

MASDAR

CAPABILITY STATEMENT IN WORKING WITH FARMER ORGANISATIONS



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MASDAR'S CAPABILITY IN WORKING WITH FARMER ORGANISATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

Individual smallholder farmers usually lack the power to lobby for improvements in their lot. By organising into groups, farmers can improve access to many of the resources they need (such as tools, seeds, advice, credit or access to markets) and can also improve their negotiating position, both in the market place and in the political arena. This organisation can bring tangible benefits such as equitable access to water or land, but also broader ones such as developing a more vibrant civil society which is able to hold governments (and other decision makers) to account. In recent years this view has influenced the design of many programmes of assistance to smallholders in Africa to the extent that donors and NGOs have often made group formation a prerequisite for accessing project resources. Additionally, from the donors perspective, there are significant advantages in distributing project resources to groups rather than to individuals, as costs are lower and resources can be disbursed more rapidly.

There are many different types of farmer organisation ranging from informal groups formed for extension and training purposes through to legally constituted organisations such as Co-operatives. Farmer organisations are invariably formed for a particular purpose such as Producer Associations, Water User Groups, Marketing Bodies or Co-operatives.

Although farmers organisations can clearly be beneficial, there is growing evidence that those formed hastily, purely for the benefit of a particular donor-funded project, are rarely sustainable. Many do not last long and in the worst situation, members negative experiences contribute to undermining future self-help initiatives. To be effective and sustainable, groups need to be demand driven; have a clearly defined purpose; a strong, responsive and accountable leadership and high technical and managerial capacity.

The most formal type of farmer organisation is the Co-operative. Until recently these were often viewed as 'failing organisations' due to government interference, a 'top-down' policy of control and their use for political patronage. However, the co-operative movement is undergoing a renaissance with increase autonomy, membership and impact based on the original co-operative values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. Agricultural co-operatives can help farmers get a better deal at various stages of production and distribution. Through membership of a co-operative, farmers are collectively able to negotiate better prices for inputs, transport and storage facilities. Co-operatives can also help them expand access to markets and capture more of the value chain, for example by getting involved in processing activities. Some co-operatives are significant economic players in the formal sector such as Amul, the Indian dairy co-operative, which boosts incomes to people across their value chain: farmers in 130,000 villages, over 7000 distributors and 4000 parlour outlets. 50% of global agricultural produce is marketed via co-operatives.

2. EXPERIENCE

In its 35 years of existence, MASDAR has worked with numerous farmer organisations and has managed a number of projects where strengthening farmers organisations was a major objective.



WUA Farmers - Malawi

Currently, in Malawi on the **Smallholder Crop Production and Marketing Project** MASDAR is working with farmers groups including irrigation water users associations on 39 irrigation schemes around the country. We are assisting these groups to organise themselves into registered co-operatives and then developing their capacity through providing training in management and successful co-operative operations. On the same project we have already undertaken a detailed situation analysis of all Water Users Associations

within the project area, describing their strengths and weaknesses and identifying their training needs.

In Mozambique on the **Green Zones Women's Development Project**, MASDAR worked with the largest co-operative in the country, the Uniao Geral Das Cooperativas (General Union of Co-operatives). Initially built on poultry production, the Co-operative diversified into numerous business ventures and MASDAR supplied an 8 person team to assist with co-operative development and to introduce more efficient business systems. The co-operative proved highly successful and its President, Celina Cosa, was named the 1998 Laureate of the African Prize for Leadership for the Sustainable End of Hunger.



UGC Farmers with a new boiler House - Mozambique

On the IFAD funded **Smallholder Enterprise and Marketing Programme (SHEMP)** in Zambia MASDAR supplied the entire management team for 7 years. A major objective of SHEMP was the formation and strengthening of farmer enterprise groups to improve access to inputs and markets. The Programme worked in seven focal areas, located in Southern, Central, Lusaka, Copperbelt and Eastern provinces where there is a heavy concentration of trading/agricultural activity. Focal Area planning was achieved through a decentralised participatory approach of elected stakeholders who constituted the FARG (Focal Area Resource Group). SHEMP proved very successful and the lessons learnt from it have formed the basis of the successor project the **Smallholder Agribusiness Promotion Programme (SAPP)**.

