



Mr Daniel W. Yohannes CEO, MCC (Left) and Prof. Samuel K. Sefa-Dedeh, (Right) Chairman of MiDA Board

Millennium Challenge Corporation CEO Visits Akwapim South Municipality

The CEO of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), USA, Mr. Daniel W. Yohannes, on a three-day visit to Ghana visited a number of MCC funded projects in the Akwapim South Municipality.

Mr. Yohannes was accompanied by the Chairman of the Board of the Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) Professor Samuel K. Sefa-Dedeh, the CEO of MiDA, Martin Eson-Benjamin and the Resident Country Director of MCC Ghana, Mr. Jim Bednar.

The party visited two schools in Pakro, rehabilitated by MiDA with funds provided by the MCC. Mr. Yohannes addressed the Chiefs and People of Pakro, including teachers and pupils of the two schools.

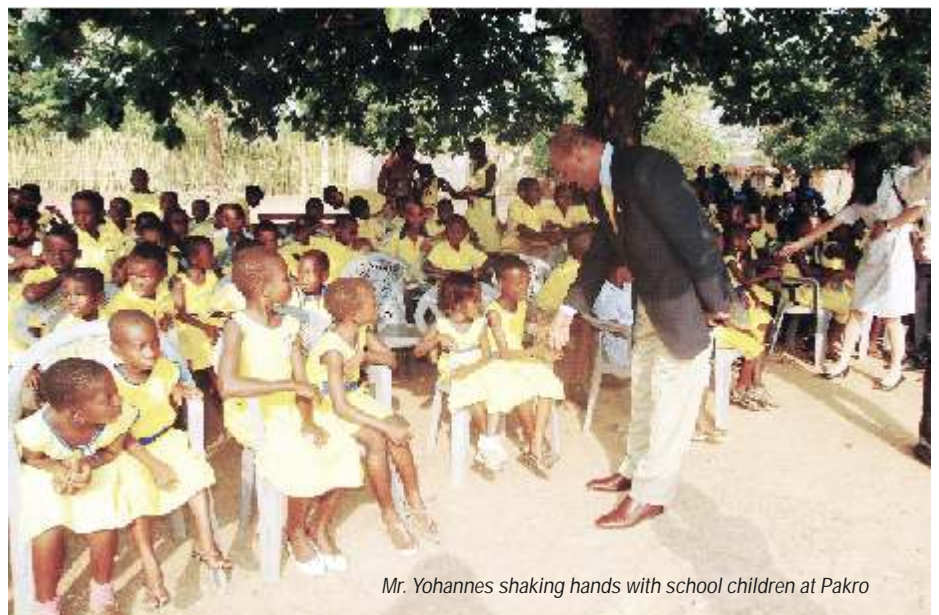
Speaking at the Methodist Basic Schools at Pakro, Mr. Johannes said that MCC "recognizes the big role that education bring in long term poverty reduction by constructing and improving schools". He asked the children " to never stop believing in your potential. Remember: the sky is the limit. You can move mountains". He concluded by saying that the US government through MCC is proud to partner with the people of Ghana to achieve the success of the compact, including the success of investments in education.

He donated some Map of Africa and footballs to the two schools. The visiting party continued to other projects in the Municipality by inspecting the Pakro-Nsawam roads which is under construction.

Mr. Yohannes was driven to Bomart Farms near Awutu-Bawjaise where he inspected a modern agricultural Enterprise which has received significant support from MiDA.



MCC CEO interacting with construction workers.



Mr. Yohannes shaking hands with school children at Pakro

Message From The CEO



Martin Eson-Benjamin, CEO, MiDA

On February 16 2010, the MCA Ghana Program was ushered into the final two years of the 5-year Program. We are now on the homestretch.

Going by our avowed intention to meet every approved deliverable of this agricultural transformation programme, it is imperative that the Management Team in MiDA commits to an all-out effort to:-

- speedily conclude all outstanding procurements;
- manage and supervise all **C O N T R A C T S** under implementation;
- **d e m a n d** from Contractors/Consultants, a high level of physical activity and consequently, physical progress;
- get things done right first time and professionally;
- insist on a higher but efficient burn rate, and improve on current levels of financial progress.

This must not be the time for business as usual. The last three years was committed for a thorough, but painfully slow process of procurements, feasibility studies and project designs,

Overcoming our Challenges on the Homestretch

and allowed for too many iterations and corrections. We no longer have the luxury of time and all hands must be fully on deck, if our Team must be successful.

MiDA, the Accountable Entity, has a major responsibility towards the provision of the necessary inputs and infrastructure which will assist in creating significant economic values among the poor farmers in our beneficiary Communities. Ours is an integrated Program and our success will be judged on our deliverables.

