



AFC - striving to further develop the quality of its services

this issue

Introduction	P. 1
Strategic Cooperation with DLG International GmbH	P. 2
Ghana: Sales Meetings for Export Promotion	P. 3
Egypt: New Project for the Consortium AFC - ADG	P. 4
Morocco: Agricultural Training Projects	P. 5
Guatemala: Support of the National Policy of Food and Nutrition Security	P. 6
India: Energy Efficient Residential Housing	P. 6
Personnel – New Colleagues	P. 7
AFC's New Projects	P. 8

Consulting companies are active around the world and need sound knowledge on how to implement projects in different cultures. Thus, social competence, team work, a good grasp of the technical subjects at hand as well as a thorough understanding of methodologies are of major importance.

We have continuously developed new concepts to meet the requirements of our different target groups. In the recent year, AFC was awarded 22 new contracts. Each of these projects is a challenge to adapt approaches and work plans. In this newsletter, we present some of our new projects and, on page 8, provide a complete list. AFC intends to grow further within its core fields of work, namely agriculture, agribusiness and financial sector development. In 2011, our turnover for consultancy services increased by 15% to EUR 9 million. To continue this steady growth is also a target for the coming years and we are confident that there is further potential for qualified services in our fields of intervention.

While the ongoing cooperation with our strategic partners - DLG for agriculture and agribusiness and ADG for financial sector development – is being maintained on a high level, we keep improving our services at headquarters. Currently, we are focusing on various subjects in close cooperation with the companies of the GOPA Consulting Group. In the field of human resource development, training is a key issue. We are actively participating in special working groups hosted by GIZ and the BMLEV and we are continuing to provide training in:

- Capacity WORKS (GIZ);
- PRAG procedures (EC);
- value chain links (agriculture and agribusiness); and
- financial sector development (rural finance, insurance systems).

A number of our experts working in our projects abroad participated in these trainings as well.

In our headquarters we have a special contact person for all experts who are interested to work with us and require further training (Barbara.Braun@afci.de).

Regular workshops and events are also very valuable. In January 2012 we organised our 4th Financial Expert Day together with our partner ADG, using Montabaur castle as a venue. As every year, the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture in Berlin provides our experts with an opportunity to share their experience in the fields of agriculture and agribusiness. This year the event took place from 19 to 21 January in Berlin's Conference and Convention Centre. AFC regularly presents its services at this forum with a fair stand of its own. The next forum will take place in January 2013 and we look forward to meeting our experts and colleagues there again.

Furthermore, it is important to create a sound working environment and improve processes at headquarters. We have therefore:

- introduced a new internal contract and finance management system;
- developed a new layout for all AFC documents (also used for this Newsletter); and
- upgraded our data processing system.

In this newsletter we present our new staff members on page 7. The increased number of colleagues at headquarters is a reflection of our continuous endeavour to further develop the quality of our services.



Johannes Buschmeier
Managing Director



Hans Otto
Managing Director



Strategic Cooperation with DLG International GmbH, an affiliated company of DLG e.V.

(Deutsche Landwirtschafts-Gesellschaft e.V. /
German Agricultural Society)

DLG International GmbH, a specialised consulting and service company for firms in the agriculture and agribusiness sector, has been active for 25 years now. Initially domiciled in Bonn, DLG International is now located in Frankfurt/Main.

International agricultural events are one of DLG International's core tasks. By now, company subsidiaries in five countries organise local trade fairs and exhibitions:

- Poland: DLG AgroFood Sp. Z o.o., Posnan
- China: DLG Beijing Agricultural Technology Service Co. Ltd., Beijing
- Turkey: DLG Fuarçılık Ltd. Co., Tekirdağ
- Netherlands: DLG BENELUX, Woerden
- Romania: DLG InterMarketing SRL, Bucharest

In Russia, USA and Italy, projects are carried out by local partners.

