

# Strengthening capacities for innovation through Agribusiness Incubation Training



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# Acknowledgments

This Outcome Assessment has been produced by the Centre of Partnerships for Development (CAD) and commissioned by *infoDev*, a global partnership program with the World Bank. The report features an analysis of the effects of the delivery of the Agribusiness Incubation Training, an integral module of *infoDev*'s Business Incubation Management Training Program and part of *infoDev*'s Agribusiness Innovation Program (AIP). The AIP has been implemented under the Creating Sustainable Businesses in the Knowledge Economy (CSBKE) program.

This report would not have been possible without the valuable contribution of the training participants from the public and private sectors as well as academic institutions in 16 countries, which dedicated their time to an in-depth interview or participated in a survey that was undertaken for this Outcome Assessment. Special thanks also go to Jamo Macanze, who supported the research team in Mozambique in the data collection process.

## **About *infoDev* and CSBKE**

*infoDev*, a global trust fund programme in the World Bank Group, supports growth-oriented entrepreneurs through creative and path-breaking venture enablers. It assists entrepreneurs to secure appropriate early-stage financing; convening entrepreneurs, investors, policy makers, mentors and other stakeholders for dialogue and action.

Among other initiatives, *infoDev* has implemented the program for Creating Sustainable Businesses in the Knowledge Economy (CSBKE), a trust fund established by the government of Finland with the objective to increase the growth of small, innovative and technology-based business, primarily in the ICT and agribusiness sectors. The CSBKE programme was designed as a public-private partnership between *infoDev*, Finland and the Nokia Corporation, and covers the period from March 2010 to June 2014.

## **About CAD**

**CAD (Centre of Partnerships for Development)** is a network of international experts specialized in international development, local economic development and public-private partnerships, with a focus on SMEs in developing countries, entrepreneurship, Base of the Pyramid and Monitoring and Evaluation tools and methods.

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Entrepreneurship and innovation in agribusiness offer tremendous opportunities for many developing countries. Yet few instruments exist to help low-income countries with a comparative advantage in agriculture advance the competitiveness and growth of local growth-oriented companies. Agribusiness incubation—a holistic service focused on enabling the growth of innovative early-stage enterprises—is one vehicle that can be utilized. However, agribusiness incubation can also go terribly wrong if not carefully designed and implemented.

As part of its Agribusiness Innovation Program (AIP), *infoDev* designed an agribusiness incubation training program. To-date, the Agribusiness Incubation Training has been provided to a total of 149 people from 25 countries, including countries from Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

This report analyzes the effects of the delivery of this training. The agribusiness incubation training sessions took place as a one-day-training<sup>1</sup> in the context of seven different events.

The analysis includes direct short-term effects on participants and potential long-term effects on organizational performance and the agribusiness

incubation ecosystem of participants' countries of origin. The assessment follows a qualitative methodology combining desk review, primary data collection and data analysis. A total of 40 persons, representing 27% of all professionals who participated in the Agribusiness Incubation Training, provided input for the assessment.

The assessment is divided into three parts, with each subsection addressing a specific aspect: the degree of satisfaction with the training, the learning and application of knowledge and the long-term effects and impact prospects. The main conclusions for each subsection are summarized below:

<sup>1</sup> The agribusiness incubation module is usually taught in combination with the basic business incubation modules 1 and 2. One day is dedicated to each module.

## The training met expectations

The direct results of the delivery of the Agribusiness Incubation Training can be rated as a success. More than 90% of participants state that the training met their expectations. Participants expressed a high level of satisfaction with the training in terms of content quality, methodology and expertise of the trainers. The only negative aspect pointed out was the limited time available.

## Trainees applied what they learned

The training increased knowledge with regard to agribusiness incubation for more than 80% of participants and 64% of participants applied the acquired knowledge. The application of knowledge includes the development of new training materials, for example to support government extension staff in running incubation centers in Kenya; the improvement of business plans of existing or future incubation centers; the implementation of follow-up trainings and the development of new services at existing incubators. Apart from the increase and application of new knowledge, the training also generates important opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and networking—creating momentum and awareness for agribusiness incubation in countries with limited incubation experience. Examples of successful peer-to-peer learning and networking range from the creation of a Facebook based knowledge platform serving as an exchange platform for incubation in Mozambique, to the creation of international networks connecting international stakeholders. In Asia, a memorandum of understanding between Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia was signed and these countries agreed to exchange staff and provide agribusiness entrepreneurs the possibility to receive cross-country support throughout the incubation process.

## The trainees improved their services

The Outcome Assessment shows that the training did lead to changes in the way participants work with 56% of participants stating that they changed their way of working after the training. Recurrently mentioned changes include improved strategic planning capabilities as well as increased collaboration inside the organization. On the level of organizational performance, which includes the creation of new agribusiness incubation centers or the improvement of existing ones, the training contributed positively to change. The number of trainees who have set up an incubation center after

the training or are in process of creating one reaches 50%. In-depth interviews revealed that the training helped them to implement these incubation centers more quickly and with better planning and quality of services. Out of the respondents who have already worked in an incubator, 59% affirm that services in their incubation centers improved after the training. Improvements included an adaptation of services to the needs of the agribusiness sector, improved business planning and product development or an improved incubatee selection process, which led to an acceptance of better suited clients. The knowledge gained is transferred to other colleagues within the organization in 75% of the cases, which contributes to long-term sustainability. The training also led to qualitative evidence of positive effects on the incubation ecosystem. This includes regional collaboration, such as in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia where a memorandum of understanding for the exchange of staff and business match-making for incubatees was established. Additionally, a country-wide upscaling of the incubator concept will take place through working with county governments in Kenya to set up agribusiness incubator facilities to bring the incubation centers closer to the agribusiness clients.

## The training fills an existing gap

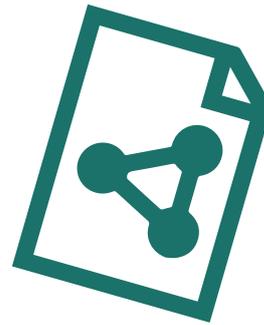
The *infoDev* training is the only agribusiness incubation training available to the majority of respondents. Participants stress the value of the training methodology, its interactivity and the usefulness and relevance of the examples provided. The possibility to network and interact with stakeholders from different regions has been highly valued, especially at the trainings held at the Global Forum.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings of the Outcome Assessment, the training successfully promoted the training objectives. It has proven successful in conveying the fundamentals of agribusiness innovation as well as exposing trainees to the variety of business models that exist and can be explored. Participants emphasized the acquired knowledge on value chains and how this understanding transformed their activities inside the incubator. The last key objective to promote networking and next steps required to implement and improve the incubator's scope and operation are also successfully fulfilled by the training.

2. *infoDev* Global Forum during which trainings are held. The training provides the attendees of the conference to participate in 2 out of the 12 training modules and these training sessions gathered people from more than 12 countries.

