



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE AFRICA LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM
AUGUST 2011

Fertilizer Policy Training

Africa Lead sent 13 professionals from across the African continent to the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) workshop: "Fertilizer Policy and Marketing Strategies in Africa" held in Nairobi, Kenya, July 4-8

In early July, 13 Africa Lead-sponsored participants joined 47 others with the goal of addressing macro- and micro-issues affecting fertilizer market development in Africa. The group spent 5 days identifying sound fertilizer policies, exploring more efficient and alternative supply chains, and contextualizing marketing strategies.

Another goal of the workshop was to strengthen business and policy linkages amongst stakeholders from different parts of Africa.

Representing 14 different countries, participants noted many opportunities for networking and collaboration. The workshop also provided a space for peer review of policies and exchange of marketing and distribution ideas. Participants were able to discuss and compare the strengths and weaknesses of the systems in their countries, which resulted in a summary of best practices. The public and private sector attendees are now tasked with putting these innovations into action.

SPONSORED PARTICIPANT: How I'll Use What I Learned

The IFDC fertilizer policy training exposed me to some of the latest research and marketing strategies, which will benefit my work as a Sales Manager for Windmill Farming Solutions, a Zimbabwean fertilizer producer. Through the various presentations and discussion groups, I realized the need for more effective collaboration with universities and the Ministry of Agriculture in developing rural markets, and the training also gave me a better understanding of how market expansion requires the establishment of strong agro-dealer networks with the necessary extension skills and product knowledge acquired through support by manufacturers and distributors. That means we'll need to help our clients do a better job of taking a long term view to the growth of their businesses. New research was presented on boosting fertilizer effectiveness to increase yields with the use of less product, and I want to have my company's research start looking into technologies to do that. In these ways, the training is sure to have an impact on my work.

- Sylvester Tsikisayi, Zimbabwe

WHY FERTILIZER POLICY MATTERS

by David Tardif-Douglin, Africa Lead Chief-of-Party/Program Director

One of the most important proximate causes of Africa's low agriculture productivity is the very low use of fertilizer on small farms. Most small farmers simply do not have the money to buy it. To rectify this, some policy analysts and policy makers recommend that farmers receive subsidies to purchase fertilizer on the grounds that over time the farmers will see the benefit of fertilizer and will become willing to buy at market price. Another rationale for subsidizing fertilizer purchase is that the fertilizer supply chain is not well developed and remains inefficient resulting in high costs to farmers. With the increased use resulting from subsidies, the supply chain will develop and economies of scale will be exploited. But, others contend, untargeted fertilizer subsidies might be a large fiscal burden on government budgets especially if commercial farmers who would have purchased unsubsidized fertilizer have access to subsidized fertilizer. Furthermore, without stringent procurement, management and disbursement rules and procedures, subsidy programs are open to abuse. Getting the policy right for increased use of fertilizer under normal market processes is important for developing a strong, productive remunerative African agriculture sector.

BENEFICIARY STORY: Ghana

Helping Farmers Hold Government Accountable

As president of the Ghana Federation of Agricultural Producers, King David

Amoah works to empower small holder farmers across his country. While attending Africa Lead's CAADP Champions for Change training, he was challenged and inspired to develop "outside-the-box" ideas for a workshop that would have real local impact.

So in June, Dr. Amoah brought together representatives from 30 farmer-based organizations, plus their District Directors of the Ministry of Agriculture, for a 4-day residential training to educate

Dr. King David Amoah brought together local farmers with District Directors of Agriculture to improve trust and awareness of public services and citizens' rights

farmers on the local services available to them, such as subsidized tractor rentals. Participants used Africa Lead training materials to explore national agriculture policies and learned how ordinary citizens can track public budget cycles to keep government accountable for its promises. Participants pledged to pass on their learning in their organizations and communities after returning home.

Visit us on the web at
www.AfricaLeadFTF.org

Or browse our online database of upcoming short courses relevant to African agriculture professionals at
AfricaLead.vudat.msu.edu/courses

For more information, contact:

Jennifer Maurer
USAID/Bureau for Food Security
jmaurer@usaid.gov

David Tardif-Douglin
Chief-of-Party, Africa Lead
david_tardif-douglin@dai.com

What is Africa Lead?

A USAID-funded program – and part of the Feed the Future global food security initiative – that builds the capacity of African agriculture leaders to lead change

Africa Lead supports the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) by providing 4 main services to participating countries and regions:

- Developing and delivering **training modules**:
 - **CAADP Champions for Change**: a 5 day course about CAADP and leading change.
A second 3 day course, tailored to each country, is now in development. It will equip CAADP leaders to operationalize investment plans. The first offering is expected to take place in September 2011.
- Providing logistical and financial support for other trainings and **innovative learning partnerships** that connect participants with institutional hosts, such as the *International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)*, the *World Food Programme*, and private sector agribusinesses.
- **Assessing capacity needs** of national and regional institutions, CAADP Country Teams, and National Agriculture Investment Plan implementation.
- Developing an **online database** of short courses relevant to African agriculture professionals.

RESULTS TO DATE

- ✓ **909** trained CAADP "Champions" from 24 countries:
 - 424 in East Africa
 - 359 in West Africa
 - 126 in Southern AfricaTrainees implement Action Plans developed during training to lead change management by conducting cascade trainings, creating new programs, and advocating for policy changes, among other innovations.
- ✓ 15 people trained in fertilizer policy or risk analysis for animal health
- ✓ 3 capacity assessments of West African regional institutions
- ✓ 2 assessments of CAADP Country Team processes
- ✓ A new short course database features over 250 upcoming offerings relevant to African agriculture professionals! You can browse the offerings or search for a specific topic by going to <http://africalead.vudat.msu.edu/courses>