



# Miller Center

for Social Entrepreneurship

**Name of social enterprise:** Farmerline

**Mission statement:** Farmerline's mission is to transform millions of smallholder farmers into successful entrepreneurs by building global technologies merged with local expertise.

**Webpage:** [www.farmerline.co](http://www.farmerline.co)

**GSBI Accelerator 2016 business plan presentation:**

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTFApFZek1zqTmEr1oMvFKTYAszISYUvq>

**Headquarters:** Accra, Ghana (company headquarters), and Kumasi, Ghana (field operations headquarters)

**Location(s) of research:** Ghana

**Impact to date:** Reached over 200,000 farmers across 5 West African countries with mobile content.

**Background:** Smallholder farmers are the backbone of the economy in many African countries. Despite the critical role of smallholder farming in the economy, and the pressing need to improve its productivity given population growth, climate volatility, and food security challenges, many countries struggle with inefficient supply chains, inadequate farmer education programs, and underinvestment in supportive infrastructure. In Ghana, for example, the government has only 1 agricultural extension agent to train and collect information from every 2000 farmers. Combined with poor road and communication infrastructure, this has created a huge gap in farmer information, services, and access to markets.

Farmerline is a for-profit Ghanaian company that has built a social business, software technology, and partnership network reaching over 200,000 farmers across 5 countries in 3 years. Their mission is to enable millions of farmers to become successful entrepreneurs by building global technologies that leverage local expertise. Farmerline links smallholder farmers with agricultural businesses, government agricultural extensions and education programs, and more profitable markets.

**The challenge:** To document and communicate the full range of social and economic benefits provided by Farmerline technology to its business to business (B2B) and business to farmer (B2F) customers.

**Action research products needed:**

1. Two impact assessment reports. Farmerline has requested help in characterizing its social impact through 1) its direct B2F business model and 2) its B2B business model. A systematic report on the B2F model would help the enterprise report its impact to funders, NGO customers, investors, and explain to governments the benefits of working with Farmerline. A systematic report on the B2B model would help the enterprise report its impact through businesses working with farmers and present the benefits of businesses using the Farmerline platform. A pilot study (now dated) suggested that increased

information access allows farmers to increase their yields and garner better market prices. Farmerline has some quantitative data, and could gather more. Fellows would validate the quantitative data and gather qualitative data.

2. Two documentary videos. The first would convey how smallholder farmers use feature phones, in local languages, to access agronomic, weather and market information. It would explain how Farmerline serves farmers. The second would present the value proposition to agricultural businesses, to help the enterprise expand its business-to-business customers.

**Student skills needed:** Social science survey development; interviewing skills; data science; videography.

**Keywords:** Social impact assessment. Small holder farmers. Local agricultural markets. Agricultural extension.



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