



TRADE HUB AND AFRICAN PARTNERS NETWORK FINANCIAL ADVISOR'S WORKSHOP AND FOLLOW-ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT

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TRADE HUB AND AFRICAN PARTNERS NETWORK

FINANCIAL ADVISORS WORKSHOP AND FOLLOW-ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REPORT

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DISCLAIMER

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) or the United States Government.

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I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

The Trade Hub held a Financial Advisors' Orientation Training Workshop from March 17-19 in Accra for its 24 newly engaged financial advisors (FAs) from 8 West African countries. The Workshop covered a wide range of topics including administrative aspects of working with the Trade Hub, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) requirements, engaging with partners and stakeholders, identification and screening of firms, conducting due diligence, providing financial advisory services, and building a business as a financial advisor.

In addition to financial advisors' participation, representatives of USAID were invited. The Workshop included Trade Hub staff and consultants' presentations, an overview of the cashew sector, and a roundtable discussion by African agribusiness financiers, including a commercial bank, a leasing company, two private equity investors and a large social venture capital firm.

This report provides strategic feedback from the consultants' perspective with regard to the learning objectives and technical merits of the Trade Hub's Workshop and a review of the follow-on applied technical assistance provided to financial advisors and client firms by Christopher Shyers in Nigeria and Peter White in Benin.

The report includes sections on the following:

- Review and Key Learnings of the Workshop
- Trade Hub Financial Advisors Capacity Development
- Result of Pilot Applied Technical Assistance Program
- Need for Further Capacity Development
- Next Steps
- Summary Workshop Report

The four Annexes include the workshop agenda, participant list, workshop notes, and financial advisors' evaluations summary and ancillary documents.

I.1 SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

The Workshop was highly successful and highly praised in evaluations by financial advisors. The forum provided participants the opportunity to discuss the financial ecosystem across West Africa, compare Anglophone and Francophone banking and investor perspectives, and identify appropriate practices in conducting due diligence. Most importantly, an FA network was established with the potential to grow and strengthen as members leverage their peer, firm, and financial institution (FI) connections, and buyer/market knowledge.

Future FA capacity development and knowledge management workshops will strengthen the Trade Hub's ability to facilitate access to finance for agribusiness firms in selected value chains. Financial advisors agree that collaboration with industry actors, service providers and event managers will strengthen the network and provide solid introductions to agribusiness firms that will benefit from Trade Hub support. This report recommends that the Trade Hub broaden the reach of the network by further engaging:

- Equipment Suppliers (Alvan Blanch, and others)
- Service Providers (examples: Fair Trade certifiers, freight forwarders)
- Development Partners and Projects (CARI, and others)
- Trade Show Organizers (example: Agrofood West Africa in December in Accra)
- Trade Journals (example: Africa Agribusiness Magazine)
- Government Export Promotion Councils
- Wholesalers/Retailers (e.g., Shoprite seeking locally sourced products)

In addition to expanding its outreach through the above noted mechanisms, this report recommends the Trade Hub deepen the reach of the FA network by leveraging current and future partners:

- African Cashew Alliance
- AGOA/Trade Resource Centers
- Association Afrique Agro Export
- Borderless Alliance
- Comite Permanent Inter-états du Lutte Contre la Sècheresse au Sahel
- Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la Filière Bétail
- Economic Community of West African States
- Global Shea Alliance
- Réseau des Systèmes d'Information des Marchés en Afrique de l'Ouest
- West African Grains Network
- ROPPA, get the full name from the web
- West African Economic and Monetary Union

This report suggests that the Trade Hub is well positioned to lead new knowledge management efforts around SME financial facilitation and strongly encourages it to act as a thought leader in the convergence of inclusive business, impact Investment, and SME access to finance in Africa.

1.2 REVIEW AND KEY LESSONS OF THE WORKSHOP

Based on feedback from the financial advisors and presenters, the Workshop was highly successful. It provided participants with the framework to discuss the financial ecosystem across West Africa, compare Anglophone and Francophone banking systems and investor perspectives, and elaborate appropriate practices for conducting investment due diligence. Most importantly, the seeds of a financial advisors network were planted with the potential to grow and strengthen as members leverage the network, contribute to the exchange of knowledge-based management, and develop strategies to develop their own private consulting and financial advisory businesses.

By definition and out of necessity, this inaugural training program covered a broad range of topics, including introductions to USAID's West Africa and Trade Hub objectives, administrative topics (e.g., the philosophy and practicalities of task orders, contracting), value chains (VC) including value-added global and Feed the Future (FTF) as well as related VC associations, business ideation and access to finance, prospecting for SME agribusiness. (See Workshop Agenda in Annex I).

The FAs brought a diverse array of experience (industries, value chains, and managerial responsibilities), client segment preferences (larger companies, SMEs, rural cooperatives) and years of service to the Workshop.