## 2. INTRODUCTION



### **infoDev's Agribusiness Innovation Program**

*infoDev's* Agribusiness Innovation Program (AIP) seeks to catalyze inclusive growth by accelerating the growth of pioneering agribusinesses. The program aims to: 1) develop and test new approaches to connecting innovative, growth-oriented entrepreneurs to the knowledge, markets, networks and capital needed to advance their enterprises; 2) build local capacity and enable public-private partnerships to deliver these approaches, and 3) to deliver solid methodologies to the development community for planning, supporting, monitoring and evaluating initiatives that advance the growth of innovative agribusiness enterprises through provision of financial and non-financial services.

### **infoDev's Agribusiness Incubation Training**

As an integral module of *infoDev's* Business Incubation Management Training Program, the Agribusiness Incubation Training offers a practical "how to" course for professionals who want to use business incubation to promote the start-up and growth of innovative agribusiness enterprises in developing countries. These professionals may be interested in designing a new agribusiness incubator or strengthening an existing one.

Through this specialized training course, professionals gain the knowledge they need to foster the growth of innovative agribusiness enterprises in developing countries through business incubation. The module outlines the challenges associated with incubation in the agricultural sector, where climate, the supply and quality of raw materials, and market risks are far higher than in many other sectors, making agribusiness incubation far more difficult. It provides an overview of the various types of agribusiness incubator models: "One stop" agribusiness sector developers; university and research-based agribusiness incubators; agribusiness supply chain integrators; grass roots innovation incubators; and transnational strategic alliance technology transfer agribusiness incubators.

The module also provides insights into agribusiness value chains, which are critical for understanding how the shift from supply chains to value chains and from commodities to differentiated products, opens up new opportunities for processors and other innovative enterprises to compete on value rather than price and in new markets. In a highly competitive and commoditized environment this understanding is essential for the success of new and growing agribusinesses.



Finally, the module engages participants in a discussion about the key success factors for agribusiness incubators including concepts illustrated with practical examples drawn from agribusiness incubators in developing economies.

The importance of specific agribusiness networks is addressed, along with the growing importance of regulation and certification. Participants consider the risks and trends as the context for developing improvement plans for their agribusiness incubation activities.

**After completing the module, participants should be able to:**

1

Explain the fundamentals of agribusiness incubation, how it differs from other types of business incubation, the different existing models and their success factors as well as their influence on the value chain to market;

2

Indicate the key elements of a model that would best suit their country;

3

Identify key elements of agribusiness supply chains, how they are transformed to value chains and specify where in the value chain opportunities exist for value addition;

4

Explain where the agribusiness incubators intersect with the value chain and identify priority strategic actions to strengthen agribusiness incubators' present and near future influence on value chains;

5

Identify key networks needed by an agribusiness incubator and the next steps required to implement and improve the incubator's scope and operation.

*infoDev* aims to offer all its training programs—including the agribusiness incubation training module—to as many developing country and emerging market stakeholders as possible.

The *infoDev* Business Incubation Management Training Program is based on the concept of Participant-Centered Training and aims to involve attendees intensively throughout the training session. In order to deliver this training, *infoDev* trains and certifies the trainers.

To date, *infoDev* has trained and certified 60 highly experienced business incubation professionals from 35 countries who have robust technical knowledge and practical experience of business incubation, as well as experience with participant-centered adult education methodologies.

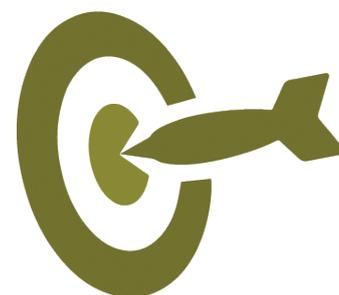
The “Train-the-Trainer” program coaches experienced business incubator managers to deliver *infoDev*'s training program on behalf of *infoDev* and its regional networks.

Certified trainers go through a rigorous evaluation process that tests their knowledge in business incubation as well as their skills in delivering training with a participant-centered, interactive approach.

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## 3. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

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Between June 2011 and November 2013, seven training sessions were held in seven different countries – Finland, India, Uganda, Burundi, Senegal, South Africa and Mozambique – reaching more than 149 participants from Africa, Asia, Australia, Eastern Europe and Latin America.

The overall goal of the assessment is to identify and analyze the effects of the delivery of the Agribusiness Incubation Training; including direct short-term effects on participants and potential long-term effects on organizational performance and the agribusiness incubation ecosystem of participants' countries of origin.

The analysis is based on the principles and impact sequence of the Kirkpatrick Model for training evaluations.

In this regard, the Outcome Assessment features three levels of analysis:

### **1) Direct results of the training, defined as the immediate effects of the training .**

This level includes the satisfaction of participants with training delivery and quality as well as how participants value the usefulness of the training.

### **2) Outcomes, defined as short- and medium-term effects of the training.**

At this level, the objective is to assess participants' learning and application of knowledge, that is, to what extent participants have applied the knowledge acquired to their work environment.

### **3) Impact prospects, defined as long term effects of the training.**

This level of analysis describes and analyzes what changes can be expected as a result of the learning process and the application of specific knowledge acquired during the training. These changes can be at the personal level—in the daily activities of the trainees; at the organizational level—in the work environment of trainees; or at the incubation ecosystem level—in the country where trainees are based.

Additionally, the assessment includes an analysis of *infoDev's* comparative advantage from the trainees' viewpoint and presents a brief diagnosis of future training needs for the participants.

In this regard, the Outcome Assessment seeks to assist *infoDev* to detect strengths and weaknesses of its agribusiness incubation training, thus providing input for the revision and update of the content and the delivery methods.

To carry out the assessment the methodology combined desk review, primary data collection and data analysis. A total of 40 persons, representing 27% of the overall participants, provided input for the assessment. For a detailed description of the methodology, see Annex 1.

3. This would correspond to the reaction level in the Kirkpatrick model.

4. This level of analysis would be a combination of the learning and behaviour levels in the Kirkpatrick model.

5. This third level covers some of the features of the results level in the Kirkpatrick model.

## 4. CONTEXT AND INTERVENTION



The Agribusiness Incubation Training has been provided to 149 people from 25 countries, including numerous African countries: Botswana, Burundi, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia; as well as Asian, Eastern European and Latin American countries: Bangladesh, Bulgaria, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Macedonia, Mexico, Nepal, Pakistan, Panama, Tajikistan and Thailand.

The agribusiness incubation training sessions took place as a one-day-training in the context of seven different events:

The agribusiness training module was first piloted at *infoDev's* Global Forum in June 2011 in Helsinki, Finland, where 16 people from 14 countries were trained. As part of the partnership with UNIBRAIN (FARA), the agribusiness training module together with the basic modules were delivered to 29 people from 7 African countries in Hyderabad, India, in November 2011, and to 23 people from 5 African countries in Uganda in March 2013.

Figure 5

Timeline with the different agribusiness training module sessions



In the framework for the feasibility assessments for Agribusiness Innovation Centers (AIC), the agribusiness training module was delivered to build the capacity for potential local implementation partners for the implementation of an AIC. Twenty-eight people in Mozambique in February 2013 and twenty people in Senegal in May 2013 participated in the training.

Another twenty-one people from nine countries were trained at the Global Forum in East London, South Africa in 2013. In the framework of the partnership with SPARK, the agribusiness training module was delivered to twelve people from Burundi in July 2013. Training sessions in Mozambique, Senegal and Burundi also included basic business incubation modules.

