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# FIRST QUARTERLY REPORT— FY 2014

## FEED THE FUTURE

INTEGRATING NUTRITION IN VALUE CHAINS PROJECT, MALAWI

COVERING PERIOD: 1ST OCTOBER—31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER, 2013

DRAFT

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## **AUTHORITY/DISCLAIMER**

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# **FIRST QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT FY2014**

**COVERING PERIOD: OCTOBER 1<sup>ST</sup> THROUGH DECEMBER 31<sup>ST</sup> 2013**

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## ACRONYMS

ABM	Association Business Manager
ADMARC	Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation
AEDC	Agriculture Extension Development Coordinator
AEDO	Agriculture Extension Development Officer
AFO	Association Field Officer
AI	Artificial Insemination
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AMC	Association Management Centre.
ARET	Agricultural Research and Extension Trust
ARI	Acute Respiratory Infection
ASWAp	Agriculture Sector Wide Approach
BCC	Behavior Change Communication
BDS	Business Development Services
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program
CBO	Community Based Organization
CCFLS	Community Complementary Feeding and Learning Sessions
CISANET	Civil Society Agriculture Network
CG	Care Group
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CGV	Care Group Volunteers
CH	Community Health
CHD	Child Health Days
C-IMCI	Community Integrated Management of Childhood Illness
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CONGOMA	Council for Non-Governmental Organizations in Malawi
COP	Chief of Party
CSB	Corn Soy Blend
CTC	Community Therapeutic Care
DAECC	Department of Agricultural Extension Coordinating Committee
DAES	Department of Agricultural Extension Services
DAPP	Development Aid from People to People
DARS	Department of Agriculture Research Services
DCA	Development Credit Authority
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DEC	District Executive Committee
DHMT	District Health Management Team
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DIDP	Dairy Industry Development Platform
DNHA	Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
DTWG	Dairy Technical Working Group
ELISA	Enzyme-Linked Immune-Sorbent Assay
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
ENA	Essential Nutrition Actions
EPA	Extension Planning Area
ERF	Environmental Review Form
EU	European Union

FAS	Field Accounting Systems
FBO	Farmer Based
FISP	Fertilizer Input Subsidy Program
FTF	Feed the Future
FUM	Farmers Union of Malawi
FY	Fiscal Year
GAC	Group Action Committee
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GBC	Grain Bulking Center
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GHI	Global Health Initiative
GIS	Geographic Information System
GM	Growth Monitoring
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
GoM	Government of Malawi
GPEC	Grant Proposal Evaluation Committee
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
HICD	Human and Institutional Capacity Development
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HSA	Health Surveillance Assistant
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IFPRI	International Food Policy and Research Institute
IHS	Integrated Household Survey
IIF	Investing in Innovation Fund
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
I-LIFE	Improving Livelihoods through Increasing Food Security
INVC	Integrating Nutrition in Value Chains
IPC	Innovation and Productivity Centre
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
IR	Intermediate Results
ISF	Implementation Support Fund
IT	Information Technology
LCD	Local Capacity Development
LQAS	Lot Quality Assurance Sampling
MAD	Minimum Acceptable Diet
MASA	Malawi Seed Association
MBG	Milk Bulking Group
MCHN	Maternal Child Health and Nutrition
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDDA	Malawi Dairy Development Alliance
MDI	Malawi Dairy Industries
MEDI	Malawi Entrepreneurial Development Institute
MGDS	Malawi Government Development Strategy
MIM	Malawi Institute of Management
MIP	Market Information Point
MLI-BM	Market Linkages Initiative- Bridging Mechanism
MMPA	Malawi Milk Producers Association
MoA&FS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security

MOH	Ministry of Health
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSU	Michigan State University
NASCOMEX	NASFAM commercial
NASFAM	National Association of Smallholder Farmers of Malawi
NFRA	National Food reserve Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCAT	Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool
OIBM	Opportunity International Bank of Malawi
PDH	Positive Deviance/Health
PDI	Positive Deviance Inquiry
PHH	Post-Harvest Handling
PIRS	Performance Indicator Reference Sheet
PMEP	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
RUTF	Ready to Use Therapeutic Food
SA	Supervision Area
SATH	Southern Africa Trade Hub
SBCC	Social and Behavior Change Communication
SFSA	Support for Food Security Activities
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SO	Strategic Objective
SOYAMA	Soy Bean Association of Malawi
SPS	Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary
SSDI	Support for Service Delivery Integration
SSU	Seed Service Unit
SSTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
Sub-IR	Sub Intermediate Results
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
TAMIS	Technical and Administrative Management Information System
ToT	Trainer of Trainers
UNC	University of North Carolina
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government
VAC	Village Aggregation center
VAT	Value Added Tax
VCS	Value Chain Specialists
WFP	World Food Program
WRS	Warehouse Receipt System
ZOI	Zone of Influence

## FEED THE FUTURE – INVC ACTIVITY OVERVIEW AND RESULTS

This document presents the quarterly progress report for the Feed the Future *Integrating Nutrition in Value Chains* (INVC) project covering the period from 1<sup>st</sup> October through 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013.

This quarterly report includes an overview of the project in order to provide a brief background and create a context for those unfamiliar with the activity. It also summarizes the main achievements and challenges experienced during the reporting period.

### BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Awarded on April 25, 2012, Malawi INVC runs for three years from April 2012 to 2015. Designed to help advance the vision of Feed the Future and Global Health Initiative in Malawi, the INVC project will focus its activities to deliver the Initiatives' two over-arching goals:

1. Sustainably reducing rural poverty; and
2. Improving Nutrition.

These goals reinforce Malawi's Poverty Reduction Strategy and USAID/Malawi's Strategic objective of promoting Economic Growth and Food Security. The INVC activity components are essentially contributing to these goals directly and indirectly.

The Malawi "Integrating Nutrition in Value Chains (INVC)" project, a three year effort under the Task Order/Contract No: AID-612-TO-12-00001 is funded under the SFSA IQC No: AID-623-I-10-00003. To achieve the overall goals of the project, INVC will promote, support, and facilitate gender equitable market-driven, agriculture-led, and integrated economic growth approaches. The delivery of targeted technical assistance will assist not only civil society, but also the private sector and government throughout the seven target districts in central and southern region in Malawi, to realize the advantages of greater collaboration, commercialization, and competitiveness across three targeted value chains: Soy bean, groundnuts, and dairy.

INVC support over the life of the activity is expected to lead to agricultural transformation across the three value chains resulting in the achievement of the following objectives:

1. Improved productivity (land, water, labor) through soil and water management practices;
2. Increased competitiveness of the legumes and dairy value chains to mitigate food insecurity and increase incomes of the rural poor;
3. Reduced chronic under-nutrition;
4. Improved value chain competitiveness and nutrition outcomes through the fostering of innovation in adaptive technologies and techniques that will increase participation of the poor in agriculture-led growth; and
5. Enhanced capacity of local organizations and institutions developed to promote sustainability and climate change resilience.

To achieve the above objectives, INVC will:

1. Invest in the competitiveness of legumes (soy bean and groundnut) and dairy value chains to develop domestic and export markets and improve nutrition options;

2. Link increased market-oriented production of legumes and dairy to household consumption and improved nutritional status;
3. Support community based programs focused on behavior change, food fortification, and capacity building to impact nutritional outcomes; and
4. Strengthen Malawian agriculture-related organizations (both government and non-governmental) to improve institutional capacity to capture and scale up existing models and practices in order to implement one or more components of INVC.

To realize the above results, the INVC project will fully integrate USAID FtF goals of poverty reduction and malnutrition. INVC will focus its activities along the following five inter-related components to harness the production and commercial potential of smallholders so that they are better enabled to accelerate their march toward prosperity and healthful living. These five inter-related components form the core of the project, which provide the means to deliver long-term, systemic changes in Malawi's market and health systems:

- a. Advancing Value Chain Competitiveness.
- b. Improving Productivity.
- c. Improving Community Capacity to Prevent Under-Nutrition.
- d. Promoting Innovation.
- e. Developing Local Capacity.

In addition to these components, a number of systemic and cross-sectoral issues critical to INVC success including gender, information and communication technology, HIV and AIDS, access to financial services, policy advocacy and climate change will be addressed.

Over the life of the project, INVC will also tackle market and firm-level efficiency issues for Malawi's smallholders, increase farm-level value capture, and promote more mainstream consumption of nutritious foods through behavior change strategies.

### ***FtF-INVC Target Beneficiaries***

Malawi smallholders that are eligible for participation in INVC activities are described as "the poor with assets." These are smallholders who, while they do not belong to the "ultra-poor" group that fall well below the poverty line, nevertheless lack sufficient resilience to completely escape from the possibility of falling under the line in the future. External shocks beyond their control could easily plunge them into poverty.

This population representing the target beneficiaries shares the following characteristics:

- Cultivate between 1.25 to 3 acres (0.5 to 1.2 Ha) of land,
- Produce sufficient maize for home consumption,
- Have the potential to increase maize productivity and to free up land for crop diversification to legume production,
- Access extension services and inputs (seeds and inorganic fertilizers), and
- Have the potential for linking to markets.

### ***FtF-INVC Target Districts***

The focus on diversification into legume production (groundnut and soy bean) and dairy for their income generation, soil fertility and moisture enhancement and nutritional benefits determine INVC's geographic scope as those areas of Malawi suitable for these agricultural activities. The seven districts, spanning two regions (Central and South) and affecting

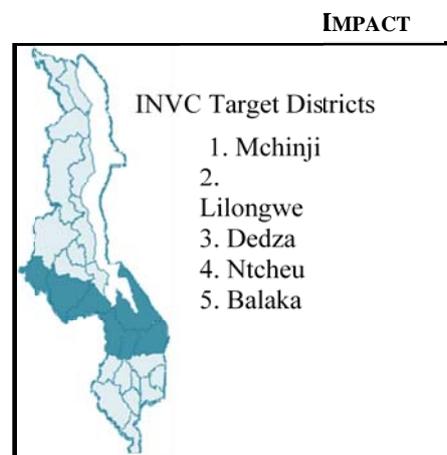
275,000 households, with highest potential for increasing legume and dairy production are: Mchinji, Lilongwe, Dedza, Ntcheu, Balaka, Machinga and Mangochi (See Figure 1).

## RESULTS FRAMEWORK

INVC activities fall under six intermediate results (IRs). These IRs highlight the close linkage between agriculture and nutrition, and the leveraging of resources from across both the FtF and the Global Health Initiative (GHI) portfolios further underscore the centrality of the two domains to the success of INVC (Figure 2).

Both domains support the overall USAID FtF and GHI goals, which are:

- a. Sustainably reduce poverty and hunger in Malawi
- b. Foster a healthier populace able to participate in the nation's economic development

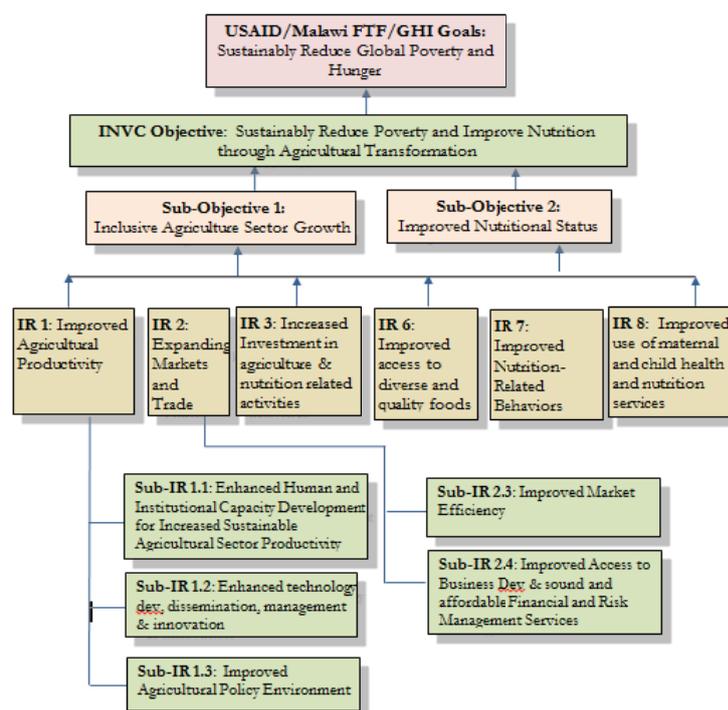


The six IRs and their subsequent sub-IRs are clustered around a framework that supports the achievement of a strategy to deliver the achievement of the Mission-level objectives of:

1. Inclusive agriculture sector growth
2. Improved nutritional status

The five INVC components contain activities that are prioritized to achieve results in each IRs and Sub-IRs and maximize INVC contribution to the Mission objectives.

Together the IRs and sub-IRs provide the pathway for INVC to achieve its development goals, strategic objectives, and required results. The IRs and Sub-IRs under the two objectives are presented below:



### Sub-Objective 1: Inclusive Agriculture Sector Growth

#### IR 1: Improved Agricultural Productivity

- Sub-IR1.1: Enhanced Human and Institutional Capacity Development for Increased Sustainable Agricultural Sector Productivity
- Sub-IR1.2: Enhanced Technology Development, Dissemination, Management, and Innovation
- Sub-IR1.3: Improved Agricultural Policy Environment

#### IR 2: Expanding Markets and Trade

- Sub-IR2.3: Improved Market Efficiency
- Sub-IR2.4: Improved Access to Business Development and Sound and Affordable Financial and Risk Management Services

IR 3: Increased Investment in agriculture and Nutrition-related Activities.

### Sub-Objective 2: Improved Nutritional Status

- IR 6: Improved Access to Diverse and Quality Foods
- IR 7: Improved Nutrition Related Behaviors
- IR 8: Improved Use of Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition Services
- IR 3: Increased Investment in agriculture and Nutrition-related Activities

To successfully deliver the results outlined above, Malawi INVC must manage and monitor its activities under the five inter-related components and cross-cutting areas over the life of the project. Table 1 below illustrates how each component and IRs and Sub-IRs are linked to generate the outputs and outcomes leading to achievement of the objectives.

**Table 1: INVC Project Components and IRs**

Sub-Objective 1: Inclusive Agricultural Sector Growth	Sub-Objective 2: Improved Nutritional Status
<i>Component 1: Advancing Value Chain Competitiveness (IR-2;IR-2.3; IR-2.4)</i>	<i>Component 3: Improving Community Capacity to prevent Under-Nutrition (IR-6;IR-7;IR-8)</i>
<i>Component 2: Improving Ag. Productivity (IR-1;IR-1.2;IR-1.3)</i>	
<i>Component 4: Investing in Innovations (IR-3)</i>	
<i>Component 5: Developing Local Capacity (IR-1.1)</i>	

All INVC activities will contribute toward achieving the following performance targets (Table 3), as measured by the above intermediate result (IR) indicators.

**Table 2: Performance Indicators**

Project Wide Performance Indicators	Life of Project Targets (Apr-25-2015)
Households benefiting from INVC facilitation	275,000
Children under 5 years with reduced malnutrition	100,000
Yield/hectare for legumes increased	15%
Yield/cow for milk increased	50%
Land area under legumes production increased	15%
No. of agriculture-related Malawian NGOs and/or governmental organizations with operational capacity and effectiveness increased	5
No. of local partners with effective management practices and financial systems with potential to receive future USG awards	3
Value of new investments by private sector actors increased as a result of innovation fund co-investments	\$500,000

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF PROGRESS THIS QUARTER**

This subsection of the quarterly report briefly summarizes progress made by the Malawi FtF-INVC project team toward completing the tasks under the five components listed in Table 1. Highlights from the quarter include:

### **PROJECT MANAGEMENT:**

During the quarter, the FtF-INVC program achieved the following:

1. Partner Organizations ramping up their effort to hire M&E officers to manage the data monitoring and reporting requirements of FtF-INVC project.
2. Both partner organization and FtF-INVC participated in the DQA training led by Social Impact. DQA feedback and subsequent action plans were outlined for almost all partners and project.
3. Key partner organizations together sent 25 data entry clerks/staff to participate in the FtF-INVC organized Data quality and entry training event held at Kalikuti hotel.
4. FtF-INVC participated in a number of donor coordination meetings in the quarter including USAID partners meeting and USAID stocktaking session.
5. One (1) proposal was signed this quarter; Civil Society Agricultural Network, CISANET. The signing of this proposal is a milestone in the implementation of FtF-INVC project as this will help to kick start advocacy and innovation of the project.
6. FtF-INVC revised the PMEP and submitted the USAID for approval.
7. Local STTA finalized working on the MIS data base for FtF-INVC. Dewitt, DAI Home Office Associate also worked with the Director of Finance to align some of the financial aspects of the program.
8. Embedded a former Peace Corps volunteer (PCV) to serve as “management/business process advisor” within MMPA to help strengthen the management and implementation capacity of the organization.

### **COMPONENT 1: ADVANCING VALUE CHAIN COMPETITIVENESS**

Significant achievements under this component included:

9. Increased volumes on warehouse receipts despite season of year.
10. Trade facilitation continued with ACE concluding 262 contracts for about 12,700mt of commodity valued at almost MK2,500 million.
11. Rural trade agents continued to bring business to ACE and to date have facilitated contracts worth MK1.3m relating to about 10,600 mt.
12. Increase in the value of collateral financing facilities with over \$5million secured.
  - Discussions with other banks are at an advanced stage with NEDBANK, Standard Bank and CDH, all expressing interest.
  - Pressure is being applied to the banks by traders, storage operators and processors for them to support the ACE Warehouse Receipt System.
13. Increase in the number of Market Information Points from 2 to 4
14. Registration of additional 10,669 beneficiaries and formation of a total of 71 GACs / clusters plus two new associations at Golomoti and Bembeke, which are in the process of being registered
15. Identification of additional 200 lead farmers
16. Conducted a total of 1,250 club meetings with an attendance record of 9,500
17. 144 mt of CG7 certified groundnuts seed was procured and distributed to 14,400 beneficiaries who subsequently planted 1,800 hectares and expect to yield 2,250 mt

18. 250 bicycles were procured and distributed to 50 lead farmers in each of the five Extension Planning Areas (EPAs).
19. Dedza CADECOM warehouse achieved a total stock of 205 mt of maize with 188mt under WRS

### **COMPONENT 2: IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY**

Significant achievements under this component included:

1. Basic seed storage facility constructed at IITA and due for completion at the end of January.
2. Training manual produced on soybean seed and grain production and post-harvest handling and distributed to lead farmers.
3. 20 seed producers trained in soybean seed production and post-harvest handling in the seven project districts.
4. 5.4mt of basic Tikolore seed produced and sold across the ACE Exchange Floor, well before the onset of the rains.
5. Analysis of quality traits of available improved soya bean varieties initiated to determine which are most suited to Malawi and to assess the protein levels and oil extraction rates.
6. FUM Executive Board trained in governance issues at MIM.
7. FUM together with other institutions had 595 lead farmers trained in best agronomic practices as a means of imparting knowledge on new technologies such as doubled up legume, double row planting and plant populations when planting.
8. An “audit” of 20 farmer organizations within FUM was carried out to assess the sustainability of these organizations by examining their strengths and weaknesses and identifying the gaps.
9. FUM distributed 450 kilograms of soya bean seed to 10 EPA’s under the FtF INVC project in Mchinji, Lilongwe and Dedza districts to establish demonstration plots, where farmers can learn new technologies and replicate them in their own fields.
10. Meetings were held with 22 lead farmers to discuss challenges they are facing and to map the way forward.
11. FUM went on a joint field visit with USAID to evaluate how well farmers were adopting new technologies following trainings and capacity building initiatives, carried out using funding from USAID.

### **COMPONENT 3: IMPROVING COMMUNITY CAPACITY TO PREVENT UNDER-NUTRITION**

Significant achievements under this component included:

1. Technical capacity building, including the training of
  - 29 partner staff and 120 care group promoters in care group model
  - 120 care group promoters in essential nutrition actions (ENA) and Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) interventions
  - 120 promoters in food processing and utilization focusing on legumes and dairy food products being promoted in FtF-INVC.
2. Establishment of care group structures at volunteer level
3. Agreement with third party (UNC/FEEDBACK) on impact evaluation design for FtF-INVC.
4. Support to implement Child Health Days campaign, this year under the banner of Integrated Measles Vaccination

5. Eight theatre performances conducted in Mpingu and Ukwe EPAs in Lilongwe district where 4,266 people attended the shows.
  - The performances addressed issues of exclusive breastfeeding, growing soy beans and groundnuts, and importance of consuming soy beans and groundnuts especially among pregnant women and lactating mothers.
6. Two radio jingles on exclusive breastfeeding were aired 219 times on three radio stations
7. The formative research report was finalized by Pakachere Institute of Health and Development Communication
  - Findings were shared with DAI Principal Global Practice Specialist as means of revising SOW for STTA on rolling out social and BCC on nutrition.
8. Nkhoma Hospital recruited 6 Nutrition Assistants who are responsible for supervising promoters in care group activities.

#### **COMPONENT 4: INVESTING IN INNOVATIONS**

Significant achievements under this component this quarter included:

1. 81% of funds disbursed have been submitted by grantees in expense claims.
2. CADECOM's grant increased in value by US\$517,784 to assist them to launch their phase 2 programs.
3. Grant modifications extending the period of performance for 6 other grants up to 31 January 2014, were concluded.
4. 144mt of certified seed was delivered to CADECOM's farming households by almost all suppliers on time.

#### **COMPONENT 5: DEVELOPING LOCAL CAPACITY**

Significant achievements under this component this quarter included:

1. Senior partner staff trained in Leadership and Management Skills.
  - The course was held at Malawi Institute for Management (MIM) and facilitated by MIM.
2. Conducted organizational capacity assessments (OCA) for
  - Malawi Milk Producers Association (MMPA)
  - Agriculture Commodity Exchange (ACE)
  - Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET)
3. The assessment provided a basis for developing a capacity building plan for addressing the identified capacity gaps.
4. Business planning process was facilitated by Umodzi Consulting and Tradeline Consultants for farmers' cooperatives and AMCs under NASFAM, FUM and MMPA, resulting in business plans finalized for:
  - Nathenje Milk Bulking Group
  - Tidziwane Farmer Cooperative
  - Nkhunguyembe Farmer Cooperative
  - Lilongwe North Association Management Committee
  - Mchinji Association Management Committee
  - Namwela Association Management Committee (AMCs).
5. Training courses for lead farmers on field management and agronomic practices were conducted by the trained partner field staff.
  - Subsequently rolled out to fellow farmers in clubs and demonstration zones.
  - FtF-INVC staff made field visits to monitor and back-stop the training activities done by the lead farmers and partner field staff.

6. FtF-INVC continued mentoring its partners in grants management and financial reporting.
  - Refresher meetings were held with CADECOM, FUM, IITA, Nkhoma, Pakachere, MMPA and ACE.

#### **CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED THIS QUARTER**

1. Main challenge was delay in implementation of nutrition activities at community level pending decision on design for the impact evaluation by UNC.
  - The decision to identify a suitable control group/counterfactual took long to arrive at and the process for establishing care group structures was delayed.
  - As most activities in FtF-INVC under nutrition rely on care group structures, it was not possible for most of the activities to commence in the absence of such structures.
  - On the other hand, clustering 18,225 households is a milestone given this quarter most people are occupied with agricultural activities.
2. Delays in finalization of the control group require by UNC affected the rolling out of BCC interventions which in turn affected implementation of some key activities e.g. development of radio programs, production and printing of posters and creative briefs to be used by care group volunteers.
3. Low commitment from partners to distribute the extension and technical materials to all the trained lead farmers.
4. Delayed on-set of rains for planting which may have a negative bearing on crop productivity if the rains stop early. This also led to reduced momentum of lead farmers in interacting with fellow farmers.
5. Although grantee reporting has shown substantial improvements in quality of documentation submitted and timeliness in reporting, challenges and weaknesses still exist in many areas, especially IITA, CADECOM and NASFAM.
6. The project experienced almost crippling delays in obtaining critical documentation from CADECOM management relating to a budgeted US\$380,000 procurement of certified CG7 groundnut seed.

## KEY RESULTS THIS QUARTER

The combined effect of all of the activities mentioned in the next sections is expected to contribute to the achievement of the overall impact objectives pertaining to this Activity. INVC estimates that during this quarter, it contributed the following toward the achievement of the targets. As INVC further establishes itself in the communities across the zone of influence (ZOI), we expect its contribution toward the impact indicators to increase as well.

**Table 3: Key Results - This Quarter**

Applicable Performance Indicator (outputs only)	Outputs for this Quarter Oct – Dec, FY13
Number of rural households benefiting directly from USG interventions	57,052
Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	18,767
Number of private enterprises (for profit), producer organizations, water users associations, women's groups, trade and business associations and community based Organizations (CBOs) receiving USG assistance.	1,340
Number of MSMEs, including farmers, receiving USG assistance to access loans	28
Value of new private sector investment in the agriculture sector or food chain leveraged by FtF implementation	-
Land planted (ha) with legume	4.551
Number of dairy animals AI serviced	300
Number of organizations/traders using WRS	130
Number of farmers using WRS	95
Value of warehouse receipts issued	MK1,324,608,700
Number of farmers accessing certified seed	29,253
Number of farmers participating in demonstrations and field day	45
Value of agricultural and rural loans	MK 5,012,195
Number of children under five reached by USG-supported assistance	237,813
Number of people trained in child health and nutrition through USG-supported programs	149
Number of cooking demonstrations conducted targeting women with children 6-36 months and the entire village	3
Number of children 6 - 36 months participating in Thanzi Sessions	
Number of people reached with drama performances	4,266
Number of drama performances held	8
Number of messages aired on local radio stations	2

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

This section of the report provides a concise overview of project management and monitoring efforts undertaken by the project team to contribute toward achieving the overall project objectives. The primary focus of the project team during the quarter was (1) to assist local partners in their effort to get staffed-up and kick off their technical programs in a timely manner to meet the planting season; (2) to upgrade capacity and skills of partners on project management, program monitoring and compliance, systems setup; and (3) to facilitate the process of completing the FY2014 annual work plan. These activities are discussed under the two tasks detailed below:

### TASK 1: KEY PROGRAM MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

#### SUB-TASK 1: PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION/MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

##### *FY 2012 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP)*

The final revised FtF-INVC PMEP FY13 has been updated as per suggested by USAID/Malawi. The PMEP document has a revised performance indicator reference sheet (PIRS) which is a reference document for the definitions of all the indicators. The FtF-INVC performance indicators are derived from the recent version (October 18, 2013) of the Feed the Future Indicator Handbook. Precise definitions were reviewed and where applicable revised, the level of disaggregation was incorporated and also the unit of measure explored for each indicator. Furthermore, during a recent Mission-initiated Data Quality Assessment (DQA) exercise held on October 17, 2013 FtF-INVC was advised to reduce the number of indicators it intends to track and report to USAID over the implementation period of the project. As a result, FtF-INVC reduced the list of indicators for this latest version of the PMEP. The list has now 21 indicators, which includes 12 required indicators, 7 standard indicators and 2 custom indicators. Of the 21 indicators two are impact indicators. This final revised FtF-INVC PMEP has since been submitted to USAID for approval in December 2013

##### *Project Staffing*

FtF-INVC grantees have now finalized the staffing of many of the open positions under the project. NASFAM finalized hiring six INVC field coordinators, and are now in the process of hiring an INVC M&E Coordinator, who is expected to be placed at NASFAM headquarters to assist the M&E Manager for NASFAM. FUM has already filled their field coordinators for Mchinji, Lilongwe and Dedza. CADECOM has taken a slightly different approach: they have placed five field coordinators in Dedza, who are each responsible for an EPA. MMPA has hired an Assistant Program Manager who will help with FTF INVC project management. It has also engaged a Business Process Advisor who will provide project oversight for INVC. Under nutrition, Nkhoma is yet to recruit its 4 Nutrition Assistants and Accountant. ACE has recruited a Program Manager and M&E Officer for INVC activities.