DLG International organises and coordinates international business fairs in the agricultural sector, including agricultural machinery, plant production, animal production, bio-energy, etc. Innovative products, processes and services are presented along the whole value chain. The exhibitions are accompanied by special events such as lectures, conferences, workshops and expert panel discussions. In 2011, eleven fairs were implemented in seven countries.

Since its foundation in 1987 as DLG-Agriservice GmbH, numerous cooperation projects have been realised in the consulting business together with AFC.

One of those assignment was the project "Strengthening the value chain of agricultural products/ Modernisation of the public food inspection system" in Morocco (BMZ/GTZ, 2002 – 2009, 2 Mio. EUR). Within this service contract, the competitiveness of the Moroccan food industry was successfully improved through a modern and efficient food inspection system.

Another example of the fruitful cooperation between DLG International and AFC is the „Joint German-Chinese Ganhe Demonstration Farm“. This public private partnership project between BMELV (Bundesministerium für Ernährung, Landwirtschaft und Verbraucherschutz / Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection) and the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture started in 2008; the contract has been extended by the beginning of 2012 until 2014. The Sino-German Ganhe farm aims at exchanging information between Chinese and German agricultural experts. Chinese farm managers are being trained to manage the demonstration farm once the project comes to an end.

The project helps to modernise agriculture and to create a higher profit for farmers by increasing yields and making production more cost effective. The demonstration farm combines German technology and best farming practice with 1,000 ha Chinese land and staff. Leading German companies from the sector of agricultural machinery are involved as partners in this project and are being supported in China by DLG Beijing Agricultural Tec

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TRADE SHOWS

	18 – 20 May 2012 Bio-Energy-Expo www.bio-energy-expo.com		China
	7 – 10 June 2012 DLG - ÖÇP Tarla Günleri www.tarlagnunleri.com		Turkey
	7 – 10 June 2012 AgriPlanta www.agriplanta.ro		Romania
	15 – 17 June 2012 Opolagra www.opolagra.pl		Poland
	30 June – 1 July 2012 Agro-Tech Minikowo www.agro-tech-minikowo.pl		Poland
	30 August – 2 September 2012 DLG - ÖÇP Tarım ve Teknoloji Günleri www.tarimteknunleri.com		Turkey
	11 – 14 October 2012 AgroTech Russia www.agrotechruusia.com		Russia
	29 – 31 January 2013 AG CONNECT Expo www.agconnect.com/dlg		USA

www.dlg-international.com

Sales Meetings for Export Promotion

An Encouraging Example from Ghana

On behalf of the EU-ACP TradeCom Facility, AFC has just completed the Project "Capacity Building for the Ghana Export Promotion Authority (GEPA)". AFC supported GEPA the testing of a new export promotion tool: one-to-one sales meetings of Ghanaian fruit and vegetable producers and exporters with potential importers in Germany.

The sales mission for eight exporters of fresh and dried fruits, spices, medicinal plants and coffee was scheduled between two world-leading trade fairs: the fresh produce industry event Fruit Logistica (Berlin) and the organic food fair Biofach (Nuremberg). The sales mission started with a briefing of exporters and GEPA officials on 12 February 2012 in Hamburg. Subsequently, more than 30 individual sales meetings were carried out over a period of five days. Individual debriefings on 18 February evaluated the preliminary success of the meetings.

It turned out that sales missions are a very suitable addition to GEPA's export promotion instruments. Individual sales meetings at the companies' headquarters tend to bring about more concrete results than just a participation at international trade fairs. Among the groups of exporters, the Ghanaian fresh fruit producers returned most successfully from the sales mission: up to now, five sales offers have been already requested and four trial shipments have been agreed upon. Dried fruits and medicinal plants also very much attracted the interest of European importers. Exporters of spices, however, faced more challenges as they mostly could not satisfy clients' requirements in terms of volumes and certification. For coffee, the mission also discovered certain difficulties in entering the European market due to the long established relations that importers have with traditional exporting countries.



