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TRADE HUB AND AFRICAN PARTNERS NETWORK

PROGRESS REPORT #2
APRIL-SEPTEMBER 2014

Contract No.: AID-624-C-13-00002-00

October 2014

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Abt Associates Inc. for the Trade Hub and African Partners Network.

Recommended Citation: Trade Hub and African Partners Network**.** "Progress Report #2- April-September 2014." Prepared for the Trade Hub and African Partners Network by Abt Associates Inc., Bethesda, MD, October 2014.

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ACRONYMS

AAFEX	*Association Africa AgroExport*
ACA	African Cashew Alliance
ACTE	Africa Competitiveness and Trade Expansion Initiative
AfDB	African Development Bank
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AGRA	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
AIMS	African Institute for Mathematical Sciences
ALCO	Abidjan–Lagos Corridor Organization
APEX	*Agence de Promotion des Exportations*
ARC	AGOA Resource Center
ATP/E-ATP	Agribusiness and Trade Promotion/Expanded Agribusiness and Trade Promotion
ARTC	AGOA/Trade Resource Center
BA	Borderless Alliance
BCEAO	*Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest*
BIC	Border Information Center
BOA	Bank of Africa
CBC	*Conseil Burkinabé des Chargeurs*
CBP	Customs and Border Protection
CCI	*Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie*
CCIAG	Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture
CDU	Capacity Development Unit
CET	Common External Tariff
CILSS	*Comité Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel*
CIR-B	*Comité Interprofessionnel du Riz du Burkina*
CMA	Collateral Monitoring Agreement
COFENABVI AO	*Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la Filière Bétail/Viande des pays de l'Afrique de l'Ouest*
COP	Chief of Party
DCA	Development Credit Authorities
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party

DfID	Department for International Development
ECOSHAM	ECOWAS Standards Harmonization Model
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EMMP	Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plan
EPA	Economic Partnerships Agreement
ETLS	ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme
EU	European Union
FAF	Financial Access Facilitator
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FinGAP	Financing Ghanaian Agriculture Project
FTF	Feed the Future
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GSA	Global Shea Alliance
GSP	Generalized System Preferences
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IMF	*Institution de Micro Finance*
ISRT	Interstate Road Transit Convention
IST	Interstate Transport Convention
JBP	Join Border Point
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MIS	Market information systems
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MVCWG	Mango Value Chain Working Group
NES	Nigeria's National Export Strategy
NEXTT	Nigerian Expanded Trade and Transport Project
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCAT	Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool
OPA	*Observatoire des Pratiques Anormales*
PATISEN	*Pâtisseries du Sénégal*

PMP	**Performance Monitoring Plan**
REGIS	Resilience and Economic Growth in the Sahel
RESIMAO	*Réseau des Systèmes d'Information des Marchés en Afrique de l'Ouest*
RFA	Request for Application
RFP	Request for Proposal
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
SSATP	Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Program
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards
STTA	Short-term technical assistance
TFA	Trade Facilitation Agreement
TFS	Trade Facilitation Specialist
THN	Trade Hub Network
TH-CBT	Trade Hub Capacity Building Team
TOCIP	Tema-Ouagadougou Corridor Intervention Plan
TOR	Terms Of Reference
TSI	Trade Support Institution
TTEE	Trade & Transport Enabling Environment
TTPP	Trade and Transport Policy Priorities
TTFO	Trade and Transport Facilitation Observatory
UEMOA	Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USTR	United States Trade Representative
VC	Value Chain
VCL	Value Chain Leader
WA	West Africa
WAGN	West African Grains Network
WATH	West African Trade Hub
WRS	Warehouse Receipt System
WTO	World Trade Organization

FOREWORD

This is the second report for the Trade Hub and African Partners Network Project, reporting on activities for the 3rd and 4th quarter of the USG FY 2014.

The final Trade Hub contract was signed with Abt Associates on March 17, 2014. A work plan covering the remaining months in FY14 was submitted on June 17 with a revised version submitted July 8. This report summarizes progress of the major activities during the period, discusses problems encountered, and proposes remedial actions as necessary. It is organized to track with the corresponding work plan.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

USAID/West Africa's Mission-wide goal is the West-African led advancement of social and economic well-being. This goal is supported by several development objectives, including "broad-based economic growth and resilience advanced through West African partners." The Trade Hub and African Partners Network Project (the "Trade Hub") will contribute to this development objective by achieving two critical intermediate results:

1) Improving the capacity of West Africa's farmers and firms in targeted regional and global value chains.
2) Improving the business enabling environment by addressing transport constraints and trade barriers affecting the efficiency of the region's corridors and borders.

The Trade Hub will work through regional private sector associations and regional governmental entities to help channel all partners' efforts in a way that will address critical constraints to trade competitiveness, capture opportunities to expand trade, demonstrate West Africa's productive potential to investors, and facilitate greater investment in the region. Its results will include both an increase in 1) regional trade in key agricultural commodities, a critical Feed the Future (FTF) indicator, and in 2) value-added global exports, a targeted indicator for the Africa Competitiveness and Trade Expansion (ACTE) Initiative, which ultimately aims to increase Africa's share of world trade.

The project will build the capacity of several key groups of African partners—regional private sector associations and alliances, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa (UEMOA), a multi-donor funded Transport and Facilitation Observatory, and Global Development Alliances with private sector companies. As the Trade Hub works with associations and regional alliances, it will help them serve as leaders in promoting reforms, attracting buyers and investors, and adopting improved practices. Eventually, the Trade Hub's partners will act independently and take on even greater leadership roles.

The Trade Hub's major components are:

- Regional staple foods development (livestock and grains)
- Global value chain development (targeted agro-processing and manufactured consumer goods)
- Finance and investment
- Transport and the trade enabling environment
- Capacity building
- Communications
- Administration and management, including grants administration.

1.2 HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PERIOD

The project accomplished all the administrative, personnel, and programmatic requirements for a successful start-up. In addition, the Trade Hub contract included a demanding schedule of analytics on top of the usual expected work planning deliverables. Thus the highlight of the period is that the start-up in Accra is complete, the schedule for all initial deliverables was met, we are fully engaged in tackling the substantive questions about value chain and enabling environment priorities that must be resolved in

collaboration with USAID and our partners, and we have developed a work plan for the coming fiscal year. Highlights during the period covered by this second report include the following:

- **Start up.** Set up offices in Accra and Ouagadougou, hired 28 staff, and set up our administrative and financial management systems.
- **Assessments.** Completed all initial contract deliverables on time:
    - Start-up and preliminary work plan
    - Annual work plan and draft PMP
    - Value chain selection report
    - Grant formats and field grant guide
    - Value chain assessments
    - Baseline study and establishing report
    - Partner selection report
    - Transport and trade policy assessments
    - MIS potential supply and demand analysis
- **Partners.** Engaged in extensive discussion and planning with partners: GSA, ACA, Borderless Alliance, CILSS, COFENABVI-AO, UEMOA, ECOWAS, RESIMAO, etc. Signed MOUs with six partners. Officially launched the Project in Abuja on September 18, with ECOWAS and USAID/WA.
- **Capacity building.** The project's most significant accomplishment so far have been in the area of capacity building, e.g., reinvigorated the AGOA Resource Center in Guinea Conakry.
- **Regional value chains.** Drafted the terms of reference for analysis of cereals seasonal export bans and began an effort to improve the supply of quality animal products by identifying the main cattle export staging areas and cattle fatteners in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger.
- **Global value chains.** Created working groups among mango growers and exporters in Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Senegal to increased communication about constraints to processing and marketing of mangos and provided assistance to three companies with questions and problems related to AGOA requirements.
- **Finance and investment.** Signed the first subcontracts with companies who will assist firms in gaining access to finance.
- **Transport and trade enabling environment.** Carried out the data harmonization study for CILSS and UEMOA, prepared a joint activity plan with Borderless Alliance, identified the BICs to be supported by Trade Hub, and developed a joint action plan with ECOWAS and other institutions to work on elimination of trade barriers.

PROGRAMMATIC TRENDS

Evolving approach to the work. Throughout the start-up period, as we were doing the initial assessments, we kept asking the same question: Given the many demands for project assistance, how can we most effectively and efficiently allocate our resources? How can we be responsive to many constituencies, yet avoid spreading ourselves so thin that we dilute our impact? Our conclusion is while all of our work has a regional lens, we should carry out a mix of regional and more localized efforts as follows:

- **Corridor work.** We should focus most of our efforts on five corridors (especially two in the coming year), where our staff and partners can work more closely and in a more integrated way with the key stakeholders. These corridors are:

    - Tema - Ouagadougou
    - Abidjan - Bamako
    - Dakar - Bamako
    - Cotonou - Parakou - Fada N'Gourma - Ouagadougou
    - Bama - Koury

    The corridor focus is a logical result to achieve the project mandates in the Scope of Work. It is a natural evolution of the direction set by our predecessor projects, regional partners, and stakeholders.

- **Opportunistic value chain work outside the corridors.** Although the corridors were selected because of their relevance to our value chains, if opportunities present themselves to generate significant trade, employment or investment outside the designated corridors, we will make an effort to undertake those activities. Likewise, we will concentrate most of our work in selected value chains, but will be open to targets of opportunity in other value chains, especially for AGOA products, e.g, some specialty foods.

Our guiding principle will be to maximize the impact of our efforts, where impact is measured in terms of increased trade, investment, and jobs for project-assisted firms and associations over the life of our project.

2. IMPROVING THE TRADE AND TRANSPORT SECTOR'S COMPETITIVENESS

#	Indicators	Baseline	5-Months Results
5	Number of food security private enterprises (for-profit), producer organizations, trade and business associations receiving USG assistance	0	1
25	Number of individuals who have received USG trainings on trade and transport enabling environment[1]	0	37 (3)

2.1 ANALYSIS FOR THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

The overall objective of the Trade Hub to increase trade in West Africa is hampered by inadequate implementation of ECOWAS regional texts by Member States. The major issues relate to non-implementation of regional regulations on the Interstate Road Transit Convention (ISRT), the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS), the Interstate Transport Convention (IST), Axle-Load regulations, and lack of mutual recognition of national approvals (certificate of origin and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures). Road harassment, delays, and illicit payments are still symptoms of a biased trade environment against private businesses.

Over time, development partners have collaborated with regional institutions (ECOWAS, UEMOA, and CILSS) to tackle the challenges. Ongoing collaborative efforts include:

- GIZ support to ECOWAS on ETLS and CET
- JICA support to UEMOA on road infrastructure (including JBPs) and customs procedures
- World Bank/SSATP/IFC support to ECOWAS on the ALCO project for road governance monitoring and HIV sensitization activities on the Abidjan-Lagos corridor, and the establishment of a virtual regional road governance observatory
- USAID support to CILSS on trade flows and road governance monitoring for agricultural products

[1] See the full list of indicators in annex A

- USAID support to ECOWAS and UEMOA on road governance, ETLS compliance, and CET implementation
- DfID (UK Aid) support to ECOWAS and Borderless Alliance (BA) on road governance monitoring and food market improvement
- AfDB support to ECOWAS and UEMOA on promoting regional integration.

This list is by no means exhaustive, but is indicative of the commitment of the development partners to promote free movement of people, goods, and vehicles in the sub-region.

The Trade Hub work complements the bilateral mission work in improving the trade and transport in the region within the context of the visions and objectives of ECOWAS and UEMOA The project also supports the BA to carry out effective sensitization and advocacy activities on road governance.

2.2 REPORTS, DELIVERABLES, STUDIES

The Trade Hub conducted a survey to identify the trade and transport policy priorities for the project. The study covered the policy constraints and analyses undertaken by the previous USAID trade projects, related to agricultural value chains and inputs (fertilizer and seeds), and the barriers to cross-border trade. The study identified priority issues and activities to focus Trade Hub efforts on harmonization of UEMOA and CILSS road harassment data collection methodologies, bilateral corridor management activities, implementation of CET, and effective implementation of ETLS. The study proposed project priority corridors, namely Tema-Ouagadougou, Bamako-Abidjan, Bamako-Dakar, and Ouagadougou-Cotonou. The Bama-Koury corridor was added to the list to cover the parboiled rice trade. The implementation of the recommendations of the study has been provided for in FY15 Work Plan.

The project has held consultations and working sessions with ECOWAS to discuss issues on the implementation of CET, ISRT, SPS harmonization, as well as other trade and transport issues. The project also participated in the organization of the ECOWAS Citizens' Forum held in Ouagadougou as an initiative of President Blaise Campaore as a platform to generate ideas and proffer solutions to the challenges on free movement of persons and goods in the sub-region. The Communique and Action Plan proposed by the Forum were later adopted by an Extra-Ordinary Session of the Authority of Heads and Government of ECOWAS to serve as a roadmap for a concerted effort with partners to eliminate the barriers (tariff and non-tariff) to cross-border trade in West Africa.

The official launch of the project at the ECOWAS Commission on September 18 is indicative of the growing collaboration between ECOWAS and USAID/WA. In particular, it provides a basis for the Project to continue earlier efforts of WATH with ECOWAS towards free trade and higher investments through open borders, lower and stable prices. The project will be working closely with ECOWAS towards the harmonization of regional free trade area schemes, a Common Investment Market and a Customs Union.

The project has had fruitful discussions and collaboration with UEMOA, CILSS and JICA in Ouagadougou in various areas including:

- Harmonization of road governance activities for agricultural products and general goods
- Collaboration on the OPA Data Harmonization Study and Validation meeting
- Sharing of road governance data and analysis for effective advocacy and sensitization

- Joint action on improvement of the operation of Joint Border Posts, including customs connectivity
- Support to the establishment of the regional Trade and Transport Facilitation Observatory (TTFO).

The upcoming Validation meeting of the OPA Data Harmonization Study Report in October/November in Ouagadougou would provide an opportunity to adopt a joint Action Plan on these issues

The project held several meetings with BA on road governance issues, transport professionalization, regional and national policy implementation, trade facilitation, and capacity building, budget and grants. An MOU was signed with the Alliance in July as a framework for collaboration in three key areas:

- Promotion of private sector transport competitiveness, investment and regional trade through the elimination of non-tariff barriers;
- Corridor trade and transport performance monitoring and the provision of evidence to enhance decision making in regional transport and trade improvements and advocacy; and
- Monitoring gaps in the implementation of Community Protocols and Policies, International Instruments and Bilateral Agreements by ECOWAS and UEMOA Member States and relevant stakeholders with the aim to enhance competitiveness in regional trade and business as well as strengthen regional integration and an effective free movement of persons and goods.

BA has also agreed to leverage its advocacy strengths on the Trade Hub's targeted trade corridors, to galvanize private sector involvement to support the Trade Hub's aims, and to provide data for Trade Hub's monitoring and evaluation purposes.

The project subsequently participated in joint activities with BA, including the bilateral Côte d'Ivoire/Mali ISRT meeting in Abidjan, axle load regulation in Accra, transport professionalization in Accra, and trade and transport facilitation advocacy at the Finance Ministries of Ghana and Benin.

The project participated in a workshop organized by BA on the Implementation of New Axle-Load Regime in Ghana – at the Coconut Grove Hotel, Accra, May 20, 2014. Dignitaries who participated included the Minister of Roads & Highways; Alhaji Sulemana Amin Amidu, Deputy Minister of Transport; Joyce Bawa Mogtari, Chief Executive Officer of Ghana Shippers' Authority; Dr. Kofi Mbiah, the Chairman of the Ghana National Facilitation Committee; Godwin Brocke; and the President of the Borderless Alliance, Mr. Ziad Hamoui.

The Ministry of Roads and Highways (MRH), with its responsibility to ensure that government investment in the road sector is optimized, was concerned by the problem of excessive loading, which leads to premature failure and deterioration of the road network.

Presentations were made by the axle–load policy implementation agency, the Ghana Highway Authority, as well as private sector companies and transport associations, such as the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority, the Burkinabé Shippers' Council representation in Ghana, the Malian Transporter Union, Unilever Ghana Limited, Ghana Haulage Transport Owners Association, and the Ghana Road Transport Coordinating Council. The action plan adopted at the meeting will be discussed with ECOWAS in the context of a regional Axle-Load Roadmap, and is supported in the Trade Hub FY15 Work Plan.

The project participated in the meeting facilitated by BA on Inter-States Road Transit (ISRT) scheme between Côte d'Ivoire and Mali on July 15-16, 2014. A roadmap for the implementation of the ISRT was

discussed between the two countries. The meeting agreed on a list of activities to be conducted by the two parties, which includes harmonization of customs procedures, partnership between national guarantors, and harmonization of vehicles' approval procedures. The activities will be supported through a grant to BA in FY15.

