



**Andreas Hermes Akademie (AHA)**

In its capacity as the main training institution of the Deutscher Bauernverband (German Farmers' Association, dbv) and of 12 other agricultural organisations, the Andreas Hermes Akademie has made an important contribution to the further education of German farmers for more than 70 years. The Akademie trains competences farmers need to assume responsibility for themselves, their businesses and communities. Furthermore, the Akademie helps them engage in Association activities and consequently take on managerial tasks in the Akademie's supporting organisations.

**Deutscher Bauernverband (dbv)**

The dbv (German Farmers' Association) safeguards the interests of German farmers, ranging from single to family farms and from cooperatives to large scale enterprises. The dbv and its network of associations offer a large pool of experts who team up with AHA trainers to bring in their experience and take action in partner countries. dbv and AHA are members of AgriCord, an international network of supporters of agricultural development organisations.

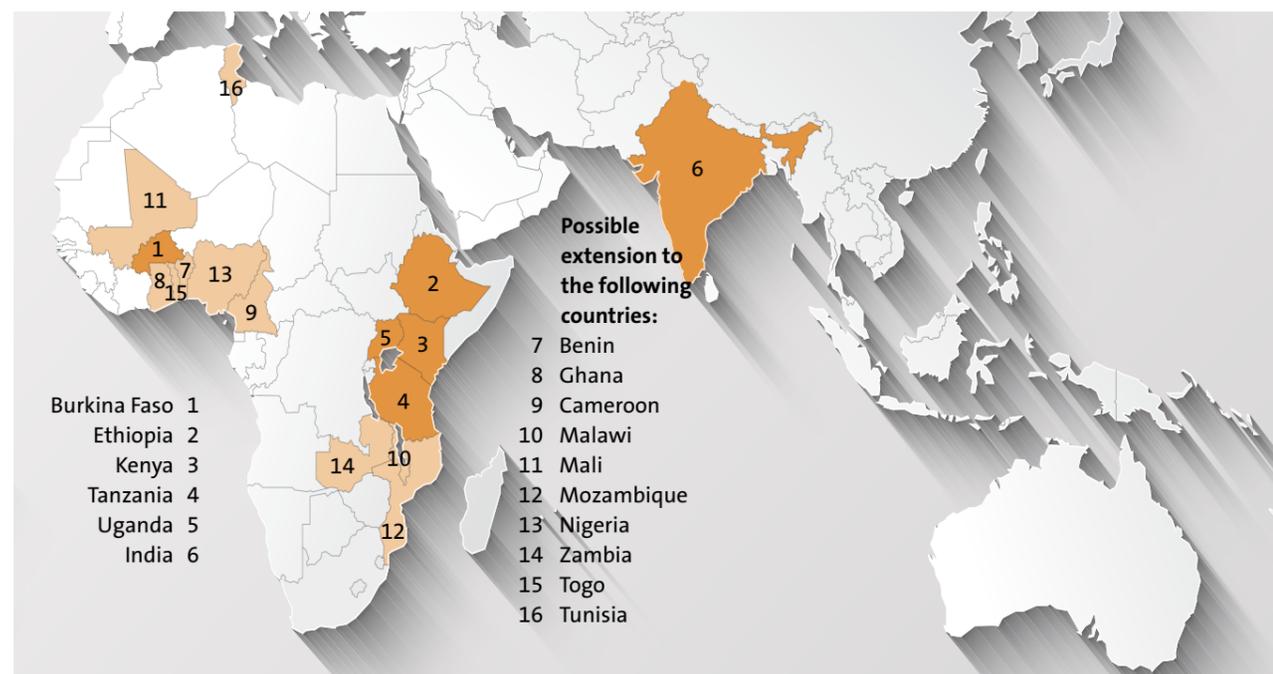
**»ONE WORLD – no hunger«**

»ONE WORLD – no hunger« is a special initiative launched by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development which is designed to reduce hunger worldwide through food security and increased resilience, innovation and improved rural structures, soil conservation and better access to land. It is within the framework of this special initiative that funds are granted to the Andreas Hermes Akademie and the German Farmers Association for their initiative »Strengthening of farmers' organisations for sustainable agricultural development«.

# Strengthening of Farmers' Organisations



**Target countries of the AHA/dbv initiative**



**Strengthening of farmers' organisations for sustainable agricultural development**

Farmer empowerment means strengthening farmers through capacity building and rural self-help organisations. It is the key to sustainable agricultural development. Strong farmers' organisations that are politically and economically independent best understand farmers' needs. They will support their members by safeguarding their interests, providing services, offering vocational training and further education and developing networks.

