and involved and committed.

5.6 AGRO-ENTERPRISE STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES: MR. GEOFF HEINRICH (CRS)

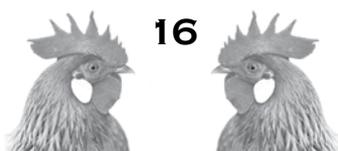
Mr Heinrich started by outlining the broader goals of Catholic Relief Service (CRS) as an organisation and zoomed in on the importance of Agricultural Economics to the work the CRS does throughout the world. With over a decade of experience in linking vulnerable farmers to markets, CRS works in about 35 countries across three continents.

He highlighted how CRS had, as of April 2009, launched the New Ag Strategy, anchored on four pillars: Ag for Income; Ag for Health, Ag for Environment as well as Ag for Emergency Response. In July 2009, CRS began an initiative with partners such as Land O'Lakes in Eastern and Southern Africa.

The overriding theme of Mr Heinrich's presentation was the importance of education, and alliances with the objectives of knowledge generation and sharing of learning experiences. CRS with its various partners has produced various literature on methodologies for the development of agro-enterprises. This is part of its efforts towards knowledge generation, learning and sharing.

Mr Heinrich also stressed that CRS does not believe in NGOs playing the role of business service providers because, more often than not, there is no continuity when they leave at the end of the project. He emphasised the need to promote the practice of "producing for the market" rather than "marketing what is produced." An ongoing market analysis is important during all phases of the project cycle.

The experience of CRS has been that of seeing many fragmented farmers develop to become well-organised farmers with ownership and links in high-value chains. Mr Heinrich said that although CRS is mainly involved when farmers start to get organised into small groups and learn new skills. They are also involved when farmer



groups come together and link to commodity markets.

Mr Heinrich shared information on the ways in which CRS is exploring the use of technology, such as ICT, to enable access to market information, product information and for education for smallholder farmers. He concluded by stressing that linking farmers to markets is vital for development and requires a systematic and participatory approach. Partnerships are important because everybody has a role to play and has a unique comparative advantage. For NGOs, this comparative advantage is in areas of Farmer Group Organisations; capacity building for groups; and in facilitating links along the value chain.

5.7 THE ROLE OF LINKING FARMERS TO MARKETS: MR. ADRIAN MASEBO (CUMA):

Mr Masebo began by outlining the vision and mission of Concern Universal Malawi (CUMA). CUMA adopts an integrated approach with food security as the main entry point for improving livelihoods. This is done through programmes on food security and sustainable livelihoods; water and environmental sanitation; emergency action and rehabilitation; capacity building for local organisations, and microfinance. In addition, issues of gender, HIV&AIDS, human rights and environmental management are all highlighted.

He explained how the Microfinance Programme is currently being implemented by an independent institution; CUMO Microfinance Limited. From its participatory rural appraisals, CUMA has facilitated the development of marketing and business activities for farmers whom they identified as: not being market orientated; lacking market information; and not knowing what to grow, how much to produce, at what price to sell and to whom. Farmers lacked technical know-how and knowledge of how to conduct business.

Linkages: of business groups to marketing information institutions, of farmers to lending institutions, and of farmers to buyers is the major area of CUMA's work. Mr Masebo also explained how CUMA is facilitating and providing farmer group training in marketing and business skills, leadership skills, association management, basic bookkeeping and accounting, conflict management, crop post-harvest handling and storage, quality control and value addition.

CUMA has also acted as an informal arbitrator for any disagreements between buyers and farmers and has been involved in the establishment of business groups or marketing associations to increase bargaining power and secure bigger markets.

Mr Masebo shared CUMA's experience in Public Private Partnership in the Irish Potato project. The project involved Universal Industries Limited (UIL), Concern Universal, the International Potato Centre (CIP), the Ministry of Agriculture and farmers. The result has been that farmers have moved from being production oriented to having a market-led orientation, are able to negotiate for better prices. They have started building trust and long-term relationship with some buyers.

Farmers have been able to plan and realise maximum benefits from their farming as they have a reliable market in advance. They have gained experience in important technical aspects of potato production and have been transformed into commercial potato producers (taking farming as a business). There has been much trust developed between all the parties.

The greatest challenges have been: delayed feedback to farmers on some aspects from various stakeholders (both technical and administrative); the abrupt termination of production of the Lady Rosetta potato variety by the Ministry of Agriculture, which left farmers in suspense and questioning the continuity of the partnership; as well farmers' dishonesty on disclosure of land history for potato production. Limited patience by farmers who have to wait for payment for a period of more than a month has been another challenge.