The project provided training to junior and senior staff officers of Ghana Customs on July 25 and 31. The presentation covered an introduction to the Trade Hub project, its regional partners and strategic areas for partnership with the Ghana Customs, especially towards value chain development through the removal of barriers to free movement of goods and vehicles. The presentation highlighted ways of working with Ghana Customs and other government agencies and the private sector to promote trade and transport facilitation in Ghana. The project is to focus its efforts on implementing the Tema-Ouagadougou Corridor Intervention Plan (TOCIP) as a flag-ship corridor in West Africa.

The project participated in the workshop on "Promoting Efficiency in the Trucking Industry" as part of Professionalization of the Trucking Sector in West Africa, at the Alisa Hotel in Accra. The workshop was organized by BA, with support from the project. The objectives of the workshop were to identify regional trucking companies and their specific needs in trucking professionalization, and fleet upgrade. A follow-up workshop will be organized by the Finance Component of the Project to introduce the selected trucking companies to financing opportunities with financial institutions and leasing companies.

2.3 ASSESSING TRADE AND TRANSPORT POLICY PRIORITIES AND DATA ANALYSIS

Sub-activity 1.f. ***Cross-Cutting***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Perform analysis of trade and transport policy	TTEE, TFS	The study report was submitted. Activities recommended in the report are being implemented from FY15.
Data harmonization study for CILSS and UEMOA	TTEE	A draft report is being reviewed by the Trade Hub. A draft final report is to be discussed at a validation meeting in October/Novemeber 2014.

Since the treaty forming ECOWAS was signed in 1975, the 15 Member States have worked toward free movement of people, goods, and services. Today, almost 40 years after the treaty was signed, it is widely acknowledged that progress is patchy, that some gains made are quickly lost, and that overall, the region is still far from its goal.

The Trade and Transport Policy Assessment Study identified trade and transport policy priorities for the project and highlighted areas for maximum impact. The study concentrated a great deal of effort at the corridor level, where bottlenecks can be tackled in a bilateral and national context, allowing for more rapid progress. The corridor-specific policy work designed to be closely integrated with other Trade Hub activities (especially the value chain component), which will also take place in a corridor context.

The project's priority corridor is Tema–Ouagadougou, where a combination of ambitious activities will be implemented to showcase the beneficial impact of improved trade conditions. At the same time, the project will begin efforts on the Abidjan–Bamako, Dakar–Bamako, and Cotonou–Ouagadougou corridors, but in a more limited fashion. A list of 13 top-priority corridor activities was presented in the report and scheduled for implementation beginning in FY15.

The Trade Hub is supporting the road governance activities carried out by the former WATH and ATP-EATP projects to monitor bribes, delays, and checkpoints along the projects corridors. To this end, the Trade Hub is carrying out a study to analyze the current status and initiatives of road governance data collection activities in West Africa. The overall objective of the study is to assess the status and challenges of current road governance data collection efforts, develop a uniform data collection methodology, and redefine optimal roles for the various actors in order to re-launch the collection and analysis of road governance data.

During the study carried out in August/September, the consultant interviewed about 50 stakeholders in about 30 organizations. These stakeholders included national coordinators, focal points, data collectors, UEMOA, ECOWAS, CILSS, ALCO, BA, and other donors.

The initial draft is being reviewed by the Trade Hub. The final study report is to be validated at a meeting to be organized by the Trade Hub in October/November, in collaboration with ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, JICA, EU, DfID, AfDB, BA, the World Bank, and ALCO, within the context of the establishment of a regional virtual Trade and Transport Facilitation Observatory.

The Trade Hub team met in Accra with representatives from Ujuizi Labs to discuss the Cheetah Project, a the Trade Hub welcomed the innovation and relevance of Cheetah Food to the road governance and MIS, and would await the results of the pilot deployment on the Tema-Ouagadougou corridor to decide on possible adoption of the system.

2.4 CAPACITY BUILDING FOR BORDERLESS ALLIANCE AND TRADE AND TRANSPORT FACILITATION OBSERVATORY

Sub-activity 15.a. ***Cross-Cutting***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Capacity building for Borderless Alliance and TTFO	TTEE, CapD, TFS	Prepared a joint activity plan with BA.

The Borderless Alliance is a legacy of the previous WATH, which closed in June 2013. Borderless has been carrying out trade facilitation activities and actively participating in the inclusion of preparatory arrangements for the setting up of the regional Trade and Transport Facilitation Observatory, and for the support of BICs. During this half year, the project prepared a joint activity plan with BA covering trade facilitation advocacy, institutional capacity-building for Borderless and support for BICs. The activities are to be carried out in FY15.

2.5 SUPPORT TO BORDER INFORMATION CENTERS

Sub-activity 15.d. ***Cross-Cutting***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Support existing Border Information Centers	TTEE, COP, TFS	Identified the BICs to be supported by Trade Hub.

The establishment of BICs was a major recommendation of the ETLS Roadmap, which was developed at a meeting between ECOWAS, Member States, and Civil Society in June 2011. This meeting also discussed the Reports of the Gap Analysis Study, carried out by WATH on the compliance of the

Member States with the provisions of the ETLS. To date, BICs have been established with USAID support at the following borders: Aflao-Kodjoviakope (Ghana/Togo), Paga-Dakola (Ghana/Burkina Faso), Seme-Krake (Nigeria/Benin), Elubo-Noe (Ghana/Côte d'Ivoire), and Dakar (Port of Dakar). The BIC operations were transferred to BA at the end of the WATH project.

The Trade Hub will focus its activities on the BICs on the project corridors, while supporting the BICs established and operated with USAID funding and work with BA to establish and operate new BICs along the project corridors. In FY15, the Trade Hub will support the upgrade and operation of the BICs in Seme (Nigeria) and Krake (Benin), primarily to relocate them to more conducive sites for the traders and other users. The project will also support the operation of the other existing BICs, as well as the establishment of a Market Information Centre at the livestock market in Fada N'Gourma (Burkina Faso).

2.6 RATIONALIZATION OF BILATERAL AGREEMENTS ON TRANSPORT

Sub-activity 15.f. ***Cross-Cutting***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Rationalization of bilateral agreements on transport	TTEE, COP, TFS, VCL	Participation in Review of Dakar-Bamako ISRT bilateral agreement. Initiation of Abidjan-Bamako ISRT meeting between Mali and Côted'Ivoire.

The ECOWAS Interstate Road Transit Convention was established to simplify the management of transit trade between the Member States, but the Convention has not lived up to expectations. Its implementation has been hampered by several factors. Principal among these are the issue of the location and performance of the National Guarantors (usually the Chambers of Commerce), transit fees, manual customs clearance process, customs escorts, and transit logbook. Although ECOWAS has recently commenced the review of the Convention to address these issues, the review process has been slow, and it is still far from completion.

In order to resolve some of these issues, Senegal and Mali signed a bilateral convention in 2011 to ease transit operations between the two countries. In April 2014 the Trade Hub participated in a meeting in Dakar, organized by the Borderless Alliance, to review the status of implementation of the bilateral agreement. A major achievement was the introduction of a single transit declaration document and logbook, which has resulted in faster clearing times for transit goods.

The Trade Hub partnered with BA to initiate discussions between Côte d'Ivoire and Mali during a meeting held in Abidjan in July 2014, where they agreed on a list of activities to be conducted by the two parties. These include harmonization of customs procedures, partnership between national guarantors, harmonization of vehicles' approval procedures. The project will support this, as well as a similar initiative between Ghana, Burkina Faso and Mali, in FY15.

2.7 SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

Sub-activity 15.f. *Cross-Cutting*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Rationalization of bilateral agreements on transport	TTEE, COP, TFS, VCL	Participation in ETLS Task Force, Citizens' Forum. Development of joint action plan with ECOWAS (and other institutions) based on the TTPP study report and recommendations of the Forum.

The project collaborated with BA and ECOWAS to organize the meeting on the establishment of the Task Force aimed at monitoring Member States' compliance with the ETLS. The project also engaged with ECOWAS and BA to organize the Citizens' Forum to present recommendations of the ATP/E-ATP Food Across Borders Workshop and the High Level ETLS Meeting (on the WATH Gap Analysis) to non-state actors. At the Forum, the participants agreed to an action plan to serve as a minimum agenda for the elimination of barriers to free movement of goods and vehicles in the sub-region.

The action plan has been adopted by the ECOWAS Heads of State, and will form the basis for discussions and activity planning between the project and ECOWAS.

2.8 CONSTRAINTS AND SOLUTIONS

Due to the delay in the establishment of the grants procedure to commence the grant approval process, some activities scheduled to be carried out in collaboration with B were postponed to FY15. These include: review of Dakar-Bamako ISRT bilateral agreement, upgrade and re-launch of Seme and Krake BICs, support to operations of existing BICs, and National Facilitation Committees (NFC) meetings between Ghana and Burkina Faso.

Inadequate communication and collaboration between and within UEMOA and ECOWAS institutions continues to hamper effective coordination of trade and transport facilitation activities, especially as relates to the establishment of the Regional Trade and Transport Facilitation Observatory (TTFO). The Trade Hub will continue to play a technical convening role towards the establishment the regional Transport Observatory.

#	Indicators	Baseline	5-Months Results
5	Number of food security private enterprises (for-profit), producer organizations, trade and business associations, in regional value chains receiving USG assistance	0	1

3. SUPPORT TO REGIONAL VALUE CHAINS

3.1 ANALYSIS FOR THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

Significant challenges to improved and increased regional trade in the livestock and cereals value chains remain during the 2014 agricultural season. These challenges are present in the enabling environment and also within each specific value chain. During the first five months of operation, the Trade Hub has improved its understanding of these sectors and has targeted areas that should be supported in the short term to have a measurable impact on increased investment and transactions. For example, there is a need for an explicit effort to identify and address export bans of cereals imposed by certain countries within the region during the agricultural harvest. Although national governments intend for bans to enhance national food security, their effect is to reduce trade and value added across the cereals value chain. Another area to be targeted is elimination of export fees and licenses for livestock trade between Senegal and Mali, imposed on Senegalese traders. This type of non-tariff barrier decreases transactions and reduces cross border collaboration between the private sector and government regulatory actors.

The Trade Hub has spent considerable effort during start up to explore the best ways of working with the regional partners in both of these value chains that are being supported: COFENABVI for livestock and WAGN for cereals. Both of these regional platforms require direct support, but both of these organizations have relatively strong inter-professional associations in some of their member countries. Enhancing the relationship between these national associations and the regional platform organizations will be a key tenant of the Trade Hub's program. This will require a combination of capacity building, mentoring and specific technical assistance during the next year of this program.

3.2 REPORTS, DELIVERABLES, STUDIES

During the reporting period, the Trade Hub submitted the Value Chain Selection Report (May 2014) and the Value Chain Assessment report (May 2014), both contract deliverables. These are discussed below. In addition, a separate document was prepared that presented a strategy and action plan for each of the six value chains that have been selected by the Trade Hub (August 2014).

3.3 VALUE CHAIN SELECTION

Sub-activity 1.b. ***Individual VCs under ACTE***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Value chain selection	Value Chain Leader (VCL) and Value Chain Specialists	Regional Value Chains were pre-selected in the contract ; no selection report required.

The Regional Feed the Future Value Chains were not reviewed for selection but included in the assessment phase (see below).

FTF Regional value chains:

- Maize
- Millet-Sorghum
- Rice
- Cattle
- Small Ruminants

3.4 VALUE CHAIN ASSESSMENTS REPORTS

Sub-activity 1.d. ***Individually, FTF, or ACTE***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Perform targeted value chain assessments	VCL, VC leads, TTEE	Eleven Value Chain Assessment reports submitted. Six VC's recommended for support (two for regional; four for global).; Opportunistic support for other VC's as appropriate Varying levels of support recommended for targetted VC.

The value chain assessment exercise was completed at the end of May, and included specific recommendations to upgrade each value chain, for both regional and global exports. This analysis identified different levels and types of support to be provided by the Trade Hub, reflecting recent changes (both positive and negative, depending on the value chain) and other environmental factors that have been identified. Specific constraints to each value chain were reviewed and will form the basis for specific support to be provided.

Within the context of the Trade Hub's largest results, certain value chains present more opportunity to increase trade, investment and create jobs than others (examples include cashew, shea, and cattle). The strategic use of project resources suggests that those value chains with a larger "marginal return" to level of effort should receive more support. However, opportunities do exist within all of the eleven value chains that were studied. It is also recognized that these value chains are dynamic; over time new opportunities could emerge. Maintaining a flexible perspective to respond to opportunities as they arise is a cornerstone of the Trade Hub's overall strategy. Because of the region's dependence on key grain value chain and the Trade Hub's mandate to support increased food security impacts from regional trade, effort will be spent on all the principal cereals, especially maize.

3.5 VALUE CHAIN ASSESSMENTS FOLLOW UP

Sub-activity 1.e. ***Individually, FTF, or ACTE***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Roll out targeted value chain	VCL, VC leads,	Individual meetings held to discuss VC assessments with

assessment strategy	TTEE	regional partners in each value chain.

Since submission of the Value Chain Assessment reports, meetings were held with regional partners COFENABVI (livestock) and WAGN (cereals) to discuss a program of collaboration. The subject of these meetings was to establish a basis to finalize a MOU from which structured Trade Hub support would be provided. These documents were drafted and ready for signature with each regional partner.

3.6 UPGRADING THE CEREALS AND GRAINS SECTOR

3.6.1 ESTABLISH PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS IN CEREALS AND GRAINS

Sub-activity 3.a *FTF*	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Sign MOUs & workplans with WAGN, others, for organization upgrading	VC Lead, VCL, TTEE	MOU with WAGN drafted and ready for signature. Advised WAGN about forthcoming MOU with ECOWAS Updated List of Cereals value chains actors. Drafted TOR for analysis of cereals seasonal export ban

Discussions within the Trade Hub about the program to strengthen WAGN focused on a phased process by which different levels of support should be provided, given the organization's nascent status. More detail on Trade Hub explicit support is presented in the next section.

There are multiple donors committed to supporting WAGN's development. This was reiterated at a meeting hosted by the Trade Hub in Accra in May 2014 and a separate meeting in July 2014 at a regional micro-finance conference in Kenya. The Trade Hub is consulting with different donor organizations to coordinate this assistance (AGRA; EU/CTU/FARM/ECOWAS). One concrete example during the reporting period was advising on the content of a working document between WAGN and ECOWAS that was signed in July 2014. Financial support from ECOWAS for the cereals value chain will be made available during the next several months and the Trade Hub staff will advise WAGN on the most effective way to use this funding as it establishes its operational base.

An updated list of cereal value chain actors (processors and traders) was prepared at the end of the reporting period. This was based on information included in the value chain assessment report and will be used by the project's investment team as the financial facilitation mechanism is formalized during FY 15.

A Terms of Reference was prepared to guide project staff as they collect information and analyze the ongoing cereals harvest in the region to identify potential export bans that may be imposed. As this exercise continues in early FY 15, explicit effort to prepare a lobbying campaign will be provided.

3.6.2 BUILD CAPACITY OF GRAINS AND CEREALS ASSOCIATIONS

Sub-activity 3.b *FTF*	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Begin capacity building and upgrading activities for associations	CapD, VC Lead, VCL, TTEE. STTA	Provided assistance to receive institutional support grant to establish WAGN Executive Secretariat. Coordinated other donor funding to be provided to WAGN during

Provide STTA to refine strategic plan and create operatonal center for WAGN		2014 – 2016. Prepared short term technical assistance plan for WAGN prior to opening of Executive Secretariat.

The Trade Hub made significant progress in supporting the West African Grains Network (WAGN) to establish a visible presence in the region. WAGN was created as the platform for cereal value chains actors to address constraints and respond to opportunities in policy, production, postharvest handling, value-addition, and commercialization that will increase competitiveness of the cereal sector. The Trade Hub initiated capacity building support by conducting a rapid assessment of WAGN's current state of development using the USAID Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) tool. The Trade Hub Capacity Building Team (TH-CBT) held meetings with the WAGN Chairman in Ouagadougou on May 2014 and discussed the current state of WAGN, their aspirations, and priority areas for capacity building support.

Subsequently, the Trade Hub team facilitated discussions between WAGN and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) regarding the mechanisms to support the establishment of a fully operational head office/ secretariat in Lomé, Togo. Trade Hub staff from the value chain and the capacity building components worked closely with the Chairperson of WAGN to prepare a grant application to AGRA. The two year grant will cover the operation of the WAGN head office, recruitment of an executive secretary and administrative support staff, and technical activities related to the promotion of a Warehouse Receipt System (WRS) program among member countries. The position of the executive secretary will be advertised in newspapers in all WAGN member countries.