MASDAR also worked extensively with farmer groups on the **Smallholder Macadamia Nut Development Project** and the **PROSCARP Project** – both in Malawi. On the Macadamia project MASDAR mobilised a total of 207 farmer production groups with a

total membership of over 3000. This was 165% of the target set in the AfDB Staff Appraisal Report.

However, it was recognised that quality of the groups was more important than just quantity and groups were ranked according to ability and strength so that appropriate training could be accurately targeted.

Substantial training was undertaken and then detailed recommendations were made as to how these groups could be combined into a hierarchy culminating into an apex farmer organisation responsible for coordinating macadamia activities in all project areas.



Participants to a field day held at Kalira Mother Nursery in Ntchisi RDP



Farmers in the field in The Gambia

In The Gambia, MASDAR provided a 5 person TA team to the **Peri-Urban Smallholder Improvement Project** which is a smallscale irrigation project very similar to SCPMP. They established water-user groups and trained farmers in appropriate irrigation management skills and crop agronomy. Similarly on the **Mayo-Ine Irrigation Project** in Nigeria, MASDAR provided extension services to local farmers and outgrowers.

Currently in Ghana, MASDAR is undertaking a **Data Collection Support Consultancy** for the Millennium Development Authority. This includes a 'clients assessment' to provide qualitative information on the socio-cultural conditions and perceptions of various farmers groups operating throughout the project area.

Other MASDAR projects in Africa involving group formation and/or cooperatives include the **Bakolori Irrigation Project** (Nigeria), the **Bauchi State Agricultural Development Project** (Nigeria), the **Northwest Smallholder Agricultural Development Project** (Uganda), the **Southern Province Household Food Security Project** (Zambia), the **Rice Development Project** (The Gambia) and the **Smallholder Agricultural Credit Project** (Malawi).

MASDAR's work with Farmers Groups and Associations has not been limited to Africa.



*Rehabilitated irrigation canal -
Nepal*

In **Nepal**, on the Gulmi and Arghakhanchi Rural Development Project, MASDAR staff facilitated the building or rehabilitation of 45 irrigation schemes, helping local communities to build and maintain many kilometres of precipitously situated canals. GARDP worked with local Water User Groups providing technical advice so that they could access the generous loans for irrigation available from the Agricultural Development Bank of Nepal. Moreover, they were able to access funds for maintenance which is essential to cope with the future inevitable landslide damage to their canals.

On the same project enterprise groups were established for a whole range of activities including vegetable production, livestock production, seed multiplication, bee keeping as well as cottage industries such as tailoring.

In the Windward Islands, MASDAR worked with Banana Growers Associations (BGA) to provide an upgrading of management information systems so that the BGA's had better management and financial information to aid in the expansion of the banana export industry. In Moldova we were tasked with the creation of a **National Federation of Rural Based Farmers Associations**. This involved working with both existing and new groups of private farmers and establishing an apex 'national federation'. This included drafting a law on Agricultural Co-operatives for the whole country.

3. STAFFING

MASDAR maintains a database of over 3000 consultants in a very wide range of disciplines. These include many in the field of Farmers Associations, Groups and Co-operatives such as:-

Professor Suleman Chambo - is one of Africa's foremost proponents of Co-operative Development and is currently leading MASDAR's team assisting co-operative development in Malawi. Until recently he was Principal of the Moshi University College of Co-operative and Business Studies and he has over 30 years relevant experience in Co-operative Management, Development and Research. He is an active public speaker and has recently presented research on: The National Micro Finance Policy of Tanzania; Strategies and Processes to add value in Agricultural Marketing Co-operatives in Tanzania; and Member Empowerment in Co-operative Savings and Credit Co-operatives in East Africa. In 2006 / 07 as team leader he joined a major research project on "Enabling Environment for Co-operative Development in Africa" for the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA).

Dennis Dobson – Dennis has worked as a Group Formulation specialist for MASDAR on projects in Malawi and Nigeria. He has over 30 years experience in the mobilisation of Farmer Groups, Associations and Co-operatives and has worked extensively throughout Africa. He has extensive experience working directly for ILO and a considerable track record in supporting and developing the Co-operative movement.

