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**CNFA**  
Cultivating New Frontiers  
in Agriculture

# AGRO-INPUTS PROJECT IN BANGLADESH

Quarterly Progress Report  
Year 3: January 1, 2015 – March 31, 2015



Prepared for the United States Agency for International Development under USAID Cooperative Agreement No. AID-388-A-12-00005, Agro-Inputs Project in Bangladesh, implemented by CNFA.

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## Contents

<b>Acronyms .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Project Background .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Key Project Details .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Project Objective and Interventions .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Intervention 1: Establish Agro-Input Retailers' Network.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Summary of Intervention 1 Key Activities for Next Quarter .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Intervention 2: Market Information Systems .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Summary of Intervention 2 Key Activities for Next Quarter .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Intervention 3: Setting Quality Control Standards for Inputs and Lessening Regulatory Constraints.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Summary of Intervention 3 Key Activities for Next Quarter .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Intervention 4: Strengthening Local Organizations .....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Summary of Intervention 4 Key Activities for Next Quarter .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Project Management and Cross-Cutting Themes .....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Key Issues of Interest.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Research &amp; Technology .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Financial and Expenditure Summary (Y3 Q2) .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Annex 1: Feed-the-Future Indicators.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Annex 2: Custom and Cross-Cutting Indicators .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Annex 3: Lower-level Output Indicators - Interventions 1 through 4.....</b>	<b>33</b>

## Acronyms

AESA	Agricultural Extension Support Activity Project
AIN	Aquaculture for Incomes and Nutrition Project
AIP	USAID Agro-Inputs Project in Bangladesh
AIRN	Agro-Inputs Retailers Network
AIS	Agricultural Information Service of the DAE
AVAS	Association of Voluntary Actions for Society
BCPA	Bangladesh Crop Protection Association
BEC	Business Ethics Committee of AIRN
BFA	Bangladesh Fertilizer Association
BMT	Business Management Training
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BSA	Bangladesh Seed Association
CA	Cooperative Agreement
CE	Continuing Education
COP	Chief of Party
CPP	Crop Protection Product
CREL	Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods Project
DAE	Department of Agricultural Extension
DCA	Development Credit Authority
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESRI	Environmental Systems Research Institute
FFD	Farmer Field Days
FTF	Feed the Future
FO	Field Officer
GIS	Geographic Information System
GLC	Gender Lens Committee
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
ISC	Industry Skills Committee of AIRN
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ISTA	International Seed Testing Association
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFI	Micro Finance Institution
MIS	Market Information System
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPOB	Monthly Price Outlook Bulletin
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
OCD	Organizational Capacity Development
PERSUAP	Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan
PNGO	Partner NGO
PSE	Personal Safety Equipment
SHC	Seed Health Committee
SMS	Short Message Services
SSA	Spatial Systems Associates
TEC	Technical Evaluation Committee
TOT	Training of Trainers
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

## Project Background

### Key Project Details

<b>Title:</b>	Agro-Inputs Project (AIP) in Bangladesh
<b>Start Date:</b>	September 17, 2012
<b>Project Duration:</b>	Five Years
<b>Type of Award:</b>	Cooperative Agreement No. AID-388-A-12-00005
<b>Award Amount:</b>	\$14,028,602
<b>Main Implementer:</b>	CNFA
<b>Sub Implementers:</b>	Spatial Systems Associates Capacity Building Service Group The Nielsen Company (Bangladesh) Ltd. GMark Ashroy Foundation <i>Banchte Shekha</i> Association of Voluntary Actions for Society (AVAS)

### Project Objective and Interventions

The objective of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Agro-Inputs Project in Bangladesh (AIP) is to improve the knowledge and supply of quality agricultural inputs through a network of credible input retailers. A central effort is the creation of a sustainable Agro-Input Retailers Network (AIRN). AIP's four interventions are:

- 1) Establishment of an Agro-Input Retailers Network;
- 2) Development of Market Information Systems;
- 3) Setting Quality Control Standards for Inputs and Lessening Regulatory Constraints;
- 4) Strengthening Local Organizations.

The creation of AIRN is designed to build the technical and business capacity of 3,000 licensed retailers in 20 Feed the Future (FTF) districts in order to supply quality agricultural inputs to over one million farmers. Among the 3,000 agri-retail shops, 300 will be women-owned businesses. All retailers will be supported to make informed business decisions for efficient, ethical, and technically-sound operations.

AIP distributes an Ag-Inputs Monthly Price Outlook Bulletin (MPOB) for seeds, fertilizers and plant protection products. The bulletin is underpinned by geographic information system (GIS) to depict a visual representation of input distribution networks, transportation infrastructure, client concentration, cropping patterns, product and price trends, and other important business information

Improving quality control standards and lessening regulatory constraints involves working with industry associations and the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) to improve industry standards for major crops. In addition, AIP is working with these input associations to identify constraints in the implementation of existing regulations, particularly in seed, and assert their collective voice.

Finally, AIP is strengthening local organizations through capacity building to organizations such as industry associations, local NGOs, and AIRN. Capacity development, following an organizational capacity assessment (OCA), will be tailored to each organization in order to conform with realistically achievable outputs for the participating organizations.

## Executive Summary

### Intervention 1: Establishment of an Agro-Input Retailers Network

AIRN's membership drives (and other activities) were hampered by political disturbances this quarter. However, 339 new members joined AIRN from 59 *upazillas* in 16 districts for a total of 1,842 members. Of this total, 830 AIRN members have attained accredited status; the remaining will be awarded accredited status after completing the required basic trainings.

Towards formation of AIRN's governing body, members of the (interim) Advisory Board met in March 2015 to discuss and elicit feedback on the existing AIRN objectives, membership, registration status and goal of becoming a registered training organization. The Board is also working on a draft AIRN business plan to be completed in Y3Q3. The GoB registration of AIRN commenced in Y2Q4 and is anticipated to be completed in Y3Q3.

In order to promote and support female-owned and operated agro-inputs' retailerships, AIP aims to award 300 matching grants over the life of project. During this quarter, the first tranche of 16 grant applications was approved by USAID. In addition, tranches 2 and 3 (total of 26 applications) were approved by the AIP Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) and await USAID approval.

AIP held one batch of retailer training on "appropriate use and sales of agricultural inputs" for 26 AIRN member retailers and an environmental compliance training in Jessore for 18 participants including AIP/AIRN field officers (FOs) (11) and USAID/Agricultural Extension Support Activity (AESAs) staff (7). In addition, AIP is currently planning a second international study tour to Thailand to be carried out in May 2015 and has developed the program, learning objectives, and activities for a "short course" on agro-inputs to be administered during the tour.

### Intervention 2: Development of Market Information Systems

During this reporting period, three issues of the MPOB were published and distributed among AIRN member retailers and other stakeholders. AIP staff discussed changes to the MPOB to increase its relevance and readability for AIRN members.

Building upon the work done in the previous quarter with a short-term consultant from AIP partner Spatial Systems Associates (SSA), the AIP GIS Specialist plotted data on input companies in AIP's existing GIS system from a survey conducted by AIP, and the plotting of wholesalers is ongoing. Plotting this information will enhance the MIS tool which currently maps the location of AIRN members, input company retailers, and demo plots overlaid base layers, including population by *upazilla* and by union, crop rotation pattern, land use and roads in project working area. The AIP GIS team is also planning to map complaints from the field received through the AIRN Call Center in order to analyze sales patterns of sub-quality inputs.

Field demonstrations of quality products continued in Y3Q2. AIP and AESA established 21 demonstration plots on chili and mung bean in Jessore, Barisal and Patuakhali. In addition, three private input companies provided a list of 375 demo plots to conduct during the upcoming summer season. AIP's environmental team found 82 of 98 plots allowable following the Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) compliance evaluation. The remaining plots will be evaluated by mid-April 2015.

### **Intervention 3: Setting Quality Control Standards for Inputs and Lessening Regulatory Constraints**

AIP is planning another meeting with the Bangladeshi Seed Association (BSA) this quarter to organize a discussion meeting on the implementation status of the seed regulatory framework (the National Seed Policy 1993; the Seed (Amendments) Act 1997 and 2005; and the Seed Rules (1998)) and its impact on private sector stakeholders. The meeting intends to bring a private seed sector voice to the GoB through discussion on better implementation of the seed regulatory framework. Preparation for this meeting is ongoing and the meeting will be held in the next quarter.

### **Intervention 4: Strengthening Local Organizations**

During this quarter, an OCA was completed for BSA and a presentation was made on the findings to the BSA leadership. On this basis, a limited Organizational Capacity Development (OCD) is slated to begin in Y3Q3 following further discussion with the association on the nature and degree of such activities. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Bangladesh Crop Protection Association (BCPA) and the Bangladesh Fertilizer Association (BFA) was completed in Y3Q1, allowing for the completion of an OCA for both associations in this reporting period. The OCD for these organizations is to begin in Y3Q3.

