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FEED THE FUTURE AGRICULTURE POLICY SUPPORT PROJECT

**QUARTERLY REPORT (APRIL - JUNE 2014)
PROJECT YEAR 1, QUARTER 2**

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The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chemonics International is pleased to submit this second quarterly report to USAID/Ghana, covering the period April to June 2014. The main goal of the Feed the Future (FtF) Agriculture Policy Support project (APSP) is to improve the food security enabling environment for private sector investment, by increasing the capacity of Government of Ghana (GOG), the private sector, and civil society organizations to implement evidence-based policy formation and implementation, research and advocacy as well as perform rigorous monitoring and evaluation of agricultural programs implemented under the Medium Term Agriculture Sector Investment Plan (METASIP).

The Project has three components:

- a. Policy formation and implementation, which is aimed at improving Ghana's agricultural sector policy process for evidence-based decision making related to food security
- b. Policy research, aimed at making available increasing rigorous policy analysis capacity for evidence-based policy making, and;
- c. Policy advocacy, aimed at strengthening the institutional and technical capacities of private agribusiness organizations, civil society organizations and the media, to enable them increase their participation and amplify their voice in the public policy process.

During the second quarter, the APSP has continued to meet with key stakeholders and made significant progress on the Y1 work plan amidst some unexpected delays linked to the need to receive technical and political clearance from the Minister of Food and Agriculture (MoFA):

- APS identified MoFA's priority needs from MoFA and the project received proposal requests from the following Directorates: Plant Protection and Regulated Services, Crop Services, Statistics, Research and Information and Women in Agriculture.
- APS is participating in various coordination schemes with other USAID/Ghana Feed the Future projects and other development partners to address MoFA's needs, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and expand development impacts; at the same time has taken the lead in other coordination schemes with the same purpose.
- The Policy Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (PPMED) has set out the course for development of the actions plans to be supported by the project to assist in the strengthening of the METASIP Steering Committee and of the SAKKS Nodes.
- APS has completed the initial mapping of prospective CSOs and FBOs to receive capacity-building support to improve their policy advocacy skills.
- The project has liaised with GiZ to jointly support the revival of the Agriculture Public-Private Dialogue Forum being led by PEF.
- The project has started to share its vision with Non-State Actors (NSA) and other public organizations in various regions of the country, enabling us to gain strong understanding of the context of agriculture sector policy and that of its main stakeholders.

In general, our relationship with MoFA and private stakeholders has been highly productive. Notwithstanding, there is the need to increase the project relationship with the ministry's leadership as a means to speed up implementation and share with them the full context and activities of our project to strengthen the agriculture policy process in Ghana, including reporting and commenting on our activities with private stakeholders.

ACRONYMS

AESD	Agricultural Engineering Services Directorate
AGRA	Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa
APD	Animal Production Directorate
APPDF	Agricultural Public Private Dialogue Forum
APSP	Agriculture Policy Support Project
ASWG	Agriculture Sector Working Group
BUSAC	Business Sector Advocacy Challenge Fund
CDI	Center for Development and Innovation
CEPA	Center for Policy Analysis
COP	Chief of Party
CSD	Crop Services Directorate
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DAEA	Department of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness
FAGE	Federation of Associations of Ghanaian Exporters
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FBO	Farmer-Based Organizations
GAWU	Ghana Agricultural Workers Union
GFAP	Ghana Federation of Agricultural Producers
GNAFF	Ghana National Association of Farmers and Fishermen
GNAPF	Ghana National Association of Poultry Farmers
GOG	Government of Ghana
GRIB	Ghana Rice Inter-professional Body
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
ISODEC	Integrated Social Development Center
ISSER	Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research
ISU	Iowa State University
METASIP	Medium Term Agriculture Sector Investment Plan
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MOFAD	Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development
MOTI	Ministry of Trade and Industries
NAFCO	National Buffer Stock Company
NASWG	Northern Agriculture Sector Working Group
NBBCU	Northern Bread Basket Coordinating Unit
PEF	Private Enterprise Federation
PFAG	Peasant Farmers Association of Ghana
PPMED	Policy Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate
PPRSD	Plant Protection and Regulatory Services
SADA	Savannah Accelerated Development Authority
SAKSS	Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System
SPEG	Sea-freight Pineapple Exporters of Ghana
SRID	Statistics Research and Information Directorate
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAAPP	West African Agricultural Productivity Project
WIAD	Women in Agriculture Development

