

# **Modernization of Guyana Extension Services Team 2 Report**

## **Partners of the Americas – Farmer to Farmer Program**

**January 6 – 19, 2008**

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### **Executive Summary**

This report outlines the activities and conclusions of Team 2, University of Wisconsin–Extension, Farmer to Farmer volunteers. After working with Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) Extension Services headquarters and regional staff, and farmers from Region 3, Parika East Bank Essequibo and Region 10, West Watooka/Linden, Team 2 offers several recommendations about what future teams can do to help MOA Extension professionals, both headquarters and regional, build organizational capacity in an effort to better serve their clients. These recommendations are detailed in the final section of this report.

Also included are summaries of meetings held with MOA officials, initial week visits with individual farmers, a training program delivered to MOA Extension headquarters and regional staff, week two meetings and action planning sessions with farmers, and the debriefing meeting with MOA officials.

Team 2 members wish to express their appreciation to Shaun Francis and Kelvin Craig from Partners of the Americas, Farmer to Farmer Program for proving to be such fine, knowledgeable hosts. We also wish to acknowledge the kind and warm reception afforded us by the MOA Extension Services headquarters and regional staff and the farmers and members of their families we were privileged to meet.

### **Background**

Team 2 consisted of University of Wisconsin–Extension faculty Julie Keown–Bomar, Art Lersch, and Greg Wise. The primary purpose of their visit was to offer ideas and provide training to MOA Extension Services staff that would provide them with tools to address the needs of their constituents in new ways. The revitalization of the MOA Extension Services is now underway. We were asked to demonstrate how we engage audiences and build the capacity for organizational change. A secondary purpose was to model the ways that we work with communities of farmers, helping to identify ways they could work together to address concerns that arose during gap analyses conducted by Team 1 in November, 2007.

## **Activities/Results**

### *Initial Meetings with Ministry of Agriculture Extension Services (January 7, 2008)*

Julie Keown-Bomar and Art Lersch met twice with MOA Extension Services staff on January 7 at the MOA offices.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the meetings was to identify training topics and to finalize logistics for the January 10 and January 11 Extension staff trainings to be conducted at the Guyana School of Agriculture. In attendance were Brian Greenidge, Joseph McAllister, John Woolford, Michael Welch, and Brian Sears. Also in attendance were Kelvin Craig and Shaun Francis from the Partners of the Americas, Farmer to Farmer Program. Although some preliminary conversations about the trainings took place during the morning meeting, most of the training outline and logistics discussion took place during the afternoon session.

Discussion during the afternoon meeting began with an analysis of what MOA Extension Services officials felt should be the primary objectives of the trainings. Joseph McAllister reiterated (from the morning meeting) the importance of Extension personnel helping farmers to create and sustain action groups around various issues. Too often, he stated, farmers' groups are established and then fizzle out after they achieve the immediate goals they were designed to address. McAllister expressed that the trainings should provide Extension personnel with ways to help farmers abandon short-term thinking in favor of developing long-term sustainable working groups that focus on specific issues.

John Woolford stated that the trainings should provide Extension professionals with practical organizational development/capacity building skills in a variety of topics. Group sustainability is a key area of concern. He asked Team 2 to propose topics that they thought should be explored over the two day training. The team suggested the following topics:

- What can Extension as an organization influence and not influence? (with practical ways to discern the difference)
- Effective Communication and Conflict Resolution
- Transformational Education<sup>2</sup>
- Community Development Toolbox<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Due to flight delays caused by poor Wisconsin weather, UW-Extension/Partners team member Greg Wise did not arrive in Guyana until late Monday, January 7.

<sup>2</sup> This topic was later added to the list considering that it felt well with capacity building.

<sup>3</sup> This topic was also added later.

- Team Building
- Community/Social Networking
- General Leadership Development
- Appreciative Inquiry (AI)
- Action Planning (using AI)

It was agreed that these topics would be presented by Team 2 in a highly interactive way. The team explained that some interactive small group sessions could easily be designed for topics like Appreciative Inquiry and action planning. Additional interactive methods would be modeled as ways Extension professionals could better communicate and work with one another.

