



FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative



Commodity Production and Marketing Activity FY15 Annual Report



USAID | **UGANDA**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Chemonics International, Inc. prepared this annual report for the United States Agency for International Development pursuant to Contract No. AID-617-C-13-0000, Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing Activity.

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October 31, 2015

Chemonics International, Inc. produced this publication for review by the United States Agency for International Development

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FEED THE FUTURE UGANDA COMMODITY PRODUCTION AND MARKETING ACTIVITY

**FY15 Annual Report
(October 2014 - September 2015)**

Contract No.AID-617-C-13-00003

Submitted to USAID/Uganda

October 31, 2015





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LIST OF ACRONYMS

aBi	Agribusiness Initiative Trust & Finance
AFCA	African Fine Coffees Association
AIA	Agricultural Inputs Activity
ACE	Area Cooperative Enterprise
APS	Annual Program Statement
BCC	Behavior Change Communication
BDS	Business Development Services
BFS	Bureau of Food Security
B2B	Business to business
CEDO	Community Enterprise Development Organization
CIAT	International Center for Tropical Agriculture
CLA	Collaborating, Learning and Adapting
CODE	Community Development Enterprise
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CORI	Coffee Research Institute
CPD	Commodity Portfolio Director
CWD	Coffee Wilt Disease
CWS	Central Washing Station
DCA	Development Credit Authority
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DFCU	Development Finance Company of Uganda Limited
DOI	Development Objective I
DOPs	District Operation Plans
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DSIP	Development Strategy Investment Plan
DQA	Data Quality Assessments
EAC	East African Community
EAGC	East African Grain Council
EEA	Feed the Future Enabling Environment for Agriculture Activity
FaaFB	Farming as a Family Business
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FICA	Farm Inputs Care Centre
FONUS	Food and Nutrition Solutions Limited
FOs	Farmer Organizations
FTF	Feed the Future
GAP	Good Agronomic Practices
GAPP	Governance, Accountability, Participation and Performance activity
GDF	Global Development Fund
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPDM	Integrated Pests and Diseases Management
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IPs	Implementing Partners
IR	Intermediate Result
ISSD	Integrated Seed Sector Development
ISFM	Integrated soil fertility management
KG	Kilograms
LEAD	Livelihoods and Enterprises for Agricultural Development
LEO	Leverage Economic Opportunities

MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MPEP	Micro and Private Enterprise Promotion
MIS	Management Information System
MLI	Market Linkage Initiative
MT	Metric Ton
MTIC	Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Cooperatives
MVCM	Maize Value Chain Manager
NaCRRRI	National Crop Resources Research Institute
NaCORRI	National Coffee Resource Research Institute
NARO	National Agricultural Research Organization
NASECO	Nalweyo Seed Company
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PCV	Peace Corps Volunteer
PHH	Post-Harvest Handling
PIN	Production for Improved Nutrition
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PMU	Project Management Unit
PO	producer organization
RATIN	Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network
REDS	Rural Enterprise Development Services Ltd
SAF	Strategic Activities Fund
SAFE	Supporting Access to Justice, Fostering Equity and Peace
SDS	USAID/Uganda Strengthening Decentralization for Sustainability Program
SG2000	Sasakawa Global 2000
SMEs	Small Medium Enterprises
SMS	Short Message Service
TDY	Temporary Duty
TGCU	The Grain Council of Uganda
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance
TOT	Training of Trainers
UCDA	Uganda Coffee Development Authority
UCE	Uganda Commodities Exchange
UCF	Uganda Coffee Federation
UDB	Uganda Development Bank
UEPB	Uganda Export Promotions Board
UNADA	Uganda National Agro-input Dealers Association
UNBS	Uganda National Bureau of Standards
UNFFE	Uganda National Farmers Federation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USTA	Uganda Seed Trade Association
VA	Village Agent
VSA	Village Service Agent
VARM	Village Agent Retail Model
VC	Value Chain
VSLAs	Village Savings and Loan Associations
WFP	World Food Programme



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing Activity (hereinafter referred to as CPM or the Activity) is implemented through a five-year, Cost-Plus-Fixed-Fee contract funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). CPM is part of USAID/Uganda's Feed the Future (FTF) Value Chain Development Project that builds on more than 20 years of agricultural development experience and lessons learned by USAID/Uganda, Ugandan partners, and other donors. The two other core activities under the project are the Enabling Environment for Agriculture Activity (EEA) and the Agricultural Inputs Activity (AI or Ag-inputs).

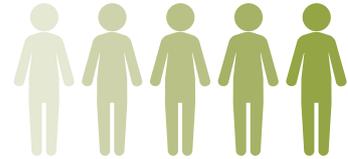
CPM exists to increase the productivity and income of Ugandan families. CPM harnesses market forces and uses innovative methods to reduce poverty and under-nutrition in rural families by increasing the quantity and quality of coffee, maize, and beans that they are able to produce and sell. Chemonics International, Inc. implements CPM, which began on March 28, 2013 with a contract ceiling of \$20,991,889. The FY15 annual report provides an overview of CPM's approach, highlights of FY15 results, lessons learned and how CPM has adapted.

CPM embraces the collaborating, learning, and adapting approach promoted by USAID/Uganda. Across the three value chains, CPM engaged government institutions, private sector entities, and other FTF partners in planning, monitoring, mapping outcomes of innovations, and thereafter scaling up best practices and/or re-designing strategies and tactics within regions and value chains. For instance, the Activity worked with AI to support 15 Village Agents (VAs) associated with three traders to access inputs through two preferred stockists that supplied 20 tons of maize seed. With EEA, CPM worked to disseminate and train farmers on East African Community (EAC) maize standards. With local government, CPM regularly shared information at District Operational Plan (DOP) meetings in 17 of the districts that have formalized collaboration with USAID. Moreover, consistent with the FTF whole-of-government approach, CPM is collaborating with four Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) as their primary assignment. Through this collaboration, the volunteers trained 35 traders in entrepreneurship skills to help them improve service delivery to farmers.

The report is organized by the Intermediate Results (IRs) of the contract that aim to increase crop productivity and access to competitive markets. Under each of the two IRs the report highlights successes as well as challenges, and CPM adaptations to tactics as a result of each. The Management section includes additional details of how CPM used CLA to adjust its approach over the year.

CPM employs a facilitative market system approach and in FY15 expanded to all 34 FTF districts by engaging middle value chain actors (e.g. traders, producer organizations, and processors) who invested resources and established relationships that incentivized and built the capacity of farmers to improve productivity and increase market access across the target value chains. Over the life of the Activity, CPM is tasked with reaching 400,000 farmers as it significantly contributes to the Feed the Future Uganda results. Annex I presents detailed progress against life of activity indicators and targets that were developed in collaboration with USAID upon activity inception.

226,896
Farmers benefiting directly from CPM



\$648/ha

\$381/ha

\$1,757/ha



Gross Margin

Overview and Approach

The CPM contract established the Results Framework (RF) and related tasks. The Intermediate Results (IRs) and sub-IRs depicted in Figure 1 provide the framework for the annual work plans and results monitoring. At the highest level of the RF is USAID's *Development Objective 1 (DOI): Economic growth from agriculture and the natural resource base expanded in selected areas and population groups.*

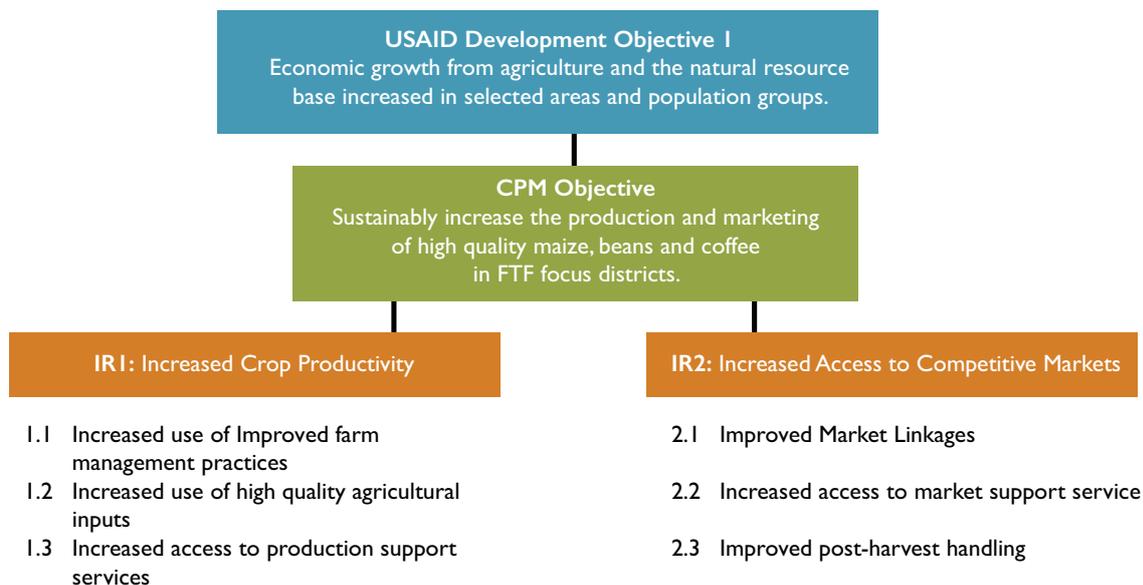


Figure 1: Results Framework

While the Activity contributes significantly to DOI, it does so through CPM's objective to sustainably increase the production and marketing of high quality maize, beans, and coffee in FTF focus districts. CPM's objective will be achieved through annual work plans focused on the two IRs: 1) increased crop productivity, and 2) increased access to competitive markets, and their respective sub-IRs and tasks. As CPM has gained experience through implementation over the past 2.5 years, it has modified and adapted some of the tactics used to implement the tasks that support its development hypothesis in Figure 2. Early in its first year of operations, CPM adopted a collaborating learning, and adapting (CLA) approach to implementation. The CLA agenda is supported by a robust monitoring and evaluation system that aligns promoted innovations and tasks to desired outputs and outcomes. The system supports both internal and external learning needs. The Activity has always used a facilitative value chain approach aimed

