Farmer skills set for sustainable market engagement

Presentation to the USAID Global Learning Experience and Exchange on

SCALING UP ADOPTION AND USE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGIES

Addis Ababa, 3-5 December 2013

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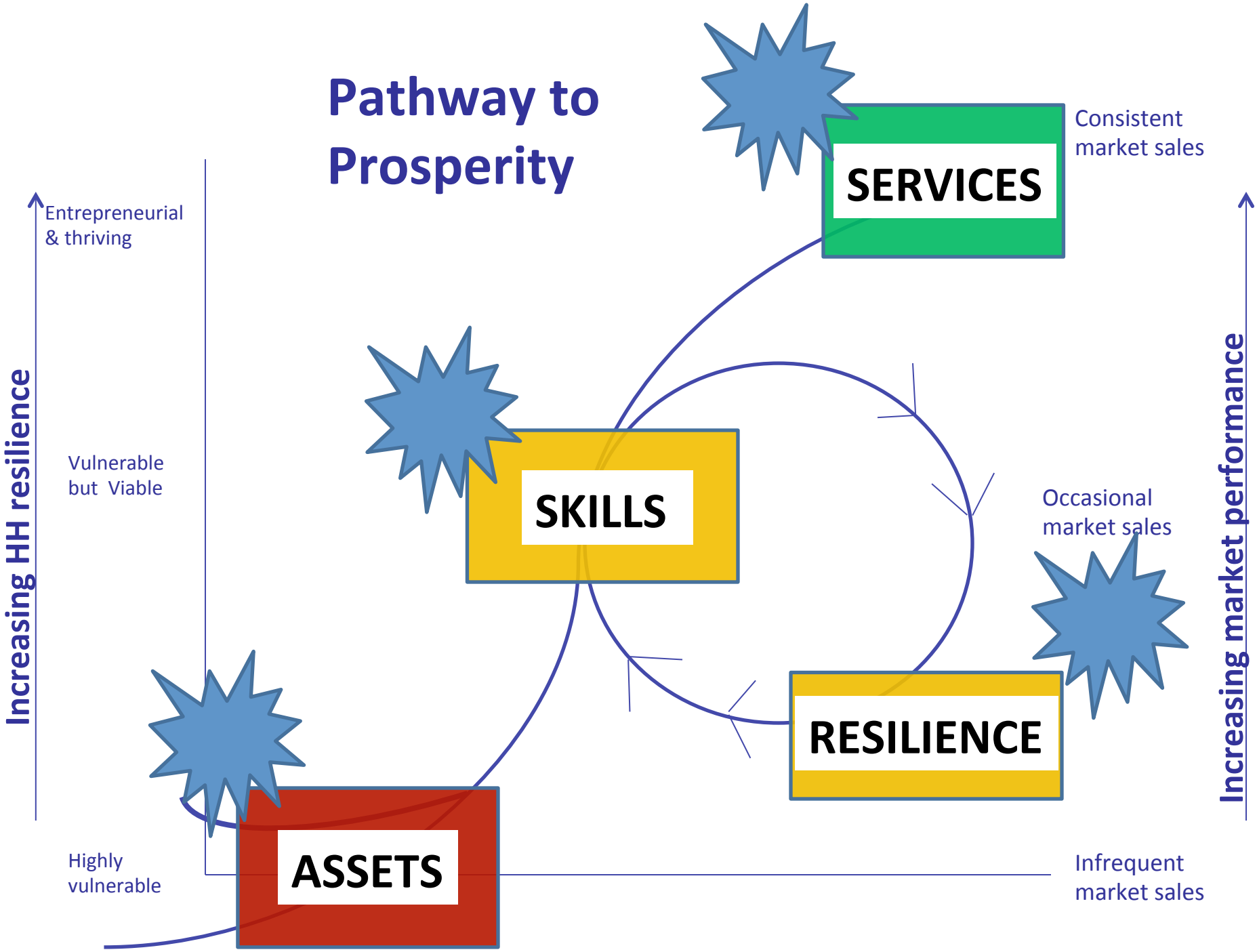
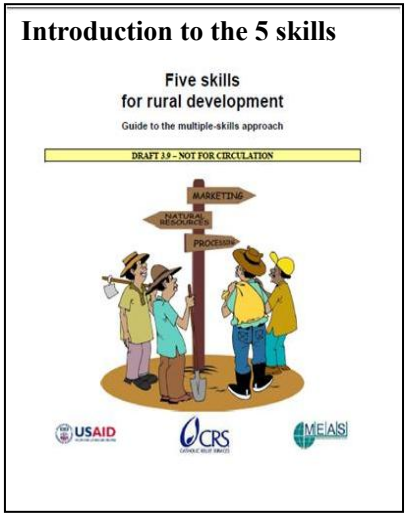
CRS
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES


Pathway to Prosperity
SERVICES
Consistent market sales
Entrepreneurial & thriving
Increasing HH resilience
Vulnerable but Viable
SKILLS
Occasional market sales
Increasing market performance
RESILIENCE
ASSETS
Highly vulnerable
Infrequent market sales

The 5 Skills



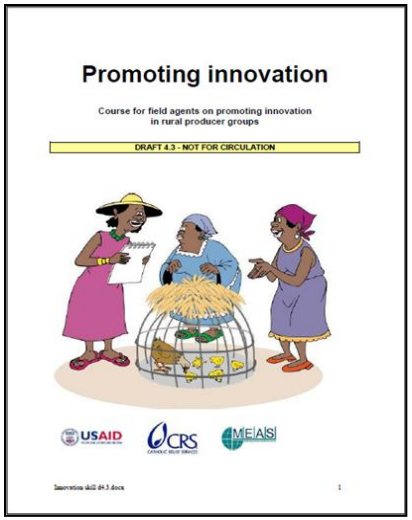
Innovation

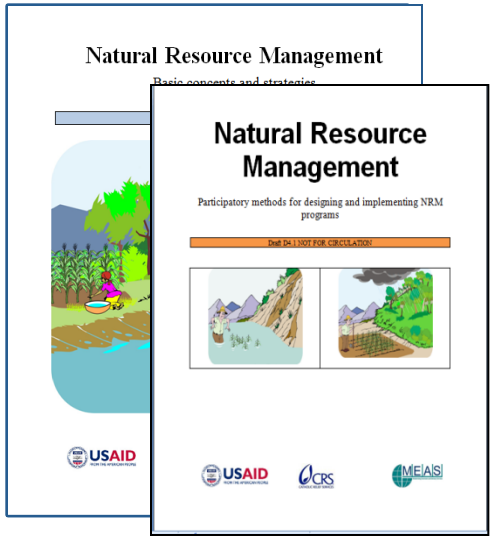
Finance

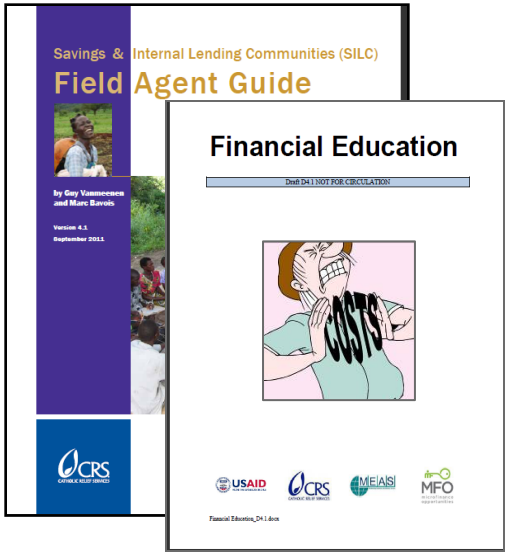
NRM

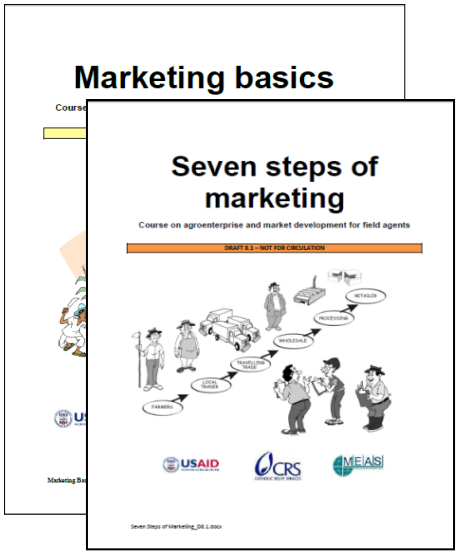
Marketing

Group Organization









Background to 5 skills set

- Catholic Relief Services(CRS) and the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture(CIAT) in 2002.
- Agro-enterprise learning alliances were co-facilitated by CIAT & CRS and commenced in East Africa and Central America, more have been formed in Central, Southern Africa.