Addressing a concern made by Woolford, Team 2 members said that even the training sections that are merely “lecture” in nature would be designed to engage attendees in discussion. Part of that engagement would be enhanced through the illustration of various tools meant to increase self knowledge and organizational capacity. Interactive sessions would not only stimulate thinking but provide those in attendance with practice in these highly important organizational skills. Moreover, the team explained that the tools presented could help Extension professionals develop much needed relationship building skills with farmers.

Woolford also stated and his colleagues seemed to agree that the trainings should be highly organized to illustrate to MOA Extension Services staff how they could conduct similar seminars with farmers.

When asked about the nature of relationship building, MOA and NARI officials brought up influential factors such as ethnicity, family status, socio-economic status and religious orientation. They expressed the need for Extension agents to be sensitive to issues of diversity when working with local farmers.

This concern seems not to have been formally addressed during previous meetings between MOA Extension Services officials and Team 1 or the exploratory team that visited the country in April and May, 2007. Team 2 members agreed to try and address and integrate these topics in the training with Extension staff.

*Visits to Parika and West Watooka Farms (January 8 and 9, 2008)*

#### *General Observations*

Team 2 members spent from 30 to 60 minutes with each of the 10 farmers they visited. It was somewhat difficult reaching the Parika (Region 3) farmers. Dirt roads in the rural areas were inundated with large and deep potholes. Poorly

maintained roads were often mentioned by farmers as major obstacles to getting their cash crops to market. In Parika, a recognized community leader and farmer told us that farmers were unwilling to work together as a cohesive group and this was one reason the roads were not regularly graded. West Watooka (Region 10) roads were markedly better and, although narrow, most were paved.

Each farmer we visited during the two days in both regions was comfortable and willing to talk with us. The local Extension educators that Team 2 worked with have cultivated positive relationships with many farmers in each area. The farmers interviewed during these visits conveyed a sense of professionalism, leadership, and self reliance when talking with team members. As was stated in the April/May and November, 2007 Guyana Team project reports, their knowledge of farming techniques is substantial. Many have years of experience. Each demonstrates entrepreneurial traits. Some saw what they thought was a favorable plot of land, gained the capital necessary to lease it, and started clearing fields, generally by hand.

Most of the farms we visited were between five and 10 acres, although at least one was as small as 2.25 acres and another as large as 17 acres. Nearly all of the farmers were producing cash crops, wholesaled for local markets. Some were also selling their produce retail, at markets and roadside stands. Vegetables, including "bora" (Asian long bean), tomato, eggplant, sweet pepper, and butternut squash, were being produced.

Butternut squash is a crop that Guyana Trade & Investment Support (GTIS) officials are advising Parika farmers to plant for export. Because of the extreme weather conditions (long rainy seasons and periods of dryness) farmers are still learning what it takes to grow it successfully. Farmers believed insufficient technical support was provided and they expressed frustration that they were paying a high cost by experimenting and diverting land from other crops. Over a span of two growing periods, the results were poor in terms of yield and quality. While generally pessimistic, not all farmers are ready to give up on it yet.

Citrus of various kinds and plantain crops were being grown in both regions. Plantain seems to be an important cash crop staple in both regions, but citrus (mango, oranges, etc.) was more prevalent in West Watooka. It again must be pointed out that Team 2 visited only 10 farms, so it is difficult to say whether other farmers in the respective regions were planting similar crops, although later meetings with more farmers in both areas indicated that they were.

Although several important issues were mentioned by farmers in both areas, two in particular stood out. Many of them said that in its heyday Guyanese Extension

officers provided farmers with important materials, or inputs, to produce crops, including seed, pesticides, and even some farm equipment.

