

West Africa

A Dynamic Regional Alliance

for Professionalizing
the Market of Crop Protection Products



An International Center for Soil Fertility and
Agricultural Development

Representing the
Plant Science Industry



Shared Values



IFDC, an International Center for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development, is a public international organization whose mission is to help developing or transitional countries to raise their agricultural productivity in a sustainable manner. IFDC is active in 15 countries in Africa and the Middle East and has permanent offices in seven West African countries.

Agricultural production systems and the development of agribusinesses are closely linked. Hence, IFDC programs take into account concurrently:

- ✓ **agro-inputs markets:** development and transfer of technologies and marketing expertise that are efficient, economically viable, and safe for the environment;
- ✓ **sustainable management** of agricultural companies and agribusinesses;
- ✓ **agricultural production markets:** development of agricultural sectors and market information systems.

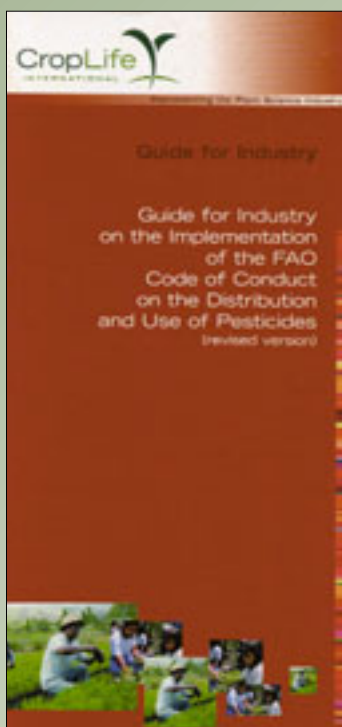
An active participation and training of all stakeholders form the priorities in all of IFDC's development initiatives.

CropLife Africa Middle East is a regional professional organization representing the plant science industry (agrochemistry and biotechnology) in Africa and the Middle East. Its members are the leading international private companies of the plant science industry, namely Arysta LifeScience, BASF, Bayer CropScience, Dow AgroSciences, Dupont de Nemours, FMC, Makhteshim Agan, Monsanto, Sipcam, Sumitomo, and Syngenta. CropLife is active in over 30 countries in Africa and the Middle East, through national associations representing the local industry.

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- ✓ **promotion** of the principles of integrated pest management and the responsible and safe use of crop protection products (CPPs). This is in conformity with the FAO Code of Conduct on the distribution and use of CPPs;
- ✓ **support** to the establishment of national and regional regulatory frameworks on CPPs;
- ✓ **technology** as the engine of innovation for a sustainable agriculture and human progress;
- ✓ **communication** with openness and the possibility for collaboration with the other stakeholders.



► From a local collaboration to a dynamic regional alliance

In 2004, after several years of informal cooperation at the local level, IFDC and CropLife decided to develop a structured and ambitious regional partnership.

Synergies between CropLife and IFDC are possible in Africa due to:

- ✓ a common vision on food security and poverty alleviation on the continent;
- ✓ convergence in their missions and objectives for an increase in agricultural productivity in a sustainable manner;
- ✓ shared values related to the importance of agricultural technology, involvement, and responsibility of the private sector in agricultural development as well as openness and dialogue with all stakeholders.

Based on the complementarities of their expertises and networks, IFDC, which represents the public sector, and CropLife, representing the private sector, decided to develop a regional alliance to strengthen and professionalize the crop protection market in Africa and in West Africa as a priority.

On April 14, 2004, the two organizations signed an agreement defining the general working framework of their partnership.



Yves Demeure (left), Chairman of CropLife West & Central Africa, and Rob Groot, Director of IFDC Africa Division, sign the partnership agreement in Bamako, Mali, April 14, 2004.

Joint action plan

1 Strengthen agro-input dealers and their associations



Executive members of CropLife Senegal finalizing an environmental scan of the association in Bamako, Mali, December 2004.

Training of Trainers : the concept

The objective of a Training-of-Trainers (ToT) program is to refresh, focus and strengthen knowledge and skills of the participants as trainers help them become master trainers. Participants are selected from national CropLife associations, public sector, and technical partners. They already have good technical knowledge and are involved in sensitization and training activities on agro-inputs.