#### SUB-TASK 2: PROJECT SITE VISITS AND FIELD TRIPS

As FtF/USAID's flagship project in Malawi, FtF-INVC is mindful of its role in sharing project performance information and showcasing project activities. During the quarter, site visits and field trips were organized for USAID/Malawi or visiting dignitaries as shown in the table below:

No	Visiting Team	Dates	Project	Partner Site
1	Acting Mission Director- Stephanie Funk, Cybill Sigler, John Edgar	November 8, 2013	Machite MBG, Lilongwe District	MMPA

			Market Info Point-Dedza District	ACE & CADECOM
2	John Edgar, Matthew Rabion	20 <sup>th</sup> December	Lilongwe North	Nkhoma Hospital

FtF-INVC technical staff continued their regular project site visits to all partners' management areas across the zone of influence.

### **SUB-TASK 3: DONOR COORDINATION**

In order to foster synergy, reduce duplication, increase coordination, and contribute to development, this quarter too, FtF-INVC participated in several workshops and meetings organized by donors, NGOs, partner projects, and government ministries. Participated in USAID partners meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013 at cross roads hotel. During the meeting FtF-INVC presented on major accomplishments it had made and its desired outcomes for increased cooperation with other USAID partners. During the meeting, USAID announced the G8 New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition which has been initiated by President Obama at 2012 G8 Summit. The G8 New Alliance builds on CAADP Country Ownership and 2009 G8 L'Aquila Commitments, and it emphasizes on government policy commitments and private sector investment. All FtF partners were asked to closely follow on the progress of the G8 New Alliance rollout in Malawi as USAID will continue to update partners on progress and hold discussions on how FtF can support the New Alliance process. Other critical issues discussed were introduction of scaling technology which USAID will communicate to all FtF partners on its development in Malawi.

Data Quality Assessments report was also presented. FtF-INVC was represented by a total of 10 members of staff including the COP and all sub-grantees. A USAID/FtF-INVC was also held on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2013 at FtF-INVC office. This was to discuss the findings from DQA, provide update on the finalization of PMEP, give update on work plan revision and submission, nutrition impact evaluation especially on the submission of verified list of promoters by EPA, GAC/Cluster, GVH and villages for purposes of randomization for the impending impact evaluation to be done by UNC. During the meeting FtF stocktaking exercise was also done by Matthew Rabboin of USAID. Focus for the stocktaking was on assessing casual logic of FtF-INVC, value chain competitiveness, capacity of sub-partners, gender, sustainability, the DAI/USAID contract and follow-up activities.

## **TASK 2: KEY MONITORING AND REPORTING ACTIVITIES**

### **SUB-TASK 1: MONITORING AND REPORTING SYSTEM**

#### ***Project Documents and Report Submission***

As per contract-progress reporting requirements to USAID, FtF-INVC has finalized four quarterly reports for FY13 covering the period between 1st October 2012 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013. In addition, FtF-INVC finalized the FY2014 Annual work plan that covers the period beginning October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014. The FY2014 work plan brings FtF-INVC in sync with the Mission's fiscal year.

#### ***Data Collection Tool Development***

The FtF-INVC M&E team has finalized developing comprehensive reporting templates for reporting. These reporting templates, which are partner specific, will be used for both monthly and quarterly reports. The reporting templates were revised following contribution from the short term technical assistance (STTA) in M&E which the project engaged to reinforce skills among M&E team and the results of the DQA exercise that was carried out by

USAID in the quarter. Furthermore the M&E team has developed instructions for each of the tools that it has developed to enhance standardized reporting from the partners. M&E team assisted the STTA who was developing the MIS database among other things by profiling the district in terms of Villages, Sections, Group Villages, Traditional Authority as well as EPAs for each district which have been populated in the database.

Partner data entry clerks/staff were also trained during the quarter on the importance of data quality, data entry and how to populate the database with information from the field. A total of 25 partner data-entry staff were trained at Kalijuti hotel. The data quality and entry training was led by a INVC local consultant who was supported by INVC M&E staff. The tools will be rolled out to the partners in the next quarter.

## **SUB-TASK 2: STRENGTHENING GRANTEE M&E SYSTEMS**

FtF-INVC finalized the first component of M&E database development. The database is now ready for installation to each sub-grantee to input beneficiary registration and seed distribution data. USAID conducted DQA at FtF-INVC and the following partners participated: NASFAM, CADECOM, MMPA, Nkhoma Hospital and FUM from October 17 to November 1, 2013. This was the first DQA that USAID with assistance from Social Impact had conducted with FtF-INVC and sub-grantees. The DQA drew a lot of lessons for both FtF-INVC and all the partners. FtF-INVC has already responded to most of the action points drawn by the DQA with all its partners. Among others, the PMEP in particular and the PIRS have been fully updated after taking the team's feedback into account.

A comprehensive M&E operational manual, which was revised, and has instructions on all the M&E tools used by FtF-INVC has been developed and soon will be shared with partners.

### ***Organizing M&E Training Events***

One-on-one mentoring trainings continued in the quarter to enhance understanding of the different elements of M&E system of FtF-INVC to all partners.

On Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 FtF-INVC participated in FTFMS guidance webinar. The objective of the Webinar was to review FtFMS guidance document, explain system changes, and discuss some complex indicators. The following partners attended: FUM, MMPA, Nkhoma Hospital and NASFAM. Lynn Schneider from USAID Mission (Malawi) also attended and made clarifications on some issues partners raised at the end of the session

On 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> October 2013 Nkhoma field staff and promoters were oriented on the monitoring and supervision component of the care group model. 3 Nkhoma technical staff, 4 NASFAM staff (AFOs), 1 FUM staff, 1 Pakachere staff and 43 promoters from 6 EPAs in Lilongwe north (Ukwe, Mpingu, Mngwangwa, Chigonthi, Chiwamba and Chitsime. 40 promoters from 6 EPAs (Chioshya, Mlonyeni, Msitu, Mikundi, Kalulu and Mkanda), 7 Nasfam field staff, 1 FUM field staff and 3 Nkhoma field technical staff members. 37 promoters from 5 EPAs (Thawale, Mlomba, Chileka, Nyanja and Mpenu) 3 Nkhoma technical staff and Nasfam field officers. The promoters were trained in filling of the four data collection forms i.e. registration form, volunteer monthly report, promoter monthly report and training attendance sheet. The training was useful in the sense that it was an opportunity for testing the data collection forms through which the sections that need modification were identified and reviewed accordingly.

On 14<sup>th</sup> October 2013, FtF-INVC participated in Data Quality Assessment (DQA) Training session at Kumbali Lodge in Lilongwe. The objective of the training was to prepare FtF-INVC and other partners on how DQA can be conducted to various institutions. Some of the areas covered during the session were: Why data quality is important; purpose of DQA; USAID data quality standards which included validity, reliability, timeliness, precision and integrity. The session was facilitated by Social Impact in collaboration with USAID Malawi Mission.

On 5<sup>th</sup> November 2013, FtF-INVC participated in the debriefing on the project's Data Quality Assessment findings. Some key recommendations focused around continuing the DQA activities of the sub-partners to ensure that DQA protocols are being followed and that corrective actions are being duly completed.

Each INVC M&E coordinator continued to collaborate and coordinate with M&E officers from partner organizations to verify the validity and reliability of the data given the data sources. The M&E team continued to make field visits to ensure partners are carrying out their work plan activities.

Management Information Systems (MIS) user training was conducted with 25 data entry staff (12 males and 13 females) from NASFAM, CADECOM, FUM, ACE and Nkhoma from 19<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> December 2013. These trainings were done to improve data collection, entry and reporting by the partners.

### **SUB-TASK 3: PROJECT BASELINE AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

FtF-INVC baseline data entry, cleaning and analysis is underway with International Food Policy and research Institute (IFPRI) in Washington. The baseline data entry, cleaning and analysis is led by IFPRI. The final baseline report is scheduled for finalization in February 2014. Although that said, IFPRI submitted draft baseline data for completing the FTFMS data entry requirement. FtF-INVC will have baseline figures to update FTFMS baseline figures and PITT baseline figures and dissemination of the same with partners and other stakeholders is planned in quarter January – March 2014.

### **SUB-TASK 4: DATA COLLECTION, REVIEW, AND SUBMISSION TO VARIOUS USG EFFORTS**

#### ***Feed the Future Monitoring System (FTFMS)***

FtF-INVC Populated the FTFMS data base with the 21 indicators, stating the level of achievement in FY 13 and the targets for FY 14 and FY15. This is a USAID, Bureau of Food Security (BFS) database. There were a number of orientation webinars that followed for FtF-INVC to properly update the FTFMS. While the submission of the baseline data from IFPRI came in very late, much of the agriculture related baseline data managed to be incorporated in the FTFMS database. The nutrition baseline information, however, were not inputted in the FTFMS database given that the methodology for collecting the nutrition baseline was not properly followed by IFPRI rendering what they have collected to be not useful or valid. As such, it was agreed with BFS that the baseline for nutrition would use secondary information sources for baseline.

#### ***USAID Microenterprise Results Reporting (MRR)***

There were no activities reported under this Sub-Task.

## COMPONENT 1–ADVANCING VALUE CHAIN COMPETITIVENESS

The competitiveness of most agricultural value chains in Malawi continues to be hampered by a number of structural issues and problems including, but not limited to, the following:

- A lack of knowledge, understanding and capacity in both the public and private sectors.
- Financing of business and access to capital continue to be problematical and are further hindered by a lack of liquidity in the market due to Government activities soaking up much of it through the offering of Treasury Bills at extremely attractive rates.
- Institutional deficiencies and policy/regulatory interventions that have a negative impact on the business environment are also impacting negatively on the sector.
- The steady depreciation of the Malawi Kwacha over the course of 2013 has increased the costs of key production inputs such as fertilizer, plant protection products, tools, agricultural equipment, livestock inputs and processing materials (ingredients and packaging).
- The cost of transport continues to be high and is likely to continue with the continuing devaluation of the Kwacha, which in turn further impacts on all operations and will make the cost of exports uncompetitive.
- The foreign exchange component of these costs is important.
- In addition, foreign exchange controls by industry actors also contribute to substantial delays in procurement, tie-up cash flow, and increase transaction risks.

This fiscal year, FtF-INVC plans to address several key challenges and exploit any opportunities through the tasks and sub-tasks outlined below, which focus on the three value chains under FtF-INVC: Soy Bean, Groundnut, and Dairy.

### TASK 1: INCREASE ACCESS TO MARKETS

#### SUB-TASK 1: CONDUCT UPGRADING STRATEGIES, COMPETITIVENESS/MARKET ANALYSES, AND DEMAND ASSESSMENTS

##### *1.1 Groundnut Value Chain*

Significant opportunities exist for improving the value chain for groundnuts in Malawi since this particular value chain has, historically, been less well-developed than other chains. This relative weakness persists today and some critical challenges exist that continue to hinder progress. Aflatoxin contamination creates difficulties: hampering increased production, market expansion, value addition and utilization as food and the incorporation of groundnuts into fortified foods. The limited number of industry players involved in the value chain and relatively few agro-dealers provides an additional opportunity of engagement by improving the groundnuts value chain.

Therefore, in the first quarter of the 2013/14 season the project focused on expanding awareness amongst farmers: as growers of the crop and as consumers. Efforts centered on the procurement, supply and planting of recommended certified groundnut seed. Farmers were also trained in best-bet agronomic practices. This knowledge included the significant advantages of specific ridge and planting spacing (75cm and 15cm respectively) and the importance of early planting: particularly to align with the first rains.

## ***1.2 Soy Bean Value Chain***

In the quarter under review, FtF-INVC, in collaboration with NASFAM, carried out a number of activities in readiness for the growing season. The activities included farmer registration, soybean seed distribution, training farmers through lead farmers in best agronomic practices (soybean planting space and ridge space for example) and seed rate. Training sessions, radio messages and demonstrations have been designed and scheduled to assist farmers in managing soybeans at various stages of the crop in the course of the year – right up until it is harvested.

### ***Farmers' registration***

In the quarter, 41,000 farmers have been registered against the initial target of 82,000. This shortfall has been attributed to a swift change in demand towards groundnuts and away from soya beans. Many farmers did not like to grow soybeans because of difficulties they had with marketing during the previous season.

### ***Seed Cleaning and grading***

In line with the recommendations from the Seed Services Unit, and with assistance from FtF-INVC, NASFAM carried out seed cleaning and grading exercise for both soybeans and groundnuts after carrying out seed tests on samples from all NASFAM stocks. This process was designed to ensure that only clean, second-generation seed was distributed to farmers in the 2014 growing season.

### ***Project Coordination and staffing***

In the quarter, the project recruited FOs and AFOs in newly established GACs and INVC Programme Coordinators for each of the 6 AMCs under NASFAM for example. All new recruits underwent orientation for their jobs. This additional increase in the number of staff able to work full-time on INVC activities will improve coordination and supervision of FtF-INVC project activities. The vacancies for Project Accountants were advertised. The selection process is scheduled to be completed by the end of the next quarter (March 2014) and the new recruits in post by that time.

### ***Market Outlook***

During the quarter market prospects for soybeans looked promising - both locally and internationally. Locally, the demand for soybeans continued to increase as witnessed by the increase in the commodity prices. It is projected by ACE that commodity prices will continue to increase up until April 2014, with Forward Contracts for delivery being concluded almost on a daily basis.

### ***Trade Facilitation***

During the quarter, ACE facilitated 262 contracts for almost 12,700 metric tonnes (mt) with a total value of MK2,400 million. Within this volume, Rural Trade Agents from Mchinji and Dedza facilitated about 37mt with a value of over MK6.3million. To date ACE has facilitated around 25,000 mt with a value of MK4,800 million. Trade agents have facilitated over 10,600mt, valued at MK1.3million.

More complete analyses of the detailed volumes and values are given the Tables that follow.

**Table 4: Contracts facilitated**

Type of Contract	Facilitator	Number of Contracts	Volume (mT)	Value (MK)
Any	Rural Trade Agent	5	36.62	6,332,168
Forward Contract	All	131	3,184.00	641,046,424
Any other contract	All	126	9,463.40	1,762,520,639
	All	262	12,684.02	2,409,899,232
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>25,368.04</b>	<b>4,819,798,463</b>

### **Warehouse Receipt System (WRS)**

The period under review has traditionally been quiet for ACE vis-à-vis warehouse receipts, since most commodities have already been marketed by this point in the season. However, this year there has been a substantial increase in the number of warehouse receipts issued, especially on Forward Contracts for soya beans. By September 2013 ACE had succeeded in getting only about 780mt of commodity on WRS. This shortfall was caused, primarily, by delays in securing finance from the banks. However in the last quarter, a significant increase has been measured despite the time of year. A total of almost 6,000mt of commodity has been committed to warehouse receipts. Of this total approximately 2,600mt, mostly soya beans, was deposited on warehouse receipts into Sunseed Oil Limited silos under Forward Contracts. This brings the total of commodity deposited on warehouse receipts to nearly 6,800mt.

The use of Forward Contracts on WRS has the potential to enhance structured trade in Malawi and to provide additional, and increased, security to all the parties concerned. Producers are protected against price fluctuations and processors can be shielded from the extremely high interest rates that are currently prevailing. With the successes achieved by ACE during the marketing period, it is hoped that there will be more opportunity to increase the number of banks providing finance, as well as the ability to have finances in place at the beginning of the marketing period.

**Table 5: Warehouse Receipt System volumes**

Warehouse	Commodity	Volume (MT)
Rab Kanengo	Maize Grain	526.75
Rab Blantyre	Maize Grain	89.08
Dedza (CADECOM)	Maize Grain	188.48
Kafulu	Maize Grain	412.99
Nathenje	Maize Grain	298.63
Balaka	Maize Grain	50.00
	Pigeon Peas	16.25
Mwandama Grain Bank	Maize Grain	4.93
	Pigeon Peas	49.05
	Soya	7.48
KUD Warehouse	Maize Grain	49.90

Sunseed Oil (Forward Contracts)	Soya	4511.08
	Sunflower	72.64
Senwes	Soya	500.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,777.26</b>

### ***Farmer Sensitization Meetings***

In the quarter, ACE conducted farmer sensitization meetings through various platforms such as Rural Trade Agents Head Office staff, Trade Facilitation Office and Market Information Points. As the FtF-INVC program moves into the second phase, ACE Head Office staff have extended farmer sensitization meetings into four new districts: Ntcheu, Balaka, Mangochi and Machinga. Sensitization meetings were conducted in partnership with NASFAM during the Annual General Meetings of the Associations. This helped to ensure that attendances were high. The breakdown of participants is shown below:

**Table 6: Sensitization by Rural Trade Agents and Warehouse Staff**

Category of Participant	Male	Female	Total
Government Officials	4	1	5
Producers	428	377	805
Private sector	20	6	26
Civil Society	1	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>837</b>

**Table 7: Sensitization by Trade Facilitation Office**

Category of Participant	Male	Female	Total
Government Officials	0	0	0
Producers	44	10	54
Private sector	44	11	55
Civil Society	2	0	2
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>111</b>

**Table 8: Sensitization by Head Office**

Category of Participant	Male	Female	Total
Government Officials	67	17	84
Producers	1,608	869	2,477
Private sector	18	11	29
Civil Society	15	10	25
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,708</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>2,615</b>

**Table 9: Sensitization through Market Information Points (MIPs)**

Category of Participant	Male	Female	Total
Government Officials	1	0	1
Producers	108	88	196
Private sector	3	4	7
Civil Society	13	1	14
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>218</b>

### ***Farmer Registration and Profiling***

Registration and profiling of farmers by ACE continued. A total of 414 farmers were profiled during the quarter under review, bringing the total of farmers on the ACE database to 7,568. Of this total, 2,240 farmers are from the FtF-INVC districts of Mchinji, Lilongwe and Dedza. It is worth noting that all profiled farmers on the database receive regular trade opportunity alerts but at present the majority of them are not yet receiving weekly commodity prices on their mobile phones. Farmers will have to be sponsored to receive weekly commodity prices and, to date, only 2,830 farmers have been sponsored by WFP and Land O'Lakes. These are the only ones who are receiving weekly price information on their mobile phones.

### ***Collateral Financing***

During the quarter, ACE continued to pursue financing (particularly to underwrite the warehouse receipt programme) and succeeded in getting increases for most of their lines of credit. This was assisted by the strong market demand for Forward Contracts, where the facility was boosted to cater for this demand.

**Table 10: Bank Financing Facilities**

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Value: MK</b>	<b>Value: US\$</b>
Bridging Finance	85,000,000	212,500
Warehouse Receipt Financing	170,000,000	425,000
Forward Contracts	800,000,000	2,000,000
NFRA Procurement	1,000,000,000	2,500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,055,000,000</b>	<b>5,137,500</b>

Due to the increased demand for the bank financing facilities (as shown above), ACE requested First Merchant Bank (FMB) to allocate resources in addition to the funds they had already made available. Because of the existing strong partnership and trust established by ACE, FMB acted on the requests within the quarter and increased the allocation to the facilities as follows:

- Bridging finance increased from MK35m to 85m
- Warehouse receipt increased from MK70m to 170m
- Forward Contracts increased from MK 175m to 800m

Forward Contracts and Bridging Finance facilities attracted more attention from smallholder farmers and traders. The increased demand for soya by SunSeed Oil Limited provided a great opportunity for producers and traders and resulted in the increased use of Forward Contracts. It was pleasing to note that by the end of the quarter all resources allocated under bridging finance were depleted and a total of over MK641 million was utilized under Forward Contracts. There is a need for ACE to identify and mobilize more resources for this type of facility in this new season.

### ***Bridging Finance***

Producers and small traders fully utilized the MK85 million financing facility that was allocated under Bridging Finance. These producers/small traders fulfilled all their obligations and deposited well over 1,600mt of commodities under WRS. ACE was able to “revolve” 70% of the value of the commodity deposits by allocating the costs to WRS financing and crediting these funds back into the Bridging Finance facility. This process created an increase in the overall value of the facility to MK124 million. This consequently enabled ACE to

finance an additional 1,053mt of commodities, which were deposited into various ACE-certified warehouses on the WRS.

### ***Warehouse Receipt System progress***

ACE facilitated total deposits of almost 6,000mt of commodities under WRS. A large percentage of the deposits were soya through Forward Contracts: about 4,500mt of soya was deposited into SunSeed silos under the system. To date ACE has about 6,700mt on WRS.

### ***Forward Contracts***

The rolling out of Forward Contracts has generated excitement among small holder farmers and traders (both small and large). Larger traders included Auction Holdings Limited (AHL), CAPS Limited, TROPHA Estates, TRANSGLOBE and PROPAC Limited. First Merchant Bank (FMB) made MK800million available to ACE for this new finance facility.

During the quarter, 78 producer farmers and small traders (22 female and 56 male) accessed finances through this facility. These farmers and traders deposited nearly 4,000mt of soya beans at SunSeed Oil Limited silos under WRS. This volume had been covered by Forward Contracts to the value of MK641million. The Forward Contract finance facility is being viewed as a good alternative support to smallholder farmers and traders and ACE needs to secure more resources for the next marketing season.

## **SUB-TASK 2: SUPPORT INDUSTRY PARTICIPANTS IN MARKET DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING**

### ***Significance of market access***

To improve the groundnuts value chain it is imperative that all industry players fulfill their roles appropriately and effectively. One of the most critical areas in the value chain is access to markets and marketing opportunities. In this vein, FtF-INVC staff continued to be involved in supporting efforts to identify potential markets to increase marketing options for groundnuts and other crops.

### ***Market development initiatives***

The establishment of an additional certified warehouse facility by ACE at Dedza for the WRS was an initiative that enabled farmers and traders to gain access to a different and innovative marketing system. Due to issues of risk - particularly those risks associated with aflatoxin - the groundnut crop was not one of the products marketed at Dedza under WRS. Nonetheless, farmers in the vicinity of the facility were exposed to a new experience in marketing their beans and maize. The Market Information Point (MIP) attached to the warehouse created the opportunity for farmers to access information on prices of products, including those not yet traded under WRS. A number of cases were also noted where staff of ACE were able to link farmers with other markets for groundnuts as well as beans. This provided the farmers with viable market outlets which generated profitable prices.

Implementing partners were also involved in a number of activities that ensured smallholder preparedness for other marketing options. Such activities at Dedza CADECOM were delivered either by CADECOM and ACE staff concurrently at each meeting or by ACE staff conducting WRS sensitization meetings alone. During this quarter, marketing messages were shared with farmers as part 1,250 club meetings involving a total of 9,500 farmers. Of this total, the majority of participants (5,650) were female farmers and only 3,850 were males.

Along with other partners, NASFAM promoted and facilitated market connections and linkages with other buyers/stakeholders. Many stakeholders already had trading relationships with NASFAM and therefore arrangements involving WRS and promoting the use of commodity exchanges (ACE) could be established. In certain areas there are expectations that processing capacity might be enhanced and thus spur market opportunities for local production of, amongst other products, groundnuts flour, oil expulsion, groundnuts butter and packaging. CADECOM conducted the procurement processes for the purchase of processing equipment designed to extract these products from groundnuts. The plan is for this processing equipment to be procured during the period January-March 2014, thereby making it available for use in the forthcoming harvesting and marketing season.

### ***Engaging ACE and Pakachere in market development***

Actions are included in the 2014 work-plan for NASFAM to work in close collaboration with ACE and others to promote use of WRS and collective marketing. Pakachere has been engaged to conduct a behavioral change campaign ('BCC') amongst farmers to better appreciate the use of WRS and its potential benefits. From the coming marketing season onwards, NASFAM's NASCOMEX will have to engage in the market place competitively. They will not be able to rely on being able to purchase commodities from NASFAM members through the monopolistic system that has existed in the past. This change will lead to increased competition for commodities available in the market and is likely to prove more beneficial to NASFAM members. In addition, NASFAM is actively promoting the use of ACE, WRS, collective marketing and safe and effective storage as a means of improving farmers' incomes. This is yet another improvement on the prior situation.

### ***Linking farmers to markets***

ACE established two new Market Information Points during the quarter; one at the certified warehouse in Balaka and the other at Mwandama in Zomba. It is anticipated that these new MIPs will assist farmers and other market participants. They will help, not only to access markets more effectively, but also to receive information on, amongst other topics, planting, agronomic practices, harvesting, post-harvest handling and storage. More work will need to be done to promote these facilities to farmers and small traders in order that MIPs can eventually become a One-Stop information point. The vision is that these points will become a place where inputs can be purchased and banking facilities made available. The expectation is that local communities will see the benefits and start to use them extensively.

The effective implementation of ACE's plans to increase the use of WRS was hindered by the late establishment of financing, but the current uptake of Forward Contracts bodes well for the future. The concept of Forward Contracts attached to the WRS has been embraced by small-holder producers, small traders and processors alike and has proved to be extremely successful. With hindsight, it is clear that even greater benefits could have been achieved had financing been made available in July, when considerably more commodity was available. Nonetheless, further improvements are anticipated in this area, with NASFAM complementing ACE's operations over the forthcoming marketing season through the provision of transport to move commodities from household storage into certified storage facilities.

Further cooperation between ACE and NASFAM is expected to lead to the more effective and efficient use of certified storage facilities in these districts, leading to greater opportunities for smallholder farmers to market their commodities. The provision of commodity quality assurance, warehouse management and the provision of safe and secure

storage will assist in the respect. The continuation of sensitization meetings, use of drama group messages and the expanded registration of farmers will all help to get the message across about the potential benefits of using commodity exchanges.

### ***Broking division within ACE***

The potential to have NASFAM form a broking division within the organization will be pursued vigorously during the coming quarter. Plans were developed and advertisements calling for those interested in brokering launched in local newspapers during the quarter to train up to 30 individuals to become brokers on ACE. If suitable candidates can be found from within the FtF-INVC partners, this will be even more effective since they will already have an insight into the agricultural practices in Malawi. The intensive training will be conducted over a period of one week with 15 candidates in each of two training courses. Candidates to be included in the training will be carefully selected before starting and, at the end of training, will be tested on the knowledge gained. Those who pass the examination will be given a certificate and a license to operate as a broker on ACE, with the license subject to re-testing every two years.

### ***Facilitate milk supply contract between MBG and processor***

INVC, in collaboration with MMPA, has facilitated a milk supply contract between Machite MBG and a new processor. Unfortunately, MDI, the milk processor that was collecting from Machite MGB, has gone out of business, yet again. From the beginning of December 2013 a new milk processor from Mzuzu (Good Neighbour Development Limited) has been collecting milk from the MBG. It is worth mentioning that Magomero MBG has also signed a contract with Lilongwe Dairy to supply them with milk.

With the withdrawal of MDI from buying and processing milk, CREMPA and MMPA are now working towards linking three MBGs (Lumbadzi, Nkhweza and Machite) that were under MDI to Lilongwe Dairy or, potentially, other milk processors.