Extension's strong historical presence shapes farmers' current expectations about what kind of help they should be receiving from MOA Extension Services and other government agencies like National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI). Collective expectations, shared by farmers and Extension staff, are difficult to change, despite the reality that resources are not available now and are not likely to return. Despite the fact that the Guyanese farmers we met are highly self-reliant, this pervasive mindset seems to have prevented many farmers from thinking outside the box and joining together to help one another. Mistrust between farmers, built out of competition for scarce revenues, has also contributed to an inability or unwillingness of farmers to work well together in groups. This is far more pervasive in the Parika area.

Farmers in both regions also told us that they can not obtain timely and reliable soil test results. Frustration with NARI, the testing agency, was evident. The two previous Farmer to Farmer teams from UW-Extension heard these concerns as well.

One farmer explained that part of the reason why reliable soil tests are so difficult to obtain is that the government agencies coordinating them do not communicate. Whether this is the case or not, disappointment in government agencies providing this basic service pervades these farming communities. MOA Extension Services regional personnel are usually the middle people delivering soil tests to farms and bringing the results back to them from NARI. When results are late and/or inaccurate, this reflects poorly on the staff even though they have little or no control over the situation.<sup>4</sup>

### *Initial Parika Farmer Visits*

Although we met with several farmers in this region who we describe as community leaders, the Parika area seems to have few *groups* of farmers currently working together to tackle shared problems. These leaders indicated to us that most farmers in the area are not willing to work together because they are competing against one another when selling their cash crops to wholesalers (and one person's keen insights could mean a banner crop and higher prices if others were unable to reach the market with their supply). However, this is not the only reason for lack of cooperation. These farmers lack a sense of neighborly bonding and in many cases simply mistrust one another. It is worth noting that the Parika farming community is relatively new as compared to the West Watooka community (10 years old compared to about 30 years old). Many

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<sup>4</sup> This assertion was made at another meeting with farm leaders during the second week of our visit.

of the Parika farmers came to the area from other parts of the country. The lack of homogeneity and a common sense of purpose will take time to overcome.

Parika farmers, at least the ones we met, do not for the most part talk with one another about farming techniques they are using. If they try something different that helps increase yields, they are not likely to share what they did with their neighbors. By contrast, the West Watooka farmers we spoke to indicated that they share useful information with one another.

Parika farmers are open to experimentation, as evidenced by their persistent attempts to develop butternut squash as a cash crop. Three of the farmers we met planted and harvested the crop with very limited success. All of these farmers said that they would continue to try because they've been convinced the squash has excellent export potential. Butternut squash was suggested to the farmers by GTIS.

### *Initial West Watooka Farmer Visits*

If only considering the weather and the roads, traveling to the Linden/West Watooka area was less stressful and more pleasant than going to Parika. As a gift to Guyana, the United States built a significant highway from Georgetown to the area. Before speaking with local farmers, we stopped in Linden to pick up the MOA Extension Services regional staff at their office, shared with a local economic development corporation. The Linden Economic Advancement Programme (LEAP) is a project of the Guyanese government in collaboration with the European Union. The facility provides local farmers and other business owners with a variety of services including marketing assistance, technical advice, training in business and employment skills, and loans. It also runs a local business incubator.

The lending arm of LEAP, provides loans to entrepreneurs requiring start up or expansion capital. We had trouble finding any program criteria, including business plan requirements. As we later discovered, farmers are also lacking information about the loan program, referred to as LEAF.<sup>5</sup>

We met with five extraordinary farmers including Rigby Dovre, a graduate of the Guyana School of Agriculture who chose to return to farming. He grows peppers and is interested in investing in bees as well. He shared his farming operation with great pride. He and most of the farmers we met in both regions had considerable investment in making their land productive.

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<sup>5</sup> This program was specifically referred to during our action planning session with West Watooka farmers during the second week of our visit.

On another farm, George Wallace and his family are developing a new plot of land on a hill where they could grow cash crops without the threat of flooding during the rainy season. He leases the hill and another 15 acres from the government. He is working to clear all the land almost exclusively with a machete (although he was able to borrow a chain saw to cut down some of the larger trees). When asked why he chose to become a farmer, he explained that he helped his father farm for several years and came to "love it." Other than for their homestead of 1-2 acres, all the farmers we met leased land from either the government or a private owner.