5.8 THE PROMISE OF RICE IN OUR REGION – EVIDENCE FROM ZAMBIA: MS ANGELINE KAHARI

Zambia has a large natural resource base, juxtaposed with poverty, unemployment, malnutrition and other social ills. Ms Kahari posed the question of poverty in the face of such wealth. How can this be explained? This changing world is characterised by, among other phenomena, rising food prices. In solving this problem, SNV takes an "issues-based approach", identifying bottlenecks and formulating an 'investment in growth' strategy. Ms Kahari stressed that national development plans are key to SNV's work. SNV takes an advocacy role.



Ms Kahari provided statistics for rice production and consumption in Africa, which highlight the existence of a market for rice. There are 25,000 rice producers in SNV selected provinces in Zambia (70,000 in the whole country); there is a large unsatisfied market; there is commercialisation of rice as a smallholder cash crop (local prices are stabilising); and, finally, the potential income is USD 1,000 p.a. for 1 hectare per producer. Farmers realise that growing rice can really change their lives.

Presently rice is a buyer's market, dominated by small-scale traders and rice retailing is conducted through open informal markets. Imported rice is sold through formal retail chains.

Ms Kahari presented the following as the challenges of the rice value-chain:

- Low volumes of poor quality produce from small-scale producers (over-dry paddy);
- Excess Milling Capacity;
- Collapse of formal marketing systems;
- Absence of quality local brands on the domestic market;
- Decrease in access to financial services by rural farmers (elimination of Government directed credit);
- Inadequate post-harvest handling skills and agronomic practices;
- Lack of pure seed and fertiliser;
- Lack of quality storage facilities;
- Insufficient market information for market actors;
- Poor rural roads network.

SNV has expanded its programme outreach from 3,000 producers in 2007 to 5,000 in 2009 and is steering towards a target of 15,000 in 2012. Production has risen and farmer income from rice production has increased, Value chain financing of USD 300,000 has been brokered with rice millers for forward contracts with smallholder farmers, and value chain financing of USD 300,000 to producers for bulking of rice.

Among other achievements indicated by Ms Kahari, SNV has facilitated formal trade of paddy from smallholders through their associations and has supported 15 Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) each with 100 members. Some of the challenges, however,

have been in working with under-funded government departments that are supposed to provide services to producers (Research and Extension); creating a business orientation among farmers who have essentially been subsistence producers; inadequate infrastructure and storage facilities; and delayed approval of the Agricultural Credit Act that legalises the warehousing receipt system. SNV has learnt that, through their empowered associations, farmers are able to solve their own problems.

All the institutions that are working with SNV along the rice value chain are working toward business goals and profitability rather than just subsistence. With SNV support, rice value chain facilitation has expanded to include producers, input suppliers, processors, extension service providers and financiers. A culture of entrepreneurship is slowly emerging as evidenced by the formation of active SACCOs. Progress made along the chain has attracted funders.

5.9 DISCUSSION CONCERNING ACTIVITIES TO LINK FARMERS TO MARKET

Study circles promoted by SCC are not a replacement for extension services but complement them by providing information to farmers. NGOs call in specialists to assist farmers when the need arises. Furthermore, in terms of response to needs, information is provided on issues of food security and also on other, alternative products. This helps farmers to make informed decisions and has resulted in farmers shifting to market-oriented production.

The introduction of study circles has helped to link farmers producing grain crops for food security and there is now a shift to market-oriented production. In most cases, farmers sell their produce on their own on a cash basis, but some supply supermarkets where they usually supply on credit and get cash at a later date, something most farmers do not like, as they prefer cash up front. In Zimbabwe, this is due to problems they have experienced in the past where they were operating in a hyper-inflationary environment.





6 GROUP DISCUSSIONS

On the second day, the workshop divided into three working groups, which discussed the following topics:

- **Group 1** – How can NGOs work with other stakeholders, share knowledge and experiences?
- **Group 2** – How can NGOs both develop and maintain linkages with private and government sectors?
- **Group 3** – How can we avoid high levels of beneficiary dependence?

6.1 GROUP 1: HOW CAN NGOs WORK WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, SHARE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES?

The group began by assessing the present systems of information dissemination, identifying their strengths and weaknesses. It was noted that, currently, there is lots of information but that information is remaining within particular organisations due to lack of coordination between organisations. In a desirable environment information should move between organisations and it should be made easily accessible in a simple form that can be interpreted by target groups.

As such, there must be a willingness to share information between the organisations and role players i.e. government, nongovernmental organisations and private sector. The group outlined the ways in which information could be shared between role players. These include, among others:

- Hold conferences and workshops where role players can meet, discuss and share information on their experiences;
- Establish electronic information linkages, specifically website linkages;
- Form an information hub for the region, with a website to which different role players can contribute and where other organisations can easily access information;

- The FAO can take the initiative as the central mother body for organisations to contribute information that can be accessed from their website;
- Make use of existing organisations like SACU, COMESA and SADC to provide a platform to share information through providing website linkages to various organisations on their main websites.