A. PROGRESS BY COMPONENT

A1. Component 1: Policy Formation and Implementation

Component 1 aims at improving Ghana's agricultural sector policy process for evidence-based decision-making related to food security and has four main pillars as follows:

- To improve capacity for policy analysis and evaluation by core METASIP. implementing institutions by standing up the SAKSS node
- To enhance implementation of improved policies/regulations/administrative procedures as outlined by GOG-endorsed policy documents and agreements made between GOG, donors and private sector.
- To improve policies that enable private sector develop, commercialize and use improved agricultural inputs to increase smallholder productivity and incomes, and.
- To improve execution of METASIP.

A1a. Progress to date

The APSP received technical clearance from MoFA for at in June 2014, and as a result, a number of activities started in Q1 got delayed. To facilitate the process, the COR and the project team made multiple attempts to meet with MoFA's management and continued working with the different Directorates to pave the way for the next quarter. The project made significant progress in Q2 as described below:

Program Support. APSP continued to work with senior officials of the Policy Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (PPMED), Statistics Research and Information Directorate (SRID), Plant Protection and Regulatory Services (PPRS), Crop Services Directorate (CSD), Women In Agriculture Development Directorate (WIADD), all of MoFA and with the Agriculture and Agribusiness Unit (AAU) of the Ministry of Finance (MOF), to define activities that the project could support. So far, the project received requests for support from SRID, PPRS, CSD and WIADD.

SRID's request is to support implementation of a 6-month project involving the training of its staff nationwide and provision of equipment/tools to enhance their work. Requests from PPRS and DCS are to support to undertake a national sensitization exercise for public education of the Plants and Fertilizer Law and for short-term technical assistance to develop implementable projects out of the Fertilizer and Seed Policies and Regulations. WIADD's request is for short-term technical assistance to review the Gender and Agriculture Development Strategy (GADS). Since receiving clearance from the Ministry, we have started working with the Directorates on the way forward to materialize our support.

Attendance to USAID Meetings. The Project's technical team attended several meetings, at the instance of [REDACTED], our Project COR, to discuss priority policy areas and agree on ways to provide support. In June 2014, the Chief of Party (COP) and the Senior Policy/Institutional Development Specialist participated in a meeting at USAID to discuss the West Africa Seed Program and how it may be harmonized with and fused into Ghana's own seed industry. At this meeting, it was

agreed that the APSP would work with DCS and PPRSD to harmonize Ghana's seed policies with the regional ones. In addition, the project's senior team discussed at length with the COR issues related to the future of the National Buffer Stock Company (NAFCO). MoFA has requested USAID's help with the drafting of terms of reference (TORs) for a comprehensive study of NAFCO, leading to a possible re-structuring/privatization of the company. APSP will take the lead drafting the TORs in Q3 after consulting with key stakeholders.

In April, 2014, USAID/Ghana called for a meeting between the project and MoFA's Agriculture and Agribusiness Unit (AAU) to discuss how APSP's proposed capacity building initiatives could benefit its staff. It was agreed that APSP will invite the AAU to participate in training programs planned for MoFA, to help build the capacity of the Unit in policy research/analysis.

Attendance to Meetings at MoFA. The project technical team participated in the Joint Sector Review (JSR) in June 2014, and the COP and the Senior Policy/Institutional Development Specialist also attended meetings of the Agriculture Sector Working Group (ASWG) and its affiliated Policy and Governance Sub Groups. From the JSR, the APSP has identified specific sector priority needs for future collaboration with MoFA. At the Policy and Governance Sub Groups in June 2014, the project's senior team discussed the implementation of specific key action areas assigned to the APSP at the JSRs. All parties agreed on the need to adopt a more holistic approach to dealing with the challenges, and as a response APSP will organize workshops with PPMED and SRID in Q3 to develop action plans and address issues in a more coordinated fashion.