Management appreciates the team efforts and commitment that have been exhibited by MiDA's Staff, by MCC, the Implementing Entities and other Stakeholders, on our journey so far. Going forward, we must harmonise and leverage our strengths. We trust that our joint efforts and tenacity of purpose, underpinned by a very strong desire to work systematically and even harder, will enable us deliver excellent results - results which create wealth, reduce rural poverty and attract further support from MCC and the Government of the United States of America.

Finally, the message from our Team to the Supervising Consultants and implementing Contractors must be that in all these, we anticipate the continued understanding and support from the MiDA Board, and through them, the GoG's appreciation of our work. This must motivate and give all of us the impetus to do good things to deliver this Compact and thereby merit another Compact at the end of the Program at midnight on February 15, 2012.

May the Almighty guide and keep us all.

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District Advisory Committee Meetings



... At Akatsi



... At Awutu-Senya



... At Mampong



... At Mpraeso



... At Ejura



... At Donkorkrom



... At Effiduase



... At Kumawu

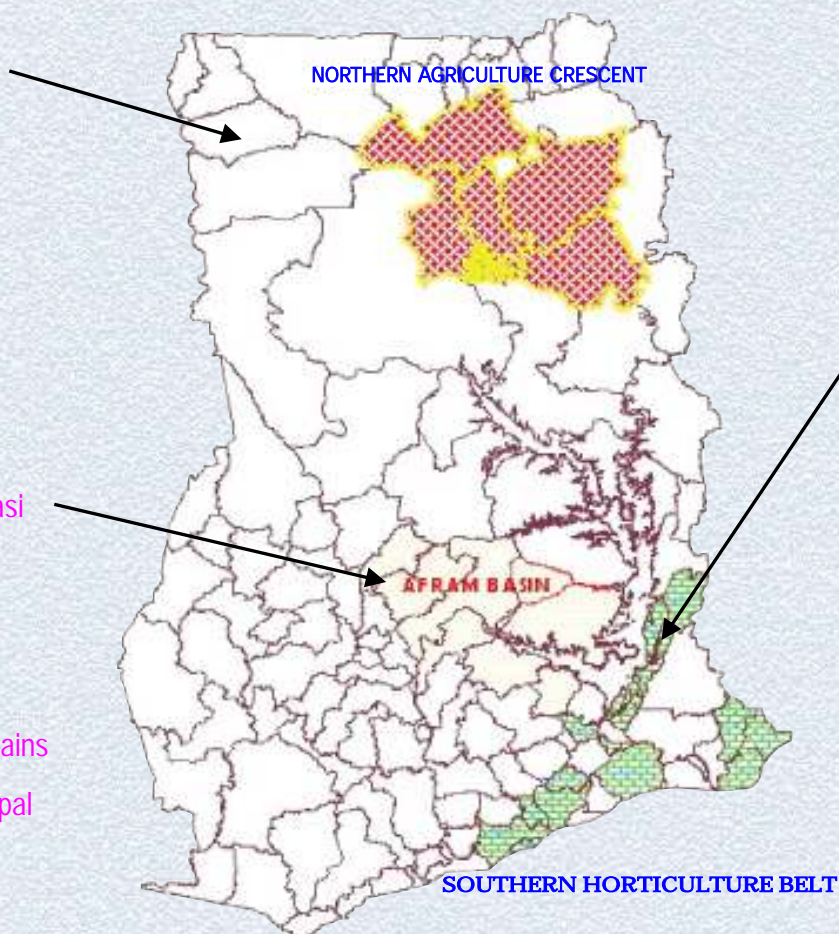
MiDA INTERVENTION ZONES

NORTH

Savelugu Nanton
Tolon Kumbungu
Tamale
West Mamprusi
Karaga

AFRAM BASIN

Ejura Sekyedumasi
Kwahu South
Kwahu East
Sekyere East
Sekyere Afram Plains
Mampong Municipal
Sekyere Central
Kwahu North
Fanteakwa



SOUTH

Gomoa East
Gomoa West
Efutu Municipal
Awutu-Senya
Akuapim South Municipal
Upper Manya Krobo
Lower Manya Krobo
Dangme West
Yilo Krobo
Kpando
Hohoe Municipal
Ketu South
Ketu North
Keta Municipal
South Tongu
Akatsi

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MCA Ghana Program Supports Building Capacity Of Procurement Professionals



Ghana's polytechnics and universities will start running courses leading to the award of internationally recognised certificates, degrees and diplomas in procurement. The Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) in collaboration with Public Procurement Authority (PPA), launched a three-type curricula and modules which provide the framework for the implementation of medium to long-term public procurement training programs in the country's tertiary education institutions.

