



**– International Fund for Agricultural Development –
– Identifying and sharing innovation in Western and Central Africa –**

– On-farm training of farmers by farmers –

I. Context

1. Name of the innovation

On-farm training of farmers by farmers

2. Country – Region

Cameroon

3. Organization

Support Service for Local Development Initiatives in Cameroon (SAILD)

4. Who is the innovator?

SAILD and the farmers

5. Actors involved

Farmer-trainers belonging to the Association of Small Farmers from the Western Region (BINUM) and SAILD

6. Starting date

1998

7. Type of innovation

Institutional and political

II. Key concepts

8. Summary

With current developments in the rural world, most farmers need specific training and information in order to carry out their activities effectively and thus improve their living conditions. With regard to the current situation of agricultural training in Cameroon, a large number of people who basically live from rural activities are in fact excluded from such training. Realizing this and with the support of more experienced farmers, SAILD designed a training approach based on the transmission of farmers' know-how. It is an on-farm training programme of farmers by farmers, basically capitalizing on farmers' knowledge and experience. The training is carried out by farmers, given to other farmers and takes place on farms. The stages of implementation of the programme are as follows: (i) identification of the topics for training, (ii) identification of the farmer-trainers, (iii) workshop to design and launch the project, (iv) selection of criteria for candidates for training and (v) definition of exactly how the training is to take place and its monitoring.

9. What problems does this innovation seek to solve?

This innovation seeks to:

- Improve farmers' know-how by providing them with practical and easily accessible knowledge
- Turn farmers' know-how to good purpose
- Improve farmers' income
- Facilitate the establishment of farms
- Improve the productivity of small farms

10. Factors for successful replication

The training takes into account the trainee's needs, difficulties and plans. It does not last long and knowledge is quickly acquired. It is practical, allowing trainees to familiarize themselves with farm management, since it takes place in the field. In a short while the training provides useful production know-how. The farmer has the opportunity to see how things are done, to do them, to make mistakes and to receive advice.

11. Main results

The experiment effectively got under way in 1998. Today there is a network of 20 trainers in 9 subjects, and 400 farmers, including 20 from the Central African Republic and 10 from Gabon, have been trained in the following subjects: poultry farming 107, market gardening 53, pig farming 89, fish farming 45, bee-keeping 48, plant-based health care 27, agroforestry 8 and rabbit breeding 23. Of the farmers trained, 65 per cent have put into practice the activity for which they have been trained, 15 per cent have enhanced their farms, 10 per cent have used their certificate to find a job and 10 per cent have not reacted. The success rate of the training is therefore about 75 per cent.

The training also fosters the creation of a network of relationships among farmers of different types, inasmuch as the trainers and trainees remain in touch afterwards, forming what could be the beginnings of a real farmers' alliance.

12. Target group(s)

Farmers in various fields (especially poultry farming, market gardening, bee-keeping, plant-based health care, agroforestry and rabbit breeding)

13. Difficulties encountered

14. Financial aspects

As agreed at the workshop to design and launch the training, the farmer-trainers working within this programme receive a sum of CFAF 50,000 per trainee and per session, to cover board and lodging for the trainee, the trainer's fee and a contribution to the purchase of inputs. SAILD also covers the travel expenses of the trainee from the headquarters of its West Cameroon Branch in Bafoussam to the trainer's farm.

III. Technical aspects

15.

In future, SAILD would like to stress the formation of a trainer's *club* and if possible entrust it with the running of this programme. At present a trainee cannot work through all the necessary stages in one month, but with the formation of a club he or she would be able to do so by staying with two or three different trainers for the various stages.

The training process

There are five training sessions a year – in August, September, October, November and December. An information campaign is organized at the start of each year to inform interested parties about dates, places and subjects, and also about how to take part. The trainees' application forms are received, processed according to the selected criteria and sorted according to the month chosen and the sphere of training. At the start of each growing season, a meeting is held with the farmer-trainers, where they are told the number of trainees for each month and other details. They decide which farms to visit, who will be reserve trainers, etc. The SAILD coordinator visits the sites to ensure that everything is ready for the trainees' arrival; for example, the condition of the farm and its accommodation capacity. Depending on the selected subject, training lasts one month. The selected farmers go to SAILD's western branch, where there is a familiarization workshop, and then they are taken to their respective trainers' farms. The training is totally hands-on: the trainee farmer lives with the experienced farmer, who explains and shows him how he runs his activities. The trainee farmer visits other farms working in the same sphere. The SAILD coordinator makes at least two monitoring and evaluation visits to ensure that the training is going well and make any adjustments needed. After the training, the trainee receives a two-day monitoring and evaluation visit from his trainer to help him, if necessary, to carry out certain procedures better (receiving chicks, transplanting, disease prevention treatment etc.). The period is chosen by the trainee and the costs are borne by SAILD. The SAILD coordinator also makes a two-day field visit to make sure that the farm is being well run.

IV. Further information

16. Key contacts

Name	Organization	E-mail
Marie-Martine Yobol Director, SAILD-CDDR Regional Coordinator, SICAC	CDDR/SAILD BP 11955 Yaoundé Tel/Fax (237) 221.26 88	cddr@saild.org

17. Internet link

<http://www.sicac.org>

18. Key documents (document title + link or contact or address)