### *Guyana Project Trainings for Extension Staff (January 10 and 11)*

Team 2 was charged with providing tools that MOA Extension Services professionals could use ("as is" or in a modified form) to help build capacity within their organization or farmer groups. While an initial outline for this training was developed during discussions held with MOA Extension Services headquarters officials on the first day, the training curriculum was influenced strongly by our field visits with MOA Extension Services regional staff and the farmers they work with on a regular basis.

The trainings took place over a period of two days at the Guyana School of Agriculture (see Appendix I). Both trainings were about six hours in length. Approximately 35 MOA Extension Services professionals attended the January 10 training. About 25 attended during the second day. Many of these staffers traveled quite far to attend the trainings. In Guyana this is especially relevant because of the underdeveloped road and bridge infrastructure.

Several MOA Extension Services headquarters and executive level officials attended the trainings off and on between other commitments and one person from NARI was present throughout most of both days. Nearly all attendees were very receptive and engaged during the 12 hours. A complete agenda and archive of the two-day PowerPoint are provided as appendices to this report. Additionally, we've included a summary of the evaluations affirming the learning and plan for implementing new ideas that participants expressed.

The curriculum was titled: "Capacity Building Skills for Sustainable Programs" and was informed by the community development paradigm. We placed the effort in the Transformational Education context and introduced the Community Development Toolbox as a way of framing work with groups. Specific day one topics included: Controlling Change, Effective Communication, Team Building, Community Networking/Engagement and Community Organizational Assessment. Day two built on the Community Organizational Assessment work of day one and added: Group Sustainability, Leadership Development, Appreciative Inquiry,

Action Planning and Evaluation. For each of the topics, we engaged the learners in active ways to teach the topic and then model the exercise.

Besides using small group discussion methods, the team made an effort to engage learners by providing them with opportunities to assess themselves and learn more about each other. For example, the trainees completed a communication styles assessment. The team used interactive discussion to debrief the attendees on the meaning of the styles and why it might be important to make use of the information they convey, especially as it relates to formulating effective teams that respect and properly utilize individuals' varied talents.

Other tools introduced during the trainings included a community development tool box model, community organizational assessment tool (COAT), an appreciative inquiry scenario exercise, World Café discussion techniques, and a basic action planning template sheet. A post-training evaluation asked what attendees learned and how they planned to use those skills as well as what changes attendees might make in their work with clients or communities. This tool modeled how Extension professionals might begin to measure the effectiveness of their work, utilizing the Logic Model.

We continually related what we were teaching and how we were teaching it to the idea that they might engage their audiences similarly, often pausing to seek out how it might or might not be successfully implemented in their settings. The team also introduced case studies related to the work they do in Wisconsin, providing examples of what succeeded and failed while designing and implementing programs.

Based on the aforementioned evaluations, the participants clearly learned much from and enjoyed the trainings. Some attendees listed specific tools that were introduced in the trainings that they planned to use in their organization and in the field. Those included the community development tool box and the World Café discussion method. A few of the participants mentioned that they gained confidence from attending the sessions.

*Follow- Up Regional Meetings (January 14 - 17, 2008)*

*Parika Farmers (January 14 and 16)*

A Partner's representative and an MOA Extension Services regional staffer told us that at least one non-MOA agency (typically an international development NGO) visits the Parika area yearly to offer farmers some kind of "development deal" and Team 2 got to see this first hand. On the day we were scheduled to meet with Parika farmers to discuss group dynamics, an international NGO rural

development project group already working in other regions of the country, usurped our meeting and our message. They scheduled a community meeting at the same time and were first on stage, promising many inputs, quick results, and no obligations to work as a cooperative group.