## **SUB-TASK 3: STRENGTHEN PRODUCER, PROCESSOR AND VALUE CHAIN BASED TRADE ASSOCIATIONS**

To bolster the capacity of implementing partners, FtF-INVC continued to provide technical assistance to its implementing partners. Managers and other key players from implementing partners (CADECOM, FUM, MMPA and NASFAM) attended various courses and meetings organized by FtF-INVC. Capacity assessments of the implementing partners were also started as a means of assessing the need for further capacity development actions. These new assessments will confirm the current situation as well as identifying any changes from the previous assessments. This will, in turn, help to quantify any additional support that needs to be offered.

Following the training sessions conducted by DARS and DAES in the previous quarters, training was cascaded down to farmer associations, GACs and clusters as well as farmer clubs through the lead farmers. Farmers were trained in improved agronomic practices that focused on land preparation and the planting of soy and groundnuts to the recommended specifications. Village and cluster demonstration plots were established as learning sites. Review meetings were conducted to assess progress and address challenges encountered by farmer groups.

Two new farmer associations were formed at Golomoti and Bembeke and will be initially affiliated to Uliminchuma and Dedza associations respectively. The associations of Lifidzi,

Dedza and Uliminchuma, which were already in operation, were revamped through election of new office bearers and the inclusion of new GACs and clubs.

### ***Business Development training***

INVC provided technical assistance to MMPA through a feedback session on the Business Development Training delivered in September 2013. A final report was produced and sent to MMPA and a de-briefing session at local level was also organized for the beneficiaries to appreciate the business plan development. Furthermore, an Assistant Programme Manager was recruited to work within MMPA to strengthen the capacity of this major stakeholder. The Business Development Advisor was also recruited to provide oversight on INVC operations.

### ***Strengthening the National Dairy Industry through a Unified Platform***

In addition to supporting partners on the management side, INVC also attended a meeting at Lilongwe Hotel on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013 organized by CISANET to unveil the findings of the research on the Milk and Milk Act. Unfortunately, the meeting was poorly attended (see Table below) and nothing tangible was agreed. However, a suggestion was made to have a follow-up meeting which could help to improve the wording of the current Act so that it might benefit dairy farmers and the industry as a whole. It is believed that the proposed Act in its current form will not be of benefit to the dairy sector and needs further revision before being submitted to Parliament. DIDP was tasked to arrange this meeting in the next quarter.

**Table 11: Organizations attending Research Findings Dissemination Meeting**

CISANET	- Civil Society for Agriculture network.
FtF-INVC	- Feed the Future Integrating Nutrition in Value Chains
FAO	- Food and Agriculture Organization
DALHD	- Department of Agriculture Livestock and Health Development
MBS	- Malawi Bureau of Standards
Lilongwe Dairy	
Heifer International	
SSLPP	- Small Scale Livestock Production Project
VSO	- Volunteer Service Organization
MMPA	- Malawi Milk Producers Association
CREMPA	- Central Region Milk Producers Association
LUANAR	-Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources(Bunda)

### ***Geo-reference MBG members***

During the Quarter, the Machite geo-referencing exercise was completed. Completion of other MBGs have taken time since survey technicians are mostly students from Bunda College, and the academic calendar negatively affected the opportunity to organize a briefing to share the final report. MMPA is waiting for a similar exercise to be implemented in the three remaining MBGs (Magomero, Nkhweza and Lumbadzi) and this will be completed during the next quarter.

## **SUB-TASK 4: ENHANCE CAPACITY TO COMPLY WITH STANDARDS, QUALITY CONTROL AND FOOD SAFETY PROCEDURES**

Through NASFAM, FtF-INVC has facilitated training relating to the various stages including harvesting and post-harvesting handling of produce, especially groundnuts. This is designed to reduce aflatoxin levels and help to prevent contamination. For soybeans, training focused on paying attention to harvesting at the right time (i.e. when it is fully matured) as this is

essential. PSA messages relating to these issues have been prepared and will be aired on radio at the most appropriate time in the growing season.

In the dairy sector, effort were made to work with processors to raise milk prices based on milk quality. However give the prevailing inconsistencies in the use of the milk testing machines in MBGs at Machite, Lumbadzi and Magomero, it has not been easy to convince the milk processors to increase milk prices. Magomero MBG is not willing to use the milk analyzer claiming that fewer farmers are now delivering milk to the MBG after the introduction of the machine. However, to counteract this trend, MMPA, working through CREMPA, has been involved in sensitizing farmers to the benefits of using the machine. For example, they have shown farmers that if the quality of their milk is known it can help them to lobby for a better milk price.

The example of the Magomero MBG is perhaps symptomatic of what is happening in the dairy industry. Little or no attention has been paid to quality issues and this seems to reinforce prior perceptions that Magomero has a history of milk adulteration.

**Figure 3: Milk Analyzer**



#### **SUB-TASK 5: DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS AND STRENGTHEN INDUSTRY/BUSINESS LINKAGES**

During 2014 FtF-INVC will place additional emphasis on an integrated approach, in which the various partners that are involved in each of the value chains will play distinct and appropriate roles and preparatory work for launching this process took place in the Quarter. The integrated approach is designed to reach farmers and other players along the value chains who will become more knowledgeable by using the information being provided and thus able to link up with the rest of the players in the value chain. At the same time, these farmers should be able to appreciate how others do things and, if appropriate, will be able to implement changes and improvements within their own operations.

#### **TASK 2: INCREASE VALUE CHAIN EFFICIENCY AND VALUE ADDING OPTIONS**

FtF-INVC is involved in the complementary value chains for both legumes and dairy. An example of complementarity for the last quarter was the process used by MMPA farmers who, in order to ease animal-feed sourcing, registered and received seed from NASFAM to produce their own soybeans for feed. This therefore ensured adequate and timely available

feed for the animals, plus increased milk production and, furthermore, made the milk more competitive in the market by lowering the cost of procurement.

### **SUB-TASK 1: FACILITATE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER THROUGH FIRM-LEVEL AND ASSOCIATION ASSISTANCE**

It is crucial to identify and implement technologies that farmers are able to understand and adopt in their working lives. This therefore generates the need for better, farmer-friendly, approaches to technology transfer as the most effective way of achieving greater impact on production. Such approaches include radio messages and farmer exchange visits, both of which will bring immediate results. FtF-INVC, in collaboration with various partners, has developed PSAs designed to explain various agronomic practices relating to soybean production across the whole growing season and which will be broadcast over the radio at appropriate times.

### **SUB-TASK 2: IMPROVE ACCESS TO POST-HARVEST HANDLING AND STORAGE OPTIONS**

During this quarter, key activities were the preparation of communication materials in the form of leaflets and flyers, including those relating to storage instructions. During 2014 these designs will be reproduced by implementing partners for distribution to farmers. Training of extension front-line staff will take place and these staff, in turn, will train the lead farmers. In this way, the relevant communication materials will be widely shared.

In the 2014 season ACE will provide farmers with access to good storage facilities and thereby encourage them to participate in the use of WRS. This process will start at the local level and at the time that small holders are harvesting their crops. It is envisaged that initially commodities will be stored at village level for as short a time as possible: to avoid the unnecessary wastage that unfortunately occurs. Wastage is known to be caused by rodents and other pests that destroy the crops, reducing the crop volumes and quality. A key part of this initiative is therefore promoting the movement of commodities into safe and secure storage in a timely manner, in order to minimize loss and damage.

## **TASK 3: INCREASE ACCESS TO CREDIT AND FINANCE**

### **SUB-TASK 1: SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE STRUCTURED TRADE OPPORTUNITIES**

Given that ACE has adequately addressed the issues of rural warehouse security, the role that Government has played in the maize and soy bean markets once again impacted negatively on the markets and on ACE in particular. The decision to remove the export ban on legumes came too late to have any real benefit, particularly as the Presidential Initiative was paying higher than usual prices for soy beans, which negated the need for farmers and traders to look for export opportunities. This situation also influenced farmers when considering the use of WRS and the high prices resulted in less than ten tonnes being put onto WRS.

Quality remains an issue with the markets in Malawi. Local industry players do not appear to be overly concerned about the quality of the commodities they purchase - provided they can get the volumes needed to meet their requirements. This sort of attitude will have to change if longer-term competitiveness is to be achieved and for Malawi to be able to maintain a presence in Regional markets.

From a food safety perspective, the sooner commodity quality can be improved the better. From the perspective of meeting quality and varietal selection expectations amongst international buyers, then clearly more work needs to be done if Malawi is to compete in the region.

With this in mind, FtF-INVC initiated discussions with Auction Holdings to help bridge linkages between them and ACE to jointly tackle this issue of quality and grain standards. The same issues will also be worked on through FtF-INVC partners. An initial goal is getting agreement from all market participants and the Malawi Bureau of Standards on recognized quality standards for all commodities produced within the country. It is envisaged that this meeting will kickoff next quarter, where both exchanges will be encouraged to engage in efforts to address these issues. This improvement and agreement process will start with soya beans and groundnuts and then include other crops in due course.

## **SUB-TASK 2: FACILITATE LINKAGES BETWEEN LENDING INSTITUTIONS AND SMALLHOLDERS**

The question of finance for smallholder farmers continues to be a major problem with banks reluctant to lend to members of the community who have no identity documents, no land tenure and no collateral to back these loans. Whilst some progress has been made through micro-finance institutions, the number of farmers receiving loans remains small, whilst the returns on investment for the micro-finance companies remain high. One area that can perhaps be expanded is that of warehouse receipts, but, the ability to do so will depend entirely on the amount of finance that ACE will be able to raise from banks for the coming season. Timing is crucial to the success of the ACE warehouse receipt initiative so when these funds are made available will be critical.

There can be no doubt that ACE has had to take some unusual steps to get WRS operational in Malawi. For example, the process whereby loans are provided to ACE by the banks to use on funding WRS and then ACE itself receiving payment from the depositor when he sells the commodity in order to service the loan. Whilst this process is innovative, ACE is effectively doing the work of the banks, but without proof of identification, land tenure or collateral to put up against a loan from a bank. This situation is unlikely to change for the foreseeable future. The position taken by ACE to expand their areas of operation and to register additional storage facilities is a step in the right direction and, subject to the availability of finance when it is needed, the next growing season has the potential to firmly establish WRS as part of the market operations in Malawi.

## **TASK 4: FOSTER BUSINESS ENABLING ENVIRONMENT**

### **SUB-TASK 1: STRENGTHEN VERTICAL COORDINATION AND TRUST**

Lessons learned during the current marketing season provide an indication of the need to lobby the Government of Malawi on a number of issues, including the prior imposition of an export ban on soya beans. This ban was, of course, subsequently lifted but without any clear instructions given to the Department of Customs and their staff continued to delay the free movement of trucks – unnecessarily, and with no legitimate cause. These delays resulted in unforeseen additional costs to exporters - leading to much-reduced profits - and also made exports less attractive. This in turn impacted negatively on Malawi through the loss of revenue potential. The problem with the manner in which the export bans were lifted also remains of concern and a need is seen for this to be legislated in order to give more credence to the actions taken last year.

Under the Presidential Initiative, seed was supplied to farmers and the resulting grain bought in the early stages of the season at highly inflated prices. This distorted the market to the point where other buyers such as NASFAM could not compete: the orders they had to supply were priced below the level being paid through this initiative. It also resulted in farmers holding on to their soya beans in the hope that they, too, could sell to the Presidential initiative. However, limitations in the funding available for this purchase scheme reduced the scope for such purchases and, as a result, opportunities to sell at slightly reasonable prices were missed.

## **SUB-TASK 2: BUILD AGRICULTURAL POLICY ADVOCACY AND DIALOGUE CAPACITY**

FtF-INVC will continue to work through our partners and other interest groups to help build policy advocacy and dialogue capacity. FtF-INVC is now an active participant on a number of Technical Working Groups. This participation will create a platform to improve the current process. A key goal will be to enhance trust between all the interest groups, and especially between the public and private sectors.

Due to uncertainties in the soya bean market, many farmers indicated that they were not interested in growing soya beans this year. This was despite high demand in Malawi, supplemented by demand in the region - particularly Zimbabwe. This farmer behavior may impact negatively on soya bean production this year. At this stage it is not clear how much soya has been planted nationwide as compared to previous years.

In order for any lobby to be effective, it must come from the industry as a whole including producers, traders, processors and consumer. In order to achieve this aim, FtF-INVC will continue to work closely with organizations such as CISANET, SOYAMA and the Oil Seed Products Technical Working Group.

## COMPONENT 2: IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY

Productivity in the three value chains in which FtF-INVC is working remains well below world and regional levels. In each of the value chains, this low productivity persists as a result of poor quality inputs including seed, as well as the cost of fertilizer, herbicides and pesticides which are priced out of the reach of most small holder farmers. Whilst productivity can be increased through better access to quality and more affordable inputs, it will also require improved crop management, better and expanded extension support and a change in the marketing practices in Malawi.

### TASK 1: IMPROVE ACCESS TO QUALITY SEED AND OTHER AGRO-INPUTS

#### SUB-TASK 1: INCREASE/STRENGTHEN SEED SUPPLY

Like any other crop the groundnut outlook hinges on a number of factors, with the farmer's main perspective being the relative profitability of groundnuts in comparison to other competing crops. Simtowe et al. (2009) asserts that there is scope for increasing productivity by 51% by just improving management practices – without increasing cash input usage. In line with this, FTF-INVC aims firstly to place emphasis on improving seed system, production management, farmer training and extension, and improved harvesting and postharvest curing, drying and storage practices to that end.

As a result of this policy, Dedza CADECOM procured total of 144mT of certified groundnut seed. This was issued to 14,400 beneficiaries, who each received 10kg in each of the five EPAs. The type of seed distributed was CG 7 and was supplied by four organizations: NASFAM, Pannar Seed, JF Investments and Ananchuma Holdings Limited.

**Table 12: Quantity of groundnuts seed distributed to beneficiaries at Dedza**

NO	NAME OF EPA	TOTAL DISTRIBUTED (MT)	TOTAL BENEFICIARIES RECEIVED	GENDER	
				F	M
1	Chafumbwa	30	3,000	1,355	1,645
2	Mtakataka	30	3,000	1,100	1,900
3	Golomoti	28	2,800	2,100	700
4	Bembeke	28	2,800	1,867	933
5	Kanyama	28	2,800	1,150	1,650
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>14,400</b>	<b>7,572</b>	<b>6,828</b>

The groundnuts seed delivery commenced from December 2, 2013 at Chafumbwa and Mtakataka EPAs and the last delivery was done December 12, 2013 at Kanyama EPA. Some EPAs had received adequate planting rains and hence planted immediately while others had to wait for rains such as Mtakataka that had not planted until three weeks after seed delivery. NASFAM distributed 293.681mt of certified groundnuts, cultivar CG 7 and Nsinjiro to 19,667 beneficiaries. Each beneficiary received 15kg pack in the zone of influence. Distribution to beneficiaries started on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

A significant number of farmers practiced the two planting options of either double row or single row as per training conducted by DARS. The recommended ridge spacing was 75cm between ridges, 15cm between rows on the ridge and 15cm between planting stations on the

same ridge and row. Variances were observed among farmers in complying with these set standards.

Secondly, FTF-INVC activities through the Partners Dedza-CADECOM and NASFAM focused on the improvement of groundnut quality. The goal is to add value through training and extension on applying good grades and standards to post-harvest handling and marketing and to educate and mitigate the risk of aflatoxin contamination. FTF-INVC is working through the partners to promote and support, inter alia:

- proper drying
- use of Mandela Cock
- in-shell aggregation and marketing
- hand-powered or motorized mechanical shelling versus wetting and hand shelling
- mechanical grading and shelling before processing
- oil extraction and byproduct utilization.

To this end NASFAM procured processing machinery for distribution to its association management centers while Dedza CADECOM initiated approvals and procurement processes for purchasing oil expellers, grinders and groundnuts shellers. This equipment is yet to be used and it will be utilized on the upcoming season's harvest.

#### ***Basic Seed Storage Facility under Construction at IITA***

Motti Building Contractor was engaged to construct the basic seed storage facility. The roofing, electrical wiring, plastering, ceiling and window fittings and flooring are all completed. The contractor had problems in sourcing air conditioners locally and so they are trying suppliers in South Africa to see if the procurement can be achieved more speedily. The problem of procurement of air conditioners may slow down the progress a little. It is anticipated that structure will be completed by the end of January 2014.

The completion of this facility will go a long way to ensure the safe and secure storage of basic seed, which in turn will help to improve seed supply to the market. Reports continue to be received regarding the inadequacy of many of the storage facilities used for the storage of seed, resulting in deterioration of its integrity and therefore the quality of the seed stored in these facilities.

#### ***Construction of a Breeder Seed Storage Facility at DARS***

Some progress was made in terms of preparation for construction of the breeder seed storage facility at Chitedze Research Station under DARS. The architectural design was finalized and the Quantity Surveyor prepared a cost estimation and bill of quantities. These actions will ensure that the structure will be within the budget. However, DARS wanted the structure adjusted to increase its carrying capacity, but the planned DAI/INVC funding would not meet the cost of the larger structure. DARS indicated that they would like to source extra funds from their other projects to top up the DAI/INVC budget. Actual construction may start in the January-March quarter after these financing logistics are finalized. A stringent follow-up will be made to ensure that this is not further delayed unnecessarily.

The new basic seed storage facility under construction at IITA Malawi is illustrated below.

**Figure 4: Loading bay of the Under construction basic seed storage facility**



**Figure 5: Inside the spacious basic seed storage facility**



During the earlier part of the first quarter, the focus was on trying to ensure that the quality of seed procured from NASCOMEX by NASFAM, met the required specifications in terms of germination and purity. This was done in an effort to ensure that the problems with germination rates for groundnuts experienced in the last season were not repeated.

The Seed Services Unit (SSU) in the MoAFS was asked for support in sampling and conducting the tests. Several samples were randomly collected on 4-6 September 2013. The SSU set up the tests and NASFAM and FtF-INVC also set up parallel tests as cross checks. The results for both groundnut and soy bean show a high germination rate of between 85% and 95%, which means that most of the seed will germinate without high failure rate. However, purity tests revealed that significant quantities of seed needed re-handling. As shown in the Table below, 14.5mt of Serenade seed failed the purity test. Because of the high levels of impurities and varietal mixtures, it was not recommended for re-handling but for sale for consumption as food or feed for livestock. The SSU recommended the re-handling of category B quantities of seed to reduce the proportion of impurities and mechanically damaged or rotten grain.

## SUB-TASK 2: STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND SEED/INPUTS DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS

The support provided to IITA by FtF-INVC for production of basic seed continued this quarter. After cleaning and re-handling, IITA had 5.4mt of certified basic seed available, but due to the length of time taken to adequately sort out this seed, it was not possible to have it available for the production of seed in winter.

### *Production of Basic Seed*

IITA has had to revise its plans for the production of basic seed. The 6.6mt of seed from CDI Mphero Farm was re-handled in order to meet certification standards. Because re-handling took longer than anticipated, it was not possible to distribute the seed to interested certified seed producers for 2013 winter production, as was originally planned. After the re-handling was completed, 5.4mt of certified basic seed was realized and put up for sale on the Agricultural Commodity Exchange (ACE) platform for 2013/2014 rain-fed production. The seed was sold out well before Christmas.

As part of a major effort to achieve the basic seed production targets, 650kg of breeder seed was sourced from DARS in pursuit of the revised seed production plan outlined in the Table below. Two basic seed producers - one in Lilongwe and the other in Mchinji - have been contracted to produce at least 17.1mt of basic seed this season. Two growers are contracted in two different locations to spread the risks and uncertainties of production. The grower located at Sindemisale in Mchinji started planting on 16<sup>th</sup> December and the grower located at Khasu in Lilongwe started planting on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2013.

**Table 13: Revised Seed Production Plan for 2013/14**

2013 (Irrigation/offseason)	2013/14 (Rainfed/main season)			
Breeder seed production	Breeder to Basic		Basic to Certified	
	Breeder seed	Basic seed	Basic seed	Certified seed
427.5 kg (DARS & IITA)	427.5 kg (DARS)	17.1mt (IITA)	5.4mt	216mt

Assumptions: 50kg seed is required to plant a hectare. A hectare will yield 2 tonnes.

**Table 14: Revised Seed Production Plan for 2014/15**

2014 (Irrigation/offseason)		2014/2015 (Rainfed/main season)	
Basic to Certified		Certified to Grain	
Basic seed	Certified seed	Certified seed	Grain
17.1mt (IITA)	684mt	216+684 = 900mt	36,000mt

Assumptions: 50kg seed is required to plant a hectare. A hectare will yield 2 tonnes.

Whilst IITA has had to change the timing in respect of seed production from winter -under irrigation - to rain-fed summer production, the tables above show that it is still anticipated that the targets set for 2014/15 will be met. The choice of two separate farmers to produce basic seed from breeder seed provides additional safeguards in securing the levels of seed projected. IITA will be monitoring this production very closely in the coming months to help ensure that systems are adhered to.

During the quarter, IITA commissioned profile analyses of several soy bean varieties to assist the private sector determine which variety is best for the commercial needs. IITA utilized the services of the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) laboratory, who determined protein, oil, calcium, potassium and ether extract of 7 soybean variety samples including Tikolore and the results were as follows.

**Table 15: Quality traits of Tikolore and other commercial soybean varieties in Malawi**

Sample No.	Variety	Quality parameter expressed as a percentage (%)				
		Protein	Oil	Calcium	Potassium	Ether extract
1	Nasoko	32.2	11.9	0.18	7.82	11.0
2	Serenade	38.6	16.1	0.16	18.4	15.7
3	Ocepara 4	44.8	13.7	0.18	5.84	13.9
4	Tikolore	31.5	16.2	0.06	9.12	15.7
5	Makwacha	35.2	12.8	1.28	9.96	12.3
6	UG-5	28.4	13.4	0.18	7.57	13.0
7	Tikolore	46.1	17.8	0.16	5.49	16.9
8	Magoye	34.5	16.4	0.15	5.63	16.7
	<b>Average</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>14.79</b>	<b>0.29</b>	<b>8.73</b>	<b>14.4</b>

### Commentary on seed quality testing results

- In terms of protein content, Tikolore seems to be equal to Ocepara 4 and Serenade, but superior to the rest of the varieties that were tested.
  - Thus Tikolore would be one of the choice varieties for the booming animal feed manufacturing industry.
- In terms of oil content, Tikolore surpasses all but equals Magoye, another promiscuous small-seeded variety, and Serenade.
  - Therefore, Tikolore would be among the varieties earmarked for the oil extraction market.
- Tikolore seems to be an alternative for any of the tested varieties with reference to calcium content except Makwacha, which has higher calcium content than all the tested varieties by a significantly wide margin.
- Although the tested varieties seem to display a high variance in potassium content, all the varieties do not deviate much from the average (8.73%) potassium content except Serenade, which registers high potassium content distinctly isolating itself from the general cluster.
- The picture that is evident in the ether extracts of the tested varieties can be superimposed squarely on that in the oil contents.
- We are still looking for a laboratory that can do the isoflavones determination.

The protein and oil contents of Makwacha, Nasoko and Tikolore were analyzed in Belgium and USA under the TLII project. The averaged results were as presented in the Table below.

**Table 16: Protein and oil contents of Makwacha, Nasoko and Tikolore as determined in Belgium and USA**

Variety	Protein (% average)	Oil (% average)
Makwacha	33.6	19.4
Nasoko	32.0	20.6
Tikolore	35.1	17.5
<b>Average</b>	<b>33.6</b>	<b>19.2</b>

- The protein contents do not deviate significantly from those documented in literature<sup>1</sup> and those generated by Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS).

- However, the MBS-generated oil contents are lower than both those generated by the laboratories in Belgium and the USA and those documented in literature<sup>1</sup>.
- The variance might be attributed to differences in the oil test or extraction method used. MBS laboratory used the soxhlet extraction procedure.
- The trends in the results are quite clear and informative.

### ***Distribution of Soya bean seed for demonstration plots***

FUM distributed a total of 450 kilograms of Tikolore soya bean seed in all of the 10 EPAs under FtF-INVC in Mchinji, Lilongwe and Dedza districts. The purpose of seed distribution is to establish demonstration plots where farmers can learn new technologies and replicate the same to their fields.

**Table 17: Distribution summary per district.**

<b>DISTRICT</b>	<b># OF EPAs</b>	<b>AMOUNT IN KGs</b>
Lilongwe	4	194
Mchinji	2	54
Dedza	4	202
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>450</b>

Data for the number of the demonstration plots mounted is yet to be submitted as the seed was distributed late December and early January. Follow ups will be made by Farmer Organization Facilitators to establish how many plots have been established.

## **TASK 2: INCREASE ACCESS TO NEW TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

### **SUB TASK 1: IMPROVE ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE BEST BET (PRODUCTION) TECHNOLOGIES AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

Experience during Year 1 of the program with the Partners delivering training for harvest, post-harvest, and marketing showed that:

- Partners were seen to be more orientated towards the “class-room” type training
- They tended to prefer the use of paper-based work
- They used little, or no, hands-on experiences as part of the training.

In contrast, training in the last quarter emphasized:

- Reinforcement through in-field or market chain demonstrations using real tools and equipment
- Transfer of the basic calculation skills and rules of thumb essential to improving farmer practice.

FTF-INVC ensured close supervision of the quality of the content and process of Trainer to Lead Farmer and Lead Farmer to Farmer training. FTF-INVC ensured that IPs focused to driving good training content, methods, and materials to the farmer level. During this quarter lead farmers passed on to fellow farmers the knowledge and skills gained in the previous quarters during TOT trainings organized by FTF-INVC through DARS and DAES.

At Dedza CADECOM training was achieved through the following:

- Improved agronomic practices which emphasized land preparation and planting was conducted by lead farmers in all EPAs.
  - CADECOM extension workers and AEDOs supervised these activities.

- The performance of lead farmers varied from one section to another depending on the motivation and personal capabilities of each.
- Mobility of lead farmers was reported as the key challenge to conduct these trainings and meetings with farmers not located in the same villages.
- Lead farmers' training sessions had been judged to not adequately address the farmers' needs, due to challenges such as shortage of extension workers at the EPA level
  - Therefore improved agronomic messages were passed on to the seed beneficiaries at the point of receiving the seed
  - Farmers were instructed not to plant until they have received guidance from lead farmers or fellow farmers who have undergone training or attended groundnuts planting demo session
- Extension workers supervised the planting demonstrations soon after farmers were issued with certified groundnuts seed randomly
- Each section mounted a number of village/cluster demo plots where farmers were inducted on improved planting practices
- Lead farmers took upon themselves to demonstrate in their own fields and to oversee the planting by each farmer
- Technical backstopping by extension workers was provided too.

**Table 18: Summary of productivity activities conducted by Dedza CADECOM**

NO	NAME OF ACTIVITY	PLAN (activity)	ACTUAL (activity)	Participants by GENDER		REMARKS
				M	F	
1	Club meetings	1,000	1,250	3,850	5,650	The meetings were to prepare the clubs for the distribution of the seed, Strengthening the clubs.
2	Field visits	4,000	4,500	2,150	2,350	The visits were done in conjunction with government extension workers and Lead farmers to appreciate the extent and reinforce of adoption of new technologies.
3	Review Meetings	15	10	8	40	These were done at EPA level. The aim was to discuss the challenges faced so far and way forward.
4	Identification of demonstration plots	100	100	46	54	These plots are located where farmers will be meeting to share experiences and learn better methods of farming.
5	Association and GAC meetings	150	150	1,575	2,100	The aim was to strengthen them and prepare them for their role during seed distribution.