Mr Nkansah, Ghanaian exporter of medicinal plants, in a sales talk with Mr Erol Kux, CEO of Cargofresh, at the Biofach 2012 (Photo: AFC)

In terms of costs both for GEPA and the exporters, sales missions are a less expensive alternative to exhibiting at trade fairs. Costs for organising a sales mission can be kept down if GEPA can manage high amounts of data on potential buyers using appropriate information systems. The project has trained GEPA officers in compiling lists of possible importing companies, contacting them over the phone and by e-mail in a professional manner, and in applying forms, templates and serial letters to systematically organise sales missions.

Thanks to the impact achieved, the world will probably soon see more Ghanaian companies travelling to meet buyers abroad. And consumers in European markets may benefit more from fresh and processed mangoes, pineapples, and other tropical fruits from Ghana, all complying with high quality standards and international organic certification schemes.

Author: Christoph Arndt (Project Key Expert).

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New Project in Egypt for the Consortium AFC – ADG

Strengthening the microfinance sector in
the MENA region

At the end of 2011, AFC as lead company in a consortium with its strategic partner ADG was awarded a new contract by GIZ: “Strengthening the microfinance sector in the MENA region”.

The microfinance market in the MENA region is comparatively young and characterised by an unfulfilled demand for microfinance services to approx. five million households. A substantial cause for the insufficient supply of services are the inadequate legal, regulatory and institutional framework conditions. Accordingly, microfinance institutions lack opportunities to become professional. In addition, national associations have weak organisation structures and so far only work in isolation. The access to state-of-the-art know-how is very limited and the platforms for the mutual exchange of experience on the regional level are scarce.

The overall GIZ measure “Promotion of the microfinance sector in the MENA region” follows a multi-level approach in which two service packages are provided. One is to provide authorities charged with the supervision of microfinance activities in selected countries with advice and implementation support for the improvement of the regulatory and legal framework conditions. The other is a service package, implemented by the AFC and ADG, which supports the regional microfinance association Sanabel in organisational development and service improvement.

Founded in 2002 by 17 microfinance representatives from seven Arab countries, Sanabel is a network for microfinance institutions in the Arab world headquartered in Cairo, Egypt. Currently there are 82 full and affiliate members from 12 Arab countries. As of December 2009, its members covered 90% of the microfinance market in the MENA region, together serving 2.8 million borrowers. Despite some weaknesses in governance and operations, Sanabel is an extremely promising partner for developing the microfinance sector in the region. It has proven its commitment to overcoming deficiencies and constantly strives to tailor its services to the needs of its members. Recognising this dedication and the huge potential, Sanabel has been awarded the title “Network of the Year 2010” by the Small Enterprise Education and Promotion Network for improving its score in the Network Capacity Assessment Tool in the period 2008 to 2010.

AFC and ADG have been commissioned by GIZ to support Sanabel in improving the efficiency of its operations, aligning its strategic direction with regard to policy advocacy and membership, and improving such services as training, research and social performance management. The inception phase for this project took place from January to March this year, during which time Sanabel underwent an institutional assessment. In a participatory planning workshop, organised by GIZ, a work plan for the remaining 24 months of the project was jointly developed with Sanabel, to ensure that our consulting services target exactly those areas where the organisation sees the greatest need and can benefit most from our support.

For the second quarter of 2012, these services will focus on the internal processes and procedures within Sanabel, i.e. we will conduct staff training in soft and management skills, support ongoing change management processes and develop new human resource management concepts. By the end of 2012, strategies for Sanabel's involvement in policy advocacy, training and research as well as a membership strategy will be developed, feeding into a new three-year strategic plan for the organisation. Particular issues to be addressed are the relation of Sanabel to national associations, adapting international best practice training courses to the needs of the MENA region, and defining Sanabel's role in the promotion of innovative microfinance products such as mobile banking, Islamic finance or micro-insurance.

The consortium looks forward to being involved in the development of such a dynamic and challenging sector as the microfinance in the MENA region and is proud to be partnering with such a reputable institution as Sanabel.

