

# **USING LEAD FARMERS SUSTAINABLY**

## **ECHO EAST AFRICA SYMPOSIUM**

**7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

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# WHO IS THE LEAD FARMER?

- Male or female role model farmer
- An example of “best practice” farmer
- An early adopter of “new” farming technologies and agronomic practices.
- A risk taker
- A leading farmer
- A farmer innovator
- A farmer motivator
- A trainer



# ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF A LEAD FARMER

- Voluntarily assist other fellow farmers.
- Practically demonstrates new farming technologies to other farmers.
- Prepared to host on-farm demonstrations for group and non group members
- Meets with group members to share new information and ideas.
- Occasionally visit individual group members and non-group members to give them onsite support.
- Acts as a link between the group, farmers, village leaders, service providers and extension advisers.
- Works with group to develop an extension and training plan.
- Maintains a record of on-farm demonstration activities and other farm records.
- Attends training session organised by extension staff to share new information.
- Co-facilitate trainings with extension agent



# QUALITIES OF A LEAD FARMER

- Approachable and respectable person
- Ready and willing to assist other farmers for free.
- Honesty and Reliable
- Fulltime practising farmer
- Livelihood mainly based on farming
- Uses mainly family labour for farming
- Leads by example
- Good communicator
- Able to read and write.
- Collaborates well with other Lead Farmers



# PROCESS TO SELECT LEAD FARMER

- Call a group/community meeting
- Discuss roles and functions of the Lead Farmer
- Discuss qualities of the Lead Farmer
- Use the qualities described as criteria for selecting the group lead farmer.
- The group/community should discuss and agree on the priority areas for learning and sharing.
- Term of office for lead farmer is decided by the group.
- Lead Farmer signs agreement with group & Project



## **Lead Farmer train:**

- Agriculture eg CA, Push-Pull etc
- How to work as a team, and how to work about conflicts/misunderstanding between themselves/ family / with extension officers, village leaders
- More trainings/Refresher trainings



## **How to work with them/ How to use them:**

- Extension officer visit Lead Farmer
- Lead Farmer takes Extension officer to farmers he/she has motivated, trained and visits them for on-site training
- Lead Farmer co-facilitate farmer trainings with extension officer
- Encourage Lead Farmers to invite other Lead Farmer when conducting trainings or visiting farmers
- Help build their capacity, confidence and trust
- Project reports: They are a source of information, impact stories
- They are a bridge/link between the community, farmer group, project, village leaders and extension officers
- Provide advice and training for community members
- Provide demonstrations from their own farms



# SWOT ANALYSIS FOR USING A LEAD FARMER

## Strengths

- Enables project to reach more farmers
- Is an implementer or practitioner.
- Familiar with local culture, language and experiences.
- Knows how to approach individual members
- Well trusted by local community
- Understands training needs of fellow farmers.

## Weaknesses

- Tendency to develop growing expectations.
- Tendency to equity oneself with extension advisers.
- Tendency to become accountable to extension advisers than fellow farmers.
- Visibility of own social weaknesses may affect performance/acceptance





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THANK YOU

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