In country, governments should engage role players early in the planning stages to form a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of the roles of different organisations. This will help to avoid duplication and ensure that the organisations complement each other in their efforts. Joint planning will help in capacitating role players and allow planning and flexibility in the implementation of programmes.

It was also noted that there was an information gap between farmers who would like to produce and the markets, which lack supply.

Non-governmental organisations were encouraged to work closely with government extension workers who are already working with farmers to improve their capacity. NGOs can also play a big role in supporting extension workers through training, especially on interpreting market information so that it reaches the farmer in a form that is simple and easy to understand. The media can also play a big role in sharing information by sponsoring radio or TV programmes where experts are invited to speak about markets and economic trends in simple terms that can be understood by farmers.

The group considered it important to start from the perspective of the farmers and not of the donors. It stressed the importance of good monitoring and evaluation and felt that this needed to continue after the NGO pulled out. The emphasis in evaluation needed to be on the project's overall impact on livelihoods and not just on achievements with the particular crop chosen for linkage activities.



6.2 GROUP 2

HOW CAN NGOs COOPERATE WITH THE PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT SECTORS?

Group 2 stressed that NGOs should support smallholders to understand value chains and to negotiate contracts. They should not appear to take the side of the farmer in negotiations with the buyers. They considered Multi-stakeholder Forums to be an important development and a way of improving communication with the private and government sectors.

The group felt that there should be clearly differentiated roles for all parties involved. NGOs can:

- Support smallholder farmers to understand value chains and to negotiate;
- Help smallholders to understand government policy and build capacity;
- Police government policies, their implementation, monitoring and linkages;
- Make people understand the importance of contracts and the consequences of failing to deliver according to agreed terms;
- Facilitate arbitration between parties in dispute, as NGOs are not supposed to take sides;
- Advise the government.

The following were identified as possible challenges:

- Solutions provided by smallholders never reach policy makers – there is a communication gap;
- Conflicting interests of the parties involved;
- Lack of information among smallholders;
- NGOs cannot succeed in a project if the government is opposed to it – there is a need to work together;
- Power imbalance: smallholders have little bargaining power against government and the private sector unless they are united;
- Who is responsible for initiating dialogue or a forum for discussion between stakeholders?

The group made the following recommendations for approval in the plenary session:

- Form a multi-stakeholder platform where stakeholders can come together to address various problems. This can be anchored by establishing committees to

address challenges at national, provincial and local level;

- Follow a down-up approach to problem solving;
- The private sector should participate in the financing of NGOs because they benefit from the activities of NGOs;
- NGOs should align their objectives with those of government, while each party should have clear and feasible goals;
- Governments should analyse the needs of an area and be advised by NGOs and the private sector before action is taken;
- Agricultural advisory forums at provincial and district level should be strengthened and supported;
- Help smallholders to take up collective action and enhance bargaining power.

6.3 GROUP 3

HOW CAN HIGH LEVELS OF BENEFICIARY DEPENDENCY BE AVOIDED?

Buy-in by farmers is of great importance. Farmers must also show a level of commitment to the project and have a sense of ownership towards it. NGOs must avoid providing services but should rather organise and facilitate linkages with business.

At inception stage, it is important to choose the correct target group/beneficiaries. Projects should take a "business-model" approach rather than an aid or charity approach. A clear exit strategy was also highlighted as important. Planning *with* farmers rather than planning *for* farmers was encouraged. There should be regular monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Multi-sectoral partnerships should be established, using a phased approach of gradually transferring responsibilities from the NGOs to Commodity Organisations (as with the Wool Growers) or to industries in which farmers also have buy-in. Group 3 emphasised that it was important to avoid beneficiary dependence. Echoing Group 2, they stressed that NGOs must work *with*, not *for*, farmers. Farmers must contribute to their own development and not be "spoon-fed". NGOs should provide knowledge but otherwise communities should be expected to use their own resources and initiative. There was a need for a "business model" rather than an "aid" approach to development.





7 LEARNING FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR

WAYS IN WHICH THE PRIVATE SECTOR IS LINKING TO EMERGING FARMERS

7.1 MODELS OF THE FARM-FARM AGRIBUSINESS LINKAGES, GLOBALLY: ANDREW SHEPHERD (FAO)

According to Mr Shepherd, we need to look at some of the methods that companies use to improve the sustainability of trading relationships between themselves and small farmers. There are various reasons why companies would like to work with smallholder farmers and these include consistent supply through a diversified supplier base, overcoming shortages or by-passing monopoly suppliers, community goodwill, freshness of produce, and comparative advantage with some crops.