at improving relationships among middle value chain actors and farmers to achieve sustainable productivity through promotion of incentives that motivate value chain actors and encourage public-private investment and collaboration on sector competitiveness strategies.

CPM's development hypothesis is achieved through multiple intermediary business models including producer organizations, cooperatives and traders linked to buyers, small-scale processors such as coffee hullers and washing station operators, agro-dealers, warehouse managers, block farm nucleus centers, and private sector and NGO farm service centers. Other key stakeholders engaged included grain and coffee cooperative unions; the Millers' Association; processor and seed companies; financial institutions; information and communication technology (ICT) service providers (e.g., mobile money); equipment fabricators; traders; village agents, and input agents. Multi-stakeholder engagement helped cultivate "buy in" using a facilitative value chain approach.

If... middle value chain actors understand the incentives to improve their supply chains and

If... CPM interventions change their behavior so that they invest their time/money to:

- Increase farmer access to and use of high quality inputs
- Improve farmer access to and use of production support services
- Increase farmer knowledge and adoption of improved farm management practices
- Increase farmer adoption of post-harvest handling practices

Then... Farming families will sustainably increase production and sales of high quality maize, beans and coffee, which will increase their income and long-term prospects.

Figure 2: Development Hypothesis

CPM engaged private sector entities through energizing win-win partnerships with other FTF activities, including agro input suppliers, exporters, and trade institutions. Through these partnerships, CPM demonstrated to smallholder farmers that self-sustaining innovations, extension services, modern technologies, policy promotion, and other proven practices can effectively increase agricultural growth, improve livelihoods, and reduce poverty among smallholder farmers, including women.

And while CPM used CLA methodology to adjust its implementation approach, the project has also significantly transformed its operational structure and mentored staff to go beyond a simple value chain approach to a more expansive facilitative market system approach to value chain development.

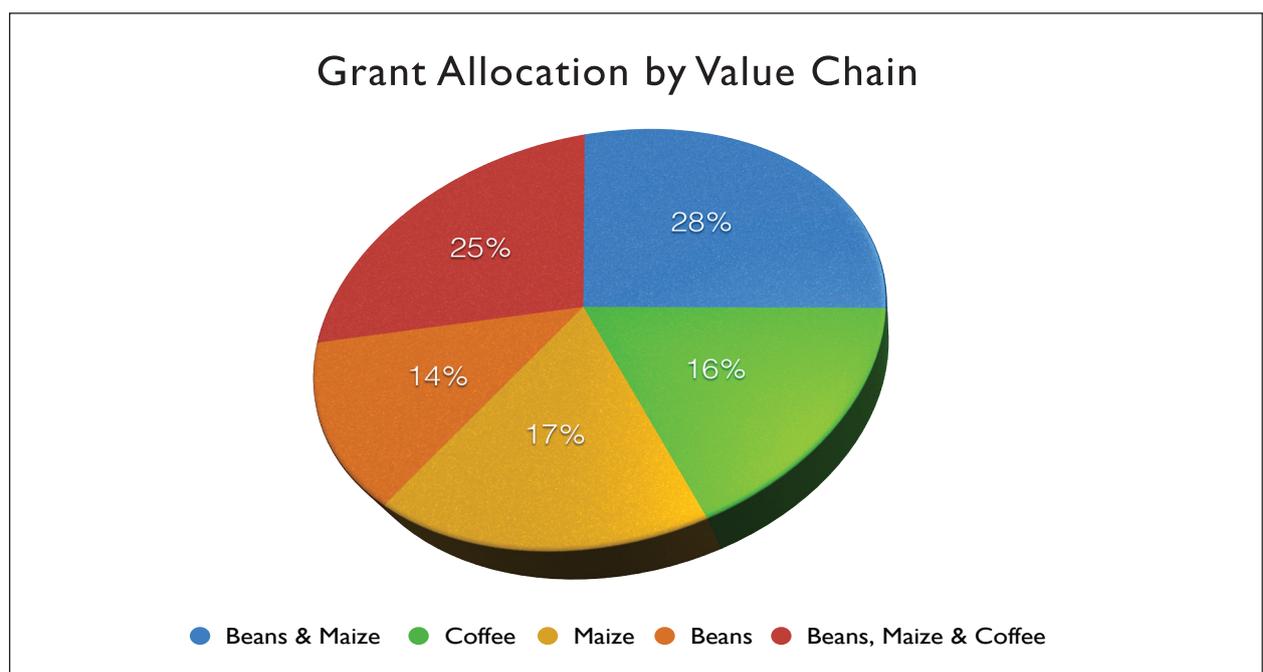


Figure 3: Approximately \$375,000 in grants allocated by value chain



IR 1: INCREASED CROP PRODUCTIVITY

The Activity scaled up collaboration with selected enterprises and input dealers to coach and mentor middle actors in Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), combined with smart climate change adaptation measures, such as promotion of resilient varieties and conservation agriculture. Engagements with these middle actors also included cost sharing in hosting and managing of learning sites, farmer trainings, media promotion, farmer field days and exchange visits, with the aim of reaching smallholder farmers and other stakeholders. The Activity also utilized ICT tools developed by Grameen and other mobile application providers to improve stakeholder access and response to weather forecasts and information, enabling them to adjust production calendars for each agro-ecological area. Using grant and SAF funding, the Activity also partnered with private sector players and a network of traders and VAs to promote farmers' access to production support services such as soil testing, spraying, and planting services.

Extension Services Are Vital

The Activity continued to build middle value chain actors' capacity to provide extension services. Harnessing a network of 1,158 VAs, CPM expanded their ability to provide good agronomic practice (GAP) skills to smallholder farmers. CPM focused its skills development on integrated soil fertility management (ISFM) and integrated pest management (IPM), as well as climate smart agriculture. The climate smart technologies promoted included: utilization of shade trees, soil and water conservation techniques, coffee establishment techniques, and mulching technologies. The provision of extension and other production services by middle value chain actors reflected a significant buy-in for Activity-promoted

Sixty-eight-year old Alice Tibalwa from Bugiri District, always dreamed of owning a decent house but her dream seemed to fade with each passing year.

"I have been a maize farmer for a long time, but I was not getting much out of it because I didn't know there was a better way of farming. Out of an acre of maize, I would only get 3 bags. I was struggling to look after my grandchildren and I wanted a bigger house since our small house could not accommodate us." As a result of training she received from the Village Agent, Alice decided to try the Longe 10H maize variety and apply fertilizers. She also bought a maize cleaner and tarpaulin.

"I wanted my maize to be clean because BAIDA gives a higher price for clean maize. I have also stopped beating the maize to remove it from the cobs because it reduces its quality and I now use a sheller which I access through my Village Agent at a fee." In 2014, Alice harvested 13 bags from one acre in season A and 12 bags in season B, earning over one million Uganda shillings. In two years, Alice has been able to build a new house and pays school fees for her 10 grandchildren. At 68, Alice is living her dream, thanks to the support from Feed the Future.

1,283
Number of farmers
accessing crop
insurance



innovations. In support of the beans value chain, the Activity trained 23 traders and 185 VAs on good agronomic practices, disease and pest management, weed control, and fertilizer application using 370 learning sites to reach 9,250 beans farmers. Cumulatively, CPM has conducted 917 learning sites, exposing 69,254 smallholder farmers to improved technologies including staking options for climbing beans, pesticide application, and conservation tillage. In coffee, 38 partners with a combined network of 355 VAs were trained on the proper combination of soil-based macro nutrient fertilizers and foliar fertilizers. Two hundred eighteen coffee learning sites of ½ acre each were established in collaboration with middle actors, exposing an additional 8,290 farmers to new technologies, intercropping coffee with beans, and techniques for increasing yields and demand for inputs; cumulatively, a total 67,638 coffee farmers have been exposed. In maize, 73 middle actors invested in establishing 368 learning sites worth \$41,503, exposing 15,088 farmers, for a cumulative total of 90,004 maize farmers exposed through 1,250 learning sites of 1 acre each, managed by 625 VAs. The Activity also cost-shared on a 50:50 basis with 108 middle actors to organize 93 farmer field days targeting 2,246 farmer leaders from 2,246 groups across the three value chains. The Activity adapted innovations from SAWBO on E-extension using animation, and worked with Akorion to develop extension animation and equip VAs with user-friendly content they can use to train smallholder farmers in agronomy, PHH, crop insurance, and soil testing.