Key support in the immediate term to be provided by the Trade Hub to WAGN includes:

- Advertisement for the position of the Executive Secretary, in newspapers in the member countries or in select countries);
- Review applications, shortlist and start interviews;
- Open a bank account;
- The FY 15 work plan includes several visits to Lomé October – December 2014 quarter. The purpose of these visits would be to provide initial mentoring and technical assistance to the Executive Secretary who would be recruited to start by mid-October. During this period, recruitment of two other positions for the Executive Secretariat would be completed. The negotiation of a lease and physical office space for the WAGN secretariat would also take place, with the objective to open the office in January, 2015.

3.7 UPGRADING THE LIVESTOCK SECTOR

3.7.1 PROGRESSIVELY PROMOTING REGIONAL TRADE IN LIVESTOCK AND FRESH MEAT AS CAPACITY TO DO SO PROPERLY BECOMES ESTABLISHED

Sub-activity 4.a *FTF*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Progressively promoting regional trade in livestock and fresh meat as capacity to do	VCL, Value Chain Livestock Specialist	MOU with COFENABVI drafted and ready for signature. Identified main export staging areas in Burkina Faso (5), Mali (5) and Niger(5) focused on consumption countries.

so properly becomes established.		Developed list of 30 cattle fatteners that export in to consumption countries.

The discussions with COFENABVI that resulted in the MOU to be signed in October 2014 focused on three general areas of collaboration:

- Improving the supply of quality animal products;
- Improving the value chain's enabling environment;
- Providing institutional support to COFENABVI.

The activities included in the FY 15 work plan reflect these areas of collaboration. The list of entities involved in cattle fattening that was identified will be used to develop specific training to improve their operations prior to transport of livestock to key consumption markets. COFENABVI will receive a grant from the Trade Hub to improve its overall operational capacity. The details of this program will be confirmed during the first quarter of FY 15.

3.7.2 PROGRESS TOWARDS THE HARMONIZATION AND SIMPLIFICATION OF SPS EXPORT STANDARDS FOR CATTLE AND MEAT

Sub-activity 4.b *FTF*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Progress towards the harmonization and simplification of SPS export standards for cattle and meat.	TTEE, VCL, Value Chain Livestock Specialist	Met with UEMOA and ECOWAS on SPS issues, to discuss dissemination program of regional standards. Planning for proposed techncial assistance to develop an improved livestock transport vehicle. Worked with other partners to prepare an advocacy program to address road harrassment on Bamako – Dakar corridor. Worked with other technical partners to identify disease free zones to be established in export staging areas.

Discussions with COFENABVI underlined that current regional SPS standards for livestock are not well known and poorly implemented within the value chain. As a result of this and subsequent meetings with staff from both ECOWAS and UEMOA, a work shop will be organized in early FY 15 that will review the current SPS texts for livestock transport within the region. The participants will be member companies of the regional partner who will be tasked with sharing this information throughout the value chain to improve and make intra-regional trade more effective.

At the end of the reporting period, a technical assistance program was prepared to identify an improved vehicle upon which livestock can be transported. This prototype would adhere to existing regional standards but also contribute to a higher quality animal that is received in the consumption markets of the region. This activity will be implemented in collaboration with the project's transport component.

Another joint program with the TTEE component will be to address non-trade barriers in the Bamako – Dakar corridor that were identified at the end of the reporting period. These barriers include increased road harassment on the Senegal side and the imposition of export fees from Mali to Senegal that have been proposed by private sector organizations. These fees have increased the cost of livestock transport along this important corridor.

The establishment of disease-free zones for animals prior to their transport will be supported by the project during FY 15. In preparation for this program, the technical staff contacted other technical and financial partners working in this area to improve coordination and strategic planning.

3.7.3 EXAMINE POTENTIAL FOR TRADERS TO EXPORT AT A LARGE ENOUGH VOLUME IN THE LIVESTOCK VALUE CHAIN ACROSS BORDERS

Sub-activity 4.d *FTF*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Identify traders capable of regularly exporting significant levels of livestock on a regular basis	Financial Services Specialist, Livestock Value Chain Specialist, TFS, FSA	Identified selected companies to participate in financial facilitation program (Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Mali).

The companies identified as potential candidates for support in the Trade Hub's access to finance program have limited experience with formal livestock trade, especially on a large scale. As the project's financial facilitation partners are contracted throughout the region, they will be tasked with a more in depth review of these companies and others to be selected, to confirm the capacity to participate in larger formal livestock transactions than have taken place in the recent past.

The Trade Hub goal is to work with traders to formalize their export capacity in terms of:

- Volume of exports, such as number of cattle per shipment, is known in advance;
- The number of trucks per week or month, is known in advance;
- Buyers are identified and agree and sign written contracts prior to shipment.

3.8 CONSTRAINTS AND SOLUTIONS

The largest constraint identified within both the livestock and cereals value chains is the need to improve the regional platform to better represent the interest of the key stakeholders. The need for direct capacity building support for both COFENABVI and WAGN is clear and the majority of the Trade Hub's actions to date, and in the next year of this program reflect this perspective.

Meetings with the partners themselves about the largest constraints they face focus on another critical area: how to improve access to finance for their member companies to increase commercial transactions. The potential for intra-regional trade is significant in West Africa, particularly in the livestock value chain. A large part of trade that is completed is not formalized and as a result uneven and usually much lower in quantity (and quality) than could be completed. The Value Chain component will work closely with the Finance and Investment component to disseminate the benefits of working the Financial Facilitation mechanism that is being put in place throughout the region. This will require acceptance of a "different" way of doing business than many of these companies have completed in the past. This is an area where capacity building from the project will be critical to reinforce the importance of and benefits from a more formal approach to regional trade.

The cereals regional platform will require more direct assistance than the regional organization for livestock, because it is only now starting to operate as an independent organization. That there is significant donor support in addition to the Trade Hub reinforces the importance of creating an effective

organization in the short term. The Trade Hub will continue to be the primary interlocutor with the other donors that will support WAGN, to ensure the most effective package of assistance is provided.

4. SUPPORT TO GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS

	Indicators[2]	Baseline	5-Months Results
1	Value and volume of sales of firms that received USAID assistance (Global Value Chains)	$0	$1,011,167
5	Number of food security private enterprises (for-profit), producer organizations, trade and business associations, in regional value chains receiving USG assistance	0	4

4.1 ANALYSIS FOR THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

The conclusion of the value chain assessments and subsequent contacts between the Trade Hub and stakeholders in the global value chains confirm that significant potential exists to increase investment, trade and job creation. The relatively strong regional platforms for the cashew and shea value chains provide a direct linkage to their member companies to increase their commercial activities. While effective regional platforms for the mango and apparel value chains are forthcoming, it's clear that West Africa has developed significant market share during the past 10 years in these sectors. For both of these value chains, support to a combination of lead firms and national entities will be targeted in the short term. The creation of a mango value chain specific regional platform will be supported during FY 15 by the Trade Hub. Global trends in the apparel sector that underline the comparative advantage for operating costs in West Africa also support more potential for investment in the region's three countries with significant private sector presence.

Challenges remain especially as the these value chains grow in importance with regard to global market share and/or seek to increase the amount of value accumulated within the value chain, to remain in West Africa. Addressing these challenges will require leadership within the value chain and a solid understanding of the operating environment in which these member companies operate, to support their own expansion programs. This will also require flexibility to take advantage of export enhancement programs, such as AGOA, and regional-based initiatives designed to improve the enabling environment from a policy and regulatory perspective. These are all areas in which the Trade Hub will provide support and assistance, as reflected in the project's FY 15 work plan.

[2] See the full list of indicators in annex A

4.2 REPORTS, DELIVERABLES, STUDIES

During the reporting period, the Trade Hub submitted the Value Chain Selection Report (May 2014) and the Value Chain Assessment report (May 2014), both contract deliverables. These are discussed below. In addition, a separate document was prepared that presented a strategy and action plan for each of the six value chains that have been selected by the Trade Hub (August 2014).

At the end of the reporting period, a Short Term Technical Assistance (STTA) assignment was completed to develop a pilot program to increase mango exports, both within the region and to international markets. More detail about this study is presented below.

4.3 VALUE CHAIN SELECTION (GLOBAL VC'S ONLY)

Sub-activity 1.b. ***Individual VCs under ACTE***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Value chain selection	Value Chain Leader (VCL) and Value Chain Specialists	Nine Value Chain Selection Reports Submitted. Seven Global VC's recommended for assessment.

An interdisciplinary team of subject matter experts developed nine VC Selection reports during April and early May 2014. Of the nine value chains that were reviewed, three (specialty foods, textiles and seafood) were found to have limited growth opportunities and relatively small "niche" markets. A fourth value chain (home décor) was recommended for opportunistic support as this becomes available. Another recommendation of the value chain selection analysis was the separation of textiles from apparel (recommended for assessment). As a result, six global export value chains were recommended for an assessment, as presented below.

Export-oriented (global, value-added) value chains:

- Apparel
- Cashew
- Honey
- Mango (and possibly other cut fruits/vegetables)
- Sesame
- Shea

4.4 VALUE CHAIN ASSESSMENTS REPORTS

Sub-activity 1.d. ***Individually, FTF, or ACTE***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Perform targeted value chain assessments	VCL, VC leads, TTEE	Eleven Value Chain Assessment reports submitted. Six VC's recommended for support (two for regional; four for global).; Opportunistic support for other VC's as appropriate

The value chain assessment exercise was completed at the end of May, and it included specific recommendations to upgrade each value chain, for both regional and global exports. This analysis identified different levels and types of support to be provided by the Trade Hub, reflecting recent changes (both positive and negative, depending on the value chain) and other environmental factors that have been identified. Specific constraints to each value chain were reviewed and form the basis for specific support to be provided.

Within the context of the Trade Hub's largest results, certain value chains present more opportunity to increase trade, investment and create jobs than others (examples include cashew, shea, and cattle). The strategic use of project resources suggests that those value chains with a larger "marginal return" to level of effort should receive more support. However, opportunities do exist within all of the eleven value chains that were studied. It is also recognized that all of these value chains are dynamic; over time new opportunities could emerge. Maintaining a flexible perspective to respond to opportunities as they arise is a cornerstone of the Trade Hub's overall strategy. This could include minimal Trade Hub activities to support an on-going initiative in the sesame value chain, for example. The four global value chains targeted are apparel, cashew, mango and shea.

4.5 VALUE CHAIN ASSESSMENTS FOLLOW UP

Sub-activity 1.e. ***Individually, FTF, or ACTE***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Roll out targeted value chain assessment strategy	VCL, VC leads, TTEE	Individual meetings held to discuss VC assessments with regional partners in each value chain.

After submission of the Value Chain assessment reports, meetings were held with several regional organizations to discuss future collaboration. The subject of these meetings was to establish a basis for further collaboration in the future, ultimately resulting in an MOU from which structured Trade Hub support would be provided. MOU's have been signed with ACA and GSA and a dialogue has begun with AAFEX to define the framework upon which an MOU will be finalized.

4.6 IMPROVING CAPACITY OF GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS FIRMS

4.6.1 DEVELOP MARKET AND TRADE LINKAGES FOR GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS

Sub-activity 5.a ***ACTE***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Develop market and trade linkages for export value chains	Inv/VCL, VC Specialist	Initial meetings during VC Assessment process clarified seller priorities. Established relationships to promote new trade linkages in the mango value chain.

During the reporting period, preliminary meetings with local finance and producer organizations provided background about ongoing financial transactions within some of the global value chains, such as cashew and apparel. Many of the transactions were begun during the period prior to the start of the Trade Hub program and reflect the potential of some the lead firms in these global value chains to promote their business models without outside support. The largest constraint for the cashew value

chain to increase market linkages is access to finance. For the shea value chain, an ongoing constraint is limited export potential to the US market due to import restrictions about the use of shea butter for chocolate production.

The pilot program for the mango value chain begun at the end of the reporting period created working groups among lead firms and growers' associations in three countries. These working groups will provide the basis for increased communication about common constraints to increased processing and marketing of mangos and exports in general. Depending on the country, the type of trade linkages within the value chain is different but each contributes to regional and global trade (Ghana for fresh mango exports; Burkina for processed/dried mango exports within the region, and Senegal for improved varieties and targeted "specialty" exports to the European and North African markets).

4.6.2 CONDUCT AN INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF FIRMS WITHIN EACH OF THE TARGETED VALUE CHAINS, PART OF VC ASSESSMENTS

Sub-activity 5.b. *ACTE*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Conduct an initial assessment of firms within each of the targeted value chains	CapD/VCL, VC Specialist, FSA, M&E Specialist	Meetings held with firms in the mango sector in three countries. Target an opportunity for increased mango exports by working with key firms in two countries. Created data base of women-owned firms across value chains.

One result of the mango STTA was an updated listing of the different enterprises in Ghana, Burkina Faso and Senegal that are involved in mango production, processing and marketing, both with the region and for the global export market. The total number of firms is 54; of this total, 37 are involved in mango exporting. This information is the basis for the working groups created in each country upon which specific support will be provided to improve the competiveness of the value chain and explore the creation of a mango-specific regional platform.

A focused diagnostic exercise of women-owned enterprises in the targeted value chains was also completed. This included field visits and meetings with some of these enterprises. From this activity, the Trade Hub has created a database of firms operating in different value chains of the project and in particular those directed by women. The data base characterizes women-owned enterprises according to size, investments, national/regional coverage, and access to finance experience and support needs.

4.6.3 SUPPORT TO AGOA RESOURCE CENTERS

Sub-activity 5.d. *ACTE*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Support to AGOA Resource Centers	AGOA Coordinator, VCL	Support to the AGOA Resource Center (ARC) in Guinea, by picking up the salary of the Trade Advisor for three months. Meetings with four ARCs (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, and The Gambia). Meeting with the Government Accountability Office (GAO).

		Meeting with the United States Trade Representative (USTR) Technical assistance to several companies.

4.6.3.1 Transforming the AGOA Resource Centers into AGOA/Trade Resource Centers

The Trade Hub re-conceptualized the AGOA Resource Centers into AGOA/Trade Resource Centers (ATRCs) to include the findings of the Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) conducted with four Resource Centers (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, and The Gambia). The ATRC concept provides a sustainable framework for the next generation Trade Support Institution (TSI) engagement with the private sector to provide regional and global trade assistance. The ATRCs provide practical and responsive short-and long-term capacity strengthening support by delivering services to the private sector to enable regional trade and exports internationally, and to the United States under AGOA. The Trade Hub also held an initial discussion with the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade to discuss the ATRC concept and areas of potential collaboration. The Trade Hub will also submit the ATRC Concept to the African Development Bank (AfDB) to discuss potential areas of collaboration.

4.6.3.2 Support to the Guinea Resource Center

The Trade Hub, after discussions with USAID/WA and USAID/Guinea, renewed support to the Resource Center in Guinea, by picking up the salary of the Trade Advisor for three months (June-August). The support of the Guinea ARC focused on building sectoral databases, working with the Global Shea Alliance (GSA) and the African Cashew Alliance (ACA) to build the capacity of the local shea and cashew associations, developing an export documentation guide, working on the textile visa arrangement for Guinea, and attending the African Heads of State summit to the United States. The support of the Trade Hub successfully resulted in the Ministry of Commerce and the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (CCIAG) agreeing to integrate the Trade Advisor. The Textile visa arrangement documents are also ready for submission to USTR via the U.S. Embassy.

4.6.3.3 Institutional Review of AGOA

The Trade Hub held a meeting with representatives (Farhanaz Kermalli, Senior Analyst, and Benjamin Sclafani, Analyst, International Affairs and Trade) from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to discuss the successes of trade between SSA and the U.S. in the framework of AGOA, as well as recommendations to be taken into account in the AGOA legislation that is set to be renewed in September 2015. The Trade Hub also facilitated meetings between the GAO team and cashew, shea, and apparel companies to learn about constraints and opportunities for growth in these sectors, and how U.S. government trade capacity building programs have helped increased trade in these sectors.

The Trade Hub also held a meeting with Senior Policy Advisor, Karl Wycoff from the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to discuss the strategic orientation of the new Trade Hub, policy issues related to the newly agreed WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) framework, the AGOA legislation that is up for renewal by Congress in September 2015, and the potential impact of the E.U Economic Partnerships Agreement (EPA) in SSA.