The Chief Executive Officer of MiDA Mr. Martin Eson Benjamin said Ghana was the first country in West Africa to institutionalize procurement education in tertiary institutions to help curtail the waste of public funds by unprofessional procurement

practices. He added, the curricula and modules would strengthen the capacity of the various procurement entities within the government.

Explaining the nature of the program, Mr. AB Adjei, Chief Executive of the Public Procurement Authority (PPA) said the first category will be a three (3) to six (6) months intensive training in procurement, specifically targeting procurement practitioners currently working in the public sector on procurement schedules who do not have any professional qualifications in procurement besides the academic and/or professional qualifications they may hold in other disciplines.

There is also a 15-24 months intensive training in procurement for HND graduates

Management courses in the polytechnics and would want to acquire Bachelor's degrees. The third category will be a Bachelor's degree courses in Procurement for Senior Secondary School leavers wishing to pursue careers in Procurement. He said, over the years, Ghana has led the way in procurement reforms particularly in Africa and that apart from the high scores attained in World Bank reviews of Ghana's Procurement system, several Commonwealth countries have visited Ghana to study its procurement system.

The Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) under the MCA Ghana Program, with funding from the Millennium Challenge Corporation is supporting the capacity building initiative with US\$2.3 million.

ONE Campaign "Listening and Learning Tour" Hits Ghana



Ghana and Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) had the pleasure of hosting the anti-poverty group, ONE, on Tuesday 19 January 2010. The Team was conducted round selected projects completed under the Millennium Challenge Compact. The purpose of the visit was for ONE to explore how women are impacted by extreme poverty and what progress was being made in Africa through US investments on the continent. The group also intended to use the visit to understand firsthand, how women and girls in developing countries are critical to the health, social and economic well-being of entire communities.

• The delegation, included ONE U.S. Executive Director, Sheila Nix, and ONE Global Policy Director, Erin Thornton. It also included prominent women from the policymaking, business and creative communities, including:

- Cindy McCain, Humanitarian, business owner, and board member of non-profit groups
- Operation Smile and The HALO Trust
- Connie Britton, Award- winning actress, currently starring in the television drama Friday Night Lights. Britton is producing a documentary on Ethiopia while also supporting ONE
- Yvonne Chaka Chaka, Renowned South-African singer and anti-poverty activist
- Maureen Orth, Special Correspondent for Vanity Fair; founder of the Marina Orth Foundation and Escuela Marina Orth in Medellín, Colombia, now the first One Laptop Per Child school in Colombia
- Dana Perino, White House Press Secretary to President George W. Bush from 2007 - 2009; Fox News contributor; Public Relations Consultant
- Maura Keefe, Chief of Staff to U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen, New Hampshire

MiDA's component of the programme took the

team to Nyanyano Primary School and George fields Farm located in the Awuttu Senya District.

At Nyanyano, the group interacted with PTAs, CMAs, the Traditional Authority, Local Administration, and the Head mistress and pupils of the school. ONE was given an overview of MiDA's mandate by the CEO, Mr. Martin Eson-Benjamin, followed by a Presentation on MiDA's Community Services Project by the Project Manager, Mr. S. Kuma-Botchway. The Head Mistress presented a paper on the impact of MiDA's intervention on the development of the school. She emphasized that the contribution by the MCC through MiDA which resulted in the remarkable rehabilitation of the school was the first significant development in the school since it was founded in 1952. To complement MiDA's intervention, the community had begun to pool their own resources to fence the compound, provide ICT facilities and connect the school to the national electricity grid. Yvonne Chaka Chaka, the renowned South-African singer and anti-poverty activist, spoke to the Girls Club and asked them to "learn hard and aspire to greater things." ONE donated sporting materials, stationery and maps to the school.

The ONE Team later visited Georgefield Farms to meet with Farmer Based Organizations, Exporters and also observe work at a pineapple processing plant. This visit to the farm afforded members of the ONE Team an opportunity to ask questions about agricultural practices in Ghana.



MCC, CEO, Commissions Land Registration Office at Winneba



Front view of Land Registry built with MCC Funding



Waiting area inside the Land Registry built with MCC Funding

Mr. Daniel W. Yohannes, CEO of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, MCC USA commissioned the new Land Title registration Office at Winneba. Present at the commissioning ceremony were the Hon. Hanna Tetteh, Minister of Trade and Industry, Hon Mike Hammah, Minister of Transport, the Deputy Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, Hon. Henry Kamel and the US Ambassador to Ghana, H. E. Donald G. Teitelbaum.