Improving METASIP execution. In May, the project's senior staff attended a meeting supported by the Regional SAKSS (Re-SAKSS) located within the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Ibadan, Nigeria, that examined the progresses of CAADP, the METASIP and the SAKSS node. Conclusions arising from a study undertaken for the review indicated that the CAADP and its related METASIP/SAKSS mechanisms are facing a number of challenges in Ghana. Since the review meeting, the project team and the Policy Analyst of the Re-SAKSS in IITA have committed to coordinate efforts to revitalize the METASIP the SAKKS Nodes specifically.

Support to Women in Agriculture. Through consultations, the project and WIADD agreed on an area of support. WIADD's initial request for support to revise its GADS will be covered by assistance from the West African Agriculture Productivity Project (WAAPP) APSPS will support a baseline survey on gender-disaggregated data in the agriculture sector as well as a public sensitization of the revised GADS which will be printed and distributed by WAAPP.

Implementation of Plants and Fertilizer Act, Policies and Regulations. The Plants and Fertilizer Act 803, passed in 2010, has three main parts including, Plant Protection, Seeds and Fertilizers. The three Councils to oversee the implementation of all the three parts of the Law were inaugurated in February 2014, and the appropriate seed and fertilizer policy documents have been developed by DCS and PPRSD, respectively. The DCS receives assistance from AGRA and from the IFDC through

the USAID-funded Agricultural Technology Transfer (ATT) Project, to develop the Seed Policy into implementable project ideas. AGRA and IFDC also provide support for local consultancies and other local activities involved in the process. PPRSD also received support from the USAID-funded West Africa Fertilizer Program (WAFP) in the implementation of the Act. During the quarter under review, both PPRSD and DCS submitted requests to the APSP for support to embark on sensitization exercises.

Once again, APSP took the initiative to coordinate the on-going support for the implementation of Act 803, 2010 and organized a series of meetings with all stakeholders in June 2014, to discuss a coordination framework in order to align interventions and increase cost efficiency. Participants at the meetings, agreed to set up an informal discussion platform to work with MOFA to remove policy constraints in the seed and fertilizer industries and to coordinate the various supports to these industries. A Concept Paper developed by APSP and vetted by all members of the informal group, has been submitted to the Directors of PPRSD and DCS to adequately brief the new Minister of Food and Agriculture on the intent of the informal group and to seek his concurrence for the implementation of the priority action areas identified in the discussions.

Since their inauguration in February 2014, the Councils have not met for lack of resources. At the June 2014 meetings, the members of the group expressed their worry over this development. Therefore, they identified, as a matter of priority, the need to take immediate steps to facilitate meetings of the three Councils and work with them to lead in the implementation process.

Implementation of the Plants and Fertilizer Act 803, falls within the mandate of both the PPRSD and DCS. Accordingly, an agreement was reached in the informal group for the two Directorates to develop a joint strategy and budget for their planned sensitization exercise, on the realization a joint effort would be more cost effective. Beyond the public sensitization of the Act, however, PPRSD and DCS need further support to implement the other aspects of the Act's policies and regulations. These specific needs will be submitted separately for consideration at a meeting supported by the project and scheduled for July 2014, during which the partners will identify specific activities that they would fund.

Embedding a Policy Analyst and Researcher at MoFA's PPMED. In June 2014, APSP received MoFA's feedback and approval for the embedded Policy Analyst. The position's SOW was jointly developed by the APSP and CEPA and submitted to PPMED in Q1.

A1b. Challenges and recommendations for adjustments and corrective action

As indicated previously in this report, APSP had to delay some activities while waiting for MoFA's official clearance especially in Components 1 and 2. While waiting for the clearance, the project has worked closely with the different directorates to continue building a productive relationship with their staff and identify interventions areas for support.

Even though MoFA's Directorates have been collaborative, they need to consult with MoFA's management on every single initiative discussed with APSP, which

contributes to further delays. APSP would greatly benefit from USAID formally presenting the project to MoFA's management, so the project can start developing a relationship with higher-level ministerial staff as means to get their buy-in and speed up implementation.

