



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

– Cassava processing (gari) –

I. Context

1. Name of the innovation

Cassava processing (gari) and agricultural innovation

2. Country – Region

Ghana

3. Organization

The Taabosom Mothers Club, member of the Ghana Association of Women Entrepreneurs (GAWE)

4. Who is the innovator?

The Taabosom Mothers Club

5. Actors involved

- Women producers' associations
- GAWE
- Secondary schools

6. Starting date

The Taabosom Mothers Club was created in 1999. Processing activities began a year later, in 2000.

7. Type of innovation

Institutional

II. Key concepts

8. Summary

The Taabosom Mothers Club, a producers' organization and member of the Ghana Association of Women Entrepreneurs (GAWE) umbrella organization, was created at the end of the 1990s, bringing together 23 women from a village situated more than 200 km from Accra. To gather the resources needed to achieve their objective of processing cassava into gari, the members of the club began by making monthly contributions for a year. These contributions were deposited in an account that was frozen for the whole year. Initially, the processing of cassava into gari used local varieties of cassava. In response to growing demand and the need for more raw material to process into gari, the women in the association eventually adopted new high-yield varieties of cassava – Tropical Manioc Selection (TMS) – which are resistant to disease, especially mosaic disease. Agrofood processing thus encouraged the adoption of new TMS varieties of cassava. Thanks to the exchange of information with other women belonging to the GAWE association, they improved marketing of their product, wrapping the gari in standard-sized bags with attractive labels. Moreover, by stressing product quality and improving various aspects of marketing, they have been able to gain entry to the market for supplying some secondary schools.

9. What problems does this innovation seek to solve?

- This innovation seeks at the same time to solve a problem of access to resources (through contributions to an account that is frozen for a year) in order to facilitate access to the innovation
- The innovation also seeks to solve the question of market access through marketing-focused initiatives

10. Factors for successful replication

- Mobilization of the association's members' own resources
- Adoption of improved varieties in response to demand
- An integrated, progressive approach, which has been a central tenet of the association and has been a key factor in achieving its goals: the members began by pooling financial resources for a year before starting on the processing project

11. Main results

The experience of the Taabosom Mothers Club shows that processing cassava into gari is a significant factor in facilitating people's access to agricultural innovation. Processing allows longer preservation and also facilitates consumption and marketing. On the basis of these changes, producers can then think of adopting new technologies with a view to increasing production.

This innovation has enabled women producers to increase their production and means of livelihood. It has also enabled them to improve the quality of gari products, thereby opening the secondary-school market to them.

12. Target group(s)

- Women
- The poor

13. Difficulties encountered

Difficulties in finding TMS cassava cuttings. The association had to contact GAWE to assist them in this matter.

14. Financial aspects

III. Technical aspects

15.

IV. Further information

16. Key contacts

Name	Organization	E-mail
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17. Internet link

18. Key documents

The Family Economy and Agricultural Innovation in West Africa: Towards New Partnerships. Paris: SWAC, 2005.