4.6.3.4 AGOA-related Technical Assistance

The Trade Hub provided technical assistance to several companies as summarized below:

- PATISEN, a Senegalese manufacturer of agro-processed products shipped 31 containers of

seasoning powder and tablets to Nigeria under the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme (ETLS) for a value of $908,320. The company ran into problems as Nigerian Customs was requesting a duty-waiver from the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Finance. The Trade Hub provided assistance to get the duty-waiver letter, which PATISEN received and enabled the company to take possession of their containers. A case study on trading under the ETLS will be drawn from the PATISEN case.

- A U.S. importer imported Baobab powder (import value of $4,761) and paid duty although the product is duty-free to the U.S. under the Generalized System Preferences (GSP), which expired in 2013 and is not yet renewed. Although the GSP expired, the legislation allows GSP-eligible imports from AGOA-eligible countries to be duty-free. The Trade Hub linked the U.S. importer with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (U.S.CBP) who asked that the importer requests a duty-free claim in order to get reimbursed. The Trade Hub intends to provide export documentation training to exporters and Customs officials in selected countries to avoid this type of issue in the future.
- Two Ghanaian apparel companies (DTRT and 1888 Mills) requested assistance on export documentation of textiles products under AGOA. 1888 Mills is shipping Lab Coats for a value of $77,554.75 and DTRT is shipping 27,720 polo shirts for a value of $ 20,530.80. The Trade Hub reviewed the Commercial Invoices and Textiles Certificates of Origin to enable the shipments to receive duty-free treatment to the United States under AGOA.

4.6.3.5 Collaboration with Institutional Partners

The Trade Hub reached out to several institutional partners to discuss collaboration and plan upcoming events:

- The Trade Hub reached out to the ECOWAS Directorate of Trade to discuss the new ATRC concept and potential areas of collaboration. For example, The Trade Hub is seeking ways to leverage the ECOBIZ platform – a regional business linkages platform – for the ATRCs to use to stimulate regional trade.
- The Trade Hub is discussing with the U.S. Embassies in Cape Verde, Mauritania, the Gambia to provide technical support and training on AGOA, export readiness and general trade enabling training.
- The Trade Hub met with the Director of Trade and Assistant Director (WTO) from the Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade & Investment, and USAID/Nigeria's Project Manager to discuss assistance to the Ministry in setting up an AGOA/Trade Resource Center in Nigeria, and support on Nigeria's National Export Strategy.

4.7 CASHEW ACTIVITIES

4.7.1 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT MANAGEMENT SUPPORT TO THE ACA

Sub-activity 6.c. *ACTE*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Environmental impact study and recommended solutions.	CapD, FSA, Cashew Industry Specialist, TFS	MOU Signed with ACA. Technical assistance program developed, including support within the environmental management sector.

The MOU signed at the end of the reporting period provides a general framework upon which specific assistance can be provided. Subsequent meetings held with ACA have further defined this assistance, including the content of a grant to be provided during FY 15. The 2014 strategic plan for ACA identifies the need for an environmental impact analysis related to cashew production and marketing. The Trade Hub included the following activity in its FY 15 work plan:

Provide TA to ACA environmental examination study, with explicit emphasis of management of the waste stream (November 2014).

This activity is directly linked to ACA's objective to increase the amount of cashew that is processed locally. A large number of new factories are expected to be created and the need exists for better management of the waste stream from these entities. This support was discussed with ACA during the preparation of the Trade Hub's Environmental Management and Mitigation Plan (EMMP) completed in August 2014. Improved environmental management of the waste stream from cashew processing will ultimately enhance the quality of what is produced for export and improve the value chain's competiveness in the global market.

4.7.2 CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT FOR CASHEW FACTORY MANAGEMENT

Sub-activity 6.d. *ACTE*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Management course for cashew processing facilities	VC, CapD, ACA	Capacity building program developed and agreed upon with ACA.

The Trade Hub will support the expanding cashew processing industry in West Africa through increased availability of skilled technicians capable of managing the different factory functions. This assistance will begin in early FY15 with the development of a cashew processing management certificate program. During the period under review, the Trade Hub had extensive discussions with the leadership of the ACA on the modalities to put this program in place. In the first quarter of FY15, Trade Hub and ACA will conduct a rapid needs assessment of cashew factories in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana to identify human resource needs and priorities. Additionally, discussions will be held with technical / agricultural education institutions on the feasibility and requirements of incorporating the cashew course into their curriculum. Concurrent with the curriculum development, the Trade Hub will support cashew processing factories with expert technical assistance to provide in-service skills upgrading.

4.7.3 ACCESS TO FINANCE FOR CASHEW SECTOR

Sub-activity 6.d. *ACTE*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
More financial facilitators and investors working with cashew sector	FSA, ACA, CapD	Cashew value chain is included in negotiations with Financial Access Facilitators in four countries.

Since its initial meeting with the Trade Hub at the beginning of the project, ACA has emphasized the importance of increased access to finance for its member companies. This was the basis of the formal request for Trade Hub support received in August 2014. Subsequent meetings with ACA have focused on the Trade Hub's overall access to finance strategy (to be coordinated with Financial Access

Facilitators (FAFs). It has been agreed that the Trade Hub's grant mechanism will not be used to support ACA's efforts to increase access to finance. Rather, the FAFs will be in place to support ACA's member companies as they seek increased access to finance for the 2014 – 2015 cashew season.

4.8 SHEA ACTIVITIES

4.8.1 SUPPORT SERVICES FOR GSA SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE

Sub-activity 7.a. *ACTE*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Support services for training related to post-harvest and warehouse management	VCL, FSA, CapD	MOU signed with GSA Agreement to co-finance a program for enhanced warehouse management.

The MOU signed with GSA is the basis for a joint program to support the dissemination of best practices in community-level warehouse management. This is an effort to increase the value added at the lower level of the value chain, and ultimately improve the quality of the kernel that is collected and stored for export. A RFA will be developed and released by GSA and the Trade Hub to co-finance this program during 2014 – 2016.

Specific activities held during the reporting period include:

- Hosted several meetings with USAID and GSA on how to support the GSA warehouse program. The outcome of these meetings is a plan to implement a GDA-type program involving the Trade Hub, GSA and a development NGO. A concept paper to further develop this program is being reviewed by the Trade Hub and GSA prior to public release of the RFA during the first quarter of FY 15.
- Participated in a workshop facilitated by the Nigeria Expanded Transport and Trade (NEXTT) project in Nigeria on the development of manual on best practices for warehouse management and cooperative development. This will be reviewed by the development partner who will implement the Trade Hub/GSA-funded program during the next two years.

4.8.2 ASSESS REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY PRIORITIES RELEVANT TO SHEA

Sub-activity 7.c. *ACTE*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Action plan for advocating priority policy changes	VCL	STTA to support GSA campaign for potential US policy changes related to shea imports in the US.

The GSA has begun a campaign in support of requested policy changes submitted to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to allow shea butter and its byproduct to be approved as an ingredient for chocolate production in the US. Technical assistance in support of this campaign has been and will continue to be provided by home office subject matter experts. This issue has been identified as one of the largest constraints facing the value chain as it focuses on increased growth during the next 10 years.

4.8.3 ADVANCE SHEA ECOLOGY IN FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Sub-activity 7.c. *ACTE*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Action plan for improving the shea species	VCL, STTA Shea expert	Reviewed draft report and made recommendations. Will participate in final review and discussion

The GSA, in collaboration with the International Center for Research in Agro-Forestry, is funding a study to understand the state of available knowledge of shea ecology, in order to identify gaps and opportunities for the industry. The results of the study will be discussed d by the GSA's Sustainability Working Group members who will propose specific practical work streams that address issues identified by the study.

The consultant who prepared the EMMP reviewed the first draft of this study and made specific recommendations to improve the quality of the study and the relevance of its findings and recommendations to address improvements in the shea tree. This study has not been completed as of the end of the reporting period, but will be reviewed in the next meeting of the GSA Sustainability Working Group (December 2014). The Trade Hub will participate in this meeting and discussion.

4.9 MANGO ACTIVITIES

4.9.1 EXPERT ASSISTANCE TO INCREASE EXPORT CAPACITY

Sub-activity 8.b. *ACTE*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Work with AAFEX to identify potential areas for export increase	VCL STTA	Discussed the mango value chain with AAFEX and drafted MOU Developed pilot program in three countries for increased exports.

As a result of the Value Chain Assessment Reports and the OCAT completed with AAFEX (regional organization that supports value-addition in several value chains including mangoes), an opportunity to develop a pilot program for increased exports has been identified. Discussions with AAFEX have been held upon which an MOU has been drafted. As is the case with the other regional partners, the MOU provides a framework for collaboration in this value chain but could also be the basis for other activities to address opportunities in other value chains that might arise.

The pilot program for the mango value chain has been highlighted in different sections of this report. The principle recommendations were finalized at the end of the reporting period by the STTA that provided this assistance. These include:

- Form a Trade Hub Mango Value Chain Working Group MVCWG in the 3 countries
- Implementation of a training of trainer's pilot program on IPM, fruit fly control and harvesting techniques, in collaboration with an ECOWAS-supported program.
- Follow-up networking supply contacts established between Ghana, Senegal and Burkina Faso for off-season supplies.

- Facilitate training of technicians for pack houses in Ghana from similar enterprises in Burkina.
- Develop pilot business models focused in integrating producers and buyers, centered on pack houses, including use of cluster-based bulking sheds.
- Support the working groups and AAFEX on forming a regional consultative platform to promote the growth and trade of mango value chain.
- Support Mango Trade Fair in Burkina Faso to be held in April 2015.
- Design and support training for women entrepreneurs in the mango trade and processing sectors in Senegal as a pilot program

These recommendations will be used by the Trade Hub's Mango Specialist to support her work during FY 15.

4.10 APPAREL ACTIVITIES

4.10.1 MARKET TO NEW CLIENTS BASED ON SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES KNOWN TO PROJECT'S APPAREL/TEXTILE EXPERT

Sub-activity 9.a. ***ACTE***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Market to new clients based on specific opportunities known to project's Apparel Expert	FSA, VC, VCL	Opportunities identified in Ghana, Benin and CôteD'Ivoire. A potential sub-value chain for spinners and garment companies to be explored.

The apparel value chain has a large number of companies, mostly in Ghana. The Value Chain Assessment report identified positive trends for new companies in Côte d'Ivoire and Benin. The project is assisting one company in Guinea to obtain their textile visa under AGOA. During the reporting period, a team from GAO met with representatives of the Ghana apparel industry to discuss their operations during the past two years and how these have been and will be impacted by AGOA and its proposed extension in 2015. The Trade Hub will continue to support AGOA's continuation as this will have the most impact on the industry's ability to identify new export opportunities.

The Trade Hub's Apparel Value Chain Specialist was recruited at the end of the reporting period. He will work with STTA in October 2014 to re-establish contacts with companies in the three target countries. One subject discussed the Assessment report was the importance of increasing effective mid-level management of garment factories. This will be important if opportunities for increased exports are identified. In addition the possibility of support for a sub-value chain between spinners of local cloth in Burkina Faso and garment manufacturers in Côte d'Ivoire will be further explored.

4.11 CONSTRAINTS AND SOLUTIONS

The global value chains that have been targeted by the Trade Hub offer significant potential to increase trade, investment and create jobs. The largest constraints differ by value chain: for cashew access to finance to increase local processing; for shea a policy change would increase exports to the US; for mango improved regional cooperation for fruit fly controls; for apparel improved factory management for increased exports. The project's approach is to strengthen regional platforms to provide improved

services to their member companies. As stated earlier, part of this support is to ensure that the "link" between regional platforms and national associations is also strengthened. This will require regular on-going communication with senior managers in the key stakeholders with the value chain, to provide advice and technical assistance and ultimately enhance leadership.

5. FINANCIAL AND INVESTMENTS SERVICES

5.1 ANALYSIS FOR THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

During the last five months, although no formal assessment of the regional context for finance and investment was required by our contract, the Trade Hub finance and investment unit undertook a general survey of the regional context as the first step in designing its assistance.

Overall, ECOWAS has maintained its strong growth outlook, with annual growth averaging 6%. Inflationary pressures have eased in many countries as energy prices have stopped rising and food prices have declined. These developments, together with prudent fiscal policies, have provided some scope for monetary policy to reduce interest rates. This is mostly true in the eight francophone countries under supervision of the central bank of the West African franc zone (BCEAO). In other countries where fiscal policy has been lax and where currencies have weakened, monetary policy has tightened to stem inflationary pressure. Two countries could exemplify these developments, Burkina Faso (francophone) and Ghana (Anglophone). In addition, the risk to the regional economy from the outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus is troubling. This continues to be a threat to the health and economy of West Africa.

Ghana's economy is expected to moderate its relatively robust growth over the medium term. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is predicting Ghana's economic growth will slow down to a rate of 3.8 % in the next five years (compared to the 2002-2012 10-year average of 6.7 %). The Ghanaian annual inflation rate continued its upward trend and rose to 16% in August of 2014, driven by higher costs of transport, housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels. Year-on-year, the cost of housing, water, electricity and gas jumped 62% while transport prices rose 38%.

Credit costs remain very high at an average of 35-38%, with Treasury bills at 26%. The cost of credit still remains the topmost factor hindering the growth of businesses in Ghana. The high cost of credit is the result of competitive government borrowing, structural inefficiencies in the banking industry that lead to high operational costs and high lending risks and associated loan defaults. There is a need to restrain government borrowing by entrenching fiscal consolidation. There is a need to improve efficiency in the financial sector by improving management practices, engaging qualified and well-trained staff and modernizing operations. In addition, banks' lending preferences and the limited access to credit by the private sector—and the agricultural sector in particular—represent a market failure in the financial sector in the context of liberalization. This requires remedial intervention measures. There is a need to ensure availability of affordable credit for small-scale and informal private enterprises and for the agricultural sector. USAID's DCA guarantee mechanism is a very well-known example of bridging the market failure. For the industrial sector to grow, authorities need to tackle the constraints relating to the cost of credit.

Despite this hindering factor for businesses in Ghana, the country remains attractive to foreign direct investment, with a good level of investment in agriculture (cocoa, palm oil, cashew, shea and cereals, poultry, and fertilizers, etc.). High depreciation of the Ghana Cedi to the US dollar (from 1.4 to 3.6 in 5 years, a 160 % drop) is improving Ghanaian agriculture's comparative competitiveness in the longer

term. Deserving particular attention is the new interest of international investors of the apparel, textile and footwear industries, due to increased labor costs in China. Considering these high cost of credit, investment firms have a comparative advantage over the banking system and have developed strong presence in Ghana.

Burkina Faso suffered from lower gold prices in 2013 and still in 2014. Despite difficult economic circumstances, real growth remained strong at 7% in 2013. Inflation remains low in the UEMOA zone, with a predicted inflation of 2% in 2015 and 2016. The central bank of the eight-nation BCEAO is thus keeping its prime lending rate at 2.5 %. Access to credit is thus not as major a constraint as in Ghana for small enterprises, with average interest rates of 9-12% (which are by international standards, already high, making investment possible only on high return investments). Other factors like access to land, high cost and access of energy, poor infrastructure, lack of skilled labor and the less than efficient enabling environment are limiting FDI. What can be said for Burkina Faso can be also extrapolated for most of the eight UEMOA countries, with perhaps an exception with Côte d'Ivoire, with a remarkable economic recovery following their 10-years crisis.

Considering all these negative factors, financial intermediaries prefer to lend mostly in the service and trading sectors, and keeping deposits at the BCEAO (overall, banks are very liquid in BCEAO zone). Largely, this common practice pinpoints the high risk of agriculture and an underperforming banking sector. On one side, until now, and for probably another decade, BCEAO is maintaining its strong grip on the financial sector, limiting the competition, buying time while pushing for computerization and network software to upgrade its bank to the Basel international banking norms. In the meantime, some regional banks are emerging with a new client driven approach, with exponential growth. For example, one African owned bank opened 28 branches in one year and a half in Côte d'Ivoire. On the other side, to improve the demand of financial services, it is critical to develop good bankable projects. Thanks to the USAID/WA Trade Hub project, FAFs will fill this market gap and support business development services between emerging agribusinesses and the financial sector. It is mostly important, as in Burkina Faso, in general, agriculture and mining remain the main engines of growth.

