Malawi Oilseeds Platform Goes Live
CONTENTS

Malawi Oil Seeds Platform Goes Live........................................ 5
World CSR Congress Awards AICC........................................... 6
Malawi Slips On 2016 CPIGlobal Ranking................................ 7
NIP-ACB Signs MoU................................................................ 9
FBS Graduates 58 In The North, Enrolls 60............................. 10
YIF Engages Service Providers................................................. 12
Synthetic Fibre threatens Malawi Cotton Industry............... 13
Private Sector Engagement In Fertiliser Supply...................... 15
Understanding The Oilseeds Products TWG......................... 19
Abandoned But Not Foresaken............................................... 22
Soybean Pushed Me This Far: Gondwe................................. 24
Sustainable Agriculture For Sustainable Markets.
A Story Of Mwazisi CAC..................................................... 25
Collective Marketing And Piggery Business Transformed
My Life: Deliwe Mvula.......................................................... 25
From Goats To Cattle : A Story Of Hastings Kachigunda
Mismatch Erodes Pigeon Peas Profits ................................ 26
Market Access Progress Brief In
Sustainable Lead Farmer Program (SALFP)-So3.................. 27
Mismatch Erodes Pigeon Peas Profits................................. 28
Village Savings And Loans, A Timely Intervention For
Cotton Farmers................................................................. 29
2016/17 Cotton Demonstrations............................................. 30
Meet Dr. Karen Del Biondo.................................................. 30

VISION

To be the center of excellence in corporate citizenship by creating responsible competitive well
governed sustainable and profitable business enterprises in Africa.

MANDATE

Promote the role of business in development
Our Dear Readers,

Welcome to yet another edition of the Corporate Citizenship. In this edition, we take a closer look at various initiatives AICC has been undertaking during the last quarter as well as success stories registered in various projects over the year.

The 21st century has been highly characterised with great technological developments and as an organisation that strives at promoting innovations in various platform especially the agricultural sector, we have equally embraced various technologies in our interventions as one way of ensuring that we are in line with current technological demands.

The development of an online extension platform for Malawi oil seeds crops is one of such great technological innovation AICC together with other stakeholders have successfully pursued. The platform itself has embraced a number of technologies such as google maps, that has made the platform to be a very effective tool for extension services.

As we continue to foster innovations and partnerships in various sectors, I want to urge you all to visit, like and follow us on various online platforms for a quick and easy updates on any unfolding issue. The links and user names for these online platforms have been provided on the page below.

Let me end by appreciating all those who have contributed towards this newsletter. Your contributions have made this newsletter to be rich in information.

We hope to get feedback from all of you our dear readers,

Enjoy your reading

Charles Ziba
Communications Officer

Visit , like and follow Us at:

www.facebook.com/aiccafrica AICC Africa AfricaAICC www.aiccafrica.org
Malawi is grappling with development challenges that include stunted economic growth and development, climate change, environmental concerns, population growth and general welfare decline of its citizenry. We have now reached a major turning point where innovation, efficiency and competitiveness are very key to reverse the trends.

As an organisation whose operations focus on sustainable and profitable partnerships, African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) is seeking to contribute to solutions that are economically viable, socially and environmentally sound by considering future posterity. AICC is therefore pushing forward sustainable initiatives that have been nurtured over many years of facilitating multi stakeholder partnerships and epitomize the Public Private Partnership approach.

Recognizing the important role information plays in sustaining these multi stakeholder partnerships, AICC will work together with all stakeholders and continue on the path toward the realization of sustainable businesses under the corporate punch line of “Promoting Corporate Social Responsibilities Through Partnerships” that AICC upholds. To this end, AICC will work relentlessly in ensuring that stakeholders are always kept abreast of current and relevant information on various initiatives that AICC is engaged in.

AICC will continue to be a trusted initiator and mediator of profitable partnerships in all sectors.

As we work toward achieving our established goals, we kindly request the continued support and understanding of all stakeholders.

Wishing you all a blessed and prosperous 2017.

Enjoy the newsletter.

Felix Lombe, PhD
Chief Executive Officer
The Malawi oil seeds online platform has now gone live to consolidate efforts aimed at promoting the production and marketing of oil seeds.

The Government of Malawi identified oil seed crops as a key area for potential growth in the National Export Strategy (NES).

Currently, the running costs for the data base are being covered by African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) with support from other partners including Royal Norwegian Embassy, UK Department for International Development and Irish Aid.

It is being envisaged that in the long run, as the platform grows, the private sector will be incorporated into the data base and the platform will be used to market and advertise products and services.

AICC Chief Executive Officer, Felix Lombe, said the platform provides information on projects that are offering extension services in different districts and extension planning areas within the districts.

“It also provides information for the four main oil seeds; cotton, groundnuts, sunflower and soybeans.

“The platform further highlights the key extension services that are offered for all the target crops,” he said.

Extension coverage for the four main oil seeds is essential to the success of the oil seeds component in the NES.

But, according to Lombe, a lot of gaps exist in the delivery of extension services for oil seeds.

“Although oil seeds are considered as part of the export drive, four crops, namely cotton, groundnuts, soya and sunflower were selected for particular focus. One of the specific enablers in the NES is affordable access to business development services. Extension has been identified as one of the key business development services,” Lombe said.

AICC is handling the technical aspect of the implementation with support from the Legume Development Trust (LDT).

The platform is expected to be sustained with membership fees realised from the LDT.
The World Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Congress, an international institution that aims at propelling CSR among various business enterprises has awarded the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) an African NGO leadership award for its concentrated efforts in promoting best Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices in the country.

Speaking before presenting the awards to various institutions at the 6th African leadership awards in Le Meridien City in Mauritius, Dr. R.L Bhatia, founder of the World CSR Day said the congress started the initiative of awarding various institutions in the continent with an aim of promoting the spirit of giving back to the society.

Bhatia said the institutions being recognized are those that have truly shown to have the society they are working with at the centre of their businesses. He further expressed that apart from institutions that are promoting best CSR practices or practicing CSR, the congress also recognized innovative African institutions working towards the promotion of sustainable developments across the continent.

“We need to promote the spirit of giving back to the society, our businesses need to go beyond profit making oriented mindset but also seek to address various challenges that the society where our businesses are based meet. Of course businesses cannot address all the problems but little is better than none.

And when we are talking of CSR there are generally best practices that ought to be promoted, actually some CSR’s are in essence not CSR’s but business promotions hence there is need to advocate for these best practices so that institutions can practice CSR’s that contribute to sustainable developments in countries” said Bhatia.

Speaking after receiving the award, AICC chief Executive Officer Dr. Felix Lombe, said the award will highly motivate the institution to do more in promoting best CSR practices as well as innovative approaches in addressing challenges affecting Malawi. Lombe said the institution has always strove at

---

By: Charles Ziba
Malawi continues to slip on corruption perceptions index according to the latest Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) results released by the Transparency International (TI) which is a global anti-corruption movement. The 2016 results indicate that, Malawi has been ranked on position 120 out 176 countries that were assessed worldwide representing a great shift from the 2015 results, whereby the country was ranked on position 112.

Speaking during the launch of the results on 25th January, 2017 at Crossroads the National Integrity Platform Board Chairperson Moses Mkandawire said the 2016 results, though expected, was still alarming as it showed that the country has been greatly slipping on its ranking since 2012. Mkandawire said, the trend in CPI rankings needs not to be over looked but rather should form a starting point for various corruption fighting institutions to intensify their efforts. Mkandawire noted that results like these always have a strong bearing on the society and if measures are not put in place may result in loss of confidence in public systems by various people.

"Compared to the previous years, 2015 in particular, the 2016 results simply indicate that perhaps, we are not doing enough as a country to deal with corruption. Moving down the ladder with 8 steps within a year and 32 steps in a space of 4 years is on its own a bad sign to potential investors who might have had interest of investing in the country. Furthermore delivery of social services are equally affected when corruption is rampant in a country. The 2016 results should..." articulated Lombe.

The 6th African leadership awards saw a number of Africa based institutions being recognized for their contributions to the development of their countries as well the whole continent. Other recipients of the awards in various categories included Adis Abab University, the African water Association, Price Waterhouse Coopers, Jaguar Land Rover and various institutions from across the continent.

