

Format for Quarterly and Final Completion Reports for COMPETE Grants

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P F Tracking Number:	OAF-STA-011-018
Title of Activity:	Preparing 50,000 Smallholder Farmers in Kenya and Rwanda to Access Regional Staple Foods Markets
Start Date of Reporting Period:	1 January 2012
End Date of Report:	31 March 2012
Date Report Submitted:	21 May 2012

Narrative reports must contain, as a minimum, the following:

- **A comparison of actual accomplishments with the goals and objectives established for the period. Particular achievements and obstacles to the success of the project should be reported in specific terms.**

In this quarter, One Acre Fund's (IAF) objective was to link 7,000 smallholder farmers to regional traders for beans and maize in Kenya and Rwanda. 15,000 farmers in Kenya were prepared to link to traders and will do so if they choose in the upcoming months. In Rwanda, over 26,000 farmers were trained on proper storage practices. Based on IAF M&E these farmers sold 55% of their maize harvest at market.

Our objective for Kenya of 3,000 farmers linked to traders is on course but will happen under a later than expected timeframe because of market price changes. Based on our M&E information, in Rwanda we estimate that 4,000 farmers will be linked to traders.

Rwanda: Post Harvest Storage Training (January 2012)

IAF field staff in Rwanda trained smallholder farmers in groups of 40-50 farmers in the fields where they live and work. Field Officers trained 26,614 farmers on the importance and method of storing maize and beans by correct removal of seeds, drying, and use of insecticides.

Of all farmers trained, 90% of farmers correctly understood the components of the stocking training and 93% intend to change their stocking practices as a result. Not only does this ensure maize and beans quality standards are maintained, but it enables farmers to store more for longer.

Rwanda: Maize Sheller and Market Linkages Trial (March 2012)

The objective of this trial was to use hand-held maize shellers to increase farmers' profits. The project was conducted in Karongi district with 1,000 participants. Initial goals of the trial were:

- Test the demand and usefulness of hand-held maize shellers
- Increase farmer profit by allowing them to store more maize de-grained
- Better understand maize markets and related farmer behaviour
- Better understand how to help farmers access staple crop markets in general

10 cells in Karongi district in which maize is an important crop were selected based on suggestions from field staff, field visits, M&E data, and a recent survey of markets and mills. In order to best determine the impact of shelling maize, we will have two general types of site: (1) easy access to maize markets and small mills; (2) limited access to maize markets and small mills.

One Field Assistant was assigned to every two cells to work with Field Officers and Field Managers to recruit trial participants from existing One Acre Fund groups. Participants purchased the hand-held maize shellers for 1,500 RwF (\$2.50).

The data generated by this trial will be analysed to determine the impact hand-held maize de-grainers have on storage practices and market access. IAF expects that maize de-grainers allow farmers to store more grain and more easily transport these larger amounts to markets. With more storage, farmers will also have more maize available to sell when market prices are more favourable. Depending on the outcome and popularity of the de-grainers, IAF may offer them as a product program-wide for the 2013A season.

Kenya: Market Access Trainings (February – March 2012)

In February and March IAF trained staff and farmers in Webuye and Bungoma South districts on maize sales and market access. With data from September supporting our belief that IAF farmers were in a good position to sell more maize if they wanted to, the trainings for farmers emphasised three best practices:

- Store quality maize longer
- Know, compare and share maize prices
- Bargain, transport and sell collectively

In total 90 field staff and 15,359 farmers were trained. Field staff received training on best sales practices and a weekly database of local maize buyers that included if they were buying and at what price. They used these prices to advise farmers on when to sell and direct farmers towards buyers who would give them the best price.

Each week, field staff will use an interest sheet to collect information on which farmers are interested in selling, which they will then use to connect farmers to buyers. At the end of the week, all sales will be recorded on a maize sale sheet, which will be entered into a database. This

will give us weekly numbers on how many farmers are selling (selling in groups), the amount of maize they're selling, and the price at which they're selling.