We suspect that the nice turnout was probably a result of their attempt and our attempt to gather a group, probably unwittingly, at the same place and time. At any rate, they made a presentation proposing to help 80 of the region's poorest farmers improve their profitability of their cash crop production.<sup>6</sup> Firm representatives offered the approximately 30 farmers present direct inputs such as seed, along with technical support. All the farmers but one said they wanted to be part of the project and few questions were asked. In years past, farmers received inputs from the MOA Extension Services similar to those offered by the NGO. However, MOA officials assured us that the new model of Guyana's Extension Services does not envision a return to this approach. It is worth reiterating that by agreeing to take part in the project—likely because they are desperate for help—the model of attempting to use a short-term solution to solve entrenched long-term problems was reinforced.<sup>7</sup>

This was the initial day we were planning to discuss with farmers how they may go about working together to address some of the concerns mentioned during November's gap analysis session. In fact, our ideas of communal efforts that build leadership and empower the community to be effective were antithetical to the NGO representative's proposal of individual farmers working with program officials. We made a team decision to discuss with the farmers group dynamics in only very general terms. We also made a decision not to keep the farmers very long, as they had already been away from their work for all morning (both the NGO and our Team were delayed by a bridge closing, and the NGO had already taken up over 90 minutes of the morning). What we were able to do the first day in Parika working with a community of farmers was to have each team member provide examples from our community work back home that illustrated how challenging but rewarding it is to form and sustain effective groups. The primary message conveyed by all of us was that the creation of effective work groups is an incremental process that demands much patience. It takes time to identify what a group can work on, to assess and to effectively utilize the strengths of each group member, to choose group leaders, and to develop and then work on an action plan.

Since action planning could not be done at this time because of the barriers explained above, the team decided that the next course of action would be to

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<sup>6</sup> We were late because the floating bridge across the Demerara River closed and our Partners liaison had to find another way to cross the river.

<sup>7</sup> It is also worth noting that we later found out from an MOA official that this group did not inform the agency or Extension that it would be coming to the region to promote their project.

discuss with Parika's most identifiable leaders what kinds of training, information, etc. they might benefit from in order to help them develop effective farm groups that address shared concerns. On January 16, MOA Extension Services staffer, Quincy Hegart organized a meeting for us with five farm community leaders. Their suggestions were both insightful and specific.

The farmers present felt that it would be useful for them and their neighbors to learn more about general leadership principles and how to apply those to their situation. Along with this, they concluded that basic training in group dynamics and conflict resolution would also be relevant. The team suggested that this training could be provided by Team 3. The farmers present agreed to invite emerging leaders from the community to this training. We discerned that community leaders could conceivably help design a training that would be most useful to them and their fellow farmers. Toward that end, we further recommended that the April team meet in week one with these leaders to expand upon conversations we had with them. Again, we are convinced that they should be involved in designing their training and we have concerns that not engaging them in this respectful way could be counterproductive. Finally, we want to characterize the farmer-leaders in Parika and their needs as far more basic in terms of group development. They are "near-ripe" for forming into sustainable groups, but need to be better prepared for that to be successful.

We also suggest Region 3 Extension staff would benefit from a dedicated regional office training in group dynamics, team building, and conflict resolution. This approach would build regional office capacity and teamwork and help staff members apply and cultivate these skills in the communities in which they work.

#### *West Watooka Farmers (January 15 and 17, 2008)*

Team 2 went into the January 15 meeting (about 30 in attendance) expecting to guide farmers and MOA Extension Services regional staff through an action planning process based on concerns farmers raised during the gap analysis conducted in November, 2007 by Team 1. Although the West Watooka farmers continue to have concerns about inadequate soil testing, marketing issues, and excessive manual labor (few machines to assist), they quickly chose another issue to focus their action planning on: access to capital.