There are also disadvantages of companies working with smallholder farmers. These disadvantages include high transaction costs, low levels of traceability, small farmer unreliability, lack of technical skills and side-selling. However, Mr Shepherd noted that specific marketing cooperatives that can overcome these disadvantages are rare. Cooperatives need professional management but this requires large-scale operations. Normincorp in Mindanao is one example of a successful organisation.

Buyer-driven models can have high transaction costs in dealing with individual farmers. They may require significant "on-the-ground" presence of company staff or agents. Examples of buyer-driven models were Frigoken in Kenya and Hortifruti in Honduras.

Models driven by intermediaries can avoid high transaction costs. Mr Shepherd gave an example of Bimandiri in Indonesia, which is a specialised intermediary to supply supermarkets. He noted that for the companies to successfully work with the farmer there is need to explore innovative ways of avoiding side-selling, to develop flexible

pricing models, to have extension staff on the ground and to encourage adjustment of contracts. He stressed the need to learn by trial and error.

7.2 WINE INDUSTRY NETWORK OF EXPERTISE AND TECHNOLOGY: MR GERARD MARTIN (WINETECH)

According to Mr Martin, five years ago there were discussions on how best to involve previously excluded communities in the wine industry of South Africa in a meaningful and long-term, economically viable manner at producer level. The idea originated of developing an unconventional farming approach to achieve this. As a market approach, Mr Martin pointed out that the focus should be mainly but not exclusively on the production of raw materials for the brandy and grape-juice concentrate markets. Considerable amounts of these products are imported, while they could be produced at a competitive price locally.

Winetech therefore developed a concept that was analysed by the University of Stellenbosch and was tested experimentally at the same time by the Agricultural Research Council (ARC). The results of the analysis and experimental work showed that this approach would be economically viable and that it could work. The areas that were best suited for this type of grape production were identified as the Northern Cape and the Free State. The argument in favour of these areas was that, in terms of natural resources like water, soil and climate, there is extensive potential for development.

Currently, about 41 hectares of vineyards have been planted in the Northern Cape. Some are very successful while others are less so. In the Free State, about 25 hectares have been planted so far.



The success of this programme came from good management and technical practices, continuous training and advice from a viticulturist on a regular basis.

The following challenges have hindered the complete success story of the initiative:

- Training of beneficiaries and employees;
- Development of plantings - supervision and mentoring in the first three years of development is crucial for the success of the initiative;
- Transfer of land ownership to beneficiaries;
- Financing of initial operational costs;
- Project development;
- Coordinating vineyard establishment with government budgeting and project development procedures.

7.3 THE EXPERIENCE OF INTABA WITH WOOLWORTHS: MR SOLY JANSEN (INTABA COMPANY)

Intaba is a fruit processing company set up with donor assistance by nine unemployed people. It mainly uses fruit that does not meet export standards. Production is now up to 2,500 jars or bottles a day and the company has secured a contract to supply Woolworths in South Africa.

The reason for the formation of the project was an increase in unemployment in the area. This led to unemployed people coming together to form a company. This was registered in July 2001 and is owned by nine previously underprivileged and unemployed people. The company employs 22 people at a factory situated on top of a mountain near Piketberg in the Western Cape. The company manufactures jams. It does not use preservatives or colourants.

The company buys fruit from the surrounding farms. The workers were trained by the ARC. All preparation and bottling is done by hand. They do not intend to get more mechanised because one of their reasons for starting the company was to create jobs. They don't want machines to reduce the number of workers they employ. At first they used to produce 200 bottles per day but they are now producing up to 2,500 bottles per day. Mr Jansen noted that the market must be reliable and constant. He pointed out that Woolworths is going out of their way to assist them.

In his concluding remarks, he outlined the following lessons they have learnt:

- Never grow too big too quickly;
- Train your people, especially in supervision and management;
- Responsibilities must be clearly defined;
- Always ensure accuracy of records;
- Plan ahead.

7.4 LINKING FARMERS TO MARKETS IN MALAWI: MR E.M. PHIRI (WORLD VISION)

World Vision, in Malawi, realised that it had to change the focus of its activities when it found that classes in schools that it had built were poorly attended because the children had to work on family farms. It has stressed the importance of road upgrading to improve market access and has been working to encourage seed production. It argues that no matter how subsistence-oriented the farmers, they must be encouraged to see farming as a business.

As a consequence it is promoting "Village Commercialisation" as a concept. The speaker criticised some other NGOs, who appear happy to pay people \$10 just to attend a meeting. He attributed this to the need of NGOs to meet donor targets on short-term projects. However, World Vision was convinced that farmers do not need charity: they need inspiration.

Mr Phiri stated that World Vision started operating in Malawi in 1982 with its major focus on infrastructure development. In 1992, World Vision Malawi integrated development programmes with a focus on food security, health, water and sanitation, and human resource development. It is currently operating in 26 out of the total of 28 districts in Malawi.