#### ***Other agronomic practices***

In this quarter, doubled-up legume intercropping groundnut/soybeans with pigeon peas was promoted, especially in areas where pigeon pea is traditionally grown like Machinga. However in the new areas where it was rolled out, not many farmers adopted the technology because the promotion of this technology did not include the provision of seed and required that farmers provide their own seed for this purpose. That said, those farmers who had no

experience of growing pigeon peas were reluctant to try out new practices. Those who had exposure to pigeon pea production were reluctant to double up legumes given that they feared that doubling up would lower the overall output.

FUM conducted training in agronomic and husbandry practices in all the EPAs in the three districts namely, Mchinji, Lilongwe and Dedza. A total of 595 lead farmers were trained.

**Table 19: Number of farmers trained in Agronomic Practices in Lilongwe, Dedza and Mchinji**

District	EPA	Attendance		
		Male	Female	Total
Lilongwe	Chitsime	10	15	25
	Chileka	21	13	34
	Thawale	29	6	35
	Ngwangwa	25	11	36
	<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>130</b>
Dedza	Mayani	13	57	70
	Lobi	13	19	32
	Kabwadzi	16	12	28
	Linthipe	21	9	30
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>160</b>
Mchinji	Mkanda	122	22	144
	Kalulu	117	44	161
	<b>Total</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>305</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>387</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>595</b>

This training was envisaged to impart knowledge to lead farmers on new farming technologies aimed at improving yield and ensure high quality crop production through good farming practices. These trainings took place in December and lead farmers are yet to train farmers (this being a busy farming period they are equally busy in their fields).

A pictorial view of participants who attended a ToT in agronomic practices at Mkanda EPA in Mchinji.



Below is a pictorial view of participants who attended a ToT in agronomic practice in Kalulu EPA, Mchinji



The impact of these trainings is already being observed on the ground where some farmers have adopted new technologies such as planting leguminous crops such as Soya, groundnuts and beans in double rows using recommended planting spacing. This will help to maximize yields and control pests and diseases therefore achieving objective of the project.

**Meeting with lead farmers**

Two review meetings were conducted in Nkanda and Kalulu EPAs where a total of 22 lead farmers were in attendance. The main agenda was to discuss the challenges faced during the last quarter and map the way forward.

**Table 20: summary of participants**

DISTRICT	EPA	M	F	TOTAL
Mchinji	KALULU	4	6	10
	NKANDA	5	7	12
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>22</b>

**Field visit**

A joint field visit was conducted by USAID and FUM officials to Kalulu EPA where they appreciated the adoption of new technologies by farmers as a result of training and capacity building initiatives done with support from USG. It was pleasing to note that these farmers are adopting new technologies such as double row planting technology. It is expected that farmers will realize increased yield as a result of new farming technologies. However, it was also observed that some farmers are applying new technologies on one side of the field while maintaining the old system of single rows on the other side. This is due to the fact that farmers are still testing the technologies to see if they indeed can realize high yields.

**Advantages of double row planting technology**

- Double row planting system increase plant population which contributes to high yield
- The system helps to reduce diseases and pests.

Below is the pictorial view of the field visit:



visitors appreciating a field in Kalulu



A bean field with double row planting



Visitors interacting with a farmer in her field.



A groundnut field with double role planting



Gelevazio Gabriel a lead farmer in his groundnut field



A USAID official interacting with a farmer in her groundnuts field

### ***Training manual on seed production and post-harvest handling***

Production of the manual has been a joint effort of IITA, DARS and SSU.

Features:

- The manual is 21 pages long and has two parts.
  - The first part deals with the general agronomic aspects of soybean production.
  - The second part underscores the concepts specific to soybean seed production and certification such as classes of seed, seed crop registration requirements, site selection, seed crop isolation distances, parent seed sources, seed crop management and rogueing, post-harvest seed handling, transportation, labelling, sampling for quality tests, storage and marketing.
- It will have been circulated to the concerned parties by mid-January, 2014.
- An insert of the publication of the guide to soybean production is shown below.

### **Result 5: At least 20 seed producers trained in soybean seed production and post-harvest handling in the seven project districts**

The training was conducted in the seven project districts, namely Dedza, Machinga, Mangochi, Lilongwe, Ntcheu, Balaka and Mchinji as summarized in the table below

**Table 21: Features of the training sessions in Dedza**

<b>District</b>	<b>Dedza</b>
Implementing/participating partner	Farmers' Union of Malawi (FUM)
Number of participants	20
Participant composition	19 lead farmers and 1 frontline field staff member
Sex: male to female ratio	11: 9
Partner areas of operation	Various Extension Planning Areas (EPAs) in the district
Participant expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Learn soybean seed production principles</li><li>2. Learn about available soybean seed markets</li><li>3. Learn how to register as seed producers</li><li>4. Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans</li></ol>
Training materials	First part: general agronomic aspects of soybean production. Second part: concepts specific to soybean seed production and certification – classes of seed, seed crop registration requirements, site selection, seed crop isolation distances, parent seed sources, seed crop management and rogueing, post-harvest seed handling, transportation, labelling, sampling for quality tests, storage and marketing.
Mode of presentation	Participatory, pictures, flip charts, practical sessions, group discussions, question sessions, take home messages.
Expectations not met	Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans.
Participants' evaluation of the training	Very good and timely – way before the onset of rains. 2-day training is too short to cover all materials thoroughly.
Post training reaction	Participants prepared action plan to train other farmers in their respective EPAs.

**Figure 6: Participants sharing notes on the attributes of certified seed**



**Table 22: Features of the training sessions in Machinga**

<b>District</b>	<b>Machinga</b>
Implementing/ participating partner	National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi (NASFAM)
Number of participants	20
Participant composition	18 lead farmers and 2 frontline field staff
Sex: male to female ratio	16:4
Areas of operation	Various Group Action Committees (GACs) in the district
Participant expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn new soybean seed production principles</li> <li>2. Learn about available soybean varieties</li> <li>3. Learn about soybean markets</li> <li>4. Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans for seed production</li> </ol>
Training materials	First part: general agronomic aspects of soybean production. Second part: concepts specific to soybean seed production and certification – classes of seed, seed crop registration requirements, site selection, seed crop isolation distances, parent seed sources, seed crop management and roguing, post-harvest seed handling, transportation, labelling, sampling for quality tests, storage and marketing.
Mode of presentation	Participatory, pictures, flip charts, group practicals, group discussions, question sessions, take home messages
Expectations not met	Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans for seed production
Participants' evaluation of the training	Very good and timely before farmers make farm decisions Next training should take more than 2 days in order to cover all materials thoroughly
Post training reaction	Prepared work plan to train other farmers, in their respective GACs, on the principles of soybean seed production

**Figure 7: A participant lamenting over wasted efforts of production without inoculation**



**Table 23: Features of the training sessions in Mangochi**

District	Mangochi
Implementing/participating partner	National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi (NASFAM)
Number of participants	20
Participant composition	16 lead farmers and 4 frontline field staff
Sex: male to female ratio	18:2
Areas of operation	Various Group Action Committees (GACs) in the district
Participant expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn soybean seed production principles</li> <li>2. Learn about available seed markets</li> <li>3. Learn how to register as seed producers</li> <li>4. Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans for seed production</li> <li>5. Swim in the River Shire</li> </ol>
Training materials	First part: general agronomic aspects of soybean production. Second part: concepts specific to soybean seed production and certification – classes of seed, seed crop registration requirements, site selection, seed crop isolation distances, parent seed sources, seed crop management and rogueing, post-harvest seed handling, transportation, labelling, sampling for quality tests, storage and marketing.
Mode of presentation	Participatory, pictures, flip charts, practical sessions, group discussions, question sessions, take home messages
Expectations not met	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans for seed production</li> <li>2. Swimming in the River Shire</li> </ol>
Participants' evaluation of the training	Very good and timely before farmers make farm decisions. Next training should take more than 2 days in order to have more practical and discussion sessions.
Post training reaction	Prepared action plan to train other farmers in the lead farmers' respective GACs.

**Figure 8: A participant demonstrates her newly acquired skills**



**Table 24: Features of the training sessions in Lilongwe**

District	Lilongwe
Implementing/Participating partner	National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi (NASFAM)
Number of participants	15
Participant composition	13 lead farmers and 2 front line field staff
Sex: male to female ratio	12:3
Areas of operation	Various Group Action Committees (GACs) in the district
Participant expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn new soybean production principles</li> <li>2. Learn about available soybean varieties and markets</li> <li>3. Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans for seed production</li> </ol>
Training materials	First part: general agronomic aspects of soybean production. Second part: concepts specific to soybean seed production and certification – classes of seed, seed crop registration requirements, site selection, seed crop isolation distances, parent seed sources, seed crop management and rogueing, post-harvest seed handling, transportation, labelling, sampling for quality tests, storage and marketing.
Mode of presentation	Participatory, pictures, flip charts, practical sessions, group discussions, question sessions, take home messages.
Expectations not met	Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans for seed production.
Participants' evaluation of the training	More trainings are necessary in future.
Post training reaction	Prepared action plan to train other farmers in the lead farmers' respective GACs.

**Table 25: Action plan for lead farmers in Lilongwe - training in soybean seed production in Group Action Committees (GACs)**

Date	Activity	Personnel/place	Location	Target
16/09/2013	<i>Soybean seed production</i>	I. Chimpamba/ Tsinkha School Lead farmer	Kamwana  Mwangu	170 Mpenu Association 100 Nyanja Association
18/09/2013		E. Bikitoni/ Kaphala school Lead farmer	Kamwana  Kalonga	190 Mpenu Association Malingunde Ass
20/09/2013		T.Dazeni/ Kamwana School Lead farmer	Kamwana  Sonkhwe	260 Mpenu Association 120 Nyanja Association
25/09/2013		Lead farmer  G. Kambani	Bathe  Mswela	120 Nyanja Association Malingunde Association
27/09/2013		Lead farmer	Kasupe	80
30/09/2013		Lead farmer	Chikowa	100 Nyanja Association
01/10/2013		L. Chiletsa	Phililanjuzi	Malingunde Association
02/10/2013		Lead farmer	Mlomba	95
08/10/2013		Lead farmer N. Chopeza	Kachono Dickson	90 Malingunde Association
18/10/2013		Lead farmer	Mapemba	100
22/10/2013		Lead farmer	Kaphilitsuwi	70
30/09/2013		Lead farmer	Chikowa	100 Nyanja Association

**Table 26: Features of the training sessions in Ntcheu**

District	Ntcheu
Implementing/Participating partner	National Association of Smalholder Farmers in Malawi (NASFAM)
Number of participants	22
Participant composition	20 Lead Farmers and 2 frontline field staff
Sex: male to female ratio	13:9
Areas of operation	Various Group Action Committees (GACs) in the district
Participant expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn new soybean production principles</li> <li>2. Learn about new soybean varieties and markets</li> <li>3. Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans for seed production</li> </ol>
Training materials	First part: general agronomic aspects of soybean production. Second part: concepts specific to soybean seed production and certification – classes of seed, seed crop registration requirements, site selection, seed crop isolation distances, parent seed sources, seed crop management and rogueing, post-harvest seed handling, transportation, labelling, sampling for quality tests, storage and marketing.
Mode of presentation	Participatory, pictures, flip charts, practical sessions, group discussions, question sessions, take home messages.
Expectations not met	Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans for seed production.
Participants' evaluation of the training	Excellent program. More training is necessary in the near future.
Post-training reaction	Lead farmers prepared action plan for training other farmers in their respective GACs.

Figure 9: Raymond Mwenitete guiding participants in Ntcheu



**Table 27: Action plan for lead farmers in Ntcheu - training soybean seed producers in Group Action Committees (GACs)**

Date/Time	Activity	Personnel	Expectations	Target
First week of October	Farmer-to-farmer training	Lead farmers	All GAC members to know soybean grain & seed production	All the GAC members
Second week of October	Farmer-to-farmer training	Lead farmers	All GAC members to know soybean grain & seed production	150 farmers per lead farmer = 3000 GAC members
End of October	Establish new clubs	Lead farmers	5 clubs established by each lead farmer	5x20=100 clubs

**Table 28: Features of the training session in Balaka**

District	Balaka
Implementing/participating partner	National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi (NASFAM)
Number of participants	26
Participant composition	20 Lead Farmers and 6 frontline field staff
Sex: male to female ratio	21:5
Areas of operation	Various Group Action Committees (GACs) in the district
Participant expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn new soybean production principles</li> <li>2. Learn about new soybean varieties and markets</li> <li>3. Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans for seed production</li> </ol>
Training materials	First part: general agronomic aspects of soybean production. Second part: concepts specific to soybean seed production and certification – classes of seed, seed crop registration requirements, site selection, seed crop isolation distances, parent seed sources, seed crop management and rogueing, post-harvest seed handling, transportation, labeling, sampling for quality tests, storage and marketing.
Mode of presentation	Participatory, pictures, flip charts, practical sessions, group

	discussions, question sessions, take home messages.
Expectations not met	Learn of possibilities of agricultural loans for seed production.
Participants' evaluation of the training	Excellent program. More training is necessary in the near future.
Post training reaction	Lead farmers prepared action plan for training other farmers in their respective GACs.

Figure 10: sample of re-handled soybean seed



Figure 11: A typical young soybean crop from certified soybean seed



**Table 29: Action plan for lead farmers in Balaka - training soybean seed producers in Group Action Committees (GACs)**

Date/Time	Activity	Personnel	Expectations	Target
First week of October	Farmer-to-farmer training	Lead farmers	All GAC members trained	50 farmers/lead farmer=1000 farmers
Second week of October	Farmer-to-Farmer training	Lead farmers	All GAC members trained	50 farmers/lead farmer=1000 farmers
End of October	Formation of clubs	Lead farmers and frontline staff	Clubs formed	5 clubs/lead farmer=100 clubs

**Table 30: Features of the training sessions in Mchinji**

District	Mchinji
Implementing/Participating partner	National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi (NASFAM)
Number of participants	20
Participants composition	17 Lead Farmers and 3 frontline field staff
Sex: male to female ratio	15:5
Areas of operation	Various Group Action Committees (GACs) in the district
Participant expectations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Learn soybean production techniques</li> <li>2. Learn about soybean disease control</li> <li>3. Learn about new soybean varieties and markets</li> <li>4. Learn of available agricultural loans for seed production</li> </ol>
Training materials	First part: general agronomic aspects of soybean production. Second part: concepts specific to soybean seed production and certification – classes of seed, seed crop registration requirements, site selection, seed crop isolation distances, parent seed sources, seed crop management and rogueing, post-harvest seed handling, transportation, labelling, sampling for quality tests, storage and marketing.
Mode of presentation	Participatory, pictures, flip charts, practical sessions, group discussions, question sessions, take home messages.
Expectations not met	Learn of available agricultural loans for seed production.
Participants' evaluation of the training	Excellent planned. More similar trainings necessary in the near future.
Post training reaction	Lead farmers prepared action plan for training other farmers in their respective GACs.

**Table 31: Action plan for lead farmers in Mchinji - training soybean seed producers in Group Action Committees (GACs)**

Date/Time	Activity	Personnel	Expectations	Target
Week 1, 2, 3 & 4 October 2013	Farmer-to-Farmer training in soybean seed production	Lead farmers	All GACs covered within the month of October	850 farmers

**Figure 12: Soybean crop heavily infected with rust**



### ***Cost benefit analysis completed***

The task was to complete a Cost:Benefit Analysis under smallholder conditions for:

1. Ridge and in-row spacing/groundnuts and soybeans
2. Doubled-Up Legumes (Groundnuts-PigeonPea; Soybeans-Pigeon Pea; Groundnut-Soybean)
3. Mandela Cock for groundnut drying
4. Micro-dosing Fertilizer; and 5. Dairy Forage Production

In the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of Year Two, FTF-INVC developed scope of work for short-term technical assistance to develop partial budgets with gross margin analysis, opportunity cost assessment, and, when possible, at least qualitative review of the risks involved in adoption of various improved agronomic technologies. Pending the availability of relevant staff for the task, planned for the next quarter six analyses will be performed. Each one will include an analysis that compares likely gross margins and opportunity costs at the 1 acre farm level and the 3 acre farm level

### ***Site demonstration farms***

45 lead farmers have planted Leukina in the demonstration farms for animal feeding. The table is a breakdown of the recipients to the training by gender, MBG and quantities planted.

**Table 32: Lead Farmers with demonstration farms – analyzed by Gender**

<b>Name of MBG</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Quantity</b>
Magomero	7	2	0.2kgs
Machite	6	2	0.2kgs
Nathenje	6	2	0.2kgs
Lumbadzi	7	3	0.2kgs
Nkhweza	4	6	0.2kgs
<b>Totals</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10kgs</b>

## **TASK 3: IMPROVE ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE ADVISORY EXTENSION SERVICES AND INFORMATION**

### **SUB-TASK 1: IMPROVE ACCESS TO PROVEN MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE DAIRY SECTOR**

#### ***Institution of farm record book***

The branding and marking requirements of the record book has been finalized and MMPA was authorized to go ahead with printing and distributing them to farmers. In the coming quarter MMPA will arrange to print the record books and distribute them to farmers at a later date.

#### ***Promote AI service***

The AI campaign came to an end in the last quarter. A total of 371 animals have received AI services in the reporting period (see Table below). MMPA will be meeting AI technicians from the five MBGs to establish challenges, lessons and the things that worked well during the campaign period. MMPA will compile a report which, when shared, will inform the planned campaign in the second year.

Heat synchronization hormone was procured and distributed in the five MBGs for the AI campaign although there was a delay in the process of procuring. 208 animals have been serviced with hormone of which 71 are pure breed cows, 54 are crosses while the rest are local Zebu cows.

**Table 33: Number of animals inseminated during the AI Campaign.**

MBG	# of animals inseminated			Totals
	Pure	Cross	Local	
Machite	29	50	19	98
Magomero	59	7	30	96
Nathenje	22	5	58	85
Lumbadzi	30	9	20	59
Nkhweza	15	3	15	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>371</b>

**Table 34: Number of animals administered with Estrus Hormone**

MBG	# of animals administered			Total
	Pure	Cross	Local	
Magomero	13	7	4	24
Lumbadzi	30	0	20	50
Machite	15	44	17	76
Nkhweza	10	3	15	28
Nathenje	3	0	27	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>208</b>

## **SUB-TASK 2: USE ICT IN STIMULATING PRODUCTIVITY AND VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT (DAIRY)**

MMPA has been using ESOKO to disseminate technical messages to MBG farmers. Technical officers were supposed to compose messages to be sent to farmers as regards FtF INVC activities taking place in the MBGs as well as dairy production activities in general.

## **TASK 4: PROMOTE RISK MITIGATION EFFORTS**

### **SUB-TASK 1: DEVELOP THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN (EMMP)**

Compliance with USG 22CFR216 is imperative for FtF-INVC's activities as such FtF-INVC has already submitted an Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) to USAID/Malawi. All grants/ subcontracts are mandated to incorporate environmental review that complies with the "negative determination with conditions" findings of the EMMP.

In the quarter under review, grantees were made aware of any mitigating measures that are needed and the mandatory requirement for them to be put in place. FTF-INVC is mandated to make periodic monitoring to ensure that EMMP mitigation procedures are followed. The IPs were briefed on the EMMP at the August work planning sessions. It was planned that TSPs and BDS suppliers would be briefed as well. It was further planned that all grantees would review their activities for potential environmental effects, screen the activities using screening forms, and prepare the, documentation needed for environmental clearance. INVC staff would undertake periodic reviews of partner activities to ensure compliance with the required conditions or mitigation activities.

## COMPONENT 3: IMPROVING COMMUNITY CAPACITY TO PREVENT UNDER-NUTRITION

The key challenges and constraints to improving community capacity to prevent under-nutrition, specifically chronic malnutrition in children leading to stunting will be addressed through FtF-INVC interventions resulting in:

- Improved key nutrition-related behaviors (essential nutrition actions) within households.
- Increased access to diverse and quality foods among target populations through improved production, purchase, storage, and preparation of nutritious foods.
- Enhanced consumption of a nutritious and sufficiently diversified diet.
- Increased access to and utilization of key nutrition-related services among target populations, including community nutrition assessment/surveillance, bi-directional referral with clinic services, and support for vulnerable populations to access appropriate care at the community or clinic level.

FtF-INVC interventions are aligned to the national programs i.e. the special 1000 days and Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) policies and programs. In keeping with the overall FtF-INVC implementation framework, all interventions in the target districts focusing on improving community capacity to prevent under-nutrition are channeled through partners:

- NASFAM
- FUM
- Pakachere Institute of Health and Development Communication
- Nkhoma Hospital.

This section of the report summarizes FtF-INVC nutrition program elements, which have been introduced. FtF-INVC ensures that all implementing partners understand that nutrition programs are to be delivered to all members of a community in each target district using total community approach.

### ***Partner strengthening as a foundation for activity roll out***

In this quarter, FtF-INVC continued focus was on working with partners Pakachere Institute of Health and Development Communication and Nkhoma Hospital in implementation of nutrition interventions. Following the completion of project start-up activities and recruitment of care group promoters, FtF-INVC worked to build technical capacity of technical service providers to effectively deliver nutrition interventions. Major areas of focus were the training of care group structures in care group model, essential nutrition actions and scaling up nutrition.

- FtF-INVC trained 149 people (120 care group promoters and 29 partner staff) in care group model.
- The training was delivered to enable partners to implement nutrition activities using care group model.
- In addition 120 care group promoters were trained in essential nutrition actions, scaling up nutrition and food processing and utilization with emphasis on dairy and legumes to equip them with knowledge and skills to be delivered through the care group structure as the promoters cascade the training to care group volunteers.

- The 120 care group promoters constitute 80 promoters for Lilongwe district and 40 for Mchinji district.
- During the same period 25 drama group members were mentored on theatre for development in Mpingu and Ukwé EPAs.
- The trained promoters started establishing household clusters with children under three years, pregnant and lactating women to recruit care group volunteers.
- At the close of this quarter, 18,225 households (37.5% of the FY2014 target households) had been grouped into 12 households per cluster.
- During the life of the project, each care group promoter is expected to oversee three care groups of 12 volunteers each.
- Overall, the promoter will be responsible for 36 volunteers with each volunteer overseeing 12 households inclusive of his/hers.

The recruitment of the care group promoters and volunteers are the major reason limiting progress to achieving the target number of target households to be reached. Household clustering and volunteer recruitment process will continue in the second quarter. The target is to continue supporting and mentoring Nkhoma Hospital, NASFAM and FUM to recruit at least 70% of the target households.

Within this quarter, nutrition activities at community level were put on hold from mid-October to 10 December 2013 when the decision about impact evaluation and selection of the comparison group was made. To inform decision about impact evaluation and selection of the comparison group, FtF-INVC provided information about the process employed to recruit 120 promoters that will facilitate nutrition and health activities in care groups. In the previous quarter, FtF-INVC through Nkhoma Hospital, NASFAM and FUM conducted sensitization and mobilization activities in 17 EPAs in Lilongwe and Mchinji districts to recruit 120 promoters whose summary are provided in the Table below.

**Table 35: Summary of number of EPA, GVH, Villages and GACs by district**

Variable	Mchinji	Lilongwe	Total
EPA	6	11	17
GVH	127	164	291
Villages	209	283	492
GAC/Clusters	45	107	152
No. of Applicants	368	367	735
No. of Shortlisted Applicants	368	172	540
Promoters recruited	40	80	120

Because nutrition activities were put on hold, there was slow progress in recruitment of care group volunteers and subsequent roll out of nutrition activities that depend on establishment of care group structures at volunteer level.

## TASK 1: IMPROVE KEY NUTRITION-RELATED BEHAVIORS (ESSENTIAL NUTRITION ACTIONS) WITHIN HOUSEHOLDS

### SUB-TASK 1: DETERMINE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE NUTRITION AND FEEDING PRACTICES

A formative research report was finalized by Pakachere Institute of Health and Development Communication based on work done during the previous quarter. The findings were shared with DAI Principal Global Practice Specialist-Nutrition (Kathleen Kurz) and used to revise scope of work (SOW) for short technical assistance (STTA) on social and behavior change communication (SBCC) rollout on nutrition. The findings in the final report will be used by the consultants in message development workshop to develop creative briefs addressing some specific nutrition behaviours and practices among pregnant and lactating women in Lilongwe and Mchinji districts. The STTA on SBCC rollout is expected to be conducted next quarter in collaboration with Save the Children International (SCI) expert(s) based in Washington DC, USA.

### SUB-TASK 2: DEVELOP BCC STRATEGY

BCC was developed already. However, one (1) formative research report was finalized by Pakachere Institute of Health and Development Communication whose findings will be used to revise some messages in the BCC Strategy so that they are specific. The activity is expected to be facilitated by two (2) international consultants from DAI and SCI, Washington DC, USA in the next quarter.

### SUB-TASK 3: FACILITATE IMPLEMENTATION OF BCC STRATEGY

Theater Performances were conducted in each of eight GVHs in Mpingu and Ukwe EPAs in Lilongwe district where 4,266 people (2,512 male, 1754 female) attended the shows, where the following issues were addressed:

- The growing of soy beans and groundnuts
- The importance of consuming soy beans and groundnuts and associated products especially among pregnant women and lactating mothers.
- The importance of exclusive breastfeeding.

**Table 36: Number of people reached by Pakachere Travelling Theatre in Mpingu and Ukwe EPAs**

District	EPA & Time performed	GHV	Village	Total attended	Female	Male
Lilongwe	Mpingu, 7/10/13	Nzindo	Nzindo	397	301	96
	Mpingu, 8/10/13	Chiliza	Chiliza	117	69	48
	Mpingu, 9/10/13	Mkombe	Mkombe	388	217	171
	Ukwe, 14/10/13	Khudzumba	Khudzumba	567	371	196
	Ukwe, 15/10/13	Chinyama	Chinyama	1337	735	602
	Ukwe, 16/10/13	Namkumba	Namkumba	479	267	212
	Ukwe, 17/10/13	Khudzumba	Kasakula	318	197	121
	Ukwe, 14/10/13	Katema	Katema	663	355	308
	<b>Total</b>			<b>4266</b>	<b>2512</b>	<b>1754</b>

- The largest recorded attendance was 1,337 (735 female, 602 male) at Chinyama GVH in Ukwe EPA

- The lowest was at Chaliza GVH, Mpingu EPA where only 117 people attended (69 female, 48 male).
- Overall, more females than males attended the performances, which is a very positive development as the primary target audience for the nutrition component are females (pregnant women and lactating mothers).
- With this trend, it is likely that more females are going to get nutrition messages through theater performances in addition to other communication channels which the project is using e.g. radio, print and face to face with care group volunteers.

Figure 13: A play in session on the need to give a pregnant woman soy products



Seventeen theatre performance workplans (one for each community-based drama group in each of the EPAs) were developed. The workplans are for rolling out theatre performances by community-based drama groups in addition to Pakachere Travelling Theatre.