101,942
Farmers implementing risk-reducing practices/actions to improve resilience to climate change



Farmer field days provide a platform for farmer-led practical events where farmers, researchers, and private sector players come together to share knowledge and build community connections.

Kyazanga Farmers' Cooperative Society, in Lwengo District, with support from CPM, held a farmer field day event on May 20, 2015 that attracted more than 190 participants. The event provided a platform to disseminate information on ways to increase household income and improve nutrition through bean seed multiplication. As a result of the field day, more farmers have been motivated and encouraged to start up community bean seed multiplication to improve their livelihood.

Grameen Foundation and Akorion provided refresher training to 184 VAs on the use of smartphones to access agricultural E-extension services. The Activity collaborated with AIA, EEA, and Makerere University Centre for Climate Change and Resource Institute (MUCCRI), to train 50 climate change champions from 7 districts. These champions included: VAs, traders, input dealers, district coordinators, and youth who were trained to become advocates for climate change. In collaboration with the National Maize Program of NARO, the Activity compiled and distributed an inventory of new stress and drought tolerant maize varieties to traders and other partners to address farmers' climate change problems. The Activity partnered with FICA Seeds, a private seed company, to introduce two new high yielding, drought tolerant maize seed varieties: Co 267 and FH 5160. Farmers continued to adopt climate smart technologies such as conservation tillage, use of early maturing varieties, and accessing weather information through ICT mobile applications. The Activity also partnered with Akorion, which used their ICT platform to profile 384 farmers under the white beans out grower scheme for export to Kenya and 1,600 farmers in coffee in ACPL-Ibanda and Bukusu for UTZ certification.



\$156,106,145
Value of Incremental Sales across the three value chains

Good Quality Inputs Are What Farmers Need

78%
Farmers purchasing inputs from village agents



Middle actors continued to scale-up the supply of quality inputs to smallholder farmers. The door-to-door model promoted by the Activity expanded business opportunities for VAs and traders while simultaneously delivering inputs closer to the farmers. To improve farmers' access to affordable, high-quality seed, the Activity trained 5 partners on seed multiplication and linked them to companies such as Grow More Seeds Ltd. and Pearl Seeds. A total of 223 tons of certified seed and 28 tons of foundation seed were sold to Pearl Seeds.

The Activity facilitated business linkages among 44 coffee actors and inputs suppliers such as Hangzhou and Balton to enable them establish long-term business relationships. In the coffee value chain, the Activity supported middle actors to organize 18 farmer

field days and provide opportunities for farmers, traders, and agro-dealers to interact. Field days were held during which agro inputs and equipment worth \$41,000 were sold and business linkages were created.

NOKIA farmers, a group of youth based in Luwero District, provides production and post-harvest handling services to farmers who are primarily based in the city and are therefore unable to manage their farms. The youth provide services including land preparation, planting, spraying, extension, harvesting, and post-harvest handling. Village Agents identify farmers who need these services and link them to NOKIA farmers. "NOKIA farmers have simplified my work. A job that I used to do in a week, they do in 2 days." CPM trained the 45 NOKIA youth farmers in safe use and handling of agro-chemicals and also provided.

In collaboration with Makerere University College of Agriculture and Environmental Studies and the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), the Activity trained 440 VAs trading inputs worth \$2,500 per VA in a season, on safe use and handling of agro-chemicals. These VAs subsequently trained 128,433 farmers. In addition, in partnership with AIA, 100 youths were trained on safe use and handling of agro-chemicals, resulting in over 100 youths of HRNS Kaweri who are now able to comply with the minimum health and safety standards. Additionally, 150 middle actors and their network of 1158 VAs were trained in spraying services and business skills to incentivize them to provide production support services as a business. As a result, 1158 VAs provided support services such as input sales, planting, and spraying services to 103,647 farmers across the three value chains. The Activity also partnered with 3 large equipment suppliers (Balton, Global agro, Brafric, and Grow More Seeds and Chemicals) and AIA to organize 4 regional field equipment promotions to showcase various labor-saving technologies, including irrigation systems, beans shellers, seed cleaners, electronic sprayers, and manual sprayers.

\$1,210,670
Input sales by activity-assisted VAs and VSAs



450
Young agents equipped with smartphones provide E-extension, inputs, farmer profiling, and crop insurance services

30%
Percentage of farmers acknowledging positive benefits from the accessed inputs

A total of 286 youth VAs were trained to provide production services to farmers and acquired electronic spray pumps worth \$28,600 on a cost-share basis with the Activity, and are now engaged in providing spraying and other production services to farmers. During the year, the youth VAs each reached an average of 162 farmers (\$1,620/season) and earned an average profit margin of \$10 per farmer. Another 263 youth VAs associated with Akorion provided group spraying services in partnership with agro-chemical service providers, Balton (U) Ltd. and Hangzhou Agrochemicals (U) Ltd. The Activity also facilitated a partnership between the NARO soil testing Laboratory and Akorion to train 120 VAs youths in soil testing with the aim of ultimately providing this service to farmers. As a result, 812 coffee farmers from Bukusu and Ankole Coffee Producers Ltd. received soil testing and corresponding recommendations.

The Activity partnered with Savannah Commodities Co. Limited to improve smallholder access to fertilizers through small pack sizes of 1kg, 2kg and 5 kg by jointly investing in a fertilizer blending facility. The private sector investment by Savannah was \$800,000 while CPM invested \$145,000. The locally-owned company is an agro-processor mainly dealing in green coffee beans and grain. With support from the Activity, Savannah acquired equipment to repackage smaller 5 - 20kg fertilizer units. Under this partnership, the Activity and Savannah aim to improve farmers' access to blended fertilizer in smaller quantities with the aim of increasing fertilizer adoption from 1kg/ha to 8kg/ha. This will also provide alternative business opportunities for middle value chain actors including village agents (VAs) and youth by providing them with the opportunity to become para stockists.

Access to Production Finance is Critical

251,543ha

Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices

To promote farmers' access to production finance, the Activity collaborated with Akorion and PCVs to train 65 traders and 420 VAs in financial and business planning, record keeping, pre-selection, and digital profiling of bankable farmers. As a result, 51,880 farmers were able to access loans from five banks including Centenary Bank, Finance Trust Bank, DFCU, Post Bank, Opportunity Bank, and UDB. The aim of the digital farmer profiles is to enable financial institutions to efficiently access biographical, historical, and real-time production data using the EZY-Agric platform. The platform captures individual farmer records on production, acreage, GPS maps, input usage per season, and farmer biographical data. Three insurance companies, two banks, and two seed companies have enrolled to utilize the platform for their field outreach. To date, 20,300 farmers have digital profiles, of whom 2,829 accessed loans using the platform. The Activity signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with DFCU bank, one of the three banks benefiting from the DCA agreement, to provide technical support and recommend prospective farmer groups who passed the pre-selection criteria for funding. On a pilot basis, Kaserem Area Cooperative Enterprise members based in Kapchorwa district obtained a credit facility from DFCU to finance inputs, production assistance, and marketing of beans and maize. To reduce crop production risks and promote adoption of crop insurance policies, the Activity collaborated with UDB, UAP, Akorion, Amarin Financial Group, and Jubilee Insurance to include the cost of crop insurance in production loans. Thirty-five VAs were also trained as crop insurance agents to promote crop insurance at the farmer level. CPM seized opportunities in rural banking using ICT on a pilot basis to increase farmers' access to loans and develop a culture of saving. Partnering with Akorion and Postbank Uganda, the team identified 12 VAs to pilot rural agency banking in Sironko and Kapchorwa districts.

30%

Percentage of farmers acknowledging positive benefits from the accessed inputs







IR 2: INCREASED ACCESS TO COMPETITIVE MARKETS

The Activity approach is focused on markets as the driver for investments at both the farmer and middle actor levels. During FY15, the Activity aimed to increase access to markets by harnessing the private sector to support smallholder farmers in reducing post-harvest losses and accessing rural finance.

Other key interventions included developing incentives for youth to provide PHH services, encouraging the use of e-payments, promoting labor-saving technologies, and increasing storage capacity.