The Workshop inducted the financial advisors through presentations, question and answer sessions, and a panel discussion from financial institutions (impact investors, commercial banks and leasing firms). Based on the financial advisors' evaluations, this was a successful effort. However, the FAs and Trade Hub staff agree that this Workshop must be followed by complementary training and technical assistance to the advisors.

The Workshop emphasized the role of financial institutions (FIs) not only as a source of financing but as a referral of potential deals. Trade Hub staff and financial advisors updated the Workshop participants on the status of their efforts to develop partnerships with selected FIs. The institutions represented at the workshop (commercial banks, leasing firm, and equity investor) repeated their interest in receiving creditworthy investment proposals. A campaign by the Trade Hub to solidify FI partnerships is on-going. Effective partnerships are critical for a successful Investment and Finance component and the Trade Hub needs to continue to support the FAs to better understand what the investors and lenders are looking for and how to successfully approach them with new deals.

1.3 TRADE HUB FINANCIAL ADVISORS CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

An identified common constraint of financial advisors (and the client firms) was understanding the principles of transforming a business concept into a business 'case' as a prerequisite to submitting a Trade Hub task order. The Trade Hub is developing a template Guide to support financial advisors to overcome this constraint. Coupled with this Guide, this report recommends that the Trade Hub provide technical assistance to selected FAs to support their understanding of how to develop a well-documented business case and task order submission. This can be accomplished through one-on-one mentoring (applied technical assistance) along with training workshops on agri-business business trends and new models of financing.

Agribusiness training. Suggested agribusiness topics for follow-on agribusiness trainings include:

- Finance Planning
- Business (Re)Structuring
- Strategic Planning
- Human Capital Management
- Business Succession – Exit Strategy
- Procurement
- Supply Chain Management
- Production and Process Improvement
- Packing and Packaging
- Technology and Equipment
- Licensing
- Promotion, (Export) Sales and Marketing
- Distribution
- Best Practices / Appropriate Practices

Access to Finance Training. A number of access to finance topics were introduced in an overview to financial advisors in this training that warrant (expanded in-depth) inclusion in future training events or in one-on-one interactions. More detailed financial topics for discussion include:

- The use of new financing instruments (e.g., warehouse receipts, convertible loans, grants / subsidies).
- Discussions of business strategy, exit strategy and due diligence of potential investments given the trend of impact investment and social venture capital interest in agribusiness.

The Trade Hub, when possible, will organize training events concurrent with external conferences to leverage opportunities to meet potential clients and stakeholders. The consultants propose that Trade Hub plan participation in the Agro-Food West Africa, December 1–3, 2015, trade show in Accra Ghana.

Consultant Network. The Trade Hub recognizes that if a FA does not have the requisite foundation in core competencies of financial facilitation, it is challenging to instill these during the relatively short life span of the Trade Hub project. It therefore may be necessary to engage sector specialists as technical consultants in specialized areas, to complement the FA's more 'generalist' orientation, to build, stronger, more bankable proposals.

Knowledge Management. The Trade Hub intends to implement a communications and outreach campaign through the use of its website, blogs, conference calls, and webinars, and to disseminate its lessons and learning to the broader development community. Financial advisors will be called upon to lead these discussions when possible, drawing on their learning and further expanding their credibility as agribusiness specialists. Knowledge sharing will become a hallmark of the Trade Hub's Finance and Investment component.

I.4 PILOT APPLIED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

West Africa Financial Ecosystem. The commercially oriented financial market ecosystems the Trade Hub is seeking to promote in West Africa is ‘crowded’ with market distorting actors, including donor funded grant programs and subsidies. An example of this is evidenced by The Youth Enterprise with Innovation in Nigeria (YouWiN!) program providing grants to MSME start-ups with little more than a business concept developed or the African Enterprise Challenge Fund’s¹ grants and zero interest loans to agribusiness firms.

These market distortions affect the perception of firms and FA’s ability to access finance and provide a disincentive to seek ‘commercial’ market rates for loans and investments. An example of this is evidenced by the Nigeria Bank of Industry Cottage Agro-Processing Fund providing subsidized loans at a 9% interest rate over 5 years as compared to commercial loans with rates between 22-27% per annum. OXFAM’s Inclusive Impact Investments fund also offers subsidized equity, quasi-equity, and debt financing to firms. These programs provide SME firms with a perception that finance can be readily obtained ‘free’ (grant) or ‘cheap’ (subsidized loans) rather than commercially priced debt or equity.

Along with low cost financing are donor programs that subsidize business development services (BDS). An example of this is the Nigeria Development Finance Project (funded by World Bank), which offers free BDS to firms throughout Nigeria. However, the Trade Hub’s approach is designed to support firms with a proven business case, market demand, market knowledge, and management capacity to manage debt and/or equity successfully. As such, the Trade Hub’s market driven model to facilitate access to financing is somewhat at odds with other donor programs. This will be an on-going challenge for the Trade Hub’s financial facilitation efforts.