25 members from five community-based theatre/drama groups in Mpingu and Ukwe EPAs in Lilongwe were mentored by Pakachere Travelling Theatre. The mentoring involved orienting dramatists on theatre for development; best practices in community-based interactive theatre for development/nutrition/health; steps for preparing theatre performances; and practical sessions (Act Out!). Each group was given a topic to develop storylines and produced a sketch which was performed to sample audiences. See illustration below.

Figure 14: Theatre performance mentoring session on nutrition issues



Pakachere technical team also conducted five monitoring sessions to theatre groups in Ukwé and Mpingu EPAs to supervise development of workplans and performances so far done.

#### ***Airing of radio jingles***

During the quarter, airing of two radio jingles on exclusive breastfeeding commenced. The jingles have been aired 291 times on three different radio stations:

- 90 times on Mudziwathu Community Radio in Mchinji
- 39 times on MBC Radio1
- 90 times on Zodiak Broadcasting Station.

The jingles are aired between 06:00-08:00, 12:00-14.00 and 17:00-20.30 daily.

So far adherence to airtime schedule by the radio stations has been 100% as there has been no any disruption in airing.

#### ***Production of a public service announcement (PSA)***

In collaboration with NASFAM and ACE, Pakachere Institute of Health and Development Communication produced one (1) public service announcement (PSA) on soy beans and groundnuts. Specifically, the PSA addressed issues of production and marketing (importance of growing soy beans and groundnuts and engaging in collective marketing). The PSAs will be aired on MBC radio 1 and Zodiak Broadcasting Station through Pakachere. They will also be through already NASFAM (sponsored) radio programs.

#### ***STTA for rollout BCC Interventions***

FtF-INVC revised the scope of work (SOW) on STTA on BCC rollout which was jointly developed with SCI during the last quarter (July-September 2013). In this quarter, the SOW was submitted to DAI (Kathleen Kurz, DAI Principal Global Practice Specialist-Nutrition) for further input and solicitation of qualified consultants. The STTA will be jointly executed by DAI and SCI in the next quarter and will contribute to the development of CC briefs on nutrition as well as building capacity of Pakachere on SBCC. A list of areas that will require STTA on nutrition and BCC was also developed during the quarter. The list was shared with DAI nutrition experts in Washington DC, USA for input.

## **TASK 2: INCREASE ACCESS TO DIVERSE AND QUALITY FOODS AMONG TARGET POPULATIONS**

### **SUB-TASK 2: FACILITATE AND PROMOTE CULTIVATION OF HIGH NUTRITIVE VALUE CROPS**

Promotion of cultivation of high nutritive value crops especially groundnuts and soy beans to enhance increased access to diversified and quality foods continued in this quarter through CADECOM, FUM, IITA and NASFAM to ensure quality seeds and other agricultural practices are followed by farmers for them to improve their productivity. Cultivation of high nutritive value indigenous crops by target households in backyard/kitchen gardens did not start in this quarter. This activity is contingent on establishment of the care group structures. In this quarter, establishment of the care group structures were still in progress and module on kitchen/home/backyard gardens was not rolled out in the care groups. This activity will start in the second quarter of FY14 when care groups would have been fully established in the communities.

### **SUB-TASK 3: FACILITATE FOOD PROCESSING**

Major food processing activities were conducted during the training of 120 care group promoters, covering food processing and utilization with emphasis on dairy and legumes - the value chain commodities being promoted in the project. The promoters are expected to cascade the training in the care groups once they finish setting up their allotted number of care group volunteers per care group. Food products processed during the training included soy milk, soy fritters that can be used as snack for children or pregnant women and peanut butter. See Figure 15 below.

Figure 15: A group of promoters boiling soybeans before de-hulling – Mchinji District



#### ***Other features of the training***

Nkhoma Hospital conducted the training utilizing the FtF-INVC compiled seasonally adjusted recipe book. This book will also be used for training care group volunteers and communities in food processing of the value chain commodities.

- The training also took into consideration the seasonality of the legumes and target groups important for registering progress in reducing stunting.
- Thus, promoters were asked to prepare dishes for children 6 – 11 months, 12 – 24 months, lactating and pregnant women.

- Emphasis was also placed on the dangers of aflatoxin contamination to enable promoters and households they will be training to recommended practices for selection, storage and consumption of groundnuts with minimal aflatoxin contamination.
- Cooking and feeding hints were also emphasized to prevent food borne diseases.
- Since food processing entails substantial use of fuel energy at household level, the promoters were trained in energy saving technologies that will be promoted at household level as they cascade the trainings.

Figure 16: care group promoters constructing energy-saving stove



#### **SUB-TASK 4: FACILITATE FOOD FORTIFICATION**

##### ***Impact of Value Chain Analysis and Policy Assessment***

This quarter, FtF-INVC considered the results of the study of Value Chain Analysis and Policy Assessment of Supply and Demand for Processed Fortified Complementary Food Products and Micronutrient Powders in Malawi (conducted in the last quarter of FY2013) with the following consequences:

- While preliminary results showed that demand for packaged complementary foods is very high in rural areas because packaged foods are perceived as nutritious, there is a need to determine the type of processed fortified complementary food that would be affordable, safe and convenient: taking into account energy constraints of low income quintile group.
- Once deemed affordable, the safety and convenience principles are determined based on the results of the assessment.
- FtF-INVC will continue exploring possibilities of supporting efforts in developing processed fortified complementary food products that meet these criteria in the subsequent quarters of FY14 while concurrently sustaining efforts to increase rural smallholder farmer's income.

### **TASK 3: ENHANCE CONSUMPTION OF A NUTRITIOUS AND SUFFICIENTLY DIVERSIFIED DIET**

#### **SUB-TASK 1: FACILITATE PROMOTION OF DIETARY DIVERSIFICATION**

This continued in this quarter through community drama performances facilitated by Pakachere Institute of Health and Development Communication. These efforts were beefed up in this quarter through training of 120 care group promoters in essential nutrition actions and food processing and utilization of legumes and dairy products. The 120 promoters started

clustering households and recruiting care group volunteers who will be training households in dietary diversification utilizing legumes and dairy. Promotion of dietary diversification will start and continue through care groups in the coming quarters.

### **SUB-TASK 2: PROMOTE MANAGEMENT OF ACUTE MALNUTRITION**

Promotion of good practices has been designed to take place in two ways, although in this quarter this could not happen fully:

- *Through care group model structures*
  - Unfortunately, care group structures were still being formed and modules on management of acute malnutrition had not been rolled out through the care groups
- *Through Government-led Child Health Days campaigns*
  - But, rather than achieve these goals, the National Task Force on Child Health Days decided to focus on integrated measles vaccination, vitamin A supplementation and de-worming and in order to reduce workload for frontline staff, nutrition screening was not included.

Promotion of management of acute malnutrition through care groups will commence next quarter.

### **SUB-TASK 3: PROMOTE HYGIENE AND SANITATION**

In this quarter, sanitation and hygiene were mainly promoted during the Child Health Days campaign and drama performances by Pakachere Travelling Theatre Group. Promotion of sanitation and hygiene through care group structures will commence in the second quarter.

## **TASK 4: INCREASE ACCESS TO AND UTILIZATION OF KEY NUTRITION-RELATED SERVICES AMONG TARGETED POPULATIONS INCLUDING COMMUNITY SURVEILLANCE AND REFERRALS**

### **SUB-TASK 1: CONDUCT COMMUNITY-BASED GROWTH MONITORING AND PROMOTION**

Like other activities that depend on establishment of care group structures, this activity was not conducted in this quarter.

### **SUB-TASK 2: PROMOTE VITAMIN A SUPPLEMENTATION AND DE-WORMING**

Promotion of vitamin A supplementation and deworming took place through the Child Health Days under the integrated measles supplementary immunization activities (SIAs). In total 179507 children were supplemented with vitamin A in Lilongwe and 158388 were dewormed in Mchinji. Details of intervention reach are presented in Table 18 below. In the second quarter, care group volunteers will be encouraging communities to participating in vitamin A supplementation.

**Table 37: Number of children under-5 supplemented with Vitamin A and de-wormed**

Intervention	Number of children reached		Total for Lilongwe and Mchinji
	Lilongwe District	Mchinji District	
Vitamin – A supplementation	90,467	89,040	<b>179,507</b>
De-worming	79,784	78,604	<b>158,388</b>

### SUB-TASK 3: SUPPORT/STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY SYSTEM/STRATEGY FOR REFERRAL OF CHILDREN

These activities started with training of the 120 care group promoters in nutrition screening to provide hands on experience on criteria for referring malnourished children for further treatment. In order to support timely reporting of and treatment of children, promoters will be training care group volunteers in nutrition screening and referral on a regular basis. Trained volunteers will continue to work with in collaboration with health surveillance assistants and village health committees to ensure timely referral. Quarterly meetings between promoters and health personnel to evaluate performance of the referral system were not carried out because nutrition activities were put on hold pending agreement on design of the impact evaluation. The meetings will be carried out in the next quarter.

### TASK 5: CREATE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR EXECUTION OF NUTRITION ACTIVITIES

#### SUB-TASK 1: CONDUCT MEETINGS WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

In this quarter, FtF-INVC participated in a number of meetings to strengthen technical quality and collaboration with other stakeholders as summarized below:

**Table 38: List of meetings attended: October-December 2013**

Date	Meeting/Workshop attended	Organizer	Purpose/issues discussed	Partner/Stakeholder
3-4 October 2013	Joint planning meeting with Nkhoma Lilongwe north team	FtF-INVC	Planning for Care group and TOT training	FtF-INVC and Nkhoma Lilongwe north staff
7 – 11 October 2013	Care group and TOT training	FtF-INVC	Train Nkhoma , FUM,NASFAM, Pakachere staff and promoters in care group and TOT	FtF-INVC, NKhoma SUN project, FUM, NASFAM and Pakachere
16 October 2013	Post care group training	FtF – INVC	Evaluate the TOT and Care Group Training Prepare for ENA/SUN and Food Processing trainings Plan for the forthcoming DQA	Nkhoma Hospital, FtF – INVC
17 – 18 October 2013	Harmonized Monitoring and Evaluation System workshop	CISANET and Center for Agriculture Research and Development( CARD) and ICAM in Ministry of Agriculture and Food security	Share progress and challenges in the implementation of HMES by projects and identify NGOs that require training in HMES	CISANET, CARD, MOAFS, WVI, Concern Universal , Lilongwe, Ntchisi and Mangochi district councils, Lilongwe district agriculture office, Malawi Lake basin program,
18 October 2013	SUN and ENA training preparatory meeting	Nkhoma Hospital and FtF – INVC	Discuss ENA and SUN training content and logistics with DHO and DADO officers( Facilitators)	District Health office for Lilongwe, Nkhoma Hospital FtF – INVC
21 – 25 October 2013	SUN/ENA training	Nkhoma SUN project	Train Nkhoma staff and promoters in SUN/ENA activities	Nkhoma SUN project, FtF-INVC, Lilongwe DHO and Lilongwe DADO
22 October 2013	Joint planning meeting for measles campaign	Lilongwe DHO	Update members on progress made by DHO and share roles and responsibilities among participating CSO in the district	Lilongwe DHO, SSDI, FtF-INVC, Red cross, WVI,

25 October 2013	Training preparation meeting	FtF – INVC and Nkhoma Hospital	Discuss food processing and utilization training content and logistics	Nkhoma Hospital and FtF – INVC
25 October 2013	Joint planning meeting with Nkhoma Lilongwe north team	Nkhoma SUN project	Plan for the food processing and utilization training	Nkhoma hospital and FtF-INVC
28 October – 1 November 2013	Food processing and utilization training	Nkhoma SUN project	Train promoters in processing and utilization of soya, groundnuts and milk	Nkhoma SUN project and FtF-INVC
30 October 2013 <sup>^^</sup>	Training supervision meeting	FtF – INVC	Discuss the overall progress of the training Discuss the working relationship between Nkhoma and INVC staff in the district	Nkhoma Hospital Mchinji district and FtF – INVC
12 November 2013	Joint planning meeting with Nkhoma SUN project	FtF-INVC	Plan for data verification exercise for all promoter applicants required for impact evaluation design	FtF-INV and Nkhoma
19 November 2013	Joint planning meeting with Nkhoma Hospital in Lilongwe South	FtF – INVC	Planning for activity roll out in Lilongwe South	FtF – INVC and Nkhoma Hospital
19 November 2013	Meeting with Benson Kazembe at UNICEF	FtF-INVC	Discuss on possibility of UNICEF to support Nkhoma with MUAC tapes	FtF-INVC and UNICEF
19 November 2013	Joint planning meeting with Nkhoma SUN project	Nkhoma SUN project	Plan for November and December	Nkhoma and FtF-INVC
20 November 2013	Area Development Committee(ADC) meeting at T/A Malili headquarters	ADC members	Brief the T/A and ADC members about Nkhoma SUN project activities	Malili ADC, Nkhoma SUN project and FtF-INVC
28 November 2013	DEC meeting at DCs chamber room	Lilongwe district council	Share progress of project and development activities in the district	DEC members and CSOs working in Lilongwe
11 December 2013	Project management meeting	FtF – INVC	Share with Nkhoma management on the status on impact evaluation study design and implications for rolling out. Discuss challenges in financial and technical reporting.	Nkhoma Hospital and FtF – INVC
11 December 2013	Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) national taskforce meeting	Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS (DNHA) in the office of the President and Cabinet (OPC)	Share SUN implementation progress and updates	DNHA, European Union, UNICEF, WFP, Concern Worldwide, Ministry of gender, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and natural Resources (LUANAR), Civil Society Nutrition Alliance (CSONA), Feed the Children, CIAT, World Vision, CIDA, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security.
11 December 2013	Planning meeting	Nkhoma Hospital and FtF – INVC	Discuss roll out plans for specific activities such as Thanzi sessions, USAID field visit and promoter allocation	Nkhoma Hospital and FtF – INVC
11 December 2013	BCC meeting on production of PSAs on soy beans and groundnut production and marketing	FtF-INVC	To produce 2 radio PSAs on soy beans and groundnut production and marketing	ACE, NASFAM and FtF-INVC
12 December	Meeting to map out	FtF – INVC	Ensuring GAC boundaries	NASFAM, Nkhoma Hospital

2013	GACs	and Nkhoma Hospital	and one promoter per GAC is maintained	and FtF – INVC
16 December 2013	Technical coordination meeting	FtF-INVC	Review progress made, share challenges encountered and activities for the remaining period.	FtF-INVC and Nkhoma
17 December 2013	Joint planning meeting with Nkhoma	Nkhoma	Plan for USAID visit to nutrition field site in Lilongwe	Nkhoma and FtF-INVC
19 December 2013	Joint Field visit meeting with USAID, Nkhoma and FtF-INVC in Mpingu EPA – Kagwatipeny GAC	Nkhoma	Appreciate progress of nutrition activities on the ground at community level and interact with registered target women.	Nkhoma, NASFAM, USAID, FtF-INVC, MOAFS and Local Leadership

## COMPONENT 4: INVESTING IN INNOVATION

The \$2 million “**Investing in Innovation Fund**” (IIF) is an integral element of FTF-INVC’s programming across Components 1, 2, and 3. The fund is open to private and non-governmental entities, and public-private partnerships that are able to demonstrate that proof-of-concept interventions can be tested in one growing / marketing season, or less. Proposals must demonstrate a clear business case for scaling that is built upon end-market analysis and a financing plan.

The \$9 million “**Implementation Support Fund**” (ISF) cuts across Components 1, 2, 3 and 4. It is intended primarily to support the refinement and scaling of partner programs that align very closely with FTF-INVC objectives in value chain competitiveness, productivity, and community nutrition activities. ISF grants will also enable FTF-INVC to build partner capacity to meet the objectives of USAID’s FORWARD policy.

### *Grants awarded and disbursements made*

This quarter, CADECOM received an incremental grant of US\$517,784, increasing their total grant to US\$ 634,399. The total value of grants signed was therefore US\$4,015,246 and during the quarter US\$324,287 was disbursed to grantees, resulting in a cumulative disbursement of US\$ 1.728,446.

### *Grant reconciliation*

Grantees submitted expense claims during the quarter amounting to US\$ 513,814 with cumulative expenses cleared by FtF-INVC amounting to US\$ 1,391,831, representing 81% of grants disbursed. The quality of expense documentation provided showed a marked increase. Nevertheless there is room for improvement. FtF-INVC met with 6 grantees in order to ascertain the challenges they experience in grants reporting and further explain the importance of proper documentation.

USAID approval was obtained to procure 144mt of certified CG7 Groundnut seed and 300kg of indigenous vegetable seed. These agriculture commodities are classified as ‘Restricted Commodities’ according to AIDAR 752.225-70. Both approvals were communicated to the grantees in a timely manner and, as a result, some significant achievements followed. For example, certified groundnut seed--valued at close to US\$300,000--was delivered to CADECOM’s farming households in time.

During the quarter, much focus was on Data Quality Analysis. Grants staff, along with other FtF-INVC staff attended 3 meetings with the consultant and 2 with USAID.

## **TASK 1: OPERATIONALIZE FUNDING MECHANISM**

### **SUB-TASK 1: ESTABLISH GRANT REVIEW AND MANAGEMENT PROCESS**

**Table 39: Cumulative progress to date in FTF-INVC grant review, USAID concurrence and signature.**

Components	Concept Notes	Proposals	Total Received	Grants concurred by USAID to date	Grants signed to date including current quarter

Advancing value chain competitiveness	13	6	19	2	2
Improving productivity	6	7	13	4	4
Improving community capacity to prevent under-nutrition	2	2	4	2	2
Investing in innovation	0	2	2	1	1
Developing local capacity	4	1	5	1	1
<b>Grant Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>

### ***Grant preparation and signing***

FtF-INVC signed a grant with the Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET) on 6 November 2013 and USAID concurrence for this grant award was received on 9 November 2013. As with previous grant reviews, a rigorous process was followed from the time the application was received up to the time the grant was prepared for signature. FtF-INVC obtained 3 references for CISANET, during the proposal vetting stage. The contact details of the referees were obtained from CISANET and were independently contacted by the project to obtain references. These references provide the project with independent confirmation that applicants are capable of handling a grant of the magnitude envisaged by the project and that there is no evidence of previous ‘mishandling’ or ‘misuse’ of grants provided by donors. None of the references obtained contained any negative comments on the grantee concerned.

A pre-award survey of CISANET was carried out in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of FY 2013. These surveys provide information from the grantees relating to, *inter alia*, their organization structure, staffing, financial systems, conflict of interest procedures and internal controls. Of the information collected, conflict of interest procedures and/or their understanding was the least appreciated and understood and so, as part of their planned capacity development work, FTF-INVC will focus on those aspects.

A financial capability questionnaire requesting key information on CISANET’s financial systems was obtained in the last quarter of FY 2013. Such questionnaires provide a clear understanding of grantees’ financial and accounting systems. The project was satisfied with the answers contained in the CISANET questionnaire.

Unlike with other grant proposals, FTF-INVC did not have to spend too much time and resources in improving the quality of the CISANET proposal, prior to submitting to USAID for its concurrence. This indicates that their proposal writing skills are better honed than some of the other grantees.

FtF-INVC also worked closely with CISANET on the final grant budget: discussing and aligning grantee cost share contributions, requesting quotations to justify budgeted costs and alignment of budget line items with the time period available for the grant activity.

These steps culminated in the compilation, for the attention of the Chief of Party, of a Negotiation Memorandum on CISANET as part of the grant preparation process. Within this document were: the rationale for utilising the selected grant instrument (in this case Standard Grant); the basis of costs in the budget; their reasonableness (including a comment on any overhead costs and how they had been derived). The draft grant document was then submitted to DAI Headquarters for review by DAI Contracts staff.

### ***Grant Modifications***

Almost all the grants issued by DAI had a closing date of 30 September 2013. Such a short performance period with relevant activity targets was initially adhered to because DAI did not want to issue large amounts of funds in advance to grantees as that would be very risky, especially when DAI was not certain how grantees would perform. The only exceptions were IITA (being a Public International Organization – PIO) and CISANET (whose grant was signed only during this quarter.)

However, such a short performance period has its drawbacks, for example the need to modify grants to extend the period of performance. This might happen when, in the short term, grantees are slow to utilize the full value of the grant and/or carry out their activities expeditiously. Modifications, extending the period of performance to 30 November were initially made for all grants except IITA and CISANET. Thereafter, a grant modification was issued to CADECOM with a completion date of 31 December 2014. Other grants were further modified with a period of performance extension up to 31 January 2014.

### ***Details of grants and reasons for extensions***

The table below summarizes the situation

**Table 40: Grant extensions**

<b>Grantee</b>	<b>Grants signed this quarter (US\$)</b>	<b>Total Signed Grants Value (US\$)</b>	<b>Narrative</b>
ACE		430,127	Its second phase budget needs to be approved by USAID. This will be handled by the Chief of Party.
NASFAM		1,126,694	Its budget was submitted very late to FtF-INVC on 3 December 2013. Furthermore, there were critical line items that needed further discussion, such as the need to finance basic groundnut seed and certified Soya bean seed. This was considered unacceptable by FtF-INVC and was communicated to NASFAM in mid-December 2013
MMPA		336,091	As with ACE, its second phase budget needs to be approved by USAID. The Chief of Party will obtain the required clearance.
IITA		591,610	
FUM		218,438	Its second phase budget request is for US\$ 502,904. The balance available for the grant, based on already received USAID concurrence, is US\$ 351,339. The higher figure needs to be approved by USAID. The Chief of Party will take obtain the required clearance
CADECOM	517,784	634,399	
PAKACHERE		111,044	While its paper work is in order, an extension up to 31 December 2014 could not be issued as NKHOMA's budget and activities have not yet been cleared by FtF-INVC. Many of PAKACHERE's activities are related to NKHOMA's. Therefore it was deemed prudent by DAI to wait until the NKHOMA budget

			and activities had been approved.
NKHOMA		329,864	Its budget needs clearance by the Chief of Party as it exceeds the amount approved by USAID.
MIM		77,480	
CISANET		159,499	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>517,784</b>	<b>4,015,246</b>	

Notes: The ACE and MMPA grant extensions needed USAID concurrence and therefore time was spent reading both proposals relating them to the work plan and budget: the MMPA proposal needed most attention and correction.

### ***Proposals submitted to USAID***

During this quarter, no proposals were submitted to USAID for its concurrence.

## **SUB-TASK 2: MANAGEMENT OF POST-GRANT AWARD ACTIVITIES**

### ***Requests for advances***

During this quarter CISANET requested an advance of US\$ 14,925 in December and was paid during the same month.

**Table 41: Submission of expense reports**

<b>Grantee</b>	<b>Expense reports submitted and reconciled this quarter (US\$)</b>	<b>Expense reports submitted and reconciled (US\$) – Cumulative to date</b>
ACE	120,590	279,805
NASFAM	128,302	474,679
MMPA	57,755	121,033
IITA	16,194	18,372
FUM	30,509	168,827
CADECOM	36,271	64,365
PAKACHERE	14,656	29,592
NKHOMA	88,607	214,228
MIM	20,930	20,930
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>513,814</b>	<b>1,391,831</b>

During the quarter, most grantees submitted their expense reports up to November 2013. A few such as ACE and MMPA, submitted their December expense reports, as well and they are to be commended. NASFAM and IITA have not yet submitted their expense reports for the period October – December, 2013. In IITA's case, as per the grant agreement, they will only submit their expense report for that period by 31 January 2014.

### ***Submission of Financial Reports***

These reports were well presented, both as required quarterly and when requesting an advance payment.

### ***Grantee funds requests***

The following grantees submitted funding requests and were paid during the quarter. A summary of such payments is shown in the table below:

**Table 42: Requests from grantees**

<b>Grantee</b>	<b>Funds provided by DAI this quarter (US\$)</b>	<b>Advances paid by DAI (US\$) – Cumulative to date</b>
ACE	149,951	391,627
NASFAM	-	467,883
MMPA	22,044	135,642
IITA	-	67,661
FUM	21,844	196,594
CADECOM	39,628	82,602
PAKACHERE	-	53,703
NKHOMA	75,895	296,879
MIM	-	20,930
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>309,362</b>	<b>1,713,521</b>

All Standard Grants issued by DAI provide for a 2 month advance payment. DAI issues an advance payment to grantees. Grantees submit expense reports with requisite documentation evidencing usage of such advances. Once such expense documents is accepted by FtF-INVC, a fresh advance is disbursed by DAI on receipt of a funding request from grantees.

***Grantee Training on Grants/Finance/Reporting Issues***

Prior to this quarter, FtF-INVC had noted that Grantees were slow in understanding the need for quality and reliable documentation when presenting their expense reports. The project had also noted that there was little or no consistency in reporting by grantees. In order to make sustainable improvements in reporting, it was decided to have meetings at FtF-INVC with 2 grantees at a time. Grantees would nominate their staff while FtF-INVC would be represented by the Grants Manager, Finance and Administration Director, Grants Accountant and Capacity Development Specialist.

Three such meetings were held:

- Nkhoma and Pakachere – 6 November 2013 – 2 Nkhoma staff and 3 Pakachere staff attended
- FUM and IITA – 27 November 2013 – 4 FUM staff and 1 IITA staff attended
- MMPA and CADECOM – 6 December 2013 - 3 MMPA staff and 1 CADECOM staff attended

Some of the topics discussed were:

- Challenges faced by grantees when reporting to FtF-INVC
- Grantee systems and how they relate to documentation
- Communication
- Request for Funding
- Process of grant payment approval
- Expense, technical and financial reports
- Required support documentation

- Procurement policy

In addition to such meetings, FTF-INVC also conducted a meeting with CISANET, the new grantee, on the above mentioned topics.

### ***Grantee audit visits***

FtF-INVC began making preliminary audit visits to grantees in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of FY 2013. The program commenced on 26<sup>th</sup> July when the Grants Manager and Finance and Administration Director visited MMPA. However, no audit visits were conducted during this quarter.

It is planned to visit the following grantees in the next quarter:

- NASFAM
- IITA
- Pakachere
- Nkhoma.
- MIM, and
- CISANET

### ***Interaction with Grantees***

Grantees' financial reporting shows more consistency and can be attributed to the many coaching and advisory sessions FtF-INVC has had with grantees. However there is still room for improvement.

**Table 43: Interaction with grantees**

Dates (in 2013)	Organization	Participants	Content	Type of Guidance	No. of sessions
16 October	IITA	Country representative	Discussion on approved allowances and quality of documentation	<b>ADVICE</b>	1
06 November	Nkhoma Pakachere	5 accounts and field staff	Interaction on grant reporting issues		1
27 November	FUM & IITA	5 accounts and field staff			1
06 December	MMPA CADECOM	4 accounts and field staff			1

### ***Approval for Restricted Commodities***

On 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013 the project requested USAID approval to procure 300kg of indigenous vegetable seed for planting in household kitchen gardens by Nkhoma CCAP Hospital's FtF-INVC target households. The Restricted Commodities provision of ADS 312 lists agricultural commodities as a restricted item, procurement of which requires USAID approval. The Contracting Officer's approval was therefore sought to purchase indigenous vegetable seed (agricultural commodities), which are classified as restricted commodities, by AIDAR 752.225-70. This approval was obtained on 19th November 2013.

