



MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME FOR NORTHERN GHANA (MADE)

Deploying a market systems approach, MADE is driving pioneering changes in how small rural agribusinesses engage with smallholder farmers (SHFs) in the Northern Savannah Ecological Zone (NSEZ) of Ghana. Since March 2014, MADE has worked directly with over 100 agribusinesses and support enterprises to help build capacity within the private sector and a support infrastructure for over 60,000 farmers. The programme is funded with UK aid from the UK Government and is scheduled to run until February 2020.

The Challenge

In Northern Ghana, development of the agricultural sector has fallen far behind that enjoyed in the south and central regions of the country. Support to the region has been dominated by public sector interventions to introduce irrigation and provide subsidised inputs to farmers. These direct interventions have proven unsustainable, with a decline in private sector credit flowing to agriculture and a fall in marketable produce. SHFs have been unable to buy essential inputs for their farms, such as seeds and fertilisers, or access mechanisation and other support services.

MADE's Approach

MADE has pioneered annual cycles of interventions with agribusiness partners (input suppliers and aggregators) to improve their business models. These involve strengthening commercial working relationships with support enterprises and SHFs. Beginning with simple, focused demonstrations of good agricultural practices, interventions have evolved into support to partners in delivering comprehensive packages (bundles) of inputs such as certified seeds, fertilisers and

agrochemicals. MADE also helps partners provide key services such as mechanisation, water management and farm advisory services. These integrated bundles offered to SHFs operating within a range of value chains are known as the Advanced Model. A single firm ensures its SHFs receive and correctly apply critical inputs and services, often in partnership with other service companies – thereby deepening the network in the region. MADE has supported partner firms with their management systems for this approach, and has encouraged wider networking with wholesalers, end-users and other value chain operators. Over the years, MADE has also raised the bar for partner selection in order to target those businesses that have the necessary scale and ambition to deliver against a growing range of service requirements.



Women smallholder farmers are a valuable link in the agricultural value chain

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The 7 Rights

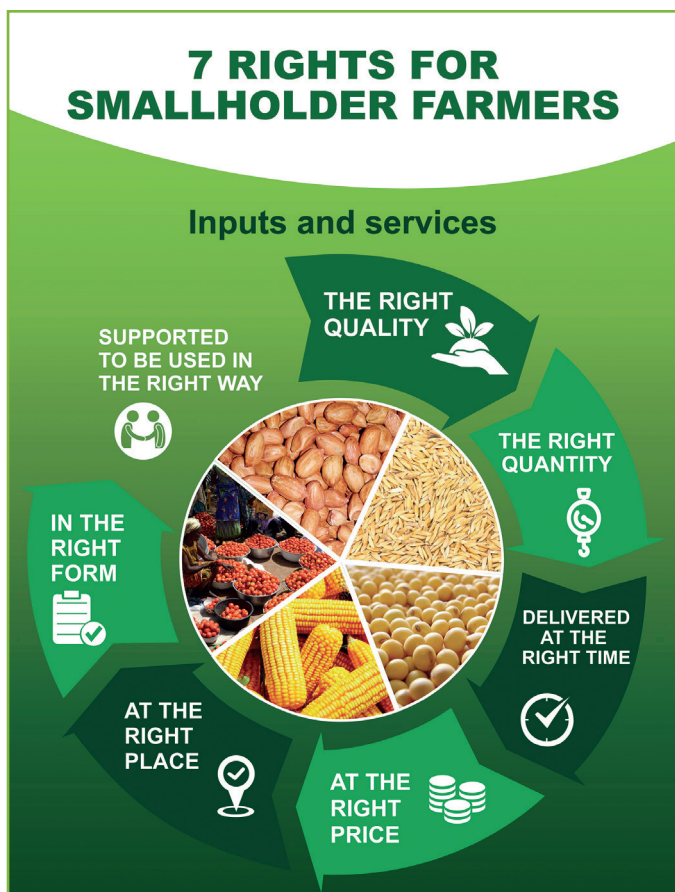
MADE's mantra of the "seven rights" with respect to supporting farmers targets the right quality of inputs and services, in the right quantity, at the right time, at the right price, in the right place, in the right form and, crucially, using these inputs and services in the right way. The employment of Farm Enterprise Advisors (FEAs) and Business Development Advisors (BDAs) by agribusinesses to work with their farmers has proved to be a key element of this business model, improving relationships, raising farming yields and standards, allowing effective monitoring, and delivering faster growth.

MADE recognises that it is operating in a complex socio-political context. Engagement is not limited to its agribusiness partners: the programme works with larger anchor firms, trade associations and commodity exchanges to improve linkages across the value chain and to enable access to wider national and international markets. MADE also collaborates with government to improve partner knowledge of the regulatory environment and with key public institutions and regulatory bodies towards the formulation of appropriate policies and regulations to overcome market constraints. MADE envisions the private sector driving the agenda of government policy and influencing other programmes working in Ghana to adopt a market systems approach.

Impact

As a result of MADE partners' adoption of improved operating models, agricultural markets are functioning more effectively. At the end of the 2018 growing season, 53 MADE partners had provided goods and services to 66,351 SHFs, 38.2% of whom were women farmers. As a result of the delivery and use of these goods and services, 72,092 SHFs (40.8% women) and rural enterprises achieved higher sales and turnover. A total of 65,868 SHFs (40.6% women) had higher incomes after the 2018/19 harvest. Incomes for SHFs working with MADE partners has risen, on average, by £575 (GHS 3,738) since 2015.

These impressive results, which are testament to the crucial role played by Ghanaian women farmers, provide evidence that a market systems approach can incentivise SHFs to scale up into commercial farming, and help smaller suppliers to evolve into more complex agribusinesses. MADE has put together the building blocks of a highly functional agribusiness network within which selected partner businesses are positioned to develop along a growth pathway, scaling up to cover millions of rural farmers and transforming the agricultural sector of Northern Ghana.



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Find out more about the MADE Programme, our work and our partners:

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