

PARTNERSHIP

FOR THE PROMOTION OF PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN CTA AND ACP, ARNHEM, THE NETHERLANDS



DR HANSJÖRG NEUN

Breaking away from routine

Replacing remote communication by warm, direct contacts is the challenge facing our workshop. But the workshop wants to go further. For the CTA Director, its brief is to help CTA enhance its collaboration with the national partners. "They are in contact with the farmers and the rural communities, and they know what is needed in the field".

Dr. Neun said that "agriculture is gaining ground thanks to the favourable position espoused by the World Bank and the European Commission on Agriculture and Rural Development". He also said that the meeting was motivated by the resulting link that could be established with CTA's 2007-2010 Strategic Plan".

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Monday 22 October 2007

z Highlights z



Plunged in the Strategic Plan

The partnership promotion workshop being held in the conference room of the Mercure Hotel in Arnhem, The Netherlands, brings together some 70 participants from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. The first meeting was presided over by H.E. Clement Eledi, Minister of Agriculture of Ghana and Dr. Hansjörg Neun, CTA Director. There were several speeches and presentations at the opening session :

- welcome address by the CTA Director ;
- speech by the workshop's honorary president, the Ghanaian Minister of Agriculture ;
- an introduction and brief presentation of the partnership programme and the goals of the workshop by Thierry Doudet and Ibrahim Tiémogo ;
- a presentation of the CTA 2007-

2010 Strategic Plan, strategic orientations, and guidelines for the Plan's implementation by Dr Hansjörg Neun,

- introduction of the participants,
- background of the Local and National Partnerships Programme (2002 - 2007), by Ibrahim Tiémogo,
- testimony by Djibril Koné of Adaf Gallé, a Malian NGO,
- report on the results of the electronic discussions on the comparative advantages of CTA, especially for the partnerships programme. The moderators for these discussions, which were started last August, were Alioune Thioune and Tunji Arokoyo. In the afternoon, three working groups were set up to carefully study the results of the e-discussions, with special focus on CTA's comparative advantages. ●

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON THE PROMOTION OF PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CTA AND THE LOCAL AND NATIONAL ACP ORGANISATIONS

z The partners' grain of salt in the Strategic Plan z

Since yesterday, some 70 participants from 29 ACP and European countries have been attending a workshop on the promotion of partnership between CTA and local and national ACP organisations. This is a meeting with a new turn that, until 26 October, will not only assess activities and problems but, as was stressed in the speakers' presentations, will bring out the need to link the CTA partnership programme and the CTA Strategic Plan.



Presidium, chaired by the honourable Minister of Agriculture of Ghana

There was a special atmosphere in the conference room in Mercure Hotel, Arnhem, The Netherlands where participants from 29 EU and ACP countries are attending the international workshop on the promotion of partnership between CTA and local and national ACP organisations. The purpose is to contribute to improving the planning, implementation and monitoring of rural development projects and programmes. All the speakers, be they from Africa, the Caribbean or the Pacific, stressed the relevance of this goal. As the Honourable Minister of Agriculture of Ghana, Mr. Clement Eledi, said, "CTA is a very important institution that can contribute signifi-

cantly to developing the capacity of national ACP agricultural and rural development organisations. The meeting this week will provide an opportunity for thinking together, to work out responses to major issues facing CTA

and its partners, to draft recommendations and to outline an action plan that ensures the best possible match between the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan and the national partnership programme."

The ITAD consultancy bureau's last evaluation of CTA recognises the effectiveness of CTA actions but recommends improving CTA's performance. With this in mind, the first part of 2007 was devoted to finalising the 2007-2010 Strategic Plan. The CTA Director, Dr Hansjörg Neun, who presented the main points in the Plan, summarised it as follows: "The Strategic Plan has been designed to increase CTA's outreach so as



to promote more effective methods of access to information and communication for ACP countries and to reach more partners. We want to work more with our partners, such as rural radio stations, television stations and partner institutions".

Since the workshop seeks to include all of CTA partners in this move forward, the Director said that he hoped the partners would help CTA take the most appropriate decisions by making suggestions for enriching the Strategic Plan.

MINISTÈRE DE L'AGRICULTURE ET DE LA PÊCHE • N° 1

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This newsletter is a publication of the CTA Local and National Partnerships Programme.

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REVIEW OF LOCAL AND NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAMME (2002 - 2007)

Information for rural producers

The coordinator of the Local and National Partnerships Programme, Dr Ibrahim Tiemogo, presented a review of the programme for the period from 2002 to 2007. The number of partners has risen from 5 at the start up phase in 2000 to 60 now, and the profile has become more varied. In the beginning, most of the partners were NGOs, but now there are more professional agricultural organisations, media, and media networks. More and more organisations feel that information and communication are an ingredient of agricultural development, just like seed, for instance. Many communication tools in national languages are being created and adapted to local realities.