- In 2005 the Learning alliance identified need to for a new approach to improve the capacity of farmers to link to markets.
- Study by Alliance in 2005 of farmer groups in Uganda, Bolivia & India.
- The successful groups from this study showed that groups with the 5 skills were much more successful.

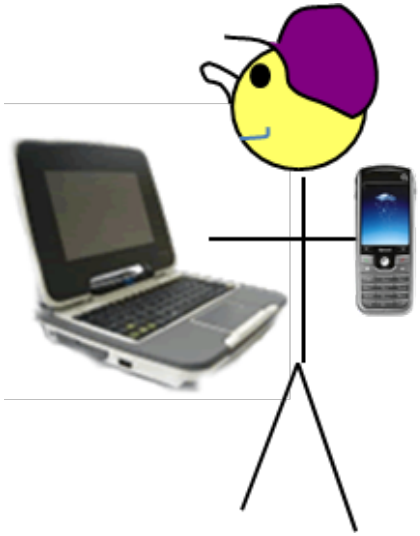
5 Skills sets

- When CRS introduced this concept to producer groups in Tanzania, their products sales more than doubled in 2 years.
- Application of this approach makes a high demand on Field agents-CRS has produced manuals to guide training of each skill set (paper based, Web-based).
- Care should be taken on how to sequence the skills, which will depend on the type of group and their level of engagement (see the Pathway diagram)

Distance Learning with Go Course

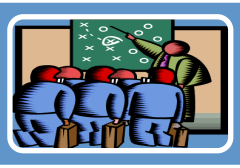
- Group Organization
- Financial Education
- NRM
- Marketing
- Innovation