MALAWI SLIPS ON 2016 CPI GLOBAL RANKING

By: Our Reporter

Dulani commenting on the results during a panel discussion
thus be a call to all stakeholders including government, civil society organization, the media and all other players from both private and public sectors to intensify their efforts in fighting corruption" said Mkandawire.

Mkandawire further said that although it might be argued that perceptions are not necessarily the truth, the published results nevertheless form the basis for decision-making among traders, potential investors and the development community.

He indicated that over the years the Corruption Perception Index has undeniably become a point of reference in estimating the level of risks for business and development investments as such the CPI results should be considered as an important basis for self-reflection as well as a tool for strategic engagement among governance stakeholders with a purpose to contribute to Malawi’s attainment of sustainable social and economic development.

“The country needs to do a lot more to improve its image in matters of corruption by addressing the many issues that have in recent times been raised by many governance stakeholders. While we acknowledge all efforts and progress being made to fight corruption, Malawi can still do better to polish its image by focusing on various issues such as free access to information and demonstration of political will” narrated Mkandawire.

Commenting on the same issue AICC Governance Technical Advisor, Dr. Karen Del Biondo agreed with Mkandawire sentiments saying the results had much complications on a global scale as they paint a bad picture of the country.

She however indicated that even though Malawi is not on the bottom 20 of the most perceived corrupt countries in Africa, putting in strict measures to deal with corruption practices at this juncture would bail out the country from devastating effects that come in when corruption is rampant in a country. Dr Biondo further narrated that even though there is no difference in the scores of points for Malawi between 2015 and 2016. The shift in position might simply indicate that the country is not doing enough to address issues of corruption such that other countries who are doing something about it have started to overtake us.

“The bad thing about corruption is that only a few benefit while the rest suffer. The vice needs to be fought from all angles by everyone regardless of their status, background or position in the society less we lose our country for good” explained Dulani.

Responding to the results, government spokesperson Nicholas Dausi said, government took the results positively such that they will treat the ranking as a wakeup call for government to do more on the fight against the vice.

In the 2016 Corruption Perceptions Index Malawi was also assessed among 176 countries and territories. The Corruption Perception Index ranks countries by their perceived levels of corruption based on expert assessments and opinion surveys. The CPI is based on a tool developed by Transparency International, a global anti-corruption movement.
The National Integrity Platform (NIP) on Tuesday, 22nd November, 2016 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Malawi Anti-Corruption bureau (ACB) that stipulates the roles and responsibility each party would play in their partnership as they strive to raise awareness and foster support in the fight against corruption.

Speaking before signing the MoU, NIP Board Member Levi Nihowa said as a civil society coalition that is there to foster collaborations with various key stakeholders to address corruption, the coalition realized the need to work with ACB as one way of ensuring that there is strengthened coordination and support between the 2 institutions.

“The fight against corruption is not only in the hands of the government agencies like ACB but all players in various sectors. ACB needs partners to carry out its mandate successfully and am glad to say NIP is one of such partners.

On behalf of all NIP members I would want to commit to ACB that the NIP platform will always support ACB as we strive for a corrupt free Malawi’ said Nihowa.

Speaking on behalf of ACB, Corruption Prevention Director, Mary Phombeya said ACB was very delighted to work with other partners as the fight against corruption highly require close collaborations among various partners.

Phombeya said, it was frustrating to note that many stakeholders are just quick to point fingers at ACB without offering the institution any support. She said the commitment shown by NIP was very comforting and asked many players to emulate the gesture.

“Rarely do we see various players coming in to work with ACB as NIP has done. Let me point out that indeed for corruption to be fought up to the roots we need partners, such partnerships will highly help us (ACB) to reach more areas as well share expertise with other members on the fight against corruption. I would like to say ACB takes plight in this partnership and we will work with you at every opportune time’ narrated Phombeya.

The 2016 – 2018 MoU comes in after the expiry of the 2013- 2015 MoU between the 2 institutions. The MoU among others lays down the roles and responsibilities of each of the parties for the proper coordination, conduct and effective implementation of programmes that aim at raising awareness and fostering support of the Malawi population in the fight against corruption.
After a year of comprehensive training with rice farmers in various districts, Farm Business Schools (FBS) operating in Karonga and Nkhatabaya districts under the Rice platform of AICC finally graduated 58 farmers who had undergone farm business management training.

In a bid to impart an entrepreneurial mindset among rice farmers in various district that AICC under the rice platform is working on, the institutions introduced Farm Business schools trainings in farm business management as a way of equipping rice farmers with business skills for their agriculture businesses.

The trainings that are coordinated by AICC rice platform and highly facilitated by Agriculture Extension Development Officers (AEDOs) of various EPA’s train farmers of various approaches in farming business starting from pre-season period to season and post season period.

Among many aspects, farmers are trained on how they can plan for their farming business each year, by calculating and planning how much they want to produce, how much it would cost them and their terminal benefit at the end of the season before hand. This highly help farmers to plan on how they can source their inputs as well as evaluate the viability of their farming business. Furthermore, planning also gives farmers an insight on risks associated with businesses hence giving them an opportunity to plan for such circumstance.

On the other hand, another challenge for farmers to run successful business had been on setting their prices, in most cases farmers would just set prices abruptly, however through the Farm business schools farmers have been taught on mechanism of setting out prices depending on the cost they incurred during their productions as other factors. Furthermore, the trainings also taught farmers on various new technologies that they can employ in order for them to grow their production as well as on skills on marketing access.

Speaking when he was awarding the certificates to Nkhatabaya graduations, AICC Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Felix Lombe said the main reason AICC introduced such schools in

**FBS GRADUATES 58 IN THE NORTH, ENROLLS 60**
their programme was to create business oriented rice farmers in various districts.

He said, for long the country have failed to benefit from their efforts because they lacked business skills in their approach. He however said he was glad that this has greatly changed in the area as many farmers especially those who were under training had started to realize a good fortune out of their farming. Lombe said, such results indicate that the trainings are necessary hence it would propel AICC to support the initiative more.

"I was going around the area before I came to this place and whilst doing that I was shown and told of great success stories coming out of this programme. Some of you have constructed very good houses, some have even bought motor bikes and even your life styles have greatly improved, this is a great indication that the trainings are bearing fruits. From the little examples that I have seen am sure, people now have a strong desire to continue utilising the knowledge they have acquired. I Am very optimistic that next time that I will come I will see a great change in all of you to the extent that some of you will be driving and possibly construct mansions: said Lombe

Concurring with Lombe’s sentiment Traditional Authority (T/A) Timbiri of the area, said he bears witness of the great change that has happened in his area as well as on his people since the project was introduced. T/A Timbiri further said the people from his area really cherish the development AICC has brought and requested that it should be up-scaled in order to accommodate more farmers from the area.

The graduation ceremonies that took place in Karonga and Nkhatabay districts saw 27 farmers graduating from Karonga while Nkhatabay graduated 31. Each of the graduated farmers will now be a lead farmer and will have 10 followers farmers assigned to them for mentorship purposes. Meanwhile AICC will be introducing 2 more classes in each district and will see close to 60 farmers participating for a period of close to 49 weeks.

Promoting the Role of Business in building Resilient Communities - NEWS

Each of the graduated farmers will now be a lead farmer and will have 10 followers farmers assigned to them for mentorship purposes.
Opportunity arose for Young Innovative Farmers (YIF) in Lilongwe to engage various service providers, when the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) organized a business to business meeting for young innovative farmers and service providers at BICC in Lilongwe.

The meeting which was facilitated in order to give a platforms to both parties to collaborate and discussion issues affecting them saw a number of young farmers from various location converging at one place in order to engage the service providers with hopes of striking deals with them.

Making a presentation on behalf of financial institutions, Chindikani Nyirenda of FDH bank articulated that various financial institutions in the country had now started opening up to offer loans to farmers especially those with sound business plan. He said, FDH has friendly services to all farmers and that the institution was already working with various agricultural institutions such as Auction Holdings Commodity Exchange (AHCX) in promoting the sector.

"the approach to farming as a business is very viable and many financial institutions have now started to offer services to farmers that have shown serious potential in their agriculture business. This might have not been the case previously as most agriculture approaches lacked the business aspect hence it was hard for banks to finance such approaches.

However, just like any loan, the agriculture loans also come with its own conditions and banks first scrutinize the loans applications before they give out the loans in order to establish the viability of the business itself as well as the risk associated with it" narrated Nyirenda.