### **Project Changes**

In addition to ongoing work, AIP is working to revise its program description in order to respond to new priorities identified during the first half of the project period. In particular, AIP will request (via modification) that USAID approve the following:

- Expanded communications efforts: The use of communications and messaging tools was proposed in the original program description; however, a substantial expansion of written and electronic media outreach tools is envisaged through a concerted targeted campaign in the revised program description. A principal aim of the campaigns is to create broad recognition by farmers, suppliers, and the public at large of GoB-mandated (and other) parameters of quality agricultural inputs.
- Discontinuation of the Guarantee Facility: Given the existence of a \$5M USAID Development Credit Authority (DCA) fund with Brac Bank (the “*Anonno*” SME credit facility), this modification proposes to drop AIP’s mandate to create a \$250,000 credit guarantee facility (GF), while continuing to promote the *Anonno* credit facility among AIRN member retailers. The funds under this line item in the original approved budget will instead be used for organizational capacity development of local organizations, as outlined in Intervention 4.
- Tactical change in strengthening of local organizations: The original program description required AIP to strengthen 20 local organizations (including the three major industry business associations (BSA, BCPA, and BFA) and AIRN) and to certify at least any four for USAID financial pre-award stature, whereupon the “graduated” organization would fulfill mandates towards achieving AIP objectives. Implementing formal thorough organizational capacity assessments has been extremely painstaking and assessment results of the three industry business associations reveal a mixed picture in which most do not have internal organs or processes, nor the resources to establish organs/processes to

fully engage organizational development efforts and thus rise to “graduation”. The landscape of local organizations in the FtF zone, as revealed by information sharing from other FtF projects, is not extremely promising. Nonetheless, there is merit in proceeding with organizational capacity development of the three industry associations and AIRN, but rather with the aim to first define for a given organization after formal assessment what could be realistically achievable against USAID financial pre-award criteria, and then to work to fulfill that personalized definition through sub-award or grant to AIP.

## Intervention 1: Establish Agro-Input Retailers' Network

### 1.1.1 Selection of 90 out of 122 *upazillas* in 20 FTF districts

From January 1-March 31, 2015 a total of 339 new members joined AIRN despite limitations to organize membership drives due to unstable situations in country. As of the end of this reporting period, 1,842 retailers have joined AIRN as members from 59 *upazillas* in 16 districts. Among them, 830 retailers are accredited members while others are on process to be awarded with accredited membership status after completing the required training, which includes agri-business management and business ethics, generic agronomic use of inputs, and safe and judicious use of pesticides.

**Table 1: *Upazillas* under AIRN membership drive as of March 31, 2015**

SN	<i>Upazilla</i>	District	Division	
1.	Babuganj	Barisal	Barisal	
2.	Bakerganj			
3.	Banaripara			
4.	Barisal Sadar			
5.	Wazirpur			
6.	Agailjhara			
7.	Jhalokati Sadar	Jhalokati		
8.	Nalchiti			
9.	Rajapur			
10.	Patuakhali Sadar	Patuakhali		
11.	Nesarabad (Sorupkhati)	Pirojpur		
12.	Najirpur			
13.	Pirojpur			
14.	Bhola sadar	Bhola		
15.	Faridpur Sadar	Faridpur	Dhaka	
16.	Nagarkanda			
17.	Sadarpur			
18.	Saltha			
19.	Boalmari			
20.	Alfadanga			
21.	Bhunga			
22.	Madhukhali			
23.	Kotalipara			Gopalganj
24.	Gopalganj sadar			
25.	Tungipara			
26.	Bagher Para	Jessore	Khulna	
27.	Jessore Sadar			
28.	Jhikargacha			
29.	Manirampur			
30.	Chougasa			
31.	Keshobpur			
32.	Batiaghata			Khulna
33.	Dacope			
34.	Dighalia			
35.	Dumuria			
36.	Phultala			
37.	Terakhada			
38.	Pykgasa			
39.	Jhenaidah Sadar	Jhenaidah		
40.	Kaliganj			
41.	Horinakundo			
42.	Sailocupa			

SN	Upazilla	District	Division
43.	Maheshpur		Khulna
44.	Fakirhat		
45.	Chitolmari		
46.	Bagherhat Sador	Bagherhat	
47.	Kachua		
48.	Mollahat		
49.	Satkhira sadar		
50.	Kolaroa	Satkhira	
51.	Tala		
52.	Meherpur sadar	Meherpur	
53.	Mujibnogor		
54.	Chuadanga	Chuadanga	
55.	Alamdanga		
56.	Magura sadar	Magura	
57.	Sreepur		
58.	Kalia		
59.	Narail sadar	Narail	

### 1.1.2 Assessments of Private Sector Agricultural Input Companies

Study findings on the internal self-regulating procedures of Lal Teer Seed Ltd, one of the largest private seed companies in Bangladesh, were shared with its management during the quarter. These findings included recommendations on assuring production quality and market competitiveness.

AIP also contacted agro-input companies and industry associations to initiate a quick needs assessment for international certifications on quality management. A local expert in international certification has already been identified to assist agro-inputs companies and relevant associations in assessing the need for international certifications from entities such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) or the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA). AIP will facilitate the certification process through workshops and one-on-one mentoring.

### 1.1.3 Identify Training Needs of Retailers

There was no training need assessment done in this quarter.

### 1.1.4 Working Purpose, Objectives, and Modalities of AIRN

This quarter, AIRN renewed emphasis on defining member services rather than focusing on increasing membership. An initial meeting of AIRN's interim Advisory Board was held to elicit feedback on draft goals, objectives, member services and draft business plan of AIRN (see section 1.1.5). In the meeting, the board formed a committee to examine the current GoB input policy frameworks and in particular its implementation of quality control for micronutrient fertilizers, especially zinc and boron. This committee will share findings and recommendations in next AIRN Advisory Board meeting in Dhaka in May 2015. Additionally, the board determined to add quality issues of micronutrient fertilizers in AIP's communications campaign along with related training for AIRN FOs and retailers.

The AIRN Advisory Board fulfills a critical role as its decisions guide the organization on an interim basis. Among its responsibilities, it will also organize a general membership meeting to elect the AIRN Board of Directors. At that time, the Advisory Board's recommendations

will be presented to the membership for consideration and the interim board will subsequently dissolve.

### 1.1.5 AIRN Structure and Members

At the end of Q2, 59 *upazilla* AIRN “ad-hoc” committees were formed and a total of 1,842 agro-input retailers joined the network as members.

As noted in previous quarterly progress reports, a law firm is working to secure AIRN’s license and registration and expects to complete the process by the end of Y3. In the meantime, draft bylaws required for the registration and licensing process were prepared and reviewed by the Advisory Board.

Twenty-one women retailers joined AIRN as provisional members, a new membership category created to provide assistance (e.g., obtaining required GoB licenses, small grant application development support) to women in the process of establishing an agro-inputs shop.

#### 1.1.5.1 AIRN Membership Drives

In this quarter, 339 new retailers joined AIRN spontaneously through personal networks in absence of membership drives due to the unstable political situation (see Table 2 and Figure 1 below). To date, = AIRN members total to 1,842 (830 accredited members, 991 associate members, and 21 provisional members) from 59 *upazillas* in 16 districts. New accredited members signed the business code of conduct with an oath to sell quality agro-inputs and also to participate in AIP activities, as required.

**Table 2: AIRN members as of March 31, 2015**

<i>Upazilla</i>	District	Division	Provisional	Associate	Accredited	Total member
Babuganj	Barisal	Barisal	01	6	14	21
Bakerganj			02	10	17	29
Banaripara				12	5	17
Barisal Sadar				2	29	31
Gaurnadi			01	0	1	2
Mehendiganj				0	1	1
Muladi				0	3	3
Wazirpur				5	25	30
Agailjhara				36	7	43
Jhalokati Sadar			Jhalkati	Barisal		9
Nalchiti		17			4	21
Rajapur		16			1	17
Patuakhali Sadar	Pathakhali		5	22	27	
Najirpur	Pirojpur	Barisal		17	12	29
Pirojpur				16	3	19
Nesarabad	Bhola	Barisal		17	0	17
Bhola sadar				37	4	41