The ToT course takes 5 days. During the first 3 days, the program focuses on the competencies of the trainer:

- Planning a training program
- Model for structuring a training session
- Adult learning
- Training approaches and methods
- Audio-visual supports for training
- Questioning and handling questions
- Verbal and nonverbal communication

During the last 2 days, the participants share their technical skills and learn from

Every year, IFDC and CropLife develop a joint action plan for West Africa. This action plan serves as a guideline for the partnership but is flexible enough to take other joint activities into account depending on the available opportunities. At the end of each year, the two partners perform a detailed assessment per activity.

Among the 35 professional organizations of the agro-inputs sector listed in West Africa, five are members of CropLife Africa Middle East and three others collaborate on a regular basis with CropLife. All of these associations have benefited from the support of the IFDC/CropLife partnership through:

- ✓ developing **internal organization** including motivation of members, keeping of registers, roles of the executive members and those of the executive secretary, communication, leadership, and income generating activities;
- ✓ preparing an **annual action plan** in line with the expectations of their members and based on the strategic priorities of CropLife Africa Middle East;
- ✓ creating **partnerships** with other stakeholders including the public sector, technical partners, and producers' organizations.

In three years of partnership and in six African countries, IFDC and CropLife have jointly trained **74 trainers from the public and private sectors** on the safe and responsible use of CPPs. In each country, the **Training-of-Trainers (ToT)** programs were organized by the national CropLife association; CropLife



A participant of a Training-of-Trainers program is putting his skills into practice by explaining how to manage an accidental spill of a crop protection product on the floor of a storeroom. Accra, Ghana, November 2005

Africa Middle East financed the workshops and IFDC provided two facilitators.

IFDC and CropLife also jointly organized and financed **follow-up workshops** to these Training-of-Trainers programs, in which agro-input dealers or farmers are trained by the master trainers who followed the ToT program before. In 2005 and 2006, **205 agro-input dealers** and **44 members of farmer based organizations** were directly trained on the safe use and management of CPPs. Moreover, the trained master trainers also organized and facilitated several training sessions for the customers of their own distribution companies.

All participants of these IFDC/CropLife training programs are tested and deserving participants receive a certificate.

Joint action plan

2 Support the development of a regional regulatory framework for crop protection products

3 Create awareness and communicate

In order to implement the common agricultural policy of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on the one hand and of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) on the other hand, the regional economic communities in collaboration with the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), requested the support from partners to establish a regional regulatory framework for CPPs.



Hence, IFDC played a central facilitation role in this process and CropLife brought its expertise as the leading technical partner. After adoption of a roadmap in April 2005 by all the partners, IFDC and CropLife supported the development of a regional technical study and recommendations were translated into regulatory drafts. The next step (in 2007 and 2008) is the adoption of regional regulatory drafts by the Council of Ministers of ECOWAS and WAEMU, and West African Heads of State.

Together, IFDC and CropLife have organized information activities for stakeholders and created awareness to strengthen the safe distribution and use of CPPs in West Africa. IFDC and CropLife supported a baseline study in Ghana followed by a sensitization workshop on counterfeit and illegal CPPs sold in the Ashanti region. In December 2006, journalists in Senegal were made aware of crop protection issues by CropLife Senegal members who followed a training-of-trainers course facilitated by IFDC and CropLife. Target groups for education activities include farmers, exporters of agricultural commodities, agro-input dealers, regulatory officials, medical services, consumer associations, and technical partners.

For partnership visibility, IFDC and CropLife have established links between their respective websites and inform their members and partners regularly on the progress of their collaboration via news bulletins and joint press articles.

The IFDC/CropLife partnership is based on transparent and dynamic internal communication, which is achieved through exchange of technical and commercial studies, information on upcoming events, and frequent meetings.



Example of a CropLife newsletter mentioning common activities with IFDC. Newsletter n°13, December 2006.



Example of an IFDC information note mentioning common activity with CropLife. The title reads, "Towards a regional regulatory framework for crop protection products for West Africa". Information note n°3, May 2005.