Reacting to the presentation, young farmers pleaded with financial institutions to consider revising their loan interest as they deter most of them from accessing the loans as they are on a higher side.

Seed producers also had their time to present to the young farmers. Making the presentation peacock seeds productions Manager Innocent Jumbe said the as a seed producing company they were more than ready to work with the young farmers on areas of their choice ranging from seed production to livestock breeding. Jumbe further said the company was very committed to uplift young farmers in the country as such he urged all the farmers present to consider meeting him after the meeting to strike deal immediately.

Speaking on behalf of AICC during the function, Young Innovative Farmer Project Manager, McLoud Kayira hailed the private sector and young innovative farmers that unveiled themselves to the function saying that was a strong indication that there was strong will for partnerships among all players. Kayira further narrated that the main aim of project was to make agriculture business unusual through young farmers as one way of making Agriculture productive and attractive. He therefore urged farmers to fully utilize the platform.
SYNTHETIC FIBRE THREATENS MALAWI COTTON INDUSTRY

BY Our Reporter

The cotton industry in Malawi could be under threat following a shift on the world market from cotton fibres to synthetic fibres as raw material in the clothing and textile industry.

For years, natural fibres have dominated the textile industry, with cotton being the undisputed material used for making garments and home furnishing.

A report released by the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) analysing the synthetic fibre boom and the future of the cotton industry, shows that cotton consumption has been floating between 10-30 million tonnes against synthetic fibres which have exponentially risen from 15 million tonnes in the 1960's to about 90 million tonnes in 2016.

Synthetic fibres are now seen as the fastest growing textile fibre against cotton and silk with the report showing that fibre production rose from seven tonnes in 1980 to 40 tonnes in 2012 and continues to rise.

Manufactures consider synthetic fibres more attractive to cotton because they are relatively cheaper to produce than cotton and exhibit a high level of design and freedom in research.

The shift has also been driven by changes in lifestyle in emerging countries like China and India.

AICC said the synthetic fibre boom in the textile industry has detrimental impacts on the cotton subsector and countries that rely on cotton export trading for their overall Gross Domestic Product.

It further predicts that cotton fibres will continue to face stiff competition on the world market.

The transition comes at a time when the cost of production of natural fibres such as cotton is high and the crop is facing competition from other food crops such as cereals and legumes.

Although Malawi is not a major cotton producer regionally, accounting for less than three percent of the average of total African production,
African Institute of Corporate Citizenship

Cotton still comes fourth as major foreign exchange earner for the country.

While the synthetic fibre boom has not greatly impacted on Malawi yet due to its low export volumes, AICC says the findings should be a wakeup call to all cotton producing countries such as Malawi to start strategizing to revamp their cotton industries.

“The cotton market in Malawi just like many other sub-Saharan African countries continues to be influenced by a lot of externalities, including the shift of textile fibre. Growth in world cotton demand remains a key concern as global stocks and competition from lower priced manmade fibres such as polyester weigh on the world market,” the report said.

Minister of Economic Planning and Development, Goodall Gondwe while indicating that government is aware of the trends on the world stage, said mitigating strategies must first be put in a budget context.

He, however, said government is on course with its plans to diversify the economy.

“We are doing quite well shifting from tobacco to legumes and people are responding well. We just have to make sure that export earnings are brought back into the country,” he said.

Government through the Cotton Council of Malawi has earmarked production of 80,000 tonnes of cotton in the 2016/2017 season.

But cotton production levels have been dwindling hitting less than 15,000 metric tonnes in 2015/2016 growing season and the persistent decline in cotton production makes the share of Malawian cotton almost negligible.

Currently, the major limitation to increase yields and production is limited access to production inputs by smallholder farmers.

The Economics Association of Malawi (Ecama) said it is too early for Malawi to abandon cotton as a cash crop, observing that the country should instead focus on producing good quality cotton, engage in value addition and find other markets.

Ecama Spokesperson, Edward chilima, said Malawi being an agro-based economy, continuos diversification measures would help to reinforce economic gains.

“We need to empower small and medium enterprises to produce crops with export quality,” he said.

China has emerged as the largest consumer of textile fibre and is the largest producer of synthetic fibre in the world.

The amount of fibre produced by China grew by 60 percent between 2008 and 2012 and now totals 36.1 million tonnes.

This represents a world market share of 65 percent. On the other hand, India is the largest producer of cotton fibre but its share on the global textile market increased by 17.5 percent in 2013 compared to 2012.

The growing demand for synthetic fibre on the world market has detrimental effects on India’s export earnings and African countries that export their cotton to India.

This shift has strained the exports of Francophone and sub-Saharan African countries which rely on India as their major export market.

Upcoming Events

+ SABI National field day and local field days
+ Legumes technology symposium
+ Cotton Stakeholder review meetings
+ FISP review meeting

+ Legumes post-harvest trainings
+ Regional Rice stakeholders Meetings
+ regional rice field meetings
INTRODUCTION

The 2016/17 agricultural season marks exactly twelve years since the Malawi government introduced the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP). Mainly, the intervention focuses on improving agriculture in the country by improving poor households’ access to agriculture inputs such as fertilizer and seed, through such intervention the programme aims at ensuring that resource poor households are food self-sufficient and have increased incomes.

While the programme continues to attract international interest, the intervention has nonetheless stirred a number of debates in public circles. The relevance of subsidies has always been questioned, but proponents of the programme argue that FISP has achieved both efficiency and equity objectives. Efficiency in terms of sub optimal use of the fertiliser due to among others market failure, information asymmetry and liquidity issues. On equity, the targeted fertiliser subsidy may in the long run help poor smallholder farmers achieve food security.

On the same note, the intervention has also stirred a technical debate on implementation modalities especially when issues of fiscal policies and achievement policy objectives are drawn into context.

Meanwhile, there continues to be considerable evidence suggesting that the programme has registered remarkable success in achieving its policy objective. Chibwana et al (2010) found that the average increase in maize yields from accessing a standard FISP package of maize seed and fertilizer was 447 Kg/Ha which was two times the yield gain from utilizing fertilizer only.

CFMS (2010) also noted that FISP increased fertilizer use and noted a positive relationship between the amount of fertilizer used and maize yields. Plots with improved maize had 21 percent higher yields than those planted with traditional maize.

The success of the programme prompted experts to christen Malawi as a model on how to implement agriculture input subsidies in Africa. That notwithstanding, opponents of the programme contend that the intervention is marred by a plethora of intriguing efficiency limitations. mis-targeting, fraud, corruption, long queues at distribution points, late delivery of inputs by contracted suppliers, same farmers benefitting over time, pilferage of inputs, fake coupons and late payment for inputs to suppliers are some of the notable inefficiency raised.

African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) as a Nongovernmental organisation that promotes the role of business in building sustainable and resilient communities has been collaborating with the Malawi government in implementing various livelihood programmes. Since its inception in 2001, AICC has been piloting cutthroat innovations in agriculture and other sectors aimed at improving the profitability and competitiveness amongst value chain players in the selected agriculture value chains.

The piloting on the use of electronic vouchers in 2013/14 and 2014/15 and supporting the re engagement of private sector in fertiliser retailing under FISP are notable milestones that AICC together with selected FISP stakeholders lobbied government to consider introducing to address efficiency challenges in FISP.

Over the years, the program has undergone a series of changes aimed at making the intervention better for everybody. FISP as a program has therefore evolved in terms of input package component, beneficiary selection and number, coverage and other implementation modalities.

Key changes in FISP implementation modalities over the years include widening the scope of engaging private sector beyond input supply (2006/7, 2007/8, 2015/16, 2016/17), piloting use electronic vouchers by the government in collaboration with African Institute

The reforms have been effected to address some of the efficiency limitations. Fixation of the coupon value as opposed to purchase price to allow beneficiaries bear the risk of price movements and reduce the burden on the Treasury, reengagement of private sector in fertiliser supply chain management, increase proportion of volume of fertiliser handled by private sector, piloting use of “productive” farmers as opposed to tradition “pro-poor” farmers as FISP beneficiaries and centralised beneficiary selection (without replacement) to ensure every beneficiary a chance of benefiting from the program over a given time horizon.

PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT IN FISP FERTILISER SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

The role private sector has played in FISP supply chain management has evolved over the period. Private sector players have assumed the de facto role played by the two state controlled companies- ADMARC and Smallholder Farmers Fertiliser Revolving Fund (SFFRFM). Their engagement is seen as a precursor to addressing some of the efficiency challenges mentioned earlier on - reduction in operational costs, timeliness of input delivery, access and replenishment-.

The resources saved would thus help government concentrate on other productive activities and reduce the displacement effect of the program.

The recent engagement of private sector players in retailing of fertiliser under FISP is not a new phenomenon. Government initially engaged private sector firms to retail fertiliser under FISP during the 2006/7 and 2007/8 agriculture seasons.

Due to other reasons, private sector involvement in fertiliser retailing was suspended and their role mainly focused on other FISP supply chain functions (importation, supply to government, transportation, etc) except retailing. The task of retailing fertiliser under the program was entrusted in the hands of ADMARC and SFFRFM. During the 2006/7 season, private sector players retailed 28 percent of 174,688 tonnes of FISP fertiliser sold to smallholder farmers while ADMARC and SFFRFM handled the rest. Government introduced a premium per 50 Kg bag of fertiliser sold in rural areas in 2007/8 to incentivise private sector to service those areas after noting that the areas were shunned by private players a year earlier. As noted by Kelly et al (2010) private sector concentration in rural areas increased significantly as a result of this premium although its sustainability was questioned.

The recent FISP reforms of engaging private sector players in fertiliser retailing has given the private sector additional scope in terms of FISP fertiliser supply chain management by assuming all supply functions- importation, warehousing, distribution and retailing unlike during the 2006/7 and 2007/8 growing seasons whereby their main role was...
confined to importation, supply to SFFRFM, transportation and retailing in unit markets.

Under the new arrangement, private sector players stock unit markets with fertiliser for commercial and FISP purposes and farmers have a choice of inputs depending on prevailing market prices.

Private sector has dominated the procurement and supply of fertiliser to government under the program over the past 10 years. Even though this has been the situation, their involvement in the retailing of fertiliser under the intervention gained ground in 2016/17 season where private sector was allocated to retail 60 percent of the fertiliser under FISP by both private sector and government agriculture marketing bodies from 2007/8 to 2016/17 has varied markedly. It should be noted that the volume of fertiliser available for FISP mainly came from the private sector. Where figures do not add up to the targeted number of beneficiaries, the additional fertiliser injection into the program came from other government supported initiatives such as Farm Input Loan Program and Malawi Rural Development Fund.

On average, ADMARC and SFFRFM has supplied less than 40 percent of fertiliser to the program the period under consideration yet they have always dominated the retailing of fertiliser where private sector players were allowed to retail except in 2016/17 where private sector fertiliser retailing share reached 60 percent. ADMARC expression of interest to supply FISP fertiliser through competitive bidding has increased, reality on the ground shows a different picture. In 2016/17 for instance, the parastatal was allocated to supply and retail 18,000 metric tons of fertiliser yet the input was not available in its unit markets during input redemption as of early January, 2017 when more than 50 percent of the inputs had been redeemed. It will be noted that due to ADMARC’s failure to retail fertiliser under FISP, the private sector share for retailing fertiliser in recent years where its interest to supply fertiliser has increased.

Figure 2 shows proportion (%) of fertiliser retailed by sector during the years that private sector was engaged to retail fertiliser under FISP.

As can be revealed by Figure 2, ADMARC and SFFRFM has enjoyed significant share in the retailing of fertiliser under FISP during the periods under consideration. Significant private sector participation in the retailing of fertiliser was only registered in 2016/17 season where over 60 percent of FISP fertiliser is being retailed by these private sector entities.

While ADMARC expression of interest to supply FISP fertiliser through competitive bidding has increased, reality on the ground shows a different picture. In 2016/17 for instance, the parastatal was allocated to supply and retail 18,000 metric tons of fertiliser yet the input was not available in its unit markets during input redemption as of early January, 2017 when more than 50 percent of the inputs had been redeemed. It will be noted that due to ADMARC’s failure to retail fertiliser under FISP, the private sector share for retailing fertiliser
in 2016/17 will likely increase from the planned 60 percent by volume as some of the quota allocated to ADMARC will automatically be handled by either private sector players of SFFRFM.

PRIVATE SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES IN FISP FERTILISER RETAILING

The business opportunities presented by the initiative taken by government to broaden the scope for private sector engagement in fertiliser supply chain management under FISP has attracted new entrants not traditionally involved in the fertiliser business. Dorward et al. (2010) also noted that there has been increased participation of the private sector in the supply of fertilizers to the programme, be it in terms of number of players and the relative volume handled.

Although the continuity of the program remains elusive, the increase in number of private sector players engaged in the program gives a rough signal of the potential FISP has in stimulating a sustainable and private sector driven fertiliser supply system in the country.

Fertiliser companies can work in collaboration with seed companies to jointly supply seed and provide after sale services in form of extension.

Distribution and Warehousing in Unit Markets: Fertiliser companies might also consider exploring warehousing arrangements with other firms, projects supported and farmer owned or individuals. A lot of warehouses lie idle and only become operational towards harvest. With proper planning and certainty regarding the program, private sector might plan ahead and invest in transportation and warehousing.

PRINCIPAL CHALLENGES ON PRIVATE SECTOR FERTILISER RETAILING:

- Poor input redemption monitoring system coupled with weak feedback pathways for both government and private sector resulting in information asymmetry and uneven distribution of fertiliser by type within and across districts.
- Continuous Shunning of rural areas resulting in farmers not serviced. The situation was aggravated by ADMARC which did not retail fertiliser under the program despite being allocated 18,000 tonnes since the every private sector player was initially allocated a quota and area of operation. The situation improved after government relaxed the restrictions in reaction to the situation on the ground.
- The increase in scope of private sector engagement in fertiliser supply chain management under FISP attracted new players who are not traditional players in the fertiliser business with some failing to operate on the ground. This was also noted by FUM (2016) and Holden and Tostenson (2011) that some companies bid for contracts yet they are/were unable to fulfill their contractual obligations.
- Delayed and outstanding payment dating back to more than two years by government to private sector players on fertiliser supplied wrecks private sector investment in the system and undermines the potential sustainable development of a private sector led fertiliser supply system.
ADDRESSING THE EXTENSION GAP

The Government of Malawi identified oil seed crops as a key area for potential growth in the National Export Strategy (NES). In view of this, a Technical Working Group (TWG) was established in the country to identify ways of promoting the production and marketing of oil seed crops.

One part of the efforts to drive forward the oil seeds component of the NES, the OSPTWG would like to ensure there is extension coverage for the four main oil seed crops. In addition, it would also like to ensure that there is harmonized and adequate information going to the farmers on all stages of production and marketing processes. Thus, the Oil Seed Extension Coordination Platform has been set up.

THE CHALLENGES

Extension has been identified as one of the key Business Development Services. However, a lot of gaps exist in the delivery of extension services for oil seeds.

- Poor asymmetry of Information: The OSPTWG uncovered a gap in regards to availability of important information of different interventions that are currently there in the oil seeds sub sector. This includes information that would help stakeholders to answer questions such as “who is doing what, where and with who”.

- Uncoordinated efforts: The poor asymmetry information has brought about uncoordinated efforts in the same sector where interventions in the subsector are done in isolation without knowledge of other stakeholders. This has led to duplication of efforts in areas where there is a possibility of collaboration.

THE INTERVENTION

The OSPTWG would like to ensure that there is harmonized and adequate information going to the farmers on all stages of production and marketing processes. Hence setting up of the Malawi oilseeds extension coordination platform. The platform shows who is working where, and on what aspects of oil seed crop production, storage and marketing. The platform also enables organizations and projects to share extension materials they have produced by putting them on the “dashboard”. If a project has an interesting new technology or piece of information advice for farmers it will be
African Institute of Corporate Citizenship

The Corporate Citizen, November - January, 2017

20

The Malawi Oil Seeds Extension Coordination Platform

Implementing agency is the grant of funds holder. Whereas the implementing partner is the supporting agency that implement certain aspects of the projects either in terms of objective or geographical coverage. The platforms allows the user to view projects according to donors, implementing agency or implementing partners. For example, on can opt to only view the projects that Irish Aid (Donor) is funding or AICC (as an implementing agency or partner).

