

PRESS RELEASE

Mercy Corps holds first Kenya Annual Learning Event to share findings from the AgriFin Accelerate program

Discussions to focus on opportunities and challenges in agriculture, learning about increasing digitally-enabled services for smallholders

Nairobi, December 6th 2016—A learning platform to share insights and learning about providing digital financial and information services to smallholder farmers will begin in Nairobi with a learning event on December 6th. Organized by AgriFin Accelerate, a development program of Mercy Corps in partnership with The MasterCard Foundation, the full-day event will discuss opportunities and challenges facing the agricultural sector, and share learning on how to increase digitally-enabled services for smallholder farmers in the region.

The event brings together more than 200 leading market stakeholders from the region, including mobile network operators, commercial banks and other financial institutions, the Kenyan government, technology innovators and a broad spectrum of agricultural sector players, including major buyers, input suppliers, and farmer organizations among others.

The Kenya Annual Learning Event will enable participants to share and learn from one another and engage in in-depth discussion on topics of highest priority to smallholders, including:

- technology innovation;
- digital financial services;
- credit scoring;
- building partnerships;
- distribution channels;
- transport logistics;
- reaching women and youth;
- client protection in the digital world;
- contract farming going digital; and
- a farmer capability lab.

“As part of our learning this year, we have found that the ecosystems required to serve smallholders are both complex and fragmented, and may best be addressed



through digital technologies and payment systems,” said Leesa Shrader, the AgriFin Accelerate Program Director at Mercy Corps.

The AgriFin Accelerate program is a six-year, \$25 million program of Mercy Corps, supported by The MasterCard Foundation and operating in Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia. The program helps to close the gap in access to financial and information services experienced by smallholder farmers.

The learning event opens with keynote addresses on digital financial services, highlights partner learning and the role of technology in agriculture, and closes with a panel discussion to explore the potential of Internet tools to transform markets for smallholders. Through shared learning, this event will support existing technical initiatives, identify new areas of focus and provide an opportunity to energize players around digital financial inclusion for smallholder farmers.

At the event, Mercy Corps will officially present the 2016 Kenya Farmer Benchmark survey results.

###

Media Contact:

Abraham Mudasia, Communications Manager,
AgriFin Accelerate Program,
+254 721 883842/+254 724 357 488
amudasia@mercycorps.org

About Mercy Corps

Mercy Corps is a leading global humanitarian agency saving and improving lives in the world’s toughest places. With a network of experienced professionals in more than 40 countries, we partner with local communities to put bold ideas into action to help people recover, overcome hardship and build better lives. Now, and for the future. For more information, please visit www.mercycorps.org

AgriFin Accelerate is a development program of Mercy corps supported by The MasterCard Foundation. The programs seeks to close the gap in access to financial



**MERCY
CORPS**

**AGRIFIN
ACCELERATE**



**The MasterCard
Foundation**

and information services experienced by the smallholder farmers. For more information, please visit www.mercycorpsafa.org. Follow the program at @MercyCorpsAFA on Twitter.

About The MasterCard Foundation

The MasterCard Foundation works with visionary organizations to provide greater access to education, skills training and financial services for people living in poverty, primarily in Africa. As one of the largest, private foundations, its work is guided by its mission to advance learning and promote financial inclusion to create an inclusive and equitable world. Based in Toronto, Canada, its independence was established by MasterCard when the Foundation was created in 2006. For more information and to sign up for the Foundation's newsletter, please visit www.mastercardfdn.org. Follow the Foundation at @MastercardFdn on Twitter.