370,409MT
Volume of exports by
Activity-assisted traders
and exporters

Competing Successfully in New Markets is More than Just a Possibility

Across the three value chains, on a 50:50 cost-share arrangement, CPM linked 41 traders and exporters at the Busia border to enable them explore opportunities for exporting quality produce to Kenya. As a result, 12 traders signed grain contract agreements with Busia Produce Dealers, Hadoto Foods Limited, and Malaba Cross-Border Trader to supply single color beans (NABE5). To increase access to new markets in beans, the Activity collaborated with Akorion to pilot a grower scheme in Kaserem ACE and Bukusu ACE for white bean production for export, covering 432 acres and using ICT to monitor farmers' progress. Lessons learned from this scheme will provide the blueprint for replication to other commodities. In addition, the Activity linked Kiyuni United Farmers Company to Nkoola Agency, a major bean exporter to America, to supply nine tons of quality beans as a market trial. Activity partner Joseph Initiative expanded their operations by establishing 20 new buying centers in Mubende and reaching an additional 23,000 farmers. In the coffee value chain, the Activity collaborated with exporters and Uganda Coffee Quality Traders and Association (UCQTPA) to identify 28 new partners to facilitate vertical market linkages and provide market information. Through

Upland Rice Millers Company Limited (URMCL) is a private company based in Jinja, eastern Uganda with a network of over 30,000 farmers spread throughout the country. Upland Rice Millers with support from the Activity will acquire a biomass dryer that will be used to dry farmers' and traders' grain as part of an efficient grain processing system. This is expected to reduce the cost of drying from the current rate of UGX 80 per kg to UGX 24 per kg. This partnership aims to further the Activity's strategy to improve on post-harvest handling methods by promoting incentives for faster and more efficient movement of maize to access quality driven markets.

158,827
Number of rural households benefiting directly from U.S. government interventions



business-to-business (B2B) meetings, the Activity strengthened linkages between 27 coffee intermediaries and exporters including Kibinge Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Society, Ankole Coffee Producer Cooperative Union, and Ankole Coffee Processors Ltd. to obtain higher premiums by increasing the quantity and improving the quality of production. The Young Farmer's Coalition of Uganda (YOFACO) and CPM engaged youth in agriculture by participating in six radio talk shows encouraging youth to seize opportunities in beans export. The Activity also led market initiatives to link the youth with three companies based in Kenya (Njoro Canning Factory Kenya Limited, Garnet Enterprises, and Betta Grains Limited) demanding 20,000 MT of beans per season. CPM also trained 187 YOFACO members in business skills and negotiation strategies to better position them for other similar opportunities.

Halima Naiga, 45, has always dreamed of a better education for her four children. She dropped out of school in primary seven because her parents could not afford school fees for all their children. They only educated the boys. In Kibinge where she lives—a remote village 130km south of Kampala—it's common for parents to keep boys in school but drop the girls in the hope that girls will get a better life through marriage. The result is a cycle of poverty and missed opportunities for girls. But coffee farming is changing that. The income garnered through farming is what Halima is using to send her eldest daughter Madiina Nakakembo to a vocational school to study hairdressing. "All my brothers went to school. They are teachers. I pay fees for my 3 girls so that they can go to school. I also pay for the boy. This season, I am expecting 300,000 shillings per bag after processing," Halima said, after delivering 10 bags at Kibinge Coffee Farmers' Cooperative Society—one of the traders supported.



12,600
Number of private enterprises and producers' organisations receiving USG assistance

\$4.7 million
Value of contracts signed for Beans export by partners



46%
Percentage of female participants in U.S. government-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources

Quality and Standards Equal Increased Profits

CPM worked throughout the year with the public and private sectors as well as other implementing partners to help improve quality, support standards, and demonstrate that making changes means making money. Highlights included:

- The Uganda Export Promotions Board (UEPB) and Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) worked with CPM to train 356 cross-border traders on the procedures for and benefits of trading formally in the EAC, and demonstrate that the use of panya routes are not the best way to earn a living.
- Together with EEA, UNBS, and UEPB, CPM trained 231 middle value chain actors (including traders and VAs) on EAC maize and bean quality standards.
- Fifteen middle actors consisting of traders and cooperatives showcased their products and interacted with other traders in 31 coffee shows through cost-share arrangements with CPM.
- Star Café Ltd., a company committed to transforming Ugandan coffee culture, invested with CPM at a 1:2 ratio to help drive domestic consumption by improving Ugandan citizens' access to quality coffee. Star Café trained 40 young men and women in a barista and business skills program.
- The Activity partnered with EEA, UNBS, and WFP to disseminate EAC standards using 1,308 brochures, 148 maize and beans posters, and 600 coffee trainings among intermediaries who then used these resources to educate their farmers on the standards.
- The Activity partnered with 25 middle actors on a 50:50 cost-share basis across the three value chains to invest in initiatives that improve grain quality at both the farm and aggregation level. During FY15, the Activity partnered with six actors to purchase 17 grain cleaners and 17 mobile maize shellers worth \$85,300. This included Joseph Initiative who cost-shared with the Activity to acquire 14 mobile shellers, enabling them to establish 20 additional buying centers in Masindi and Kasese districts and increase storage capacity to 6,500 MT. At their own initiative, 35 individual service providers and 30 actors purchased 65 additional mobile shellers worth \$108,000 to provide shelling services as an income generating enterprise. In collaboration with equipment suppliers, the Activity promoted two labor-saving technologies, bean threshers and cleaners,



1544
MSMEs received business development services to improve grain standards

that meet women's needs. In coffee, four actors invested \$45,930 in the construction of coffee hulling facilities (including six hulling machines and four coffee moisture meters). The Activity facilitated a business-to-business (B2B) partnership between a local fabricator, Munyegera Metal Works, and 15 traders to improve market support services in three regions (Eastern, Central and Western). During FY15, the Activity partnered with one local fabricator, three crop insurance providers, eight local banks, eight seed companies, 10 agro equipment suppliers, 45 agro dealers, and 1,485 middle actors across the four regions. A specialized training was organized for 33 youths to be able to provide maintenance services to shelling and cleaning equipment in 12 districts. This will enable the youths to provide the maintenance services as well as earn income.



\$2,376,191

Value of new private sector investment in agriculture



5

Labor-saving technologies that meet women farmers' needs made available



349

New Jobs

Akorion and Grameen trained 420 VAs on the use of smartphones to access and disseminate market information, demonstrating that ICT platforms can facilitate transactions between middle actors and farmers. The Activity also supported dissemination of market information to traders who reported an increase in the volume of their sales as a result. A total of 150 middle actors and 1,158 VAs accessed market information from Farmgain Africa as a result of Activity support who in turn disseminated information to 69,480 smallholder farmers across the three value chains to improve on volume traded. For example Moses Makaka

of BAIDA in Bugiri district reported an increase in the volume of sales from 140 MT to 680 MT and Kakinga Millers based in Ibanda district reported an increase in quantity procured from 800MT to 1300MT as a result of the market information provided. The Activity mentored traders and VAs on the effectiveness of using mobile money for payments. The VAs found it safer to use mobile money than carrying cash without the fear of theft during transactions.



17,780

E-payments completed by value chain actors as a result of the Activity's promotion of USAID's Better than Cash Initiative

Reducing Postharvest Losses at Farmer and Aggregation Levels

The Activity built the capacity of 1,158 VAs and 150 traders in good PHH services to reduce losses at the farmer level. In turn, the actors trained a total of 128,433 farmers in better PHH techniques. Specifically, the training focused on managing aggregation centers, construction of cribs, and record keeping. With the aim of reducing breakage due to poor shelling methods, the Activity supported training of 202 maize Sheller operators on maize shelling, grading and machine maintenances, in partnership with Munyegera fabricating company based in Mayuge District.

The Activity trained 61 coffee hulling operators in machinery skills to improve coffee processing. As a result, the operators were able to offer better hulling services which improved the outcome ratio from 50% to 60% production. An additional 30 partners operating rural collection centers benefited from the Activity's training on hygiene practices, use of pallets in storage of coffee, and proper ventilation to maintain quality coffee.

Furthermore, the Activity collaborated with Akorion to train 23 VAs from Busoga region as ToTs on PHH and grain conditioning using WFP-produced PHH training materials. As a result, 6,210 smallholder farmers were trained on good grain handling and storage, and also procured grain storage units of various capacity from 100kg to 1.2 tons. Joseph Initiative increased its storage capacity by 6,500MT in Masindi and Kasese districts as a result of expansion in operations and reached an additional 23,000 farmers.



	Beans	Coffee	Maize
Baseline	18%	7%	25%
2015	46%	17%	98%

Reduction in PHH losses

Mr. Moses Balikoowa a trader and chairman of Nakisenhe Adult Literacy Group (NALG) in Iganga District, led some members of his group to Masindi District on a learning visit at Joseph Initiative, a trading company which is also involved in growing maize. They wanted to learn ways of minimizing postharvest losses. Moses and his group had been growing maize but they were incurring big losses due to inadequate postharvest handling methods. Following the visit, NALG embarked on constructing a maize crib to reduce postharvest losses. But the group did not have all the funding. Through a cost-share program, CPM enabled the group to construct a maize crib of 20 metric tons at one of their aggregation centers. Moses says, “We are now in position to take maize from the farmers before the quality begins to drop. This is just the beginning and we shall explore more affordable ways to enable us meet the EAC maize standards.” For the harvest of 2015A season, since they now have a crib, NALG will be able to get more from their registered farmers. Moses now plans to scale up construction of more cribs in all NALG sub-counties.