GOING FORWARD

In 2017, the Legumes Development Trust (LDT) through the OSPTWG seeks to ensure the following for the Malawi oil Seeds extension coordination platform.

1. Data Collection for Agricultural features: Populating the agricultural features information for the agro dealers, warehouses and irrigation schemes will be critical as this information is important for decision making for the interested stakeholders.

African Institute of Corporate Citizenship

The Corporate Citizen, November - January, 2017

THE MALAWI OIL SEEDS EXTENSION COORDINATION PLATFORM ILLUSTRATION DIAGRAM

Implementing agency is the grant of funds holder. Whereas the implementing partner is the supporting agency that implement certain aspects of the projects either in terms of objective or geographical coverage. The platforms allows the user to view projects according to donors, implementing agency or implementing partners. For example, on can opt to only view the projects that Irish Aid (Donor) is funding or AICC (as an implementing agency or partner).

GOING FORWARD

In 2017, the Legumes Development Trust (LDT) through the OSPTWG seeks to ensure the following for the Malawi oil Seeds extension coordination platform.

1. Data Collection for Agricultural features: Populating the agricultural features information for the agro dealers, warehouses and irrigation schemes will be critical as this information is important for decision making for the interested stakeholders.

African Institute of Corporate Citizenship

The Corporate Citizen, November - January, 2017

THE MALAWI OIL SEEDS EXTENSION COORDINATION PLATFORM ILLUSTRATION DIAGRAM

Implementing agency is the grant of funds holder. Whereas the implementing partner is the supporting agency that implement certain aspects of the projects either in terms of objective or geographical coverage. The platforms allows the user to view projects according to donors, implementing agency or implementing partners. For example, on can opt to only view the projects that Irish Aid (Donor) is funding or AICC (as an implementing agency or partner).

GOING FORWARD

In 2017, the Legumes Development Trust (LDT) through the OSPTWG seeks to ensure the following for the Malawi oil Seeds extension coordination platform.

1. Data Collection for Agricultural features: Populating the agricultural features information for the agro dealers, warehouses and irrigation schemes will be critical as this information is important for decision making for the interested stakeholders.

African Institute of Corporate Citizenship

The Corporate Citizen, November - January, 2017

THE MALAWI OIL SEEDS EXTENSION COORDINATION PLATFORM ILLUSTRATION DIAGRAM

Implementing agency is the grant of funds holder. Whereas the implementing partner is the supporting agency that implement certain aspects of the projects either in terms of objective or geographical coverage. The platforms allows the user to view projects according to donors, implementing agency or implementing partners. For example, on can opt to only view the projects that Irish Aid (Donor) is funding or AICC (as an implementing agency or partner).

GOING FORWARD

In 2017, the Legumes Development Trust (LDT) through the OSPTWG seeks to ensure the following for the Malawi oil Seeds extension coordination platform.

1. Data Collection for Agricultural features: Populating the agricultural features information for the agro dealers, warehouses and irrigation schemes will be critical as this information is important for decision making for the interested stakeholders.

African Institute of Corporate Citizenship

The Corporate Citizen, November - January, 2017

THE MALAWI OIL SEEDS EXTENSION COORDINATION PLATFORM ILLUSTRATION DIAGRAM

Implementing agency is the grant of funds holder. Whereas the implementing partner is the supporting agency that implement certain aspects of the projects either in terms of objective or geographical coverage. The platforms allows the user to view projects according to donors, implementing agency or implementing partners. For example, on can opt to only view the projects that Irish Aid (Donor) is funding or AICC (as an implementing agency or partner).

GOING FORWARD

In 2017, the Legumes Development Trust (LDT) through the OSPTWG seeks to ensure the following for the Malawi oil Seeds extension coordination platform.

1. Data Collection for Agricultural features: Populating the agricultural features information for the agro dealers, warehouses and irrigation schemes will be critical as this information is important for decision making for the interested stakeholders.

African Institute of Corporate Citizenship

The Corporate Citizen, November - January, 2017

THE MALAWI OIL SEEDS EXTENSION COORDINATION PLATFORM ILLUSTRATION DIAGRAM

Implementing agency is the grant of funds holder. Whereas the implementing partner is the supporting agency that implement certain aspects of the projects either in terms of objective or geographical coverage. The platforms allows the user to view projects according to donors, implementing agency or implementing partners. For example, on can opt to only view the projects that Irish Aid (Donor) is funding or AICC (as an implementing agency or partner).

GOING FORWARD

In 2017, the Legumes Development Trust (LDT) through the OSPTWG seeks to ensure the following for the Malawi oil Seeds extension coordination platform.

1. Data Collection for Agricultural features: Populating the agricultural features information for the agro dealers, warehouses and irrigation schemes will be critical as this information is important for decision making for the interested stakeholders.

African Institute of Corporate Citizenship

The Corporate Citizen, November - January, 2017

THE MALAWI OIL SEEDS EXTENSION COORDINATION PLATFORM ILLUSTRATION DIAGRAM

Implementing agency is the grant of funds holder. Whereas the implementing partner is the supporting agency that implement certain aspects of the projects either in terms of objective or geographical coverage. The platforms allows the user to view projects according to donors, implementing agency or implementing partners. For example, on can opt to only view the projects that Irish Aid (Donor) is funding or AICC (as an implementing agency or partner).

GOING FORWARD

In 2017, the Legumes Development Trust (LDT) through the OSPTWG seeks to ensure the following for the Malawi oil Seeds extension coordination platform.

1. Data Collection for Agricultural features: Populating the agricultural features information for the agro dealers, warehouses and irrigation schemes will be critical as this information is important for decision making for the interested stakeholders.
2. Private sector involvement: As part of the sustainability process, private sector involvement is important. These will be approached and a business case will be presented especially in the realm of advertisement on the platform.

3. Updating project information: As new projects come in, other projects phase out and old projects change direction, it is critical that all the new information is put on the database to keep the database relevant and live.

4. Development of various Maps: The LDT would like to continue producing different maps for stakeholders’ consumption. Hence more data will be collected for the same purpose.

Have a look: www.aiccafrica.org/oilseedsplatform Or os.aiccafrica.org

Users need:
To have Google earth installed to access maps and agricultural features.
When the husband abandoned her, in 2007 and went to South Africa in search for greener pastures, her life completely collapsed. Christina would wake up each day, hoping that her husband would perhaps show up that day but this was to no avail. His departure, left her completely devastated, it was as if the husband had left with him all her dreams and hopes for her life. No sooner than later, her life and that of her children was completely in a mess, poverty became the order of the day and they struggled everyday of their lives.

This is the plight of many women in Mzimba district who have had the same experience, whereby their husbands abandon them and their children and travel to South Africa, (popularly known as Joni in the district) in search of greener pastures. The practice is very common in the district as many men trek to S.A in search for jobs but never come back. Unfortunately, such men, mostly stop communicating or supporting their wives and families once they are gone. This has left many families in the district to become female headed households as well as vulnerable to poverty and other social ailments.

However, the story of one, Christina Chipeta of Manyamula EPA in Mzimba district offers comfort to many and indeed affirms that not all is lost for women like her once they choose to do something about their situation. All that glitters may not be gold indeed, as the saying goes, but the probability of finding gold in glittering things is high than those very promising and benefitting to the society. But due to other personal reasons she had some reservations to join. Tired of being poor, she made up her mind to join the project later in 2014, even though she had doubt in herself. But ever since, she has never regretted her decision. Christina articulates that it is during the same period of 2014/15 growing season she
started to benefit from her farming career.

Ever since her husband left her some 10 years ago, Christina resorted to start farming in order for her to survive as well as provide for her family. Due to capacity challenges, she would only realize less from her fields which at times was not even enough to feed her family and make good sales at the same time. However this changed when she joined the SALF programme and attended market access project trainings which were being facilitated in her area by AICC. The project which among others aims at increasing market access to rural communities, strengthen and attain a well organized commercial-oriented farmer groups and increase volumes sold has highly helped many smallholder farmers in the area to become agribusiness oriented as well as relies more from their crops.