Need for Firm-Level Mentoring and Technical Assistance.

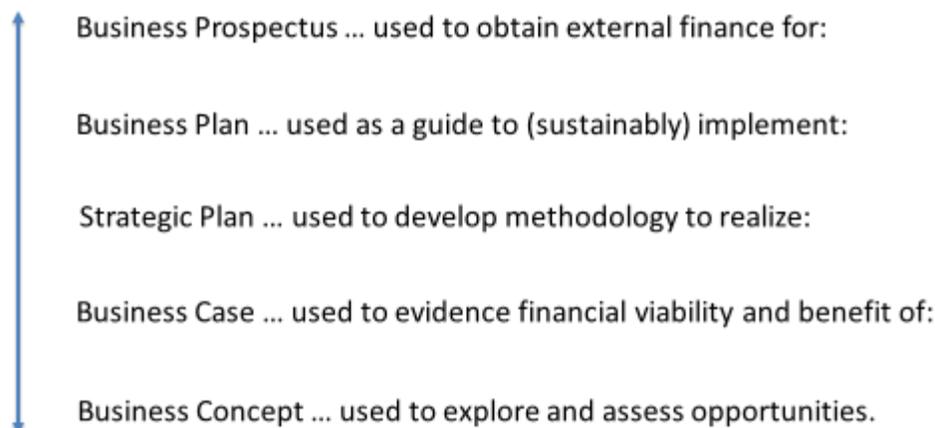
The Trade Hub West Africa has received a number of ambitious task orders from financial advisors that require (re)structuring to make them bankable (see textbox). In some cases, the fundamental business concept needs to be re-conceptualized, thought through, and revised into a ‘staged’ proposal with short-, medium-, and long-term investment needs. The process of transforming a business concept into a business prospectus (loan, investment or grant application) is illustrated in the slide below². This step-by-step process was presented and discussed during the March Training Orientation Workshop.

Due to the inexperience of many West Africa firms and several Trade Hub’s FAs, some initial business proposals (i.e., task orders) are too complex and need to be broken down into ‘steps’ that can be achieved over time. For example, one firm seeking to begin processing and exporting 5,000 MT of cashew annually must first acquire land, hire staff, and begin exporting on a small scale to ‘prove’ the viability of the concept.

¹<http://www.aecfafrica.org/windows/agribusiness-window>

² This is taken from the Trade Hub FA Training Orientation Workshop in March 2015.

Business Ideation and Access to Finance



Recognizing the firm-level and financial ecosystem complexities of the Trade Hub's ongoing deals (e.g., task orders in process), a pilot test to provide direct assistance was developed. The pilot test was organized to provide technical assistance (business coaching) to one firm/FA in Benin and three in Nigeria, with a goal to:

- Support financial advisors to understand the process of developing a *business concept* into a business proposal.
- Support firms to gain the necessary skills to develop a business strategy and a business plan based on the business concept.
- Support financial advisors and firms to develop an 'action plan' to develop a business proposal.³

³ Action Plans are step, by step guides that the consultants will use to support the completion of designated transactions.

The Trade Hub's pilot technical assistance effort involved dispatching two experienced, agribusiness financing consultants (Christopher Shyers and Peter White⁴) to Nigeria and Benin to work directly with designated FAs over a concentrated period. The coaching revolved around specific 'deals' that had been presented to the Trade Hub and were considered fairly complex and perhaps not bankable in their current state. The technical assistance with FAs and firms was structured as a third party review of task orders to determine their bankability. The TA involved direct coaching with FAs and firms to challenge their current business assumptions, assess their human resource and management capacity, rationalize their business concepts, and restructure proposed deals. In addition to the in-country mission, the consultant and FAs had, and continue to have, ante and post interactions regarding developing and refining task orders.

The FA coaching often took place in conjunction with client firms; as such, the technical assistance benefited both the firm and the FA. This mentoring enabled the FAs to implement assistance to their client firms while also demonstrating that the Trade Hub was actively supporting 'live' deals in the field. In all four cases, the FAs reported that they significantly benefitted from the coaching experience.

The specifics of the individual engagements and common challenges are provided below:

- *Access to Finance.* Firms and FAs had a limited understanding of how to demonstrate the financial viability of their deals (i.e., task orders).
- *Credible Business Cases.* Financial advisors are incentivized by the Trade Hub's mobilization fee to prepare a task order (see textbox); focus is given to the business concept⁵, however, these concepts do not necessarily develop into a credible business cases that can articulate demand, industry knowledge, or firm-level capacity.
- *Financial Ecosystem Disincentives.* Financial advisors are not necessarily conducting preliminary due diligence on (potential) clients as they are dis-incentivized by nonmarket and quasi-market actors' grants and subsidies that are providing BDS. As such, there can be a number of bodies (donors, projects, consultants) working with one firm, reducing the Trade Hub FA's leverage and influence with a client. These issues require further study to determine if the Trade Hub's facilitation model will succeed in achieving its goals.