Dr Penelope Perkin – Penelope started her career working with women’s groups in Malawi. She subsequently took up an academic career and for the past 9 years has been short course coordinator at the world famous Agricultural Extension and Rural Development Department (AERDD) of Reading University. Amongst her teaching duties she conducts several important courses on gender issues and has supervised numerous thesis on gender and women in development. Her practical background combined with her academic skills have enabled her to put theory into practice and for the last year she has been MASDAR’s gender specialist on the Smallholder Macadamia Nut Project in Malawi.

Gerrit Struyf – Gerrit is an Agricultural Marketing Specialist with considerable experience of working the Farmers Associations in Southern Africa. He is currently working for MASDAR in Malawi where he has overseen the situational analysis of 39 Water Users Associations and is now implementing a substantial training programme to address their identified training needs.

4. PROJECT DATASHEETS

We have included 6 datasheets of projects undertaken by MASDAR aimed at strengthening Farmer Associations.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION SHEET 1

Assignment Name: CO-OPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT, SCPMP		Country: MALAWI
Location within Country: Countrywide in 19 districts		Professional Staff Provided by Your Firm: 6
Name of Client: Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development		No. of Staff: 7
Address: Private Bag 390 Lilongwe 3 Malawi		No. of Staff Months: 47
Start Date(Month/Year): November 2010	Completion Date (Month/Year): November 2011	Approx. Value of Services (in Current USD): USD 255,400
Name Of Associated Firm(s) if any: Co-operative College (UK)		No. of Months of Professional Staff Provided by Associate Firm(s): N/A
Name of Senior Staff (Project Director/Coordinator, Team Leader) involved and functions performed: Professor Suleman Chambo (Team Leader); David Warwick (Project Director); Pelias Kabuli (Co-ops Development Expert); Agnes Sentala (Legal Expert); and four Co-op Development Assistants		
Narrative Description of Project: The Co-operatives Development Assignment is a component of the Smallholder Crop Production and Marketing Project. This is being implemented in 19 districts throughout Malawi with a view to increase agricultural productivity and the main objective of this assignment is to assist farmer groups and irrigation water users associations to organise themselves into registered co-operatives.		
Description of Actual Services Provided by Your Staff: The MASDAR team are supporting the development and registration of co-operatives in line with the Malawi Co-operatives Act. Key activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting a desk review of models of co-operative development within Malawi • Sensitising existing farmers groups on the benefits of co-operatives and the processes required for registration • Conducting a Training Needs Assessment for staff and farmers • Producing a Co-operatives Training Manual with guidelines on establishment, registration and operation of co-operatives, appropriate co-operative management structures and models of appropriate accounting and auditing • Undertake a training and capacity building programme for newly formed co-operative societies • Setting up a monitoring system for tracking newly registered co-operatives 		

THEMES RELEVANT:

- Sensitising farmer groups on co-operative formation
- Assisting in the formation and registration of co-operatives
- Training and capacity building for newly formed co-ops

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SHEET 2

Assignment Name:**Country:**

SMALLHOLDER CROP PRODUCTION AND MARKET PROJECT – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR MARKETING COMPETITIVENESS STUDY AND TRAINING

MALAWI**Location within Country:**

Country wide in 19 districts

Professional Staff Provided by Your Firm:

5 + short term specialists

Name of Client:

Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development

No. of Staff:

5

Address:Private Bag 390
Lilongwe 3, Malawi**No. of Staff Months:**

124

Start Date(Month/Year):

October 2008

Completion Date (Month/Year):

September 2011

Approx. Value of Services (in Current USD):

USD 1.37 million

Name Of Associated Firm(s) if any:

N/A

No. of Months of Professional Staff Provided by Associate Firm(s): N/A

Name of Senior Staff (Project Director/Coordinator, Team Leader) involved and functions performed:
Project Director (Nick Freeland), Team Leader (Mannex Mwabumba), Marketing Advisor (John Doughty), Marketing Specialist (Edson Mphande), Business Admin/Trainer (Felix Jumbe) – plus short term specialists.