A1c. Outcomes of high-level meetings held and field visits

Meeting with the Hon. Minister of Food and Agriculture. As part of USAID/Ghana's Office of Economic Growth's efforts to provide advice to MoFA on relevant issues concerning the Fertilizer Subsidy Program, the project's COP participated to a meeting with the Honorable Minister of Food and Agriculture. At the meeting, the Director of Crop Services (DCS) shared some data on yield and production levels in the Ghanaian agriculture sector since the beginning of the subsidy in 2008, that showed an increase of both yields and production that could be attributed in part to the use of fertilizers. The DCS also touched upon financial issues the GOG is facing being in debt with fertilizers suppliers for 2012 and 2013 crop seasons. During this meeting, the project's COP made the following suggestions:

- The GOG might consider substituting direct cash payments to fertilizers suppliers for tax credit letters that these agents can either use to pay for their own local tax obligations or negotiate them with other private units at a discount. The Hon Minister took interest in the proposal, asking questions about implementation, especially with relation to its legal feasibility. We understand that the project's proposal was further discussed with other GOG officials.
- If the subsidy program continues, then there is the need to need to improve its transparency, efficiency, and establish confidence among suppliers and farmers about the implementation of the program to plan ahead of the planting season. The Honorable Minister indicated that initially the GOG plans to keep the program up and running for the 2014 planting season.
- IFPRI/Ghana and APSP could work with the Directorate of Crop Services on initiating a research process to assess what the impacts of the subsidy fertilizer have been on increasing yields in the Ghanaian agriculture and contribute with designing some level of promotional campaign to increase awareness and support MoFA's objectives with relation to the program.

Meetings with COPs managing USAID/Ghana's Feed the Future Projects. The COP and the Senior Policy and Institutional Development Advisor continued to attend monthly meetings of the USAID/Ghana Feed the Future projects COPs, The group is unofficially named the "Collaborative Circle of Chiefs of Party" (CCC) and has the broad objective to identify common areas of work, avoid duplicating efforts and thus increase the impact of USAID's development efforts. This initial coordination process was initiated when the COP invited the other COPs to attend APSP's First Annual Work Plan session, seeking for the identification of overlaps that could be jointly worked out. The CCC is an institutional innovation that puts project coordination as a priority that comes along the main tenets of the USAID Forward vision.

In Q2, discussions centered mostly on how to share information on grants and activities of the various projects. METSS accepted to design a database to promote information sharing among all projects. Activities to be shared varied from assessing

technical impacts, shared research papers, success stories, monitoring approaches, etc. COPs decided to institute quarterly meetings of the Project M&E and Grants Managers. A joint baseline on a set of indicators will be co-funded by all FtF projects.

A1d. Planned activities for next quarter

The Project will work with MoFA and the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (MoFAD) on the following activities:

- Embed a Policy Analyst and Researcher within MOFA's PPMED
- Organize a workshop to develop a short and long-term plans for improving METASIP execution and the strengthening of METASIP's Steering Committee.
- Undertake a capacity needs assessment of METASIP implementing institutions, PPMED and appropriately train all relevant staff of MOFA and the AAU of the MOF.
- Train staff of the AAU of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) on agriculture policy analysis and research.
- Support METASIP Secretariat in implementing some "quick-wins" identified in the short and long-term plans
- Facilitate the implementation of a roundtable discussion among some development partners with SRID to agree on a harmonized approach to support this directorate to improve agricultural data collection, analysis and dissemination.
- Support WIAD to conduct a baseline study on gender and agriculture; support public education of its GADS document and to organize training in gender sensitive budgeting, resource management, financial planning and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).
- In collaboration with other development partners, facilitate meetings of the three Councils overseeing the implementation of the Plants and Fertilizer Act and to develop action plans to build capacities of the Councils and their Secretariat.
- Support PPRSD and the DCS in creating national awareness of the Plants and Fertilizer Act, through an intense sensitization program with stakeholders
- Support PPRSD and the DCS thorough technical assistance and capacity building activities to implement plans for the full implementation of the Seeds and Fertilizer Policies and Regulations.
- Provide technical assistance to MOFAD for the development of its policy document into investment/bankable projects.

A1e. Assessment of progress against the objectives and results

Despite the delays caused the late in initiating some activities in the Policy Formation component, the Project made significant progress. Many of the activities planned for Q1 and Q2 have been initiated according to our workplan and most of our progress made in Q2 resides in identifying priority needs from the ministry, the establishment of an excellent rapport with MoFA's Directorates, which is critical for implementation, and the efforts developed by the project to seek technical and

institutional coordination with other USAID/Ghana FtF projects and other development partners.