Fee Structures

The West Africa Trade Hub project pays FAs \$1,000 for the identification of potential firms seeking access to finance through its mobilization fee; this fee includes the costs associated with developing and presenting a strong business concept, i.e., task order. The Trade Hub offers BDS support through a SME assistance package (capped at \$5,000) for approved business development services; however, the primary financial incentive for FAs is a 'success fee,' e.g., a percent of the total transaction's value (capped). This model encourages FAs to seek out larger deals, regardless of whether the company has developed a proven business case.

⁴ Mr. White and Shyers were the lead trainers from the March Financial Advisor Workshop.

⁵ The Trade Hub's guidelines focus on the business concept and new guidelines need to be structured to ensure that FAs and firms think through the entire business process before task orders are submitted

The pilot hands-on technical assistance for four firms and FAs was very successful and can be demonstrated by:

- Financial advisors and the firms were willing to reassess business concepts and focus on developing (rationalized) business cases (based on demonstrated market demand, sector knowledge, and management capacity) to revise task orders.
- Financial advisors and the client firms were willing to develop new strategies and business plans.
- Financial advisors and the firms were willing to develop action plans to identify tasks and a timeline needed for turning business concepts into business proposals (and the sources and use of funds).

I.5 NEED FOR FURTHER CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The Trade Hub's financial facilitation program is built on the premise that the project will work with experienced FAs. This presumes that experienced FAs (with experience in finance and agribusiness) are available and will be attracted to the Trade Hub. As mentioned above, given the broad objectives of both USAID and the Trade Hub, a diverse group of financial advisors has been recruited.

The 24 partner FAs are representative of their respective countries. Some financial advisors target larger, city-based investments; others favor rural, community investments. All FAs, even the most experienced, will require orientation into the Trade Hub and some degree of capacity building, which was the objective of the March Orientation Workshop. However, if an FA requires an inordinate amount of capacity building, s/he will probably not be a good fit for the Trade Hub, especially given the Trade Hub's very ambitious indicator targets and limited life span.

Even with careful recruitment and selection, it has been difficult to assess the qualifications of previously-unknown FAs and to gauge the motivation of experienced and well-qualified FAs to devote their time to the Trade Hub's work. Financial advisors have alternative sponsors and clients that compete for their time. Moreover, underqualified (or in the worst case, unscrupulous financial advisors) can have a detrimental impact on the project's financial facilitation goals. It is, therefore, critical to make early on a determination whether to train or release FAs, within the confines of their contracts.

The Trade Hub is only recently devoting resources for the capacity building of its FA network. This is evidenced by the 3-day training program described above. It has also been recognized that specific deals will need hands-on technical assistance and that some FAs will need practical coaching—as was pilot tested in Benin and Nigeria immediately after the training workshop. This report proposes that there is a continued need and role to play for both classroom and one-on-one capacity building for the Trade Hub's FAs and partner firms.

1.6 NEXT STEPS AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on the three days of interaction with the 24 FAs during the March training, the Trade Hub developed a general sense of the capacity of these individuals. To supplement this knowledge, the Finance and Investment team will develop a survey to obtain more specifics on knowledge gaps; this might be in the form of an online test. Based on these results, coupled with the results of the March training, the extent of coaching requirements will be determined for each FA; in some cases, possible medium-term twinning arrangements may be developed between the Trade Hub's consultants and FAs.

This report recommends that the Trade Hub's structure for coaching FAs include the following steps:

Expanding Networks and Outreach. The Trade Hub will work with each identified FA to assist them in developing working relationships with all of the Trade Hub strategic partners, e.g., ACA, GSA, etc., as well as other important membership associations where potential deals may be developed. Drawing on the Trade Hub's VC team of experts will also be emphasized. As introductions are made and the FA familiarizes himself with these resources, the FA will interact directly with these strategic partners.

Understanding FI Requirements and Formalizing Relationships. The Trade Hub will work remotely with each selected FA to acquire a more in-depth understanding of bank requirements and assist them to develop long-term relationships with Trade Hub partner FIs.⁶

Providing Hands-On Support with Clients. As task orders are submitted to the Trade Hub for review, those from FAs selected for coaching will be reviewed for positive impact from one-on-one coaching from a consultant. Under such an approach, the consultants will be allotted a specific amount of time to cover the remote and in-country support for targeted FAs. Work will be conducted remotely if possible and in-country assistance will be organized for logistical efficiency, grouping together assignments in one country and neighboring countries, to the extent possible.

Targeted TA will be driven by the potential impact of task orders.

