



ANNOUNCES AN INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM ON

# LINKING FARMERS TO MARKETS IN AFRICA



**ACCRA, GHANA    MAY 15-19, 2017**

### REGISTRATION FEES:

Early Bird Registration and Payment by Mars 27	Regular Registration and Payment by April 17	Late After April 17
\$1,500	\$1,650	\$1,800

## BACKGROUND

*A group of African farmers are producing a commodity, but every season they struggle to access the needed inputs – improved seeds, quality fertilizers and crop protection products – at the right time, in the right quantity and quality, in reasonable proximity to their farms and for a reasonable price. They often do not have the needed cash or credit to pay for the inputs. After harvest, the farmers struggle to sell their goods. Often, they have no choice but to sell their produce at the local market for a low price. They are not organized and do not have the capacity either to negotiate for better prices, or to store their produce until prices increase. Even the basic options needed to add value are beyond their reach.*



When there is a steep rise in the price of agricultural commodities, it is expected that the increase in food commodity prices offers farmers in developing countries an incentive to increase their yields and incomes. But profitable smallholder farming requires timely access to affordable and quality inputs and the possibility to sell the products at harvest for remunerative prices. A certain level of organization among smallholder farmers can be quite beneficial to helping them access markets; improved knowledge of how to access markets and how to engage in transactions in competitive markets is also required. Improved access to timely information on prices is needed so that farmers can respond to market incentives and thereby help improve food security at the family and national levels. Enabling, favorable policies that allow for the development of farmer-to-market linkages are required.

The example above is an underlying problem statement of many project proposals with the objective to link farmers to markets through the increasingly popular commodity value chain approach, in which the consumer market drives the value chain. Based on IFDC's experiences in Africa during the last 35 years, market demand is a major driver but will only lead to increased productivity, food security and welfare if combined with other market components that drive the value chain. Through many projects in Africa and other parts of the world, IFDC and partner organizations have developed a successful approach to organize and empower farmers and to effectively link them to both input and output markets.

IFDC's Competitive Agricultural Systems and Enterprises (CASE) approach develops 'agribusiness clusters' in which producer groups become an integral part of commodity value chains. Through support from Business Development Services, linkages among various value chain actors (input providers, producers, storage providers, processors, credit institutions, buyers) are established to effectively link farmers to markets. Profitability and sustainability are key elements of IFDC's approach; the underlying concept that "all actors in a business cluster are able to generate additional revenue" is the basis for sustainability, both in economic and environmental terms. The IFDC approach is farmer-centered and assists farmers in identifying and accessing profitable input and output markets with an important role for farmer groups/organizations and with an additional focus on information management.

This training program will draw on lessons and best practices of IFDC and partner organizations in Africa.



## TRAINING PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this five-day program are to:

- Discuss the theory behind the different principles and components of farmer-to-market linkages and draw on lessons and best practices of IFDC and partner organizations in Africa;
- Show how to make theory successful in practice through well-selected case studies;
- Improve capacities to analyze farmer-to-market linkages within the context of specific agricultural environments and their input and output markets;
- Develop project(s) proposals which incorporate principles that allow for effective farmer-to-market linkages; and
- Create a network to facilitate future exchanges, joint proposal development, mainstreaming of farmer linkages approaches and long-lasting, professional relationships.

## WHO SHOULD ATTEND

The training program is aimed at professionals from both the private and public sector with a specific interest in farmer-to-market linkages:

- Producer organizations and trade associations.
- Government officials dealing with formulating and implementing agricultural and trade policies.
- Service providers such as financial institutions, insurance companies, transporters, mobile phone services, ICT platform solutions, market information services, business development services, etc.
- Agribusinesses dealing with farmers: processors, exporters and importers, agro-dealers, etc.
- Representatives of national and international organizations involved in funding agricultural development and enterprise projects.

IFDC encourages the participation of project teams.

### EDITION 2015

*Everything we have learned will help out farmers produce in good quantities and quality that will fetch good market*

*Thank you so much for organizing this program. It's a great learning opportunity and as well as a chance to meet with other practitioners in the field*

*Mixture of participants from different countries, implementing partners, donor agencies was very good to improve content discussions and experience exchange - Agribusiness and Finance Advisor, Mozambique*

### EDITION 2014

*The shared experiences are really rich and stimulating. Congratulations to the IFDC Training Department for putting together all of these experiences for the benefit of all the participants.*

*To me, this training program is a value-addition with regards to its methodology and its content, in particular, the session on the market information systems.*

*This training program is beneficial to us as we just started supporting agricultural value chains in our country*

### EDITION 2013

*Thank you and IFDC for the wonderful opportunity offered. I learned new and useful things about Linking Farmers to Markets and have met and made new friends and contacts that I will cherish for a long time to come. My colleagues and I extend our hand of friendship to all; we tremendously enjoyed the company of all our fellow trainees.*  
*Team Leader, Nigeria*

## TRAINING PROGRAM CONTENT

The program is composed of three themes:

**1. Input markets:** Importing agro-inputs is often limited to only a few players in a national market, while distributing inputs is open to everyone, including those without any technical knowledge. How can farmers identify a reliable distributor and enter into a mutually beneficial relationship? How can they negotiate good prices? How can they ensure timely delivery? How do they know which products to use and how to use them?