From the different support proposals received from MoFA's directorates and our direct discussions with their staff, the project has identified specific activities that will—if implemented—contribute to reinforcing the ministry's capacity for agriculture policy formation and implementation. These discussions and almost daily communications with the directors have also contributed to developing a personal and institutional relationship that undoubtedly will also contribute to a steady progress. On the other hand, the project has established itself as a reference for assisting the strengthening of agriculture policy in Ghana and to this end, has been working “around the clock” in contributing to the establishment or participating in a network of institutional coordination schemes, not only with USAID/Ghana Feed the Future projects but also with other development partners. These coordination arrangements are assisting the project in advancing its technical activities while avoiding duplication of efforts hence, contributing to their effectiveness and impact.

MoFA's political and technical clearance will allow the project to move forward with implementation, and the senior staff will continue making efforts to communicate and build a relationship with the ministry's leadership as a critical step towards enhancing project implementation. .

A2. Component 2: Policy Research

Component 2 aims at producing high quality policy research to promote rigorous policy analysis for evidence-based policymaking.

A2a. Progress to date

Meeting with Academia on Agricultural Research. The COP and the Senior Policy and Institutional Development Adviser met with the Provost of the College of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences of the University of Ghana and had discussions on a wide range of issues, including METASIP and its functioning. The Provost represents research/academia on the METASIP Steering Committee. We have also made contact with the Dean of Agriculture of the Presbyterian University at Abetifi in the eastern region and are in the process of defining areas of support.

Support to Private Sector Organizations. We have made contact with umbrella bodies like the Private Enterprises Federation (PEF), Federation of Associations of Ghanaian Exporters (FAGE) and Sea-freight Pineapple Exporters of Ghana (SPEG) that are at the forefront of working to influence agricultural sector policies. These organizations need support in the area of policy research, which we will be able to provide through our grants program.

A2b. Challenges and Recommendations

The METASIP Steering Committee (SC) and its related SAKSS nodes, is responsible for identifying relevant research areas, an activity that has not been implemented at its fullest. The APSP will be able to further support the SC in this capacity in Q3.

The project has had difficulties identifying candidates for the grants manager position within FSN max and several qualified candidates have turned on offers since Q1 because the project was not able to align salary offers to their salary history. This has delayed the beginning of our grants program. APSPS has identified a new qualified candidate that we are hoping to get on board by the beginning of Q3. Once the grants manager is on board, he/she will be working with the Chemonics home office grants specialist, grants department and APSP's technical team to develop the project's grants manual. After the grants manual is approved by USAID the project will be able to start its grants program.

A2c. Planned Activities for Next Quarter

APSP has planned the following activities for the next quarter:

- On boarding of a Grants Manager and development of the grants manual, including training the project staff on the use and application of the manual.
- Set up the grants management scheme and once approval from USAID on the manual is received, establish the small grants fund
- Agree on relevant research topics as part of our engagement with and capacity building interventions of the METASIP SC.
- Sign MOUs with relevant research institutes to undertake identified research topics, among them ITTA and AGRA.

A2d. Assessment of progress against objectives

There has been delays in the implementation of this component. Now that MoFA has cleared project implementation and the METASIP SC will soon be submitting its requests for support, we can expect to make progress from the third quarter onwards.

The project has determined that the first set of research studies to be supported will be drawn from the priorities set out by the METASIP Steering Committee following the SAKSS nodes recommendations. In our First Year Work Plan, we determined to hold workshops with private stakeholders to identify research priorities, but now we understand that the SAKSS recommendations are demand-driven.

In Q3, the project will undertake some additional consultations with private stakeholders and examine if as part of the dynamics that characterizes events in the agriculture sector, other research needs might have been identified. For instance, researching the impacts (both from the agronomic and economic standpoints) of the fertilizer subsidy program on the present conditions of agriculture in Ghana is one area of major importance. It seems that researching the impacts of macroeconomic policies on agriculture is another issue of interest, especially when because of different scenarios farmers are heavily affected by falling prices while competing against food imports now even more promoted by the depreciation of the local currency. Another area for further research and subsequent policy recommendations is the expansion of agriculture insurance, which as pointed out by empirical demonstrations is the engine for technological innovation.