One of their goals is to improve household food security in the targeted communities and World Vision Malawi has managed to create an enabling environment for linking organised groups to market. He gave the examples of Mphompha ADP linked to bean production; ADMARC and private traders; vegetable growers and Shoprite; dairy farmers linked to the Lilongwe Dairy Board Company; and community-based seed producers linked to the seed market.



He noted that in the above-mentioned projects they faced a number of challenges. Some of the challenges included lack of a policy on contract farming, limited availability of basic seed and different approaches by different agencies. He concluded by giving the lessons they have learnt as follows: Many smallholder farmers may be poor but they wish to be prosperous.

The focus of the institutions that serve them, therefore, must be on prosperity rather than

poverty. The poor do not need charity. He added that simply because farms are small in size does not imply that they are not commercially viable *per se*. Small farms in Malawi have scope for sustainable intensification that is productive, profitable and environmentally sound, provided they have equitable access to input and output markets, credit, innovations, knowledge and information.





8 FIELD TRIP FEEDBACK AND CONCLUSIONS

The field trip involved a tour to three different places, namely the Phillippi Fresh Produce Market, Mhudi vineyard and Koopmanskloof vineyard.

8.1 PHILLIPI FRESH PRODUCE MARKET

This market was set up with the intention of servicing peri-urban black farmers who were expected to produce horticultural produce on around 4000ha of land in the vicinity. Phase 1 was inaugurated in 2005 and consists of two warehouses with cold storage facilities as well as some retail shops. The facility, which is of an extremely high standard, has never really been used for the intended purpose.

Mr Ebrahim Isaacs, the Director of the market, welcomed the delegates and gave a presentation on the market before taking them to see the site. He described the Phillippi Fresh Produce Market as an intergovernmental venture that is seen as a new economic hub and significantly located in the settlement of people who have migrated from the homelands. The market was developed to serve:

- As a basic required infrastructure and
- As a powerful instrument for the reconstruction of the existing settlement.

Mr Isaacs argued that the market was strategically located near two national roads, the airport, and the Phillippi horticulture area and was ideal for agribusiness industrial development. He further argued that the market was seen as a catalyst for attracting investments and was also expected to:

- Serve as a suction force for produce from 2500 emerging farmers and over 5000 ha;
- Support social and economic upliftment;
- Provide a conduit for fresh produce to be marketed.

The following are the facts noted about Phillippi Fresh Produce Market from Mr Isaacs' presentation:

The land area size is 6.5 ha where wholesale space is 1200 m², retail space is 1000m², value adding includes packing and grading. The market is Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) accredited. The District Municipality owns the market and is managed by Phillippi Corporate Company.

The Phillippi Fresh Produce Market (PFPM) could be pivotal for meaningful farmer to market intervention. SMART partnership evolution is still in the embryonic stage, however. One big challenge faced by the Phillippi market is that the target customers, i.e. retailers, prefer to buy produce from the Epping Fresh Produce Market in Cape Town. The main reasons for not buying from the Phillippi market are higher prices and the limited variety of fresh produce at this market. If retailers were to buy at Phillippi they would still have to go to Epping to get the bulk of their supply.

The farmers, on the other hand, prefer to supply the Epping Fresh Produce Market in Cape Town, rather than the Phillippi Fresh Produce Market. Reasons seem to be the lack of production and the proximity to Cape Town of the main Epping National Produce Market.

The initial assumptions about the viability of a market at Phillippi may have been faulty, and this may have been a case of a desire to be seen to be doing something, without too much attention being paid to the nature of the investment. The facilities are presently being used by the Food Bank, which takes donated produce that is past its sell-by date or damaged in some way and redistributes it through charities, and by a fresh produce export company that uses one warehouse for transit storage.

On the other hand, the intended supply from the small emerging farmers has not yet been realised. The delegates were given opportunities to look around the market and ask questions. One question was, where does the revenue of the market go? The answer was that the revenue from this market goes to the city council.



The Director of the market was asked to do better to ensure that the market operates optimally.

8.2 MHUDI FARM

In welcoming the workshop delegates to the farm with an entertaining presentation Mr Rangaka pointed out that Mhudi farm is owned by a black family originally from North West Province. It is a vineyard of 23 hectares and is presently the only vineyard owned by a black family in South Africa. It had been successful in developing export sales to the USA and UK. Wine is not made on the premises but at a neighbouring producer.

The husband and the wife loved farming and thought of buying a farm. However, it was not an easy task to get the farm they wanted. They inspected 22 farms and the last was Mhudi farm, which they accepted and bought. The farm is situated in the Western Cape Province of South Africa.

The couple then resigned from their professional work and started farming. The husband was working as lecturer and the wife was a civil servant. At first they did not have much idea of what to do and how. One of their neighbours played a significant role in transferring skills and knowledge to this couple with regard to viticulture.