6. The agribusiness incubation module is usually taught in combination with the basic business incubation modules 1 and 2. One day is dedicated to each module.

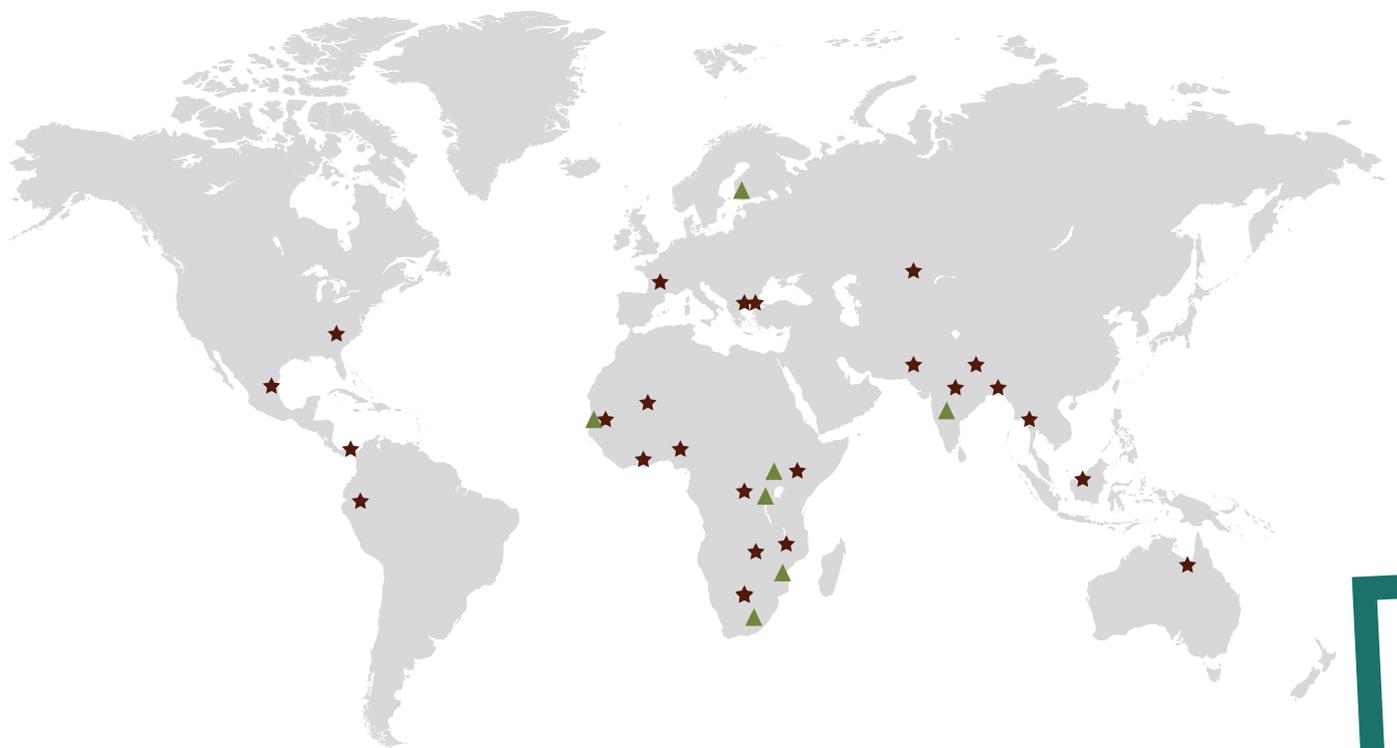


Figure 4

Location of training events and participants' countries of origin



## 5. OUTCOME ASSESSMENT OF *infoDEV*'S AGRIBUSINESS TRAINING

### 5.1

#### Direct results: degree of satisfaction

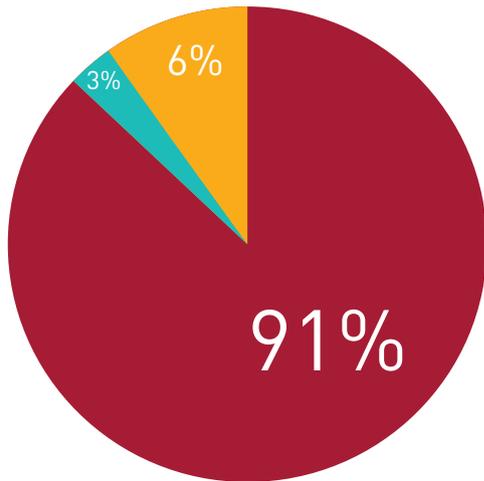
The following section analyzes the direct results, meaning the level of satisfaction of participants with training delivery and quality, as well as the usefulness of the training. This includes relevance of the content, quality of the delivery, overall usefulness of the training and appropriateness of the training approach.

### Key Findings

- The direct results of the agribusiness training can be rated as a success. More than 90% of participants state that the training met their expectations.
- Aspects that are valued particularly positive are the quality of the trainers, the training methodology and the case studies provided during the training sessions.
- The only negative aspect pointed out was the limited time available for the agribusiness module. Participants perceived that they were “rushed through” the module and would like to receive further and more in- depth training in this topic.



■ Yes   ■ No   ■ No answer



Both survey results and qualitative interviews reveal the participants' high level of satisfaction with the training in terms of content quality, methodology and expertise of the trainers. Notable aspects are the practical examples and case studies that were used during the training, as well as the quality of the trainers and the presentation of content.

## Figure 5

Did the training meet participants' expectations?

Source: Results of online survey



I like the fact that one of the facilitators had good knowledge and experience on Agribusinesses in Africa. He had his facts on his finger tips.”

(Quote from a participant of the training at the UniBRAIN training in India)

Regarding specific training content, participants especially valued the introduction of the value chain approach, as well as learning about incubator business model development.

In Mozambique several participants highlighted the relevance of having the agribusiness module in Portuguese and recalled the agribusiness training as more adapted to the local context than the training sessions given in English for Modules 1 and 2.

This shows the importance of adaptation to the local context when implementing the training.