A3. Component 3: Policy Advocacy

This component is intended to strengthen the institutional and technical capacities of private agribusiness organizations, civil society organizations, including farmer-based organizations (FBOs) and other civil society organizations and the media, for them increase their participation and amplify their voice in the public policy process. This result is to be achieved through the pursuit of the following three pillars:

- Improve the engagement of the private sector in food security policy reforms and implementation
- Improve the capacity of the private sector to advocate for pro-business agricultural sector reforms in Ghana
- Facilitate civil society and media support for the policy efforts of other Ghana FTF projects.

A3a. Progress to date

In Q2, the project established the framework for amplifying the voice of the private sector in the public policy process. The APSP team finalized criteria for the selection of eligible CSOs and private sector organizations to participate in the agricultural public private dialogue forums (APPDFs). The project identified and classified civil society and private sector organizations (including the gender-sensitive ones) along the agriculture value chains (input supply, production, processing and marketing), including organizations that have shown record to work on and include gender related issues. On June 24, 2014, the project conducted a consultative workshop of non-state actors (NSA) / stakeholders in Accra, including active agriculture sector players compiled from the mapping and review of documents of civil society and private sector organizations. The major objective of the workshop was to present the project, its objectives, implementation strategies and boundaries to the participants. The participants were also introduced to the Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT). OCAT would be employed in assessing the selected organizations for inclusion in the project's capacity building program.

The workshop was attended by 40 participants and made up of 31 males and 9 females. The participants represented 24 NSAs and 2 public sector/development partners. The NSA participants were categorized into nine CSOs, nine agribusiness operators, five producer associations and one from the media. There was also a representative from the USAID/Ghana Feed the Future Africa Lead project and a representative from the Agriculture and Agribusiness Unit (AAU) of MoF. The major outcome of the workshop was the commitment expressed by the participants to participate or become project's partners.

In addition, the project carried out an overall assessment of their organizational and technical capacities to do public advocacy. This is critical in establishing effective methodologies to strengthen their capacity to engage in the agriculture policy process at the national and bi-national levels.

A3b. Challenges and recommendations for adjustments and corrective action

Managing Stakeholder expectation: APSP will continue to present the project's objectives and strategies to stakeholder and potential beneficiaries to make sure they understand possible areas of collaboration, in order to manage their expectations.

Different grant regimes: The presence of a number of ongoing grants programs that support to the Agriculture Public-Private Dialogue Forum (APPDF) poses a competitive challenge for APSP. To avoid duplication of efforts and to contribute to expand project impacts there is the need to work together with other development partners such as GIZ- Market Oriented Agriculture Program (MOAP) and other FTF Projects.

Sustainability of private institutional initiatives. A major area of interest for the project is how to assist its private partners/stakeholders in devising means to sustain their activities over a long period and turning and helping them be less dependent on donor-funded projects. Through our engagement with CSOs or other NSAs, we have identified a number of institutional, technical and financial weaknesses. Africa Lead, for instance has conducted a rapid assessment of PEF, the institution leading the revival of the APPDF. The assessment showed that the organization can barely meet its regular institutional commitments and would not have the capacity to support the forum. The forum itself, should strive for institutional and financial sustainability by receiving full support from its members and by any additional income as a result from tangible and effective "services" rendered to its constituency. To help private institutions overcome this challenge, the project will help CSOs devise service schemes to address the issue of institutional sustainability.

A3c. Outcomes of high-level meetings held and field visits

Revival of APPDF Meetings: The APPDF has been dysfunctional for some time now due to lack of technical capacity and funding to continue its activities. In recognition of its importance in the agriculture policy process, PEF is leading efforts to revive it. APSP met with GIZ-MOAP in May 2014, to discuss joint efforts in support of the revival initiative. GIZ-MOAP had already initiated discussions with PEF on possible support for this initiative. In a closely related event, the project's technical team participated in a major stakeholders' meeting organized by PEF in May 2014, in Accra towards the revival of the APPDF. The major outcomes of these meetings were twofold. First, it was agreed between GIZ-MOAP and APSP to work together to build the capacity of APPDF so both development partners could contribute meaningfully to the agriculture policy process. Second, in order to achieve the first outcome, there was the need for further discussions with PEF to prioritize activities for reviving APPDF, including getting the functioning of its secretariat.

