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# ZIMBABWE AGRICULTURAL COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAM

PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

CONTRACT NO. EDH-I-00-05-00004-00

TASK ORDER EDH-I-15-05-00004-00

**AUGUST 2012**

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This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by DAI.

# ZIMBABWE AGRICULTURAL COMPETITIVENESS PROGRAM

## PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING

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| <b>Program Title:</b>           | <b>Zimbabwe Agricultural Competitiveness Program</b> |
| <b>Sponsoring USAID Office:</b> | <b>USAID   Zimbabwe</b>                              |
| <b>Contract Number:</b>         | <b>EDH-I-00-05-00004-00, Task Order No. 04</b>       |
| <b>Contractor:</b>              | <b>DAI</b>   |
| <b>Date of Publication:</b>     | <b>August 2012</b>                                   |
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## ACRONYMS

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| ACP     | Agricultural Competitiveness Program                            |
| AMID    | Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanization & Irrigation Development |
| CA      | Commodity Association   |
| CIBER   | Competitiveness Impacts of Business Environment Reform          |
| CIG     | Commodity Industry Group  |
| CFU     | Commercial Farmers Union  |
| DOHOPA  | Domboshawa Horticulture Producers Association                   |
| EMA     | Environmental Management Agency                                 |
| FaaFB   | Farming as a Family Business                                    |
| FACHIG  | Farmers' Association for Community Self-Help Groups             |
| MAPA    | Murehwa Agricultural Producers Association                      |
| NGO     | Non Governmental Organization                                   |
| SAPST   | Southern Africa Parliamentary Support Trust                     |
| SIRDC   | Scientific and Industrial Research and Development Centre       |
| STTA    | Short Term Technical Assistance                                 |
| TA      | Technical assistance  |
| USAID   | United States Agency for International Development              |
| ZCFU    | Zimbabwe Commercial Farmers Union                               |
| ZFU     | Zimbabwe Farmers Union  |
| ZIM-ACP | Zimbabwe Agricultural Competitiveness Program                   |
| ZINWA   | Zimbabwe National Water Authority                               |

# **ACP PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Procedures for Data Collection and Reporting provide guidelines for the collection, processing, analysis, and reporting under the Zimbabwe Agricultural Competitiveness Program (Zim-ACP). These procedures are intended to inform current and future collectors, readers, users of Zim-ACP data and/or reports on the usefulness, timeliness, accuracy, and comparability of program data that inform key management decisions and are reported to USAID. These procedures describe processes that will result in high quality data. They do not describe the type of data nor specify the indicators that Zim-ACP will collect. Those details are contained in the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP).

## **2. PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING**

### **2.1 Management of data collection and reporting**

ACP uses TAMIS (Technical and Administrative Management Information System) to maintain event registers, event reports and minutes. TAMIS is also used to capture, collate and maintain survey data. All data collection on program activities and outputs is routed through the M&E unit for coordination, recording and capturing in TAMIS. Surveys for tracking and reporting on program outcomes and impacts are managed by the M&E unit. While ACP data collection is aimed at indicator tracking, it responds to and is sensitive to the various information needs of USG, USAID and program management. When survey data is collected, ACP ensures that the enumerators are adequately trained and prepared for the task.

In designing surveys for data collection, ACP takes steps to minimize the time, cost, and effort required of data providers. This includes scheduling the data collection, to the extent possible, at the convenience of the data providers. Data collection activities are scheduled in consultation with data providers to accommodate annual planning, recordkeeping, and processing requirements. Data providers are given early notification of plans for data collection.

ACP endeavors to coordinate data collection at business enterprise level to ensure that data for several impact indicators is collected in one single data collection.

ACP's approach to data collection is to keep the instrument as short as possible. Each item in the data collection instrument is examined to make sure that the information is needed and will be used. ACP ensures that the use and value of the data justifies the cost and burden.

ACP schedules regular evaluations of ongoing data collections to assess continuing need and appropriateness. Whenever possible, ACP tests the survey tools for “understandability” and respondent effort through pilot testing. These activities ensure that:

- Each item is understandable to the respondent;
- The technical terms used are appropriate to the respondent;
- The questions are clear and unambiguous to the respondent;
- The items elicit a single response;
- The survey is not too much of a burden for the respondent.

ACP ensures that survey procedures and guidelines are followed by everyone tasked to collect the data (Zim-ACP staff, hired enumerators or outside agencies contracted for data collection and/or reporting).

## **2.2 DESIGNING THE DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT**

Tools/questionnaires used to guide data collection provide clear and detailed instructions to the interviewer for completing the data collection instrument. They provide definitions and clarifying information for individual items and terms.

The questionnaires include only the questions that address the information needs. Whenever feasible, information that is available in the Zim-ACP database (such as training course attended, dates of training, name of trainer, venue etc.) is pre-printed on the collection instrument to save time and avoid confusion, in the field.