On 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013 the project requested USAID approval to procure 144mT of certified CG7 Groundnut seed - with a value of US\$370,286 - to be planted by 15,000 farming households coming under CADECOM's purview. The Restricted Commodities provision of

ADS 312 lists agricultural commodities as a restricted item, procurement of which requires USAID approval. The Contracting Officer's approval was therefore sought to purchase groundnut seed (agricultural commodities), which are classified as restricted commodities, by AIDAR 752.225-70. This approval was obtained on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2013.

### ***Improvements seen and challenges experienced***

During this quarter FtF-INVC grants section, in conjunction with Finance and Administration, continued to check and approve grantee expense reports. Grantee reporting has shown substantial improvements during this quarter, especially the quality of documentation submitted and timeliness in reporting. Nevertheless, challenges still remain and there is much room for improvement, for both IITA and NASFAM, concerning quality of documentation and timeliness of reporting.

FtF-INVC also experienced, at first hand, almost crippling delays in obtaining critical documentation from CADECOM relating to a budgeted US\$380,000 procurement of certified CG7 groundnut seed. The whole process of guiding CADECOM in obtaining credible certified groundnut seed quotes began late in July 2013. It was only in the second week of October 2013 that we received an accurate funding request. However the project noted that some of the procedures adopted by CADECOM may leave unnecessary question marks. The project then decided to work more closely with CADECOM in obtaining quotations from suppliers, reflecting principles of fair and open competition. The Operations Manager, Groundnut Value Chain Coordinator and Grants Manager involved themselves in the bid evaluation process and it was fortunate that the certified seed was delivered to CADECOM's 15,000 farming households in the first week of December 2013. The planting rains arrived late so this timing turned out to be workable, fortunately.

## **TASK 3: DEVELOP SUSTAINABILITY MECHANISMS FOR FUNDS**

### **SUB-TASK 1: CONDUCT ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENTS**

Grants operations did not carry out any Pre-Award Surveys or administer any Financial Capability Questionnaires during this quarter.

### **SUB-TASK 2: DEVELOP INDUSTRY BUSINESS PLANS**

During the previous quarter, implementing partners identified their best performing associations and cooperatives that needed help to further improve their systems and inculcate a business approach in operations.

FtF-INVC had also previously evaluated and selected 3 Business Service Providers (BSP) to document Business Plans for some of the selected entities. Those BSPs were:

- Malawi Institute of Management (MIM)
- Umodzi Consulting
- Tradeline Consult.

MIM carried out 4 courses and these were completed during the previous quarter. Umodzi Consulting prepared business plans for 3 entities:

- New Nathenje Milk Bulking Group
- Nkhunguyembe Agribusiness Cooperative
- Tidziwane Producers and Marketing Cooperative

The New Nathenje Milk Bulking Group (MBG) is one coming under the ambit of MMPA, while the latter two entities are under the umbrella of FUM.

Umodzi Consulting briefed MMPA, FUM and FtF-INVC jointly on all three business plans. Based on the feedback provided, they amended their documents and then briefed the three entities' membership. Once that was done, Umodzi prepared the business plans in Chichewa and distributed to the three entities.

Tradeline Consult was requested to document business plans for three NASFAM Association Management Centres (AMC). These were:

- Namwera AMC
- Lilongwe South AMC, and
- Mchinji AMC.

They briefed NASFAM on the draft business plans. Thereafter they updated their business plans on the feedback provided by NASFAM and FtF-INVC.

### **SUB-TASK 3: SURVEY AND ASSESS INVESTORS' INTEREST**

Two of the three BSPs mentioned in sub-task 2, produced six business plans for associations /cooperatives coming under the purview of MMPA, FUM and NASFAM. During the next two quarters, BSPs are expected to produce more business plans for selected FtF-INVC stakeholders. These will then be utilised by FtF-INVC and the BSPs to explore investor interest. The project aims to engage the interest of investors to make value chains more competitive.

## **TASK 4: INCREASE INVESTMENTS IN AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION-RELATED ACTIVITIES BY PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS**

### **SUB-TASK 1: FACILITATE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP RELATED TO AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION SECTORS**

ACE, which accesses grants from the Innovation Fund, continues to attract significant interest in WRS. In this quarter alone it facilitated an increment of almost 6,000mt increase in tonnage, much of it for Soy Bean. Furthermore, 4,683mt were covered by Forward Contracts. ACE also obtained incremental collateral financing of US\$1.3m from First Merchant Bank who now appear to be convinced of the attractiveness of such facilities to traders/manufacturers. This increased financing covered a combination of Bridging Finance, Warehouse Receipts and Forward Contracts.

### **SUB-TASK 2: INVESTMENT PROMOTION TARGETING FTF-INVC VALUE CHAINS**

BSPs will also be requested to do business plans for key value chain processes or activities. FtF-INVC will then attempt to attract investment interest in the more valuable business propositions.

This task will be more effectively dealt with when more business plans are produced by BSPs in the next two quarters.

### **SUB-TASK 3: FTF-INVC INNOVATIONS**

During this quarter, no innovations were recorded for reporting.

## COMPONENT 5: DEVELOPING LOCAL CAPACITY

FtF-INVC is focusing on delivering its Local Capacity Development interventions along two prongs

- **Organizations (institutions)**, - Organizational Development capacity gaps for FtF-INVC partner organizations are determined by conducting organizational capacity assessments annually as a basis for developing the capacity building plan and monitoring progress of capacity development over time.
- **Beneficiaries** to maximize performance and benefits accrual within the value chain, through technical skills development and enhanced business management skills.

### TASK 1: DEVELOP MALAWI'S CAPACITY GOING FORWARD

#### SUB-TASK 1: UPGRADE/IMPROVE ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY TO MANAGE GRANTS

During the quarter, FtF-INVC continued providing organizational development training to partners through Malawi Institute of Management (MIM) as well as conducting review/refresher /mentoring meetings with partners on grant management and financial reporting.

#### SUB-TASK 2: BUILD ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

FtF-INVC started rolling out use of the organization capacity assessment tool (OCAT) to three partners:

- Malawi Milk Producers Association (MMPA),
- Agriculture Commodity Exchange (ACE)
- Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET).

Around 5-8 members of staff representing all levels and sections at each organization participated during the OCA exercise, which covered the 8 capacity areas as recommended by USAID:

1. Governance
2. Administration
3. Human Resources Management
4. Financial Management
5. Organization Management
6. Project Management
7. Project Performance Management
8. Leadership and Team Dynamics.

The results of the OCAT will provide a basis for developing a capacity building strategy and plan for each organization. The activity will continue with the remaining partners in the next quarter.

During the reporting period, FtF-INVC conducted a Leadership and Management Skills course for its 8 partners where participants were trained in, inter alia:

- Leadership and Management
- Conflict Management
- Effective Communication
- Team Building
- Results Based Management
- Managing Self (using the Myers-Briggs Indicator).

FtF-INVC continued mentoring its partners in grants management and financial reporting. Grants Management/Financial Reporting refresher meetings were held at INVC with CADECOM, FUM, IITA, Nkhoma, Pakachere, MMPA and ACE. In addition monitoring visits on the same continued to all FtF-INVC partners to provide coaching services.

## **TASK 2: ENHANCE HUMAN AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT WITHIN VALUE CHAINS**

### **SUB-TASK 1: DELIVER NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO ORGANIZATIONS**

#### ***GPS Mapping***

FtF-INVC carried out the GPS mapping of Nathenje and Machite Milk Bulking Groups under MMPA in Lilongwe district. The mapping helps to guide MMPA on dairy farmers targeting and coverage and the exercise will continue for the other milk bulking groups.

#### ***MIS training***

FtF-INVC organized a Management Information System (MIS) User training course for partners' staff responsible for data collection and reporting and had two main objectives:

1. To orient partners (CADECOM, NASFAM, MMPA, FUM, ACE, and NKHOMA Hospital) on the content of the FtF-INVC back-bone forms and to harmonize understanding of them.
2. To orient data entry staff in partner organizations on use of FtF-INVC Management Information Systems.

#### ***Features of the training and additional commentary***

- The course was held at Kalikuti Hotel in Lilongwe
- A total 24 people from FtF-INVC partners participated.
- All partners brought their computers for use during the training enabling the training approach to be very practical, using the actual computers to demonstrate how the MIS will work.
- This training will improve data collection and quality reporting by partners.

### **SUB-TASK 2: DELIVER NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO FARMERS**

#### ***Groundnuts agronomic practices***

Under CADECOM, 200 lead farmers out of 400 were trained in groundnuts agronomic practices such as groundnuts varieties, ridge and plant spacing, time of planting, plant diseases and field husbandry practices. The trained lead farmers cascaded the messages to other farmers in their clubs using demonstration plots. In NASFAM impact areas, over 300 lead farmers were trained in soy beans agronomic practices. Field staff from the Partners, IITA staff and FtF-INVC staff made regular field visits to back-stop lead farmers in their training activities.

### **SUB-TASK 3: FACILITATE POLICY REVIEW AND ADVOCACY SUPPORT**

FtF-INVC signed a grant agreement with CISANET on a "Malawi Value Chain Promotion Initiative" to provide facilitation support to SOYAMA and Dairy Industry Development Platform (DIDP) on policy and advocacy issues.

### ***The 1972 Milk act: features and challenges***

CISANET organized a DIDP consultative meeting to discuss findings of a survey which CISANET undertook to seek views from farmers on the 1972 Milk Act.

- In terms of operations, all the three regional milk producers associations (SHIMPA, CREMPA and MDFA) are struggling because of inadequate milk processing facilities.
- The Milk Act provides, among others, that farmers in cities cannot sell raw milk but only processed/pasteurized.
- The challenge currently is that the associations do not have the capacity to pasteurize milk.
- As a result, they rely on private processors, for example:
  - Lilongwe Dairy for the whole central region
  - Dairy Board Malawi and Sun Crest Creamers in the southern region.
  - There is no such processor in the northern region.
- These private processors enjoy monopoly power and, as a result, can control pricing of raw milk.
- The DIDP is lobbying for a review of the Milk Act through the Department of Animal Health and Industries under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and CISANET.

The meeting held at Lilongwe Hotel agreed on the following as a way forward:

1. DIDP to meet in order to polish up the gray areas in the Revised Milk Act and suggest corrective actions. CISANET to help organize this meeting.
2. There is need to increase production and demand for milk and milk products in the northern region- this will necessitate the investment in milk processing companies in the area.

### ***Review of the 1996 Seed Act***

CISANET also organized a consultative workshop involving stakeholders in the seed sector to discuss the review of the Seed Act (1996). The workshop was officially opened by the Minister responsible for Agriculture and Food Security. CISANET will continue championing the review of the Seed Act.

### ***Malawi Agricultural Trade Policy***

FtF-INVC initiated a study of the Malawi Agriculture Trade Policy focusing on effects of the Export Trade Restriction that the Malawi Government imposed. The draft report of the study is ready and will be discussed with relevant stakeholders in the next quarter. The source of contention is that Government bans exports and sets minimum prices but it does not have buying power. Sometimes Government sends conflicting messages, for example, the National Export Strategy promotes diversification and export versus Government ban on exports.

## **SUB-TASK 4: CONDUCT TRAINING IN VALUE CHAIN AND NUTRITION SPECIFIC TOPICS**

FtF-INVC organized and facilitated training of trainers (TOT) on Care Group Model, food processing and Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) for promoters and staff from NASFAM and FUM from Mchinji and Lilongwe districts. In total, 149 participants were trained. One of the action points from the training was the development of an action plan for setting up care group structures at community level.

### **SUB-TASK 5: STRENGTHEN AND FACILITATE GROWTH OF SERVICE PROVIDERS**

FtF-INVC signed Agreements with Umodzi Consulting and Tradeline Consulting to provide Business Management services to five farmer associations/cooperatives, including facilitating development of business plans for the groups.

Within the reporting period, FtF-INVC organized and facilitated 2 meetings for reviewing and presentation of Business Plans by Umodzi Consulting

- with MMPA on Nathenje Business Plan
- with FUM, on Tidziwane and Nkhunguyembe Business Plans.

The meetings resolved that the refined Business Plans should also be presented to respective associations/groups for their final input. Discussions between FtF-INVC, FUM, MMPA and Umodzi Consulting will continue on how Umodzi Consulting can continue providing business related services to the three CBOs as well as development of business plans for four other MBGs and cooperatives under MMPA and FUM respectively. A similar process will be followed with Tradeline Consulting, targeting mostly NASFAM farmer associations.

### **SUB-TASK 6: M&E WORKSHOP**

Importance of M&E and sampling methodology workshop planned for the next quarter.

## PARTNER ACTIVITY REPORTS

Below are some of the activity highlights done by partners namely: ACE, NASFAM, FUM, CADECOM, MMPA, Nkhoma Hospital, Pakachere Institute of Health and Development Communication and IITA.

### 1. AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES EXCHANGE (ACE)

#### 1.1 ACHIEVEMENTS

Despite experiencing difficulties with financing from the banks, nevertheless, ACE managed to achieve a number of successes during the quarter as indicated in the table below. Perhaps most significantly is the amount of financing that ACE has managed to access, which is as a result of the partnership they have forged with First Merchant Bank. It is hoped that this will be expanded to include other banks in the coming year, to further enhance the amount of capital available.

Other successes were seen in trade facilitation by Rural Trade Agents, the volumes of soya bean deposited on warehouse receipts and the number of forward contracts concluded to mention but a few.

**Table 44: Summary of major achievements**

Deliverable	Indicator	Revised Target	Unit	Quarterly Achievement	Total Achievement
950 metric tonnes on warehouse receipts facilitated by rural agents	Volume of commodity contracts facilitated through warehouse receipts	300	MT	36.62	596.34
	Value of commodity contracts facilitated through warehouse receipts	38 million (USD 113,500)	MWK and USD	MWK 6,332,168.2 (USD 15,830.20)	MWK 92,233,050.00 USD 230,582.63
	Number of rural households benefitting from commodity contracts facilitated through warehouse receipts	30	Number	2	44
9,500 metric tonnes of commodity on the warehouse receipt system	Total volume of commodity contracts facilitated through warehouse receipts	700	MT	5,997.10	6,777.26
USD 950,000 from banks on collateral financing	Value granted by banks for financing of receipts and forward contracts	WRS: 70 million	MWK and USD	WRS: 100 million	WRS: 170 million
		BF: 35 million		BF: 50million	BF: 85million
		FC: 175 million		FC: 625 million	FC: 800 million
		NFRA: 1 billion			NFRA: 1 billion

		WRS: 200,000		WRS: 250,000	WRS: 425,000
		BF: 105,000		BF: 125,000	BF: 212,500
		FC: 520,000		FC: 520,000	FC: 2,000,000
		NFRA: 3 million			NFRA: 3 million
450 metric tonnes of commodity stored in NFRA through WRS	Volume of commodity stored in NFRA under warehouse receipts	0	MT	0	0
950 metric tonnes of soya on warehouse receipt	Volume of soya bean contracts facilitated through warehouse receipts	0	MT	4,511.08	4,511.08
	Number of farmers benefitting from soya bean contracts through warehouse receipts	0	Number	134	134
	Number of smallholder individuals benefitting from improved structures such as warehouse receipts	0	Number	173	173
1,700 metric tonnes of trade facilitated by rural agents	Volume of commodities facilitated by rural trade agents	8,000	MT	36.62	10,574.59
24,000 farmers sensitized	Number of farmers sensitized	10,000	Number	3,656	14,167
24,000 accessing price information for commodity markets	Number of farmers profiled for market information dissemination	3,000 (with mobile phones)	Number	414	2,240
	Number of farmers using the MIPs	300	Number	196	196
	Number of smallholder farmers accessing market information systems	3,000	Number	414	2,240
3 trade fairs attended/facilitated and participated	Number of trade fairs attended, facilitated or participated	2	Number	2	5
12 weekly price info inserts in Nation	Number of newspaper inserts	7 in each newspaper	Number	20	34

## Trade Facilitation

During the period under review (October to December 2013) ACE facilitated a total of 262 contracts representing a total of 12,684.02 metric tonnes at value of MWK 2,409,899,231.71. Of the above total Rural Trade Agents from Mchinji and Dedza facilitated a total 36.62 metric tonnes at a value of MWK 6,332,168.20.

To date ACE has facilitated a total of 25,368.04 metric tonnes of trade at a value of MWK 4,819,798,463.42. Out of this total, Rural Trade Agents have facilitated a total of 10,574.59 metric tonnes valued at MWK1, 325,731.20.

**Table 45: Contracts facilitated**

Type of Contract	Facilitator	Number of Contracts	Volume (MT)	Value (MWK)
Any	Rural Trade Agent	5	36.62	6,332,168.20
Forward Contract	All	131	3,184.00	641,046,424.32
Any other contract	All	126	9,463.40	1,762,520,639.19
	All	262	12,684.02	2,409,899,231.71
	<b>Total</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>25,368.04</b>	<b>4,819,798,463.42</b>

### Warehouse Receipt System (WRS)

Despite the time of year, which is not usually busy from a marketing perspective, ACE saw a substantial increase in the number of warehouse receipts issued, particularly in relation to forward contracts. Much of this was for soya beans to Sunseed Oils, with 4583.72 mt having been put to forward contract on warehouse receipts, against a total of 677.26 mt in total. Of the aforementioned volumes, 596.34 mt was facilitated by Rural Trade Agents.

**Table 46: Volumes on Warehouse Receipts System**

Warehouse	Commodity	Volume (MT)
Rab Kanengo	Maize Grain	526.75
Rab Blantyre	Maize Grain	89.08
Dedza (CADECOM)	Maize Grain	188.48
Kafulu	Maize Grain	412.99
Nathenje	Maize Grain	298.63
Balaka	Maize Grain	50.00
	Pigeon Peas	16.25
	Maize Grain	4.93
Mwandama Grain Bank	Pigeon Peas	49.05
	Soya	7.48
KUD Warehouse	Maize Grain	49.90
Sunseed Oil (Forward Contracts)	Soya	4511.08
	Sunflower	72.64
Senwes	Soya	500.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6,777.26</b>

### Farmer Sensitization Meetings:

During the quarter under review ACE conducted farmer sensitization through various platforms (Rural Trade Agents, Head office staff, Trade facilitation office and Market Information Points). As INVC rolls out into the second phase ACE head office staff has extended farmer sensitization meetings to remaining four INVC districts of Ntcheu, Balaka, Mangochi and Machinga. In the above additional districts sensitization meetings were done in partnership with NASFAM who coincidentally were conducting farmer association Annual General Meetings (AGMs) in those districts. The above approaches enabled ACE to sensitize a total 3,656 (1,327 female and 2,329 male) farmers on its services during the quarter alone. To date ACE has sensitized a total of 14,167 (5,757 female and 8,410 male) farmers under the INVC project.

**Table 47: Sensitization by Rural Trade Agents and Warehouse Staff**

Category of Participant	Male	Female	Total
Government Officials	4	1	5
Producers	428	377	805
Private sector	20	6	26
Civil Society	1	0	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>837</b>

**Table 48: Sensitization by Trade Facilitation Office**

Category of Participant	Male	Female	Total
Government Officials	0	0	0
Producers	44	10	54
Private sector	44	11	55
Civil Society	2	0	2
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>111</b>

**Table 49: Sensitization by Head Office**

Category of Participant	Male	Female	Total
Government Officials	67	17	84
Producers	1,608	869	2,477
Private sector	18	11	29
Civil Society	15	10	25
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,708</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>2,615</b>

**Table 50: Sensitization through Market Information Points (MIPs)**

Category of Participant	Male	Female	Total
Government Officials	1	0	1
Producers	108	88	196
Private sector	3	4	7
Civil Society	13	1	14
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>218</b>

### Collateral Financing Facilities

The First Merchant Bank (FMB) made available bank financing facilities as detailed below:

#### Bank Financing Facilities

During this quarter, ACE was able to get a total of US\$5 137 500 in financing for a variety of activities as indicated below. Whilst these funds were only provided by a single bank, it is anticipated that other banks will participate in the coming marketing season, based on expressions of interest submitted by them to ACE.

**Table 51: Financing**

Amount in MWK	Amount in USD	Purpose
85,000,000	212,500	Bridging Finance
170,000,000	425,000	Warehouse Receipt Financing
800,000,000	2,000,000	Forward Contracts
1,000,000,000	2,500,000	NFRA Procurement
<b>2,055,000,000</b>	<b>5,137,500</b>	<b>Total</b>

Due to the increased demand for the bank financing facilities shown above, ACE requested the First Merchant Bank (FMB) to allocate more resources to the funds already made available by them. Because of the existing strong partnership and trust established by ACE, FMB acted on the requests within the quarter and increased the allocation to the facilities as follows:

- Bridging finance increased from MWK35million to MWK85 million
- Warehouse receipt increased from MWK 70 million to MWK170 million
- Forward Contracts increased from MWK 175 million to MWK800 million

Forward Contracts and Bridging Finance facilities attracted more attention from small producer farmers and traders due to the increased demand for soya by SunSeed Oil Limited, which provided great opportunity for producers and traders, as evidenced by the huge demand for forward contracts. It was very pleasing to note that by the end of the quarter all resources allocated under bridging finance were depleted and a total of MWK 641,046,424.32 was utilized under forward contracts. There is need for ACE to source more resources for the above facilities in this new season. Below are further details:

### **Bridging Finance**

Producers and small traders fully utilized the MWK85, 000, 000.00 financing facility that was allocated under bridging finance. These producers/small traders fulfilled all their obligations and deposited 1628.30 metric tonnes of commodities under the ACE warehouse receipt system ACE was able to “recycle” 70% of the value of the commodity deposits by allocating the costs to warehouse receipt financing and crediting these funds back into the bridging finance facility, resulting in an increase in the overall value of the facility to MWK124, 193, 061. This enabled them to finance an additional 1053.66 metric tonnes of commodities, which were deposited into various ACE certified warehouses on warehouse receipts.

### **Warehouse Receipt System**

During the quarter ACE facilitated total deposits of 5,997.10 metric tonnes of commodities under the warehouse receipt system. A very big proportion of the deposits were soya through forward contracts. A total of 4,511.08 metric tonnes of soya was deposited in SunSeed silos under the system. To date ACE has 6,777.26 metric tonnes under the warehouse receipt system.

### **Forward Contracts**

The rolling out of forward contracts has brought a lot of excitement among small producer farmers and traders (both small and large) that included Action Holdings Limited (AHL) CAPS Limited, TROPHA Estates, TRANSGLOBE and PROPAC Limited. First Merchant Bank (FMB) availed to ACE of MWK 800 million for this new finance facility. During the quarter 78 producer farmers and small traders (22 female and 56 male) accessed finances

through this resource. These farmers and traders deposited a total of 3,990.82 metric tonnes of soya at Sun Seed Oil Limited silos on warehouse receipt which was forward contracted, at a value of MWK 641,046,424.32. The forward contract finance facility is being viewed as a good alternative support to smallholder farmers and traders and ACE needs to request for more resources during the next marketing season.

## Dissemination of Price Information

During the quarter ACE continued to place weekly price inserts in each of the local Malawi newspapers (Nation and Daily Times) as one way of disseminating market information to target participants. The newspaper inserts present weekly market prices and forward prices in Lilongwe for a range of commodities. A total of 20 newspaper inserts were placed during the quarter and this resulted in an increase of commodity deposits on forward contracts under warehouse receipt system.

During the quarter 414 farmers were profiled under ACE database and to date a total of 7,568 farmers have been profiled. From the above profiled farmers only 2,240 farmers are from INVC districts of Mchinji, Lilongwe and Dedza. It is worth noting that all profiled farmers on the database receive regular trade opportunity alerts but most of them are not yet receiving weekly commodity prices on their mobile phones. Farmers need to be sponsored to start receiving weekly commodity prices. To date only 2,830 farmers have been sponsored by WFP and Land O'Lakes and are receiving weekly price information through their mobile phones.

## 1.2 CHALLENGES

**Table 52: Summary of challenges**

Challenges	Solutions	Progress made towards addressing the challenges during the quarter Oct-December 2013
Slow rolling out of bank collateral financing particularly for forward contracts	ACE continued to negotiate with FMB for the issuing of guarantees for forward contracts. This paid dividends as the first consignment for a forward contract of 330 MT is likely to be delivered to Sunseed Oil company in the 1 <sup>st</sup> week of October, 2013. This, in addition to discussions with other banks have raised hopes of financing being available at the beginning of the next marketing season, rather than some way into it as was the case this season.	FMB availed MWK800 million for forward contracts. This initiative was well received by producer farmers and traders to the extent that a total of MWK 641,046,424.32 was utilized within the quarter as detailed in the quarterly report
Poor performance of some rural trade agents	ACE has put in place a re-orientation plan for rural trade agents and Warehouse Managers on their scope of work and will follow their activities more closely to help ensure improved performance.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. After conducting the re-orientation of their scope of work ACE continued to closely monitor performance of these field based staff</li> <li>2. To demonstrate its seriousness of this ACE has not renewed employment contracts for 4 poorest performing rural agents and has already advertised for replacement</li> </ol>
Delayed implementation of activities at the Market Information Points	For the Dedza MIP, the equipment (projector and dongle) has been bought and will be installed as soon as possible. For the Mchinji MIP, a new site has been identified and it should start running in the course of next month.	The challenges at both Dedza and Mchinji were sorted out in October and the MIPs are functioning properly

## 2. NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SMALLHOLDER FARMERS OF MALAWI (NASFAM)

### 2.1 ACHIEVEMENTS

In summary a total of about 19,590 smallholder rural farmers received 293.86kgs of groundnuts and 19,667 received 236.0 kgs of soybean seed as an improved technology with direct support from the USG interventions. By the end of beneficiary registration exercise, a total figure of about 62,000 beneficiaries registered only to withdraw when they realized NASFAM could only afford 75% soy bean and 25 groundnuts seed. In fact, in some areas like Mchinji and Namwera, a decision to promote 100% soy bean was made to ensure better results on nutrition interventions since soy bean can be easily processed into various locally made nutrition products. A total of 529866.2kgs of seed was distributed with an overall proportion of 45% and 55% for soy bean and groundnuts respectively.

**Table 1: Number of beneficiaries per IPC/AMC for 2014**

INVC BENEFICIARIES AND VOLUMES OF SEED DISTRIBUTED				
AMC	BENEFICIARIES	VOLUME OF SEED DISTRIBUTED(KG S)		REMARKS
		SOY BEAN	GROUND NUTS	
Balaka	6,325	44,692	7,151	The groundnuts seed distributed in Balaka was basic seed from ICRISAT. The rest of the soy bean was quality assured seed from last year recoveries and Seed co Ltd reserves we kept from last year's purchase
Lilongwe North	9,105	5,700	129,450	Quality assured groundnuts seed from last year's recoveries and additional purchased quality assured seed was distributed
Lilongwe South	10,349	24,327	119,670	27 metric tonnes of basic groundnuts seed from ICRISAT, quality assured seed from last year recoveries, quality assured seed purchased as additional seed, certified seed from last year's remaining stocks at Seed co Ltd
Mchinji-MASFA	6,299	75,618.2	0	Quality assured seed from last year recoveries and certified soy bean seed from last year's stocks reserved at seed co Ltd
Ntcheu	4,496	24,120	37,590	Quality assured seed from last year recoveries (both soy bean and groundnuts) and certified soy bean seed from last year's stocks reserved at seed co Ltd. Additional purchased groundnuts quality assured seed was purchased.
Namwera	5,129	61,548	0	Quality assured seed from last year recoveries and certified soy bean seed from last year's stocks reserved at Aeed Co Ltd
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>41,703</b>	<b>236,005</b>	<b>293,861</b>	Total of 529866.2kgs of seed was distributed with an overall proportion of 45% and 55% for soy bean and groundnuts respectively.