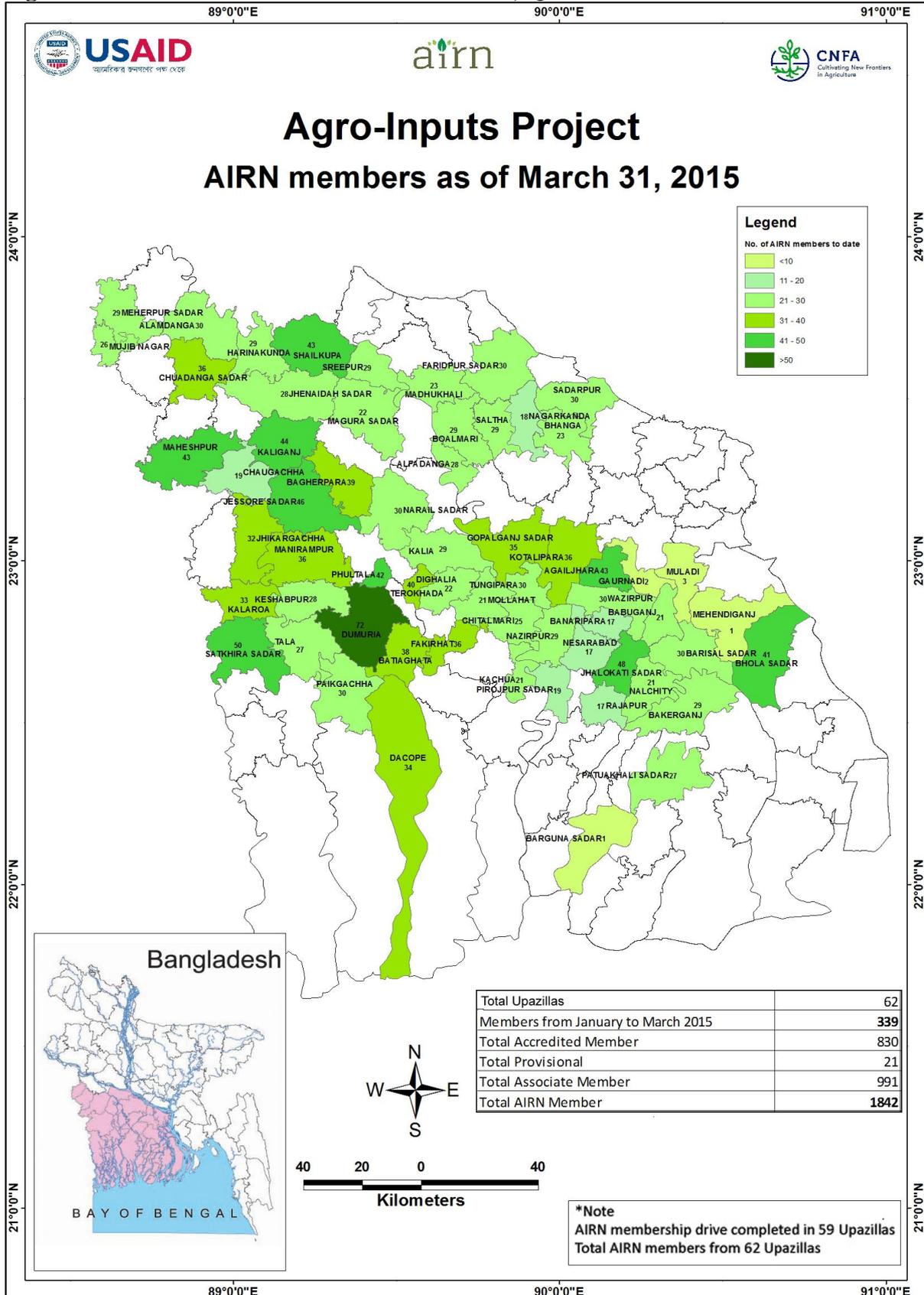
<b>Upazilla</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Division</b>	<b>Provisional</b>	<b>Associate</b>	<b>Accredited</b>	<b>Total member</b>	
Faridpur Sadar	Faridpur	Dhaka		13	17	30	
Nagarkanda				11	7	18	
Sadarpur				22	8	30	
Saltha				18	11	29	
Boalmari				17	12	29	
Alfadanga				21	7	28	
Bhunga				14	9	23	
Madhukhali				16	7	23	
Kotalipara			Gopalganj		23	13	36
Gopalganj sadar					29	6	35
Tungipara		25		5	30		
Bagher Para	Jessore	Dhaka	01	18	20	39	
Jessore Sadar			01	20	26	47	
Jhikargacha				12	20	32	
Manirampur				22	14	36	
Chougasa				16	3	19	
Keshobpur				17	11	28	
Batiaghata	Khulna	Dhaka		18	20	38	
Dacope				25	9	34	
Dighalia				27	13	40	
Dumuria			14	26	32	72	
Phultala			01	23	18	42	
Terakhada				10	12	22	
Pykgasa		21	9	30			
Jhenaidah Sadar	Jhenaidah	Khulna		02	26	28	
Kaliganj				19	25	44	
Horinakundo				08	21	29	
Sailocupa				19	24	43	
Maheshpur				09	34	43	
Fakirhat	Bagherhat	Dhaka		24	12	36	
Chitolmari				15	10	25	
Bagherhat Sador				31	5	36	
Mollahat				15	6	21	
Kachua				18	3	21	
Satkhira sadar	Satkhira	Dhaka		17	33	50	
Kolaroa				15	18	33	
Tala				11	16	27	
Meherpur sadar	Meherpur	Dhaka		2	29	31	
Mujibnogor				7	21	28	

<b>Upazilla</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Division</b>	<b>Provisional</b>	<b>Associate</b>	<b>Accredited</b>	<b>Total member</b>
Chuadanga	Chuadanga			26	15	41
Alamdanga				18	12	30
Magura sadar	Magura			10	12	22
Sreepur				14	15	29
Norail sadar	Norail			22	8	30
Kalia				20	9	29
<b>Total</b>				<b>21</b>	<b>991</b>	<b>830</b>

To increase retailer knowledge and boost AIRN membership services, AIP FOs routinely organize small group discussions on the following subjects:

- Safe use of pesticide and use of personal safety equipment (PSE);
- Maintaining neat and well-organized shelves stocked according to WHO color code for pesticides;
- Market information and sourcing of quality inputs;
- Identification of quality agro-inputs (proper labeling, identification of active ingredients, reputed company information);
- Establishment of demonstration plots: roles and objectives, and benefits of demo plots both for farmers and retailers.

Figure 1: AIRN members as of the end of Year 3, Quarter 2



### 1.1.6 Credit Guarantee Fund

AIP holds a \$250,000 credit guarantee facility for AIRN member-retailers. It was initially expected that leveraging this guarantee would increase lending to agro-retailers by reducing the risk to banks and/or MFIs. To expand the amount of loans served by this guarantee, AIP investigated partnerships in which the AIP guarantee covers 50% of the risk and the remaining 50% is borne by the financial institution. It was anticipated that AIRN member borrowers would receive more favorable terms than typically offered by the lenders due to this decrease in risk for the lender.

At the same time, USAID issued a \$5 million credit guarantee to Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) Bank through its Development Credit Authority (DCA). Under this arrangement, BRAC Bank created a DCA-backed loan product, “*Annono*”, to serve the needs of small and medium sized enterprises. Given the accessibility of this much larger facility, AIP has chosen not to compete with *Annono* but to rather encourage AIRN retailers to utilize its services. AIP therefore anticipates that its credit guarantee facility will be discontinued.

### 1.1.7 Gender Lens Committee

Gender Lens Committee (GLC) members celebrated International Women’s Day with gender coalition partners (FTF partners of Khulna and local partner NGOs i.e., Ashroy Foundation and Shushilon) in March 2015. Coalition partners decided to undertake collective activities such as promoting women’s mobility (for both farmers and retailers) and raising awareness on women’s access to and control over household resources. Two potential AIP grantees from Khulna also shared their business experience with other FTF project participants during the event.

### 1.1.8 Creation of Women Agro-retailers through AIRN

During the reporting period, AIP’s three partner NGOs (PNGO) organized seven public meetings with 330 potential women grantee participants, 87 of whom are in the application process to receive AIP grants.

Initially, PNGOs submitted 28 grant applications to AIP following critical examination of the pre-applications and level of future clientele (to assess business viability). The AIP grants team shared 18 applications with the TEC for scoring, after completing site visits and assessing community feedback. Among them, 14 applications were accepted by the TEC and the COP and subsequently submitted these to USAID for final approval.



**Niva Rani an AIRN member is learning about seed cultivation techniques to share with farmer-clients by reading instructions on the seed packet.**

**Photo: Shariful Islam, FO, Khulna**

In this quarter, 13 “acceptance garnering sessions” were held by the PNGOs with 611 participants including Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) representatives, community leaders, and *upazilla* parishad (council) members. Acceptance garnering sessions seek support and commitment from families and neighbors for becoming patrons of women who are approved by the grants review committee. Grantees themselves organize the

garnering session with facilitation support from AIP. Participants in the garnering session are generally local elected body representatives, local farmers, teachers, religious leaders, other women entrepreneurs, freedom fighters, DAE personnel, and/or family members of the applicant as applicable.

In addition, the AIP team assisted potential grantees in obtaining 18 trade licenses (including 15 for pesticides from DAE and 3 for seed from the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)).

Other notable outcomes include:

- Good relations developed with *upazilla* agriculture officers in Babugonj, Bakegonj, Barisal Sadar, and Gournadi which help to expedite the business license process with the DAE.
- Working through the union *parishad* female members helped develop a quick list of potential women grantees.
- Grantee selection criteria for women retailers (education qualification, written family consent and ability to work outside the home) were adapted to mirror the ‘Gender Champion Project’ of WorldFish.

### **1.1.9 Strengthening Agricultural Input Wholesale Associations**

#### **1.1.9.1 Directory of Input Supply Companies and Wholesalers**

In Y3Q2, AIP launched tenders for printing and publishing a directory of agro-input companies and wholesalers. In addition to the procurement process for publishing, AIRN FOs also conducted a final quality cross-check of collected data to ensure their accuracy before making it public.

#### **1.1.9.2 Capacity Development of BSA, BFA, and BCPA**

An OCA was completed with the BSA in Y2Q4 and presentation of the findings was made to the BSA membership. Based on results of the OCA and ongoing discussions with BSA’s leadership, it was noted that, due to the association’s current limited capacity to fully carry out OCD, AIP will work with BSA to develop a tailored capacity building plan unique to its situation. This plan will focus on realistic assistance to help BSA develop relevant member services and in-depth training on quality seed.

