

### **The Commonwealth of Learning (COL)**

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL), has been facilitating the implementation of the Lifelong of Learning for Farmers (L3F) initiative, which involves an attempt to reach a large number of small farmers and marginalized sections of rural communities in South Asia, Africa and the Small Island of Caribbean and Pacific. Through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and ICTs, the project aims at building capacity among farmers, landless laborers and extension officials to help them in developing value-added farming, encourage more sustainable use of natural resources, strengthen their ability to face globalization, and ensure food and livelihood security. The concept envisages a global and local partnership between research institutions, extension agencies and farming communities. COL visualizes the L3F as a concept for self-sustaining, self-replicating programmes in Commonwealth countries. Through L3F programme, COL partners with communities and organizations, and makes effective use of ICTs to facilitate learning for development. COL's L3F programme helps people in rural communities to find appropriate technology-based open and distance education to improve their livelihoods

### **The programme (L3F)**

The L3F programme is a response to a critical need arising from the fact that the wealth of information resulting from agricultural research and development often fail to travel the last mile to the villages of the development world where it is most needed. While governments face challenges in funding adequate agricultural extension, globalization is creating increase competition for poor rural farmers. L3F addresses these issues by empowering vulnerable rural women and their families to among other things gain knowledge, create their own self-directed learning process, organize themselves to solve problems of marketing their products and food security, improve their living conditions, and freedoms and independence from government support.

Matumaini Mapya has come into an understanding with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) to initiate and execute the Lifelong Learning for Farmers (L3F) initiative. Basically, the initiative aims at building the capacity of farmers in Kagera region in learning for sustainable livelihoods through the use of community radios, FM stations, mobile phones and local TV channels available in Kagera region. The program is to take three years whereby 5,500 people will be reached by June 2016

The purposes of this L3F in Kagera Tanzania are:

1. To facilitate at least 550 L3F participants to access low cost social, human and financial resources through Mobile Phone based Learning, community and/ or FM radio and other multimedia based learning; strengthening forward-backward linkages of L3F value chains-capacity for value addition and processing and linking to markets
2. To strengthen the capacity at Matumaini Mapya Sacco in financial literacy to empower its members in disciplined savings and borrowing and linking to cooperative and financial institutions
3. To develop and model of linking social capital and financial capital with lifelong learning resulting in increased income, household food security and empowerment of rural women in Tanzania and show a social rate of return of at least 1 to 3

Under the Agreement Matumaini is supposed to:

1. Establish a self-sustainable model of L3F in Kagera region, Tanzania
2. Strengthen Matumaini Mapya and Matumaini Mapya Savings and Credit Cooperative (Sacco) to emerge as a resource centre for gender sensitive Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and Lifelong Learning in agriculture and allied sector for Tanzania
3. Collaborate with Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives Ltd (TFC) and Kagera Farmers Cooperative Bank Ltd (KFCB) in activities relating to policy advocacy and replication of L3F

Specifically, Matumaini Mapya will undertake the following activities in the first year of L3F:

- 1.1 build the social capital of Matumaini Mapya Sacco
- 1.2 identify the appropriate agro-based enterprise of the Matumaini Mapya Sacco with business credit plan
- 1.3 conduct a baseline survey among the selected samples in Matumaini Mapya Sacco

- 1.4 identify the learning needs of the members of Matumaini Mapya Sacco and the scope of farmer to farmer knowledge exchange
- 1.5 assess the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) suitable to reach the members of Matumaini Mapya Sacco with Open and Distance Learning (ODL)
- 1.6 develop a gender sensitive financial literacy course in ODL and build the capacity of 550 members of Matumaini Mapya Sacco
- 1.7 train a set of resource persons within Matumaini Mapya Sacco in the concept and practice of gender-sensitive ODL
- 1.8 develop the business and credit plan for the enterprise in a gender sensitive ODL course and build the capacity of 550 members of Matumaini Mapya Sacco
- 1.9 facilitate Matumaini Mapya Sacco to negotiate with KFCB in accessing credit for the enterprises
- 1.10 facilitate Matumaini Mapya Sacco to establish the enterprise
- 1.11 support KFCB in its activities of "Every agricultural borrower is a learner"
- 1.12 collaborate with TFC in policy advocacy activities relating to L3F