**2. Output markets:** Markets exist at several levels, from village to national and international markets. Often, a producer only has access to local markets, while other markets might offer better prices. But how can producers find these markets, access them and sell their products for prices that are negotiated based on supply and demand, while making optimal use of partnerships with other actors in a commodity value chain?

**3. Cross-cutting issues:** To make agribusiness clusters work and ensure effective linkage, there are several other conditions that need to be fulfilled. The training program will focus on six of these cross-cutting issues: (a) association development and management; (b) market information systems (MIS); (c) access to financial services; (d) ICT platform solutions; (e) agricultural policies; and (f) gender integration.

Based on the three themes, the training will focus on among others the following topics:



*The training was awesome, and it covered most of our expectations. Job well done for adding value to capacity building in development staff!*  
*Market Development Manager,  
Zambia*

*The program is very good; I think it will be a valuable addition to implement the value chain in our countries. Thank you!*

*National Economist and Finance  
Officer, Burundi*

### EDITION 2013

*Thank you very much; it was really worth the cost and the time. Stay blessed.*

*Program Officer-Markets and Business  
Development, Zimbabwe*

*The training course was good and very educative. I am implementing most of the activities directly with our partners and will improve on my services to them.*

*Congratulations, IFDC, for a well-planned training.*

### EDITION 2012

*A big thank you to IFDC for having shared its expertise in the subject matter! I wish IFDC could establish across Africa a network of trainers specialized in Linking Farmers to Markets for more impact and sustainability of its action.*

*Director, Rural Economy, DRC*

*Hats off to the IFDC team which has been able to organize this training! They have demonstrated the perfect understanding of the issues and strategies related to the access to the markets and to the agricultural value chains*

*Program Coordinator, R&D, Benin*

## *Input Markets*

- Agro-input markets: what they are, challenges serving farmers, structure, forecasting demand and selling.
- Marketing – as the key to business development.
- Agro-dealers and their linkages with farmers and financiers, facilitating the development of agro-dealer networks, competitive marketing strategies.
- Lessons learned from agro-dealer strengthening programs.
- Role of governments in linking farmers to agro-input markets.

## *Output markets in Africa*

- The Competitive Agricultural Systems and Enterprises (CASE) approach: theory and principles.
- Agribusiness cluster development and market opportunities.
- Output market operations (challenges of access by smallholders, meeting market demands).
- Structured marketing systems such as warehouse receipt systems, commodity exchanges and their essential logistics.
- Role of agribusiness clusters in output markets.
- Value chain development and analysis (activities of an actor in a value chain, logistics in value chains).
- Outgrower model: opportunities and constraints.

## *Cross-Cutting issues*

- Lessons from well-functioning agribusiness associations.
- Agribusiness associations: roles, challenges and sustainability in value chain development.
- Business development services.
- Agricultural policies and influence on markets and farmers participation.
- Harmonization of policies for regional integration of input and output markets.
- Agri-insurance to protect producers' investment and income.
- Innovative agriculture financing mechanisms.
- IT platforms and solutions: challenges and opportunities in linking agribusiness clusters to markets, linking farmers to financial solutions, using IT to access information.
- Market information systems and market transparency (what are they, what works, practical examples).
- Incorporating gender in market access: opportunities for women.
- Proposal development.

For all topics, the program will discuss the current situation and how producers can use or influence the given situation to their advantage.

## TRAINING METHODOLOGY

The five-day training is a combination of theory (classroom lectures), interactive interventions from resource persons to illustrate the farmer-to-market linkages in practice and presentations by participants or participating projects. Each day, participants will have the opportunity to put the theory into practice with a case study that includes all elements of the theory. The case study will form the basis for a presentation of a farmer-to-market project proposal developed by groups of participants. A field trip to expose participants to the workings of the farmer linkages to markets at the grassroots level and a panel discussion between experts and participants will be part of the methodology of the program.

## FACULTY

The program faculty will include subject matter experts from IFDC and partner organizations.

## VENUE

The training program will take place in Accra, Ghana, at the Erata Hotel – a three-star facility situated in the serene environs of East Legon and residential area in Accra, the capital city of Ghana. Conveniently located; a 10 minute drive from the Kotoka International Airport, 30-minute drive to Accra City Center, 20 minute drive to Aburi Botanical Gardens and 5 minute drive to the University of Ghana. Erata Hotel has over 50 well-furnished, air-conditioned rooms and offers a complimentary shuttle from the airport.



Participants will be extended IFDC's negotiated special rate of US \$80.00 per person/per night for bed and breakfast (inclusive of taxes). This rate is valid for reservations made **NO LATER THAN April 15, 2016**. After this date, reservations will be subject to room availability and at the best available rate. Participants will be responsible for reservation and payment of accommodations at the Erata Hotel. Participants should plan to arrive in Accra, Ghana, on Sunday, May 14, 2017.