For the Trade Hub project, Burkina Faso, as a landlocked country, has fewer investment opportunities than Côte d'Ivoire, back to become the locomotive of the eight countries of the UEMOA zone. Overall, it is an exciting time for Africa, and specifically for West Africa: FDIs are increasing and competition is growing among the financial sector. Internet access, communication and better schools are paving the way of a new generation of business people. This conjuncture and technical assistance of the Trade Hub are partly filling the gap between the supply of financial services and this new improved demand of financial services.

5.2 REPORTS, DELIVERABLES, STUDIES

Three reports stand for the deliverables of the Access to Finance component. The first is a training course in business plan development for the selected Finance Access Facilitators of the program. The second is a pipeline investment firm identification and the third is a financial constraint analysis. These last two reports are interlinked, as the financial constraints were partly identified with the support of the interviewed agribusinesses. These reports are briefly described in the sections below.

5.3 DEVELOPING FINANCE VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS TOOL

Sub-activity *Cross-Cutting*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Financial Benchmarking Value Chain Analysis	Investment and Finance Specialist, VCL, CapD, STTA by JE Austin	On going.

This activity is rescheduled for the FY 15 work plan. Time to develop this finance value chain analysis tool would have made difficult to focus on the most urgent task to launch the Access to Finance: identify and select strong Finance Access Facilitators and develop an Investment firm's pipeline. Following the next 12 months of activities, the relevance of the benchmarking will be reevaluate with the FAFs and the financial institution's partners.

5.4 DEVELOPING FINANCE TRAINING TOOLS

Sub-activity *Cross-Cutting*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Develop a Business Plan Development training and a Loan Application modules for Financial Facilitators	Investment and Finance Specialist, VCL, CapD support and done by Banyan Global	Done.

This activity was completed in July and will be finalized in early October to take into account the level of expertise of the selected FAFs and the investment and finance opportunities among selected value chains.

5.5 MAPPING OF FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

Sub-activity *Cross-Cutting*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Financial Intermediaries mapping for selected value chains in West Africa	Financial Services Specialist, Banyan Global, SSG	Done.

Trade Hub met the most important banks and investment firms in West Africa. This knowledge will support our FAF pool, to use the most adapted financial and investment products to increase the flow of agribusinesses in West Africa.

5.6 PARTNERING WITH FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

Sub-activity *Cross-Cutting*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Develop partnerships with financial intermediaries and International venture companies.	Financial Services Specialist, with coordination with SSG Advisors LLC.	On going.

The Trade Hub will initiate MOUs (or Letters of partnership) with regional banks, like Ecobank, BOA, ORA and Coris Bank to develop formal partnership agreements in FY15. These banks were met, but the partnerships will take meetings with Head Office of these regional banks. For international venture companies, we still need to identify a growth sector with important investments to attract a major buyer or investor.

5.7 TRAINING OF TRAINERS IN BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Sub-activity *Cross-Cutting*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Training of trainers for financial facilitators in developed modules	Financial Services Specialist, COP, VCL and Banyan Global	In progress.

Planned for the end of October, following the regional field mission, which will permit the tailoring of the training, as explained in section 5.4. In addition, the Access to Finance team is still recruiting Finance Access Facilitators to have a good coverage of value chains and countries.

5.8 TRAINING IN SECTORAL FINANCIAL VALUE CHAINS

Sub-activity *Cross-Cutting*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Training in sectoral financial value chain	Financial Services Specialist and VCL support, done by JE Austin	Re-scheduled

As the finance value chains analysis activity is postponed, the training course based on the finance value chains analysis is also postpone. As mentioned before, following the next 12 months of activities, the relevance of the benchmarking will be reevaluate with the FAFs and the financial institution's partners. If such an analysis and training is still requested, we will be able to better tailor the analysis and training on specific value chains, where weaknesses and constraints are most important.

5.9 PARTNERING WITH FINANCIAL FACILITATORS

Sub-activity *Cross-Cutting*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Develop partnerships with financial intermediaries and international venture companies.	Finance and Investment Specialist, with coordination with subcontractor SSG Advisors	On going

The FAFs are identified and under contracts in Ghana (6), Côted'Ivoire (2), Togo (2), Mali (2), Burkina Faso (1). There is still working underway for Senegal and Nigeria. We will do a second round for Côte d'Ivoire, as this country will require more than the 2 already selected.

- 1 FAF in Ghana is also covering Nigeria, for the cashew sector;
- 1 FAF in Togo, also covering Benin;
- 1 FAF in Burkina Faso, also covering Niger.

5.10 CONSTRAINTS AND SOLUTIONS

For these 5 first months of the Trade Hub, several constraints were identified with respect to the Access to Finance strategy. These constraints were partly based on logistics and procedure limitations and on incomplete or partial assumptions of the business development services market in West Africa. Below is a short summary of these constraints:

Business Development Services Market and Performance-Based Contracts

- Abt's proposal envisioned working with two regional consulting firms, Performance in Senegal and Catek in Mali. However, after a month of proposals and counter-proposals about budgets and scopes of work, both withdrew from the project.
- The previous Trade Hub project hired three consulting firms to boost investment in the last months of the project: Catek in Mali, CFS in Côte d'Ivoire and AIMS Limited in Ghana. These consulting firms received a large portion of fixed fees to cover travel costs and labors topped with an additional performance fee of 8%. The new Trade Hub approach is geared toward a more sustainable approach in the longer term. It took some time to bring local firms on board with this – it is completely performance based, paying an average of 3 % for smaller transactions and 1% for larger transactions. This only performance-based approach may have a drawback: some consulting firms will not always be able to upfront the initial expenses to work with the client. Trade Hub believes that it is better to cope with this limitation, and push the Business Development Services market toward a more sustainable approach on the longer term.

The Finance Access Facilitators Selection Process

- The component has faced logistical and administrative constraints to send advertisement in papers across the main countries where Trade Hub works. Two issues arose: the first was to comply with the administration requirement of getting pro forma invoices and bills before sending payments; the second was the requirement of paying through wire transfer, while most papers required cash payment only. Some advertisements were delayed one or two months due

to these logistical constraints.

- In some countries, only a few proposals were received and in some cases, none were received. In some of these countries, the project will send out new advertisements in September-October.
- Taking into account the low level of response, like in Senegal, the Access to Finance component had to rely on recommendations to identify good consulting firms, and then meet them, which led to associated travel costs and additional time.

Variety and Quality among FAF

- The Access to Finance component limited the number of Finance Access Facilitators in its first year. It is expected that Trade Hub will have between 15 and 20 FAF under contract before 2015. It is likely that each FAF will register an average of 3 transactions in the first couple of months of their contracts. This cautious approach is being taken until we access the speed and quality of transactions, coupled with ceiling constraints.
- The Access to Finance component has identified several very good consulting firms, specialized in access to finance and investment. Most of them are senior consulting firms, with experienced consultants, and in some case, previous bankers. This is highly important to support the complex and large transactions in the cashew and shea value chains. In Ghana and Nigeria, because of the high level of interest rates, investments are preferred to bank loans. As a result of this high level of expertise, the project has recommended that a basic financial intermediary training is not required for this initial group of FAF.
- Time will show if these senior FAFs will finalize transactions in lower amounts, and in other value chains, like livestock or cereals, where the margins are lower and in some cases, still mainly working informally.
- In some countries, like Mali, there are relatively few investment firms. Thus, most transactions will be debt financing where FAFs are less exposed to high structured transactions. In addition, the possibility of generating good structured deals is more limited. These more junior FAFs will probably be more inclined to work in the cereals and livestock sectors.

Staff Recruitment and Access to Finance Component Management

- Generally, salaries for BDS specialists and bankers are higher than the USAID FSN scale. With few exceptions, only very junior consultants are ready to work for the project at the current FSN rates. Bankers will not leave full-time, permanent bank jobs for a 3-year project without a substantial salary increase. This is of course beyond the usual 5% increase permitted.
- The FSN scale was obsolete due to the foreign exchange depreciation. The recent adjustment took time to be effective, delaying the project in hiring an employee.
- Without these 2 locally hired employees, the Finance and Investment specialist has limited capacity to achieve all work plan activities. This partly caused some activities to be postponed and other to be combined. It is expected to get USAID final approval of both local candidates in October 2014.

Access to Finance Capacity to Deliver Results

- The PMP Investment definition (as per FTF Indicator handbook) and contracts to Finance Access Facilitators include all stakeholders in the value chains, including production and downstream

and upstream investments. The Trade Hub has strategically decided to focus on investments and access to finance that will bring results on the higher level project outcomes: regional sales and jobs. This strategic choice will reject some projects in production and downstream and upstream investments, and thus limit the speed of achieving overall targets.

- The Access to Finance team will carefully coordinate their work with USAID-bilaterally funded projects and in some cases, take a country-specific approach to work in given value chains, e.g., a focus on expanded production to meet domestic market demand in Nigeria.

Nigeria

- The Trade Hub will develop a Nigeria-specific finance and investment strategy given the need to collaborate closely with the USAID bilaterally funded projects in Nigeria as well as other donor programs – some of which are implementing projects with very similar objectives and approaches (e.g., NEXTT). The size of Nigeria's market also calls for an approach that may be driven by serving local demands – as well as export opportunities – in particular, for staple food crops.

6. ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF VALUE CHAIN RESULTS

6.1 ANALYSIS FOR THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

A common tenant of the value chain assessment reports completed during the reporting period is to "upgrade the value chain." This concept is focused on improving the professionalization of the key actors within each value chain, be they the managers of the regional platform organization, the inter-professional associations in different countries or individual lead firms. More specifically, Trade Hub activities are designed to formalize the way by which these organizations conduct their business. One example of this is related to an expanded use of written contracts as the basis for commercial relations to be established and expanded. Other examples are to increase the understanding, acceptance and use of standards by which products are transported and marketed within the region and outside of the region. This perspective is reflected in the MOUs that have been developed by the Trade Hub with regional partners and is the basis for which activities in the FY 15 work plan will be implemented.

6.2 REPORTS, DELIVERABLES, STUDIES

The EMMP was developed during the reporting period and is an important management tool by which the project can measure the impacts of project-supported activities, both negative and positive. In addition to adhering to Regulation 216 requirements, the EMMP recommends that

"An affirmative policy involving the needs and opportunities for environmentally sound design and management should be one of the hallmarks of (the project's) advice, counsel and support to its constituency of partners in the Region. Accordingly, this EMMP focuses on the most environmentally critical activities related to the sector, and it will reinforce more specifically the general quest for sustainability, competitiveness and profitability inherent to the basic objectives of the Trade Hub Project".

A common activity in the FY 15 work plan for the cashew, shea and mango value chain is development of an environmental module about "best practices" to be adopted by regional partners and disseminated to member companies. This process will contribute to the overall upgrading of these value chains and overall effectiveness of the stakeholder organizations. This recommendation is equally applicable to the Feed the Future value chain stakeholders because improved environmental management will result in a higher quality product being marketed across regional borders. Examples include training on regional slaughterhouse requirements (livestock) and the creation of a regional platform to promote ECOWAS-approved standards for certified seeds and fertilizer practices (cereals).

6.3 IMPROVING BUYER-SELLER INTERMEDIATION

6.3.1 PURSUE KNOWN PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Sub-activity11.a. *ACTE*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Pursue partnership opportunities	VCL, STTA	MOUs signed or ready for signature with Regional Partners. Development of a potential GDA program with GSA. Established dialogue between mango producers and exporters.

Several of the regional organizations with which key partnership opportunities were established during this reporting period were in existence prior to the start of this project (e.g. ACA, GSA and COFENABVI). As a result of the VC Assessment Report process and initial outreach with different stakeholder organizations, additional partnerships are being pursued, such as AAFEX for the mango value chain. In the case of the previously-existing organizations, the working relationship has been re-defined to address the Trade Hub's highest level results as defined in its contract with USAID.

During the STTA to establish a pilot program for mango exports, contacts were made with the board composed of different grower' associations that have assumed ownership of a large pack house constructed under Ghana's MCC compact (the pack house has never functioned since its inauguration in February 2012). The board had entered into negotiations with an entrepreneur to manage the pack house during the 2014 – 2015 mango seasons. The Trade Hub facilitated several meetings between these parties to better clarify what is needed for the pack house to become operational. Part of these discussions identified specific capacity building support to be provided. The entrepreneur has met with members of the Trade Hub finance component to learn about the FAF process.

The Trade Hub/GSA initiative to focus on best practices for community-managed warehouses for the shea value chain will include private sector financing from GSA member companies and a cost share contribution from the development partner that will manage this program. The main objective of this program is to improve the bargaining position of those that are collecting the shea kernel to receive a higher amount of value added at the lowest level of the value chain.

6.3.2 ESTABLISHMENT OF PROCESS FOR PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT THROUGH ASSOCIATIONS

Sub-activity11.b. *ACTE*	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Evaluate associations' current matchmaking between buyers and sellers and propose platform for doing so more efficiently.	VCL, STTA	Improved understanding of relations within each value chain, from member companies to inter-professional associations to regional platform. Evaluate potential for business to business (B2B) within selected value chains.

The application of findings from the OCAT exercise and negotiation of MOUs with regional partners has improved Trade Hub understanding of the importance of effective communication between national

entities and the regional platforms themselves. The more effective this communication, the better the regional platform can engage with other private sector operators in support of an expanded value chain. On a general level, the national associations in the Feed the Future value chains are relatively stronger than their regional platform organization. The opposite is true for the global value chains (cashew, shea and mango). In the case of the apparel value chain, relatively strong lead firms are present and remain effective in terms of exporting their products to the global market.

These differences have an impact on the intervention methodology of the Trade Hub within the different value chains. The common objective is to strengthen both national and regional platforms across these value chains, with the different tools available to the project: technical assistance, capacity building/training, mentoring, workshops and targeted grant funding.

One tool used in the past for increased private sector engagement with different value chains was attendance at regional and/or international trade fairs. This will not be a priority activity of the Trade Hub. However two B2B activities will be supported during FY 15: a group of regional companies organized by AAFEX to attend the SIAL in Paris in October 2014 and a group of cereal traders (members of WAGN) to attend the regional "Bourse de Cereals" in Mali in December 2014. The results of these two activities will be reviewed prior to deciding if future support in this area can or should be provided.

6.3.3 DEVELOPMENT OF SHORT-LIST OF BROKERS AND DISTRIBUTORS WITH INTEREST IN AFRICAN-SOURCED PRODUCTION

Sub-activity 11.c. ***ACTE***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Development of short-list of brokers and distributors with interest in African-sourced production	VCL, FSA, VC Specialists	Contacts being identified during the investment pipeline exercise for global value chains.

The subject matter experts who completed the VC assessment reports identified some brokers and/or distributors that have worked with the studied value chains in the past and have the capacity and willingness to continue to do so in the future. This list is being updated during the first phase of the investment pipeline exercise that will be completed in early October 2014 by the finance and investment component. The result will be formal agreements with financial access facilitators throughout the region. These financial access facilitators will then work with different value chains to leverage increased investments the regional level. The initial focus are the global value chains and a separate exercise on the Feed the Future value chains will be completed later in FY 15.

6.4 EXPANDING USE OF GRADES AND STANDARDS

6.4.1 VALUE CHAIN-SPECIFIC GRADES AND STANDARDS ANALYSES

Sub-activity 12.a. ***Cross-Cutting***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Value chain-specific grades and standards analyses	VCL, TTEE, VC Specialists	Technical Assistance plan developed for selected value chains.

A common tenet in the Value Chain assessment reports for the global export value chains is the difficulty each has to successfully use established grades and standards. Several objectives of the regional partners associated with these value chains is to increase the availability of information about and techniques to adhere to improved grades and standards. The Trade Hub work plan includes activities in support of these objectives.

The TTEE Policy Analysis submitted in July 2014 concluded that there was limited compliance with grades and standards for the Feed the Future value chains, especially in terms of documentation for transport and SPS purposes. The FY 15 work plan includes support for improved compliance for livestock and cereals standards, as presented in the ECOWAS Standards Harmonization Model (ECOSHAM).

6.4.2 GRADES AND STANDARDS ACTIVITIES BASED ON VALUE CHAIN STUDIES

Sub-activity 12.b. ***Cross-Cutting***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Grades and standards activities based on value chain studies	VCL, CDU, AGOA Coordinator, CapD, grant manager	Begin to develop Challenge Grant program to address adherence to grades and standards in terms of AGOA aherence. Identification of activities to support cashew and shea standards initiatives.

One subject discussed at length with the GAO team that visited the Trade Hub in June 2014 was the difficulty that key value chains have adhering to international grades and standards, especially for the US market. This was also a key finding in the assessment studies. The Trade Hub grant facility will be used to Trade Resource Centers improve the quality of their advisory services to focus on improving their ability to better adhere to grades and standards as per AGOA an GSP guidelines.