According to Christina, the trainings and skills -such as collective marketing- they have acquired through the project has highly helped them to realize more proceeds from their farms than they previously did. Christina narrates that from the onset of her involvement in 2014 she did an irrigation farming of Irish potato on a small piece of land in a dimba and sold the crops to vendors from which she realized MK68,000. This was a scare crops then hence it made realize more. Being her first time to gain such money at once, she started to construct a house but kept some for survival. This was repeated in 2015, where she realized K110,000 and she used the money to buy iron sheets as well as make tremendous project on her house project.

During rainy season, Christina was also involved in farming Soybean crops of which she was also selling collectively with the same group she had been doing irrigation farming with at their dimba. The proceeds from the soybean was also enormous and highly helped her to floor her house with cement, as well as buy a bed and mattress.

Christina life has greatly changed ever since she joined the project in her area. She is now fully independent and no longer expect other people to feed her. She challenges that she has now dealt with poverty completely and has embarked on a journey of involving her older son in the farming business. As it stands now, Christina, started another house project of which she has already managed to floor it with cement and place steel door and window frames. She vows not to fully utilize all the skills that have been imparted on her and also train others on these business skills.
Mwazisi Commodity Aggregation Centre (CAC) is one of the few CA centers that acts as a set example for many on the importance and advantages of collective effort by farmers in market research and selling of commodities. Having successfully made its own market research and negotiated with a buyer, a member from within the group who had for long wished to provide his family a better house and an improved living standard finally accomplished his wish through the arrangement.

Mathews Gondwe has been farming tobacco for as long as he can remember but expressed how he has always been disappointed with the final cash that came his way amidst all the work he put into growing the crop. In his search to find an additional cash crop, during the 2015/16 season, Gondwe who is a lead farmer, sourced soybean seed to plant on his 1.5acre land of which he was to sale collectively with his follower farmers.

Having harvested 1800kgs from his soybean field, Gondwe together with his CAC members underwent a market research in identifying formal markets for their produce of which they settled for Nasfam that was initially buying the crop at MK310/kg, However using the negotiation skilled AICC imparted on them, Mwazisi the CAC managed to negotiate for a price of MK350/kg of which their total 6800kgs was sold and realizing MK 2,380,000.00 and Mr. Mathews Gondwe from his 1800kgs realized MK 630,000.00. Gondwe then used the money he realized to clear up some land where he has begun the construction of his new home and hope to finish construction from the proceeds he will realize in the 2016/17 growing season.

Collective marketing has been identified as a mechanism for improved smallholder farmer bargaining power on the market. AICC has thus through the thus through the SALF programme facilitated the formation of commodity Aggregation Centres in EPA’s were it is working in order to ease and foster collective marketing through lead farmers.
A lot of literature has been written on sustainable agriculture in response to the prevailing climatic changes and ways farmers can adapt to both produce more but also realize increased income. However income from agricultural production will only be realized when there’s availability of markets for those produce and the farmers are aware of the market needs. The gap now comes in with majority of farmers not being aware of the market requirements and which markets require which products.

AICC using the lead farmers in the target EPA’s established lead farmer committees known as Commodity Aggregation Centre’s (CAC’s). The committees are formed at section level they are responsible for marketing activities in their section.

In the past, farmers used to sale their commodities individually, this made them fetch low prices. However, having undergone intense trainings in market negotiations strategies and market research with AICC, Mwazisi CAC put its acquired knowledge to use and selected a team that went in search for markets and negotiating for better prices on their produce. Three markets were identified by the CAC marketing members namely AHCX, Nasfam and ETG.

Mwazisi CAC had aggregated 6.8 tonnes of soya and upon negotiations with the markets identified was satisfied with the prices that were offered by Nasfam. An agreement was made on the price, tonnage to be collected and market day which saw Mwazisi CAC selling soybean at an overwhelming price of MWK400/kg, on market day extra tones of soya was brought to the market which resulted in the total tonnage of 8.4 tonnes sold realizing a total of MWK3,360,000.00.

COLLECTIVE MARKETING AND PIGGERY BUSINESS TRANSFORMED MY LIFE: Deliwe Mvula

Ever since AICC started implementing its projects in Mzimba district, the lives of most farmers in the district has greatly changed. Farmers in the district have now started organizing themselves to and sale their produce collectively as trained by the organisation.

Before AICC started implementing its programmes in the district a few years ago, most farmers believed in selling their commodities individually and due to scarcity of markets they would use unchartered markets where they ended up selling more for less.

Due to lack of negotiation skills farmers also settled for any price
offered by traders and this made them realize less proceeds from their crops.

However, within 2 years of AICC existence in the district, farmers have now started to appreciate the need for collective marketing. The farmers then formed groups and got trained in marketing skills plus capacity building. Ever since the farmers can now sell collectively and negotiate the prices of their commodities.

Miss Deliwe Mvual is one of the lead farmers in SALFP program in Dimi section under Vibangalala EPA in Mzimba District. The farmer sold her Soybean crop through Emphangweni association to Super star and she realized K96, 000.00 from her produce. This motivated her and she also sold two pigs at K187, 000.00. In total she had K283, 000.00 and she managed to roof her house, bought an oxcart and farm input for the coming season.

Farmers have now been empowered to negotiate with buyers on the price for their commodities which was not possible in the past. These are the fruits of the trainings that AICC has been facilitating on issues to do with marketing. The story below is a story of success of Mr Hastings Kachigunda of Kanjiwa EPA in Ntchisi.

Mr Hastings Kachigunda is one of the lead farmer of the SALFP programme in Nthiransembe Section under Kanjiwa EPA in Ntchisi District.

In the year 2015/16 growing season, Kachigunda sold 1.6 tonnes of Soybean to Export trading through collective marketing with fellow farmers in the area. From the sale, he managed to realize MK512,000. He used part of the money to buy 2 cattle to be used for oxen. Oxcarts are obviously the most commonly mode of transport in the area in times when farmers are transporting farm inputs and outputs from their respective farms hence he will be making money out of the it.

Kachigunda is one proud product of AICC project on market access being implemented in his area. He boost that through the project, he has acquired new skills in collective marketing as well as negotiating for better prices with potential buyers.
Mismatch between supply and demand is one of the factors stakeholders in the pigeon peas value chain have identified as contributing to failure by the country to break through on the international market despite Malawi being among the leading producers of pigeon peas in Africa.

The country’s overreliance on one market for exports of its pigeon peas even though other markets are available in the region has also contributed to low earnings pigeon peas farmers get from the crop and resulting low export earnings for the country.

Malawi accounts for about six percent of the total production of pigeon peas on the continent followed by Kenya and Uganda at two percent and then Tanzania at 0.8 percent. 25 percent of the pigeon peas produced in Malawi are exported, making pigeon peas a potential cash crop for the country following challenges facing tobacco marketing.

But despite its importance, the pigeon peas value chain has been facing several challenges which limit the development of the industry.

This year for instance, pigeon pea prices have continued to tumble, with the commodity now selling at as low as K200 per kilogramme in some areas.

Concerned with the market trends, the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) called stakeholders in the pigeon peas value chain to a meeting in Blantyre to discuss the pricing challenges and find solutions to the problem.

The meeting found that Malawi is growing a variety of pigeon peas whose demand on the international market has been declining over the years. Malawi grows red pigeon peas but the demand on international markets is for white pigeon peas.

AICC Chief Executive Officer, Felix Lombe, said there is need for farmers in the sector to become more organised and work in groups to eliminate middlemen who are controlling the sector.

“Farmers are not organised. Vendors aggregate farmers themselves. The presence of too many middlemen in the value chain works to the disadvantage of farmers,” he said.

Malawi exports most of her pigeon peas to India and Programme Officer at the East African Grain Control, Taziona Chigwe, said overreliance on the Indian market has also contributed to failure by the country to make the most out of the crop.

“The problem is that we are not speaking to each other. We can link our farmers to our members in the other countries where we have a presence and some of those countries are offering better prices for pigeon peas than India,” Chigwe said.

Nandolo Farmers Association Chairperson, Susan Chimbayo, said her association is working with farmers to sensitisate them on the market requirements.

Malawi is soon expected to sign a memorandum of understanding with India, a deal which will ensure a steady market for Malawi’s pigeon peas.
MARKET ACCESS PROGRESS BRIEF IN SUSTAINABLE LEAD FARMER PROGRAM (SALFP)-SO3

By McLoud Kaira

The African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) is implementing Strategic Objective 3 in the Sustainable Lead Farmer Program which aims at increasing market access and entrepreneurship skills among smallholder farmers.