For standard indicators, the definitions and data collection methods conform to the guidelines given in the FtF Indicator Handbook and are therefore comparable and can be aggregated with other FtF countries for reporting to Washington. For management indicators, the ACP approach is to ensure that the data collection method is the most appropriate, effective and efficient for measuring the indicator achievement.

That means:

- Basing methodology on requirements, least burden to data providers, and available resources.
- Developing the design according to the type of information to be collected, the unit of analysis, the types of analyses planned, and the purposes for which the data will be used.
- Determining from the beginning, which types of design are warranted in view of the need to measure or analyze change.

The following issues are considered in the design of the ACP data collection instruments

- questionnaire to be clear about the date or time period the data collection should reflect;
- study questions to have the same meaning for different persons;
- questions to be kept simple and short;
- all possible categories to be included in the collection instrument, where response categories are supposed to be mutually exclusive and exhaustive.

Before using any new instrument to collect data, the new instrument is pre-tested on a small proportion of the target or similar population to assess the efficacy of the tool. The tool is modified to satisfy the requirements of the data collection exercise.

## 2.3 DATA COLLECTION

Data is collected throughout program implementation to allow for reporting on activities as well as results. Data for reporting on activities and output indicators is collected from project records. Registers are used to collect details of participants for the various events. Reports and minutes are written detailing procedures and outcomes of meetings, workshops and trainings. Data for reporting on program outcomes and impact is collected using observation and/or surveys of the target population.

Depending on the population size and type of data required, data is collected from a census or from a representative sample of the population. Data is collected using the telephone or face to face interviews. Where telephone interviews are the single data collection method for a particular variable, spot-checks are conducted on a small proportion of the population to double-check the accuracy of the data. Face to face interviews are designed to go together with observation where the interviewer is expected to observe physical and financial records and items/structures (depending on indicator being assessed), to confirm data collected through the verbal interview.

Because of the complexity of the project, enumerators to conduct the interviews are selected from university students and/or graduates who have proved to be easy to train and are quick to grasp the data collection approaches and the importance of collecting good quality data. In order to ensure consistency in data collection, enumerators are coached on

- how to complete the questionnaire;
- how to ask questions;
- what information the questionnaire is trying to collect; and
- how to handle problems that may arise from the interview.

Enumerators are trained to provide the following information on first contact with the respondent:

- purpose of the data collection activity and how data will be used;
- importance of respondents' participation;
- confidentiality of response;
- methodology used for data collection; and
- uses of the data.

Enumerators are given the following guidelines on handling completed questionnaires:

- never discuss confidential aspects of the data collection activity with unauthorized persons;
- keep completed questionnaires in a secure place and deliver promptly to the M&E specialist at Zim-ACP;
- during the data collection activities, do not keep any notes or documentation that contain identifying information unless expressly required by the research design;
- comply with all applicable laws concerning privacy and confidentiality.

Enumerator deployment takes into consideration knowledge of and familiarity with cultural, ethnic and other population characteristics that may affect the data collection. Enumerators for face to face interviews are also coached on how to create a good first impression –a prerequisite for a successful interview.

Where a sample is used for the survey, the sample is drawn in the office by the M&E Specialist, with the enumerators having access to only the sampling units for the study. To allow for flexibility in the field, the sampling units drawn are slightly more than the final sample size to cater for respondents who may be unavailable.

## **2.4 DATA PREPARATION AND PROCESSING**

ACP indicator data is entered and collated in TAMIS. TAMIS allows for data capture, collation, creation of a database, and retrieval of data for reporting on each indicator. The data is entered in TAMIS by a trained intern with the assistance of an enumerator/casual hired specifically for data capture.

A system is in place to log in returned questionnaires from the field. A checklist is in place to check the number and type of questionnaires submitted by enumerators when they come from the field. Enumerators are required to check their questionnaires for accuracy and completeness prior to leaving the field. The questionnaires are again checked for accuracy and completeness before they are logged-in and submitted in the office.

Edit and reasonability check is performed on the data during cleaning, after data capture. Any data inconsistencies are reconciled with the respondent through telephone interviews and rectified, if necessary, in the database. TAMIS documents all changes made to data, specifying what changed, who made the change, and date of the change.

## **2.5 REPORTING**

Quarterly and annual reports submitted as deliverables to USAID follow the USAID report format. The reports are submitted on time as set in the USAID deadlines for submission of quarterly and annual project reports.

ACP quarterly/annual reports to USAID are accurate, complete, and easy to interpret and address only issues that directly relate to the data being reported. ACP takes care to ensure that the data reported in quarterly/annual reports to USAID are backed-up by hard copy and electronic records in the office. These are available for any data verification exercises scheduled by USAID.

ACP reports focus more on program results achieved during the reporting period and less on describing the process of carrying out the activities.

ACP reports are reviewed by management prior to submission to USAID. In submitting deliverables to USAID, ACP clearly states the contract title, number, report type and time period covered.