The farm was planted with grapes and guavas. It was noted that the family had acquired the necessary knowledge regarding wine-making and marketing of wine. Market access was a serious problem in the start, but through the South African wine industry they managed to get markets in the USA and UK. Approximately 98 % of the wine produced is exported to these markets and the remaining 2 % is sold locally. Mhudi wines won a silver medal in a 2007 world competition.

8.3 KOOPMANSKLOOF FARM

The philosophy of the farm is to add value to the lives of the workers and the environment in the same measure that value is added to the quality of the products. The Koopmanskloof farm has a history of over thirty years. It is a vineyard of over 250 ha on which eleven wine grape varieties are produced. Apart from wine grapes, the farm also produces pecan nuts and olives. Approximately 100 ha of this farm are utilised as a nature reserve. Some of the important assets on this farm include a 4000 ton grape crushing facility, 3000 oak barrels for maturing wine, 6 production units and cellars, a 3 million litre stainless wine storage tank, a dam that supplies water to the farm throughout a year and 86 skilled workers.

The previous owner of the farm gave the vineyards to his grandchildren and to the farm workers. In terms of shares, the farm workers own 18 % of the entire business, the non-executive manager 6 %, the CEO 8 % and the grandchildren of previous owner 54 %.

The farm exports wine, in popular and premium ranges, to four main markets, Europe, the UK, the USA and China. There is also a local market for the wine produced on this farm. The farm is busy trying to expand its market. The CEO mentioned that wine demand in the SADC is low and there is a high degree of competition. Olives are supplied to a company making olive oil and there is no intention of expanding olive production at this point.

The CEO regards the farm as the biggest fair trade wine producer in Stellenbosch. The farm bottles its wine in facilities accredited by South African Bureau of Standards (SABS). It is also registered with the Wine Industry Ethical Trade Association (WEITA). From the monies accumulated from fair trade sales, the farm allocates money for social responsibilities, e.g. health care.

Overall, most of the delegates felt that the facilities at the Phillippi Fresh Produce Market were underutilised. Some people felt that the market had the potential to link farmers with the markets and that the Western Cape Province's department of agriculture should to help identify farmers who could supply to this market.





9 PRIVATE SECTOR EXPERIENCE AND WORKING GROUPS

This session, where three working groups were set up, started with a presentation by Mr Mark Terken about paprika production in Zambia. Three groups were then formed to deliberate on the following topics:

- How can we work together to enhance sharing of knowledge, experiences and training materials?
- What can NGOs learn from the private sector and how can they best work with the private sector?
- What have been the main lessons emerging from the workshop presentations?

9.1 THE ROLE OF THE NGO: AN AGRIBUSINESS PERSPECTIVE, MR. MARK TERKEN (CHEETAH PAPRIKA)

Mr Terken gave an overview of Cheetah, a private company established in 1995. The company operates out grower schemes for the supply of raw materials, namely dried and graded paprika. Activities include exporting paprika and chilli products from Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique to the European food ingredient industry.

Cheetah's contracting with farmers takes one of the following forms; directly through its own extension network system, through smallholder groups and commercial farmers; buying from traders; and working with NGOs, projects and other collaborating partners, such as CARE, CLUSA, POTC and IDE. He noted that trust emerges as the vital ingredient for success, enabling more efficient contracting. This could be fostered through:

- Being an industry leader for a number of years;
- Being visible and transparent;
- Developing open farmer groups, NGO and agribusiness extension staff relationships, with feedback and discussions;
- Hosting field days and carrying out regular cycles of training.

The speaker stressed the importance of buy-in in agreements that are fully understood and agreed to by farmers.

The speaker identified input diversion as one of the biggest problems in dealing with smallholder farmers on contracts. Record keeping is another challenge, and the speaker suggested that farmers be trained in budgeting and appropriate application of inputs such as fertiliser and agrochemicals. Ensuring that farmers apply inputs at appropriate rates and times is important, allowing them to experience reduced losses and greater yields.

Another challenge is "side-selling". With regards to the issue of side-selling by farmers, Mr Terken offered the following suggestions:

- Buy at farm gate;
- Offer the highest price;
- Pay in cash;
- Offer all inputs such as seed, fertilisers, chemicals and packaging;
- Offer training;
- Be lenient in product grading.

Having offered these suggestions, Mr Terken also cautioned that that this is not always possible when doing business.

As a practical example, Mr Terken presented the "Cheetah model", highlighting the manner in which it has been operating in the paprika market, and what they have learnt. He indicated that there were often conflicts between his company's goal of promoting a sustainable business and the goal of NGOs to help the poor. The company works directly with farmers, as well as through NGOs. Working directly absorbed a lot of costs, including management time. NGOs, on the other hand, could mobilise a large number of farmers quickly.