FARMBOOK



Purpose of Farmbook

Register farmers

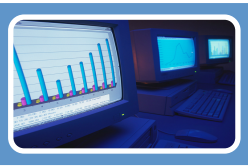


Develop business plans

Schedule crop production activities

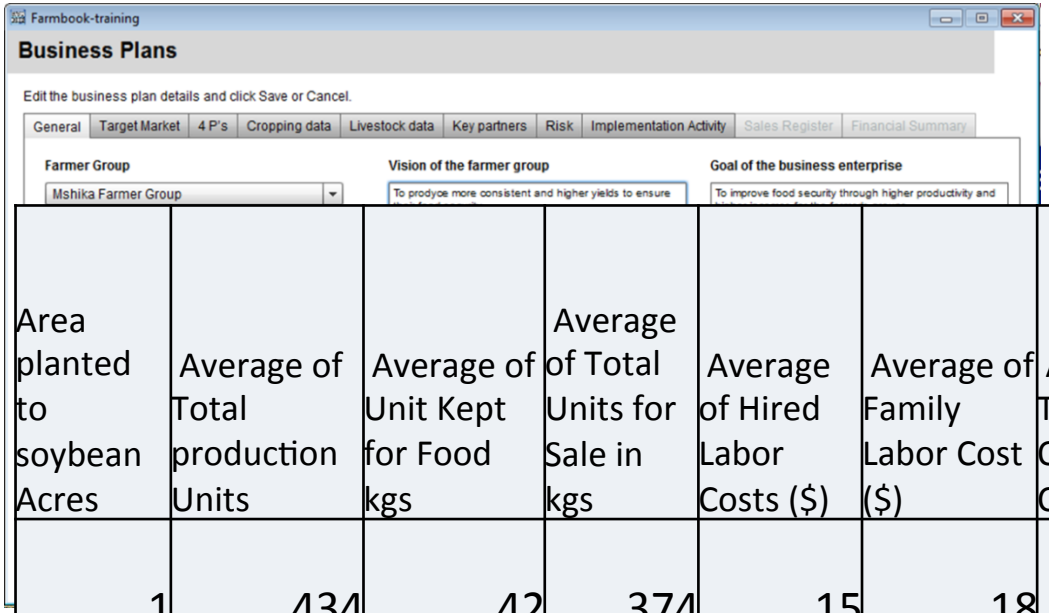
Calculate gross margins on site

Register sales

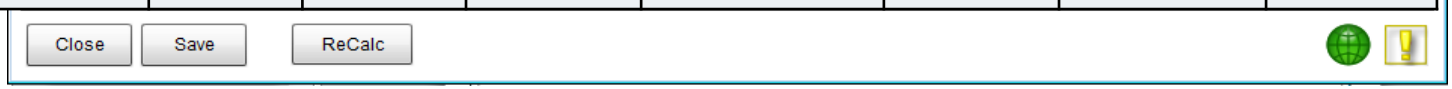


Enable field agents to collect production and crop performance data in agriculture

Generates Narrative Business Plans/ Profitability Assessments



Area planted to soybean Acres	Average of Total production Units	Average of Unit Kept for Food kgs	Average of Total Units for Sale in kgs	Average of Hired Labor Costs ($)	Average of Family Labor Cost ($)	Average of Total Operational Costs ($)	Average of Profit Based on All Costs Excluding Family Labor ($)	Average of Profit Based on All Operational Costs ($)	Count of farmers
1	434	42	374	15	18	47	149	125	107
2	964	64	858	29	34	100	329	274	70
3	1,417	80	1,278	46	70	170	501	406	17
4	1,952	85	1,778	33	105	225	637	528	11
Grand Total	778	65	680	23	32	85	266	221	205



SCALING UP THROUGH COMMUNITY BASED FIELD AGENTS

- **Project subsidizes the first 8 groups (fixed group size and savings), for entire 1st cycle**
- **Guaranteed entry stipend (8 groups) for first 3 months, continue Stipend based on peformance of groups**
- **Agents start charging their 9th group**
- **Revenue model blends:**
  - **base of 1st cycle groups (monthly payment)**
  - **Older groups (per-visit payment)**
  - **The mature groups start receiving other skills sets depending on demand.**

Scaling up model

- SILC offers two out of the five skills sets
- Community-based project paid agents are trained work, on project stipend for a year, examined(3 phase), certified as Private Service Providers (PSPs) and then offer services at a fee paid by groups.
- The Field agents will receive the extra 3 skills in phase based approach, can offer a whole package to the farmer groups.

Geographic Spacing

- **Aim for eventual (post-project) saturation, using apprentices as needed**
- **Each Field agent works on with 8 to 10 groups.**
- ***A pilot study from 2008 to 2012 in Uganda showed that the PSPs were serving almost the same number of farmers as when they were paid field agents, the rate of replication of new groups was 1.99.***

Expansion: current projects

Implementation

- CRS Programs: Zambia , Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Malawi, Tanzania ,
- Serbia 4H young farmers program,
- Bangladesh ICT4D software company,
- Kenya Ministry of Agriculture,
- Nicaragua Agro International
- Agro-enterprise Alliances between many organizations (CRS, ACCDI/VOCA, World Fish center).

Research

- Murdoch University
- MEAS