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Agricultural Training Projects in Morocco

Professional training as a key factor for sustainably enhancing living conditions in rural and urban areas

Due to today's continuing urbanisation in developing countries, both urban and rural populations face new challenges. The situation calls for innovative ideas and measures so people can profit from the dynamics of globalisation rather than becoming overrun by it. Given this context, professional education and training are essential factors for sustainably enhancing living conditions in rural and urban areas.

In Morocco, one of AFC's large-scale training projects has just successfully come to an end: the provision of a project management training cycle for staff of the Ministry of Agriculture (MCC, EUR 1.7 million).

Another project, which focuses on the agricultural production and processing level, is still ongoing and has already managed to reach a considerable number of farmers: "Training, Technical Assistance and Strengthening of Beneficiaries, Professional Organisations and Service Providers within the Date Value Chain in Selected Oasis Regions". This service contract is part of the MCA Fruit Cultivation Project which aims at promoting the cultivation and marketing of perennial fruit crops in various Moroccan provinces. The core task of this EUR 6.2 million project is training for agricultural producers and processors with a special focus on women.

The contract services of this project are grouped into three categories:

Category 1: services related to date palm cultivation (delivery of training, organisational support & technical assistance to farmer households and to representatives of their organisations);

Category 2: services related to post-harvest activities (delivery of training & technical assistance to traders and processors with regard to storage, processing, marketing, and trading of date products); and

Category 3: services related to the development of pilot projects for rural women and their professional organisations

Within the first category, "Services related to date palm cultivation", more than 7,000 participants (around 800 women) have been trained so far. The main training modules were: "récolte" (harvest), "nettoyage des touffes" (washing the bunches), "pollinisation" (pollination), "la plantation" (planting) and "ciselage" (trimming).

Since the project was launched in 2010, it has become evident that both national and international demand for dates is very high. The challenge is to ensure that the offer meets the expectations of the food industry. In this context the unit packet for dates plays an important role. The question "How can larger units be managed?" will be relevant for the remaining time of the project.

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Technical Assistance to the Programme in support of Guatemala's National Food and Nutrition Security Policy

Guatemala holds first place in Latin America and fourth worldwide in the prevalence of chronic child malnutrition, which severely affects mostly the indigenous and rural population. The problem has various structural causes that negatively impact the availability, the access, the consumption and the appropriate biological utilisation of food. The multi-sector causes of food insecurity call for a multi-sector response. Guatemala's Strategic Plan for Food and Nutrition Security (PESAN) identifies the activities of various public institutions and their impact on food security (ministries of education, health, agriculture, environment, finance, economy, various social funds, etc.), and the respective budgetary allocations for the purpose of implementing coordinated actions in 135 prioritised municipalities throughout the country.

PESAN has five strategic objectives for food and nutrition security, which relate to a) increasing food availability; b) promoting people's access to the basic food basket; c) promoting actions to improve food consumption and reduce chronic malnutrition; d) widening the coverage and quality of health services, water supply, sanitation and family hygiene; and e) strengthening the capacities of the National System for Food and Nutrition Security as well as civil society in order to reduce food and nutrition insecurity. In this context, the Presidential Secretariat of Food Security and Nutrition (SESAN) is the entity responsible for coordinating PESAN's successful implementation. The EU supports this policy by providing EUR 40 million in sector budget support.

The technical assistance to this effort, which is jointly implemented by AFC, its mother company GOPA (lead) and the Spanish consulting company Eptisa, aims at strengthening SESAN's capacity to plan, coordinate, integrate and monitor the food and nutrition security interventions with the public sector, civil society and international



cooperation agencies. It also aims at improving the technical capacities, instruments and institutional mechanisms of the ministries and government agencies responsible for the implementation of programmes and initiatives contained in PESAN.