Narrative Description of Project:

The Smallholder Crop Production and Marketing Project (SCPMP) is being implemented in 19 districts throughout Malawi with a view to increasing agricultural productivity and household incomes as well as improve nutritional status. The specific objectives of the Marketing study are:-

- a) To analyse the financial, management and business planning skills of the farmers
- b) To identify and analyse new markets and possible expansion of existing markets considering opportunities and constraints
- c) To devise a user friendly market information system within the project areas
- d) To analyse the competitiveness of commodities produced within the different geographic areas of the project

Description of Actual Services Provided by Your Staff:

As part of this project MASDAR staff undertook a detailed Situational Analysis of existing farmers groups and water user associations on the 39 irrigation schemes covered by the project. This analysis looked at the management structure of the groups and assessed their strengths and weaknesses. A Training Needs Analysis was undertaken and a comprehensive training programme implemented to address identified training needs.

THEMES RELEVANT:

- Working with farmer groups including Water User Associations
- Reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of different groups
- Undertaking a TNA and implementing a group-focussed training programme

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SHEET 3

Assignment Name: GREEN ZONES WOMENS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT		Country: MOZAMBIQUE
Location within Country: Maputo		Professional Staff Provided by Your Firm: 8
Name of Client: General Union of Cooperatives		No. of Staff: 8
Address: Avenida Agostiro Net nr 714 Maputo		No. of Staff Months: 147
Start Date(Month/Year): 1995	Completion Date (Month/Year): 1999	Approx. Value of Services (in Current USD): USD 1,346,580
Name Of Associated Firm(s) if any: N/A		No. of Months of Professional Staff Provided by Associate Firm(s): N/A
Name of Senior Staff (Project Director/Coordinator, Team Leader) involved and functions performed: Jorge Salvador - Financial Controller; A. Couto - Poultry Expert; B. Fabbri - Cooperative Consultant; M. Ismail - Credit Accountant; M. Novoa - Training Manager; S. Ravedoni - Mechanical Engineer; P. Mudd - Engineer Slaughterhouse Specialist; Jose Salvador - Marketing Consultant.		
Narrative Description of Project: This Co-operative's primary aim is to alleviate poverty by making a positive impact on the economic and social condition of its women members. This is being achieved by the introduction of more efficient business systems and training to increase the profitability of the co-op business. Target expenditure on crèches, nurseries, clinics, improve sanitation and water supplies is being made to improve living standards.		
Description of Actual Services Provided by Your Staff: Improving the management skills and capacity of the largest Co-operative in Mozambique in order to plan, implement and report its various business ventures.		

THEMES RELEVANT:

- Working with a very large agricultural co-operative
- Providing business advice and enterprise skills

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SHEET 4

Assignment Name:

**PROGRAMME COORDINATION UNIT FOR THE
SMALLHOLDER ENTERPRISE AND MARKETING
PROGRAMME (SHEMP)**

Country:

ZAMBIA

Location within Country:

Lusaka, Eastern, Southern and Central Copper Belt Provinces.

Professional Staff Provided by Your Firm:

8

Name of Client:

Ministry of Food and Fisheries

No. of Staff:

8

Address:

Lusaka, Zambia

No. of Staff Months:

588

Start Date(Month/Year):

September 2000

Completion Date (Month/Year):

December 2007

Approx. Value of Services (in Current USD):

2,500,000

Name Of Associated Firm(s) if any:

N/A

No. of Months of Professional Staff Provided by Associate Firm(s): N/A

Name of Senior Staff (Project Director/Coordinator, Team Leader) involved and functions performed:

M Slater – Project Director; D. Siame – Project Co ordinator; W Blechingberg - Agribusiness; Gibson Kapili - Contracts/Financial Manager; M Nawiko – Planning/M & E Officer; N Lubasi – Facilitator 1; P Chibbamulilo – Facilitator 2; D. Mainga – Administrator.