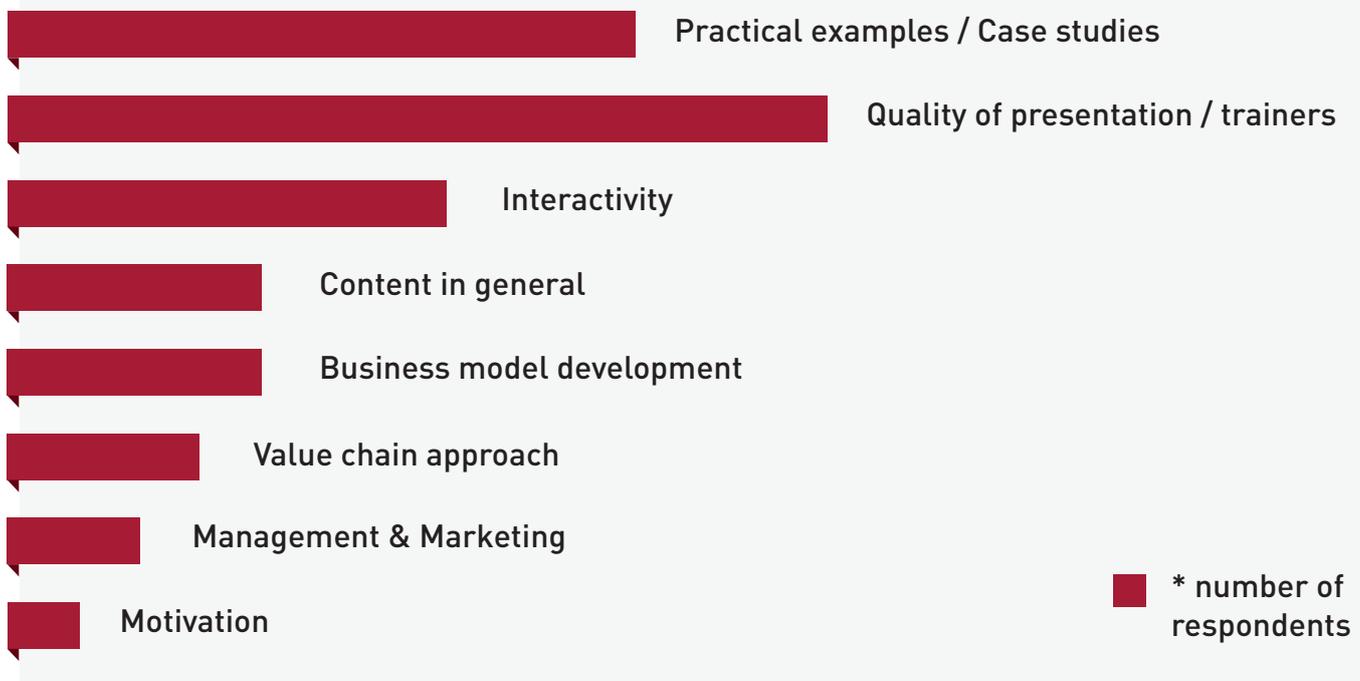


Figure 6

Best aspects of the training

Source: Analysis of online survey (open field question), as well as interviews

This analysis is in line with the evaluation reports conducted as part of the training sessions in India 2011, Uganda 2013 and Senegal 2013. All three training reports show that expectations were met and that the quality of the trainers and facilitation was valued extremely positive.

Overall, the direct results of the training can be valued as very good; however participants had a number of suggestions to improve future training sessions. The time allocated to the agribusiness incubation module has been particularly criticized. Some participants felt that the module was “rushed through” and that they received a lot of content within a very short time frame without having the possibility to digest the content properly. This analysis is again in line with evaluation reports. In the training in India in 2011, almost 50% of all participants felt that there was not enough time allocated to the Agribusiness module. In India, 30% of the respondents would have needed more time and in Senegal 12%.



Quality of content was very good especially details on incubation management, marketing and value chain approaches.”

[Quote from a participant of the training at the UniBRAIN training in India]



# 5.2

## Short and mid-term effects: learning and applying knowledge

This section analyzes what participants actually learned and whether or not - and how - they applied this new knowledge in their daily work.

The survey and the in-depth interviews for this Outcome Assessment took place between six months and two years after the actual training events. This allows for further analysis on the

longevity of the knowledge application and transfer as well as the confidence of participants to apply this knowledge based on what they learned in the training.

### Key Findings

- The training has increased the knowledge with regards to agribusiness incubation for more than 80% of participants.
- Business incubation training leads to important opportunities with regard to peer-to-peer learning and networking and has created momentum and awareness for

agribusiness incubation in countries with limited incubation experience.

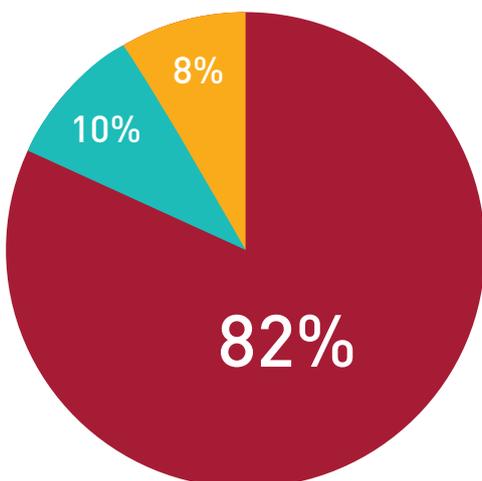
- 64% of participants have applied the acquired knowledge. Application of knowledge ranges from the development of new training materials to the improvement of business plans or the development of new services at existing incubators.

## Learning



### Increased knowledge with regard to agribusiness incubation

■ Yes   ■ No   ■ No answer



After the training, participant’s knowledge in the field of agribusiness incubation increased for almost 80% of the respondents.

Participants recurrently emphasize the value of understanding the specific necessities and challenges of incubation in the agribusiness sector, as well as value chain approaches and having a better understanding of how to define the business model of an incubator. The training sessions have succeeded in this regard.

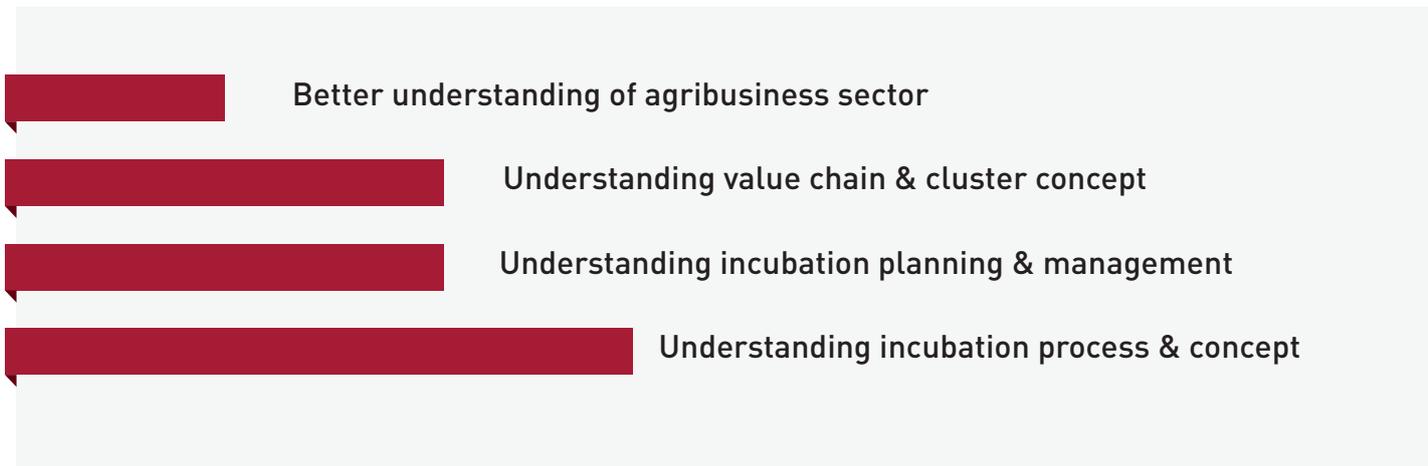
Figure 7

Increase of knowledge in the field of agribusiness incubation

Source: Results of online survey

The type of additional knowledge that participants were able to acquire depends greatly on the country context as well as the participant's previous knowledge. In a country such as Mozambique, where incubation itself is still in its infancy and the concept is not widely known, learning was not only associated to agribusiness incubation,

but more generally to the incubation process. Other cases focused on more specific aspects such as the development of the agribusiness incubation business model and the value chain approach (amongst others) given that their general knowledge on incubation was already quite advanced.