NASFAM also observed that in some areas that are not traditional groundnuts producers, farmers had preference to groundnuts seed. This was attributed to poor soy bean markets experienced in the last crop marketing season. On a sad note, beneficiaries in Lilongwe (LL North and LL South) had more than 90% preference for groundnuts compared to soy bean. The sudden change in beneficiary preferences on the type of crop and even variety of groundnuts to grow was overlooked in the first place. This might not be good for the programme results especially on nutrition component as groundnuts nutrition products are not as diversified as those of soy bean. However, NASFAM could not resist farmers' demands as it kept losing membership upon insisting to distributing more soy bean seed. In fact, this was one of the major contributing factors that led to numerous withdrawals of participation in the programme. It is expected that these beneficiaries and their households will now be competitive at the end of the season.

**Table 2: Summary of NASFAM Progress Performance Indicators - October-December 2013**

NASFAM APPLICABLE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		FINANCIAL YEAR 2014 OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2014
1	Number of rural households benefiting directly from USG interventions	• 41,703 individual smallholder farmers. About 8341 <sup>1</sup> households
2	Number of members of producer organizations and community based organizations receiving USG assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 associations in MASFA</li> <li>• 3 associations plus 1 pre-association in LL South</li> <li>• 3 associations plus 1 pre-association in LL North</li> <li>• 3 associations in Ntcheu with 2 pre-associations</li> <li>• 4 associations in Namwera</li> </ul>
3	Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training (ACE related)	N/A
4	Number of private enterprises (for profit), producer organizations, water users associations, women's groups, trade and business associations and community based Organizations (CBOs) receiving USG assistance. (ACE related)	N/A. However, there was support that was provided to Namwera, LL North and MASFA on the development of business plans that will guide the implementation of the farmers' business ideas. In this quarter, 3 business plans were finalized with support from USG through INVC programme. It is further expected that year 2 of the programme will give start-up capital and machinery to the IPCs whose business plans are finalized and approved.
5	Number of MSMEs, including farmers, receiving USG assistance to access loans	N/A. NASFAM with support from USG through the programme has distributed seed to 8341 households using a soft loan approach. Individuals from these households will return legume seed in the ratio of 1:2.
6	Number of MSMEs, including farmers, receiving business development services from USG assisted sources.	N/A. However, there was support that was provided to Namwera, LL North and MASFA on the development of business plans that will guide the implementation of the farmers' business ideas. In this quarter, 3 business plans were finalized with support from USG through INVC programme. It is further expected that year 2 of the programme will give start-up capital and machinery to the IPCs whose business plans are finalized and approved.
7	Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of FTF assistance	NASFAM consulted Pakachere to help it conduct behavior change campaigns on several identified poor practices that were identified in year 1 of the

1.

	<p>programme. Amongst the most notable bad practices was the individual crop marketing behavior that has dominated amongst the NASFAM members. NASFAM will use part of the USG support through the programme to embark on the national campaign to help it change the membership mindset on several behavior change topical issue.</p>
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However, NASFAM could not resist farmers’ demands as it kept losing membership upon insisting on distributing more soy bean seed. In fact, this was one of the major contributing factors that led to numerous withdrawals of participation in the programme. It is expected that these beneficiaries and their households will now be competitive at the end of the season.



Figure above AFO for Ukwe (Mr. Njunzi) addressing INVC beneficiaries of Ukwe association in LL North on the need to consider opting for more soy bean rather than groundnuts. Farmers invited INVC Programme Manager to hear more on the seed preferences and assurance for soy markets.

### **Promoting innovation**

NASFAM continues to strengthen the local processing capacity for its beneficiary AMCs/IPC. In the just ended quarter, the business plans for Namwera, LL North and MASFA were finalized. Innovative business ideas were identified and analysed by Trade Line Corporation (TLC).

It is in this regard that, the processing equipment that was procured for value addition was assembled ready for dispatch to the respective AMCs/IPC. The machinery includes soy milk processing machine, roasters, oil expellers and soy de-huller.



*Part of the processing equipment*

The machinery will help promote innovative value addition for the two legume crops while also enhancing stable economic status of both the IPCs and their member organizations and individual farmers. Once the processing starts, farmers will have access to reliable market created by their own local institution. Below are pictures showing the assembled processing equipment that is set for dispatch later in the second quarter of year two (2)

### **Developing local capacity**

NASFAM's INVC Programme Manager and the M&E Manager participated in this important session. The trainings were followed by participatory DQA exercise that took place at NASFAM. This helped NASFAM improve its data management and collection systems. A couple days later, NASFAM implemented a number of reforms aimed at improving data management systems. Among these, filing of programme progress results documentation, defining indicators for each participating IPC, special registration for INVC programme beneficiaries and progress report etc.

Besides the DQA, the INVC Programme Manager took advantage of the Quarterly Programme Coordination meetings with participating IPC staff in all the IPCs. Part of the sessions during these meetings was grilling of other support staff such as warehouse clerks, accounts officers and AFOs. Emphasis was put on raising the awareness on the importance of recording and report progress as per USAID requirements. This involved both financial and technical data. Below is a picture showing an improved filing system as per USAID requirement. At the very end of this quarter, NASFAM in collaboration with DAI-INVC conducted training on information management systems for programme data recording and processing.



*Data entry and processing training sessions - Kalikuti Hotel Lilongwe*

### 3. FARMERS' UNION OF MALAWI (FUM)

#### 3.1 ACHIEVEMENTS

##### Meeting with stakeholders at INVC.

The tripartite meeting was held at INVC office conference whose agenda was to discuss the following:

- Harmonization of extension approaches in conducting training
- FUM and NASFAM overlaps in some EPAs

The meeting was attended by IITA, NASFAM, FUM and FtF-INVC. It was agreed during the meeting that harmonization of training approaches by all partners is a must should always be treated as such. Partners were therefore implored to use the standard tools developed by INVC for both trainings and participant registration.

On FUM, NASFAM overlaps in some EPAs in Mchinji and Lilongwe, it was agreed that both FUM and NASFAM stick to their original impact areas, since allowing for overlaps might generate unnecessary competition and double counting. Both partners have since reverted to their designated areas and there is no fear of overlaps.

##### Data Quality Assessment

A six member team from USAID visited Farmers Union of Malawi for Data Quality Assessment exercise. The exercise was an eye opener to FUM as it informed on the required indicators for reporting. Some of the recommendations by DQA include:

Reporting on given indicators. FUM has since stepped forward to address this by reporting on indicators that fall within its scope.

Using participants' attendance registers. FUM adopted the tools developed by INVC and is since using them during trainings and meetings

##### Train FUM executive Board in Governance

FtF-INVC organized governance training for board members at Malawi Institute of Management. FUM sent four participants, who included FUM President, Vice President, the CEO and Head of Finance and Administration.

**Table 1: Proj Mgt Training participants**

Activity	Target	Male	Fem	Total	General Remarks
Training in Project Management	4	4	0	4	The training was a success and will assist the officials in the area of governance.

##### Presentation of Business Plan.

FtF-INVC engaged Umodzi Consulting to develop business plans for the two cooperatives in Lilongwe and Mchinji, thus Tidziwane and Nkhunguyembe respectively. The Consultants developed two business plans which they presented in a joint meeting attended by FUM and INVC and it was held at INVC on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

Umodzi further presented the business plans to the two cooperatives, Nkhunguyembe and Tidziwane in Mchinji and Lilongwe on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> November 2013 respectively.

## Major issues affecting farmers from the Business Plan development

### Access to loans

Due to high lending rates and demands for security by lending institutions, farmers are unable to access loans to enable them facilitate farming and marketing activities.

### Record keeping

Lack of record keeping by farmers was identified as a major weakness. To overcome the challenge, it was agreed that a simple template be developed to assist farmers capture and keep records for their farming activities.

Below is the summary of participants to the presentation functions

**Table 2: Business plan participants**

Activity	Target	Male	Female	Total	General Remarks
Business plan presentation at Nkhunguyembe Cooperative		8	4	12	Members of the cooperative were very happy with the plan and are keen to start implementing it.
Business plan presentation at Tidziwane Cooperative		13	10	23	The document served as the eye opener to the group and promised to use it as the guiding document

Below is a pictorial view of the two cooperatives during the presentation at Mkanda and Ngwangwa EPAs



Nkhunguyembe cooperative members listening attentively to a . A consultant demonstrating during a presentation at Ngwangwa EPA in Lilongwe presentation at Mkanda.



Members of Tidziwane cooperative listening attentively during the presentation



members of Tidziwane cooperative pictured with the consultants and FOF after the presentation

### **Training of farmers in Agronomic Practices.**

FUM conducted training in agronomic and husbandry practices in all the EPAs in the three districts namely, Mchinji, Lilongwe and Dedza. A total of 595 lead farmers were trained.

### **Farmer Organization Audit**

The main objective of this activity was to assess sustainability of farmer organizations through examining their strength and weaknesses while identifying existing gaps. A total of 20 farmer organizations were assessed. They include; Tipindule, Lobi horticulture, Malirana, Furmack, Kabwazi association, Duwu cooperative, Chiphwanya association, Tchesa and Tambala association in Dedza, Nachichi, Tikondane, Tithetseumphawi, Nambuma, Tidziwane, Kakuyu and Tasintha in Lilongwe and Ntapo, Nkanda, Nkhunguyembe and Kasekese in Mchinji.

**Table 3: Audited FOS**

<b>District</b>	<b>No. of FOs</b>	<b>General Remarks</b>
Dedza	9	Farmers appreciate the exercise as it showed them where they are in terms of strength or weakness and areas that require fixing
Lilongwe	7	
Mchinji	4	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>Most of the FOs have similar issues that need address</b>

### **Observations from the audit exercise**

- Most FO's have leadership or governance gaps. Leaders of most FO's are not dedicated or have poor leadership skills. This affects growth and sustainability of the organizations.
- Poor record keeping is another major challenge observed in almost all the FOs. This was evidenced by their failure to provide information during the interface, for instance records of last harvest. This is because they either don't have written records or the records went missing or the responsible person is not available.

- Lack of ownership. Most FOs rely on organizations which initiated their formation to continue providing them with financial and material support to run the day to day affairs of the organizations.
- Lack of business plans. Most of the assessed farmer organizations don't have business plans, as such were unable to indicate activities they would like to undertake, how they intend to implement them and what they want to achieve at the end. However it was noted that some associations like Tambala, Duwu and Lobi are sustainable. These associations are registered with the government.

### **3.2 CHALLENGES**

- Train the executive committee in leadership and governance skills
- Training the FOs in association and cooperative formation.
- Training in agribusiness and marketing
- Link them to ministry of trade for registration with the government.

## 4. IITA

### 4.1 ACHIEVEMENTS

#### ***A basic seed storage facility constructed at IITA***

*Indicator:* IITA identified a site within the IITA Malawi office compound to construct the basic seed storage facility. Motti Building Contractor was engaged to construct the facility. The roofing, electrical wiring, plastering, ceiling and window fittings and flooring are all completed. The contractor has had problems in sourcing air conditioners locally. He is trying suppliers in South Africa. The problem of procurement of air conditioners may slow down the progress a little. We hope to have the structure completed by the end of January 2014.

#### ***A breeder seed storage facility constructed at DARS***

*Indicator:* Progress had been made in terms of preparation for construction of the breeder seed storage facility at Chitedze Research Station under DARS. The architectural design had been finalized. The Quantity Surveyor had done the cost estimation to ensure that the structure would be within the budget frame. Preparation of the bill of quantities which should form part of the bidding documents had also been done. However, DARS wanted the structure adjusted so that its carrying capacity would be larger. The planned DAI/INVC funding would not have met the cost of the larger structure, but DARS would like to source extra funds from their other projects to top up the DAI/INVC budget. Actual construction may start in the January-March quarter after these financing logistics are finalised.

#### ***Result 3: Two small-plot soybean threshers procured for IITA and DARS***

*Indicator:* The small plot threshing machines will not be procured, as per the initial project proposal, in order to give way to the construction of the basic seed storage facility of which the budget would not have met the contractor's demand due to the loss of buying power of the Malawian currency.

#### ***Result 4: A training manual produced on seed production and post-harvest handling***

*Indicator:* Production of the manual has been a joint effort of IITA, DARS and SSU. The manual has two parts. The first part deals with the general agronomic aspects of soybean production. The second part underscores the concepts specific to soybean seed production and certification such as classes of seed, seed crop registration requirements, site selection, seed crop isolation distances, parent seed sources, seed crop management and rogueing, post-harvest seed handling, transportation, labeling, sampling for quality tests, storage and marketing. The manual is 21 pages long. It will have been circulated to the concerned parties by mid-January, 2014. See an insert of the publication of the guide to soybean production just below.

#### ***Result 5: At least 20 seed producers trained in soybean seed production and post-harvest handling in the seven project districts***

*Indicator:* The training was conducted in the seven project districts, namely Dedza, Machinga, Mangochi, Lilongwe, Ntcheu, Balaka and Mchinji, as detailed in Table 1 below. A total of 143 participants were trained in soybean seed production. Of these, 123 participants were lead farmers while 20 were frontline staff from implementing partners. Ninety-five of the lead farmers were men while 28 were women. There were 11 male and 9 female frontline staff members trained. In the interest of time, the training sessions were conducted parallel with the preparation of the soybean seed production manual. Handouts of the presentations in the vernacular language, Chichewa, were issued to the participants during

the training. The manual will have been distributed to the participants by mid-January 2014.

**20 metric tonnes of basic seed produced and sold to certified seed producers.**

*Indicator:* CDI Mpherero farm failed to produce 20 tonnes of basic seed as agreed. The farm produced only 6.6 tonnes of the basic seed, which was not certified due to admixtures. It had to be re-handled to meet certification standards. Therefore, it was impossible to immediately distribute the seed to interested certified seed producers for 2013 winter production. After re-handling, 5.4 tonnes of certified basic seed was realised and put up for sale on the Agricultural Commodity Exchange (ACE) platform for 2013/2014 rain-fed production. The seed was sold out well before Christmas. Following this scenario, there has been a loss of about 14.6 metric tonnes of basic seed and one production cycle. As part of a major effort to achieve the basic seed production targets, 650kg of breeder seed was sourced from DARS in pursuit of the revised seed production plan outlined in Table 16a below. Two basic seed producers have been contracted to produce at least 17.1 tonnes of basic seed this season, 2013/2014. One is in Lilongwe and the other is in Mchinji. Two growers are contracted in two locations just to spread the risks and uncertainties of production. The grower in Mchinji located at Sindemisale started planting on December 16, 2013. The grower in Lilongwe located at Khasu started planting on December 26.

**Table 1: Revised Seed Production Plan for 2013/14**

2013 (Irrigation/offseason)	2013/14 (Rainfed/main season)			
	Breeder to Basic		Basic to Certified	
Breeder seed production	Breeder seed	Basic seed	Basic seed	Certified seed
427.5 kg (DARS & IITA)	427.5 kg (DARS)	17.1 tonnes (IITA)	5.4 tonnes	216 tonnes

Assumptions: 50kg seed is required to plant a hectare. A hectare will yield 2 tonnes.

**Table 2: Revised Seed Production Plan for 2014/15**

2014 (Irrigation/offseason)		2014/2015 (Rainfed/main season)	
Basic to Certified		Certified to Grain	
Basic seed	Certified seed	Certified seed	Grain
17.1 tonnes (IITA)	684 tonnes	216+684 = 900 tonnes	36,000 tonnes

Assumptions: 50kg seed is required to plant a hectare. A hectare will yield 2 tonnes.

**Result 7: Initiate analysis of quality traits of available improved soya bean varieties**

*Indicator:* Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) laboratory determined protein, oil, calcium, potassium and ether extract of 7 soybean variety samples including Tikolore and the results were as follows.

**Table 3: Quality traits of Tikolore and other commercial soybean varieties in Malawi**

Sample #	Variety	Quality parameter expressed as a percentage (%)				
		Protein	Oil	Calcium	Potassium	Ether extract
1	Nasoko	32.2	11.9	0.18	7.82	11.0

2	Serenade	38.6	16.1	0.16	18.4	15.7
3	Ocepara 4	44.8	13.7	0.18	5.84	13.9
4	Tikolore	31.5	16.2	0.06	9.12	15.7
5	Makwacha	35.2	12.8	1.28	9.96	12.3
6	UG-5	28.4	13.4	0.18	7.57	13.0
7	Tikolore	46.1	17.8	0.16	5.49	16.9
8	Magoye	34.5	16.4	0.15	5.63	16.7
	<b>Average</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>14.79</b>	<b>0.29</b>	<b>8.73</b>	<b>14.4</b>

In terms of protein content, Tikolore seems to be equal to Ocepara 4 and Serenade, but superior to the rest of the varieties that were tested. Thus Tikolore would be one of the choice varieties for the booming animal feed manufacturing industry.

In terms of oil content, Tikolore surpasses all but equals Magoye, another promiscuous small-seeded variety, and Serenade. Therefore, Tikolore would be among the varieties earmarked for the oil extraction market.

Tikolore seems to be an alternative for any of the tested varieties with reference to calcium content except Makwacha, which has higher calcium content than all the tested varieties by a significantly wide margin.

Although the tested varieties seem to display a high variance in potassium content, all the varieties do not deviate much from the average (8.73%) potassium content except Serenade, which registers high potassium content distinctly isolating itself from the general cluster.

The picture that is evident in the ether extracts of the tested varieties can be superimposed squarely on that in the oil contents.

We are still looking for a laboratory that can do the isoflavones determination.

The protein and oil contents of Makwacha, Nasoko and Tikolore were analysed in Belgium and USA under the TLII project. The averaged results were as presented in Table 18 below. The protein contents do not deviate significantly from those documented in literature<sup>1</sup> and those generated by Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS). However, the MBS-generated oil contents are lower than both those generated by the laboratories in Belgium and the USA and those documented in literature<sup>1</sup>. The variance might be attributed to differences in the oil test or extraction method used. MBS laboratory used the soxhlet extraction procedure. The interesting thing though is that the trends in the results are quite clear and informative.

**Table 4: Protein and oil contents of Makwacha, Nasoko and Tikolore**

Variety	Protein (% average)	Oil (% average)
Makwacha	33.6	19.4
Nasoko	32.0	20.6
Tikolore	35.1	17.5
<b>Average</b>	<b>33.6</b>	<b>19.2</b>

**Table 5: Project action plan, expected results, actual achievements and problems**

<b>Planned project activities</b>	<b>Anticipated results of those activities</b>	<b>Actual achievements to date</b>	<b>Problems with implementation / adjustments to plan</b>
1. Construction of basic seed storage facility at IITA	Basic seed storage facility constructed and in use at IITA	Roofing, electrical wiring, plastering, ceiling and window fittings and flooring are all completed.	The contractor has had problems in sourcing air conditioners locally. He is trying suppliers in South Africa. The problem of procurement of air conditioners may slow down the progress a little.
2. Construction of breeder seed storage facility at Chitedze Research Station under DARS	Basic seed storage facility constructed and in use at Chitedze Research Station under DARS.	The architectural design has been finalized. The Quantity Surveyor has done the cost estimation to ensure that the structure will be within the budget frame. Preparation of the bill of quantities which should form part of the bidding documents has also been done.	DARS wanted the structure adjusted so that its carrying capacity would be larger. The planned DAI/INVC funding would not have met the cost of the larger structure. DARS proposed to source extra funds to top up the budget. Actual construction may start in the January–March quarter after these financing logistics are finalised.
3. Two small-plot threshers procured for IITA and DARS	Two small-plot threshers procured and being used for processing basic and breeder seed at IITA and DARS.	Both threshers will not be procured. The funds that were meant for the threshers have been diverted to top up the budget for the construction of the basic seed storage facility at IITA.	Prices of the threshers in Malawi were too high for the budget. Attempts were made to procure them in Mozambique. However, inability of the basic seed storage facility budget to meet the cost of constructing the facility led donors to suggest foregoing threshers to top up the budget for the basic seed storage facility.
4. A training manual produced on soybean seed production and post-harvest handling.	Using the training manual during the training sessions in the seven project districts and have the manual in circulation among soybean farmers.	The manual is out. Enough copies have been produced to be distributed to all the participants of the training sessions in the seven project districts.	Editing the manual took a lot of time to complete. Training sessions could not have waited until the manual was out. Hand-outs of the PowerPoint presentations were given to trainees. The manual will have been distributed to the trainees by mid-January.
5. At least 20 seed producers trained in each of the 7 project districts	At least 20 lead farmers per district would be equipped and ready to train other farmers in soybean seed	Training has been conducted in all the seven project districts. A total of 123 lead farmers and 20 frontline staff members have been	Other equally important engagements among both trainers and trainees and transport problems sometimes led to postponements. Several reviews in the training program had to be made accordingly.

	production and to be ready to go into the business of seed production.	trained in seed production.	
6. 20 metric tonnes of basic seed sold to certified seed producers	20 tonnes basic seed would have been distributed to certified seed producers for 2013 winter production.	Only 6.6 tonnes uncertified basic seed with admixtures was delivered to IITA by the contracted grower, CDI. After re-handling the seed, 5.4 tonnes certified basic seed were realised and sold to certified seed producers for 2013/2014 rain-fed production.	The contracted basic seed producer was unreliable. Recommended crop management and certification procedures were not followed. As a result, a low yield of uncertified seed was delivered to IITA. IITA had to re-handle the seed for certification. The shortfall of 14.6 tonnes will be made up by pursuing the revised seed production road map as shown under milestone 6. Basic seed producers for 2013/2014 have been engaged to produce at least 17.1 tonnes.
7. Initiate analysis of quality traits of available improved soybean varieties including Tikolore.	Information on nutritional quality traits of soybean varieties available on the market, including Tikolore, would be developed and published.	Seven popular soybean varieties, including Tikolore, have been analysed by the Malawi Bureau of Standards (MBS) laboratory for protein, oil, calcium, potassium and ether extract.	It was not easy to identify a laboratory locally or elsewhere to analyse various quality traits including isoflavones as planned. Therefore, it was resolved that MBS had to be engaged to analyse the doable quality parameters.
8. 500kg Tikolore breeder seed produced jointly by IITA and DARS for project use.	IITA and DARS would jointly produce about 3.5 tonnes of Tikolore breeder seed for production of basic seed in 2013/14 season.	Produced 2 tonnes of Tikolore breeder seed.	Winter production suffers excess heat and the crop could not achieve its genetic yield potential of 2000-2500 kg/ha.

Literature cited

1. Department of Agricultural Research Services, 2013. A guide to soybean production in Malawi. Lilongwe, Malawi.
2. ICRISAT-Malawi Team, 2013. Community seed banks and agronomic practices in seed production: Guidelines on seed production for field officers. Lilongwe, Malawi.
3. Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2013. A guide to agricultural production and natural resources management in Malawi. ACB. Lilongwe, Malawi.

## 5. MALAWI MILK PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION (MMPA)

### 5.1 ACHIEVEMENTS

There has been continuous breakdown of Machite engine which forced farmers to start vending their milk to the nearest trading centre. This became a problem where farmers could not record the value of milk they have sold to the vendors. Milk testing results could also not be collected since farmers were not delivering milk to the MBG where it is analyzed.

The going out of business of MDI has seen farmers from MBGs where MDI was collecting milk being forced to sell their milk to vendors which also prevented MMPA from collecting milk testing results.

### 1.0 LESSONS LEARNED

Farmers are continually depending on milk processors whenever they have problems with their cooling tank engine as such they are ever in debt with the milk processor and are not realizing profits from their milk sales.

### 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is good to train selected farmers in the care and maintenance of the cooling tank engine so that they don't have to hire expensive technicians from town for the simple repairs they can do on their own.

### 3.0 COLLABORATION AND COMPLEMENTARITY

MMPA is working with NASFAM in the areas where the MBGs are within NASFAM/CADECOM catchment area so that dairy farmers receive soya and ground nuts for their animal feeding as well as house hold consumption to increase their nutrition levels.

**Table 1: PLAN/S FOR COMING MONTH**

activity	Time Frame January 2014				Responsible Person
	1 <sup>st</sup> week	2 <sup>nd</sup> week	3 <sup>rd</sup> week	4 <sup>th</sup> week	
Meeting with AI technicians and AVOs to review AI campaign					Ass. P.M & M & E Officer
Meeting with MBG executive to review AI campaign					Ass. P.M and M & E Officer
Supervision and follow up on lead farmer demonstration plots, AI service provision after the campaign period, feed revolving fund					ALL
Meeting with					CREMPA

<b>Magomero MBG on the use of Milk analyzer</b>					<b>Manager, Ass P. M and M &amp; E Officer</b>
<b>Reviewing 2<sup>nd</sup> year work plan</b>					<b>Ass P. M and M &amp; E Officer</b>
<b>Conduct PD on inseminated animals</b>					

## 6. NKHOMA CCAP HOSPITAL

### 6.1 ACHIEVEMENTS

During the quarter of October 2013 to December 2013, Nkhoma Hospital conducted 4 trainings in Care group model, essential nutrition actions (ENA) and scaling up nutrition (SUN), food processing and utilization of soy beans, groundnuts and milk and nutrition screening to the 120 promoters, 3 district coordinators, and 6 nutrition assistants. Printing of manuals and cards was done during the same quarter. Nkhoma also attended two technical meetings to discuss how measles campaign will be implemented in November 2013. FtF continued providing support to partners in terms of capacity building; hence four staff from Nkhoma Hospital attended Leadership & Management Skills Training at MIM. DQA and stock taking was also conducted during the same quarter by USAID. Implementation of activities had to stop in November due to impact evaluation but resumed in December 2013 where by verification of clustered house hold and care groups formation took place. Nkhoma hospital also attended user training for MIS at kalikuti hotel. The training was organized by FtF-INVC to strengthen data quality issues. During the same quarter the project supported measles campaign in both districts.

#### *Task 1.0: Improve key nutrition related behaviors (Essential Nutrition Actions) within households*

##### *Sub-task 1.1: Determine factors that influence nutrition and feeding practices*

###### **Activities**

- In the quarter under review, technical inputs were not provided in desirable nutrition behaviors to be addressed under PDI and formative research because targeted households have not yet been clustered and care groups have not been formed.
- Several activities aimed at promoting exclusive breast feeding were conducted in all the 17 EPA's (6 in Mchinji district and 11 in Lilongwe District). The activities were conducted through measles campaign.

In the month under review, technical inputs were not provided to promote exclusive breastfeeding practices. *Task 2.0: Increase Access to Diverse and Quality Foods among Target Populations*

##### *Sub-task 2.1: Facilitate and Promote Cultivation of Nutritious Crops*

###### **Activities**

- In the quarter under review, technical inputs were not provided to facilitate establishment of home gardens because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started.
- In the quarter under review, technical inputs and capacity building were not provided to facilitate the training of care group volunteers on establishment and management of home gardens/backyard gardens because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started.

## *Sub-task 2.2: Facilitate Food Processing*

### **Activities**

- In the quarter under review, technical inputs and capacity building were not provided to facilitate the training of care group volunteers in food processing and utilization using soy bean, ground nuts and milk, because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started.
- In the quarter under review, technical inputs were not provided to facilitate community food processing demonstrations activities with care group volunteers and their cluster households, because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started.
- In the quarter under review, technical inputs were not provided to facilitate district annual nutrition events because this activity has been planned to start from May 2014.