In conclusion, the March training workshop and in-country coaching were a great success and excellent use of project resources. The training materials will be made available on the Trade Hub website for review by FAs from West Africa as well as financial advisors from the other USAID-funded Trade Hubs in Eastern and Southern Africa. The written materials and the experience gleaned from the on-site and virtual work will form the basis of a Financial Advisors and Business Development Services (BDS) Guide, supplementing the materials and experience already available from other USAID programs. The Finance and Investment component is making solid progress in its work to facilitate financial deals across West Africa and the recommendations made in this report will further these efforts.

⁶ The Trade Hub project is formalizing Letters of Partnership with bank and non-bank lending institutions across West Africa.

2. FINANCIAL ADVISORS' TRAINING ORIENTATION WORKSHOP REPORT

2.1 CONTEXT OF WORKSHOP

Access to finance remains a critical obstacle to business in West Africa despite profitable lending opportunities in nontraditional sectors. The Investment and Finance component of the Trade Hub supports the project to achieve its overall objectives of increased regional trade, investment and jobs by leveraging investment in targeted regional and global value chains as well as providing technical assistance and training support to businesses with the aim of increasing access to finance. As part of its strategy, the Investment and Finance component works at the intermediary level with a selected group of financial advisors who undertake finance related business development services to assist the Trade Hub's targeted businesses in the focus value chains to access finance.

The financial advisors are the key conduit through which the access to finance component will provide technical assistance and support for firms across the region to access investment. As such, the financial advisors' ability to effectively identify appropriate businesses, complete the necessary Trade Hub paperwork, provide the required services to the firm, and close financial transactions is vital. The 'Financial Advisors Training Orientation Workshop' which took place in Accra, Ghana from March 17 – 19, 2015, is the first capacity building activity geared towards supporting the financial advisors to enhance the services provided to businesses. The selected group of financial advisors shows a diverse range of sector (financial and value chain) background/experience, knowledge and skills. This activity is intended to bring all financial advisors up to speed with Trade Hub activities and objectives as well as provide them with capacity building and technical assistance to enhance their ability to identify strategic investment opportunities and bring deals to closure. The training is also expected to help FAFs better understand the task order administration process and enable them establish contact with some key financial institutions (especially non-bank) which many of them may not be familiar with. Presentations were made by key Trade Hub specialists, finance consultants, Trade Hub partners and financial advisors. (See *Workshop Agenda – ANNEX I*)

2.2 OBJECTIVE(S) OF TRAINING

The objectives of the training were the following:

- Strengthen the capabilities of financial advisors to enable them to secure finance and investment for firms in the Trade Hub investment pipeline in order to increase regional trade, investment, and jobs.
- Increase financial advisors' understanding of the Trade Hub project with particular focus on key Global and Feed the Future Value Chains in order to best address their financial needs.
- Increase financial advisors' knowledge of the financial ecosystem in West Africa and link

them to key financial institutions (especially non-bank) to facilitate exchanges on value chain related financing opportunities.

- Facilitate linkages among financial advisors to allow for sharing of ideas and experiences.
- Garner partner input into the Trade Hub's Access to Finance strategy.

2.3 PARTICIPANTS

Altogether, there were forty-three participants at the workshop—twenty-seven financial advisors and one prospective financial advisor from twenty-four consultancy firms, eight representatives from five financial institutions, six representatives from five Trade Hub partner organizations as well as an observer from USAID. A total of ten females and thirty-three males from Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo were present. (See *list of participants in ANNEX II*)

2.4 POINTS DISCUSSED

The sessions were organized according to the following agenda.

DAY I - TUESDAY MARCH 17

- Welcome and Introductions

The Trade Hub welcomed and introduced all participants, presented the workshop's objectives and agenda as well as gave an overview of the project and its main components.

- Overview of Trade Hub Value Chains

The Trade Hub's Value Chain Development Specialist gave an overview of the Trade Hub's value chains (global and regional) and the AGOA /Trade Resource Centers.

- Overview of Trade Hub Partners and Resources

Representatives from each of the Trade Hub partner organizations (African Cashew Alliance, Global Shea Alliance, Borderless Alliance, West African Grain Network, West African Grain Network, and Confederation of National Livestock Federations) gave an overview of their organizations, specifying how they engage with firms in their respective value chains and detailing ways in which they can support the work of financial advisors.

- Working with Trade Hub: Administration and Contract

The service agreement between Abt and the financial advisors was presented with particular focus on the Master Agreement, task order process, deliverables process and USAID branding rules as well as the monitoring and evaluation requirements.

- Working with Trade Hub: Technical Considerations of Contract

This was a practical session on the technical considerations of the contract between Abt and financial advisors. Real case studies on task orders and deliverables were presented and discussed.

