

"Good Processing Center" model to train rural women processors





# 1. Pioneer partnership

One of the best approaches to learning is through coaching and apprenticeship. In the adult learning, simple and illustrative modes of learning with a practical touch have proved to be efficient compared to classroom tutorials. On the basis of these established learning practices, 2SCALE under the soybean public private partnership (PPP), championed by Yedent Agro Limited came up with an innovative model to impart knowledge and practical training to rural based women processors.

In 2016/2017, 2SCALE in collaboration with Yedent conceived a strategy to bridge the knowledge gap of rural micro-processors (mostly women groups) in Northern Ghana as part of the partnership activities. This model afforded Yedent the opportunity to theoretically and practically impart adaptable processing and marketing knowledge to rural processors. Two women processor cooperatives from two clusters under the Soybean partnership and based in Northern Ghana benefited from this innovation. Yedent Agro as an advanced processing center practically shared knowledge in processing and business dimensions to improve the status of the micro-women rural processors. As part of the model, executives from Kpandai and Banda Bora Women Processing Cooperative benefited from best and adaptable practices from Yedent Agro. The trained executives also undertook a step-down training with the rest of the cooperative members. Yedent staff and project team made a back-stopping field visit to the two women cooperatives to examine extent of adoption and implementation of best practices learnt.

# 2. Replicable practice

Women who process soybean in rural areas are faced with a lot of challenges which can be tackled through simple and innovative ways. Yedent Agro as a good processing center used their experiences acquired over the years to impart knowledge to the women micro-processors in from rural Ghana. 2SCALE in collaboration with Yedent organised three days training (factory experiences, theory, and practicals) to address some of these challenges. The purpose of this training was to explain the basic processes of good manufacturing practices. These practices can be adopted and adapted to the situation in the rural settings by cooperative members. As part of the training, a pictorial based training manual was co-developed by 2SCALE project and Yedent Management team. The training manual consisted of topics such as quality control, fundamentals of booking keeping/records, packaging, and marketing. Each topic was spearheaded by a lead person from either the project or Yedent and featured classroom theories and discussions, practical sessions, and factory tours. The members of the constituted training team included senior BoP expert (2SCALE), Yedent General Manager, Quality Control Manager (Yedent) and Finance Manager (Yedent).

On the basis of the impacted knowledge, the team paid two backstopping visits to the processors in their community to observe the extent of application and adoption of good processing practices learnt.

To summarize, this practice is addressing constraints in terms of:

<p>Access to nutritious food</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Availability:</b> Rural women processor cooperatives were empowered in terms of knowledge to improve upon their products and effectively serve hygienic products to BoP consumers in their communities. They also had improved knowledge on how best to formulate their blends at the community level.</li> <li>• <b>Acceptability:</b> Some of the women were able to improve on their packaging upon our backstopping field visits. That translates into a more appealing package to the consumers. This was one of the milestone transformational learnings that emanated from the good processing center (GPC) model.</li> </ul>
<p>Inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ownership:</b> Owing to the practical nature of the GPC model, where interactions, practical group works and factory visits dominated, the women interacted very well.</li> <li>• <b>Risks:</b> The GPC model basically made Yedent’s experiences in processing business available to rural women processors. They were able to learn from the Yedent experiences as well as the experiences shared by the experts in order to reduce their own risk (real &amp; perceived). The training really exposed a lot of risks and lapses faced by women, especially in the area of postharvest handling and raw material storage.</li> </ul>

# 3. Preconditions for replication

## **Appropriate Business Champion**

In order to deploy a good processing centre (GPC) model, there should exist a business champion (company) that exemplifies good processing practices. It should have the necessary equipment, accreditation, staff as well as a good factory. Appropriateness also in the sense of the willingness of the company to avail its experiences, time, and knowledge to another smaller organization. Yedent management were deeply involved in the training manual development and training of the women processors.

## **Processing Synergy**

The essence of the GPC model is to create impact per training to practice and adoption. Hence, the nature of processing businesses Business Champion & Women processors) should be in tandem with each other. The synergy will create direct opportunities for the women processors to learn specific and adaptable practices with related relevance to theirs. A mismatch in the type of processing may not encourage any applicable lessons and the outcome of the training may not reflect any positive outcomes on the part of the women processors. For example, Yedent is into cereal blends and rural women processors were also into the same but at different levels of processing sophistication.

## 4. Results Achieved

Basically, results achieved from the GPC model were measured from the technical backstopping field visits organised at intervals to women processors in their various communities. Two of such visits were organised and most of the women had adopted the basic packaging trainings advanced to them. Hygiene practices were also put to use as observed from their raw material storage to where they sell. Cumulatively, the overall adoption of the GPC training was in the range of about 67% with respect to the 25 total participants.

## Want to know more?

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