## Task 3.0: Enhance Consumption of a Nutritious and Sufficiently Diversified Diet

### *Sub-task 3.1: Facilitate promotion of dietary diversification*

#### **Activities**

- In the quarter under review, technical inputs were not provided to facilitate sensitizations campaigns on the importance of providing diversified diets, because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started.
- In the quarter under review, technical inputs and capacity building were not provided to facilitate the training of care group volunteers and care givers on maternal nutrition and complementary feeding modules, because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started.
- In the quarter under review, technical inputs and capacity building were not provided to facilitate the training of care group volunteers on dietary diversity or availability of nutritious foods, because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started.
- In the quarter under review, technical inputs were not provided to facilitate annual nutrition events or open days in communities because this activity has been planned to start from May 2014.
- In the quarter under review, technical inputs and capacity building were not provided to facilitate the training of care givers in food processing and utilization of produce from backyard gardens, soy beans, ground nuts and milk using FtF-INVC developed recipe book, because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started.
- In the quarter under review, technical inputs and capacity building were provided to facilitate the training of promoters, district coordinators and nutrition assistants in food processing and utilization of soy beans, ground nuts and milk.

The training was conducted to equip promoters, district coordinators and nutrition assistants with knowledge in food processing and utilization using soy bean, ground nuts and milk, kitchen and household hygiene, cooking methods, hints on food processing and feeding, value chains being promoted by INVC and their seasonality, constructing and using energy saving stoves, food groups and major nutrients found in it, complementary foods for

breastfed children, food handling during storage and cooking of legume based meals and recommended salt intake.

The promoters were introduced to the objectives of the training in food processing and utilization. Food availability of the value chains promoted by FtF-INVC and their seasonality was also discussed. Taking into consideration that the promoters know the seasonality of the value chains, promoters were asked to prepare dishes for children 6 – 11 months, 12 – 24 months, lactating and pregnant women. Participants emphasized on six food groups available in their respective areas to ensure that they obtain maximum nutrients that can support the growth of their children. On the dangers of aflatoxin, the participants were told how they can store and buy groundnuts to ensure that the levels of aflatoxin in groundnuts are below the toxic levels so that consumption of groundnuts yields good results in curbing stunting. Finally before the cooking demonstrations commenced, the promoters were taught on the kitchen hygiene and were reminded of the cooking methods, hints on cooking and feeding practices.

- In the quarter under review, technical inputs were provided to facilitate cooking demonstrations. This happened during the trainings where participants had time to appreciate how different dishes are prepared.

Task 4.0: Increase Access to and Utilization of Key Nutrition-Related Services among Targeted Populations including Community Surveillance and Referrals

***Sub-task 4.1: Conduct Community-Based Growth Monitoring and Promotion Activities***

- In the quarter under review, technical inputs were provided to facilitate community growth monitoring. The promoters had to undergo nutrition screening training in readiness of their work.

The training was conducted to equip promoters with knowledge in child growth monitoring and emphasize on community referral. This training involved visiting health facilities for the promoters to have hands on experience on child growth monitoring/nutrition screening. The training was conducted together with Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) and Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) training.

- In the quarter under review, technical inputs were not provided to facilitate community growth monitoring learning visit, because the project had to stop implementing activities to pave way for impact evaluation.

***Sub-task 4.2: Promote Vitamin A Supplementation and De-Worming Activities***

- In the quarter under review, technical inputs were provided to support measles campaigns which were conducted in Lilongwe and Mchinji districts from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> November 2013. The interventions of the campaign included measles vaccination, polio vaccination, vitamin A supplementation, De-worming, provision of family planning and other health key messages such as exclusive breast feeding, sanitation and hygiene. Mop-Up campaign also took place for areas that performed poorly for Lilongwe district.

**Table 1: Summary of target and reached children population with the different interventions.**

Intervention	Lilongwe District			Mchinji District		
	Target	Reached	%	Target	Reached	%
Measles Vaccination	354,575	349,719	98.6	82,397	86,016	104
OPV (Polio Vaccination)	401,851	396,175	98.6	93,442	93,857	100
Vitamin – A supplementation	401,851	148773	88.0	87,888	89,040	101
De-worming	321,481	133159	105	76,338	78,604	103

- During the campaign it was difficult to collect disaggregated data as we had not procured items as advised by USAID through DQA findings. These items have been planned to be procured next quarter

***Sub-task 4.3: Support/Strengthen Community System/Strategy for Referral of children Activities***

In the quarter under review, technical inputs were provided to facilitate the establishment of community structures to be linked to health facilities and to improve community referral systems. This happened during nutrition screening training where promoters had time to have hands on experience on how referral system works from different health facilities.

***Sub-task 4.4: Promote Management of Acute Malnutrition Activities***

- In the quarter under review, technical inputs were not provided to facilitate community complementary feeding and learning sessions and community screening of children and link malnourished children to health facilities for management, because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started.

***Sub-task 4.5: Promote Hygiene and Sanitation Activities***

- In the quarter under review, technical inputs and capacity building were not provided to facilitate the training of care group volunteers in sanitation and hygiene and to deliver sanitation and hygiene modules with emphasis on IYCF hygiene, because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started.
- In the quarter under review, technical inputs and capacity building were provided to facilitate the training of care group volunteers in sanitation and hygiene and to deliver sanitation and hygiene modules with emphasis on IYCF hygiene. This took place through ENA and SUN training.

The aim was to empower promoters with knowledge and skills on the basic principles of nutrition, sanitation, hygiene and other health practices, food processing and utilization, appropriate infant and young child feeding practices and the importance of nutrition counseling.

In turn, the promoters were expected to impart the same knowledge and skills to their respective care groups. And the care group volunteers will further impart the knowledge and skills to the care givers.

**Task 5.0: Enhance Enabling Environment for Execution of Nutrition Activities**

*Sub-task 5.1: Conduct meetings with key stakeholders*

**Activities**

- In the quarter under review, technical were not provided to facilitate district level project briefing meetings, to conduct community mobilization campaigns, to conduct implementation meetings and to conduct stakeholders meetings, because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started. Technical inputs were also not provided for quarterly meetings between promoters and village health workers because VHW have not been oriented.

*Sub-task 5.2: Conduct orientation in SUN, ENA and Food processing for government extension workers*

**Activities**

- In the quarter under review, technical were not provided to facilitate the orientation of H.S.As and AEDO in ENA and SUN, because the project had to stop implementing activities to pave way for impact evaluation and this will be done next quarter.

*Sub-task 5.3: Train promoters, care group volunteers and caregivers in child health and nutrition*

**Activity**

- In the quarter under review, technical inputs and capacity building were provided to facilitate the training of promoters in health and nutrition. This happened during ENA and SUN training as well and nutrition screening training.

***Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) and Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)***

To empower promoters with knowledge and skills on the basic principles of nutrition, sanitation, hygiene and other health practices, food processing and utilization, appropriate infant and young child feeding practices and the importance of nutrition counseling.

In turn, the promoters were expected to impart the same knowledge and skills to their respective care groups. And the care group volunteers will further impart the knowledge and skills to the care givers.

***Nutrition Screening***

The training was conducted to equip promoters with knowledge in child growth monitoring and emphasize on community referral. This training involved visiting health facilities for the promoters to have hands on experience on child growth monitoring/nutrition screening. The training was conducted together with Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) and Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) training.

- Technical inputs and capacity building were also not provided to care group volunteers and care givers because verification of clustered households and care groups formation has just started

### *Sub-Task 5.4: Develop Scope of Work for Seeking Technical Assistance from INVC*

#### **Activity**

- In the quarter under review, technical assistance had not yet been requested as the project has not yet identified areas that need technical inputs from INVC.

#### **6.2 CHALLENGES**

- Rain is making it difficult to complete targeted promoters in time in the verification exercise.
- Daily aggregation of data from all sites proved to be failure. This was so because the vaccinators were not able to give data to supervisors then to the districts. This ended up having daily incomplete data.
- Working on weekends proved to be a problem as clients were reluctant to bring their children to vaccination sites.
- With the stopping of activities most planned activities had to be shifted to other months and this has brought challenges as people are busy in their gardens
- The trainings met several challenges such as the recipe book which was used during the trainings was available two days before the trainings. This provided limited time for the facilitators to properly prepare the lessons.
- The materials and ingredients for cooking demonstrations were procured on late during the trainings such that practical's which were intended to run for three days were done in two days only hence other recipes were not covered practically well.
- There were no training manuals and the counseling cards to cater for participants each and every person at the time of the training. That brought in some handicaps during delivery.
- The time frame for the training was short therefore the materials had to be reduced to cover the given time. Stationery supplies were also very limited.
- Partner planning meetings are not conducted and sharing of information on project progress in the implementation areas is not happening.

#### **LESSONS LEARNED**

- Frequent supervision of promoters improves program delivery in the communities
- Cooking demonstrations require a lot of time since there is a lot to be demonstrated to take place. Participatory methods assist for participants to understand the content material fully. There is need to prepare in time for the trainings as it helps in smooth running of the trainings.
- There is need to have more collaboration with MoH and MoA to facilitate the verification of data collection for both community and CHD's. The project has also learnt that sharing of resources strengthens collaboration i.e. during CHD's.
- Multi-sectoral collaboration if utilized properly it really brings success.
- If rapid response teams are well oriented they respond to numerous calls from sites on time to re-supply other resources needed during campaigns.
- During campaign period supervisors need to be holding meetings as this outlines problems facing the campaign.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Supervision to be done continuously
- Supervisors at district level should arrange a coordination meeting with all sector and plan a supervision schedule to ensure that the promoters are assisted.
- There is need for extension workers (field workers) to also plan and monitor implementation together so that they are able to assist the promoters
- Partners to help in data management to improve data quality
- After the challenges were reviewed, the project has decided to prepare all training materials two weeks before trainings take place.
- When stopping activities, communication should be sent in advance.
- Materials required for cooking demonstrations should be brought always in time.
- The DHO, DADO, DC should be involved from the rollout of the project, monitoring, supervision and reviews with implementing partners to ensure a successful and sustainable project. The Implementing partners should also plan and review implementation together with the coordinators at district level so that there is an integrated implementation of activities.
- There is need to provide enough stationeries and M&E tools for the project.
- Implementation planning meetings need to be conducted in order to share resources and complement each-other. These meetings will help on how the project is fairing up and what can be done to improve the project.

## **SIGNIFICANT CHANGE STORY**

The trainings were successfully conducted. This was depicted from the Pre and Post test assessment results that were administered before and at the end of the trainings. The tests showed that the promoters lacked some information and after they had undergone the trainings the results on post training were very good. During pre-test 51 promoters (42.5%) got below fifty percent and 69 (57.5%) got above fifty percent. After post test all 120 promoters got above 80% and this demonstrated adequate acquisition of knowledge. This gives the impression that tangible results would be achieved through this team provided all necessary equipment's are made available to them on time as well as technical support is provided to them.

## **COLLABORATION AND COMPLEMENTARITY**

- During the quarter under review Nkhoma involved MoA, and MoH staff to help in training promoters, Nkhoma staff and partners. Through this collaboration we have learnt a lot including involvement of GoM stakeholder (M and E, Community workers e.t.c) at every stage of implementation. Sharing of resources improve collaboration as noticed and learnt during CHD's. This will continue as it will ensure sustainability of the project.
- It was learnt that multi-sectoral collaboration if utilized properly it really brings success. This has been evidenced in the way the campaign was organized, by informing the district partners in time, and involving them at every stage, starting from planning level to implementation level. This enabled all parties to pull and bring resources together. This made the activity to be a success. The partners were able to provide the vehicles for the activity.

## 7. PAKACHERE INSTITUTE OF HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

Pakachere IHDC is providing technical support on social and behaviour change communication in the Feed the Future Integrating Nutrition in Value Chains Project to Nkhoma Hospital and other implementing partners in order for them to effectively deliver interventions that will promote nutrition seeking behaviors towards value chains and create demand for adoption of new agricultural technologies. In order to achieve the SBCC project objectives, Pakachere will;

- Develop and produce SBCC packages including mass media and print products to support dissemination of SBCC messages.
- Conduct and build the capacity of community based drama group in theatre for development to enable them effectively conduct performances in communities.
- Conduct positive deviance inquiries and market surveys to find out common behaviors and establish how the target audiences are receiving messages and later advice implementing partners on approaches to use.

This report states the activities implemented by Pakachere in year two and quarter of October to December.

### 7.1 ACHIEVEMENTS

**Outcome 1.0:** Improved implementation of SBCC interventions by NASFAM, FUM, Nkhoma Hospital

**Output 1.1:** NASFAM, FUM, Nkhoma Hospital project coordinators demonstrate an understanding of key SBCC components and interventions

#### ACTIVITIES

- Not done in this quarter.

**Outcome 2.0:** Strengthen capacity of adoption of desired nutrition related behaviors by the target groups

**Output 2.1:** Capacity of health promoters, nutrition assistants and other community outreach officers strengthened

#### ACTIVITIES

- Not done in this quarter.

**Outcome 3.0** Building the capacity of community based drama groups in TFD to enable them effectively conduct performances in communities

**Output 3.1** Develop skills and abilities among community-based drama groups on TFD as well as orienting them on INVC project objectives and expected outcomes

#### ACTIVITIES

- The Pakachere Travelling theatre again performed in 2 EPAs on stunting and exclusive breast feeding. The performances were all participatory were the communities were involved in the plays to answer questions as well as ask questions and give outcomes after the problem was introduced to them. The following are reports on the performances;
- October performances began on the 7<sup>th</sup> in Mpingu EPA, Nzindo village. The total audience on this day was 397 with 301 being females and 96 being males.

- In Chiliza village, Mpingu EPA, the performance took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October where the total audience was 117 with 69 being females and 48 being males.
- The next performance in Mpingu EPA was in Mkombe village where 388 people attended. 217 of the total audience were females and 171 were males.
- On the 14<sup>th</sup> of October, the Pakachere Travelling Theatre performed in Ukwe EPA, Khudzumba village on the topics of exclusive breastfeeding and stunting. The total audience was approximately 567 with 371 being females and 196 being males.
- The next performance on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October was in Ukwe EPA, Chinyama village. The audience at Chinyama was very amazing with approximately 1337 people with 735 females and 602 males.
- In Namkumba village, Ukwe EPA the performance was on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October. Audience participation was good with total audience of 479 people, 267 being females and 212 males.
- On the 17<sup>th</sup> of October, the group performed in Kasakula village in Ukwe EPA. The total attendance was approximately 318 where 197 were females and 121 were males.
- In Katema village, Ukwe EPA, the performance was on 18<sup>th</sup> October and the total audience was 663. Of the 663 people that were present, 355 were females and 308 were males.

**Table 1: Pakachere travelling theatre performances**

DISTRICT	EPA	GROUP VILLAGE HEADMAN	VILLAGE PERFORMED	TOTAL ATTENDED	FEMALES	MALES
LILONGWE	MPINGU (7/10/13)	NZINDO – 0995 371 489	NZINDO	397	301	96
	MPINGU (8/10/13)	CHILIZA – 0995 316 889)	CHILIZA	117	69	48
	MPINGU (9/10/13)	MKOMBE	MKOMBE	388	217	171
	UKWE (14/10/13)	KHUDZUMBA – 0991 835 752	KHUDZUMBA	567	371	196
	UKWE (15/10/13)	CHINYAMA – 0999 735 619	CHINYAMA	1337	735	602
	UKWE (16/10/13)	NAMKUMBA	NAMKUMBA	479	267	212
	UKWE (17/10/13)	KHUDZUMBA – 0991 835 752	KASAKULA	318	197	121
	UKWE (18/10/13)	KATEMA	KATEMA	663	355	308

- Community based drama groups were asked to perform at least 5 plays in the month of October. Reports are yet to be collected on the performances done so far.
- Monitoring and mentoring of community based drama groups were done by the Pakachere travelling theatre in Mpingu and Ukwe EPAs during their performance in the particular EPAs. The groups are doing fine and applying all that the learnt from the training and their communities keep asking when next they will perform.

**Outcome 4.0** Improved community understanding of nutrition requirements and effects of under nutrition to the unborn baby during pregnancy and after birth

**Output 4.1** Improved community understanding of nutrition requirements of under nutrition to the unborn baby during pregnancy and after birth

## ACTIVITIES

- Two jingles on Exclusive Breastfeeding that were produced started airing on all the three radio stations thus Zodiak, MBC Radio 1 and Mudziwathu Community Radio station. On MBC Radio 1, the jingles have been airing 3 times a day from the 18<sup>th</sup> of December to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. On Zodiak, the jingles have been airing 6 times a day from the 16<sup>th</sup> of December to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. On Mudziwathu Radio Station, the Jingles have been airing 6 times a day from the 16<sup>th</sup> of December to the 31<sup>st</sup> of December. Thus on MBC Radio 1, the jingles have been aired 42 times; on Zodiak, they have been aired 96 times; and on Mudziwathu Radio Station the jingles have been aired 96 times
- One jingle on legume production for NASFAM has been produced but has not been aired yet.

## 7.2 CHALLENGES

- Postponement of drama performances following a directive from FtF-INVC as it has to randomly select intervention and control areas for impending impact evaluation.
- Activity implementation has been affected by the delay in establishing Care Groups. It is important that Nkhoma expedite the process so that we can start working in areas where care groups are operational.
- The baseline has also affected our implementation. Performances have been put on hold pending randomization of communication.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Females of reproductive ages thus including pregnant women and lactating mothers are the ones greatly patronizing the TFD sessions and this shows our messages are getting to our targeted audience. These females are also active in answering questions and taking part in the performances and this is encouraging. There is also belief that these messages will get to other women in the community that failed to attend because women in the communities do share what they have heard.

## RECOMMENDATION(S)

Continue conducting theatre group performances in all 17 EPA and mobilize men also to participate in the sessions so that they learn more as they are key decision makers at household level on related issues related to consumption of nutritious foods (whether to grow crops with high nutritive value or buying).

## SIGNIFICANT CHANGE STORY

In most of the villages where TFD sessions were conducted, the Pakachere Travelling theatre was asked to visit them again with more performances since from the performances people would say they had learnt something they never knew on issues of stunting and exclusive breastfeeding but they were also entertained. People would answer questions during the participatory performance showing understanding of issues being presented.

## COLLABORATION AND COMPLEMENTARITY

**OCTOBER:** There was one week Care Group Model training by Nkhoma Hospital from 6<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. Pakachere, FUM and NASFAM were present at the training as partners including Nkhoma SUN project health promoters.

**NOVEMBER:** On the 6<sup>th</sup> of November there was a partners meeting at INVC offices in Lilongwe where Pakachere, Nkhoma Hospital and FtF-INVC were present. The meeting was to discuss grants and other financial issues especially on financial reporting. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of the same month, there was a meeting in Lilongwe at Crossroads hotel where all Feed the Future partners were present. The meeting addressed issues of Data Quality Assessment (DQA) where all partners are to follow up on actions identified in their DQA action plans. Partners should also follow progress of the G8 New Alliance.

**DECEMBER:** On the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> December there was training for INVC Management Information System in Lilongwe at Kalikuti Hotel. This meeting was facilitated by FtF-INVC Monitoring and Evaluation team and Isaac Nyirongo a consultant from Consult –ICT. Partners present at this training were Pakachere, Nkhoma Hospital, NASFAM, CADECOM, MMPA and FUM.

## 8. CIVIL SOCIETY AGRICULTURAL NETWORK (CISANET)

CISANET with financial support from the Integrating Nutrition in Value Chain (FtF-INVC) is implementing a project called **Malawi Value Chain Promotion Initiative**. The project's aim is to promote the development of the agricultural value chains by making available CISANET services and resources to potential members such as dairy, groundnut and soya. This will be from the initial stages while addressing the disincentives that come because of capacity as well as unfriendly structural and policy issues along the value chains. The specific objectives of the project are to:

- a. To serve as “incubation unit” to interested industries/sectors to help facilitate their interest in formation/development of soya and dairy value chains platforms or trade associations such as the SOYAMA and DIDP respectively;
- b. To strengthen the capacity of CISANET and value chain trade associations/organization to better serve their membership base;
- c. To enhance the organizational skills of farmers' organizations and related institutions in association development, governance and advocacy;
- d. To facilitate the development of sustainability strategies for CISANET itself while also focusing on the improvement of its policy research, analysis and advocacy skills in order to better represent the non-state actors in Malawi.

**The major issues/Challenges noted during the quarter in the project so far are as follows:**

- There is need to strengthen commodity value chains in legumes as each value chain has unique needs.
- Lack of organization along commodity value chains in legumes like Soya is greatly contributing to the value chain not meeting its full potential.

## 8.1 ACHIEVEMENTS

Planned Activities For this Period	Anticipated Results of Those Activities	Actual Achievements to Date	Problems with Implementation/ Adjustments to Plan
1) Facilitate the establishment of Secretariat for coordination purposes during incubation phases	Secretariat established to coordinate the incubation of the VCCU	The secretariat for coordination purposes during incubation phases has been facilitated by recruiting a program manager,	
2) Facilitate the organization development of the established value chains under incubation process	Value chains organized for ease of engagement	The project helped in strengthening the DIDP, which was already established. We also made consultations with stakeholders of Soya and groundnuts value chains on the need of the establishment of associations. We are planning to finalize the development of the organization during the first quarter.	The finalization of the activity was delayed due to the delay in funding. However, so far some steps have been taken which will be accomplished in this first quarter.
3) Support the administrative roles of the VCCUs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VCCU Coordinator becomes independent in originating communications from VCCUs secretariat despite being hosted by CISANET</li> <li>• The general public begin addressing VCCUs as an independent secretariat i.e SOYAMA, DIDP and Groundnuts Platform</li> </ul>	<p>The administration role of the VCCU has been supported by recruiting the program manager and will be supported further by procuring equipment.</p> <p>The VCCU are not yet independent since they have not been legally registered.</p>	The finalization of the activity was delayed due to the delay in funding. However, so far some steps have been taken which will be accomplished in this first quarter.
4) Facilitate the legal registration process of value chain organizations with laws of Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOYAMA, DIDP and Groundnuts Platform registered with</li> </ul>	The legal registration of the value chains organization was not facilitated. However, this will be done in the first and second	The finalization of the activity was delayed due to the delay in funding.

	<p>registrars or trustees or companies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOYAMA, DIDP and Groundnuts Platforms become independent bodies and legitimately recognized by the laws of Malawi</li> </ul>	quarters.	However, so far some steps have been taken which will be accomplished in this first quarter.
5) Conduct stakeholder collaboration meetings on soya and groundnuts value chains- engagement meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key stakeholders in soya and groundnuts value chains brainstorm on the need for formal engagements/ collaboration</li> <li>• Improved collaboration amongst key stakeholders in soya and groundnuts value chains</li> </ul>	Short meetings were done with grain traders association to brainstorm on who are the major actors in the groundnuts value chain. CISANET will also use the value chain studies in groundnut done by INVC and RLEEP to strengthen the groundnuts value chain and continue to identify critical players in the chain	The finalization of the activity was delayed due to the delay in funding. However, so far some steps have been taken which will be accomplished in this first quarter.
6) Mapping of key stakeholders in the selected value chains especially Soy bean and Groundnuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key stakeholders mapped for easy engagement</li> </ul> <p>CISANET locates key stakeholders in soya and groundnuts value chains</p>	The stakeholders in both value chains have been mapped	

**Major lessons learned over the implementation period & how it has been used**

Not much lessons have been learnt, as the project was a bit slow in the quarter due to a delayed funding. However, the project provides a platform for dialogue among the stakeholders in the concerned value chains to discuss structural and policy issues affecting the sector. We believe the project will go a long way to strengthen these chains with an improved policy environment along the chain.

## 9. CADECOM - DEDZA

Summary of key activities accomplished in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter FY 2013-14 under review at Dedza CADECOM groundnut project.

### 1.1 ACHIEVEMENTS

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Beneficiary Registration

The registration of new beneficiaries continued in the quarter being reviewed. The database indicated 10,669 new beneficiaries that had been registered of which was dominated by 6,130 males and 4,539 females which was the opposite in the first year. Cumulative total for two years registration is 25,185 of which 11,971 are males and 13,218 females dominating. The total target for the 3 years is 30,000 beneficiaries which will be achieved easily. Registration activities continued but with slacken pace because of current key field activities.

**Table 53:** New beneficiary registration aggregated by gender and EPA

No.	Name of EPA	Number Registered	Gender	
			Male	Female
1	Golomoti	2,476	1,464	1,012
2	Ntakataka	2,496	1,410	1,076
3	Bembeke	1,163	691	482
4	Kanyama	2,469	1,522	947
5	Chafumbwa	2,065	1,043	1,022
Year 2	<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>10,669</b>	<b>6,130</b>	<b>4,539</b>
Year 1	Sub Total	14,520	5,841	8,679
	<b>Cumulative Totals</b>	<b>25,189</b>	<b>11,971</b>	<b>13,218</b>

**Table 54:** Key activities this quarter

Indicator target	Target by 31 - 12-13	Achieved	Comments
Households	30,000	25,189	84 per cent achieved
EPAs achieved	5	5	All associations involved
Club formation and registration	1200	773	Under continuation
GACs/Clusters	100	71	Under continuation
Associations formed	5	5	Two are newly formed, not registered yet
Agro-dealers identified and profiled	20	20	Identification, profiling and prepared for training
Extension staff training in Agronomic practices	55	55	26 per cent were women
Lead farmers trained good agronomic practices	400	200	39 per cent were women
Additional lead farmers identified	200	200	Yet to be trained in the next quarter on agronomic practices
Agronomic practices training of	400	200	Farmers sampled from each

lead farmers			EPA
CG 7 Groundnuts Certified seed distributed	150 MT	144 MT	Limited by increase in procurement cost
Bicycles issued to Lead Farmers	400	250	63 % issued – shortfall influenced by increase in the cost
Launching of seed and bicycle distribution on 5 <sup>th</sup> December 2013	-	Over 1000	Attended by TAs, Rep of DC, , Rep of DADO, GVH, Farmers etc.
Storage of produce under WRS at Dedza CADECOM	Capacity 300MT	205 MT	20 farmers from 4 associations attended the launching ceremony
Consultative meetings Farmer Associations and Government staff	15	15	Meetings were conducted jointly with FtF-INVC Staff

*Figures below show distribution of CG 7 certified groundnuts seed and bicycles to beneficiaries at Dedza CADECOM respectively during the launch on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013.*



**L:** Dedza CADECOM Secretary hands over the seed to a farmer.

**R:** T/A Kamenyagwaza presents a bicycle to a Female Lead Farmer.

## 9.2 CHALLENGES

- Government staff cross transfers that removed staff trained by FTF-INVC and replaced by staff that had not received FTF-INVC training
- Shortage of staff at some EPAs where each AEDOs was responsible for 2-3 sections instead of ideally 1section
- Increased demand on the services of government extension staff that reduced attention to FTF-INVC activities. This can be curbed by increasing the role of associations in production activities and hence capacity building for associations must be enhanced.
- Irregular and patchy rainfall onset in Dedza delayed planting and caused poor germination of seeds that were planted.
- Unavailability of quality seeds and inefficient seed supplier systems delayed seed distribution to some farmers.