

PROJECT PROFILE:

ENHANCING FOOD SECURITY IN CASSAVA BASED FARMING SYSTEMS IN MALAWI AND ZAMBIA

Background:

The project, funded by the Italian Trust Fund for Food Security through the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, has been approved and signed for implementation in Zambia and Malawi. Project duration is two years.

Justification:

The Project Document involves a contract with Total LandCare for implementing a set of specific objectives described below as the most cost effective and potentially sustainable way of implementing the project considering the short two year time frame and the weak capacity of national consultants to take on the role of FAO Project Manager. There are benefits in building on the partner organization field experience and linkages with market outlets and other organisations.

Objectives:

The objectives are to: (1). extend improved production and on-farm value addition of cassava and other traditional staples; (2) strengthen the capacity of farmers, farmers groups and cooperatives to plan, implement, and manage value addition and improve market access for produce; and (3) identify, appraise and promote entry for cassava and alternative high value farm products in rural and urban markets.

Implementation will promote competitive, more profitable cassava production systems, increased market access and value-added activities. This will be achieved by disseminating market-oriented technologies and information to public and private sector stakeholders to transform the crop into stable, consumer acceptable quality, market-grade products which will enhance income generation, trade and food security and create employment opportunities, hence contributing to improved livelihoods to the people of Malawi.

This will be achieved through promotion of trade in cassava products by:

- Expanding markets and strengthening market access for rural communities by identifying market opportunities for cassava products,
- Sharing of information and technologies to increase the productivity of cassava to ensure consistent supply,
- Providing linkages between producers, processors and industrial consumers.
- Intensifying cassava production through sharing of information and technologies to increase productivity for consistent supply.
- Expanding engagement in post-harvest value-added activities by developing and disseminating appropriate processing technologies to address issues of grades and standards which will result in availability of high quality products demanded on the market,

Technical specifications and inputs

The following outputs are expected by implementing activities expressed therein:

Overall Objective is to improve food security and small farmer livelihoods through the commercialization of cassava and diversification into alternative farm enterprises.

This development objective will be achieved through understanding the livelihood systems of the rural community, provide farmers with training in rural enterprise development and marketing and linking farmers to markets. Through these efforts enterprise profitability and farm income will be increased.

In support of the overall development objective, the following specific immediate objectives will be pursued:

Total LandCare will undertake the following activities to contribute to the four immediate objectives of the project:

Objective 1. To strengthen the capacity of farmers, farmers groups, cooperatives and support service providers to plan, implement, and manage value addition and improve market access for produce and products.

Output 1.1: *Capacity building of farmers and farmer group strengthened and upgraded through training and enhanced communication and information flows.*

Activity 1.1.3 Strengthen the existing cassava producers groups and link to service providers

Output 1.2: *Capacity of support service providers strengthened*

Activity 1.2.1 Identify main service providers and assess their capacities and effectiveness demand for services, client satisfaction, sources of information, farmer willingness to pay (cassava value chains analyses)

Activity 1.2.2 Organize workshops to identify gaps and shortcomings and develop action plans to reinforce competencies and capacities of service providers.

Objective 2. To increase production, productivity and value addition of cassava.

Output 2.2: *Productivity, value addition and income of cassava producers enhanced*

Activity 2.2.2 Promote improved varieties and sustainable production techniques aimed a increasing cassava productivity.

Activity 2.2.3 Enhance cassava seed supply system and quality control through distribution of improved planting materials and support to nurseries.

Activity 2.2.5 Facilitate private sector investment in SMEs aimed at enhancing value addition of specialized products.

Objective 3: To increase advocacy for investment and policy support in the cassava sub-sector for national food security and economic growth.

Output 3.1: *Marketing strategies and promotional campaigns launched to raise the profile and status of cassava in food security and economic growth.*

Activity 3.1.3 Identify relevant sources of agricultural information and media channels, including

gaps in cassava market information and dissemination in project areas. Identify gaps in data collection and statistics for cassava production and forecasting and make recommendations to Govt. on how to collect accurate and timely data on cassava to contribute to existing early warning information system

Objective 4. Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Output 4.1. *Project activities and objectives monitored and evaluated*

Activity 4.1.3 Produce monthly reports on the progress of the activities

- i. Total LandCare shall be required to technically follow up activities of the project and report accordingly. This exercise will assist in ensuring that all partners are kept abreast of the developments on the ground and then feed into overall decision making process towards realisation of the project objectives.
- ii. Prepare mid term report on activities – around May 2008
The mid-term progress report on activities will help the project management team to review progress so far so that appropriate decisions can be made assuming that the activities implemented so far do not exactly read into maximum realisation of the objectives. Therefore, Total LandCare shall be required to report on the progress on project activities through a mid term evaluation.
- iii. Prepare a final report on the activities – May 2009
The final report will detail the progress made, challenges met and recommendations for future reference.

Project Inputs

Project Manager: Will work under the technical guidance of the of the AGSF, Service Chief and in close collaboration with the National Project Coordinator in the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Security. S/he will be responsible for overall coordination of project activities, and ensuring full integration of the Project in the Ministry's development programme.

Support staff: Will support the Project Manager to carry out specific tasks related to the daily smooth running of project activities.

Contractor-Total LandCare: To implement planned activities that will contribute to fulfilment of project objectives. The Contractor will carry out national awareness raising programmes, trainings, and establish and strengthen linkages between farmer groups and agribusiness service providers, including identification of private partners who can invest in cassava value adding infrastructure. Specific activities and resource allocation are stipulated in Annex 1 (F)