■ \* number of respondents

Figure 8

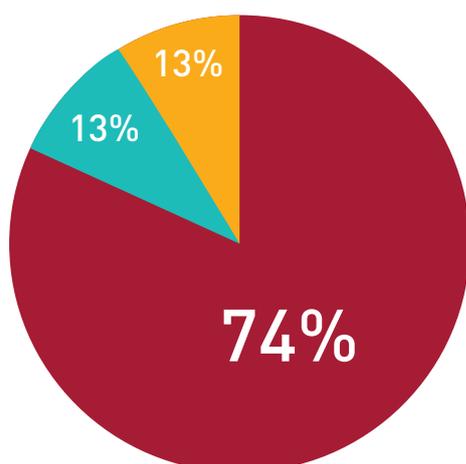
Most mentioned aspects learned in the training

Source: Own elaboration based on online survey

In Mozambique some of the participants were not practitioners but rather companies looking to participate in an agribusiness innovation center. Based on their perceptions, they now have a

better understanding of what to expect from an incubation center and the training prompted their interest to participate in a potential agribusiness innovation center.

■ Yes    ■ No    ■ No answer



Improved networking capacities and peer learning

Besides direct knowledge and learning with regard to agribusiness incubation, 74% of all respondents confirmed that they also acquired other knowledge and benefits from the training.

Figure 9

Acquisition of other knowledge

Source: Own elaboration based on survey and interviews

The most recurrently mentioned aspect regarding the development of new knowledge outside of technical aspects is the relevance of networking and the possibility for peer learning.

Especially those participants who were interviewed in more detail and had participated in the trainings at the Global Forum emphasized the significance of peer learning and information exchange as a core acquisition from the training sessions.

Participants from all different training sessions valued the possibility to increase their networks. Increased networking has led to concrete follow-up activities in a number of cases. In Mozambique for example, the participants created a Facebook based knowledge platform that serves as an exchange platform between training participants. Other participants emphasized the possibility to create international networks as a consequence of the training.

This is the case for national training sessions, such as in Mozambique where participants were able to connect with international stakeholders through the presence of *infoDev*, as well as for the global training sessions. In Asia, a memorandum of understanding between Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia was signed as a direct result of the training.

Based on this memorandum, the countries agreed to exchange staff and provide entrepreneurs the possibility to receive cross-country support throughout the incubation process. In Africa, training participants are working on the establishment of an Agribusiness Incubation Network for Africa.

## Creating awareness and momentum

In those countries where agribusiness incubation is still in its infancy, such as in Mozambique and Eastern Africa, the training also had an important effect in terms of creating momentum. In countries such as Mozambique, application of the learning might not have taken place yet, but the training has created the necessary awareness for agribusiness incubation in a context where incubation is very incipient.

### Application of the acquired knowledge

Of all the respondents 64% have applied the knowledge they acquired during the agribusiness incubation course.

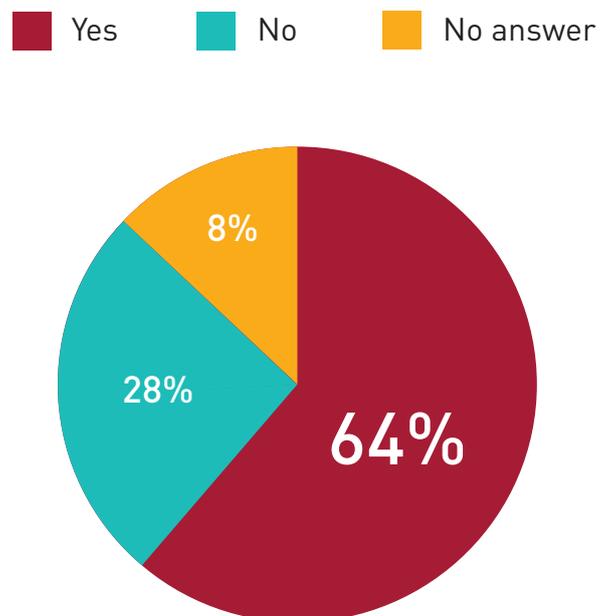


Figure 10

Application of the acquired knowledge

Source: own elaboration based on survey and interviews

The application of knowledge acquired during the training is associated to the type of participants and to the country's stage of incubation development. In Mozambique for example, the training has served to create interest as well as awareness and knowledge with regard to agribusiness innovation. However, most of the participants interviewed in Mozambique said that so far they have not applied any of the acquired knowledge as they are still in a very incipient phase in agribusiness incubation. There were two exceptions.

The University Eduardo Mondlane, where an incubation center is currently planned and the person responsible – a training participant – was able to fine-tune his concept after the training session. Another participant was able to refine the planning for a government-based technology and science center in Mozambique.

In other countries and contexts the application of learning has been much more direct.

The following are examples of applications as a consequence of the training that have been extracted from interviews and the survey.

#### **Use of the training syllabus to develop services and train staff:**

One participant from Kenya was about to inaugurate eight incubation centers on Sorghum value chains across Kenya at the time of the interview. His organization used the training syllabus as a guideline to run the incubation centers and will also train the technical teams (government extension staff) that will be recruited in each of the agribusiness incubation centers based on the syllabus of the *infoDev* training. As those agribusiness incubation centers have received seed financing from DANIDA, the knowledge will be applied immediately.

#### **Selection of partners in a more professional way:**

A similar example can be found in Burundi, where a participant is currently setting up two agribusiness incubation centers. The training helped to identify stakeholders in a more professional way and the skills learned at the training are used in the facilitation of workshops and training at the agribusiness incubation center.

#### **Implementation of training:**

A number of participants have developed training sessions or adjusted their training methodologies based on what they learned at the agribusiness incubation training. This is the case in Thailand, where other incubators are trained on agribusiness incubation on the basis of the *infoDev* methodology. In Burundi a participant started to train unemployed youth using part of the methodology and training materials with the idea to motivate them to create their own agribusiness companies and later to support them through mobile incubation services.

#### **Change in perspective with regards to incubatees:**

Another aspect mentioned by various trainees was a change in behavior with regard to client admission as a consequence of the training. A participant from Ghana, as well as a participant from Mozambique said they would be more responsive to their clients and have become more proactive in trying to understand their potential and support needs.

# 5.3

## Long term effects and impact prospects

This section focuses on the impact prospects level. It encompasses the analysis of qualitative information associated to evidence on potential changes that the training already brought or could bring about.

Five of the seven training events took place in 2013 and thus, mid- and longer term effects of the training sessions have not yet occurred, as participants are still in the process of planning the application of the knowledge acquired during

the training sessions. As a consequence, in most cases the longer term effects can only be estimated on the basis of qualitative information gathered from individual trainees.

