

# INTRODUCTION

- Bomi Women of Substance Organization is a non-for profit organization founded March 2, 2015 by a group of concerned citizens who are residents of Bomi County. The purpose of its formation is geared primarily toward improving women's opportunities through agriculture, capacity building and other income generating activities, to foster self-reliance economic, and social empowerment, thereby reducing their level of vulnerability.

# ORGANIZING AND MANAGING FARMER GROUPS

(Women of Substance-small scale  
Farmer group)

BOMI COUNTY

# PROBLEM STATEMENT

- Bomi is part of the 15 counties in Liberia with a population of over 93,331, divided into 4 Administrative districts. Bomi despite its proximity from Monrovia lacks so many opportunities. Most Farmers in Bomi have never studied farming in school, and have not learned to earn more money by producing and marketing their produce in a better way. The Women of this entity (Women of Substance), lack the required skills to adequately organize and manage it group.

# GENERAL OBJECTIVES

- Explain the most important characteristics of a strong and cohesive farmer group
- Design and implement an action plan with farmers to establish a new or strengthen and existing farmer group
- Planning and implementing activities
- Put in place a process for M&E that permits farmers to assess their progress

# SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- By the end of this workshop, participants will have learned about the advantages of organizing and working with groups
- Understand the role of field agents in promoting farmer groups
- Knowing the advantages and disadvantages of organizing and managing groups.

# TARGET AUDIENCE

The Workshop is intended benefit the following:

- Women small-scale farmers group
- Undergraduate Agriculture students

# WORKING WITH GROUPS

## DAY 1

### Why work with groups?

- Working with group can enable members to easily share information and learn new ideas
- Allowed members to easily obtain financial services
- Share work burden and cost
- Do things that individual cannot do
- Allowed group express interest more effectively than individual.

# ROLE OF THE GROUP PROMOTER

## DAY 1

- The role of the group promoter is to help farmers form and build strong farmer groups,
- He can not do the work of the group, but serves as a guide or facilitator to enable them work on their own and develop their own initiatives.



# WHY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION WORK WITH GROUP? – DAY 1

Development organization work with groups for the following reasons:

- Effectiveness
- Cost-effectiveness
- Task sharing
- Sustainability
- Payment
- feedback

# GROUP FAILURE (END OF DAY 1)

## WHY DO GROUPS FAIL?

Groups fail due to the following reasons below:

- Failure to agree on goals
- Lack of confidentiality
- Lack of transparency
- Unrealistic goals
- Lazy members

# ORGANIZING AND MANAGING A GROUP –DAY 2

- Entering the community – meeting with community dwellers and leadership structure, introduce yourself and discuss the purpose of your visit.
- Gathering the information – Entails community mapping, tracking the names of community leaders; population, facilities (done through the following) 1. Individual interview, 2. Participatory appraisal, 3. Formal survey, 4. Direct observation
- Identifying your target group –ask local authority to help nominate people, mainstream gender, select people with vulnerability (vulnerable but visible, orphans), and people who fit your criteria.

# FORMING A GROUP

## DAY 2

- Forming a group helps prospective members decide whether they wish to achieve their joint vision. If there are no groups in the community, or existing groups are not suitable, help should be provided to local people to create new one. The following steps are followed when forming a group.
  - a. Members should first decide whether they wish to form a group
  - b. Choose a name of a group
  - c. Formally create the group

# 5 PRINCIPLES OF GROUP FORMATION- DAY 2

- The group should be small, number should depend on the type of group.
- Production group should have between 8 to 15 members
- Market group should be larger and be between 15 to 30 members
- The group should be homogeneous, members should face similar economic conditions and have closed social affiliation
- Members should have common interest

# PLANNING & IMPLEMENTING ACTIVITIES – DAY 3

- Community members imagine what they would like to achieve in the long term, then decide what active to implement in the short term to achieve their goal.

# DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN – DAY 3

- Strategies for collection, analysis and use of data needed for projects and accountability purposes.

# PROCEDURES IN DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN – DAY 3

In developing an action plan, the following should be considered.

- Date and time
- Activities – what the group wants to do
- Persons responsible and participants
- Location – where the activities will take place
- Inputs required – cash, materials and labor
- Budget – a good and realistic estimate of cost or resources required
- Monitoring – how to make sure that the activity is progressing.



# IMPLEMENTING THE ACTIVITIES

## DAY 3

- Action taken or work performed through which input such as funds and technical assistance are provided.

# WAYS GROUP CAN IMPLEMENT ACTIVITIES – DAY 3

THE FOLLOWING ARE STEPS THROUGH  
WHICH GROUP CAN IMPLEMENT  
ACTIVITIES

- Assigning tasks and responsibilities to member
- Making sure plans are followed by the group
- Holding coordination meetings
- Dealing with problems

# IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

## DAY 3

- Implementing the plan looks at comparing progress against targets
- Checklist is a flexible data collection tool that list activities to be looked at in order to monitor specific indicators

# MONITORING & EVALUATION – DAY 4

## WHAT IS MONITORING & EVALUATION?

- M&E is the process of continued gathering of information and its analysis in order to determine whether progress is being made towards pre-specific objectives, and highlight whether there are any unintentional positive or negative effect from a project and its activities

# PURPOSE OF MONITORING & EVALUATION – DAY 4

- MONITORING is carried out in order to track progress and performance as a basis for decision making at various levels, in the process of an intervention or project
- EVALUATION, a more, is a systematic process to establish the extent to which an initiative or progress has achieved its goals and objectives. M & E provides regular information on progress relative to target.

# WHAT TO MONITOR IN GROUP – DAY 4

- Attendance & Participation at meetings
- Sharing of responsibilities
- Financial record
- Disbursement of benefits
- Progress toward self-reliance

# KEY BENEFITS OF M & E FOR GROUP FARMERS – DAY 4

- Monitor access to project services and outcomes by the target population.
- Inform and influence analysis of the outcomes and impacts of the group intervention, also detects the strengths and weaknesses of their implementation.
- Identify problems early and propose solutions
- Evaluates achievement of project objectives.

# CONCLUSION

- This document when implemented, will provide individual farmers the opportunity to acquire advanced knowledge in Group farming, geared toward fostering self-reliance, economic and social empowerment. Thereby reducing their level of vulnerability. This will also help specifically the Women of Substance in Bomi County easily obtain financial services, share work burden, cost and allow group express interest more effectively than individual.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & REFERENCES

We are grateful to the following entities for facilitating our work. Their materials have helped us in the preparation of this presentation.

- MEAS Smart skill guides (Organizing and Managing farmer group)
- Estrella, M. and Gaventa J. 1998. "[Who Counts Reality? Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: A Literature Review](#)". IDS Working Paper 70. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.
- Hogger, R., Kuchli, C., Zimmerman, A., Engler, M. and Vokral, E. 1997. "[Monitoring keeping in touch with reality](#)". Berne: Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

# END

## THANK YOU

- PRESENTATION COMPLETED BY:
- ALFRED S. MONGER &
- KIEH W. WISSEH

BOMI COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
WESTERN REGION, LIBERIA

JANUARY 14, 2016