Shared values

To **work together** and develop a credible collaboration, the key values of the partners must be shared. CropLife and IFDC believe in agricultural technological innovation, private sector development, research of agricultural productivity and food security, and sustainability of production systems.

What did we learn? *Sharing similar values gives the partners the opportunity to reach consensus on the objectives of their collaboration and targeted results. However, partnership is especially beneficial when individual expertises and networks of the partners are not identical but complementary. Value sharing and complementarities in expertise foster confidence between the partners regarding the effectiveness of their partnership.*

A simple operational tool

The alliance between CropLife and IFDC is described in the partnership agreement that covers all Africa. This agreement is general and therefore requires a supplementary document for the implementation and follow-up of the joint activities. The two partners opted for an annual action plan for each African region. So far, West Africa has been the main region to benefit from joint actions. The annual action plan is prepared in a participatory manner within each partner institution. It serves as a guideline for collaboration, but is flexible enough to be adapted or extended depending on the needs.

What did we learn? *Taking stock of the activities quite regularly makes the joint action plan more flexible. To achieve a dynamic partnership and optimize joint activities, it is better to monitor the implementation of the action plan on a regular basis and not wait for the annual evaluation.*

Transparency

Transparency is a prerequisite for mutual trust in a partnership. Structured collaboration, clearly defined roles, and regular communication, based on respect, honesty, and openness, ensure mutual trust in the collaboration between IFDC and CropLife. Hidden agendas are not part of the partnership!

What did we learn? *It is important that each partner appoints one main contact person as a focal point and coordinator of the alliance.*

The 4 Pillars of Partnership

Mutual benefits and interests

The two partners fully share the benefits of the collaboration. In addition to common benefits such as sharing of human and financial resources, each partner also enjoys specific benefits: IFDC benefits from the network of CropLife associations and its technical and training expertise; CropLife enjoys IFDC's competence in association strengthening and in the facilitation of regional regulations development. The IFDC/CropLife alliance also gives each partner the opportunity to develop innovative approaches and working methods.

What did we learn? *Effective partnership relies on the continuous involvement of the partners and becomes sustainable by the creation of "added value" with shared benefits and specific advantages for each partner.*



Some Prospects

for the IFDC/ CropLife alliance



Article on counterfeit and illegal crop protection products, published in the "Afrique Agriculture" magazine, December 2005.

In 2007, IFDC Africa Division and CropLife Africa Middle East will consolidate their partnership in West Africa. This can be achieved by pursuing joint activities at the regional level, such as the development of harmonized regulations for CPPs and strengthening of capacities of associations and other stakeholders.

IFDC's new projects will need to take over gradually from the MIR project (Marketing Inputs Regionally), which is the initiator and driving force of the establishment of the partnership with CropLife in West Africa.

Moreover, many other fields of activity are possible under the IFDC/CropLife partnership in Africa:

- ✓ **fight against counterfeit and illegal crop protection products.** IFDC and CropLife will mutually support the eradication of these practices, which are harmful to the economy, human health, and the environment. Complementary activities under the partnership could focus on an effective and strict enforcement of the regional crop protection regulation and of intellectual property rights, the sensitization of stakeholders, and the professionalizing of agro-input dealers;
- ✓ **development of Biosafety Policy Frameworks.** IFDC and CropLife will jointly facilitate the development of regional biosafety regulations, making it possible to use biotechnologies while preserving human health and the environment. The sensitization of all stakeholders on these technologies will go along with the development of the regulations;
- ✓ **promotion of Integrated Crop Management.** IFDC expertise in Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) and CropLife expertise in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) are complementary and could provide grounds for joint activities for the development of Integrated Crop Management by African farmers;
- ✓ **management of empty containers.** Avoiding the re-use of empty CPP containers by farmers in Africa is a major challenge. Jointly, IFDC, CropLife, and their partners have an important role to play for an effective empty container management;
- ✓ **geographical extension.** The partnership between IFDC Africa and CropLife Africa Middle East is bound to be extended beyond the borders of West Africa, where it all started. The Great Lakes region and southern Africa in particular could be new zones for an active collaboration between IFDC and CropLife.

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Satellite image of African continent
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