NGOs tended to be vulnerable to political pressure. They reduced the company's costs, but this was rarely sustainable. In Zambia, for example, the Producer-Owned Trading Company (POTC) was established by an NGO and heavily subsidised by that NGO. POTC



effectively absorbed all marketing costs and, as a result, its farmers were receiving a much higher price than farmers who were selling to the company or to the company through traders.

As a way of concluding, the speaker made the following recommendations:

- Be realistic;
- Learn to know the farmers;
- Separate “doing good” from “creating sustainable farming”;
- Carry out checks on the feasibility of products and logistics;
- Know the product cycles and price volatility;
- Make farmers stick to their annual contracts;
- Ensure that farmers invest from own resources and savings, even if it is a small contribution

9.2 GROUP 1

HOW CAN WE WORK TOGETHER TO ENHANCE SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCES AND TRAINING MATERIALS?

Group 1 felt there was a need for more conferences and workshops to exchange experiences, as well as for a web site. It was noted that the SADC had information hubs, including those on livestock and food safety and that initiatives of this type should be encouraged. There was a definite need to exchange success stories.

9.3 GROUP 2

WHAT CAN NGOS LEARN FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND HOW TO WORK WITH IT?

Group 2 felt that the practice of the private sector in constantly reviewing strategies was something that NGOs should replicate. A hard-nosed approach was required; farmer business group leaders should have the right skills and not just be appointed for social reasons.

Emphasis should be put on efficiency and profitability and not just on quantity of production. Group members noted that the private sector concentrated its resources on its “core competencies”, concentrating on what it could do best and that this was a useful model for NGOs to follow.

Lessons to be drawn from private sector successes and failures

- Move from a point of self-management for social purposes to a more structured management approach:
 - Professional management structuring, and
 - Beneficiary representation at board level.
- The importance of a well-thought out strategy, continual re-evaluation and execution of the strategy:
 - Long term,
 - Medium term, and
 - Short term planning (as in the PS).
- Learn from the private sector “How to make a profit”, and aim for maximising efficiency rather than a “volume driven” approach to processes.
- Targeting: target people who will make a success of things, in the same way that business targets specific markets.
- Concentrate resources by focusing on strengths and areas of comparative advantage. Do what you do best.
- Is the project demand oriented? Understand what the market wants.
- Good governance, a code of ethics, and proper oversight from project inception are essential.
- Identify common goals and work together.

9.4 GROUP 3

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE MAIN LESSONS EMERGING FROM THE WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS?

Group 3 noted that there was a lack of NGO coordination at both national and sub-regional levels. It was important to decide on who should do what. Lessons learned from the presentations were that a comprehensive approach was required and that there is no single answer to the problem of achieving a project’s aims. The importance of an enabling environment was stressed, as was the need for beneficiary capacity building. It was also noted that markets are dynamic and that activities that are presently profitable may not be so in years to come. The group stressed that farmers have to take responsibility for their own successes. Finally, the group also noted the lack of coordination of NGOs at national levels.

The following were the issues that were raised during Group Three’s discussions:



- All projects should adopt a market approach instead of a production approach;
- NGOs should learn from companies that are already operating in the areas they intend to work in;
- Some NGOs operate in isolation;
- NGOs should not concentrate on the poorest of the poor;
- Farmers should see farming as a business;
- Many NGOs need an exit strategy that ensures that they pull out of the project in such a way that the project remains self sustaining;
- NGO interventions should address the needs of the farmers and not the needs of the donors;
- NGOs should work with the farmers, not for the farmers;
- NGOs should work together if they are

working in the same areas;

- Many projects face ownership problems – the farmers think that the project does not belong to them but to the NGO.

The following are some of the issues that were raised by other participants after the presentation by Group Three:

- There is a need for a coordination of efforts, but the challenge is to identify who should represent the NGOs in national coordinating bodies;
- There is a need for NGO forums. It was also noted that the NGOs cannot leave government to coordinate all the activities – NGOs should sometimes take the initiative;
- NGOs should not take responsibilities from each other but should complement each other.





10 WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

In final discussions, participants stressed the following:

- NGOs, the Private Sector and Government must learn to cooperate and complement each other's efforts rather than compete with each other.
- The need for clearly defined roles for all players was emphasised.
- Trust emerged as a major sticking point between parties and its development was highly recommended and encouraged by all participants.
- Savings groups and learning programmes emerged as some of the ways of successfully equipping smallholder farmers.
- Participants agreed that some type of platform should be created for NGOs to

share their experiences, knowledge and materials. Suggestions included a form of International NGO forum, an NGO newsletter, a website, information hub and a learning alliance.