The occasion was used to present Rural Land Title Registration Certificates to 30 proprietors. The first ever Systematic Rural Land Title Registration Certificates given to farmers, are to ensure security of land tenure for farmers and promote economic activities especially in agriculture towards the reduction of poverty.

MiDA played a catalyst role in the adoption of

L.I. 1914 by Parliament to declare the Awutu Senya District as a Pilot Registration District in accordance with the provision of the Land Title Registration Law PNDCL 152.

At the commissioning ceremony, Mr. Daniel Yohannes expressed his satisfaction at the contribution of MCC to the establishment of security of tenure for farmers and the extra incentive it gives to all stakeholders to increase infrastructure in the land sector.

The chairman of the occasion was the Paramount Chief of the

Effutu Traditional Area, Neenyi Ghantey VII who was delighted that the area was benefiting from scheme. He expressed hope that the Land Registration processes having been brought closer to the people will contribute to bringing to an end, land disputes in the area.



Resident Country Director of MCC, Ghana, Jim Bednar, handing over a Land Certificate to a farmer



Group of recipients of Land Titles with MCC & MiDA Officials



Mr. Yohannes handing a certificate over to a farmer



Mr. Martin Eson-Benjamin, CEO, addressing the media.



Photo Exhibition

Third Anniversary Of MiDA: 67% Of MCA Funds Committed

The Chief Executive Officer of the Millennium Development Authority (MiDA), Mr. Martin Eson-Benjamin, has informed a group of media practitioners that “MiDA has, at the end of 2009, committed 67% of Compact Funds and re-disbursed 23% through the Bank of Ghana, representing \$367m and \$127m respectively. MiDA is on course to fully exhaust the entire Program Budget within the 5-year period”.

Mr. Eson-Benjamin was speaking at a Press Soiree organized to mark the third anniversary of MiDA and the Entry into Force of the Millennium Challenge Compact, Ghana Program. He gave an update on the status of the Program under the three thematic areas:

1. Agricultural Productivity and Value-added

Development Project - (6 Projects)

2. Transformation Infrastructure Development Project – (3 Projects)

3. Rural Services Development Project – (3 Project Activities)

Mr. Eson-Benjamin revealed that 47,000 farmers have received free Technical and Business Skills Training. Each farmer also received and worked with US\$230 worth of inputs as “Starter Packs”. He enumerated several other initiatives in Irrigation Development and Land Tenure Facilitation that were transforming the face of agriculture in the Intervention Zones in the Northern Region, the Afram Basin and the Beneficiary Districts in the Central, Eastern, Greater Accra and the Volta Regions.

Mr. Eson-Benjamin briefed the media about the progress of work on a number of sub-projects under the Transportation Project. These include the 14.1 km N1 Highway – Tetteh Quarshie-Mallam Highway – and other Trunk and Feeder roads in all the Intervention Zones. He also provided an update on Ferries, Ferry Terminals and the rehabilitation of the Floating Dock at Akosombo.

On the Rural Services Development leg of the Program, Mr. Eson-Benjamin spoke about the building and rehabilitation of schools, provision of water and the construction of 230 kms of power lines to connect several rural communities. Under this Component, MiDA is assisting several MDAs to build their capacity to provide more efficient services to citizens. One key Project under the Component is the Financial Services one which involves collaboration with the Bank of Ghana, the ARB Apex Bank and 121 Rural Banks to extend the depth and value of financial services to Rural Ghana.

Directors and Project Managers of MiDA responded to questions from the media. Present were the Resident Country Director of MCC, Ghana, Mr. Jim Bednar, his Deputy, Mrs. Katerina Ntep, Board members, Management, Staff and Consultants.



Press men and women listening attentively to Mr. Martin Eson-Benjamin, CEO.



Participants at the M&E Workshop

M & E Workshop at Novotel

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Department of MiDA has held a two day workshop to present the status of implementation of the M & E Plan for the MCA Ghana Program. The workshop which was meant to fine tune the M&E plan to enable MiDA to meet the planned goal and objectives of the MCA Ghana Program assessed the progress being made in meeting the reporting requirements of M&E under the Program and discussed the current Field Monitoring processes and how well they are working.

The workshop appraised the effectiveness of current feedback processes and provided an update on the Impact Evaluation Framework of the MCA Ghana Program.

It helped to draw up guidelines for Project Managers to monitor their projects effectively and efficiently. A flow chart for feedback cycles and reporting has also been

drafted for use by various stakeholders. A checklist of proposed changes to the M & E plan, the Monitoring Processes and Specific Project Evaluation was agreed.

The workshop was attended by Mr Martin Eson-Benjamin, Chief Executive Officer, MiDA, Mr Matthew Armah, Chief Operating Officer, MiDA and Mrs. Abigail Abandor-Sam, Director of M&E, MiDA, Project Managers of

MiDA and Mr. Jigar Bhatt, Program Officer, M&E, MCC.

