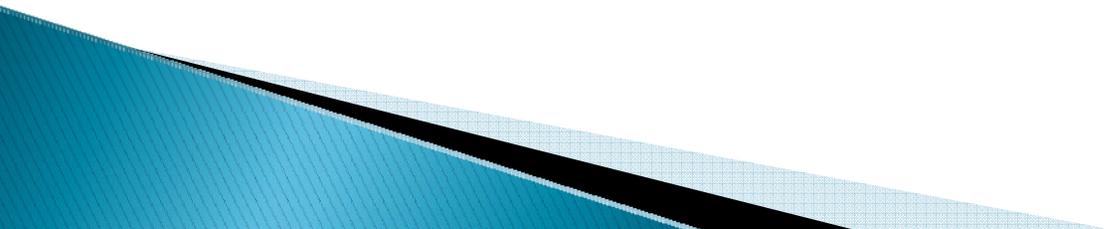


Innovative Models for Small Scale Farmers in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities. a Farmer's Perspective

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Outline

1. Background Information
 2. Innovative Models
 3. Challenges Faced by Small Scale Farmers
 4. Putting Women at the Centre of Global food security
 5. Opportunities for Small Scale farmers
 6. Conclusion
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1. Background Information

In developing countries, women often perform most of the agricultural work and produce the bulk of the world's food crops.

Constraints of the productivity of women farmers are similar factors that affect small-scale producers in general which are compounded by gender-specific factors.

The South African scenario is no exception to this rule though – complicated by the ills of apartheid that impacted negatively on women.

Who are Small Scale Farmers ?

- a) **Resource poor individuals:** mostly women who are subsistence farmers
 - b) **Urban dwellers** farming on rural land
 - c) **Land reform beneficiaries:**
Acquired land through land reform programs
 - d) **Emerging farmers:** These are relatively well-resourced farmers with poor access to appropriate-effective technology and markets
 - e) **Commercial farmers** – *very few*
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Where do they farm?

Farmers are at different levels of operation.

Some own land while some do not own land

Women tend to use any space they can lay their hands on varying from:

- school yards,
- communal land,
- land next to roads
- railroads and;
- at the back of their homes

2. Innovative Models

Incubator Approach

This model was formulated after careful consideration of lessons learned from failures of other community agricultural projects as well as challenges that face Agriculture in South Africa

Incubator Approach (cont'd)

1. “Ready to Farm” viable business units are established from bridging funds obtained for the purpose
2. Individual farmers having access to land using land reform processes selected using a set criteria
3. Production units are allocated to farmer trainees
4. Farmer trainees undergoes on the job training



Inside a production unit

Incubator Approach

6. Market opportunities are established in advance and secured
7. Strategies to minimize expenses are put in place (i.e. self farming approach, bulk buying, saving policy to accommodate lean months etc.)
8. Upon graduation farmers move to their own land to establish and manage own enterprises
9. A co-operational and mentorship agreement is signed with a back-up support system put in place
10. Graduates are given support to access production loans and are linked to viable markets is given



Inside a Pack House

Simple Farming Technology

The small scale farmers' experience in selecting farming technology options includes adherence to simple principles and the use of locally available resources to achieve desired goals

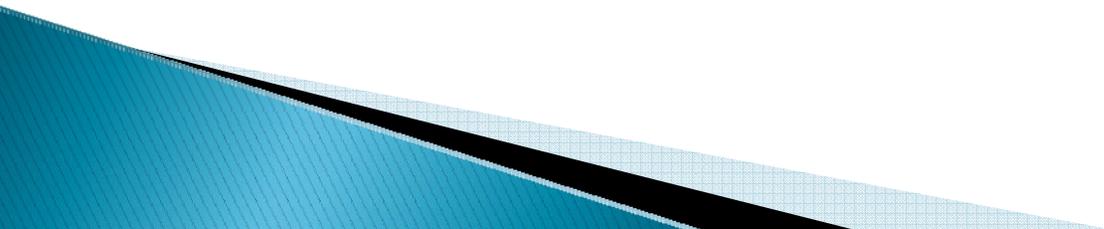
Provision of Alternative Protein source Oyster Mushroom Production