Based on maize data from September 2011 (see table below), we can see that 1AF farmers (test group) are more food secure compared to non-1AF farmers (control group), as they are storing and selling more maize in absolute terms, and consuming less maize as a proportion of their total harvest. Our research shows that overall non-1AF farmers were net purchasers of maize.

With 1AF farmers receiving storage materials and training as part of our service model, we were therefore keen to develop a market facilitation component that would enable farmers to sell more of their maize, and transact more fairly with maize buyers to ensure they get a better price.

	90kg Bags				
	Average Total Harvest	Average Stored	Average Sold	Average Eaten	Other
(Test Group) 1AF farmers (280)	10.57	6.05	2.17	1.53	0.82
Percentage		57%	21%	14%	8%
(Control Group) Non-1AF farmers (216)	5.64	3.38	1.51	1.36	-0.61
Percentage		60%	27%	24%	-11%

- **An evaluation or analysis of the degree to which the grant activities are achieving the project objectives. Reasons why established goals were not met if appropriate.**

In this quarter, 1AF focussed on linking farmers to markets. 41,973 farmers in Kenya and Rwanda received trainings that place them in a stronger position to be able to sell when market conditions are favourable. Whilst this does not relate directly to our initial plan to link 7,000 smallholder farmers to regional traders, the accomplishments of our trainings in Kenya and Rwanda are significant for our farmers.

Kenya

In Kenya farmers received training on both post harvest storage and market access. It is very likely that in the next few months at least 3,000 farmers will be linked to traders, but due to market price fluctuations it is difficult to know exactly when this will be.

Importantly, 1AF farmers are now more aware of the importance of timing in selling maize. Maintaining quality through proper maize storage has also been widely adopted. With the vast majority of 1AF farmers experiencing record harvests, most are understandably keen to store maize for home consumption for as long as possible, and this has prevented the establishment of directed linkages between farmers and regional traders.

Further, 1AF was forced to modify its trainings on market access in Kenya because of recent downward trends in maize prices. This led us to introduce an interest sheet in place of a maize sale contract. Although we were able to connect farmers to buyers in some districts, many other

sales have struggled to go through as farmers have opted to store their maize until prices improve. We also learnt that many buyers are not purchasing on a consistent basis, and this has forced 1AF to mitigate expectations from farmers about buyers/sales. Ultimately, decisions on whether or not to sell maize remain with farmers, and 1AF would never force farmers to sell.

1AF has been observing farmer post-harvest behaviour for the last 12 months with a view to designing new interventions that might better facilitate market access in future. Sudden and unpredictable price fluctuations at local and regional levels remain a barrier to planning for considerable changes to our work in this area, however, and 1AF has chosen to approach this challenge by properly equipping farmers to harvest more maize and store it for longer.

We are in discussions with the Ministry of Agriculture in Kenya on how best to engage with the NAFIS Commodity and Inputs Exchange being organised by the Agricultural Sector Development Support Programme. This online platform could offer 1AF farmer groups useful market access for maize at county and national levels.

Rwanda

In Rwanda we did not formally link farmers to traders. We conducted a trial to understand the potential benefits of maize shellers, with a view to engaging more productively in the maize sector. Connecting farmers to markets is a challenging endeavor in Rwanda due to a lack of value chain infrastructure. For this reason, we plan to investigate additional market facilitation options in the second 2012 harvest. This will involve market facilitation trials in June/July, including:

- Market facilitation trial organising farmers as willing sellers and buyers traders
- Small loans to maize mills to facilitate purchasing more maize
- Rent warehouse space to create a market for farmers to store and sell

- **Other pertinent information including, when appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs.**

One Acre Fund has not had any cost overruns.

- **A minimum of five copies of any publication funded under the grant, including books, brochures, newsletters, bulletins, video cassettes; and single copies of all other products such as newspaper clippings, project announcements, and audited financial statements.**

One Acre Fund has not produced any publications funded by the grant.