COLLABORATING, LEARNING AND ADAPTING

COLLABORATING

Internal Questions/Decisions

- Who do we work with?
- Who should we work with and why?
- Who offers the greatest opportunity for synergies?
- How can I use my awareness of insights Discovery (ID) profile and knowledge of others on my team and the VC Project more effectively?

External Activities

- Coordinated planning with partners (individual, institutional, inter organizational)
- Joint activities with partners through leveraged resources (e.g. staff, funds)
- Demand – driven technical assistance and capacity building for CPM beneficiary partners
- Coordinate and share information, research, and monitoring and evaluation findings with partners

LEARNING

Internal Questions/Decisions

- What worked well and why?
- What did not work well and why?
- What do I need to know to do my job better?
- How can I use my knowledge of my team members' ID profiles to better understanding how to do things differently?

External Activities

Coordinate learning with partners as part of the learning process
 Share information, behavior change results, and M&IE findings with partners through multiple models: workshops, training, guidelines, IEC materials

ADAPTING

Internal Questions/Decisions

- What have we learned that can justify adapting?
- What evidence do we have to support adapting?
- What should we do differently and why?

External Activities

- Share information partners
- Adjust communications to stakeholders
- Alter targeted tasks in work plan
- Emphasize cost/benefits of new technologies and first hand experiences for farmer uptake, scaling up and scaling out

Figure 4: Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting Process

Collaborating

As noted above, CPM collaborated on much of its work in FY15 with other actors in the three value chains. It started with a firm foundation as the FY15 work plan was coordinated with AI, EEA, and others late in FY14.

To scale up partnerships at the district level, the Activity participated in District Operational Planning (DOP) meetings. Among the results shared during these meetings were the use of ICT in creating linkages to facilitate the dissemination of market information, promotion of improved bean and maize varieties, record keeping for access to finance, East African (EA) grain standards, engagement of youth in agriculture, and improved postharvest handling and storage practices.

The Activity participated in the USAID Data Quality Assessment (DQA) of 12 out of 15 FTF indicators reported on by the Activity. Based on feedback from the DQA findings and lessons learned in implementing the M&E system, the Activity collaborated with USAID/Uganda's DOI team and the Learning Contract to revise five data collection tools and drop one. The Activity rolled out of ICT enabled smartphones in collaboration with Grameen Foundation to reduce manual data entry of household surveys on Farmer record form (Form six). In collaboration with Datacare (U) Ltd, a software development company for providing MIS support, the Activity rolled out SMS reminders to data collectors. Trader and VAs database were refined by reducing the number of traders from 179 to 150 (-19%) and VAs from 1,538 to 1,158 (-13%). The refinement exercise was designed to eliminate traders and VAs with limited ability to help achieve systemic change.

Learning and Adapting

Learning and adapting is a critical element of CPM's approach to market system development. At the highest level we continuously examined our progress towards indicator targets and midway through the year discovered that we weren't accelerating as fast as planned. In July and again in September, CPM conducted two extensive reviews of its database and eliminated roughly 20% of the middle actors and associated VAs and farmers that did not meet the criteria that had been established for working with the Activity. The reason for this is simple; if CPM is not working with the supply chain actors who exhibit the desired behavior in the market system, and who also bring the scale of activity necessary to create a critical mass of early adopters, it will never be able to scale out its work through communications efforts intended to bring about systemic change.

The trader-village agent model approach that accounts for 65% of our intervention, is more individualistic than working with groups and this accounts for the low numbers in terms of producers or farmers groups the Activity is reaching through the traders. This is a behavior change that the Activity will focus on in FY16 by building stronger market institutions and stronger chain relations that allow traders to support farmers to be organized in producers' associations and also spur the formation of trader associations. The intervention will enable farmers and traders to do business in a more efficient and beneficial way as well as achieving the Activity goal of working with more producers' or farmers associations.

To better understand how intermediaries work with farmers and various projects (including CPM), to develop the FY16 work plan and behavior change strategy, CPM conducted a multi-methods study among traders, village agents (VAs), village service agents (VSAs), and farmers. The research involved field observations, a quantitative mini-survey based on LQAS methodology, and in-depth interviews with 228 respondents comprised of traders, VAs, VSAs, and farmers. As a result, CPM made major changes to the way that it manages its work and created stricter criteria for entities with whom it can work.

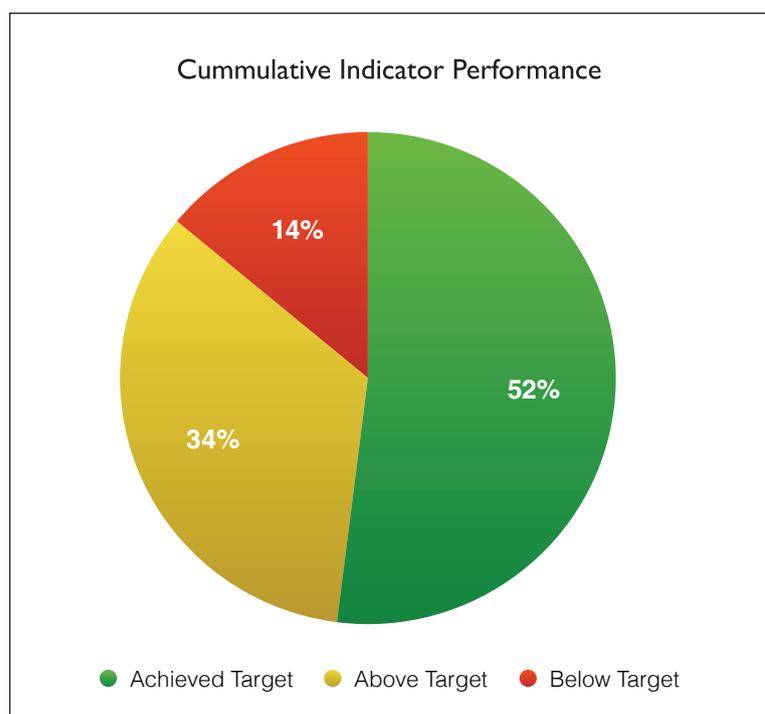


Figure 5: Cumulative Indicator Performance

Communications

For the first time, CPM developed a fiscal year strategic behavior change communications strategy and plan focusing overall communications activities including media engagement, development of message maps, and training manuals. CPM documented experiences, successes and lessons on the three value chains – coffee, beans, and maize – using videos and stories which were shared with stakeholders. The videos will be extremely useful in FY16 and beyond as a creative tool to bolster awareness of the impact of Feed the Future including innovations and lessons. CPM also conducted staff training in “communications and selling” to equip them with business skills so that they can work better with middle VC actors. This is aimed at changing attitudes and approaches from donor to business-like mentality.

What We Have Learned and How We Have Adapted

Challenges

Negative perception of working with “middlemen”

- GOU
- IPs, FTF partners, associations, NGOs and others

Learning

- GOU were not familiar with the facilitative approach
- Had to agree on tasks and approach with IPs on where to collaborate

Adapting

- Make presentation in DOPs and field visits to provide more information
- Create a section in work plan on collaboration with other IPs
- Hold joint work plan and quarterly reviews meetings with IPs

Buy-in by internal and external partners with the new approach

- Go for low hanging fruit, continuity from previous project

Learning

- 80% of partners that signed on thought CPM was the next ATM
- Had difficulty with connecting with traders-VAs then Farmers
- Staff understanding of the approach

Adapting

- Used our champions to support the rest to change
- Did a review of partners and dropped those that were not buying in the approach

Building relationships between traders and farmers

- Longstanding mistrust

Learning

- Bring farmers and traders in an environment where they can interact freely

Adapting

- Supporting the trader to implement learning sites and hold field days

Poor extension message delivery by our middle actors

Learning

- 80% of traders are not trained extension workers
- Existing extension material is not suitable for the traders VAs

Adapting

- Developing simple training materials
- Use of ICT innovations...E-Extension mobile apps

Ratio of VAs to farmers was not in line with their capacity

Learning

- Variation in agent capacity to reach farmers
- Low adoption and buy-in.....moving out of their comfort zone
- Lack of incentives to provide services.....no clear benefit, just work

Adapting

Targeting Traders that have VAs with more farmers
Creating business incentives for Village Agents to reach more farmers

Changing farmers' attitude to pay for extension services

Learning

Farmers are not willing to pay VAs for extension services

Adapting

Support VAs to build-in models that embedded extension such seeds sales spraying services

Changing farmers attitude to adopting and paying for inputs

Learning

- Everybody wants free seeds since it is donor funded
- Some farmers want home delivery of inputs