Apart from institutional and organisational capacity development, special attention is given to issues related to results-oriented budgeting and budget implementation, such as strengthening medium-term budgetary frameworks and linking multi-year programming to operational plans in the sectors involved, standardising and harmonising information systems related to food and nutrition security as well as implementing institutionalised feedback-loops to better assess and measure the effectiveness and efficiency of policy implementation. To this effect, particular food and nutrition security outcome indicators have been defined, that constitute the basis for informed decision-making at policy level and for the budget support provided by the EU.

The technical assistance, which started in October 2010, consists of four long-term and a considerable amount of short-term experts, and will last until December 2013.

For further information please contact Mattiahs.Webendoerfer@afci.de



Energy Efficient Residential Housing in India

The objective of the feasibility study is the successful implementation of a "Promotional Programme for Energy Efficient New Housing in India," a housing and habitat finance programme which will be offered to different Indian financial institutions and borrowers in the public sector through the National Housing Bank of India (NHB).



The study analysed various typical housing types (of different income groups) in different climatic zones in respect to energy efficiency and came up with a set of recommendations for three major climatic zones, and both low-cost and high-cost options that cater to the low-income, middle-income and high-income segment. The study also proposed specifications to be followed by the public/private entity/developers when applying for a loan from NHB to ensure that energy efficient measures applied in new buildings. This formed the basis for the overall design of a promotional programme for energy efficient new residential housing in India. NHB and KfW aimed at contributing to a sustainable energy supply by encouraging the use of energy efficient technologies and building methods such as energy efficient design, efficient heating and lighting.

The feasibility study covered the needs, costs, benefits, and design of the "Promotional Programme for Energy Efficient New Housing in India." It will thus support NHB and KfW in their decision-making when designing a "bankable" programme for promoting energy efficiency in housing and habitat in India.

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Personnel – New Colleagues

Ute-Linda Voegt

Ute-Linda Voegt joined the AFC team in September 2010. She holds a degree in business management (Dipl.BWL/VWA) with focus on accounting and controlling. Before moving to AFC she was head of administration in a French international company. At AFC she now works as Finance and Contract Manager. Her current responsibilities include the accounting and controlling of AFCi Maroc SARL, AFC's subsidiary in Morocco, and the financial and contractual management of projects in francophone Africa.

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Hildegund Heinze

Hildegund Heinze joined AFC as Financial Manager in July 2011. She is responsible for projects in Africa, China and the Philippines, implemented for GIZ, KfW, EC and the Worldbank. Hildegund Heinze also has a background in project and finance management of twinning projects, a field she has been working in since 2003.

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Aigul Beishekeeva

Aigul Beishekeeva took up work with AFC Consultants International in February 2012. A trained economist, she was employed for several years as a credit specialist in commercial banking in her country of origin, Kyrgyzstan. She first became involved with development projects when joining World Bank's pilot demonstration programme „Support to disadvantaged groups of people through development of their initiatives” in Bishkek where she was in charge of the financial management and the evaluation of micro-credit sub-projects. Later she held a position as Project Co-ordinator of ACDI/VOCA's "Farmer-to-Farmer" programme for USAID in South Kyrgyzstan.

After moving to Europe, Aigul Beishekeeva continued her career with Welthungerhilfe e.V. (German Agro Action) in Bonn. During eight years as Financial Controller for projects in Asia and later Haiti, she successfully managed all internal and external monitoring and reporting, and controlled compliance with financial regulations of the German Ministry for Development, the European Union, GIZ, and other donor organisations. She undertook several short-term assignments to Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, North Korea and Haiti to train local staff in financial administration and provide financial consulting to project managers.

At AFC she is working as Financial Contract Manager in charge of projects in Central Asia and Vietnam as well as North and Central Africa.

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Tesa Weiss

Tesa Weiss started with AFC Consultants International in April 2012. Prior to this she worked as a senior consultant and project manager for IAK Agrarconsulting GmbH and its predecessor company, where she was mainly responsible for the management of donor-funded projects in the agricultural and rural development sector. She was project director of a number of long-term projects in Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, funded by clients such as the EC, the WB and the African Development Bank. She has extensive experience in rural development and agricultural extension projects, including procurement and training programmes under various donor rules and regulations.

