

# LOCAL- ENTREPRENEURSHIP TEAM

**making farmers into entrepreneurs**



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Producing more work, more activity and more income for small farmers and particularly for female farmers is Agriterra's aim. Activities in the villages, at the base of the farmers' organisations, are the means to achieve this. In those locations, we are helping set up local groups that will establish good relationships with one another and with their surroundings. Often, new economic activities arise from these relationships.

The local-entrepreneurship team promotes entrepreneurship of farmers and female farmers via the farmers'



organisations on location. It targets enterprising farmers who produce a surplus and want to take it to the market. Those farmers regularly have to find answers to a number of questions, like how do I react to the demand, how do I ensure better quality, how can I increase my production, how do I get access to different sales channels and how do I obtain necessary financing?

Challenges the local-entrepreneurship team faces in providing advice to farmers are as numerous as the questions. The team invests in leadership and organisational development as well because both are essential to a healthy organisation. In all activities, the team pays particular attention to female entrepreneurs.

Advice from farmer to farmer plays an important role in the team's guidance, training and advising activities.

# BETTER SEED, BETTER YIELD

FCMN-Niya is the federation of horticultural cooperatives in Niger, one of the poorest and driest countries in the world. One hundred and twenty-three local cooperatives are connected directly or indirectly to the federation that has 22,500 members. FCMN offers its member cooperatives training, information, seeds, fertiliser, buying up and selling on of products and access to credit.

FCMN asked Agriterra to give good advice to onion producers in the regions Dosso, Tillaberi, Maradi and Tahoua. The quality of the onion seed had to improve. Agriterra was able to obtain cooperation from the seed-upgrading company De Groot & Slot to this end. This family company has been providing knowledge and expertise since 2006 through working visits and

advice from a distance. The result was that seed refiners connected to this project were able to produce much more good onion seed. They sell the seed to onion growers via FCMN and meanwhile that has led to significantly higher yields of onions for consumption.

Ultimately, FCMN wants to set up a cooperative company for onion seed. In September 2011, an FCMN delegation took an important step in this direction by visiting De Groot & Slot. They discussed the business plan for the cooperative, analysed the technical and economic aspects and drafted a plan for timing the cooperative's establishment in 2012.