HIV/AIDS and Food Security



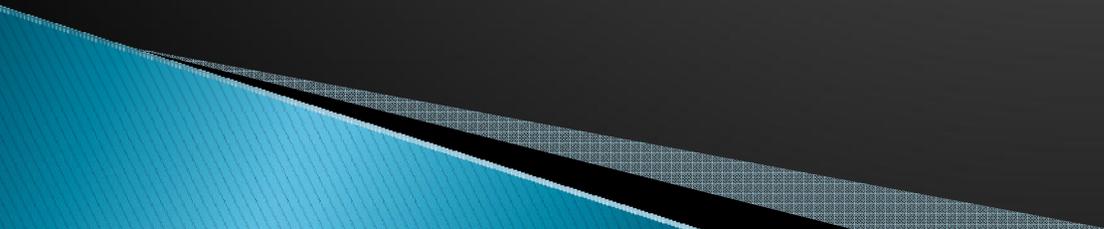
3. Challenges of Small Scale Farmers

- a) Attitudes towards Women Farmers
 - b) Inadequate extension service
 - c) Access to markets and credit
 - d) Low literacy levels
 - e) Access to water and land
 - f) Production technology
 - g) Impact of HIV/AIDS on rural livelihoods
 - h) Vulnerability to climatic change
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4. Putting women at the centre of Global food security

1. It will take women themselves to effect change in policy and its implementation. Women need to speak for themselves. Women in South Africa have a slogan “Nothing about Us without Us” It is for that reason we are here today
2. Creation of an enabling environment for women’s participation to re-dress gender inequalities that are entrenched in institutional practices should be promoted

5. Opportunities for Small Scale Farmers

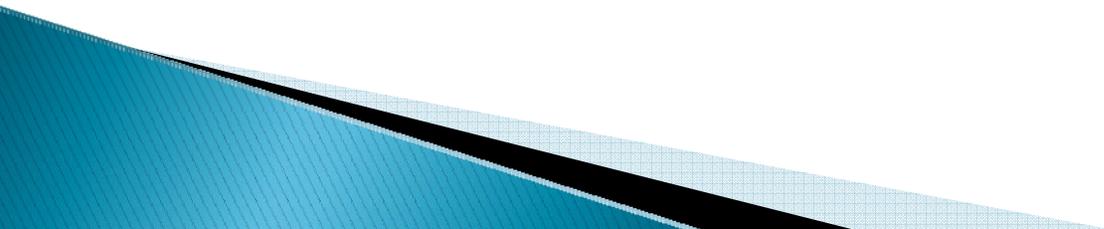


Rural development :

- Women are a driving force and main producers yet most vulnerable
- Recognition of the use of modern technology by women is critical to reduce drudgery
- Equitable access to land and adequate natural resources that matches long-term rural strategies are key
- Support of an integrated sustainable agriculture and rural development approaches



Formation and strengthening of farmers associations

- ▶ Most resource poor women farmers in South Africa are organized into smaller groups that are not legal entities
 - ▶ A first step into a true “bottom up” participatory approach would be to translate these groups into commodity or local associations to serve as foundations for a people-centered developmental process.
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Development of comprehensive farmer development programs

- ▶ Programs that is based on research tied:
 - Resources
 - Mentorship
 - Access to land, water, markets
 - Risk management
 - Systems to prevent pre and post harvest losses

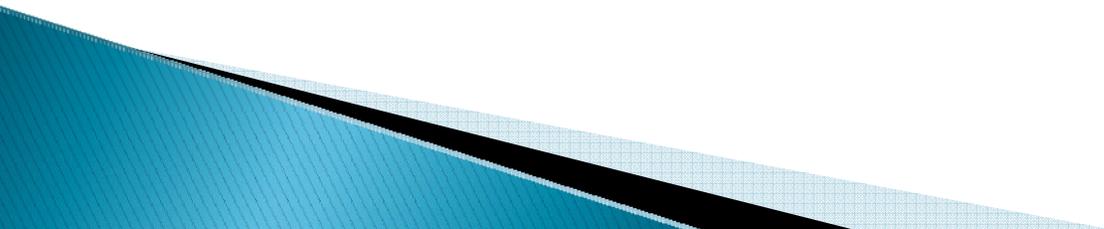
Identify and Support Farming Project “Dynamizers”

Involvement a “motivator”
“activist” or a “Dynamizer”
tend to enhance success of
enterprises

A concept successfully
implemented in Mozambique
to stimulate development in a
locality



6. Conclusion

- ▶ Women are the best target in arresting the spectra of a decline in food production, they are real bastions of food security
 - ▶ Women are the face of agriculture in developing countries, they have been feeding families for centuries. Agriculture is a given platform for women, it can be argued that is given the necessary support and resources we can just as well feed nations
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Thank You!