OCAs were completed with BCPA and BFA and findings were shared with members. Through collaboration with the association’s leadership, OCD will be implemented from May 2015 (see Intervention 4).

## **1.2 Trainings and Study Tours**

### **Retailers’ training:**

AIP held one batch of retailer training on “*Krishi Upakoron Satik Babohar O Bikroy Bishok*” (“appropriate use and sales of agricultural inputs”) in this quarter. The 3-day basic training facilitated by AIP partner GMark included one female master trainer and a total of 26 AIRN member retailers.

### **Training on environmental compliance:**

An environmental compliance training was held in Jessore for 18 participants including AIP/AIRN FOs (11) and USAID Agricultural Extension Project staff (7). From the training, participants learned the basic concepts of USAID environmental compliance, allowed and rejected pesticides as per AIP's PERSUAP, safe use of pesticides at demonstration plots, environmental evaluation of demo plots using AIP's prescribed checklist, and environmental safety-nets at retailers' shop.

#### **National domestic study tour:**

There was no national domestic study tour arranged in this quarter.

#### **International study course processing:**

AIP selected Kasetsart University in Thailand to arrange a 10-day "international study course on agri-business and quality inputs" for AIRN members. AIP developed a detailed concept note of the study course consisting of learning objectives and activities. Based on AIP's need, the extension and training division of Kasetsart University (Kampahengsaen campus) prepared a tailor-made course for AIRN members, focusing on quality inputs. The AIP and Kasetsart University management mutually agreed on the course title, contents and activities, program schedule and budget and submitted the full package to USAID for approval.

AIP selected a total of 10 AIRN retailers (including two women) for this course, to be accompanied by 3 AIRN/AIP staff members. The study course will be held from May 10-20, 2015 in Thailand.

#### **1.2.1 Development of Training Modules**

AIP revised the Training of Trainers (TOT) module to include agri-business management and ethics, safe & judicious use of agro-chemicals, generic agronomic practices, and production of nutritious crops in the modules. AIP also added two small and important topics on AIRN membership and environmental safety-net procedures at the retail shop. AIP engaged a consultant to modify existing modules and develop trainers' session plans, pre-and post-tests, hand-outs, and define participatory methodologies.

#### **1.2.2 Master Trainer Selection, TOT, and Trainings**

AIP/AIRN nominated 11 project FOs including one female who will be responsible for making regular visits to AIRN retailers', conducting AIRN membership drive meetings, and organizing various workshops and meetings. The nominated participants attended a TOT course on "*Krishhi Upokoron Satik Bebohar O Bikroy Bishouk*" ("appropriate use and sales of agricultural inputs") course in March 2015 in Jessore. In addition, 6 participants from the USAID/AESA, responsible to train farmers on various subjects, such as proper use of agro-inputs, joined the training.

Key objectives of the TOT course were to improve the capacity of master trainers on facilitation skills and delivery of technical subject matters such as business management, crop production technology, nutrition, and safe use of pesticide to input retailers. Three subject matter experts conducted the four-day TOT with support of AIP staff. The TOT was designed to follow participatory methods, adult learning principles, and hands-on techniques to create an enabling learning environment. The training included pre- and post-test and results were shared among the participants.

AIRN/AIP also selected two participants as master trainers (one female and one male Field Officer) to be included in the AIRN trainer pool. The selected two participants will be prepared as professional trainers to serve AIRN’s training needs.

### 1.3 AIRN Promotion - Prepare and Distribute Brochures

The AIRN brochure and factsheet were the two most used tools to promote AIRN among new members and stakeholders during the reporting period. In this quarter, around 700 AIRN brochures and factsheets were distributed to new members, government agricultural officers, block supervisors and field representatives of various agro-inputs companies. In addition, these materials were distributed during membership drives, field visits and introductory meetings.

AIP is currently revising the content of AIRN brochures and factsheets with updated data and new programmatic interventions.

#### 1.3.1. Branding and Marketing Campaign for AIRN

The English and Bangla Q2 AIRN newsletter was completed and is ready for dissemination to AIRN members. This newsletter promotes the AIRN Agro-Tech Fair 2014, demonstration plots conducted with inputs suppliers and other FTF projects, AIRN Call Center launch news (the Call Center is intended to create a place to report purchase of poor quality agro-inputs), one success story and views and aspirations of new AIRN members.

The English version of the AIRN newsletter will be disseminated among relevant stakeholders electronically, while the printed Bangla version will be sent to AIRN members, *upazilla* level government agricultural officers, field representatives of Bangladesh Agricultural Department Corporation (BADC), relevant agro-inputs companies and USAID FTF projects.

To promote the AIRN Call Center, an intensive plan was developed including posters, leaflets and sticker content and designs, all of which are ready to print. AIP also highlighted the Call Center through announcements in the AIRN newsletter and in the MPOB. AIP plans to promote the Call Center by mainstreaming it in its multi-media campaign strategy. It includes sending short messages via cell phones to farmers and retailers, information dissemination through AIP website, Facebook, television, and radio programs (see Project Management and Cross-Cutting Themes bullet 4).

#### Summary of Intervention 1 Key Activities for Next Quarter

In the next quarter, AIRN membership drive events will take place in new 15 *upazillas*, and AIP expects 550 more new retailers to join AIRN as associate members and 450 trained retailers to be awarded accredited membership status by the end of Q3Y3.

SN	Upazilla	District	Division
1.	Gournadi	Barisal	Barisal
2.	Lalmohan	Bhola	
3.	Daulatkhan		
4.	Kanthalia	Jhalokati	
5.	Mathbaria	Pirojpur	
6.	Dosmina	Patuakhali	
7.	Kashiani	Gopalganj	

SN	Upazilla	District	Division
8.	Muksudpur		Dhaka
9.	Madaripur Sadar	Madaripur	
10.	Kalkini		
11.	Jibannagar	Chuadanga	Khulna
12.	Abhaynagar	Jessore	
13.	Sharsha		
14.	Shalikha	Magura	
15.	Kotchandpur	Jhenaidah	

In addition, 35 new grants applications will be completed. Thirty two business licenses will be obtained by the female retailers.

AIP will conduct a brief assessment to investigate the existing status of (and need for) international certifications among agro-inputs companies and relevant associations.

Finally, AIP is proposing discontinuation of its guarantee fund in the next quarter as USAID has a larger program for a credit guarantee with BRAC Bank. The project has requested that these funds be utilized for sub-awards and grants to local organizations in support of AIP implementation.

## Intervention 2: Market Information Systems

### 2.1. Analysis and Distribution of Agro-Inputs Monthly Price Outlook Bulletin

Three issues of the MPOB containing updated price information of popularly traded agro-inputs were printed and distributed among AIRN member retailers. Feedback from AIRN member retailers shows that most have found the MPOB useful for improving their businesses through improved knowledge of available products and wholesale price. AIP has taken further initiatives to upgrade the MPOB by introducing a new design and incorporating additional features to better serve member retailers.

#### 2.1.1 GIS Development

Using a survey of input companies and wholesalers conducted by AIP, data for supply companies were successfully plotted in AIP's existing GIS-MIS system and the plotting of wholesalers is ongoing. Plotting this information will enhance the GIS-MIS tool which currently maps the location of agro-input retailer members, 3 input company's retailers and demo plot overlaid on ESRI's (Environmental Systems Research Institute) base layers, including population by *upazilla* and by union, crop rotation pattern, land use and roads in the project working area.

The AIP GIS team is also planning to map complaints from the field received through the AIRN Call Center in order to analyze patterns of sub-quality inputs sales. This database was designed in collaboration with the AIP M&E specialist.

AIP GIS staff members attended a FTF meeting promoting better cooperation in uploading data to USAID's "Geo-Center where FTF projects in Bangladesh working toward similar objectives can share maps, MIS layers, apps or other tools that have been developed for the FTF zone.

## 2.2 Agricultural Exhibitions

In line with the newly developed communications campaign theme ‘Did you know: quality agro inputs are around you?’ (see Project Management and Cross-Cutting Themes bullet 4), AIP began preparations for a second AIRN Agro-Tech Fair, which will take place from November 30-December 2, 2015 in Jessore. In March 2015, a Request for Proposal (RFP) advertisement was published in two leading Bangla newspapers (the Daily *Prothom Alo*, March 5 and Bangladesh *Protidin*, March 6) and one leading English newspaper (the Daily Star, March 5). To better inform potential event management companies, a half day bidder’s conference was held on March 16 in Dhaka, with active participation of 23 bidders.

AIP received RFP responses from 11 event management companies. Two AIP committees (technical and financial) are in the process of short-listing potential firms to organize this agro-tech fair based on the defined evaluation criteria. Shortlisting of potential event management companies will be completed in April 2015.

## 2.3 Demonstration Plots with other FTF Programs

Through collaborative initiatives with other FTF programs to establish demonstration plots, the AESA and AIP projects established 21 demonstration plots on chili and mung bean in Jessore, Barisal and Patuakhali:

- Jessore Keshobpur (3 chili plots)
- Barisal Sadar (8 mung bean plots)
- Patuakhali Sadar (10 mung bean plots)

Lal Teer supplied seeds for these plots, which are in good condition. By the end of April, all farmer field days (FFD) for these plots will be completed.