A proposal was made for more frequent gatherings in future, of the same nature as the workshop. Mr Heinrich spoke about courting the SADC and COMESA for the establishment of the information hub for NGOs. Mr Shepherd reiterated the importance of keeping alive the linkages and relationships formed during the conference, beyond the conference period and into the future. He also reminded the participants of the FAO's continued availability for the provision of technical support to NGOs.





11 APPENDIX

AGENDA

FAO – NAMC WORKSHOP IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE – WESTERN CAPE AND THE UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH

Workshop on the Role of NGOs in Linking Farmers to Markets in Southern Africa

DAY ONE – 05 OCTOBER 2009

8.30-09.00 Registration

Opening ceremony and keynote speech

Chair: Mr Ronald Ramabulana
Rapporteur: Mr Worship Mugido

- 09.00-09.15 Official Welcome
Mr Ronald Ramabulana, NAMC
- 09.15-09.30 Introduction to the workshop
Mr Andrew Shepherd, FAO
- 09.30-09.45 Participants to introduce themselves
- 09.45-10.15 Keynote Address
Prof Mohammed Karaan,
Univ. of Stellenbosch

10.15-10.45 Photos and Coffee

Linking farmers to markets and the role of NGOs

Chair: Mr Bonani Nyhodo
Rapporteur: Mr Worship Mugido

- 10.45-11.30 Lessons from experiences to date
Mr Andrew Shepherd, FAO
- 11.30-12.00 Lima Rural Development Foundation, South Africa
Mr Duncan Steward
- 12.00-12.30 Experience in South Africa
Dr Patrick Masika
- 12.30-13.00 Discussion
- 13.00-14.30 Lunch and networking

Experiences of NGOs with activities to link farmers to markets

Chair: Prof Nick Vink
Rapporteur: Mr Tichaona Gumbo

- 14.30-15.00 World Vision
Mr Mulugeta Abebe
- 15.00-15.30 Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC)
Mr Nqabayesizwe Moyo

15.30-16.00 Afternoon tea

- 16.00-16.30 Technoserve
Mr Higinio Marrule

- 16.30-17.00 Discussions

18.00 Cocktail Party – Keynote address
Ms Bongiswa Matoti

DAY TWO – 06 OCTOBER 2009

Experiences of NGOs with activities to link farmers to markets (Cont.)

Chair: Ms Bongiswa Matoti

Rapporteur: Ms Maureen Bandama

- 09.00-09.30 ECI Africa
Mr Philip Nel
- 09.30-10.00 ComMark Trust
Dr Xolile Ngethu
- 10.00-10.30 The view of the Private Sector
Mr Mark Terken

10.30-11.00 Coffee

- 11.00-11.30 Concern Universal
Mr Arian Masebo

- 11.30-12.00 SNV
Ms Angeline Kahari

- 12.00-12.30 CRS
Mr Geoff Heinrich

12.30-14.00 Lunch and networking

14.00-14.30 Discussion of morning session and introduction to Group Work

Group Work

Rapporteurs: Mr Carl Goosen and
Mr Fanie Naude

- 14.30-15.30 Discussion groups

15.30-16.00 Tea

- 16.00-16.30 Working groups report back and plenary discussions
- 16.30-17.00 Introduction to field trip

19.00-21.00 GALA DINNER



DAY THREE – 07 OCTOBER 2009

Learning from the private sector – Ways in which the private sector is linking to Emerging Farmers

Chair: Mr Luvuyo Mabombo
Rapporteur: Mr Worship Mugido

- 08.30-09.00 Models of farm-to-agribusiness linkages from around the world
Mr Andrew Shepherd, FAO
- 09.00-09.30 Winetech
Mr Gerard Martin
- 09.30-10.00 National Wool Growers Association
Mr Leon de Beer
- 10.00-10.30 Intaba Project – Woolworths
Mr Soly Jansen
- 10.30-11.00 Discussions
- 11.00-18.00 Field trip (including lunch)**
Rapporteur: Mr Bonani Nyhodo and Mr Nkgasha Tema

DAY FOUR – 08 OCTOBER 2009

Working Groups

Chair: Mr Mark Terken

Rapporteurs: Mr Tichaona Gumbo and Ms Maureen Bandama

- 09.00-10.00 Discussion groups
- 10.00-10.30 Coffee**
- 10.30-12.00 Working groups report back and discussions
- 12.00-12.30 Plenary Discussion.** “Where do we go from here and how can FAO assist?”
- 12.30-14.00 Concluding remarks and farewell lunch**

GALA DINNER PROGRAMME DATE – 06 OCTOBER 2009

- 19:00 - 19:10 Word of welcome by Prof ASM Karaan:**
Deputy Chairperson of the National Agricultural Marketing Council
- 19:10 – 19:30 Keynote address by Mr Ronald Ramabulana:**
CEO of the National Agricultural Marketing Council
- 19:30 – 20:50 Dining**
- 20:50 – 21:00 Closure**





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