

Youth Entrepreneurship and Agriculture: MEDA's Youth Extension Officer Model



Context: MEDA's EFACE Project

Ethiopia: high youth unemployment and underemployment

- Pressure for youth to move from farming to urban activities

Last mile problem – agro dealers not selling into the remote villages

Two goals of the project

- to provide livelihood opportunities for youth
- To increase household resiliency through increased knowledge of and access to agricultural inputs

MEDA's approach: seeking business solutions to poverty

What is the problem that we are trying to solve with the concept of Youth Agricultural Sales Agent?

- *Is this mostly about jobs?*
- *Are we talking about teaching youth to become self-managed workers?*
- *Or Entrepreneurs?*

Lots of talk about Entrepreneurship-
What is an entrepreneur?

Entrepreneurship is....

A mindset:

Seeing a problem or gap in the marketplace that can be addressed by:

- Offering something that is not already there
- Providing a product or service that is better, faster, or cheaper than what already exists



The role play

- Illustrates our Youth Extension Officer model
- 6 roles: youth extension officer, NGO worker (livelihoods), farmer, agricultural input supplier, unemployed young man, extension worker, community worker
- Goal: show interaction of different market actors and explore where the gaps lie (and can be filled by youth?)

Role Play Instructions

Volunteers:

- Read your role cards and ask any clarification questions you need.
- Remember that this will be a role play, not just reading your card. Be creative!

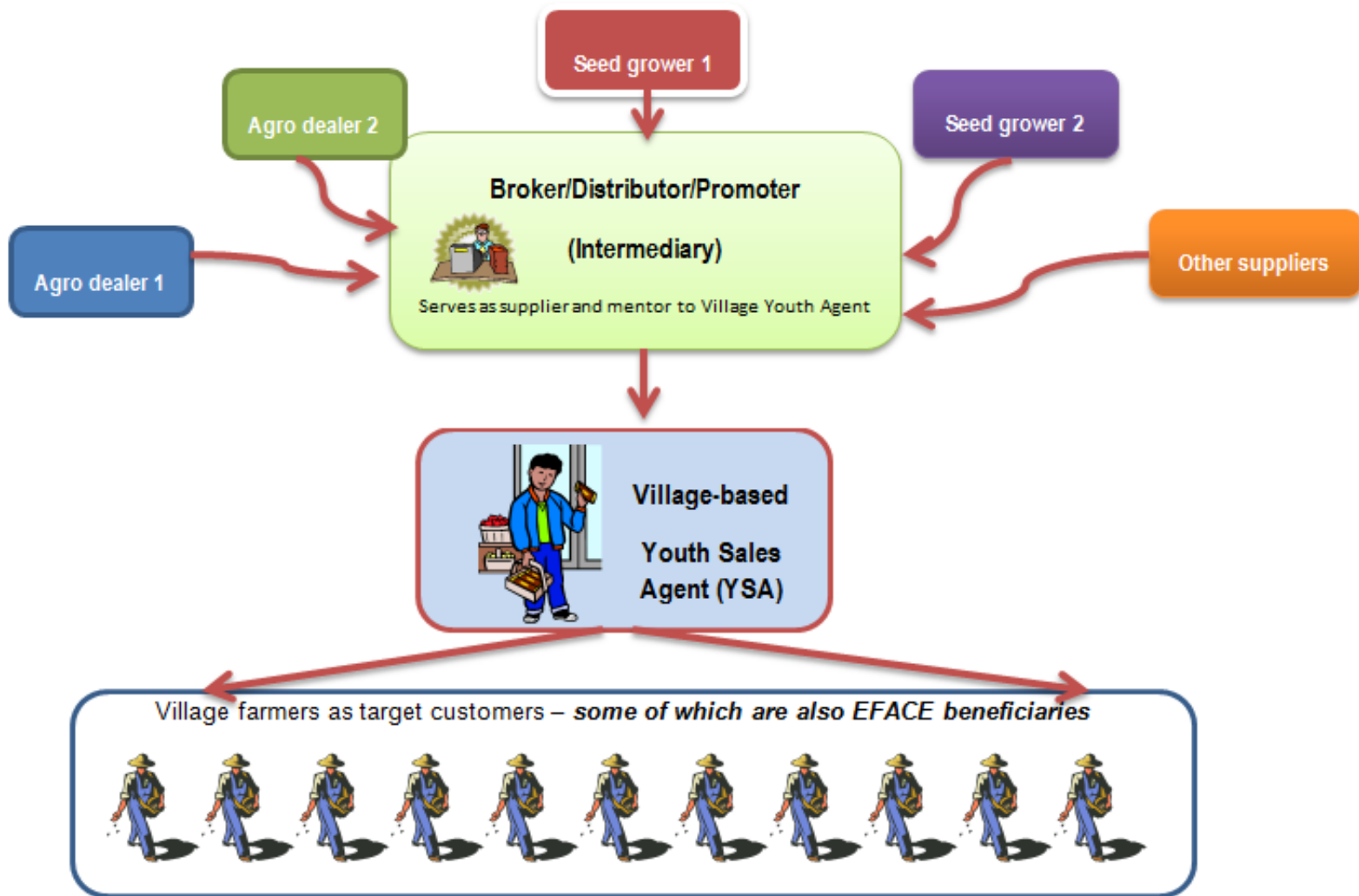
Audience:

- Consider the questions on our next slide while listening
- While the volunteers are preparing, read the 2 page overview of the Youth Sales Agent Model

Audience Analysis

While you are watching the role play, consider these questions:

- What is the Market Opportunity – the unmet need?
- What is the value being created – and can we quantify it?
- Who else other actors – and what's in it for them?
- Do we know how to choose and equip the youth entrepreneurs?



Key takeaways

1. A market cannot be forced. Need exists or something of value is created.
2. Understand what the value is and what it is worth
3. Not everyone is destined to be an entrepreneur
4. It takes a village – and it has to make sense for everyone involved or it won't last beyond the project interventions
5. Others?