



Cooperative Business School 2.0 Youth

Agri-Business Facility for Africa (ABF)

Breitenwirksame Förderung von Investitionen ländlicher KKMU in Afrika

The opportunity

Since 2010, about 1.5 million African farmers have been trained in Farmer Business School (FBS). Several evaluations reveal that FBS triggers the registration of producer organizations. Individual entrepreneurs achieve more market power and economies of scale if their producer organizations provide business services to them professionally. To seize this opportunity, the now concluded Sustainable Smallholder Agri-Business Program (SSAB) developed with support of European Union the Cooperative Business School (CBS) in 2016. Agri-Business Facility for Africa supports interested parties to introduce, customize and manage CBS in large scale.

The approach

CBS is a one-week training for management teams of agricultural producer organizations. CBS builds on the FBS training. Participants develop their knowledge and skills with practical examples about business services. Technical and economic viability are premises for successful business services.

The comprehensive CBS training handbook covers:

- ➔ Market orientation and understanding of value chains
- ➔ Concepts of viable business services for members, their cost, and benefits
- ➔ Potentials and approaches for youth employment
- ➔ Strategic and financial management of agricultural producer organizations
- ➔ Institutional frameworks, leadership, and group administration
- ➔ Tool book and Excel toolkit for application

CBS can easily be adapted to different value chains and contexts of other countries. This makes the development affordable for programs, organizations or companies that want to strengthen agricultural producer organizations and their service delivery.

CBS in a nutshell

Form Follows Function!



Outreach

- ✓ 5 country curricula with emphasis on cocoa.
- ✓ CBS has been adapted to rice by CARI and Green Innovation Centre in Nigeria. The latter has also piloted CBS for the potato and maize value chain.
- ✓ More than 7,000 managers and members from more than 600 producer organizations in Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Togo trained.
- ✓ Requests to support introduction of CBS in Madagascar, Ghana, Tanzania and Ethiopia.
- ✓ CBS with emphasis on Youth employment developed with Sector program Youth Employment and SNRD Africa.

CBS Success Factors

- ➔ Adult and discovery learning approach
- ➔ Building on FBS training
- ➔ Focus on business services
- ➔ Handbook in simple language
- ➔ 50 Tools to develop, plan and implement business and technical services

Impacts

CBS is effective. This is shown by the first evaluation in 2018 under the now concluded program SSAB. Impacts reported by trained producer organizations comprise:

- More transparent management and administration
- More viable and attractive services for members
- Group sales of cocoa have more than doubled thanks to GAP, better quality and prices negotiated
- Members receive better inputs at lower prices from bulk procurement
- More members and mergers of cooperatives
- New buyers and off-taking agreements
- Access to loans from banks.

SOCOOP PROFICAN (Cameroon): "Following FBS in 2015 and CBS training in 2018, we improved our group management. Members are proud of changes in their life thanks to increased income: All members pay school fees, 56 members opened accounts, 26 renewed their houses, 68 bought mobile phones and 16 motorcycles. Group sales of 91 tons (2017) reached a value of 78,168,000 FCFA. In 2018, we developed an internal credit system on 22 million FCFA with support of a buyer. We have aligned with OHADA, the corporate law of francophone countries in West and Central Africa"



Agri-Business Facility for Africa (ABF)

Funded by	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Intervention zones of requesting partner programs, organizations and companies in Africa
Duration	01/2020 – 05/2023
Budget	4.800.000 EUR



Please contact us if you are interested to implement CBS.



Published by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
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As at June 2021

GIZ is responsible for the content of this publication.

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