DAY 2 – WEDNESDAY MARCH 18

- Working with the Investment and Finance Component

The objectives, targets and current results of the Trade Hub’s Investment and Finance component as well as the duties and responsibilities of financial advisors were presented and discussed.

- Working with the Client

Prospecting for SME agribusiness clients in Trade Hub value chains was addressed with particular focus on understanding the client’s needs.

- Business Ideation and Access to Finance

This session touched on sourcing funding for business ideas and due diligence. A case study was presented on the cashew value chain.

- Working with Financial Institutions

During this session, participants were briefed on the progress the Trade Hub has made with signing letters of partnership with financial institutions. A presentation was made and discussions held on finding the right financial partner for each client.

- Securing Financing: Investor Panel

A panel of high level representatives from five financial institutions (ECOBANK – Commercial Bank; Injaro and Acumen Fund – Social Impact Funds; Databank AgriFund Manager Ltd. – Investment Fund; and Leasafric – Leasing Company) presented their organizations and discussed ways in which financial advisors can generate good deals for financial institutions as well as the support they can provide to the facilitation process.

DAY 3 – THURSDAY MARCH 19

- Securing Financing: Packaging and Pitching an Investment

Presentations on writing business plans and investment memoranda were made and discussions held on packaging and pitching an investment.

- Prospecting for SME Agribusiness

This session discussed strategies that the Trade Hub’s financial advisors could adopt to build their businesses in finance access facilitation.

2.5 KEY OUTCOMES, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following summarizes the Workshop’s activities and key outcomes:

- Twenty-eight financial advisors (including one prospective) from twenty-four consultancy firms were provided with information and resources on the Trade Hub, Trade Hub partner organizations and the financial ecosystem in the region.

- This workshop is the genesis of efforts by the Trade Hub to build a network of highly skilled financial advisors who will work with West African businesses to ensure that overall Trade Hub targets of increasing investment and improving trade are met.
- Financial advisors were equipped with tools to improve their capacity to provide an enhanced finance access facilitation services to agricultural export-oriented firms in West Africa.
- Based on feedback received from participants, it can be concluded that the workshop was a great networking platform for financial advisors in the region to meet and exchange ideas and share experiences. Overall, forty-four percent (44%) of financial advisors rated the workshop as excellent while forty-nine (49%) said it was good. It was also a good opportunity to develop business relationships and exchange vital information with Trade Hub partners and financial institutions across the region.
- It is recommended that similar events are held more regularly—twice a year if possible. A second workshop is scheduled to take place in December 2015.
- There was a general expectation for the Trade Hub to lead the creation of a vibrant network of financial advisors who will work together to support financial facilitation across West Africa.

The Workshop notes are presented in Annex III and participant evaluations in Annex IV.

2.6 DOCUMENTS

All Workshop participants were provided with a flash drive that contained all presentations and other relevant Trade Hub studies.

ANNEX I

FINANCIAL ADVISORS' ORIENTATION WORKSHOP

Accra, Ghana

Date: March 17 – 19, 2015

Venue: Alisa Hotel

Day 1 – Tuesday March 17		
8:00-8:30	Registration	
8:30-9:30	Welcome and Introductions	
	Opening Remarks	Jean-François Guay
	Objectives of the Orientation Workshop	
	Introduction of Trade Hub Team and Financial Advisors	
	Overview of the Trade Hub project	Aminata Mbaye
9:30-10:30	Overview of Trade Hub Value Chains	
	Overview of Regional and Global Value Chains	Bill Noble
	Overview of AGOA and Trade Centers	
	Capacity Building & Gender importance	
10:30-10:45	COFFEE BREAK	
10:45-12:45	Overview of Trade Hub Partners and Resources	
	➤ African Cashew Alliance	Ernest Dankwa
	➤ Global Shea Alliance	Aaron Adu
	➤ Borderless Alliance	Afua Eshun
	➤ West African Grain Network	Aïssatou DEME
	➤ Confederation of National Livestock Federations	Timbila Sawadogo
12:45-13:30	LUNCH	

13:30-15:15	Working with Trade Hub: Administration and Contract	
	Master Agreement	Aminata Mbaye
	Task Order & Deliverables process	
	USAID Branding rules	
	Monitoring and Evaluation	Michael Ashiteye
15:15-15:30	TEA BREAK	
15:30-16:45	Working with Trade Hub: Technical Considerations of Contract	
	Task Order and Excel Summary	Jean-François Guay
	Deliverables	
16:45-17:00	Evaluation	

Day 2 – Wednesday March 18

8:00-8:30	Registration	
8:30-8:45	Review of Previous Day	
8:45-9:30	Working with the Investment and Finance Component	Peter White
	Financial Advisors' Roles and Services	Jean-Francois Guay
	Targets and Results	
9:30-10:45	Working with the Client	
	Understanding clientneeds	Christopher Shyers
	How is Agribusiness Different?	
10:45-11:00	COFFEE BREAK	
11:00-12:45	Business ideation and Access to finance	
	Business Ideation and Access to Finance	Christopher Shyers
	Due Diligence	
	Cashew Value Chain Model	Jean-Guy Biley
12:45-13:30	LUNCH	