### 2.3.1 Identification of Collaborators and Plots

During the reporting period, three private input companies provided a list of 375 demo plots to conduct during the upcoming summer season. AIP’s environmental team found 82 of 98 plots allowable following the PERSUAP compliance evaluation. The remaining plots will be evaluated by mid-April 2015.

**Table 4: Demo plot evaluation for PERSUAP compliance**

	Name of the company	Total listed demo	Evaluation done	Allowed	Disallowed
1	ACI	141	45	40	05
2	Syngenta	65	24	17	07
3	Lal Teer	169	29	25	04
<b>Total</b>		<b>375</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>16</b>

To demonstrate quality products, AIP will partner with Getco Seed Company along with the other five private input companies (Lal Teer Seed, Ltd., Syngenta, ACI, Bayer and Global Agrovet Ltd). The MOU with Getco Seed Company will be finalized by the end of April 2015.

### 2.3.2 Farmer Field Days

AIP organizes FFDs to highlight demonstration plot results and to advertise sources of quality inputs. During the quarter, participating input companies organized 189 FFDs. Of these, 10 were conducted jointly with Lal Teer and the USAID/AESA. During FFDs, AIP’s environmental team educated farmers and retailers on the safe application of crop protection products and will continue this monitoring in the next quarter as necessary.



**Table 5: Farmer field days conducted**

Company	Plots Organized up to 31 December 2014	# of Demo Plot Organized from January-March 2015	# FFDs Organized from January-March 2015
Winter Season (2014-2015)			
Syngenta Total	69	4	151 <sup>1</sup>
Lal Teer Seed	8	29	22 <sup>1</sup>
AESA-Lal Teer	3	18	10 <sup>1</sup>
ACI Total	37	0	6 <sup>2</sup>
Early Summer (2015)			
Lal Teer	0	16	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>189</b>

### 2.3.3 Demonstrations to Promote High Value Nutritious Crops and Technologies

Six female grant applicants were identified to participate in managing an AIP demonstration plot, which will be conducted after approval of grant agreements. The GLC and grants team shared information on demonstration plots with women retailers and reviewed plot maintenance guidelines, including environmental compliance.

#### Summary of Intervention 2 Key Activities for Next Quarter

AIP will organize a survey in the next quarter to determine which new products should be included in the MPOB.

Additionally, AIP will complete its evaluation of the remaining company-supported summer demonstration plots by mid-April 2015.

Preparation will continue for the 2015 Agro-Tech Fair, working with the selected event planner identified following both technical and financial committee reviews.

Finally, the GLC and AIP grants team will conduct the following activities in the next reporting period:

<sup>1</sup> For these demos, at least three FFDs per plot were targeted.

<sup>2</sup> Due to management changes at ACI, significantly fewer FFDs than targeted were held.

- Visit women grantee retail shops to show support and observe progress;
- Conduct nutrition integration training for AIRN women retailers;
- Select sites for 6 demo plot to be managed by women retailers;
- Assist the grants team in grants making process toward creation of well-informed and widely accepted female-run agro-retailerships.

## Intervention 3: Setting Quality Control Standards for Inputs and Lessening Regulatory Constraints

### 3.1 Adherence to Industry Standards

AIP facilitates regular meetings of the Seed Health Committee (SHC), a committee formed by the MOA Seed Wing to set seed health standards for rice, wheat, jute, and potato. AIP, as an active member of the SHC, is extending technical and logistic support to the committee as it works to set standardized parameters for seed health of crops shown below with disease names and causative agents:

**Table 6: Seed-borne diseases being discussed by the Seed Health Committee**

Crop	Seed-borne disease identified	Causal organism	Seed health standards (parameters)
Rice	Bakanae <sup>3</sup>	<i>Fusarium moniliforme</i>	Yet to be finalized
Wheat	Leaf blight <sup>4</sup>	<i>Bipolaris sorokiniana</i>	
Jute	Stem rot <sup>5</sup>	<i>Macrophomona phaseolina</i>	
	Bacterial wilt/brown rot <sup>6</sup>	<i>Ralstonia solanacearum</i> ( <i>Pseudomonas solanacearum</i> )	
	Blackleg/seed tuber soft rot <sup>7</sup>	<i>Erwinia carotovora</i> subsp. <i>atroseptica</i>	
Potato	Scab <sup>8</sup>	<i>Streptomyces scabies</i>	

To highlight the importance of quality seed, SHC is analyzing the extent of damage and financial implications caused by disease infestation. The SHC is also analyzing the seed supply situation and anticipating the impact of imposing these seed health standards parameters. The last meeting was jointly organized by AIP and MOA in December 2014; AIP intends to hold another meeting in the next quarter.

<sup>3</sup> Bakanae is a common seedling disease in rice caused by the fungus *Fusarium moniliforme* / *Fusarium fujikuroi*/*Gibberella fujikuroi*. Infected seedlings exhibit abnormal elongation, chlorosis, and in severe cases, can lead to death.

<sup>4</sup> *Bipolaris sorokiniana* is the most predominant fungi responsible for wheat seedling leaf blight, spot blotch, and root rot.

<sup>5</sup> *Macrophomina phaseolina* is the major pathogen of jute and primarily causes seedling blight, leaf spot and stem rot.

<sup>6</sup> Brown rot is a disease caused by the bacterium *Ralstonia solanacearum*. The disease has the potential to cause significant yield losses, through the rotting of tubers in affected host plants.

<sup>7</sup> Tuber soft rot is caused by contamination by *Erwinia spp.* It occurs mostly superficially in lenticels and wounds, where it can overwinter until planting time.

<sup>8</sup> *Streptomyces spp.* is a plant pathogen causing corky lesions to form on tuber and root crops while decreasing the growth of seedlings. It causes the potato disease common scab, which is an economically important disease in many potato growing areas.

## **3.2 Certification and Business Ethics**

AIP encourages retailers to complete AIRN’s basic business management, agronomic use of inputs, and safe use trainings. Certification of satisfactory completion of these trainings is a prerequisite to gaining AIRN accredited member status. Additionally, in order to maintain his/her certified status, it is anticipated that each retailer (and any employees) will be required to enroll and satisfactorily complete a minimum number of hours per year of continuing education (CE). The number of CE hours required will be ultimately determined by the AIRN Board of Directors based upon recommendations of the AIRN Industry Skills Committee (ISC).

### **3.2.1 AIRN Certification**

Through the end of Q2, 830 AIRN members (including 4 women retailers) have been certified as “accredited” members. AIRN had a total of 21 “provisional” (women) members at the end of the quarter and a total of 991 (including 5 women retailers) “associate” members. Provisional members, upon obtaining the required GoB licenses and initiating business operations, become associate members of AIRN. Following completion of the obligatory basic trainings and related membership requirements by the retailer and any of his/her shop employees, the retail shop receives accredited member status.

### **3.2.2 AIRN Business Ethics Committee**

AIP initially envisioned the formation of an AIRN Business Ethics Committee (BEC) to “determine the business ethics necessary for AIRN membership.” However, given a stronger focus on AIRN as a training organization, the BEC activity will be discontinued.

## **3.3 Monitoring**

AIRN retailers are committed to buy and sell quality agro-inputs including seed, fertilizers and pesticides. They also apply the knowledge obtained from trainings through sound technical suggestions to their customer farmers to improve their productivity. AIRN uses its Call Center in Khulna to promote the sale of quality agro-inputs and solve issues with poor quality products. Through a series of mechanisms including communications materials, meetings, face-to-face communications, AIRN encourages farmers, retailers and relevant stakeholders to report poor quality agro-inputs, especially those purchased from the AIRN accredited retailers’ shops. Information collected from callers will be recorded in a database, analyzed, and then discussed with retailers and industry associations for further action.

## **3.4 Coordination on Policy, Legal, and Regulatory Constraints**

AIP collected, aggregated, and analyzed reports from three consultants on the implementation status of regulatory frameworks for seed, fertilizer and pesticide to pinpoint barriers to the smooth supply of quality inputs in the existing regulatory framework.

Based on the seed framework reports, AIP held several meetings with the BSA to organize a discussion meeting on the implementation status of the Seed Regulatory Framework (including the National Seed Policy 1993; the Seed (Amendment) Act 1197 and 2005; the Seed Rules 1998) and its impact on stakeholders. This meeting will bring the private seed sector voice to necessary discussions of seed regulatory framework reform. Preparatory work for this meeting, which will be held in the next quarter, is on-going.

In addition, under a MOU with BFA and BCPA, AIP is collaborating to collect comments on how to address policy and legal constraints that restrict the availability of quality fertilizer and crop protection chemicals. Identification of constraints and suggestions from the private sector will be communicated to the Bangladesh Policy Research and Strategy Support Program (via USAID) to be considered under its food policy advisory services.

AIP is also continuing its contribution as a member of the Seed Regulatory Reform Committee formed by MOA.

### Summary of Intervention 3 Key Activities for Next Quarter

In the next quarter, AIP will hold a roundtable meeting with BSA and government officials to discuss increasing the availability of quality seed. The role of BSA in promoting quality seed and suggestions to the GoB on the national framework will be included in the agenda. Private sector participants will also urge the GoB to declare the seed trade a formal industry in order to raise its visibility and be subject to industrial benefits.