In the project AICC mobilizes and organizes a Lead Farmer and their follower farmers practicing village savings, loans and sustainable agriculture as trained by MUSSCO and the generalist partners respectively, into business clubs which later form commodity aggregation centers which graduate into associations undertaking collective marketing and cooperatives undertaking rural entrepreneurship.

The project focuses on four key outputs which include:

• To increase market access to rural communities,
• To attain strengthened and well organized commercial-oriented farmer groups,
• To Improve agribusiness practices
• Increase volumes sold.

Summary of achievements

• Through the CACs and clubs established farmers are selling their commodities collectively and have embarked several on and off-farm businesses helping them to diversify their income. In 2015, So far
  o 12,236 framers (3529 male 4912 female and 1495 youth) have benefited from market access in SALFP.
  o 9,937 framers (3529 male 5105 female and 1793 youth) have been linked to markets.
  o 3335 framers (710 male 1097 female and 716 youth) have been sold their commodities collectively.
  o MK404, 224, 404.00 has been realized from selling of commodities
  o Average income per household has been MK121,206.72
  o 430 framers (80 male 255 female and 95 youth) have been trained and mentored as rural entrepreneurs and currently running various on and off farm businesses.
  o 1645 framers (344 male 845 female and 456 youth) have business contracts with input suppliers and markets.

From various capacity building activities and motivating exchange visits to other inspiring farmer groups and commercial farmers, the farmers have started several on-farm enterprises besides collective marketing which has proved to be an excellent model in increasing farmers’ access to high value markets.

With money realized from market linkages farmers have managed to construct and roof their houses with iron sheets, bought various household assets, livestock, bicycles, motorcycles and many others. Their lives will never remain the same.

Key lessons learnt

Major lessons learnt include the following:

• There is need for volumes if farmers are to access better markets. Current production by majority of the targeted farmers is very low due to among other reasons effects of persistent droughts experienced over the past two years.
• Lack of financial capacity by a majority of targeted beneficiaries to embark on meaningful/profitable value addition activities. However as we increase farmers’ incomes through collective marketing and small businesses it hoped that value addition will pick up although the process will be slow.
• Expectations from Field Officers of generalist partners who have in some areas lacked understanding of AICC’s roles in the project.
Cotton production has been declining over the years, the paramount contributor to the steady decline is attributed to limited access to farm inputs by cotton farmers. The underlining factor to which farmers fail to acquire adequate inputs is that most of these farmers are poor and are living below the poverty line. It is for this reason that the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) through its cotton platform embedded the component of Village Savings and loans (VSL) as part of the interventions it is implementing among Cotton farmers to alleviate poverty.

Basically, VSL’s are an informal community-managed microfinance methodology that operates on the principle of promoting local communities into forming groups that build up savings into a common Fund from which an individual group member then borrows. These provide savings and offers loans in useful amounts that can be vital for the sustenance of the borrowers’ livelihood.

Additionally the loans can be attained and used to purchase cotton inputs such as seed, insecticides and pesticides which are very crucial and detrimental in cotton production.

Introduction of VSL groups has proved to be a timely Intervention to cotton farmer of Karonga (Lupembe EPA ) and Salima EPA who have struggled to purchase cotton inputs as most investors(ginners and government) in the cotton value chain have pulled out and are no longer offering input credits. A total of 50 farmer group leaders have been trained in among others group formulation and organization, VSL operational structures, leadership skills, aspects of saving and loaning.

The trained group leaders shall retrain 200 other farmers on the same. It is expected that 25 cotton VSL farmer groups shall be in operational and this shall then be replicated to all the cotton growing districts of Malawi.

Cotton farmers in the two districts have received the development with enthusiasm and zeal as witnessed by the radio interview one participant had with a local community radio that is operational in the 6 districts of the northern region.

It is expected that through this channel, AICC shall manage to uplift these farmers financially and impart a sense of independence as they will not solely rely on ginners and the government to help them access inputs in form of loans.
AFRICAN INSTITUTE OF CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP

2016/17 COTTON DEMONSTRATIONS

By: Funny Nkhunda

Cotton is one of the major crops not only in the agriculture sector but also to the economy of Malawi. It ranks fourth as a foreign exchange earner for the country after tobacco, sugar and tea respectively.

In order to boost cotton production which hovers between 600-800 Kg/ Ha, a programme which sorely aimed at demonstrating to cotton farmers how the crop ought to be grown was introduced. For the past three years demonstration plots which were coordinated by CDT showed that farmers can get yields of not less than 1000kg/ha when Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) are enhanced.

The demonstration plots also show that a farmer can achieve 1738kgs/ha when provided with advanced technologies like herbicides and foliar fertilizer/cotton feeds.

The African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) in conjunction with The Cotton Council of Malawi, Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD) and other stakeholders are jointly conducting the cotton field demonstration program.

The cotton demonstrations are to serve as a platform where good agricultural practices are to be taught, learnt and displayed to cotton farmers with the main aim of improving the national cotton production. The stakeholders have contributed towards the mounting of this year’s cotton demonstrations. Inputs in form of seed was contributed by AICC and QUTON, and Chemicals were provided by Cotton Council in form of Nyonga Pack.

2016/17 demonstrations have been mounted in all the districts which grow cotton, targeting particular ADD’S. These districts are Chikwawa, Nsanje, Thyolo, Blantyre, Neno, Mwanza, Zomba, Machinga, Mangochi, Tcheu, Dedza, Salima, Nkhotakota, Karonga, and Dowa. Slight adjustments have been made to this years’ program. The size of the plots which used to be 0.4ha in previous years, is now 0.2ha per plot and inputs allocation per plot is 3Kg of seed and a pack of Nyonga pack containing a variety of chemicals.

Currently the crops are faring well in many districts since farmers received the inputs in a good time and the plots are being well managed that they will really demonstrate the technologies by applied to the follower famers.

2016/17 COTTON DEMONSTRATIONS

By: Funny Nkhunda

The demonstration plots also show that a farmer can achieve 1738kgs/ha when provided with advanced technologies like herbicides and foliar fertilizer/cotton feeds.

The African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) in conjunction with The Cotton Council of Malawi, Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD) and other stakeholders are jointly conducting the cotton field demonstration program.

The cotton demonstrations are to serve as a platform where good agricultural practices are to be taught, learnt and displayed to cotton farmers with the main aim of improving the national cotton production. The stakeholders have contributed towards the mounting of this year’s cotton demonstrations. Inputs in form of seed was contributed by AICC and QUTON, and Chemicals were provided by Cotton Council in form of Nyonga Pack.

2016/17 demonstrations have been mounted in all the districts which grow cotton, targeting particular ADD’S. These districts are Chikwawa, Nsanje, Thyolo, Blantyre, Neno, Mwanza, Zomba, Machinga, Mangochi, Tcheu, Dedza, Salima, Nkhotakota, Karonga, and Dowa. Slight adjustments have been made to this years’ program. The size of the plots which used to be 0.4ha in previous years, is now 0.2ha per plot and inputs allocation per plot is 3Kg of seed and a pack of Nyonga pack containing a variety of chemicals.

Currently the crops are faring well in many districts since farmers received the inputs in a good time and the plots are being well managed that they will really demonstrate the technologies by applied to the follower famers.

2016/17 COTTON DEMONSTRATIONS

By: Funny Nkhunda

The demonstration plots also show that a farmer can achieve 1738kgs/ha when provided with advanced technologies like herbicides and foliar fertilizer/cotton feeds.

The African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) in conjunction with The Cotton Council of Malawi, Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD) and other stakeholders are jointly conducting the cotton field demonstration program.

The cotton demonstrations are to serve as a platform where good agricultural practices are to be taught, learnt and displayed to cotton farmers with the main aim of improving the national cotton production. The stakeholders have contributed towards the mounting of this year’s cotton demonstrations. Inputs in form of seed was contributed by AICC and QUTON, and Chemicals were provided by Cotton Council in form of Nyonga Pack.