13:30-15:30	Working with Financial Institutions	
	Trade Hub Letters of Partnership with Financial Institutions	Credo Mensah
	Finding the right financial partner and product for the client	Peter White
15:30-16:00	TEA BREAK	
16:00-17:30	Securing Financing: Investor Panel	Peter White
17:30-17:45	Evaluation	
18:00-19:30	Networking Cocktail	

Day 3 – Thursday March 19		
8:00-8:30	Registration	
8:30-8:45	Review of Previous Day	
8:45-10:45	Securing Financing: Packaging and Pitching an Investment	
	Business Plans	Christopher Shyers
	Investment Memoranda	
10:45-11:00	COFFEE BREAK	
11:00-11:45	Prospecting for SME Agribusiness	
	Prospecting for SME	Christopher Shyers
	Building a Business as a Financial Advisor	
11:45-12:30	Next Steps and Final Discussion	Jean-Francois Guay
12:30-12:45	Wrap up and Closing	
12:45-1:00	Evaluation	

ANNEX II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS - FINANCIAL ADVISORS' ORIENTATION WORKSHOP

Date: MARCH 17 - 19, 2015 Location of the event: ALISA HOTEL, ACCRA, GHANA

	Name	Gender	Organization/ Affiliation	Title	Contact (Phone, Email)	Country
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ANNEX III

WORKSHOP NOTES - FINANCIAL ADVISORS' ORIENTATION WORKSHOP

Participants' expectations:

- To acquire knowledge and orientation on the project
- To build up knowledge on agribusiness using the value chains approach
- To build up a network for greater impact and results
- To share experiences and knowledge
- To be most efficient in the financial access facilitation task
- To create a network of consultants led by the Trade Hub
- To create a network for trade and investment across borders through financial advisors

Some key questions/issues raised on various presentations:

Value Chains:

- More information/contacts on AGOA regional offices.
- How could Trade Hub financial advisors benefit from value chain leads? Is it possible for the Trade Hub to share information on their leads with financial advisors?
- What support could Trade Hub provide to financial advisors from Mali in the mango value chain?
- Would Trade Hub be able to expand the current value chains to include poultry, cassava, and piggeries?
- How does Trade Hub ensure government participation in the various regions to achieve set objectives?
- Does Trade Hub have a list of companies from their partners that financial advisors should target or can they focus on other companies?

Trade Hub responses:

- Abou Fall shared information on the AGOA/Trade Resource Centers.
- The Trade Hub is very open to sharing information on business leads.

Overview of Trade Hub and Partners

- What are the benefits of membership with Trade Hub partners?
- Does ACA provide any support to its members to improve on their bankability?
- Request for more information on GSA

Two financial advisors consortiums from Nigeria (GDA and Lighthouse) signed up with BA as members.

Working with Trade Hub

- Why can't the Trade Hub effect payment of deliverable fees in dollars instead of local currency? (Instability of local currencies against the dollar.)

- Trade Hub needs to modify its master agreement to accept letters sent by financial advisors to banks as Deliverable 3.
- Can the Trade Hub provide a sample service agreement which financial advisors could use?
- Targets set by the Trade Hub are very ambitious with an emphasis on the loan application and approval process taking between 6-12months before approval. The Trade Hub should therefore do a quick diagnosis on the targets since the financial advisors are the focal points for deal sourcing.
- How can deals – such as warehousing- be captured by the Trade Hub regarding a company’s financial projections?
- The Trade Hub should revise the TO application on the ‘How and What to Finance section’; change “internal capital” to “owners capital” to avoid confusion.
- What happens after a financial advisor receives all payments and the approved loan is later refused?
- Would Trade Hub accept deals that are 100% debt?
- Should information requested on the excel file for financial projections be cumulated?
- Does the Trade Hub have a cap on fees charged by financial advisors?
- How do financial advisors benefit from the other components of the Trade Hub—i.e. capacity building?

M&E

- When should financial advisors fill the in the various M&E forms?
- Some businesses work in other value chains not covered by the Trade Hub. How do they capture the required information such as volume of sales and export?
- How do the various indicators guide the work of the financial advisors?
- How does Trade Hub ensure confidentiality of information submitted by financial advisors on their clients?

Panel discussions

- Why are some deals rejected by various financial institutions/investors?
- Request for more information on DCAs in various regions, especially in Senegal.
- Why are financial institutions with DCAs not willing to provide information to financial advisors?
- What is the average time for decisions on investment proposals by panel members (financial institutions)?
Response: 2 weeks–12months depending on availability/provisions of all documentations.