Adapting

- Worked with traders to develop out grower schemes
- VARM changed to VARMO to included output marketing
- Partner with input suppliers to support VAs to delivery inputs to farmers

Poor grain quality at the household level

Learning

- Post harvest handling still a problem due to lack of investment in basic post harvest equipment (tarpaulins, storage, seed cleaners shellers)

Adapting

- Use cost sharing to encourage middle actors to invest in new innovations to reduce losses
- Build capacity of Traders in grain quality handling

Fear of borrowing

Learning

- Farmers fear risk of borrowing due to climate change
- Banks have high interest rates
- Banks are not willing to lend to VAs to acquire inputs

Adapting

- Partner with insurance companies to promote crop insurance
- Worked with low interest rate banks (UDB) to provide production loan
- Support VAs to form association to access loans a group
- Partner with Akorion, Crop insurance and UDB to monitor crop progress

ANNEX I: FINANCIAL REPORT

Budget Line Item	Budget	Actual Expenditures Through End of This Quarter				Remaining Funds	
		Actual Expenditures Through End of June 2015		Actual Expenditures - July-September, 2015			
		July 2015	August 2015	September 2015	Total		
I	2	3	4	5	6	7=4+5+6	8=2-(3+7)
Salaries	\$4,341,846	\$1,910,177	\$85,380	\$77,739	\$72,967	\$236,086	\$2,195,583
Fringe Benefits	\$2,290,897	\$1,024,516	\$39,482	\$29,432	\$32,137	\$101,051	\$1,165,330
Overhead	\$3,056,031	\$1,396,592	\$63,007	\$54,189	\$53,607	\$170,803	\$1,488,636
Travel and Transportation	\$235,708	\$159,187	\$16,432	\$540	\$1,397	\$18,369	\$58,152
Allowances	\$572,622	\$746,586	\$24,919	\$31,782	\$37,638	\$94,338	-\$268,302
Other Direct Costs	\$2,807,397	\$1,073,235	\$179,709	\$31,075	\$69,006	\$279,790	\$1,454,371
Equipment, Vehicles and Freight	\$580,444	\$406,536	\$8,442	\$361	\$2,658	\$11,462	\$162,446
Training	\$567,739	\$308,538	\$16,821	\$11,467	\$26,424	\$54,712	\$204,489
Subcontractors	\$950,064	\$331,049	\$12,832	\$1,026	\$6,016	\$19,874	\$599,141
Strategic Activities Fund	\$3,200,000	\$1,349,575	\$17,119	\$90,935	\$117,833	\$225,887	\$1,624,538
General and Administrative	\$1,025,011	\$500,720	\$28,498	\$20,173	\$25,769	\$74,440	\$449,851
Fixed Fee	\$1,364,130	\$638,057	\$34,239	\$24,236	\$30,959	\$89,434	\$636,639
TOTAL ESTIMATED COST PLUS FIXED FEE	\$20,991,889	\$9,844,769	\$526,880	\$372,955	\$476,410	\$1,376,246	\$9,770,874.37

ANNEX II. CUMULATIVE TARGETS ACHIEVED (FY13 – 15)

LOA Achievements Tracker for Oct 2015 - Sept 2016

S/No	Indicator	LOA Target	FY 14 Actuals	FY 15 Actuals	% achievement on LOT
Purpose: Sustainably increase the production and marketing of high quality maize, beans, and coffee in 34 focus districts					
1	Gross margin per unit of land, kilogram, or animal of selected product (crop/animal/fisheries selection varies by country)	330	249	381	191
		450	251	1,757	446
		620	567	648	196
2	Value of incremental sales (collected at farm- level) attributed to FTF implementation	171,700,000	7,547,941	156,106,145	95
Sub IR. I.1: Increased use of improved farm management practices					
3	Number of individuals who have received U.S. government supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	420,000	116,613	128,433	58
4	Number of farmers and others who have applied new technologies or management practices as a result of U.S. government assistance	290,000	52,276	103,647	54
5	Number of food security private enterprises (for profit), producer orgs, water user associations, women's groups, trade and business associations, and community-based organizations receiving U.S. government assistance.	27,600	4,473	12,600	62
6	Number of farmers benefiting directly from Activity interventions	400,000	109,633	226,896	84
7	Number of members of producer organizations and community-based organizations receiving U.S. government assistance.	280,000	80,731	71,940	55
8	Number of private enterprises (for profit), producer orgs, water user associations, women's groups, trade and business associations, and community-based organizations that applied new technologies or management practices as a result of U.S. government assistance.	13,900	2,302	8,250	76
9	Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of U.S. government assistance	120,300	31,050	251,543	235
10	Number of labor-saving technologies that meet women farmers' needs made available for transfer- Output	14	4	5	64
Sub IR. I.2: Increased use of high quality agricultural inputs					
11	Input: sales by activity-assisted intermediary business models	4,010,000	981,817	1,290,670	57
12	Percentage of farmers acknowledging positive benefits from the accessed inputs	31%	73%	89%	523
13	Percentage of farmers purchasing inputs from village agents and other promoted models	34%	58%	69%	375

Sub IR 1.3: Increased access to production support services						
14	Number of radio, SMS, and other media awareness programs designed to encourage youth to work in value chain businesses implemented	10	2	2	2	40
15	Number of youth apprenticeships in value chain businesses brokered by the Activity	115	25	41	41	57
16	Number of rural households benefiting directly from U.S. government interventions-Output	2,15,000	65,229	158,827	158,827	104
17	Number of jobs attributed to FTF implementation	382	208	349	349	146
18	Value of Agricultural and Rural Loans	2,890,000	322,323	1,262,803	1,262,803	448
19	Number of MSMEs receiving USG assistance to access bank loans	100	24	67	67	91
20	Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of FTF assistance	480	134	150	150	59
21	Value of new private sector investment in the agriculture sector or food chain leveraged by FTF implementation	10,450,000	2,287,954	2,376,191	2,376,191	45
Sub IR 2.1: Improved market linkages						
22	Volume of exports by Activity assisted traders and exporters	288,900	140,761	370,409	370,409	177
23	Number of e-payments completed by value chain actors as a result of the activity's promotion of USAID's Better than Cash Initiative	81,600	6,342	17,780	17,780	30
Sub IR 2.2: Increased access to market support services						
24	Number of MSMEs, including farmers, receiving business development services from U.S. government assisted sources	11,250	394	1,544	1,544	17
Sub IR 2.3: Improved post-harvest handling						
25	Reduction in post-harvest losses by activity-assisted smallholders	44	73	46	46	75
		109	50	17	17	42
		29	179	98	98	248
26	Total increase in installed storage capacity	24,000	4,701	10,905	10,905	65
Other Indicators Specific to Gender and Climate Change						
27	Proportion of female participants in U.S. government-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources	40%	47%	46%	46%	116%
28	Proportion of females who report a change in self-efficacy at the conclusion of U.S. government-supported training/ programming	30%	3.67%	46%	46%	46%
29	Number of stakeholders implementing risk-reducing practices/actions to improve resilience to climate change as a result of USG assistance	210,000	48,154	101,942	101,942	71

Note: Exchange Rate is 1USD=2,500 UGX



Above Target
 Achieved Target
 Below Target



ANNEX III: IMPACT UP CLOSE

I Have More Volumes; Good Quality



Abel impressed with the quality of coffee from his farmers

Abel Bangumya is a trader based in Bushenyi District, who started trading in coffee in 2008. In 2012 he set up a new business, Modern Ishaka Coffee Factory. Two years ago Abel was selected to collaborate with Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing (CPM) Activity. Abel reveals that he has seen a lot of improvement in his trade. “Working with CPM has changed my business. My volumes increase every year! In August 2014, I traded 250 tons of coffee and in this current season 2015, I have so far bought 350 tons from farmers, yet the season is still on.” Abel has built a new store to accommodate his volumes.

He also points out that the quality of coffee he buys from the farmers is now better. “Ever since village agents started training farmers on use of inputs, keeping the coffee clean, and ensuring the right moisture content, the volumes farmers bring to me keep

increasing. Farmers used to bring us very dirty coffee, molded and mixed with stones. But now, village agents have taught the farmers to harvest the coffee when it is mature and dry it on tarpaulins. None of my farmers has been penalized by UCDA for poor practices.” Abel pays 5,100 Uganda Shillings per kilo of processed coffee to the farmers and sells at 5,200 shillings. He adds that “Most importantly, I now know my farmers. Before CPM, my scouts would go looking for coffee from various farmers, and we would compete with other traders. Currently, the village agents in addition to training the farmers, also support them to access inputs and that way, we have built a relationship.” A week ago, Abel loaded 21 tons of coffee in just one day.

Village Agents Brought Change

Lucky Edson started trading in maize in 2006 when he established his company, Kakinga Millers Enterprises. He says he used to incur a lot of losses since the maize the farmers brought him was of poor quality. Lucky is indebted to the village agents model. “The training of village agents by CPM has brought great change. They have helped me to establish a wider farmer base. Farmers bring in more maize and the quality is very good. Village agents created a way for me.” He said.