The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the Ministry of Education are some of the stakeholders in attendance. Consultants who work in support of MiDA to implement the MCA Ghana Program were also in attendance.



MCC Rep. Jigar Bhatt giving a presentation at the workshop

11 IDIQ Contracts for Boreholes and Small Towns Water Supply Systems Signed



Mr. Matthew Armah, COO, appending his signature to a contract. With him are Mrs. Dorothy Dzokoto, Legal Counsel and Mr. Sam Kumah-Botchway, Community Services Project Manager.

facilities which will provide potable water directly to over 120,000 persons in the MCA Ghana Intervention Zones. This Project is expected to provide clean potable water in order to prevent the spread of water-borne diseases, and consequently enhance the health status of residents of the Intervention Zones in order to enable them increase agricultural production in the Intervention Zones.

The breakdown of the contracts is as follows:

13 contracts signed for Small Town Water Systems

6 contracts signed for Boreholes Drilling

Signing on behalf of MiDA was Mr. Mathew Armah, Chief Operating Officer of MiDA, Mrs. Dorothy Djokoto, Legal Counsel, Mr. Samuel Kuma-Botchway, Community Services Project Manager and John Bellah Benson, Procurement Manager (Works). Others present were Mr. Gabriel Engmann, Community Services Project Support Consultant for Water and Sanitation, Mr. Kwaku Osei Asante and Kwesi Ansu-Tutu of Charles Kandell and Partners, Procurement Agents for MiDA, Nii Okai Nunoo of Lamda Consult Ltd – the Project Management Support Consultants for Community Services Activity and the successful contractor

On March 3, 2010, contractors who had gone through the qualification process and have been qualified and accepted to execute Borehole and Small Towns Water Systems Projects were all invited to MiDA Head Office to sign Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantities (IDIQ) contracts with MiDA under the MCA Ghana Programme.

Having signed IDIQ contracts, these contractors have become eligible for the award of subsequent Works Order for the construction of water supply s.

Members of the audience listing attentively during the signing ceremony.



MiDA Welcomes MCC, CEO, to Ghana





Mr. Jim Bednar, Resident Country Director, MCC presenting a framed map of Africa to one of the head teachers

Rebuilt Flood-affected Schools In Northern Zone Commissioned

The Millennium Development Authority (MiDA) has handed over thirty (30) schools built to replace schools washed away during the 2007 floods in the Northern Region to the various Metropolitan and District Assemblies at three separate commissioning ceremonies at Yama in the West Mamprusi District, Chang-Naa-Yili in the Tamale Metropolitan Area and Kaan-Fehi-Yili in the Tolon-Kumbungu District on 22 and 23 February 2010. The commissioning ceremonies were preceded by inspection tours of some of the completed schools in the respective areas.

Jointly handing over the schools to the various Assemblies, the Chief Executive Officer of MiDA, Mr. Martin Eson-Benjamin and the Resident Country Director of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), Mr. Jim Bednar, declared their satisfaction with the quality of work and the speed with which the projects were executed.

Mr. Eson-Benjamin announced that MiDA will construct four hundred and sixty-nine (469) other educational facilities, two hundred and fifty-three (253) of which are school blocks in the three intervention Zones. The Northern Intervention Zone will receive eighty-one (81) facilities, including 34 school blocks.

The Chief Executives of the beneficiary Districts were grateful for the contribution to their stock of schools and expressed their relief at the successful completion of the

school buildings. They were particularly elated because the new school blocks will alleviate the sorrowful fate of affected school children who have been studying in terrible conditions since their school buildings were washed away in 2007.

The beneficiary communities were so appreciative that they treated the MiDA delegation and other invited guests to exotic traditional songs and dances. The Chiefs were so happy that they conferred two chieftaincy titles on the Resident Country Director, MCC, Mr Jim Bednar. At Yama in the West Mamprusi District, Mr Bednar was conferred with the title Malgu-Naa of Yama (Development Chief of Yama and at Chang-Naa-Yili, he was given the title Kpang-Mang- Naa of Chang-Naa-Yili (Great Worker of the Community).





Eric and his wife in their farm at Akwasiho in the Afram Basin Zone

Farmers Sorting pepper for packing before export



MCA Program Improves Farmer Incomes

Eric Amofo, is one of about 17,000 farmers who have already participated in Business Development and Organizational Capacity Building and Technical Production Technologies Training under the MCA Ghana Program. A total of 50,000 are expected to participate.