ANNEX IV

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

		DAY 1 = 23 respondents					DAY 2 = 19 respondents					DAY 3 = 24 respondents					SUMMARY OF EVALUATION OVER THE 3 DAYS				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1	The training /workshop (content, goals ...) was clearly defined.	13	10				17	2				15	9				68.18	31.82	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	The invitation handling was satisfactory.	18	5				16	3				17	7				77.27	22.73	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	Food conditions are satisfactory (if applicable).	13	10				15	4				14	10				63.63	36.36	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	Accommodation conditions were satisfactory (if applicable).	15	4				15	2				13	4				65.15	15.15	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	The schedules were respected.	5	10	5	3		10	5	3	1		8	11	5			34.85	39.39	19.70	6.06	0.00
6	The training/workshop met my expectations.	12	11				13	5	1			12	11	1			56.06	40.91	3.03	0.00	0.00
7	I will be able to apply the	16	6	1			14	5				15	8	1			68.18	28.79	3.03	0.00	0.00

	knowledge learned.																						
8	The training/workshop objectives for each topic were identified and followed.	16	6	1			10	8	1			15	9						62.12	34.85	3.03	0.00	0.00
9	The content was organized and easy to follow.	12	10	1			11	8				13	11						54.54	43.94	1.52	0.00	0.00

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

		DAY 1 = 23 respondents					DAY 2 = 19 respondents					DAY 3 = 24 respondents					SUMMARY OF EVALUATION OVER THE 3 DAYS				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
10	The materials distributed were pertinent and useful.	11	11	1			6	8	5			13	9	1			45.45	42.42	10.61	0.00	0.00
11	The trainers/presenters were knowledgeable.	14	9				16	3				16	6				69.69	27.27	0.00	0.00	0.00
12	The quality of instruction was good.	12	10				15	4				16	6				65.15	30.30	0.00	0.00	0.00
13	The trainers/presenters met the training/workshop objectives.	11	11	1			13	6				17	5				62.12	33.33	1.52	0.00	0.00
14	Class participation and interaction were encouraged.	10	13				13	6				13	9				54.54	42.42	0.00	0.00	0.00
15	Adequate time was provided for questions and discussion.	5	12	4	2		9	7	4			9	12	1			34.85	46.97	13.64	3.03	0.00
		Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Very Poor

16	How do you rate the training/workshop overall?	7	15				10	8				12	9				43.94	48.48	0.00	0.00	0.00
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WORKSHOP EVALUATION - COMMENTS

DAY 1			
17	What aspects of the training/workshop could be improved?	18	Other comments?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The receivers should be checked to ensure they work better. - It would have been better to allow more time for questions. - Use a better room for visibility on the screen. Use the microphones. - Use better receivers. It wasn't very easy to hear. - Generally everything was good but the quality of translation into French. - I think it has been very well organized. - Time management—specific time should be given for each question and strictly followed - Presentations could be provided earlier. - Improve the schedule by reducing the time for questions. Going over questions are sometimes very long and not precise. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very useful, although we could have started on time to prevent the rest of the schedule from being tight - Wonderful opportunity for networking and productivity
DAY 2			
	What aspects of the training /workshop could be improved?	18	Other comments?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Excellent! - Access to documentation - Presented papers should be distributed in hard copy as soon as the presentation has ended with the soft copy shared via e-mail to participants on the same day. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We should keep strictly to time allocation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Documentation on the value chains (market studies and technical studies). - Addresses of financial institutions and their experience with the TH. - Translation equipment was poor 			
DAY 3				
17	What aspects of the training /workshop could be improved?		18	Other comments?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Put more focus on agriculture financing. - More time for presentation and questions. - Access to documentation to go along with presentations. - Sharing of FAF experiences on business strategy and access to finance. - Sometimes it is good to work on case studies - Access to finance from the local banks and solution to the problems encountered with the banks and possible solutions. - Promote thematic presentations for the participants in order to create opportunities for sharing experiences. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Associate more financiers to the next session. - Have a mid-term debriefing/evaluation event with FAFs in Accra or elsewhere. - It is necessary to have practical exercises(e.g. on negotiating with banks). - Organize this type of interaction frequently. 2 - 3 times a year - More useful documents should be distributed and other meetings would be more appreciated. - Will recommend the workshop is held at least once every year.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

Very positive feedback about the workshop in general - from organization to content

It was clear that the workshop was a great opportunity for networking but there was a general concern about:

- Time management
- Done poorly on day one because a lot of participants did not show up on time and the schedule was really packed on the first day.
- Interpreters and equipment

- There were some complaints about interpretation from English to French and about malfunctioning interpretation equipment.
- Presentations
- The contents of the presentations were valuable and some participants think it would be better to have interactive sessions where case studies are discussed and experiences shared among financial advisors.
- Several requests were made for documents on relevant studies in various value chains to be provided.