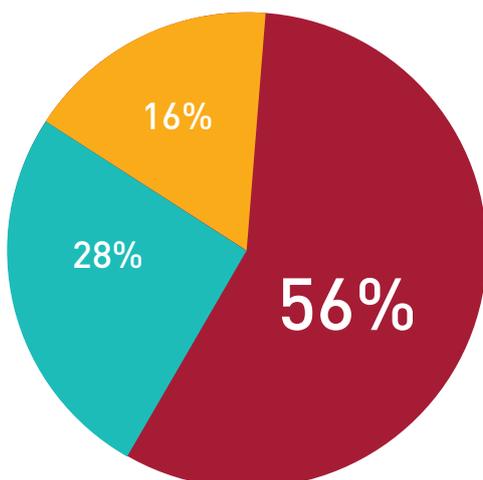
### Key Findings



- The training did have an impact on the way participants work. 56% of participants state that they changed their way of working after the training.
- 50% of trainees have set up an incubation center after the training or are in process of creating one.
- 59% of respondents affirm that services in their incubation centers improved after the training.
- The knowledge gained is transferred on to other colleagues within the organization in 75% of the cases, which contributes to long-term sustainability.

### Personal Level

Yes No No answer



At the individual level, the agribusiness incubation training did change the way trainees manage their day-to-day work activities.

A majority (56%) of participants stated that they changed their way of working.

Figure 11

Have participants changed their way of working after the training?

The most recurrently mentioned aspects that changed are associated to improved strategic planning and a more collaborative way of working. Trainees stated that they are now increasingly looking for team building inside the institution and for partnerships with other organizations. They also pointed out that they now are giving more importance to the actual needs of the local

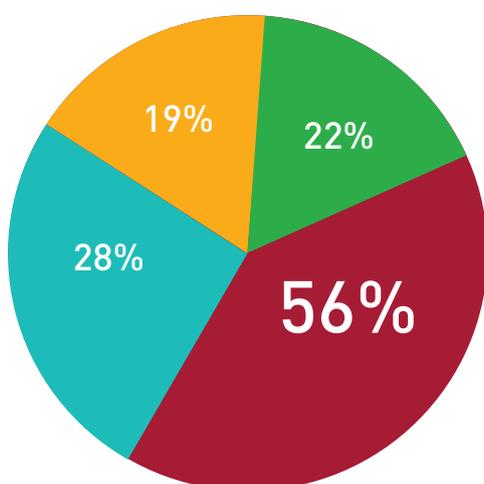
agribusiness community. All of these are aspects they did not prioritize or were not aware of previous to the training. Also, in some cases participants report that they improved financial planning and administration: they have begun to use – or are planning to use – the software for financial management introduced in the training events.

## Organizational level

The organizational level refers to changes that have been generated through the agribusiness incubation training at the level of organizational performance, which means either the creation of new agribusiness incubators, or the improvement of existing ones. There is evidence that the agribusiness incubation training did have a positive effect: 50% of participants state that they have already set up an incubation

center, or are in process of doing so. While in the in-depth interviews, trainees mention that they would have done this even without having participated in the training, they also state that the training helped them to implement the incubation center more quickly and with a better planning and quality of services. In some cases, participants also highlighted the motivation and self-confidence the training gave them to lead the way in the planning and set-up of an incubator in their countries.

■ Yes   
 ■ No   
 ■ No answer   
 ■ In process



On the other hand, 59% of the respondents, who had already been working in an incubator when attending the training, stated that the services in their incubators have improved subsequent to the training.

Figure 12

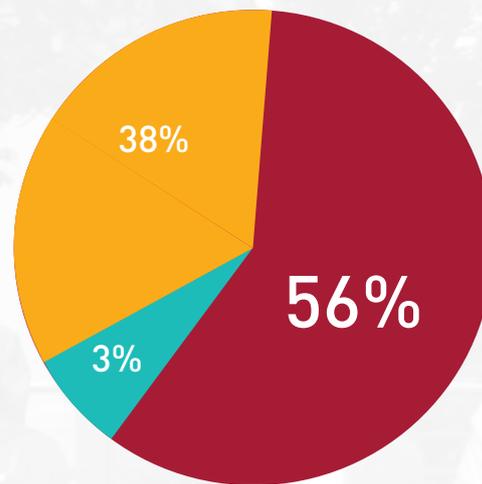
After the training, have participants set up an incubator?



Figure 13

After the training, have services in participants' business incubator improved?

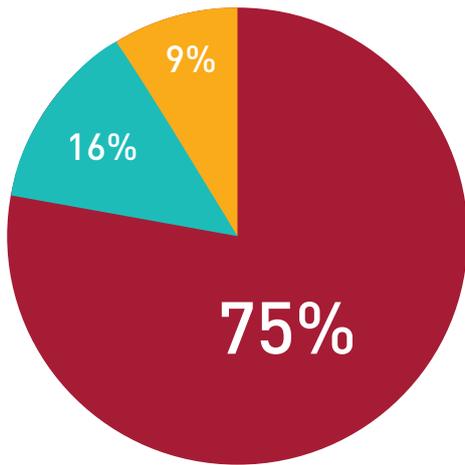
■ Yes    ■ No    ■ No answer



**Aspects that have improved that were most mentioned by respondents are:**

- 1 General improvement of services offered to incubatees, which are now more focused and better adapted to the needs of the agribusiness sector and different value chains.
- 2 Improved business planning and product development.
- 3 Improved incubatee selection process, which leads to the acceptance of better suited clients.
- 4 Development of partnerships with other actors.
- 5 Improved administration and management.

■ Yes   ■ No   ■ No answer



Moreover, 75% of participants also said that they did transfer the knowledge acquired through the agribusiness incubation training within and across their organizations, which points to further potential improvements in internal management and organizational performance, as more people of the same organization dispose of the knowledge and are likely to apply it in their work environment.

Figure 14

Did participants transfer the knowledge they acquired in the training to other colleagues in their organization?

This also contributes to the sustainability of training effects on the participating organizations. In qualitative interviews, some training participants stated that they use the knowledge they gained for addressing difficulties in their workplace, and they discuss with their colleagues the insights of the

training when relevant issues come up in the work environment. This means that the training contributed to an improvement of the organizations' problem solving, and thus to a more efficient management of the incubators.

## Ecosystem level

**The interviews conducted provide qualitative evidence that the agribusiness incubation training did have positive effects at the incubation ecosystem level.**

As effects on the ecosystem level are longer-term effects, this is especially true for interviews that have been conducted with participants that took part in the training events in 2011, whereas no concrete evidence can yet be given for training sessions that were implemented in 2013. Effects

on the ecosystem have been taking place in some cases where training participants hold leading positions in national entities that have influence on a country's incubation ecosystem.

Examples for positive effects on countries' incubation ecosystems include:



## Networking and regional cooperation

### Adaptation and country-wide use of the training

The most prominent example in this respect is Thailand. There are about 56 incubators in the country. The *infoDev* training has been introduced to a national incubation association by a participant from the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA). The association gives strategic advice to the incubators, and the knowledge from the agribusiness incubation training is thus passed on to other incubators. In addition, ThaiBispa, the Thai Association for incubation has been rolling out the training program using the *infoDev* certified trainers, implementing incubation trainings in Thailand, which include all 12 modules of the training. About 100 people have gone through the agribusiness incubation training so far.