Other activities completed during the reporting period for the cashew and shea value chains support improved adherence to grades and standards. In the case of cashew, improved management of local processing factories and the resulting waste stream will result in a higher quality and more consistent cashew nuts. In the case of shea, effective warehousing at the lowest end of the value chain and application of recommendations from the ecology study of the shea tree will support more a higher and more consistent shea kernel. This will be a principal focus of the Trade Hub during FY 15.

6.5 MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEMS

6.5.1 STUDY OF MIS POTENTIAL AND ACTION PLAN

Sub-activity 13.a. ***FTF***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Study of MIS potential and action plan	VCL, Senior MIS Specialist, TTEE	Finalized and submit the MIS supply and demand analysis and action plan study and present it to USAID mission. MOU drafted and ready for signature with RESIMAO.

The main activity carried out during the reporting period was the MIS supply and demand analysis and action plan. This project contractual deliverable due on September 15 was submitted to USAID on

August 19. Key aspects of this study were presented and discussed on September 9 with the USAID mission during a meeting held in the Trade Hub office.

The purpose of this study is to identify MIS partners for the project and to define a strategy for working with these partners to achieve the project objectives. The study was carried out using the following approach:

- Development of the SOW: With the support of a consultant, the project developed and internally validated a detailed scope of work.
- Identification of MIS operating in the region: The study started by gathering information on existing MIS initiatives in the region and outside the region to learn from their experiences. A total of 22 information systems were included in the study.
- Development and distribution of a questionnaire: to capture all the basic information about MIS (identification, geographic coverage, technology used, users of the system, funding, challenges, etc.) and distributed to all identified MIS. About 70% of the MIS's contacted responded to the questionnaire.
- Field visits: to have direct interviews and research more in-depth on some of the issues identified in the questionnaire, test the tools and technologies used and also discuss with some of the users of these systems in order to have their opinion on the services rendered.
- Gather information about market actor needs: The market information demand was assessed through a review of existing reports and interviews with major stakeholders during the field visit.
- Report writing: analysis were performed based on all the information collected but also taking into account previous USAID efforts to build regional MIS and efforts from ECOWAS and UEMOA to give a regional framework for market information interventions.

The MIS supply and demand analysis and action plan proposed eleven recommendations for the project intervention with various partners in the region and covering all project-selected value chains. Five priority actions the project should focus on to have an impact on commodities trade (intra-regional trade for maize, millet/sorghum, rice, and livestock and global trade for cashew, shea, and mangoes) have been identified:

- Issue a performance-based contract to select an MIS provider to support WAGN and COFENABVI develop their market information systems
- Support RESIMAO to make its platform more efficient in disseminating regional market information.
- Support WAGN members to attend Afrique Verte's regional "bourse des cereals."
- Support the development of ACA's market information system.
- Support the CBC in the deployment of their freight matching platform and work with Borderless Alliance to make market information available at its Trade Information Centers.

An MOU with RESIMAO has been negotiated and will be signed in October 2014. This will be the framework by which activities will be coordinated (including a grant to be developed during FY 15).

6.6 CONSTRAINTS AND SOLUTIONS

The three intermediate results discussed in this chapter: improved buyer-seller intermediation, expanded use of grades and standards and market information systems, are to be positively impacted by the outputs of the work completed under each of the targeted value chains by the project. Activities completed during the reporting period for each of these value chains have established a framework for support to be provided, identified critical constraints to be addressed, especially in terms of institutional capacity and access to finance. In the case of the mango value chain provided a "road map" to increase exports both regionally and to the global market has been developed.

The work completed for the mango value chain offers a positive example of how the Trade Hub will impact these three intermediate results. The working groups created in the three pilot countries will be supported as they negotiate new relationships to sell their product. Improved understanding of fruit fly control techniques will result in a product that will satisfy both regional and international grades and standards. Support to RESIMAO for MIS outreach will also work with AAFEX as the mango export platform also is supported by the Trade Hub to disseminate key information about this value chain to its stakeholders.

Flexibility is another key aspect of the Trade Hub's outreach strategy. This means that as each value chain evolves and with it the relationship with the respective regional platform, other opportunities will arise. The Trade Hub staff will be pro-active in its outreach with these partners to ensure that timely responses can be provided.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

7.1 CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

Capacity building of private sector actors and regional intergovernmental bodies rests at the heart of the Trade Hub and African Partners Network project. Strengthening human and institutional resources capacities of focus value chain associations is intrinsic in the spectrum of interventions supported across the project's components. Over the life of the project, the Trade Hub with its partners network will implement targeted activities that serve two main objectives: 1) Enhance performance in service delivery to members, in order to attract and retain a strong membership base, and ensure financial sustainability; 2) Build core competences that will enable them take advantage of emerging opportunities to increase competitiveness, strengthen market linkages, and expand trade in the focus value chains. These objectives contribute to Trade Hub's goal to increase regional trade of key cereals and livestock, and global trade of value-added products.

The Trade Hub's strategic approach to capacity building for its network of partners is guided by demand-driven and needs-based responsive programming. To establish the framework for crosscutting capacity building support to its partners, the Trade Hub completed a series of assessments during the period under review. The value chain assessments identified technical constraints and opportunities to strengthen each of the focus supply chains. This was complemented by focused assessments of organizational capacities of partners. The rigorous diagnostics of value chains and partner organizations identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The findings inform Trade Hub targeted support for each partner organization in FY15, and beyond.

7.1.1 PROJECT PARTNER SELECTION

Sub-activity 1.h. ***Cross-Cutting***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Review and revise association selection	VCL, CapD, TTEE, AGOA Advisor	Initial organizational capacity assessments with select partners organizations; partners selection report; areas for capacity building support identified and included in FY15 work plan.

In the Trade Hub proposal submitted to USAID by Abt Associates, several organizations were identified as potential partners for the project. They included value chain industry leaders, trade, transport, and market information facilitating institutions. Initial selection of these partners was strategic, for two reasons: identified organizations represent the regional and global value chains, and the policy advocacy of interest to the Project; all of them had previously received USAID support through former West Africa Trade Hubs (WATH 1&2) and the Agribusiness & Trade Program (ATP) and Expanded Agribusiness & Trade Program (E-ATP) projects. Thus, the Trade Hub's choice of partners was meant to leverage USAID's previous investments; to scale up on foundations already laid, with a focus on growth potentials, and aiming for ultimate graduation of the partners into self-sufficient organizations.

In the immediate 90-day period of the project's start-up, a partner confirmation was completed; through a rapid assessment exercise carried out in May and June 2014, using USAID's OCAT for information gathering, analyses and reporting. The OCA process allowed the incoming Trade Hub team to discuss with partner organizations' leadership about their interests, objectives, and capacities, and to determine how these aligned with the objectives of the project.

The Trade Hub Capacity Building team (TH-CBT) led the OCA process, with the collaboration of focal staff of the Value Chain and TTEE teams on the assessment of specific partner. The assessment team modified slightly the application of the OCAT. Instead of doing a detailed conventional OCA, the team adopted a two-phased process. Accordingly, the initial May-June 2014 process was a rapid OCA (r-OCA) with the leadership of each partner organization. This will be followed in FY15 by more in-depth, interactive OCA sessions with the national associations that constitute the base membership of each partner organization.

The need for the modification emerged out of an introductory roundtable discussion in April 2014 between the TH-CBT and key staff members of the BA, GSA, and ACA at their Executive Secretariats in Accra. The conversation revealed a greater interest on the partners' side for immediate support for on-the-shelf; ready-to-go activities that they had developed while awaiting start-up of the "new" Trade Hub. It was evident they understood their organizations to have been, *de facto*, already "selected" as partners for the project, likely due to their connections to the previous WATH projects. Thus, the initial meeting with these three alliances prompted the TH-CBT to take a more nuanced approach to the organizational capacity assessments, to avoid the risk of being perceived as an interrogation by the Trade Hub for making decisions of sanction or elimination. Therefore, the Trade Hub team used the r-OCA discussions to:

Private Sector Value Chain Associations:

- West African Grains Network (WAGN)—
- Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la Filière Bétail/Viande des pays de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (COFENABVI AO) —
- African Cashew Alliance (ACA)
- Association of African Agro-Exports (AAFEX)

Regional Trade and Transport Facilitation, and Market Information Systems

- Borderless Alliance (BA)
- Réseau des Systèmes d'Information des Marchés en Afrique de l'Ouest (RESIMAO

Export Trade Support: AGOA Resource Centers Host Institutions

- Gambia Investment and Export Promotion Agency (GIEPA)
- Agence Sénégalaise de Promotion des Exportations (ASEPEX)
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Burkina Faso (CCI-BF)
- Association pour la Promotion des Exportations de Côte d'Ivoire (APEX-CI)

- Familiarize the partners with the OCA as a tool for self-assessment of performance and for measuring progress. The majority of partners were familiar with the partner Institutional Viability Assessment (PIVA) tool but not with the OCA.
- Gain insight into the current state of the organization and activities; and
- Identify short-term interventions that would inform Trade Hub activities for the remainder of the FY14 work plan.

Analysis of OCA findings revealed partners were at different stages of organizational development; such variations would inform the tailored capacity building strengthening interventions by the Trade Hub. At the same time, some commonalities were identified with respect to thematic organizational capacity strengthening needs. Three main areas were identified and these have been incorporated in the FY15 activities.

Membership Expansion: An expanded membership base is seen as a means to promote the financial sustainability of the organization. Among the membership value chain associations, WAGN, COFENABVI, and ACA expressed a priority need to expand and strengthen their membership. Likewise, the Borderless Alliance and RESIMAO expressed interest in expanding their presence to all ECOWAS countries and attracting new members capable of meeting their financial obligations to the organization.

Strengthening Management Systems: Partners expressed the need to either develop expand or strengthen human, financial, administrative and information management systems.

Capacity Building and Training: All partners consistently expressed a need for training ranging from improved business practices (for member private sector enterprises and companies), increased efficiency in management (for staff members at the head office level), to specific technical skills development in specific value chain functions.

7.1.2 GENDER-FORWARD PROGRAMMING

Gender responsiveness is a core programming principle, cutting across all the Trade Hub's strategic components. This consideration derives from recognition of the critical roles of both men and women in the targeted value chains. At the same time, it is also acknowledged that men and women have differential access to resources; therefore the Trade Hub project is working to reduce gender disparities in within the value chains, and to ensure equitable participation by women in opportunities that promote increased trade in the projects focus supply chains. In practice, Trade Hub activities are designed to strengthen women's capacities in entrepreneurship, leadership roles, supply chain management, business and market linkages, and in regional and export trade.

To build capacity for gender forward programming across the project components, several activities were accomplished during the period under review.

- Meetings with Trade Hub partners to discuss collaboration pathways for gender-forward programming activities related to the Trade Hub's gender objectives. These results of these meeting have been incorporated in the FY15 activities. The Trade Hub Gender Specialist will work with each of the partner associations to develop a gender strategy and action plan that will guide activities.
- Integration of gender issues into the OCAT used for in the organizational assessments of partners, discussed in 7.1.
- Discussions with the different Trade Hub components:
    - Value Chain Team, to ensure gender issues were taken into account in the value chain selection process.
    - Finance and Investment Specialist, on women's specific challenges regarding access to financing.
    - Trade, Transport and Enabling Environment Team, about women traders and the particular challenges they encounter in cross-border trade. This included suggestions on Trade Hub collaboration with the ECOWAS Gender Centre, its resource staff and associations working to help women traders, so as to identify gendered constraints and opportunities to increase the value and volume of trade related to the project's objectives.

    - Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, to review the PMP and the different indicators related to gender issues for data disaggregation and indicators relevant to impact on women value chain actors.

- Finalization of the Grants Manual; provided input on gender considerations, including evaluating for impact on women's participation and involvement, impacts on other vulnerable groups like youth (job creation for women and youth, etc.), and a general focus on women's issues, such as women's empowerment, promotion, and other opportunities for women.
- Development of a draft gender strategy to guide Trade hub activities. The strategy provides a roadmap for gender sensitivity in the Trade Hub, and highlights the following actions:
    - Gender-sensitive value chain analysis and mapping to showcase the visibility of both men and women in different functions and activities in all value chains supported by the project.
    - The different constraints and opportunities for women to participate into the global and regional value chains.
- Completed a survey and needs diagnostics of women-owned enterprises in the Trade Hub value chains and affiliated with the main partner associations the project will work with. This exercise identified specific constraints faced by women, and informed activities included in the FY15 work plan. Key constraints can be summarized as:
    - Limited access to working capital and start-up financial resources;
    - Constraints on packaging, to meet international norms and standards;
    - The low level of processing equipment;
    - The high costs of transporting products cost;
    - Difficulties to meet demand as a consequence of limited access to credit and loans facilities;
    - Constraints on certification issues: more and more customers are fussy about the quality issue, the product certification.
- Meetings and discussions with USAID/Burkina Faso on potential Trade Hub support to strengthen the capacity of women's agro-enterprises and groups that are recipients ECOBANK/DCA, to enable them to manage the loans and expand their enterprises. This support activity will be implemented during FY15.

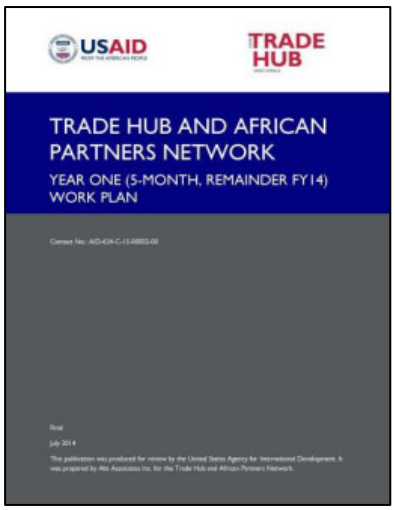
7.2 COMMUNICATIONS

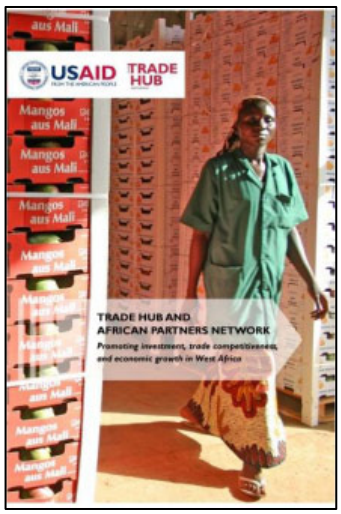
In the project's first six months, the Communications team made the following achievements:

7.2.1 COMMUNICATIONS MATERIALS DEVELOPED

- **Branding and Marking Guide submitted to USAID** (awaiting approval): The guide outlining the project's communications strategy for branding and marking was finalized and provided to USAID for comments and feedback. The guide stipulates communicating the project's message and identify of USAID support to its audiences.

- **Developed project's visual identity**, collaborating with staff to develop a series of project communications materials:
    - Project Brochure: Available in both French and English, the brochures provide an





overview of the project scope and goals.

- One-pagers: The Communications team, in close collaboration with the technical team, designed and developed project one-pagers, available in English. French translations are currently being developed.
- Developed a PowerPoint template for uniform project presentations

- Developed and submitted an online website strategy and submitted a waiver request (pending approval by Website Governance Board)
- Handle knowledge management via the project's internal CommonShare system, which is accessible to Accra-based staff, and online through the secure Abt SharePoint system, which is accessible to a wide range of remote-based staff, and supports document sharing between the Trade Hub's Accra office and Abt Home Office in Bethesda, MA.
- Developed a weekly reporting format for showcasing project updates to USAID/West Africa.

7.2.2 TRADE HUB LAUNCH EVENT IN ABUJA, NIGERIA

Coordinated with ECOWAS, USAID/West Africa and USAID/Nigeria to successfully launch the Trade Hub Project in Abuja, Nigeria. The launch took place on Thursday, September 18, and followed the signing of the Strategic Objective Agreement Grant between USAID and ECOWAS. The Communications team developed background materials and press kits, and supported national and regional press outreach. The smoothly coordinated event gained national and regional media coverage, including by some of Nigeria's largest news media.

The Communications team has also regularly developed and produced project maps demonstrating the project's targeted corridors, AGOA Resource Centers, and countries of operations.

There are initiatives that are currently in development, expected to be available shortly within the next year. This includes, most prominently, the Quarterly Newsletter (in progress, to be disseminated October 2014): The quarterly newsletter will be targeted at a wide audience of project partners, trade institutions and organizations and interested parties to inform them on project activities and provide sector knowledge and best practices. The first issue is currently in develop at the time of writing this report.