Eric who is participating as a small holder farmer, with very low income, says the knowledge and skills acquired during the training as well as the inputs (Starter Pack) received from the Program were used in cultivating green pepper, which he and members of his FBO group have nicknamed "Express Cocoa" because unlike cocoa, pepper has a short gestation period. Within 90 days of planting they harvest and make good money just as cocoa does for other farmers.

While waiting for approval of their application for credit from the bank, the Akwasiho Blessing Farmers Association, a 50 member vegetable growing FBO in the Kwahu East district, of which Eric is a member, decided to use their Starter Pack to cultivate Green pepper. Starter packs were distributed to individual farmers who participated in the training, to help them put into practice what they learnt during the training. The Starter Pack comprising fertilizer, improved seeds, protective gear such (farm boots and nose masks), funding for land

preparation and hermetic bags for storing produce has proved to be a huge boost for the poor farmer and helped the Akwasiho Blessing Farmer group to cultivate three kilograms of Legon18 variety pepper seeds which were provided.

"Last year before the MiDA training I cultivated 2.5 acres but I harvested only half bag and lost 1,200 Gh Cedis. Now I know how to control the diseases, how to plant and have the correct plant population. I have planted 1.5 acres and in the three harvests, I have sold 2,100 Ghana Cedis. I want to buy a water pump so that I can do dry season pepper farming on the bank of the Prah River in our town. I also want to buy treasury bills of 1,000 Ghana Cedis for each of my three children. Linking us to a ready buyer

is the best thing we have seen in this town" Eric's story is not unique. Late April into May 2009, forty-six (46) farmers of the FBO nursed and transplanted the seedlings onto about 25 acres of land averaging about 0.5 acres per farmer. According to Mr. Agyapong, also a member of the FBO "I have been a taxi driver for many years and have not seen any significant improvement in my life but with the pepper cultivation, I have set my eyes on buying a KIA 3-tonner truck. I am certain that with the income I am making from the pepper, I will be able to buy the truck within a year. I have parked the taxi and now into full time farming.

Cont'd. on Page 15

Weighing and packing pepper in export boxes



Kpanmanga Youth Association Shows The Way For Other “MiDA FBOs”

When we started this group in 2005 with 20 members, little did we know that with support in terms of organizational capacity building and motivation in the form of starter pack from MiDA, we could attain this level of success. We can now boast of having our tractor with all the necessary implements and a maize sheller. We now have a lifeline aside our normal farming business. Thank you MiDA” Mahama Mahami, chairman Kpanmanga Youth Association, Kanvilli, Tamale

Challenge

A group of 20 men and women in Kanvilli a



Kpanmanga Youth Association members showing off their newly acquired tractor

suburb of Tamale who were into rice and maize production and processing came together in February 2005 to form Kpanmanga Youth Association. Their main objective was to help each other in times of need and to share information among themselves. The group became dormant in 2006 because they could not see any light at the end of the tunnel. The group had no financial and technical support. Members were not paying their dues regularly and there was nothing to benefit from the group as a member. However, luck smiled on the group when it was primed as a beneficiary of the MiDA CDFO program. The membership

increased to 50 (36 males and 14 females). The group was part of the first set of 108 FBOs to benefit from the CDFO training in the Northern Intervention Zone.

Initiative During the 6 weeks Business Capacity training followed by another 3 weeks of Technical Training, the Northern RIC (IFDC) saw the potential in the group and through the assistance of the Technical Training Service Providers (TTSP) followed their activities closely. The group was encouraged to take up the challenge as stated in their business plan to look for alternative source of revenue for the

group. Each group member was encouraged to increase the dues payable to a weekly fee of Ten Ghana Cedis (Ghc10). When each member received the “starter pack” of improved maize seed, fertilizer, nose mask, wellington boots

and hermetic storage bags from MiDA, each member donated a bag (100kg) of maize from the starter pack farms to be sold and the money added to their regular contribution to the association.

Results

The trainer assigned to the group informed the executive of

a facility at MOFA where groups who can raise an initial deposit could acquire a tractor with the implements and a maize sheller at a cost of Thirteen Thousand Four Hundred Ghana Cedis (13,400). They expressed interest in the facility and wrote accordingly to the MOFA Regional Office. When their request was accepted the group was asked to make an initial deposit of Six Thousand Seven Hundred Ghana Cedis (GHc 6,700). The group through the sale of their starter pack maize and their weekly contribution raised Six Thousand Seven Hundred Ghana cedis (GHc6,700) and paid for the equipment. On 30th December 2009, the group took delivery of the tractor and the sheller in Accra and paid One Thousand Ghana Cedis (GHc 1,000) to transport the equipment to Tamale. The tractor was immediately put to work during the dry season and 20 acres of farms were ploughed. An amount of Eight Hundred Ghana Cedis (GHc800) has been realized from the activities of the tractor. A four member tractor operation committee has been established and a separate bank account has been opened where all proceeds from the tractor activities will be lodged to help the group pay the full cost by 30th December 2012. A 15 acre group farm will be established in the coming season for the group where proceeds from the farms will be paid into the tractor service account.