Dr Tiemogo explained that the Local and National Partnerships Programme is a CTA mechanism designed to funnel information and communication services and products to the grassroots level. It enables CTA to better structure its offer and establish direct contact with the farmers.



Dr Ibrahim Tiemogo

Adapted tools and supports

Now, five years later, the results speak for themselves. Mr Tiemogo explained that, "through this programme, CTA has partnered national organisations, mainly professional agricultural organisations, such as POs and networks of chambers of agriculture, in order to improve their collection strategies and operationalise their tools". He then stressed one of its distinctive features, i.e. the use of national languages. "My thoughts turn especially to the neighbourhood communication tools, all those village libraries and multimedia centres...

This has made it possible to provide information to the producers and turn it into knowledge".

More importantly, the programme has succeeded in developing awareness of the importance of agricultural information.

"We have managed to convey the idea that agricultural information is an ingredient that is often more important than money," said Dr. Tiemogo and went on to acknowledge certain partners' strategic plans which give pride of place to information and communication. In some cases, information units are even set up. "It is heartening to see what has been done with limited resources" he said. These positive results should not hide the fact that the programme still has some shortcomings. The programme coordinator felt that the greatest problem was the partners' weakness in conceptualisation. "These are people who act, who know what they want and then forge ahead. But when they are asked to write up a proposal or make a report, things become more

difficult. Actually, they are close to the people receiving their services".

Complementarity

The CTA-Partners couple works well, which proves its complementarity. And that is why Dr. Tiemogo calls for intensification of the factors of success: dialogue, training, establishing contacts. ●

Workshop numbers

Number of participants: 70

Profile of organisations

Associations (NGOs): 18

Private and professional organisations (PO and assimilated organisations): 21

Public and parapublic sector: 12

Number of countries: 29

- Africa: 22
- Caribbean: 4
- Pacific: 1
- Europe: 2



RESULTS OF ELECTRONIC DISCUSSIONS

Partners' evaluation of the Partnerships Programme : 9/10

Three months of electronic group discussions, a list of CTA comparative advantages, drawn up by 47 partners from ACP countries... When preparing the workshop on the promotion of partnership between CTA and the local and national ACP organisations, CTA's partners, the world over, were asked to evaluate CTA's advantages. The discussions were summarised in a report presented the first day of the workshop.

The partners were asked to evaluate CTA's comparative advantages on the basis of three themes: CTA position and comparative advantages, outreach and capitalisation of partners' information products and services, impact and visibility of collaboration between CTA and the national partners.

The partners reacted enthusiastically to the CTA position and comparative advantage theme and spoke well of the composition of the CTA staff mix: the staff is multicultural and international and has an excellent capacity to listen to the partners and people at the grass-roots level, thus displaying a strong sense of partnership. Complementarity of activities was also mentioned. Training is provided to contribute to capacity building, publications, and the Q&A services. Emphasis was also placed on CTA's capacity to deal directly with the people at the grass-

roots level.

With regard to methodology, everyone approved the approach based on the partners' demand and on participation since it allows for the mobilisation of the beneficiaries and facilitates access to a wide range of products and services.

The promotion of local know-how and farmers' innovations, the co-production of documents and broadcasts in national languages with local institutions are proof of the inclusion of this approach in CTA interventions.

As concerns the theme on the capitalisation of CTA products and servi-

ces, many participants pointed out that the development of a platform and a website, which includes traditional media in product capitalisation, the production and dissemination of thematic catalogues, and the establishment of virtual libraries on CTA and the partners' products are advantages that can be used to bring their products and services to the fore.

Last, support for participation in exhibits and trade fairs allows the partners to capitalise their products and services.

On the third theme, which focuses on sustainability, impact and visibility of collaboration with CTA, the national partners advocated efforts to ensure complementarity in field actions with private and public organisations and development agencies, alliances with people working in the field, greater synergy between the various CTA activities and programmes carried out within a given country, and the development of partnerships with national and local organisations.

It was not easy to conduct these electronic discussions. Their good quality has been acknowledged. Many participants stayed in the wings because they did not feel comfortable debating on line. Others quite simply did not have access to Internet. Participation was also limited by lack of skill in using the discussion tools, i.e. Yahoo and Google. The two discussion moderators, Alioune Thioune and Tundji Arokoyo, and Gilles Mersadier of Fidafrigue felt that these technical problems would have less effect in future electronic forums. ●

Electronic discussion to allow everyone to become familiar with the Strategic Plan.