Organisations are borne by people. The strengthening of personal and entrepreneurial competences will lead to greater self-determination and entrepreneurial independence. These qualities are important prerequisites for a sustainable and successful agricultural sector that achieves food security and generates income.

In its capacity as the main training institution of the German Farmers' Association, the Andreas Hermes Akademie (aha) is financially supported by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development to take action in selected countries in Africa and in India to strengthen farmers' organisations on site.

**International Farmer Empowerment**

- > The current target countries of the AHA/dbv initiative are Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and India.
- > The dbv and its network of associations promote an exchange of experiences from farmer to farmer to better safeguard farmers' interests.
- > AHA's principle to success: Everything revolves around people and their competences.
- > The initiative focuses on farmers on site. It addresses small farming structures as well as the role of women and young farmers.

**Any questions? Please contact:**

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### Professionalising the organisation

Strong farmers' organisations that are committed to democratic principles, a high level of mobilisation and good management are imperative if farmers are to be recognised by policymakers and society and if they are to provide the services required to make them more competitive. Financial independence and sustainability are the big challenges in this context. In addition to securing long-term contributions from a broad member base, every effort must also be made to generate income from services.

The Akademie supports its partners by offering an exchange with German association experts, holding workshops and training courses and supporting targeted organisational development. Dialogue is held with potential partner organisations to establish concrete requirements. Development measures are chosen to suit individual needs. The focus is always on empowering the organisation to develop and implement targeted solutions on its own.



2

### Strengthening rural lobbies

Safeguarding the interests of farmers is particularly important in developing countries. Priority must be given to creating an awareness of the fact that farmers should unite and take concerted action. This is where farmers' associations are called upon as the representatives of their members to identify concrete fields of action and demand solutions.

Thanks to an exchange of experiences with DBV experts and ongoing training provided by AHA, partners in Africa and India are empowered to recognise the importance of lobbying for their members and are able to realistically assess their own position so that they can develop appropriate strategies to enter into dialogue with government, trade and industry and society.

Through dialogue on an equal footing, they will be able to exert a positive influence on the legal, infrastructural, economic and social framework for the benefit of their members, the farmers. This in turn will contribute towards increased productivity, growing income and greater food security. This is where farmers' organisations play an important role – at a local, national and international level.



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### Multifaceted knowledge transfer

Thanks to its connection to German agriculture, the AHA is particularly well-positioned to be a link between its partner organisations and other actors. Since it is the organisations themselves that carry out the implementation, AHA can observe and evaluate this progress.

In doing so, knowledge results that is of great importance and benefit to all those involved, whether in the partner countries or for German development cooperation: what are the concrete needs of farmers' organisations? How can they be supported effectively and efficiently without interfering with their autonomy? How can the expertise of German experts, e.g. from agricultural organisations, best be incorporated?

To this end, the AHA documents its experiences and makes them available to its partners, in technical discussions and as contributions to publications. This also includes a close connection to the Green innovation centres for the agriculture and food sector, which were set up on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in different countries.



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### Strengthening networks between organisations

The organisations are based on farmers and consequently the partners are already a network in their own right. An exchange between their members will lead to further consolidation. And additional strength can be gained through networking with comparable institutions in the country and abroad. This is where DBV and AHA can support their partners by providing the right contacts and by building networks, e.g. with comparable farmers' organisations in Germany and Europe which promote mutual exchange and the provision of concrete support.

In addition, AHA strives to strengthen supra-national farmers' organisations. In Africa there are five regional umbrella federations that are united in the Pan-African Farmers' Organisation (PAFO). The organisation gives members the possibility to address issues that are of relevance beyond the borders of their individual countries.

Partners also meet to discuss selected topics at an international level, to exchange ideas between North and South, between South and South and to learn from one another's experiences.



3

### Developing and implementing services

It is often very important for farmers' organisations to develop services for their members in order to act independently and maintain long-term financial stability. These services could apply to a wide range of fields. Depending on requirements, it could be a matter of joint purchasing or marketing or financial consulting. Special emphasis is placed on skills, e.g. entrepreneur training, organising and sharing farm machinery systems, etc. The objective is to improve their members' competitiveness.

AHA and DBV help their partners take a participative approach to identify members' needs and develop top quality products to satisfy demands. Members are not always used to having to pay for services. This is where it is necessary to introduce new thinking and develop sustainable business models. With the support of DBV experts, AHA will help its partners develop and implement sustainable concepts to meet requirements.