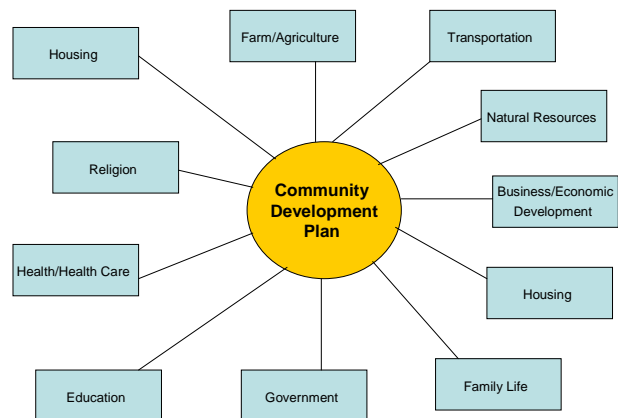
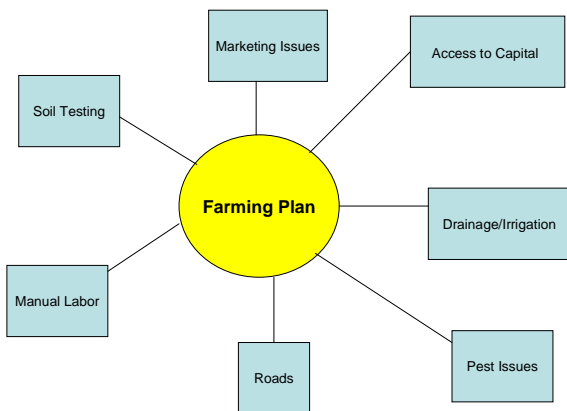
The issue was chosen primarily because the farmers reasoned that dealing with it could go a long way towards helping them acquire the means that would allow them to solve many of the problems they mentioned during the gap analysis. It was also stressed by the team that West Watooka farmers, primarily because of the groups they had already established, had many assets from which to build upon as they create and implement their action plan. The photographed notes

that follow outline the farmers' basic action plan related to improving access to capital.

We went to West Watooka knowing that a farmers' group had already been formed. During the January 15 meeting, we learned that a community group also exists. Although several farmers serve on both groups, the farmers present said that the two groups have somewhat different agendas. While discussing this matter, it was suggested by one of the recognized leaders present that the farmers group develop a "community" plan. Others advocated for a "farming" plan. There was consensus that some kind of broad plan should be created, but uncertainty as to which.

Based on the January 15 discussion, Team 2 members decided to begin the second meeting (January 17) with an overview of the differences between a community development plan and a farming plan.

The two diagrams below were used to explain the differences between a community plan and a farming plan. It was explained that the farming plan is only one element of a broad based community plan that addresses virtually all important issues faced by residents. It was also mentioned by Team 2 members that those in attendance (approximately 20) should consider whether they had the necessary resources to develop either plan. Since farming is such a central part of their community, the consensus among attendees was that it made the most sense to first develop a farming plan.



After consensus was reached that a farm plan should be created, we provided a brief summary about the challenges of group governance. We challenged those present to think about who will lead? How will those people be chosen? Who will

maintain records? Who will do what within the group? Will there be subcommittees to implement the various tasks identified in the action plan? How can the group be sustained?

Then, the following process outline was provided as an example of how the group may want to approach action planning.

- Mandate/Mission: begin by defining the primary purpose of the plan (i.e. what is the most important reason why it will exist) and create a statement to refer to time and time again.
- SOAR (identify Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results).
  - Strengths/assets of the community as they now stand.
  - Opportunities that are available to the community from organizations or individuals within it and outside of it (what can the community take advantage of?).
  - Aspirations/dreams: define a vision of the community's preferred future.
  - Results: how will success be measured?
- Set goals to maximize community strengths/assets; to take advantage of opportunities; to strive toward a collective community aspiration.
- Action Planning.
  - What tasks need to be done to achieve the goal?
  - What resources (people, money, equipment, etc. are needed to complete tasks?
  - Who will complete the tasks?
  - When will tasks be completed?
  - When does goal need to be achieved?

The team reiterated that the group had already begun action planning, but it was now time to continue that process. The group decided to expand their action plan related to the goal of improving farmers' access to capital.