Northern Sector Agriculture Sector Working Group meetings: The project staff participated in the Northern Sector Agriculture Sector Working Group (NASWG) meeting in May, 2014, where the project was presented to participants. During this same trip, discussions were also held with the Northern Sector Agriculture Investment Coordinating Unit (NSAICU), the Savannah Accelerated Development Authority (SADA), and with other development partners and non-state actors in the region on possible partnership and collaboration in strengthening public-private engagements in the agriculture policy process. The NASWG has established different sub-groups, among them the Policy and Advocacy area. The team has proposed to USAID/Ghana

the possibility of granting support to the deliberations and technical needs of such initiative. In addition, the team discussed with NSAICU and SADA, possible areas of mutual collaboration to enhance the implementation of agriculture policy in the region and assist their staff with specific training needs.

A3d. Planned activities for the next quarter

The planned activities for the next quarter are as follows:

- Develop a training plan for NSAs based on the NSAs organizational capacity assessment report
- Train NSAs (CSO, private sector and farmer organizations) on OCAT to have their self-assessments completed by NSAs.
- Organize a consultative workshop for media organizations to finalize the private sector and civil society mapping and consultation process. Media partners who are interested in agriculture sector policy would be identified, assessed and selected for inclusion in the project's capacity building program
- Develop instruments for assessing the advocacy capacity of NSAs and media houses
- Organize a training on Advocacy Capacity Index Tool for NSAs and media houses and develop a training plan for training media house based on the advocacy assessment report
- Continue discussing the harmonization of efforts for the revival of the APPDF and organize consultative meetings with PEF and other organizations to define areas of support and agree on modalities for revamping APPDF
- Organize a consultative workshop with the staff of the other USAID/Ghana Feed the Future projects on agriculture policy related issues. This is part of the effort to strengthen the participation of the private sector stakeholder participation in the policy process through the policy advocacy and public-private sector engagement. The workshop will provide direction on how to collaborate and lend civil support to the other FTF projects, particularly with the view to establishing agriculture public-private dialogue platforms on key policy issues.

A3e. Assessment of progress against the objectives and results

The key objectives for Q2 for Component 3 have largely been achieved. In particular, the consultative meeting in May, 2014, for 24 NSAs and the introductory training in OCAT has set the tone for the assessment of the NSAs. The meeting has also received commitment from participants to participate in the project. This has set the stage for a more comprehensive training on OCAT and development of action plan on the implementation of the self-assessment. The mapping of eligible NSAs is completed for the national level and eligibility criteria for the selection of NSAs had been finalized.

B. CROSSCUTTING STRATEGIES

B1. Communications

APSP submitted a Communication Plan to the USAID, as part of its first year work plan and the project is in the final stage of recruiting a long term communications specialist who will be developing a full communication plan and lead its implementation.

In Q2, the project continued to engage both the public and private sectors to create awareness about the reach of the Project. Our presentations in northern Ghana to NASWG, NSAICU and SADA, as well as to the more than 24 NSAs have all been part of our effort to communicate to the public on the objectives, purpose, deliverables and components of APSP. The COP along with the Organizational Capacity Development Specialist and the Policy Advocate Specialist have attended meetings of the Knowledge and Learning Group of all USAID/Ghana Feed the Future implementing partners. At the last meeting of the group in Tamale, the COP shared with the attendants some ideas on how to improve the communication and sharing of knowledge among projects. These included information on the newsletter that will be designed for MoFA to communicate on its policy initiatives, the suggestion to design and implement a monthly calendar of all of the projects' activities that should be put together by the Office of Economic Growth and commented on the content and format of the weekly bulletins.

We have continued to participate in monthly meetings of the COPs in charge of USAID/Ghana Feed the Future's Projects.). The project also had a change to present its objectives at the NASWG meeting in Tamale.

B2. Gender

The full Gender strategy was completed during this reporting period by our technical staff at the Home Office and internal discussions are taking place with the field office to finalize the document and submit it to USAID during the next quarter. As per the initial content of the Gender Strategy, the project objectives in gender mainstreaming are to:

- Build the capacity of the APSP staff and the project partners and stakeholders in gender mainstreaming
- Integrate gender mainstreaming at every stage of the program/activity development cycle
- Promote gender-sensitive policy making, and leverage local resources in gender mainstreaming for policy making and connect stakeholders to these resources.