Lucky displaying his milled maize

Due to the increase in volumes, Lucky bought more processing machines. He now has 4 millers, 3 hullers, 3 blowers and 2 cleaners. "I process and pack maize flour and export it to Rwanda and Burundi. I get more money now," Lucky said.

January-June 2014 - 400,000kg of maize milled
 July-December 2014 - 570,000kg of maize milled
 January-June 2015 – 600,000kg of maize milled sold at 1400/= per kilogram

Feed the Future Supporting Fulfillment of Dreams for Ugandan Children



Ramanzan Mwanga at School.

As a responsible father, Nasif Mwanga, 48, wants his children to stay in school. But this has been a challenge for his lastborn, 12 year old Ramanzan, who faced a constant threat of dropping out due to lack of school fees. Not anymore.

Nasif, is a maize and beans farmer under Kaserem area cooperative enterprise (ACE), one of the partners working with Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing (CPM) Activity that aims to increase the production and marketing of high quality maize, beans and coffee in 34 Feed the Future focus districts in Uganda.

Nasif observes that ever since he started using the new bean variety NABE 12C promoted by CPM through his ACE, his income has increased in leaps and bounds. "I used to get less than 10 bags of beans in one acre but recently I got 18 bags—100 kilograms each. I sold the beans and earned 2,700,000 Uganda shillings, an amount I had not got before." He said. "Now this money helps me to pay school fees for my

children and they are all in school." He adds. Nasif plans to expand his beans garden next season. Ramanzan wants to be a doctor and his father—now not feeling the weight of being unable to pay school fees—is proud to support his son's dreams. It is one thing that drives him to work hard. Mr. Muhamud Yusuf, the manager at Kaserem ACE reported that Nasif's story is all too common. In the past, his farmers would get low yields per acre because they were not using good farming practices. "With the help of village agents who teach them better farming methods, use of inputs and improved varieties, farmers are getting on average 15-25 bags of maize from an acre where they used to get only six bags per acre," he said.

In 2012 the ACE sold 61 metric tons of maize but last season, in 2014, they sold 180 metric tons. And for each additional ton sold, more farmers are getting higher incomes and powering the dreams of many Ugandan children.



Alice Tibalwa with one of her grandchildren cleaning maize at their home

Farmer Builds Dream House at 68 – Thanks to Feed the Future

Sixty-eight-year old Alice Tibalwa from Bugiri District, always dreamt of owning a decent house but her dream seemed to fade with each passing year. However, two years ago Alice, who is a member of Bugiri Agribusiness Initiative Development (BAIDA), received her breakthrough when a village agent started training her on good farming practices and better postharvest handling to help her increase her productivity and earn more income.

BAIDA is one of the partners working with Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing (CPM) Activity, that aims to increase the production and marketing of high quality maize, beans and coffee in 34 Feed the Future focus districts in Uganda.

"I have been a maize farmer for a long time, but I was not getting much out of it because I didn't know there was a better way of farming. Out of an acre of maize, I would only get 3 bags. I was struggling to look after my grandchildren and I wanted a bigger house since our small house could not accommodate us."

Out of the training she received from the village agent, Alice decided to try the Longe 10H maize variety and applied fertilizers. She also bought an improve maize cleaner and a tarpaulin. "I wanted my maize to be clean because BAIDA gives a higher price for clean maize. I have also stopped beating the maize to remove it from the cobs because it reduces its quality and I now use a sheller which I access through my village agent at a fee."

Last year 2014, Alice harvested 13 bags from one acre in season A and 12 bags in season B, earning over one million Uganda shillings. In two years, Alice has been able to build a new house and pays school fees for all her 10 grandchildren. At 68, Alice is living her dream, thanks to the support from Feed the Future.

Her main challenge is the parasitic Strigar weed that is attacking maize and other cereals in her district.

Village Agents Bringing Change to Farmers and Traders



Justine Naiga (left) a village agent under Ssanyu

Village agents have made my business grow. They are a very important link because they work directly with the farmers, train them and buy produce from them on my behalf." Said Edward Kyazze the proprietor of Ssanyu Investments, based in Mubende District. Ssanyu investments a trader dealing in maize and beans, is one of the partners working with Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing (CPM) Activity. The Activity helps traders of maize, beans and coffee to increase their incomes by trading more volumes of higher quality produce, thereby also helping their agents and small holder farmers to increase their incomes. Edward observes that village agents have enabled him to train farmers on better farming methods, use of good quality seeds, fertilizers and post-harvest handling which has increased productivity and quality of produce. The agents have also enabled him to have a better relationship with the farmers, thereby building trust and loyalty. "Farmers used to be unreliable, they could sell to anyone who approached them with a good price. They did not trust traders. But now, that has changed. I give them seeds and

inputs on loan and I buy the produce from them at a good price. I pay for good quality, so this pushes farmers to produce good quality," Edwards says.

Maureen Turyahebwa is a village agent working under Katerera area cooperative enterprise (ACE) in Rubirizi District. As a village agent, in addition to training farmers, she also has seasonal targets of volumes she is supposed to get from her farmers. "This season, I have a target of 500 metric tons of maize. I make sure my farmers access good seed and genuine inputs, so I bring them and sell to my farmers." Maureen said. Myers Musiime, the manager at Katerera ACE, noted that village agents help them to get information about their farmers such as acreage, enabling the ACE to project the volumes they expect in a season.

In addition, village agents provide other support services to farmers like, spraying, pruning in case of coffee and shelling of maize using mobile shellers, thereby helping farmers to improve quality and reduce on losses. "One of the most significant changes I attribute to working with CPM, is the way village agents are working. They now do more than buying produce from farmers. They use their phones to get information on crop diseases, quality, markets and weather; which they use to train farmers. They also help farmers to access genuine inputs." Said Godfrey Natumanya, a trader with Bishashe Coffee Producers Association, Bushenyi District.

Youth Operating Maize Sheller to Raise School Fees

Ivan Maganda 20 years, is in senior four. Staying in school to complete his education was an uphill task because he had no school fees. However, an opportunity presented itself when Bugiri Agri-business Initiative Development Association (BAIDA), based in Bugiri District bought 8 mobile maize shellers to help farmers shell their maize and improve its quality.

BAIDA is one of the partners working with Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing (CPM) Activity that aims to increase the production and marketing of high quality maize, beans and coffee in 34 Feed the Future focus districts in Uganda.

To promote post-harvest handling and youth employment, Mr. Makaka Moses the proprietor of BAIDA noted that they support the farmers to shell their maize at a fee, in order to get good quality maize and at the same time pay good prices to the farmers.

BAIDA has provided employment to 16 youths who operate the 8 mobile maize shellers. CMP trained them on how to operate the shellers. "We charge 2,000 Uganda shillings per bag shelled and in a day, we can shell on average 80 bags, making 160,000 Uganda shillings a day. Village agents identify the farmers who need the services and inform us." Ivan said.

The association has a SACCO where the youth keep their money. Ivan is now able to pay his school fees and has also used some of the earnings to buy goats for rearing.

One of the challenges they face however, is that the shelling is only done during harvest season. During this low season, the youth attend to their own gardens and Ivan concentrates on his education.



Ivan Maganda, operating the maize sheller in Nankoma subcounty, Bugiri District.



Abdul Jaril Mwanga one of the youth in the Kaserem Taramasiga youth

Feed the Future Creates Employment for Uganda's Youth

Twenty-two year old Abdul Jaril Mwanga dropped out of school at O level. In a country where he couldn't meet even the requisite qualifications for leadership positions at local councils and where the youth unemployment rate is among the highest in Africa, Jaril's future looked bleak. Until he learned of the opportunities that youth groups run by Kaserem area cooperative enterprise (ACE) provide to young people in Agriculture. In a bid to create employment for the youth, Kaserem set-up youth groups to provide agricultural support services to its farmers at a price. And anyone could join irrespective of his academic qualifications. That was the big break for Jaril.

He was trained and joined Taramasiga youth group which employs 18 youths who provide planting and spraying services to farmers on demand and charge between 50,000 to 60,000 Uganda shillings per acre. Even more, the ACE promotes the youth group through its extensive village agent's network. The village agent identifies farmers who need the services and links them to Jaril's group. The agents get 10% commission for linking the group to the farmers. The farmers in turn adopt better farming methods and use of inputs which lead to higher yields.

The ACE gets increased volumes at the quality they want. It is a win-win for everyone involved. During the planting season, Jaril's group plants on average 10 acres per day earning 500,000 Uganda shillings in a single day. Kaserem is an ACE supported by the Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing activity (CPM). It now runs three groups. Through linkages with financial institutions, these groups buy spray pumps, protective gear and inputs from the ACE on loan, thereby lowering the startup capital barriers for poor but hardworking out of school youths. The second group Sinna-Kazzi youth group is comprised of 20 members mainly school dropouts, who offer weeding, bagging and loading services to farmers. Arap-Masanga is the third group made up of 15 youths. The ACE assisted Arap-Masanga group to set up a coffee nursery due to the increased demand for seedlings. The group sold 90,000 seedlings this season and earned 4,500,000 Uganda shillings. The youth are trained courtesy of CPM support.