AIP will also continue to promote quality inputs through awareness of the new AIRN Call Center. Distribution of posters, leaflets, and bulk short message services (SMS) will support use of the Call Center as a reporting mechanism for poor quality inputs. In addition, AIP will look to link farmer callers to other sources of information, such as the farmer query system developed by AESA, which offers agricultural extension assistance to farmers through an ICT-based application.



**A retailer is interacting with a farmer on safe and judicious use of CPP.  
Photo: Abdur Rahman, FO, Jhineidah**

## Intervention 4: Strengthening Local Organizations

### 4.1 Organizational Capacity Assessment

AIP input industry association partners BSA, BCPA, and BFA are primary targets for OCA assistance. The OCA self-assessment process identifies the areas of strength and those requiring improvement. The OCD is an action plan to address those matters which require strengthening.

As reported above, the OCA was completed for BSA, BCPA and BFA. BFA and BCPA are scheduled to begin a modified OCD process (taking into account the inclusion of strengthening member services) in the next quarter. Discussions with BSA revealed that a tailored OCD is necessary and will be further discussed and developed in Q3.

In addition to these industry organizations, AIP has assisted 12 organizations with differing levels of organizational assessment and development. These include the 3 associations mentioned above and AIRN, 3 PNGOs located in the FTF zone, and 5 input companies.

## 4.2 Training Design

Training is the core of AIRN membership services. The basic trainings required for accredited membership (i.e., business management and ethics, high density nutritional crops, agronomic practices, safe and judicious use of agricultural chemicals) are continuously appraised and adjusted based upon debriefings and analysis following training workshops.

AIP plans to retain a local curriculum designer to assist in the expansion of AIRN’s training curricula as a component in its pursuit of “Registered Training Organization” status. The curricula will be designed in consultation with the AIRN Advisory Board to assess the skills and advanced training needs within the inputs retail industry. The Advisory Board will transition this oversight and ongoing skills determination role to the AIRN ISC. These courses are intended to lead to advanced levels of business acumen and advisory capabilities.

### Summary of Intervention 4 Key Activities for Next Quarter

Tailored OCD with BSA, BCPA and BFA will be conducted based upon the findings of the OCA process in a collaborative manner consistent with each organization’s financial and human resource capabilities.

## Project Management and Cross-Cutting Themes

### 1. Staffing

Staff changes this quarter include departed staff (Mark Treacy, Senior Advisor) and newly hired team members (Dr. Shahidul Islam, Technical Communications Specialist; Ms. Farhana Alam, Communications and PR Specialist; Ms. Nawmin Islam, AIRN Call Center Officer and Data Processor; Ms. Bibi Ayesha, AIRN Field Officer).

In addition, AIP initiated the recruitment process for the AIRN Capacity Building Director to replace the Senior Capacity Building Advisor departing in May 2015, and replacements for the Office Manager in Khulna and Office Aide in Dhaka.

### 2. Sub-Awards

AIP continued management of six sub-awards this quarter; the table below details each sub-awardee and its activity.

**Table 6: AIP sub-awardees**

Sub-awardee	Main tasks	Contact details
<b>Ashroy Foundation</b>	Field and community based assistance to AIP in matching grant making to establish women owned and operated agro-input retail shops	<b>Momotaz Khatun</b> Executive Director Ashroy Foundation
<b>Association of Voluntary Actions for Society (AVAS)</b>	Field and community based assistance to AIP in matching grant making to establish women	<b>Rahima Sultana Kazal</b> Executive Director

Sub-awardee	Main tasks	Contact details
	owned and operated agro-inputs retail shops	
<b>Banchte Shekha</b>	Field and community based assistance to AIP in matching grant making to establish women owned and operated agro-inputs retail shops	<b>Angela Gomes</b> Executive Director Banchte Shekha
<b>Spatial Systems Associates</b>	Co-designing and setting up AIP's Market Information System, backed by a Geographical Information System	<b>Larry Newman</b> Spatial Systems Assoc., Inc.
<b>Capacity Development Service Group</b>	Organizational Capacity Assessment and Organizational Capacity Development	<b>Obaidur Rahman</b> , Chief Executive Capacity Building Service Group
<b>GMark Consulting Ltd.</b>	Basic trainings of AIRN member retailers: basic business management and ethics, agronomic use of agro-inputs, safe use of pesticides, and human nutrition	<b>Md. Saifuddin Khaled</b> , Chairman and CEO GMark Consulting Ltd.

### 3. Matching grants

This section is addressed in section 1.1.8.

### 4. Communications and Public Relations

#### Strategic Plan:

In February 2015, the AIP communications team and CNFA home office Communications Director finalized the strategic plan for the “Do You Know? -or- *Apni Janen Ki?*” multi-media campaign designed to promote the recognition of quality agro-inputs. Major outputs of the plan include public awareness messaging via billboards, newspaper supplements, talk shows/in-depth coverage on television and radio; public service announcements on popular local and national television channels; key message dissemination to retailers and farmers through informational publications such as posters, leaflets, booklets, and SMS via cell phones; and, social media to promote the knowledge of quality agro-inputs and their safe use.

## **Booklets on Quality Inputs:**

Considering convenience, effectiveness, and access to reliable internet service and electricity, AIP is creating print versions of three booklets on quality seeds, fertilizers and crop protection products (instead of e-books). These booklets will be disseminated mainly among AIRN retailers, their farmer-customers, and other stakeholders e.g., *upazilla*-level government agriculture offices, extension agents, and FTF projects.

In order to ensure that technical materials follow government regulatory stipulations and increase acceptance of these project materials by a wide audience, AIP is working to co-brand select AIP communication materials with the Agriculture Information Services (AIS), a media and publication wing of the MOA.

In the next quarter, AIP will complete the process of selecting two communications and media firms to support printing, i.e., six posters, five billboards, 10 tin boards and audio-visual documents; three public service announcements for television; bulk SMS via cell phones; and one video documentary for AIRN promotion.

## **5. Gender**

Following an orientation on gender, AIRN Advisory Board members (ad hoc) agreed to incorporate female AIRN member participation in board meetings, based on the meeting agenda and topics. Three female AIRN members were selected to take part in an international study tour in Thailand in the next quarter (see section 1.1.7 for more on gender).

## **6. Environment**

### **Capacity Building on Environmental Compliance:**

A day-long training session was conducted for 13 PNGO staff members and 6 AIP/AIRN FOs on environmental compliance. The major topics of the training were: basic concepts of USAID environmental compliance (per 22 CFR 216, Environmental Compliance Regulations and Procedures); how AIP complies with 22 CFR 216; the checklist of AIP activities that need USAID environmental compliance; AIP's PERSUAP in brief (12 factors in the pesticide evaluation process, and safer use of pesticides at the field and retailing level); basic information on pesticides (classification, active ingredients, labeling, etc.); and allowed and rejected pesticides in detail. The same training was offered during the TOT in March 2015. A total of 11 AIRN FOs and 6 staff from USAID/AESA took part in the session.

Given the complex nature of the subject matter, AIP may consider designing a longer, more interactive environmental compliance training in the future.

### **Environmental Evaluation of Demo Plots:**

During the quarter, AIP performed evaluations for 98 demo plots selected by ACI, Syngenta, and Lal Teer Seeds in order to check plot location suitability. As an evaluation tool, an environmental compliance checklist was followed which highlights parameters such as location, proximity to water bodies, households or livestock housing, ecologically critical areas, pesticide evaluation based on AIP's PERSUAP, US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and WHO toxicity classes, chronic human toxicity, ground water contamination and

eco-toxicity. As a result, 82 of 98 plots were found allowable and 16 were disallowed (see Table 4 in section 2.3.1). The remaining plots will be evaluated in the next quarter.

### **Session on Safe Use of Pesticides with Demo Farmers:**

The AIP environmental team conducted 62 sessions during the quarter on the safe use of pesticides. Each session brought from 50 to 150 participants. The sessions focused on safe handling and application of pesticides with precautionary measures through using personal protective equipment/personal protective materials and post-spray hygiene. Trainings will continue to be held for farmers, particularly at and around FFDs, throughout the rest of the program.

## **Key Issues of Interest**

### **Research & Technology**

#### **Market Information Systems:**

A key area of interest for the AIP is the on-going creative application of a GIS system to underpin an AIRN market information system (MIS). This MIS will allow for visual representation of agricultural input distribution networks, transportation infrastructure, client concentrations, cropping patterns, product and price trends, and other information. The system will capture information on input retailers and demonstration plots, wholesalers and supply companies, and other points of interest related to agricultural input retailers in the FTF focus area. In addition, the system will serve as an important tool for monitoring AIP activities and evaluating progress towards achieving program objectives.

Building on technical assistance from AIP sub-grantee SSA, the AIP MIS team is working to launch “Version 2” of the AIRN MIS web application and supporting field data collection tools. This new version will be complete by the end of Y3.

#### **Mobile Money:**

AIP and the USAID-funded MStar activity have agreed to conduct a “quick assessment” to understand the existing transaction behavior and payment mechanisms between agricultural wholesalers and retailers. The assessment will also look into transactions between retailers and farmers with specific focus on the mechanisms of due payment. The aim is to understand awareness of mobile money among the participants in AIRN, potential of replacing cash-based transaction with electronic payments, and readiness and availability of merchant payment products that will be appropriate for the network.