7.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

For M & E, this period was marked by the development of the baseline study, a draft PMP and the database.

7.3.1 BASELINE STUDIES

Sub-activity 1.a. *Cross-Cutting*	Activity Manager/Other Staff	5-Months Results
Baseline study	COP, M&E Specialist, TTEE Specialist	Draft PMP submitted to USAID in April, revised 5 times to date. Baseline surveys and studies completed by June.

To satisfy the terms of the contract with USAID, a baseline study was conducted for a certain number of indicators. The objective was to provide the Trade Hub with a starting point for monitoring and reporting on progress for some indicators identified in the draft PMP.

The methodology for establishing the baseline (or starting point) for each indicator depends on the nature of the indicator. There are four possible scenarios: 1) The baseline is zero; 2) the baseline will be established on a rolling basis, as the project and specific clients make a commitment to work together; 3) the baseline can be established using data already available from partners or previous projects; or 4) the baseline can be established by collecting data at the beginning of the project.

The project has 25 total indicators for progress measurements. For five indicators, the project established the following baselines:

- Value and volume of regional value chains transactions along project-assisted corridors (Project Indicator #1): The Trade Hub determined that the value of transaction between April 2013 and March 2014 is $ 194,481,257. This information was collected from CILLS who is funded by USAID to continue to collect data on cross-border flows at the end of ATP project.
- Score in percent of combined key areas of organization capacity amongst USG direct and indirect local implementing partners (Project Indicator #6): at the begin of the project, Trade Hub measured the capacity of assisted local organizations across seven key capacity areas using the Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT). The key capacity areas include: Governance, Administration, Human Resources Management, Financial Management, Organizational Management, Program Management and Project Performance Management. The score in 2014 is 30.56 pts for regional value chains associations and 24.43 for global value chains alliances.
- Dues paying members in associations (Project Indicator #10): In 2013, the Trade Hub determined that the total number of paying members was 584. The Trade Hub collected this key information as part of initial work with the assisting associations COFENABVI-AO, WAGN, GSA, ACA, and Borderless Alliance.
- Time delays at check points (Project Indicator #18): Since the project is still finalizing selection of targeted trade corridors, data was presented for three major corridors: Abidjan-Bamako, Bamako-Dakar, and Tema-Ouagadougou. Examining both time delays and the number of check points along each corridor, the Trade Hub found that transporters were delayed on average 8.76 minutes per checkpoint. This information was sourced from publically available Observatoire des pratiques anormales (OPA) reports.
- Average rate of bribes per 100 km (Project Indicator #19): Using the same corridors listed above, the Trade Hub found that bribes amounted to, on average, $46 per 100 kilometers. This information was sourced from publically available OPA reports.

The project will retain the indicators monitoring cost and time to trade across borders depending on USAID's consultation with the East Africa Trade Hubs and Southern Africa Trade Hubs. If retained, the project could then carry out a survey along the targeted corridors, once these are selected. In addition to discussing selected baselines, the baseline report also presents draft Performance Indicator Reference Sheets, which are important building blocks of the Trade Hub's monitoring system.

7.3.2 PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN DEVELOPMENT

A draft Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) was developed to monitor the performance of the Trade Hub and its progress in meeting its objectives. Analysis of the data the project collects in accordance with the PMP will serve as the basis for reporting to USAID, provide inputs for knowledge-sharing, and support decision-making about the course of project implementation. The process of data collection, analysis, and feedback will serve as the critical management information system that will enable the

project COP, our team, USAID, and other stakeholders to measure the project's efforts in achieving its objectives. The draft PMP was submitted to USAID in April 2014.

After multiple meetings with USAID to harmonize all Trade Hubs indicators (East, Southern and West Africa), the project identified 25 indicators in the latest iteration of the PMP. The list was revised to take into account all the indicators included in the "Expected Results" and Annex 6 of the contract. (See Annex A: Project Indicators).

In August 2014, the Abt Home Office M&E Specialist Mikal Davis conducted a mission to finalize the PMP, develop the theory of change, and logic models for each value chain.

7.3.3 DATABASE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

The Senior M&E Specialist developed a database in Microsoft Excel. This database will be managed and stored in Accra. Primary data collection is either performed by partner organizations or the Trade Hub project staff/component leads. This information will either be recorded on paper forms (data collection instruments) or directly into Excel. Each component lead will be responsible for facilitating data collection of their activities and collecting the data when necessary in order to maintain his/her own database. These databases will be design by the M&E Specialist to be standardized across all components in order to facilitate data aggregation at the end of each quarter.

All completed forms are to be verified and reviewed by M&E staff before being entered into the appropriate spreadsheet. The M&E team will also return select information to staff and partners as appropriate for analysis and/or management purposes. Information systems and flows may occasionally be revised to provide more useful feedback for internal and external stakeholders on activity effectiveness and progress toward results.

Every quarter, M&E staff will supervise all data collection and will ensure that all data are collected. Before entering the data into the database, the M&E team will verify that all the supporting documentation has been provided and the data verified. Supporting documents will be stored in both hard and soft copies by the M&E team. The aggregated database maintained by the M&E team will be designed in a way that allows for easy production of GIS thematic maps that will be used in reports to illustrate program results and achievements.

7.3.4 PARTNERSHIP TRADE HUB-CILSS

The Trade Hub will collaborate with CILSS to consolidate the system that CILSS has put in place to receive data on the following priority indicators:

- Value and volume of regional value chains transactions along project-assisted corridors
- Percent reduction in time delays at checkpoints along priority West African trucking corridors
- Percent reduction in the average rate of bribes paid per 100 km

To start off this collaboration, the project conducted a mission to CILSS from May 15-16. During the mission, the project worked with the CILSS team of PRA/Marché to obtain the necessary data to establish the baseline after the analyses of the database of indicators. The two parties also agreed to sign a MOU to continue the collaboration. A second mission was conducted to formally introduce the Trade Hub to CILSS and identify areas of collaboration between the both.

After discussing the corridors covered by the two structures, the following table has been developed with an emphasis on the gap that remains to be filled by CILSS to meet the Trade Hub needs.

Table 1: Trade Corridors Covered by CILSS and Gaps

Corridor	FTF VC covered by CILSS					GAP				
	Cattle	Maize	Rice	Small ruminants	Millet/sorghum	Cattle	Maize	Rice	Small ruminants	Millet/sorghum
Tema-Ouaga										
Section 1: Ouaga-Kumasi-Ashama	F;H						F;H			
Section 2: Techiman-Ouaga		F					T			
Bouake-Bamako										
Section 1: Bouake-Ferke		F;H								
Section 2: Ferke-Bamako							F;H			
Bamako-Bouake					F					H
Pouytenga-Fada-Parakou	F;H									
Bamako-Dakar	F;H	F;H		F;H	F;H					
Bama-Kouri			F;H							

Note: F = Data collected on flows; H= Data collected on harassments

Thus, CILSS is not covering all sections of corridors, nor all value chains, and CILSS does not collect all the data required by the Trade Hub. In order to address this, the CILSS team will submit to the Trade Hub a technical and financial proposal to take account of the gaps identified.

8. SYNERGIES WITH OTHER PROJECT PARTNERS

8.1 MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING WITH BILATERAL PROJECTS AND OTHER DONORS

8.1.1 INITIAL CONTACT WITH CORS, AORS AND COPS

Activity 2.a. ***Cross-Cutting***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Initial contact with Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs, AORs) and COPs	Chief of Party, Other technical Staff as Required	Meeting with FinGAP, ADVANCE II, AgPolicy Project, NEXTT, PCE, REGIS Meeting in Benin to review the draft document of the conference on the free movement of agricultural products in West Africa.

In March 2014, the COP attended a workshop in Benin for the validation of the Program to support the monitoring of recommendations of the regional conference on free movement of agricultural products in West Africa.

In April 2014, the COP gave a presentation at the USAID/West Africa Regional Partners Meeting in Accra. The purpose of the meeting was to deepen collaboration among West African organizations, Regional and Bilateral Missions, and to identify opportunities to increase coordination among USAID/West Africa implementing partners.

This meeting was an opportunity for the Trade Hub COP and other staff members in attendance to meet with other projects and partners.

The Investment and Finance specialist attended a workshop organized by the new Financing Ghanaian Agriculture Project (FinGAP). Meetings with other projects and bilateral missions' staff will continue in the next quarter. Meetings were held with the bilateral missions in Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana, Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Mali.

8.1.2 COOPERATION WITH BILATERAL FEED THE FUTURE VALUE PROJECTS AND OTHER DONORS' PROJECTS

Activity 2.b. ***Cross-Cutting***	**Activity Manager/ Other Staff**	**5-Months Results**
Technical exchange meetings to discuss and monitor Value Chains	Chief of Party, VC, FSA	Contact with USAID and US Embassy in the Republic of Guinea.

Following the finalization of the project's selection of value chains, trade corridors, and assistance strategies with Trade Hub partners, official visits will be scheduled with bilateral missions and non-presence and limited presence countries to discuss collaboration with their country programs. During this quarter, the project engaged in discussion with the US Embassy in Guinea regarding support to the Guinea AGOA Resource Center. The project started a dialogue with the US Embassy in Cape Verde concerning the 18th edition of the Cape Verdean International Trade Fair, scheduled for November 17-21, in Praia.

Meetings with bi-lateral and Limited Presence Country missions (Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Ghana) have also begun.

9. ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

9.1 GENERAL AND PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

During the last five months, the Trade Hub has successfully set up the two project offices in Accra and Ouagadougou, and set up project presence in Dakar in an existing Abt USAID project office, recruited most technical and administrative staff and established policies and procedures to implement project activities. Within one week of the signing the contract, the Abt start-up team traveled to Accra and Jeffrey Povolny the Chief of Party moved to Accra and initiated the initial stages of mobilization:

- The Accra project office was fully operational by beginning of May 2014.
- The Ouagadougou office was fully operational by beginning of July 2014.
- During the last five months the project hired 16 technical staff and 14 Administrative staff. The project has three additional technical staff to hire and one administrative staff to hire.
- The Trade Hub reconciled and tested the IT equipment inherited from ATP, E-ATP, and WATH. Some of the IT equipment are being used by the Trade Hub staff and 169 IT equipment are obsolete, damaged or incompatible with the Abt IT system. Trade Hub will be submitting a reconciliation of IT equipment to USAID.
- The Trade Hub also inherited office furniture from the WATH project. The project hired a professional carpenter to recycle the furniture to fit the interior design of the office space. Trade Hub will need to procure additional furniture for additional project staff and make the furn. Trade Hub also inherited seven vehicles out of which three are being used in the Accra office and one in the Ouagadougou office. The three remaining vehicles are in the warehouse and the project will be proposing a disposition plan for these vehicles to USAID.

9.2 GRANTS UNDER CONTRACT

Cross-Cutting	Activity Manager/ Other Staff	5-Months Results
Support associations and regional partners.	Grants Manager and TH Team	Developed and submitted the grants Manual.

The Trade Hub submitted the grant manual in May 2014 and the latter was approved by USAID late September 2014. The project has established its process and procedures for issuing grants to different partners.

Also, the project has signed MOUs with most of the associations (BA, ACA, and GSA) and will be signing the rest of the MOUs in October 2014.

The project is in discussion with BA, ACA, and GSA in regards to the grant to be given to these associations.

9.3 ADMINISTRATIVE/BUREAUTIC CONSTRAINTS

During the course of Trade Hub's start up a number of challenges were encountered.

- Due to the high inflation rate in Ghana and devaluation of the Ghana cedi, hiring local staff and proposing salaries in Ghana cedis have been challenging since some the candidates worked for organizations and projects that indexed their salary payments to the USD. Trade Hub estimates that the project lost four to six weeks in hiring local staff because of long salary negotiations.
- The project has inherited several obsolete, damaged and non-compatible IT equipment. Due to the restriction of purchase of IT equipment in the Trade Hub contract, the project is unable to procure some of the IT equipment needed to effectively operate. The project will be submitting a revised list of IT equipment needed for the project to USAID.
- The Trade Hub was not previously registered in Burkina Faso. In order to register a project with local authorities, a project office lease agreement was required. Until the project completes the registration process, local staff could not be hired. In April, Abt Associates engaged the services of a local legal counsel to support the registration process, and finally in June the project finalized the office lease agreement.

ANNEX A: PROJECT INDICATORS

#	FTF #	Trade Hub Indicator	3-Year	5-Year
		Highest-level Outcomes		
1		**Value and volume of regional value chains transactions along project-assisted corridors** 1a. Value and volume of intraregional exports along project-assisted corridors by members of the project-assisted livestock association. 1b. Value and volume of intraregional exports along project-assisted corridors by members of the project-assisted cereals association.	Up 30%	Up 50%
2		**Value and volume of sales of firms that received USAID assistance (Global Value Chains)** 2a. Value and volume of cashew sales by the members of the project-assisted cashew alliance. 2b. Value and volume of Shea sales by the members of the project-assisted Shea alliance. 2c. Value and volume of mango sales by project-assisted companies. 2d. Value and volume of apparel sales by project-assisted companies. 2e. Value of other value chain sales by AGOA-assisted companies	$100 m	$180 m
3	4.5-2	**Creation of new jobs in project-assisted firms** 3a. Creation of new jobs by members of the project-assisted livestock association 3b. Creation of new jobs by members of the project-assisted cereals association 3c. Creation of new jobs by the members of the project-assisted cashew alliance 3d. Creation of new jobs by the members of the project-assisted Shea alliance 3e. Creation of new jobs by project-assisted mango companies 3f. Creation of new jobs by project-assisted apparel companies 3g. Creation of new jobs in others AGOA value chains	15,000 (2250)	23,000 (3450)
4		**Facilitation of investment in targeted sectors** 4a. Livestock 4b. Cereals 4c.Cashew 4d. Shea 4e. Mango 4f. Apparel 4g. Others AGOA value chains 4h. Transport sector	$62.5 m ($10 m)	$102.5 m ($15 m)
		IR1: Improved private sector capacity		
5	4.5.2-11	**Number of private enterprises, producers organizations, water users associations, women's groups, trade and**	300 (125)	500 (200)

		business associations receiving USG assistance 5a. Livestock 5b. Cereals 5c.Cashew 5c.1 Of which, assisted by AGOA Resource Centers 5d. Shea 5d.1 Of which, assisted by AGOA Resource Centers 5e. Mango 5e.1 Of which, assisted by AGOA Resource Centers 5f. Apparel 5f.1 Of which, assisted by AGOA Resource Centers 5g. Others AGOA value chains 5h. Transport sector		
6	4.5.2-27	**Score in percent of combined key areas of organization capacity amongst USG direct and indirect local implementing partners**	60%	80%
7	4.5.2-7	**Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security trainings**	100 (40)	200 (80)
		IR 1.1: Improved buyer-seller intermediation		
8		**Number of buyer-seller linkages established in targeted as a result of Trade Hub assistance** 8a. Livestock 8b. Cereals 8c.Cashew 8d. Shea 8e. Mango 8f. Apparel 8g. Others AGOA value chains	60 (25)	100 (40)
9		**Number of participants in Trade Hub-supported capacity building events related to improving trade or attracting investment**	1000 (400)	1500 (600)
10		**Number of new dues paying members in private business associations as a results of USG assistance** 10a. Livestock 10b. Cereals 10c.Cashew 10d. Shea 10e. Mango 10f. Apparel 10g. Others AGOA value chains	600 (200)	1000 (400)
		IR 1.2 Expanded use of grades and standards		
11		**Number of assisted firms meeting grades and standards** 11a. Livestock	300 (150)	500 (250)

		11b. Cereals 11c.Cashew 11d. Shea 11e. Mango 11f. Apparel 11g. Others AGOA value chains		
12		**Number of sectors and countries that advanced the harmonization of regional grades and standards** 12a. Livestock 12b. Cereals 12c.Cashew 12d. Shea 12e. Mango 12f. Apparel 12g. Transport 12h. Countries sector	24	44
		IR 1.3 Increased access to and use of market information systems		
13		**Number of users of new MIS services**	50,000	115,000
		IR 1.4 Increased access to and use of financial services		
14	4.5.2-29	**Value of new loans made to clients in targeted sectors** 14a. Livestock 14b. Cereals 14c.Cashew 14d. Shea 14e. Mango 14f. Apparel 14g. Others AGOA value chains 14h. Transport sector	$25 m ($5 m)	$58 m ($12 m)
15	4.5.2 -37	**Number of MSMEs receiving business development services from USG assistance**	125 (25)	250 (40)
16	4.5.2-29	**Number of firms in targeted sectors receiving loans from partner banks** 16a. Livestock 16b. Cereals 16c.Cashew 16d. Shea 16e. Mango 16f. Apparel 16g. Others AGOA value chains 16h. Transport sector	102 (62)	202 (123)
17	4.5.2-12	**Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USG assistance**	1	2
		IR 2.1 Improved transport sector competitiveness		