2016/17 demonstrations have been mounted in all the districts which grow cotton, targeting particular ADD’S. These districts are Chikwawa, Nsanje, Thyolo, Blantyre, Neno, Mwanza, Zomba, Machinga, Mangochi, Tcheu, Dedza, Salima, Nkhotakota, Karonga, and Dowa. Slight adjustments have been made to this years’ program. The size of the plots which used to be 0.4ha in previous years, is now 0.2ha per plot and inputs allocation per plot is 3Kg of seed and a pack of Nyonga pack containing a variety of chemicals.

Currently the crops are faring well in many districts since farmers received the inputs in a good time and the plots are being well managed that they will really demonstrate the technologies by applied to the follower famers.

2016/17 COTTON DEMONSTRATIONS

By: Funny Nkhunda

The demonstration plots also show that a farmer can achieve 1738kgs/ha when provided with advanced technologies like herbicides and foliar fertilizer/cotton feeds.

The African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) in conjunction with The Cotton Council of Malawi, Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD) and other stakeholders are jointly conducting the cotton field demonstration program.

The cotton demonstrations are to serve as a platform where good agricultural practices are to be taught, learnt and displayed to cotton farmers with the main aim of improving the national cotton production. The stakeholders have contributed towards the mounting of this year’s cotton demonstrations. Inputs in form of seed was contributed by AICC and QUTON, and Chemicals were provided by Cotton Council in form of Nyonga Pack.

2016/17 demonstrations have been mounted in all the districts which grow cotton, targeting particular ADD’S. These districts are Chikwawa, Nsanje, Thyolo, Blantyre, Neno, Mwanza, Zomba, Machinga, Mangochi, Tcheu, Dedza, Salima, Nkhotakota, Karonga, and Dowa. Slight adjustments have been made to this years’ program. The size of the plots which used to be 0.4ha in previous years, is now 0.2ha per plot and inputs allocation per plot is 3Kg of seed and a pack of Nyonga pack containing a variety of chemicals.

Currently the crops are faring well in many districts since farmers received the inputs in a good time and the plots are being well managed that they will really demonstrate the technologies by applied to the follower famers.

2016/17 COTTON DEMONSTRATIONS

By: Funny Nkhunda

The demonstration plots also show that a farmer can achieve 1738kgs/ha when provided with advanced technologies like herbicides and foliar fertilizer/cotton feeds.

The African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) in conjunction with The Cotton Council of Malawi, Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD) and other stakeholders are jointly conducting the cotton field demonstration program.

The cotton demonstrations are to serve as a platform where good agricultural practices are to be taught, learnt and displayed to cotton farmers with the main aim of improving the national cotton production. The stakeholders have contributed towards the mounting of this year’s cotton demonstrations. Inputs in form of seed was contributed by AICC and QUTON, and Chemicals were provided by Cotton Council in form of Nyonga Pack.

2016/17 demonstrations have been mounted in all the districts which grow cotton, targeting particular ADD’S. These districts are Chikwawa, Nsanje, Thyolo, Blantyre, Neno, Mwanza, Zomba, Machinga, Mangochi, Tcheu, Dedza, Salima, Nkhotakota, Karonga, and Dowa. Slight adjustments have been made to this years’ program. The size of the plots which used to be 0.4ha in previous years, is now 0.2ha per plot and inputs allocation per plot is 3Kg of seed and a pack of Nyonga pack containing a variety of chemicals.

Currently the crops are faring well in many districts since farmers received the inputs in a good time and the plots are being well managed that they will really demonstrate the technologies by applied to the follower famers.

2016/17 COTTON DEMONSTRATIONS

By: Funny Nkhunda

The demonstration plots also show that a farmer can achieve 1738kgs/ha when provided with advanced technologies like herbicides and foliar fertilizer/cotton feeds.

The African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) in conjunction with The Cotton Council of Malawi, Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD) and other stakeholders are jointly conducting the cotton field demonstration program.

The cotton demonstrations are to serve as a platform where good agricultural practices are to be taught, learnt and displayed to cotton farmers with the main aim of improving the national cotton production. The stakeholders have contributed towards the mounting of this year’s cotton demonstrations. Inputs in form of seed was contributed by AICC and QUTON, and Chemicals were provided by Cotton Council in form of Nyonga Pack.

2016/17 demonstrations have been mounted in all the districts which grow cotton, targeting particular ADD’S. These districts are Chikwawa, Nsanje, Thyolo, Blantyre, Neno, Mwanza, Zomba, Machinga, Mangochi, Tcheu, Dedza, Salima, Nkhotakota, Karonga, and Dowa. Slight adjustments have been made to this years’ program. The size of the plots which used to be 0.4ha in previous years, is now 0.2ha per plot and inputs allocation per plot is 3Kg of seed and a pack of Nyonga pack containing a variety of chemicals.

Currently the crops are faring well in many districts since farmers received the inputs in a good time and the plots are being well managed that they will really demonstrate the technologies by applied to the follower famers.

2016/17 COTTON DEMONSTRATIONS

By: Funny Nkhunda

The demonstration plots also show that a farmer can achieve 1738kgs/ha when provided with advanced technologies like herbicides and foliar fertilizer/cotton feeds.

The African Institute of Corporate Citizenship (AICC) in conjunction with The Cotton Council of Malawi, Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD) and other stakeholders are jointly conducting the cotton field demonstration program.

The cotton demonstrations are to serve as a platform where good agricultural practices are to be taught, learnt and displayed to cotton farmers with the main aim of improving the national cotton production. The stakeholders have contributed towards the mounting of this year’s cotton demonstrations. Inputs in form of seed was contributed by AICC and QUTON, and Chemicals were provided by Cotton Council in form of Nyonga Pack.

2016/17 demonstrations have been mounted in all the districts which grow cotton, targeting particular ADD’S. These districts are Chikwawa, Nsanje, Thyolo, Blantyre, Neno, Mwanza, Zomba, Machinga, Mangochi, Tcheu, Dedza, Salima, Nkhotakota, Karonga, and Dowa. Slight adjustments have been made to this years’ program. The size of the plots which used to be 0.4ha in previous years, is now 0.2ha per plot and inputs allocation per plot is 3Kg of seed and a pack of Nyonga pack containing a variety of chemicals.

Currently the crops are faring well in many districts since farmers received the inputs in a good time and the plots are being well managed that they will really demonstrate the technologies by applied to the follower famers.
Germany. During these years I did a comparative study on EU and US development policy and democracy assistance and a study on the Joint Africa-EU Strategic Partnership.

However, having studied topics related to development cooperation for such a long time I felt the need to work as a practitioner. That is why I spent one year working in Peru with a local civil society organization focused on climate change before accepting a position with GIZ in Malawi.

2. When did you come to Malawi and how did you find yourself at AICC

I arrived here in April last year. My role is to help the National Integrity Platform (NIP) establish itself as a local chapter of Transparency International. Given that the secretariat of the NIP is based at AICC, my office is with AICC. Although I do not work very often with most colleagues from AICC, as NIP has only one staff member, it is nice to be around so many colleagues and be part of the AICC team.

3. So far what has been your experience like working in Malawi, given an opportunity would you stay long?

For me having studied issues related to governance in Africa as a scholar it is eye-opening to see how things work ‘in real life’. It is great to see the impact of your activities on the ground. I find it truly fascinating to have this experience and I am learning a lot. Malawi is a beautiful country and it is nice to live here. I have never had a nice garden like here, or a lake so nearby. However, my home is still Belgium and that cannot change that easily. I think that at some point I will also like to return.

4. What does your job as technical advisor entail?

Many things, it is difficult to summarize! NIP is in its early stages, hence a lot of effort has been put to help the organization get its ground as well as grow. Thus far I made a lot of recommendations on the organizational development of NIP. At one juncture, I was involved in the process of hiring two consultants to make an organizational development and legal assessment and we have reviewed these assessment with the Board.

As the NIP had an ongoing project on the media, I worked on the strengthening of investigative journalism in Malawi through a workshop and small grants project and I am currently implementing an internship programme. I am also in the process of facilitating a study into public sector corruption in Malawi and how it can be reduced.

5. What has been your greatest moment working with AICC/ in Malawi

In November I organized a workshop on investigative journalism with an international consultant from the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists. It was a very good workshop and it was great to see how the participants were enthusiastic about it and thankful that we organized it.

6. Any sad moment?

Not one moment in particular, but it is often frustrating when things don't go the way they should because of so many factors like bureaucratic rules or people who don't do what they are supposed to. Without that we could make progress much...