**ERATA Hotel**  
Ouagadougou Avenue, Okponglo, East Legon  
P.O. Box KIA 9968  
Airport-Accra, GHANA  
Telephone: +233 544 336761/572 717590/263 003927  
Telefax: +233 302 505 119      Web Site:  
[www.eratahotel.com](http://www.eratahotel.com)  
E-Mail: [info@eratahotel.com](mailto:info@eratahotel.com);  
[reservations.eratahotel@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:reservations.eratahotel@yahoo.co.uk);  
[eratahotel@hotmail.com](mailto:eratahotel@hotmail.com)

## VISA AND MEDICAL INSURANCE

**APPLICATIONS FOR NECESSARY VISAS SHOULD BE MADE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.** Participants who are not eligible to enter Ghana without a visa should apply at the nearest Ghana's embassy for a visa. All required immunizations and health formalities should be completed. Medical insurance should be obtained by participants. The training program fee does not cover any medical insurance or expenses.

## COST AND ENROLLMENT

The program fee for this training course is US \$1,650 per participant (inclusive of a US \$250 non-refundable deposit) and should reach IFDC no later than April 17, 2017, four (4) weeks before the program is scheduled. Those received thereafter will be accepted at IFDC's discretion and incur a late fee. Participants will be given the opportunity to take advantage of an early bird rate if registration and payment is received by IFDC prior to March 27. Please refer to the table below for pricing:

Early Bird - Registration and Payment by March 27	Regular - Registration and Payment by April 17	Late - After April 2017
\$1,500	\$1,650	\$1,800

The program fee, less the non-refundable deposit, will be refunded for cancellations made two (2) weeks before the commencement of the program. Ninety percent of the paid fee will be returned and 10 percent, in addition to the deposit, will be charged to cover administrative costs for cancellations made between two (2) weeks and one (1) week before the commencement of the program. Cancellations made less than one (1) week before the commencement of the program will receive no refund.

Registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Paid participants will receive priority. An organization wishing to enroll more than one participant should supply information and payment for each participant.

Payment of the program fee can be made by: (1) check or draft payable to IFDC; (2) wire transfer to IFDC's account in the U.S.A. through First Metro Bank, 406 West Avalon Avenue, Muscle Shoals, Alabama, U.S.A., ABA number 062203955 for credit to IFDC account number 55281; or (3) major credit card – MasterCard, Visa or American Express.

The program fee covers registration, training and reference material, coffee/tea breaks, all lunches and surface transportation on field trips. The fee does not include air travel, lodging and dinner expenses, or medical and communication expenses.



## ABOUT IFDC

IFDC is a nonprofit, public international organization (PIO) dedicated to increasing agricultural productivity and food production through the development and use of plant nutrients in sustainable crop production systems. Headquartered in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, U.S.A., IFDC is involved in human resource development, research and technical assistance in collaboration with public, private, national and international organizations throughout the world. IFDC has conducted more than 700 formal workshops, study tours and training programs for more than 11,000 participants from over 150 countries since 1974. The programs have covered a wide range of subjects including integrated soil fertility management and fertilizer use efficiency, fertilizer production technology, agro-input dealerships, competitive marketing, supply chain management, investment analysis, policy reforms and numerous specialized topics.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Director, Training and Workshop Coordination Unit  
IFDC

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Website: [www.ifdc.org](http://www.ifdc.org)

**As a nonprofit organization, IFDC does not finance or sponsor any participant.**





## PROGRAM REGISTRATION FORM

Linking Farmers to Markets in Africa

Accra, Ghana – May 15-19, 2017

Register Online: <https://www.etches.com/LFtM>

Program Registration Fee:

Early Bird - Registration and Payment by Mars 27, 2017	Regular - Registration and Payment byr April 17, 2017	Late - After April 17, 2017
\$ 1,500	\$ 1,650	\$ 1,800

IFDC reserves the right to cancel any program or change the dates and/or venue of any program without liability for compensation.

Please PRINT or TYPE your legal name as you would like it to appear on ALL printed materials

(Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss)

Given Name (First Name)

Surname (Last Name)

Position

Organization or Employer

Work Mailing Address

City

State

Country

Work Tel. No.:

Fax No.:

Home Tel No.:

E-Mail:

Organization/Company Funding Your Participation

Arrival Date and Time:

Flight Number:

Departure Date and Time:

Flight Number:

Signature of Applicant

Date

Signature of Employer/Funding Organization

Date

Note: A non-refundable deposit of US \$250 is included in each program fee. The program fee, less the deposit, will be refunded for cancellations made two (2) weeks before the commencement of the program. Ninety percent of the paid fee will be returned and 10 percent, in addition to the deposit, will be charged to cover administrative costs for cancellations made between two (2) weeks and one (1) week before the commencement of the program. Cancellations made less than one (1) week before the commencement of the program will receive no refund.

The program fee covers registration, training and reference material, coffee/tea breaks, all lunches and surface transportation on field trips. The fee does not include air travel, lodging and dinner expenses, visa and medical insurance, or communication expenses. All of these costs fall under participants' responsibility.

By checking this box, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the cancellation policy and program fee coverage.