Another important long-term effect of the agribusiness incubation training is networking and regional cooperation, which has expanded / enlarged the borders of the incubation ecosystem. As a direct result of the training event, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia actually set up a memorandum of understanding for the exchange of staff and business match-making for incubatees. The incubatees can now have support from one country to another. For example, a Malaysian entrepreneur can go to Bangkok to get incubated, and vice versa.

Similarly, regional cooperation takes place in Africa as an effect of the training event. In Kenya, in the framework of UniBRAIN, work is in progress for the creation of the Agribusiness Incubation Network for Africa. While this development is not exclusively attributable to the *infoDev* agribusiness incubation training, the event did have a positive effect, as it provided deeper insights into partnership development and facilitated the networking process. Additionally, a country-wide upscaling of the incubator concept will take place through working with county governments in Kenya to set up agribusiness incubator facilities at the county level, in order to bring the incubators closer to the agribusiness clients.



## 5.4

# Comparative advantage of the Agribusiness Incubation Training

The following chapter analyzes what participants believed to be the comparative advantage of the training in comparison to other trainings that they attended or know of.

## Key Findings

- The *infoDev* training is the only agribusiness incubation training available to the majority of respondents.
- Participants stress the value of the training methodology, its interactivity and the usefulness and relevance of the examples that are provided.
- The possibility to network and interact with stakeholders from different regions has been highly valued, especially at the trainings of the Global Forum.

In total, only 12,5% of respondents knew about a similar training offered elsewhere by other organizations. Thus, the *infoDev* training is the only relevant training course available to the majority of respondents and is thus in an excellent competitive position.

Only one participant has applied to a scholarship of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for a training course on Agribusiness Management, two other participants mentioned DANIDA as a source for further training courses. However, no further information on the type of similar training programs is available. The majority of trainees that took part in the *infoDev* agribusiness incubation training does not know where to turn to for further training, although most of them mention at the same time that they would be interested in follow-up training sessions that provide more in-depth knowledge on agribusiness incubation aspects.

As part of the survey, 34,4% of respondents emphasized the high degree of interactivity, the training methodology, as well as the good quality of the case studies as the major differentiating factors of the training. In comparison to other

training programs, people felt integrated and positively challenged and motivated to participate. Another differentiating factor was the fact that the training was not limited to theoretical knowledge, but very focused on practical case studies and real examples. In country training sessions, participants also emphasized the right mix of international trainers with relevant knowledge of Africa and its challenges and opportunities as a differentiating factor in comparison to other training programs.

Another aspect mentioned as very positive, especially from those participants that were part of the global training events, is the possibility to learn from other stakeholders with different backgrounds and from different regions.

## 5.5

# Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the Outcome Assessment, the training has successfully reached the training objectives. It has proven successful in conveying the fundamentals of agribusiness innovation as well as the agribusiness incubator business models.

Participants also emphasized the knowledge acquired with regard to value chains and how these have transformed their activities. The last key objective to promote networking and next steps required to implement and improve the incubator's scope and operation are also being successfully fulfilled by the training. Important outcomes from the training are improved networking and contacts, as well as improved service delivery subsequent to the training.

Based on the results of the Outcome Assessment, the following aspects could still be improved further to use the results of the training sessions even more:

1

Dedicate more time to the Agribusiness Training Module. One major point of critique was the limited time available for the Agribusiness Module. There are two possibilities to solve this: integrate Agribusiness Incubation related examples into the other modules of the incubation training or dedicate more time to the Agribusiness Module. As participants generally participate in a three-day training that includes one day of specific agribusiness training, it might be more suitable to integrate agribusiness transversally into the other training areas.

2

Another important point is the local context. For the Agribusiness Module, participants emphasized the importance of experience with the local context and the use of relevant examples. While in a number of specific cases the local adaptation was valued positively, a more adapted localization could take place before each training.

Almost all participants were interested in further training and additional information, but did not have a clear idea on how to receive more training. *infoDev* could use the network of certified trainers to provide follow-up with participants. The certified trainer network could be supported through a web-based application and exchange platform on Agribusiness Incubation.

Another aspect requiring foresight is the future application of training. *infoDev* has invested financial resources and time to establish a network of qualified trainers that are able to

provide a standard of high quality training. To ensure this network stays sustainable after *infoDev* training support ends, a viable structure to further capitalize on the knowledge of these trainers without jeopardizing quality needs to be found. An example could be GIZ who outsourced training to independent associations led by the trainers themselves (see [www.premanet.org](http://www.premanet.org) for an example). Establishing such a structure provides trainers with the possibility to apply their knowledge after the *infoDev* support ends and can at the same time guarantee the quality of trainings.

# Annex

## Assessment methodology

### Approach and rationale

The assessment consisted of three parts:

1

Desk review of *infoDev* brochures and training materials, as well as existing training reports elaborated by *infoDev* staff and training delivery partners. These short reports contain information about training participants, as well as basic evaluation data from questionnaires filled in directly by trainees subsequent to the training events.

2

Primary data collection was conducted in two ways:

(i) An online survey was sent to 121 training participants from 25 countries by email. 32 participants from 14 countries (Burundi, Senegal, Kenya, South Africa, England, Ghana, Australia, France, Mali, Nepal, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, and Kazakhstan) responded to the survey, which represents a response rate of 25%.

(ii) The online survey was complemented by 16 in-depth interviews conducted face-to-face in Mozambique, South Africa and Kenya, and via phone calls with Thailand, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda and Burundi. As the six participants interviewed by phone have also participated in the survey, the Outcome Assessment relies on information from 40 participants, representing a total of 27% of all training participants.

This approach of combining online survey with in-depth interviews was chosen because the survey provides comparable output and outcome data on the training sessions, while the in-depth interviews imply a degree of interaction that makes it possible to understand the behavioral changes generated in the trainees' work subsequent to the training. In-depth interviews were also appropriate to gain insights into potential impacts on the incubation ecosystem in the participants' countries of origin.

3

Data analysis: The answers to the survey were tabulated and analyzed statistically. This statistical analysis has been complemented with in-depth interviews that have been used as a qualitative tool to get deeper insights about the effects that generated, and how and why they occurred.