Between 1988 and 1999 Tesa Weiss was Head of the Administration Unit and later Director of three different Consortia for EU Framework Contracts in the economic cooperation sector. Prior to her work at IAK, she was a junior consultant in a rural development /research project jointly implemented by the universities of Göttingen, Germany, and Fort Har, South Africa, in the Eastern Cape. She holds a diploma in agriculture from the University of Göttingen Germany.

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AFC's New Projects

ALGERIA - Sustainable Economic Development Programme (DEVED), Component 2 - Promoting Regional Economic Development: mission to install agri-business clusters (tomatoes and dates), GIZ, 2012

ALGERIA - Sustainable Economic Development Programme (DEVED), Component 2 - Promoting Regional Economic Development: preparation missions to conceptualise, implement and promote food clusters (tomatoes and dates), SEQUA, 2011 - 2012

BENIN - Protection and Management of Natural Resources (contract extension), KfW, 2007 - 2014

BENIN - Promotion of Agricultural Value Chains, Component 1: Training and Technical Assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in the Promotion of Value Chains, GIZ, 2011 - 2014

BENIN - Promotion of Agricultural Value Chains - Component 2: Technical Assistance in the Implementation of Concepts for the Promotion of Value Chains, GIZ, 2011 - 2014

BENIN - Development of a Label of Origin for Locally Produced Cashew Nut and Shea butter, DANIDA, 2011

BOLIVIA - Institutional Strengthening of the National Council for Combating Illicit Drug Trafficking (CONALTID) of Bolivia, EC, 2011 - 2014

CAMBODIA, INDIA, CHINA, VIETNAM - Country Market Assessment for the Asia Regional Biogas Fund, KfW, 2012

CAMEROON - Support to the National Forestry Programme - Component 3: Impact Monitoring of the National Forestry Programme and Contribution to the Regional Harmonization Programme for the Congo Basin (contract extension), GIZ, 2008 - 2013

CHINA - Setting up a Joint German-Chinese Pilot Farm in Ganhe (contract extension), BMELV, 2008 - 2014

EGYPT - Strengthening the Microfinance Sector in the MENA Region, GIZ, 2012 - 2014

GHANA - Capacity Building Programme for the Ghana Export Promotion Council, TradeCom, 2011 - 2012

GHANA - Market-oriented Agriculture Programme (contract extension), GIZ, 2009 - 2011

KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYZ REPUBLIC, TAJIKISTAN, UZBEKISTAN - Analysis of the Food Safety Situation and Development of a Regional Action Plan for the Improvement of Food Safety, World Bank, 2011

MALI - Technical Assistance to the National Programme for Sustainable Small-scale Irrigated Agriculture: Strengthening of Service Providers in Small-scale Irrigated Agriculture, GIZ, 2011 - 2012

MOLDOVA - Project Implementation Manager for the Irrigation Sector Reform and Centralised Irrigation Systems Rehabilitation Activities, MCC, 2011 - 2014

MOROCCO - Technical Assistance for the Development of Moroccan Standards for the Product "Date", CTB, 2011 - 2012

NEPAL - Improving Access to Finance Sector Development Programme, ADB, 2011 - 2012

NIGERIA - Sustainable Economic Development Programme, Component 1: Financial Sector Reform, and Component 2: Reform of the Institutional and Legal Framework, GIZ, 2011 - 2014

SIERRA LEONE - Technical Assistance to the Agriculture for Development Project, EC, 2012 - 2015

TAJIKISTAN - Sustainable Economic Development Programme, Components 1 (Private sector development in rural areas) and 2 (Microfinance and instruments for financing), GIZ, 2012 - 2013

VIETNAM - Strengthening the Banking Supervision Agency, State Bank of Vietnam, 2012



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