Maize sheller acquired by the Youth Association



CDFO Program Gives the Alhassan Family a New Lease on Life

Challenge

Braimah Alhassan's children will not pursue agriculture as business because they see their father struggle each year to access credit, use improved inputs and technologies. His productivity is low and even if there are marketable surpluses, he does not have access to profitable marketing outlets. Braimah Alhassan and his Malibuvella Farmers Group of Woribugu Kukuo in the Tolon Kumbungu District of the Northern Region have benefited from the MiDA CDFO programme where they learned how to practice farming as business. Many farmers face the same challenges as Braimah that discourage them from farming. MiDA's CDFO program is beginning to make a big difference in changing mind sets and providing the necessary elements to make agriculture a worthwhile business.

Initiative

IFDC was contracted to provide technical assistance in the context of the CDFO programme to some 360 Farmer Based Organizations in 5 districts in the Northern region of Ghana. The support consisted of technical and business training of farmers, guiding them develop business plans to access credit, providing access to irrigation and post-harvest facilities and being linked to the market. The 50-member maize producing FBO, Malibuvella Farmers Group of Woribugu Kukuo in the Tolon Kumbungu District benefitted from a 6week Business Capacity training followed by another 3 weeks of Technical Training during the cropping season to have hands-on experience and to practice what they learned in the classroom

setting. Each member of the group received a "starter pack" of improved maize seeds, fertilizer, nose masks, Wellington boots and hermetic storage bags to grow maize on a one acre plot. IFDC and Training and Technical Service Providers (TTSPs) provided technical assistance along the way.

Results

Braimah planted his starter pack field on June 16, 2009 and meticulously followed the cultural practices and input applications. He doubled his yield from 6 (100 kg) bags/acre before the starter pack to 12 (100kg). Now he can comfortably feed his family, sell the surplus and even an extra bag to contribute to his maize farmers group. With every member contributing a bag to the group, group dynamics and collective action is assured, probably taking the group on the path of independence and sustainability. Braimah

believes that the program has helped him and his group to get permanently linked to technical service providers, their financial institution, input suppliers and marketing companies. With increasing yields and bigger harvests, the group is ripe for a community post harvest facility for product aggregation and warehousing.

"When I continue using the skills I learned from the training, keep the contacts I have developed with input suppliers and buyers and maintain my relationship with the bank, my family will feed itself more comfortably and I can afford school fees"

Braimah Alhassan, Malibuvella Maize Farmers Group, Woribogu Kukuo.



Berimah Alhassan and his Children admiring their harvest

Profiles of NAZ Staff



Mohammed Alhassan Bukari –
Zonal Agricultural Manager

Mohammed Alhassan Bukari is the Millennium Development Authority's Zonal Agricultural Manager, in the Northern Agricultural Zone, with an office in Tamale. Mr. Bukari has over 35 yrs experience in rural development. His interest in Agriculture and Rural Development led him to the University of Ghana, and the University of Reading, UK where he took courses in disciplines related to how agriculture can be used to aid Rural Development. Mohammed is also an old student of Tamale Secondary School and a graduate of the University of Ghana, Legon.

Mohammed is very knowledgeable about Northern Ghana and the development issues confronting this half of Ghana. He has been grappling with the challenges of the North for years and is motivated by the desire to unlock the mystery behind "the challenges of rural people amidst plentiful resources".

He is convinced that there is a need to introduce certain external interventions in order to unlock the rich resources of the North. His job as ZAM therefore provides him a heaven-sent opportunity to facilitate some of the important interventions that will break the cycle of poverty that has blighted the lives of the people of the North.

Mohammed keeps abreast with current affairs and spends his spare time watching documentaries and researching rural development issues. He is married with children.



Alabira Ibrahim –
Monitoring and Evaluation Manager

Alabira Ibrahim is the Monitoring & Evaluation Manager at the Zonal Office of MiDA at Tamale. A son of the Northern Region, Alabs, as he is fondly called by friends and acquaintances is a very affable and friendly person.

He attended the Navrongo Secondary School for his 'O' and 'A' levels and graduated from the University of Cape Coast. Alabs did graduate studies at the University of Bristol, UK. Alabs is a widely travelled professional and has worked in very challenging international destinations.