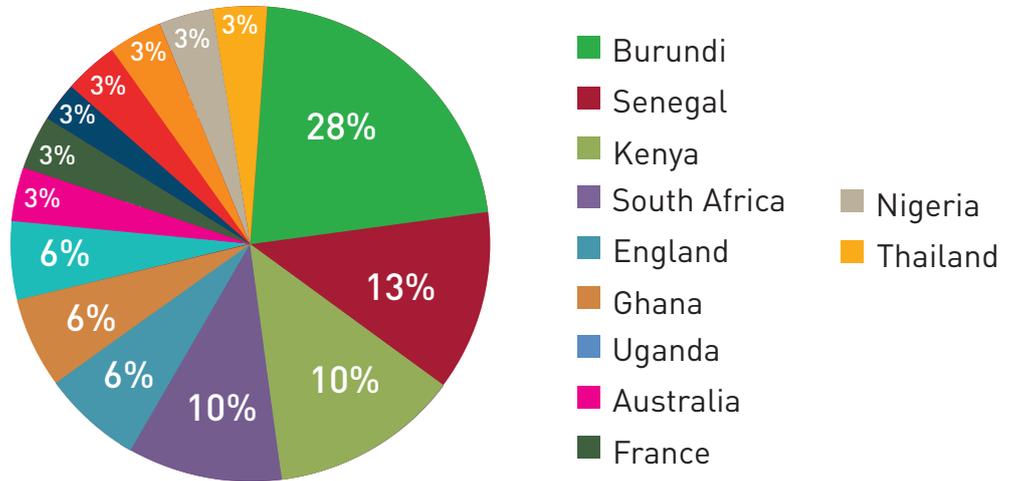
7 Evaluation reports exist for the trainings in India 2011, Uganda 2013 and Senegal 2013. For the Global Forums 2011 and 2013, as well as the trainings in Burundi 2013 and Mozambique 2013, no data are available.

8 All training participants beside of Mozambique, and participants that had been interviewed in depth in Kenya and South Africa during a field mission.

9 Originally from England, but residents in Mali and South Africa.

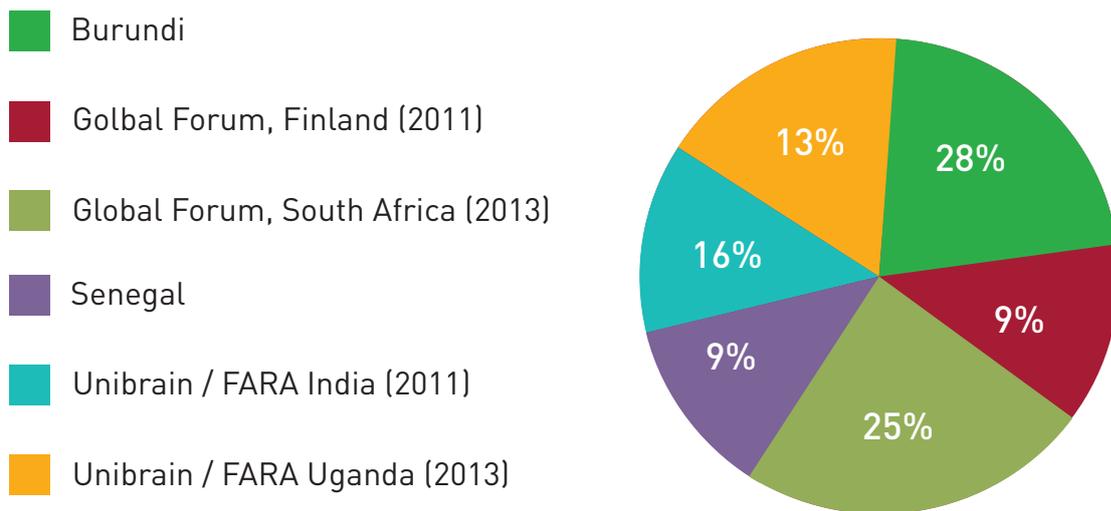
Selection of interviewees and survey participants

The online survey was sent to all training participants for whom email addresses were available and that had not been interviewed in person during field visits. As mentioned, 25% of these participants answered the survey, which is the sample that was analyzed for the Outcome Assessment. The sample is illustrative, as respondents come from all types of stakeholder groups , as well as all type of training events that have been delivered so far.



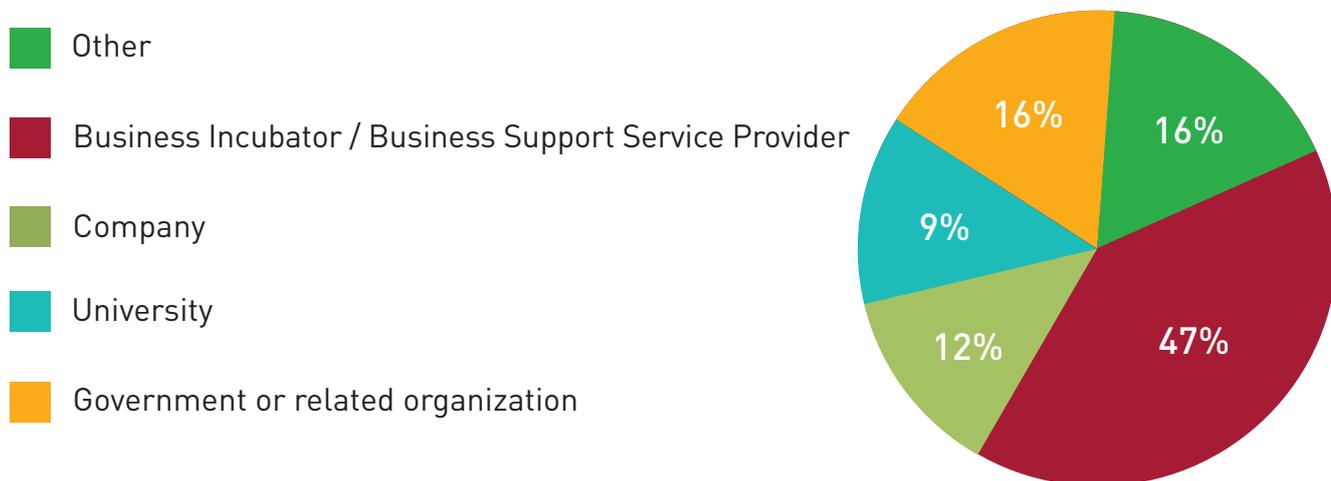
**Figure 1**

Country of origin of respondents



**Figure 2**

Distribution of respondents by training session



**Figure 3**

Distribution of respondents by training session

For face-to-face interviews conducted during the field mission to Mozambique, South Africa and Kenya, trainees were chosen based on availability for an interview. For the in-depth phone interviews, purposeful sampling based on the responses to the online survey was used. The rationale for this choice is that the Outcome Assessment should mainly serve *infoDev* to learn to what extent their trainings contribute to build capacity when it comes to setting up Agribusiness Innovation Centers or improving existing agribusiness incubators. Therefore, interviewees with a higher potential to provide substantial insights were chosen. This method is usually applied when the objective is to study information-rich cases in depth. After completion of data collection, the information was processed and analyzed according to the three levels of analysis: immediate effects; short and mid-term effects and long-term effects and impact prospects.

## Specific aspects and considerations

While this Outcome Assessment is specifically dedicated to Module 12 of the Business Incubation Management Training Program, many of the trainees have participated in additional modules, especially modules 1 and 2, which are the basic business incubation modules. Answers from the participants, especially answers associated to the application of learning and potential impacts, include participation in all training modules.

In addition, it is worth mentioning that five of the seven training events took place in 2013 and thus, mid- and longer term effects of the training sessions have not yet occurred, as participants are still in the process of planning the application of the knowledge acquired in the training sessions. As a consequence, in most cases the longer term effects can only be estimated on the basis of qualitative information gathered from individual trainees. Additionally, Module 12 is a one-day training and one has to be cautious when drawing conclusions with regard to impacts and long-term effects.