18		**Percent reduction in time delays at checkpoints along priority West African trucking corridors**	10%	20%
19		**Percent reduction in the average rate of bribes paid per 100 km**	10%	20%
20		**Reduction in cost to trade across borders and along corridors** 20a. Containerized 20b. Non containerized	10%	20%
		IR 2.2 Reduced legal and regulatory barriers		
21		**Number of reforms or improvements in enabling environment resulting from USG assistance**	3	5
22		**Reduction in the number of days/time required to trade goods across borders as a result of US assistance** 22a. Containerized 22b. Non containerized	10%	15%
23		**Number of actions (audits, reports, presentations) or tools developed to facilitate compliance of member states with the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme**	15	25
24	4.5.1-24	**Number of policies/regulations/administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a results of USG assistance in each case:** Stage 1: Analyzed Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation Stage 3: Presented for legislation/decree Stage 4: Passed/approved Stage 5: Passed and for which implementation has begun	36 in either stage 3, 4, or 5	49 in either stage 3, 4, or 5
25		**Number of individuals who have received USG trainings on trade and transportation enabling environment**	100 (40)	200 (80)

ANNEX B: SIGNIFICANT MEETINGS

Trade Hub Team

- Meeting with Trade Hub Management Council, USAID/W, June 11, 2014
- Attended Trade Hub Workshop, USAID/W, September 17-19

Trade and Transport Enabling Environment

- Various meeting with Borderless Alliance, April-June, 2014
- Trade Hub visit to ECOWAS HQ, Abuja, Nigeria, June 9-14, 2014
- Meeting with CILSS in Burkina Faso, July 3-4, 2014
- Presentation of the Trade and Transport Policy Assessment to USAID' s Agriculture and Trade Investment Offices, and to the Trade Hub, Accra, Ghana, July 9, 2014
- Meeting with UEMOA in Burkina Faso, July 10-11, 2014
- Meeting with JICA in Burkina Faso, July 11, 2014
- Meeting with USAID/Burkina Faso, July 11, 2014
- Introduction of the Borderless Alliance to the VC Lead, Accra, Ghana, July 10, 2014

Value Chains Meetings:

- Preliminary meeting with General Secretary of COFENABVI: Introductory presentation of Trade Hub,
- Meeting with Millennium Challenge Corporation Benin, May 5, 2014
- Meeting with the Investment Officer of Injaro (Agricultural Capital Holdings), June 26, 2014
- Trade Hub, WAGN and AGRA meeting, July 9, 2014
- Trade Hub and AGRA meeting (Cf. Jeff and Bill meeting with Abdou of AGRA), July 11, 2014
- Meeting with ECOWAS Consultant, July 14, 2014
- Meeting with COFENABVI Representative in Burkina Faso, July 16, 2014
- Meeting with USAID/Ghana, July 16, 2014
- Meeting with ROPPA in Burkina Faso, July 23, 2014
- Meeting with Director of Animal Resources and Fisheries of UEMOA, August 12, 2014
- WAGN and Partners meeting in Accra hosted by Trade Hub (USAID, Trade Hub, CTA, and Farm Foundation)
- Two main meetings of Staple Crops Specialist with the WAGN Chairman

- Meeting with GRB Executive Secretary
- Meeting with USAID/Burkina Faso
- Meeting with REGIS-ER in Ouagadougou

Finance Access Meetings:

- Participated in the bilateral USAID project FinGAP, met later the COP, Rick Dvorin, May 8, 2014
- Met with IFC Trade Logistics Specialist, Mikiko Imai Ollison and Alain T. Traoré, Senior Operations Officer, June 25, 2014
- Met with Karl Wicoff, Senior Trade Policy Advisor with Abou Fall, AGOA Specialist
- Met with USAID Hans Bogaard of Rabo Development
- Met with West African Monetary Institute General Manager to get information on Financial sector
- Met with private companies:
    - Premium Foods to export grits in Abidjan
    - Visited apparel Dignity-DTRT factory. Met the 2 shareholders and discuss their finance issues
    - Winfield Farms Ltd, in the mango sector
- Met with Bureau Advisory Services in Ghana: AIMS, VA Conseils and Growth Mosaic
- Met with patient capital firms: Barbara Ghansah of Root Capital, Injaro and Acumen

AGOA Meetings

- Meeting with Mr. Serigne Alioune Diop, ARC Coordinator Agence Senegalaise de Promotion des Exportations (ASEPEX), May 7, 2014
- Meeting with Mr. El Hadji Abdoulaye Diack, Executive Director, and Mrs. Hawa Sy Berete, in charge of Information and Communications at Association Afrique AgroExport (AAFEX), May 8, 2014
- Meeting with Government Accountability Office (GAO), June 17, 2014
- Meeting with United States Trade Representative (USTR), June 19, 2014
- Trade Hub conference call with the U.S. Embassy in Cape Verde, July 24, 2014
- Trade Hub meeting with Ministry of Vocational Training, learning and Crafts, Dakar, Senegal. September 9, 2014
- Trade Hub meeting with USAID/Senegal Sahel Regional Technical Office, September 11, 2014

Capacity Building Meetings

- Meeting with African Cashew Alliance (ACA), May 16, 2014

- Team Building Workshop for Project staff, with some USAID WA participation, May 22-24, 2014
- Meeting with Amethyst Technologies LLC, June 25, 2014
- Teleconference with USAID/Burkina Faso and USAID/Dakar. July 3, 2014

M&E Meetings

- Meeting with CILSS (Moussa Cisse, Regional Coordinator of Market Access, Brahima Cisse, Analyst of cross-border trade flows, and Christian Amedo, Monitoring & Evaluation specialist of cross-border trade flows), May 15-16, 2014
- USAID West Africa's Analytical Support Services and Evaluations for Sustainable Systems (ASSESS) and USAID/West Africa visit, August 1, 2014
- Trade Hub Meeting with CILSS on data collection flow, August 6-7, 2014

ANNEX C: BUSINESS & AGOA-RELATED ACTIVITIES FOLLOW UP AND STATUS

#	Date	Project / Task	Contact	Owner	THN Support
1	5/22/14	Follow up with U.S. Customs on baobab duty payment	David B. Goldman Founder and President Atacora Essential, Inc (360) 918-8193 dave@atacoraessential.com www.atacoraessential.com	AF	Explanations and recommendations to Dave. Email sent to CBP June 18, 2014. Awaiting feedback from CBP. CBP asked importer to make a claim in order to benefit from the duty-free treatment. Import value of $4,761.
2	5/29/14	Technical assistance on export documentation	Magatte Wade Tiossan CEO & Founder magatte@tiossan.com M: (650) 823-7654 www.tiossan.com	AF	Explanation on Export Documentation. Linkage with a local Senegalese freight forwarder (STTM). Follow up as needed.
3	6/9/14	Looking for buyer	Ziama Coffee - - Received request from Melody R. McNeil, Agriculture and Environment Team Leader USAID/Guinea and Sierra Leone mmcneil@usaid.gov +224 657104353	AF, IJ	Sent an intial link - Caranda Fine Foods www.carandafoods.com. Will follow up with RC to get more information on Ziama Coffee.
4	6/10/14	Looking for West Africa processed agricultural products and transportation questions	Phil Hughes, Founder Mavuno Harvest phil@mavunoharvest.com t. (267) 615-8251 - f. (267) 437-3868	AF	Linkage with AAFEX on potential W.A. partners and Borderless Alliance on tranport questions.
5	6/11/14	Looking for funding for initial feasibility study for a shoe manufacturing venture in Ghana	Keith Basik Pace Africa, LLC O: (239) 272-4643 keith.basik@gmail.com '87 West Point	AF and THN	Initial discussions. Shared project summary with THN team. Awaiting team feedback.

6	6/17/14	Apparel Investment Opportunity in Ghana	Skip Richmond, Co-CEO/Founding Director of DTRT Apparel	AF and THN	Meeting with GAO team. Follow up visit by JF.
7	7/6/14	Tomato products, relocating from Nigeria to Ghana	Mira Mehta and Shane Kiernan, co-founders of a start-up company called Tomato Jos Mira Mehta mira@tomatojos.net; Shane Kiernan <shane@tomatojos.net>	?	We will be in Accra from July 2-20th and intend spending time in Accra, Upper East and Brong Ahafo meeting local farmers and potential partners
8	7/6/14	The Base Project, WRAP - type ethic, artisanal, Fair Trade, apparel, accessories.	Chris Akin 001 (808) 295-1404 chris@thebaseproject.com The Base Project	?	The Base Project, and to see if there is an opportunity to work with USAID Ghana. We are preparing a visit to Ghana from July 14th to the July 24th. We are a US based fashion company that works with artisans in Africa, presently Ghana and Namibia. We are a Fair Trade organization and specifically work with seamstresses in Ho, Volta Region. Our primary social focus in Africa is poverty alleviation.
9	6/27/14	Follow up with Federal Ministry of Finance for duty-vaiwer under ETLS	Appolinaire AGOSSOU Responsable Supply Chain / Supply Chain Officer - PATISEN Bureau: (+221) 33 849 65 71 Mobile: (+221) 77 254 24 88 / +234 (0) 909 322 1201 Mail: appolinaire@patisen.sn	AF, TTEE	PATISEN requested assistance to get a duty-waiver in order to benefit dut-free treatment under the ETLS for seasoning powder and tablets exported from Senegal to Nigeria. Trade Hub followed and PATISEN got the duty vaiwer to remove containers worth $908,320.
10	8/15/14	Customs documentation under AGOA	Hanna Stiles Amichia Administrative Manager DTRT - Tel: +233 302 686700 Cell: +233 050 133 5861 Skype: hamichia	AF	DTRT requested assistance on export documentation for the shipment of 27,720 polo shirts for the amount of $20,530.80. THN provided TA on the textile visa.
11	9/2/14	Customs documentation under AGOA	Ernestina Ofoe Import & Export Manager Lucky 1888mills Ltd. korkor@lucky1888.com	AF	1888 Mills requested assistance on export documentation for the shipment of Lab Coats for a value of $77,554.75. THN provided TA on the textile visa.

ANNEX D: DOCUMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Year One (5-Month, Remainder FY14) Work Plan, April 2014
- Start Up and Preliminary 90 Day Work Plan, April 2014
- Draft Performance Monitoring Plan, April 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Small Ruminants, May 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Cattle, May 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Maize, May 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Rice, May 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Millet and Sorghum, May 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Apparel, May 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Cashew, May 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Shea, May 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Mango, May 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Sesame, May 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Honey, May 2014
- Value Chain Assessment Report: Overview, May 2014
- Value Chain Selection Report, May 2014
- Grants Manual, May 2014
- Partner Selection Report, June 2014
- Baseline Study, June 2014
- Trade and Transport Enabling Environment Policy Assessment, July 2014
- Strategy and Action Plan for Assessed Value Chains, July 2014
- Supply and Demand Analysis, August 2014
- FY15 Work plan, September 2014
- Weekly Reports for USAID (17 to date)
- Meeting Reports (34 to date)
- PowerPoint Presentation - Regional Partners Meeting of USAID, April 2014
- PowerPoint Presentation - COP Presentation to USAID/Washington, June 2014

- PowerPoint Presentation - Maximizing AGOA's Impact through the Trade Hub, June 2014
- PowerPoint Presentation - COP Presentation to USAID/West Africa, July 2014
- PowerPoint Presentation – TTEE presentation to Ghana Transporters, September 2014
- PowerPoint Presentation – Trade Hub Presentation to ECOWAS, USAID/West Africa, USAID/Nigeria at Trade Hub Launch Event, September 2014
- PowerPoint Presentation – Annual Work Plan presentation to USAID/West Africa, September 2014

ANNEX E: ACCESS TO FINANCE PERFORMANCE CONTRACT DELIVERABLE AND FEE STRUCTURE

Deliverable	Required elements of Deliverable	Fee Type	Payment Amount
Deliverable 1: **Investment/Loan Summary submitted and approved by Trade Hub**	**Investment/Loan Summary Report with:** 1. Signed Service Agreement; 2. Description of company's organization & operations; 3. Market opportunities and strategic analysis; 4. Financing Gap Assessment; 5. Transaction Advice; 6. List of Due Diligence Items; 7. Information Gap Assessment; 8. Timeline.	**Mobilization Fee**	**Fee: $1,000**
Deliverable 2: **SME Assistance Pack (if applicable as approved by Trade Hub)**	**Report with financial reconcilation including:** 1. Production/Purchase Volume; 2. Production/Purchase Cost; 3. Sales Volume; 4. Sales Value; 5. Overheads; 6. Stock; 7. Equipment Value; 8. Working Capital Requirement.	**Technical Assistance for financial reporting**	**Transaction value up and including $500,000:** **Fee : $3,000**
			Transaction greater than $500,000, up to $3,000,000: **Fee: $5,000**

Deliverable 3: **Investment or Loan application**	**Statement from the bank that they have received the loan application and it is being considered** 1. Executive Summary; 2. Information Memorandum; 3. Investor's Presentation; 4. Financial Model Summary; 5. Term Sheet (no- confidential personal elements); For a loan application, a Business plan could be provided, with the 5 key points.	**Milestone Fee**	**Transaction Fee : 0.5%** **Maximum Fee: $5,000**
Deliverable 4: **Financial disbursement and close-out report**	**1. Proof of disbursement from the financial intermediary** **2. A Closing report with:** 1. Investors' Solicitation; 2. Presentation Exercise; 3. Proposal Review; 4. Negotiation Support; 5. Closing Support.	**Success Fee**	**Transaction value up to and including $1,000,000:** **Fee: 1.0% of the transaction value**
			Transaction value greater than $1,000,000: **Fee: $10,000 plus 0.5% of the transaction value over $1,000,000** **Maximum Fee of $29,000**
For all Task Orders, Trade Hub will pay a maximum of:		**Total**	**Maximum of $35,000**

ANNEX F: TRADE HUB FINANCE ACCESS FACILITATORS

Country	FAF Company	Contact Name	Contact E-mail	Contact Phone
BURKINA FASO (COVERING NIGER)	ICDE	Félicité Traoré	icde@fasonet.bf	+226 7029 1998
CÔTE D'IVOIRE	CFS	Jean Guy Biley	cana_cfs@powernet.ci	+225 0701 8814
	SIGMA	Guillaume Liby	libyguillaume@gmail.com	+225 0719 7419
	Other FAFs to be added later			
GHANA	AIMS	Charles Polet	cpolet@gmail.com	+233 266 308 678
	Growth Mosaic	Wayne Miranda	wayne.miranda@growthmosaic.com	+233 302 902 270
	IESO Agribusiness	Francis Osei	iesoagribusinessconsult@gmail.com	+233 208 508 800
	IFSL	Geraldo MacJohn	mgygeraldo@yahoo.com	+233 241 903 256
	Solutions Consulting	Solomon B. Quaye	sobquaye@solutionsgroupgh.com	+233 208 141 985
	VA Investment Solutions	Vincent Akue	, vaconseils@gmail.com	+233 271 032 688

MALI	ADG Consulting	Moctar Traoré	adgmali@gmail.com	+223 7645 4084
	7 Consult	Garibou Yalcouyé	giyalcouye@7c-mali.com	+223 6659 3182
NIGERIA	Georges Davidson and Associates	Dr. Bola Onasayna, Managing Partner	bola@gdanigeria.com	+234 0803 305 9947
	Five other potential FAFs in the pipeline			
SENEGAL - STILL IN REVIEW	Access Finance Gestion	Babacar Cissé	accessfg@orange.sn	+221 338 820 6391
	Afrique Emergence Conseil	Dr. Papa Ndary Niang	contact@afriqueemergenceconseil.com	+221 77 819 7321
	Optis Consulting	Abdoul Aziz Kané	abdoulaziz.kane@optis-consulting.com	+221 77 644 1548
TOGO (AND COVERING BENIN) – STILL IN REVIEW	MGK Group	Ernest D Komenan	kedkomenan1@gmail.com	+228 9032 4141
	Perform Strategy	Credo Mensah-Dzraku	credomen2002@yahoo.fr	+228 9890 8070