#### **Nutrition Integration:**

During this quarter, AIP continued to include specific content on nutrition integration which provides retailers with basic nutrition information to share with farmers as an advisory service during sales. As women are generally responsible for feeding family members, female retailers (and future grantees) will be supported to conduct shop-level demonstration plots on nutritious crop varieties toward better nutrition education. In addition, AIP worked with the USAID-funded Aquaculture for Incomes and Nutrition project (AIN), implemented by WorldFish, to jointly develop posters with nutrition messaging, focusing particularly on

vegetables and small fish consumption. Completion of poster content and printing will take place in the next quarter.

### **Global Climate Change Mitigation:**

AIP staff met with representatives from the USAID-funded Climate-Resilient Ecosystems and Livelihoods Project (CREL) project this quarter to discuss cooperative efforts between the two projects. CREL aims to create alternate livelihoods, such as weaving, handicrafts and backyards ponds for community members' areas to ease pressure on dwindling productive forest and wetland resources. This will increase incomes while preserving vital forest and wetland habitats.

Specifically, the two teams:

- 1) Explored opportunities for CREL local service providers (LSP) to attend AIP-organized training on business management, basic agronomy practices, and safe use of crop protection products;
- 2) Expressed mutual interest to create linkages between CREL LSPs and AIP quality input retailers and to promote both;
- 3) Identified CREL women LSPs as potential participants in the AIP grants program, as applicable.

### **Key Constraints:**

Out of 68 working days in the quarter (2 holidays), a total of 60 days (88%) were marred by general strikes (*hartals*) and blockades (*oborodhs*). These political disturbances severely disrupted road traffic and movement by rail and waterways in and outside of Dhaka.



## Annex 1: Feed-the-Future Indicators

#	Name of Indicator	Classifications	Unit of Measure	Disaggregated by		Baseline	Target and Achievement			
							Target Y3	Achievement in Q2 of Y3	Achievement in Y3	Achievement Cumulative (LOP)
1	Gross Margin per hectare, animal or cage of selected product <sup>9</sup>	FTF Indicator # 4.5-16, 17, 18 (RiA)	US dollars per hectare	Type	Crop	BL to be obtained using 'before' and 'after' method once the first assessment is done	TBD Y3	-	-	-
2.	Number of MSMEs, including farmers, receiving business development services from USG-assisted sources	FTF Indicator # 4.5.2-37 (S)	Number	Size :	Micro	0	1,310	26	290	1,731
					Small	0		-	-	-
					Medium	0		-	-	-
					Total	0	1,310	26	290	1,731
				MSME Type	Seed	0		-	-	1
					Fertilizer	0		-	-	-
					Agro-Chemical	0		-	-	-
					Mixed Variety	0	1,310	26	290	1,730
				Sex	Total	0	1,310	26	290	1,731
					Male	0	1,179	26	290	1,729
Female	0	131	-		-	2				
Total	0	1,310	26		290	1,731				
3.	Number of farmers and others who have applied improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	FTF Indicators # 4.5.2-5 (RiA) (WOG)	Number of farmers	Type	New	0	100,000	-	-	-
					Continuing	0	0	-	-	-
					Total	0	100,000 <sup>10</sup>	-	-	-
				Sex	Male	0	85,000	-	-	-
					Female	0	15,000	-	-	-
					Total	0	171,500	-	-	-
4.	Number of Individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector	FTF Indicators # 4.5.2-7 (RiA) (WOG)	Number	Type of individuals	Producers	0	22,000	1,517	3,284	5,603
					People in government	0	-	-	-	-
					People in private	0	77	-	36	137

<sup>9</sup> Calculating Gross Margin was subject to approval of EDDR and PERSUAP by Year 2, which has been approved in Sept., 2013, thus the study will be deferred to Year 3.

<sup>10</sup> This assessment will be deferred to Y 3's winter season. A third party will gauge annually through a sample survey. The number of famers served by the retailers was found to be inadequate to draw a representative sample in Y2. Due to the delay in forming AIRN in Y1, AIP was not able to join retailers into AIRN and therefore could not reach farmers as planned. The project is now in its way to mitigate the delay.

#	Name of Indicator	Classifications	Unit of Measure	Disaggregated by	Baseline	Target and Achievement			
						Target Y 3	Achievement in Q2 of Y3	Achievement in Y3	Achievement Cumulative (LOP)
	productivity or food security training				sector firms				
People in civil society					0	-	5	7	11
Total					0	22,077	1,522	3,327	7,268
Sex				Male	0	20,200	1,486	3,157	6,764
				Female	0	1,877	36	170	504
				Total	0	22,077	1,522	3,327	7,268

## Annex 2: Custom and Cross-Cutting Indicators

#	Name of Indicator	Classifications	Unit of Measure	Disaggregated by	Baseline	Target and Achievement				
						Target Y 3	Achievement in Q2 of Y3	Achievement in Y3	Achievement Cumulative (LOP)	
<i>Custom indicators</i>										
1	Total sales of quality inputs by certified retailers annually	Custom	US dollar	Sex of retailers	Male	0		2,994,287	4,557,877	5,542,220
					Female	0		8,391	28,747	53,103
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>\$20 mil<sup>11</sup></b>	<b>3,002,678</b>	<b>4,586,624</b>	<b>5,595,323</b>
2.	Number of farmers purchasing from certified retailers	Custom	Number of farmers	Sex of farmers	Male	0	85,000	72,721	124,885	163,148
					Female	0	15,000	714	1,251	1,432
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>73,435</b>	<b>126,136</b>	<b>164,580</b>
3.	Number of Agro-Inputs Retailers in the Network	Custom	Number of retailers	Sex of retailers	Male	0	1,179	314	1033	1,812
					Female	0	131	4	6	9
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,310</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>1,039</b>	<b>1,821</b>
				Type of retailers	Seed	0	0	-	1	3
					Fertilizer	0	0	-	-	-
					CPP	0	0	-	-	1
					Mixed variety	0	1,310	318	1,038	1,817
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,310</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>1,039</b>	<b>1,821</b>
4	Number of AIRN retailers with increasing application and adoption of quality standards for agricultural inputs <sup>12</sup>	Custom	Number of retailers and farmers	Sex of retailers	Male	0				
					Female	0				
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>TBD</b>			
				Sex of farmers	Male	0				
					Female	0				
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>				
				Type of standards	Seeds	0				
					Fertilizer	0				
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>									
5	Number of retailers who adopted seal of quality (new)	Custom	Number of retailers	Sex of retailers	Male	0	1,700	178	505	825
					Female	0	100	2	3	5
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>830</b>
				Type of retailers	Seed	0		-	1	3
					Fertilizer	0		-	-	-
CPP	0		-	-	1					

<sup>11</sup> Yearly target value is projected and can be quantified and therefore can be more exactly ascertained after taking experience into account after forming the AIRN.

<sup>12</sup> This is to be performed by a third party assessment. Sufficient number of accredited AIRN members must be in the 1st assessment, i.e. baseline, and this number (of accredited members) will be reached by winter year 3.

					Mixed variety	0	1,800	180	507	826
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>830</b>
6.	Number of retailers who adopted seal of quality (on-going) <sup>13</sup>	Custom	Number of retailers	Sex of retailers	Male	0				
					Female	0				
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	TBD			
				Type of retailers	Seed	0				
					Fertilizer	0				
					CPP	0				
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>				
7.	Number of Policies/Regulations/ Administrative Procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USG assistance in each case: Stage 1: Analyzed; Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation	Custom (adapted FTF # 4.5-24)	Number of policy/regulation/administrative procedure	Sector	Seed	0				1
					Fertilizer	0				0
					CPP	0				0
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	4	0	0	1
				Stage	Analyzed	0			1	
					Drafted	0			1	
					<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	4	0	0	1 <sup>14</sup>
<b><i>Cross cutting indicators</i></b>										
8.	Strengthened organizational capacities of related local organizations	Cross cutting (CC)	Percent	None		0	0	0	0	1 <sup>15</sup>
9.	Collaborative initiatives increased	CC	No. of event	Partner	Category					
					FTF Implementers		0	1	2	2 <sup>16</sup>
					Input Association					4 <sup>17</sup>
					Input Private Companies	0		3	3 <sup>18</sup>	4

<sup>13</sup> This will be filled in after the first and subsequent 3<sup>rd</sup> party audits of Accredited AIRN Members.

<sup>14</sup> AIP successfully advanced GoB Seed Policy to Stage 3. Stage 1 was analysis; Stage 2 was public debate; Stage 3 was formal submission to GoB of a revised Seed Policy, itself containing 11 sections.

<sup>15</sup> Organizational Capacity Assessment of the Bangladesh Seed Association yielded a 385 baseline against the 8 fields within USAID's financial pre-award criteria.

<sup>16</sup> Organized demonstration plot with Ag-Extension Project in two cropping seasons

<sup>17</sup> Four Input Associations participated with AIP in policy advocacy issues, while three of them participated in int'l study tour and one participated in AIP's organizational capacity strengthening efforts. Here the number of associations counted once, irrespective of number of events they participated in.