The next steps for fully implementing our gender strategy are as follows:

- Get USAID/Ghana's buy-in on the content of the APSP's Gender Strategy
- Hire a gender specialist to train the project staff on gender mainstreaming

- Map out actors and local resources (experts, advocacy groups, etc.) for gender mainstreaming.
- Collaborate with other FtF projects and share challenges, successes and resources with them.

At the consultative meetings with NSA, when explaining the mechanisms for awarding grants for improving their policy advocacy skills, we have pointed out that grant applications including gender-mainstreamed activities will be highly regarded for potential support.

C. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER FEED THE FUTURE PROJECTS

- APSP representatives have been actively participating at all of the meetings of the CCCs. The purpose of the CCCs is to share project information and seek common areas of work to avoid duplication and to achieve results in a more cost effective manner.
- We are collaborating with Africa Lead II to organize an in-house tailor-made training for staff within MoFA's PPMED unit responsible for coordinating donor activities.
- We are collaborating with ATT project, WAFP and AGRA to cost-share activities for the implementation of the Plants and Fertilizer Act and of its Policies and Regulations, including building capacity of the three Councils that were inaugurated to oversee the implementation of the Act.
- We are also collaborating with IFPRI and FAO to harmonize our initiatives to support SRID to improve agriculture data collection, management and dissemination.
- We are participating fully to undertake a common baseline and establish a composite M&E to serve the purpose of all Feed the Future Projects.
- We have attended a common Baseline and KM&L meetings organized in Accra by ADVANCE II and made the necessary inputs.

We remain committed to fulfilling our obligations with all of the coordination efforts already started and explore opportunities for more.

D. FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

D1. Human Resources and Recruitment

A Policies and Procedures Manual to guide operations and human resource management was developed over the period applying Chemonics policies and knowledge of the Ghana labor market. The Manual has taken special attention to include elements that fully ensure compliance with country specific regulations.

In Q2 the project has made significant progress in regards to recruiting local staff for the remaining open positions. The Operations Director was issued with a long-term employment contract and the project is in the process of hiring a Finance Manager, a

Grants and Subcontracts Manager, an M&E Specialist, and a Communication Specialist. An Agricultural Economist has not been identified yet in spite of placing advertisements more than once in widely circulated newspapers. So far, the CVs received in response to the advertisements did not meet the minimum qualifications. The Component Leader is working with the COP to identify suitable candidates. Several candidates for all opened positions have turned down the project's salary offers because the project was not able to match their current salary per the FSN scale. This remains a challenge for the project.

The project is also offering its local staff including health insurance for staff and their dependents, life insurance coverage transport and miscellaneous allowances. The local team and home office project management unit have continued to work closely together on a daily basis and has built a harmonious relationship that allows for effective implementation of the project's objectives. To enhance knowledge sharing, monthly staff meetings have been introduced to brief staff on project activities, and to share knowledge and training on the Chemonics and USAID policies.

The COP is holding weekly meetings with the senior and technical staff of the project for coordination purposes and sharing of project progress. The Field Office and the Project Management Unit are holding weekly teleconferences, which are instrumental on assessing project implementation, identify areas of support, anticipate issues that might hampered progress and jointly seek for solutions.

D2. Procurement

The project office is fully established with office furnishing at [REDACTED], with backup power generator installed. Similarly, negotiations for the COP residence have been completed and the COP is housed in a furnished apartment with the lease fully paid. The APSP Project took over two used vehicles from the ADVANCE I project, and has acquired a new vehicle through a competitive procurement process.

Procurement of other office equipment such as desktop computers, laptops, printers, and cell phones have been completed. The APSP project is in the process of identifying an Internet Service Provider to provide efficient internet service.

D3. Security

The project office has both night and day guards provided by a temporary security company, until the long term security service provider identified start its contract at the beginning of August. The security service provider will install additional security features such as alarm react services, electric fencing, smoke and fire detection systems.

All employees have filled out emergency locator forms which provide additional contacts for staff. The Field Office is working with the Project's Management Unit to ensure security readiness through the implementation of a Project Assessment of Safety and Security tool.

D4. Finance

[REDACTED]