Narrative Description of Project:

The project was designed to improve smallholder access to input and output markets, with the overall goal of increased income & food security. Strategies include capacity building enterprise groups of farmers; improved access by road rehabilitation and construction; facilitation of cost effective network of agribusinesses trading enterprises; production of crops and livestock diversification and strengthening the appropriate policy and legislative framework

The project provided technical assistance in training, capacity building and financial control of the \$18million investment. Outputs included markets, roads, village level institutions and trading enterprises.

The project was managed through participatory systems of planning, implementation and reporting and was focussed on the poor.

Description of Actual Services Provided by Your Staff:

MASDAR provided the co-ordination, implementation and supervision of the SHEMP project and its activities and worked extensively with farmer enterprise groups.

THEMES RELEVANT:

- Working with farmer enterprise groups to improve market access
- Training of farmer groups and associations

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SHEET 5

Assignment Name:		Country:
SMALLHOLDER MACADAMIA NUT DEVELOPMENT		MALAWI
Location within Country:		Professional Staff Provided by Your Firm:
Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Kasungu		7
Name of Client:		No. of Staff:
Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Lilongwe		7
Address:		No. of Staff Months:
		36
Start Date(Month/Year):	Completion Date (Month/Year):	Approx. Value of Services (in Current USD):
2001	2004	USD 1,351,400
Name Of Associated Firm(s) if any:		No. of Months of Professional Staff Provided by Associate Firm(s):
N/A		N/A
Name of Senior Staff (Project Director/Coordinator, Team Leader) involved and functions performed:		
Ibrahim Phiri – Macadamia Development Expert / Team Leader; Edgar Chongwe – Macadamia Development Expert; Wayne Hancock – Macadamia Training Specialist; Andrew Emmott – Macadamia Marketing Specialist; Denis Dobson – Group Formulation Specialist; Penelope Perkin – Gender Specialist; Nicholas Freeland – M & E Specialist; John Wilkie – Macadamia Advisor		
Narrative Description of Project:		
The overall goal of the Smallholder Macadamia Nut Development project is to improve the well being of Malawians through poverty alleviation by promoting broad based and rapid agricultural development. Initially the project will establish high value perennial nut crops on 2500 smallholder farms intercropping with high value annual crops like paprika. The project is an innovative attempt to ensure that smallholders benefit from high value horticultural crops.		
Description of Actual Services Provided by Your Staff:		
<p>MASDAR provided a TA team consisting of two long term macadamia specialists and five short term consultants in the area of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Training • Group formulation • Marketing • Monitoring and Evaluation. 		

THEMES RELEVANT:

- Mobilising 207 farmer production groups
- Training and capacity building of farmer groups

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SHEET 6

Assignment Name:		Country:
CREATION OF A NATIONAL FEDERATION OF RURAL BASED FARMERS ASSOCIATIONS		MOLDOVA
Location within Country:		Professional Staff Provided by Your Firm:
Kishinau		3
Name of Client:		No. of Staff:
Federation Nationala A Fermierilor din Moldova		6
Address:		No. of Staff Months:
2004 Moldova, Kishinau Stafan cel Mare 152 Moldova		53
Start Date(Month/Year):	Completion Date (Month/Year):	Approx. Value of Services (in Current USD):
1995	1998	ECU 1.4 million
Name Of Associated Firm(s) if any:		No. of Months of Professional Staff Provided by Associate Firm(s):
Helmico		
Name of Senior Staff (Project Director/Coordinator, Team Leader) involved and functions performed:		
Kostas Hadjiyannis (Team Leader); Panayiotis Moschas (Market Information); Paul Seggons (Farm Inputs); Kostas Christou (Rural Credit); Alan Harold (Extension)		
Narrative Description of Project:		
The objective of this project was to establish a National Federation of existing and future rural-based farmers associations. A long term leader supported by a number of short term experts established legal aspects and financial and management procedures, trained office bearers and developed new services in pilot areas.		
Description of Actual Services Provided by Your Staff:		
A National Federation of rural based farmer associations has been legally established. Extensive training has been undertaken in the areas of administration and accounting; marketing; rural savings and credit, farm input management and agricultural extension. Study tours to the EU have been successfully undertaken and a public awareness campaign throughout Moldova has been initiated.		

THEMES RELEVANT:

- **Setting up a National Federation of Farmer Associations**

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