He is a passionate development worker and has devoted his life to making "life worth living for all humanity". Those who know Alabs very well are always confounded by his easy-going and generous ways. He has been known to be very charitable to all kinds of people, including total strangers. Among his numerous hobbies are Current Affairs, Development Economics, Chess and Music. Probably most interesting is his love of astronomy. On a good moonlit night, it will be usual to meet him in his garden fiddling with his telescope and 'reading' the stars. Alabs is married with children.



Catherine Mweyang Anpennuo – Administrative Assistant

Catherine is a daughter of the Upper West Region. She is currently the Administrative Assistant at the Zonal Office of MiDA at Tamale in the Northern Region.

She attended St. Francis of Asisi Girls Secondary School at Jirapa for her 'O' and 'A' levels and proceeded to Tamale Polytechnic to study for a Diploma in Business Studies, Secretarial Option. Not satisfied with the Diploma, Catherine is diligently working towards a Bachelor's degree in Management Studies from the University of Cape Coast by Distance Learning.

Before joining MiDA, Catherine worked for the Catholic Relief Services at Tamale. She has fourteen years experience in Business Management and Administration and has a good working knowledge of French.

Catherine spends her leisure hours reading detective novels and listening to cool music.

MCA Program Improves ...

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I am saving the income of each harvest sales and I believe within a year I will realize my vision”

Prior to first harvesting in July 2009, efforts had begun in attracting exporters such as DHILLON Farms Company Ltd and WHYTEBAGE International Limited, by ADRA Ghana (RIC), LD Consult (TTSP) and the Blessing Farmers Association to purchase the produce. These efforts proved successful and on July 22nd, DHILLON Farms Company arrived at Akwasiho for the first purchase of 146, 5kg boxes totaling 730 kgs @ Gh¢1.10/kg valued at Gh¢730.00 and exported to its end market in London, UK. The Company has expressed interest in purchasing green pepper and other Asian vegetables such as turia, marrow, tinda, ravaya and also garden eggs, aubergines and okra from the farmers.

Company Ltd, Whytebage International and FRESHMAC all based in Accra and Tema are now regularly buying pepper from the farmers. A total of 9 tonnes (9,000kg) of green pepper valued at Gh¢9,900.00 has been purchased by the exporters since harvesting begun in

July 2009. Additional purchases have been scheduled in the coming weeks and increased quantities and increased incomes will be made as the pepper plants approach their peak yields.



Packaged pepper ready for collection

Three other export companies INDIGHA



Sammy receiving his award from the Hon Moses Bukari Mabenga, then Deputy Northern Regional Minister

CDFO trained farmer wins the 2009 “Northern Regional Best Farmer award” at the 25th Annual National Farmers' Day Celebration

The 35 year old driver mechanic, Samuel Mahamadu (Sammy) left his job as driver at the Canadian High Commission in Accra to go into full time farming in Karaga in the Northern Region of Ghana. “I have always had farming at the back of my mind, so I engaged in small scale farming to supplement my income while at the Canadian High Commission” said Sammy. When he heard about Ghana’s Millennium Challenge Compact that had a Commercial Development of Farmer Based Organizations (CDFO) component to build farmers skills and change their mindsets to approach farming as business, he enrolled his Ti Deeya Farmers Group at Nyong-Nayili in the Karaga District into the program in the Northern Intervention Zone.

In September 2008, Sammy’s Ti Deeya

Farmers Group was one of the 108 Farmer Based Organizations with a total of about 5,373 farmers to receive Organizational Capacity Building & Business Development (OCB-BD) training. After successfully going through the training, Sammy and his farmer group prepared a Business Action Plan and secured a group loan of GHC 67,392 (\$48,137) from the Bonzali Rural Bank, a Participating Financial Institution (PFIs) under the Compact. Each member of the group received GHC1,347 (\$963) but Sammy knew he had to add money from his own resources if he is to meet his production target of 132 acres of maize, 120 acres of rice and 10 acres of soya beans in the 2008/2009 farming season. He started the season by completing the CDFO three-week intensive crop productivity training where farmers received “hands-on” technical training to improve productivity skills

Sammy’s efforts did not go unnoticed as he was adjudged the 2009 Best Farmer for Northern Region at the 25th Regional Farmers Day Celebration held at Yendi on December 18th, 2009 from among 50 finalists.

His award comprised a Best Farmer Certificate, a corn mill, bicycle, sewing machine, radio cassette recorder, a piece of cloth, 10 cutlasses, wellington boots, knapsack sprayer, mobile phone, T-shirts and caps. Speaking to the press soon after the award, Sammy was grateful for the technical support he received from IFDC through the CDFO program and challenged the youth to approach agriculture as a business from which they could earn a descent living instead of drifting to the urban centers to seek white-collar jobs.