We divided them into small discussion groups. They used flipchart paper to write down and summarize their ideas. Spokespeople reported for their group. In addition, very creative ideas and tasks were suggested including the development of a micro-enterprise revolving loan pool. We left the action plans in the hands of Raymond Paul, Chairman of the Farmer's Group.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Meeting with MOA Officials (January 18, 2008)***

During a January 18 wrap-up session at MOA offices, Team 2 began the discussion by thanking those present (see picture on page 15) for the privilege of working with MOA Extension Services headquarters and regional staff. We acknowledged the spirit of innovation and great pride exhibited by the farmers we were privileged to meet (a complete "Post-Visit Briefing" outline is included in the appendix).

Team 2 members summarized their accomplishments in the following way:

- Gained a better understanding of and built trust with farmers and regional staff.
- As indicated by one-on-one conversations and formal evaluations, the MOA workshop was well-received and useful.
  - Team 2 successfully introduced hands on tools that fostered learning among those present.
  - Attendees seemed to feel that much of what they learned could also be used in the field and within their organization (modified to fit circumstances and culture).
  - Team 2 members also felt that their introduction of effective methods to help Extension staffers generate, organize and select information and to build better relationships with one another was very effective (modeling brainstorming techniques, small group discussion, etc.).

Team members went on to share that they were very impressed with the regional staffs' competency in organizing meetings. It was clear from team members' experiences with these individuals that they know the people, work well with them, and care about them.

While working with farmer groups, Team 2 determined that those farmers in the two regions were at different stages of readiness. The West Watooka farmers were ready to take on meaningful action planning. Team members also concluded that with help from the MOA Extension Services regional staff, West Watooka farmers could make progress on their action plan between Team 2's departure and Team 3's arrival. Team 2's general conclusions about both farming communities, includes:

- Both farming regions possess dynamic leadership.
- West Watooka has more formal leadership and a well defined farmers' and community group.
- Parika leaders want to learn about how to form and sustain effective groups.
- West Watooka farmers and leaders are ready to conduct action planning.

Team 2 made the following recommendations to MOA Extension Services executives:

- Regional trainings should be developed with and conducted for Extension staff in both the Parika and West Watooka regions.
  - Parika staff should have training in conflict resolution, team building and group dynamics.
  - West Watooka staff could benefit from training in action planning and group dynamics.
- MOA senior staff trainings primarily focusing on leadership development should be conducted (MOA executives present at the meeting were receptive to the idea).
  - As a feature of that training, MOA senior officials should tackle one vexing problem that the farmers in both areas have (soil testing) and develop a plan to resolve it (Team 2 feels that such a gesture would go a long way toward rebuilding farmers' faith in the MOA and MOA Extension Services regional staff's feelings of headquarters).
  - MOA senior staff training should address situation analysis, leadership development trends (servant leadership in particular) and new paradigms.
- Trainings in leadership and group dynamics should be designed with and conducted for Parika farmers—Team 3 should meet with farmers to build on the discussion Team 2 had with them about these trainings.
- Team 3 should follow up with West Watooka farmers to discern how much progress has been made on their farming plan, specifically the access to capital elements and then continue to work with the West Watooka farmers on their action plans.

Team 2 makes the following recommendations to University of Wisconsin-Extension and Farmer to Farmer Project leaders:

- Team 2's experience leads to the recommendation that future teams would benefit—and more importantly, the MOA Extension Services staff and farmers would be better served by—having one member of the most recent team accompany the next team to the country.
- Project volunteers need to be carefully briefed—in person if possible—by the previous team (joined by other volunteers if available) to ensure a complete and effective transition.
- Project volunteers should be well prepared for the potential role that the previous team anticipated for them, including having documents and handouts in hard copy and/or electronic files.
- Project volunteers should be carefully screened for the willingness and ability to deal with the physical challenges of the setting (difficult transportation conditions, extremely challenging walking situations, primitive or no toilets, limited food and drink choices, heat and humidity).
- Project volunteers clearly must be matched to the likely content they will be responsible for, but equally, must be willing and able to adjust to unplanned and unanticipated changes that they may encounter related to scheduling of activities and curriculum.

Finally, Team 2 offers it's profound thanks to all those that made the opportunity available. As we shared in Guyana many times, we have little doubt that we gained at least as much as we gave in this endeavor.