<sup>18</sup> Jointly organized demonstration plots with input companies.

					Government					5
					<b>Total</b>			4	5	15
				Activity	Type 1 (Demonstration plots)			67	184	267
					Type 2 (Study Tour)					1
					Type 3 (Agriculture Fair)					
					Type 4 (Policy Administration)					11 <sup>19</sup>
					Type 5 (Org. Capacity building)					2 <sup>20</sup>
					<b>Total</b>			67	184	281

<sup>19</sup> Meetings and policy dialogues were organized with related government agency/ministry including Ministry of Agriculture

<sup>20</sup> AIRN and BSA

### Annex 3: Lower-level Output Indicators - Interventions 1 through 4

#	Interventions	Unit of measure	Targets and Achievements					Projected Targets	
			LOP Target	LOP Cumulative Achieved	Year 3 Target	Quarter 2, (of Year 3) Achieved	Year 3 Cumulative Achieved	Year 4	Year 5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1	Form Program Advisory Committee consisting of public and private stakeholders	# Committee	1	0	1	0	0	-	-
2	Organize Semi-Annual Meetings of Program Advisory Committee	# Meeting	8	0	2	0	0	2	2
3	Improved capacity of leading input industry associations (BSA, BFA, BCPA, and AIRN)	# Org.	4	2	2	0	0	-	-
4	Develop new member services	# Service	12	10	5	0	0	1	-
5	New business models introduced and adopted by input retailers	# Module	8	1	3	0	0	3	1
6	New business models introduced and adopted by input wholesalers	# Module	3	0	-	0	0	2	1
7	Provide Sub-Awards to Local Implementing Partners	# Award	30	11	14	4	5	10	-
		Value (Tk.) of Award	57,247,500	8,105,451	-	1,439,666	4,436,516	TBD	TBD
8	Develop Specific Technical Assistance Package for All Local Organizations	# Package	1	1	-	0	0	-	-
9	Value of sub-awards provided to local implementing partners	\$	750,000	105,071	-	18,510	57,109	TBD	TBD
10	Provide TA to Develop Pre-Award Survey by Local Accounting Firm	# TA	1	0	1	0	0	-	-
11	Local Organizations Qualify to Implement USG-Funded Programming	# Org.	3	0	-	0	0	2	1
12	Develop new strategic partnerships with multinational and national companies	# Company	12	5	4	0	0	3	-
13	Organized demonstration plots	# Demo. Plot	500	251	200	51	168	150	67
		# Partner collaborated with							

#	Interventions	Unit of measure	Targets and Achievements					Projected Targets	
			LOP Target	LOP Cumulative Achieved	Year 3 Target	Quarter 2, (of Year 3) Achieved	Year 3 Cumulative Achieved	Year 4	Year 5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
		FTF Implementers		19		18	19		
		Input Association							
		Input Private Companies		36		33	35		
		Government							
14	Develop new materials by the private sectors companies	# Material	9	1	3	1	1 <sup>21</sup>	2	2
15	Publish Ag-Input Monthly Price Outlooks	# Outlook	48	7	12	3	6	12	12
16	Facilitate annual exhibition	# Exhibition	5	1	1	0	1	2	1
		# Partner collaborated with							
		FTF Implementers							
		Input Association							
		Input Companies							
		Government							
		# New Product exhibited	100	73	25	0	73	50	25
		# Retailer Participated		24		0	24		
		Male		23		0	23		
		Female		1		0	1		
		# Wholesaler participated		2		0	2		

<sup>21</sup> Developed a flip chart on Safe Use of Pesticide jointly with Bangladesh Crop Protection Association (BCPA)

#	Interventions	Unit of measure	Targets and Achievements					Projected Targets	
			LOP Target	LOP Cumulative Achieved	Year 3 Target	Quarter 2, (of Year 3) Achieved	Year 3 Cumulative Achieved	Year 4	Year 5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
		# National Company participated	80	22	20	0	22	40	20
		# Multi-National Company participated	20	1	5	0	1	10	5
		# Public Sector organization		5		0	5		
		# NGO Participated		6		0	6		
17	Conduct AIRN business, technical and safe use training sessions	# Session	160	56	50	1	10	35	-
18	Retailers attend business, safe use and technical training	# Retailer	3,000	1,731	1,500	26	290	1,059	-
		Male		1729		26	290		
		Female		2		0	0		
		Total		1,731		26	290		
19	Conduct regional and local study tour	# Tour	10	6	3	0	1	1	1
		# Retailer Participant	125	71	50	0	24	14	14
		Male		70		0	23		
		Female		1		0	1		
		Total		71		0	24		
		Other Stakeholder		9		0	6		
		1.		3		0	2		
		2.		3		0	2		
		3.		3		0	2		
		All participants		80		0	30		
		# Partner Collaborated With							
		FTF Implementers		0		0	0		

#	Interventions	Unit of measure	Targets and Achievements					Projected Targets	
			LOP Target	LOP Cumulative Achieved	Year 3 Target	Quarter 2, (of Year 3) Achieved	Year 3 Cumulative Achieved	Year 4	Year 5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
		Input Associations		3		0	3		
		Input Private Companies		0		0	0		
		Government		0		0	0		
20	Provide ToT on BMT to master trainers	# Person	7	64	7	6	14	-	-
		Male		55	7	5	13	-	-
		Female		9	-	1	1	-	-
		Total		64	7	6	14	-	-
21	Commercial trainers conduct training to BSA, BFA, BCPA members  Note: The training for retailers under this output statement “Commercial trainers conduct training to AIRN, BSA, BFA, and BCPA members” is a repetition of trainings to AIRN retailers; the training for AIRN retailers is being recorded separately. Thus, the word “AIRN” has now been dropped and the target for the association staff (BSA, BFA, and BCPA) has been changed to 15 (instead of 3,015).	# Participant	15					-	-
		AIRN							
		BSA							
		BFA							
		BCPA							
22	Enhance of existing best practice materials and develop guides for key crops	# Crop	14	2	6	0	0	8	-
23	Develop new educational publications	# Publication	23	9	8	5	5	6	5
24	Results of demonstration trials results disseminated through radio and other media outlets	# Event	15	0	6	0	0	6	3
		# Events through radio		0	-	0	0		
		# Events through print media		0	-	0	0		
		# Events through other media		0	-	0	0		
25	Creation AIRN logo	# Logo	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
26	Develop project brochure	# Brochure	1	16	0	0	4	-	-

#	Interventions	Unit of measure	Targets and Achievements					Projected Targets	
			LOP Target	LOP Cumulative Achieved	Year 3 Target	Quarter 2, (of Year 3) Achieved	Year 3 Cumulative Achieved	Year 4	Year 5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
27	Develop, adopt and monitor new input quality standards	# Standard	6	0	2	0	0	2	2
28	Identify Policy Constraints and present to the policy dialogue group	# Policy constraint ( <u>Analysed</u> )	8	11	4	0	0	-	-
29	Conducted policy dialogue events by assisted associations with government officials	# Policy dialogue ( <u>Drafted</u> )	32	11	9	0	0	8	6
		# Partner collaborated with							
		FTF Implementers		0		0	0		
		Input Association		4		0	0		
		Input Companies		0		0	0		
		Government		5		1	1		
30	Conduct village sessions on garnering support from families and neighbors for women retailers	# Session	300	16	105	13	16	195	-
		# Participant							
		Male		395		324	395		
		Female		282		246	282		
		Total		677		570	677		
31	Conduct Gender assessment and Follow-up Gender Assessment	# Assessment	2	1	-	-	-	1	-
32	Utilize GPS to plot retailers assigning unique identification number	# Retailer	3,000	1,376	2,000	695	1,130	754	-
33	Develop a directory of retailers	# Retailer	3,000	1,376	2,000	695	1,130	754	-
34	Provide matching grants (\$1,000) to women retailers	# Women retailer	300	0	200	0	0	100	-
		Amount (Tk) of AIP share ('000)	24,000	0	18,400	0	0	5,600	-
		Amount (Tk.) of grantee share							

#	Interventions	Unit of measure	Targets and Achievements					Projected Targets	
			LOP Target	LOP Cumulative Achieved	Year 3 Target	Quarter 2, (of Year 3) Achieved	Year 3 Cumulative Achieved	Year 4	Year 5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
35	Create quality standards and business ethics monitoring committee	# Committee	1	0	1	0	0	-	-
36	Certification of retailers	# Retailer	4,000	991	2,500	138	531	718	-
		Male		987		136	528		
		Female		04		2	3		
		Total		991		138	531		
37	Earned AIRN logo through AIRN accrediting criteria (New)	# Retailer	3,000	830	1,400	180	508	1,278	-
		Male		825		178	505		
		Female		05		2	3		
		Total		830		180	508		
38	Input companies participate in the Business ethics committee	# Company	3	0	3	0	0	-	-
39	Conduct audit annually by independent auditors on business ethics	# Audit	4	0	1	0	0	2	1
40	Retailers audited renewing certification each year	# Retailer	2,400	0	480	0	0	1,440	480
		Male							
		Female							
		Total							
41	Print material distribution	# Copy (Print Version)	200,000	10,000	50,000	4,000	9,100	50,000	50,000
		# Copy (Key Crops)	10,000	0	4,300	0	0	5,700	