Kaamu Kalanzi (in overalls), a NOKIA farmer village agent providing.

NOKIA Youth Farmers Making Farming Easier and More Profitable

Henry Kazibwe 56, is a teacher in St. Muggaga Primary school in Bamunanika subcounty, and also a farmer mainly growing maize, beans and vegetables in Ziobwe subcounty, Luwero District.

Henry is a member of Ziobwe Agribusiness Training Association (ZAABTA). The association is one of the partners working with Feed the Future Commodity Production and Marketing (CPM) Activity that aims to increase the production and marketing of high quality maize, beans and coffee in 34 focus districts in Uganda.

Henry wanted to earn more from his farming in order to supplement his teacher salary, but he lacked sufficient time to manage his farm. The demands of his job could not allow him to effectively engage in farming. His yields were low and the quality of his produce was compromised.

When ZAABTA introduced the NOKIA farmers, Henry saw this as an opportunity to develop his farm. NOKIA farmers are a group of youth who provide production and postharvest handling services to farmers who are mainly based in the city and those that don't have enough time to manage their farms. They communicate with the farm owners and receive their payments mainly through the phone, hence the name NOKIA.

The NOKIA youth farmers provide services such as: land preparation, planting, spraying, extension, harvesting and postharvest handling. Village agents identify farmers who need these services and link them to the NOKIA farmers. "NOKIA farmers have simplified my work. A job that I used to do in a week, they do it in 2 days. They have also provided me with knowledge on good farming practices, since some of them are also village agents. I used to harvest 3 bags of maize from an acre, but now I put in less effort and earn 16 bags." Said Henry.

CPM trained the 45 NOKIA youth farmers in safe use and handling of agro-chemicals and also provided them with electronic spray pumps and start-up kits. This has provided employment to the youth, improving their livelihoods. "With the earnings from working on people's farms, I have been able to buy a plot of land and some members have also bought motorcycles." Says Kaamu Kalanzi the chairman of the group.



One of the NOKIA Youth Farmers.



Maize crib at NALG aggregation center.

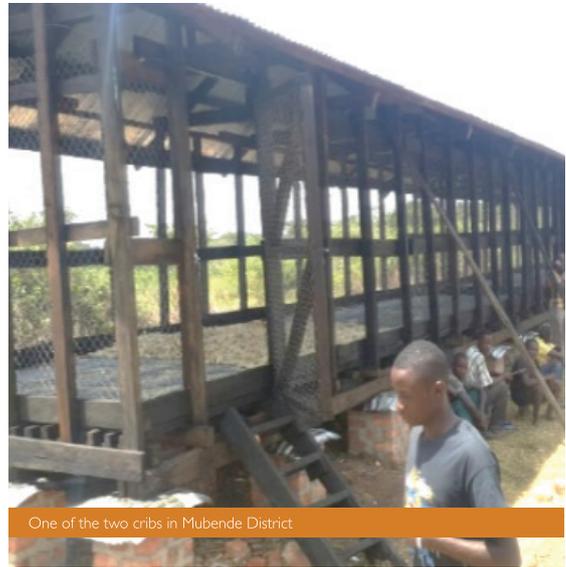
Feed the Future Helping to Curb Postharvest Losses Among Smallholder Farmers

Mr. Moses Balikooa a trader and chairman of Nakisenhe Adult Literacy Group (NALG) in Iganga District, led some members of his group to Masindi District on a learning visit at Joseph Initiative, a trading company which is also involved in growing maize. They wanted to learn ways of minimizing postharvest losses. Moses and his group had been growing maize but they were incurring big losses due to inadequate postharvest handling methods.

The Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing Activity (CPM) organized the learning trip. CPM is part of Feed the Future Uganda/USAID's Value Chain Development Project that builds on more than 20 years of agricultural development experience and

lessons learned by USAID/Uganda, Ugandan partners, and other donors. CPM is implemented by Chemonics International, Inc. Over the past years, farmers in Uganda have been trained in postharvest handling methods but the quality of maize brought on the market has remained poor and this has affected the income and revenue generated from the produce. Farmers incur the biggest postharvest losses during the second season when rains interfere with the harvest.

Following the visit, NALG embarked on constructing a maize crib to reduce postharvest losses. But the group did not have all the funding. Through a cost-share program, CPM enabled the group to construct a maize crib of 20 metric tons at one of their aggregation centers. Moses says, "We are now in position to take maize from the farmers before the quality begins to drop. This is just the beginning and we shall explore more affordable ways to enable us meet the EAC maize standards." For the harvest of 2015A season, since they now have a crib, NALG will be able to get more from their registered farmers. Moses now plans to scale up construction of more cribs in all NALG sub-counties.



One of the two cribs in Mubende District

In Mubende District, another trader, Mr. Henry Musisi, has constructed two 100 metric tons maize cribs which he plans to use for on-farm drying as well as short-term storage. "With the use of maize cribs and other technologies, the percentage of postharvest losses can be reduced considerably. We have used cribs for the first time for season 2014B and have experienced a postharvest loss of well under 5 percent arising from only spillages during shelling," Musisi says.

Farmers Teach Fellow Farmers Proven Ways to Increase Income



Mr. Joseph Asimwe of Kyazanga leads farmers to a guided tour in one of beans fields

There is no quicker way to believe better ways of farming can lift you out of poverty than seeing your next door neighbor counting the cash, feeding the family and sending children to school.

One farmer group—Lwengo District based Kyazanga Farmers' Cooperative Society, is making that happen. The cooperative identifies exemplary farmers engaged in bean seed multiplication and brings other farmers to learn from them.

"I had mixed feelings about seed multiplication farming but after listening

to Mr. Asiiwe, I went ahead and planted the seed. At the start, I planted only 20 kilograms but harvested 368 kilograms which I sold to the cooperative as seed. Since then I have never looked back. Currently, I am able to pay school fees for my children, and I have constructed a permanent house out of bean seed multiplication," said Julian Musiime, one of the farmers.

This farmer-led practical experience, dubbed farmer field days, is one of the models adapted by the Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing Activity (CPM), a project that builds on more than 20 years of agricultural development experience and lessons learned by USAID. CPM is implemented by Chemonics International Inc.

"Field days are effective in helping farmers learn and adopt good practices because farmers see their own—people like themselves—as experts," said Joseph Asiiwe, the coordinator of the cooperative which recently organized a farmer field day event that attracted 190 farmers to visit and learn from a flourishing counterpart.

Farmer field days provide a platform where knowledge, innovations, experiences, challenges, and successes are shared to encourage farmers to increase productivity and income. According to Asiiwe, as a result of the field days, more farmers have been motivated and encouraged to start up community bean seed multiplication to improve their livelihood.



A village agent checks out one of the bean farms.

Feed the Future Helps Informal Seed Systems to Come of Age

About 95 percent of bean seed comes from the informal seed sector such as farmer saved seed, farmer to farmer and local grain markets. However, there are a number of shortcomings in the informal seed sector which include: inadequate linkage with sources of good and improved varieties; inadequate and slow information flow across the targeted communities and slow movement of varieties among farming communities. The supply of bean seed by seed companies is also limited.

The Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing Activity (CPM), in an effort to promote bean seed production, forged a partnership with Harvest Plus and Uganda's National Agricultural

Research Organization (NARO) and developed a joint plan to provide foundation seed, train farmers in bean seed production, and increase market linkages. As a result, 1.2 metric tons of foundation seed were recently distributed to informal groups.

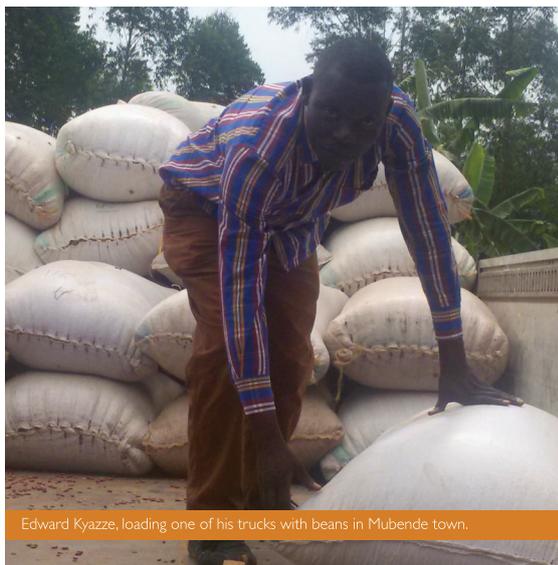
The success of the informal seed systems has attracted the interest of seed companies to sign formal contracts with informal seed producers. A total of 8.6 metric tons worth 22 million Uganda shillings of certified seed was produced through this informal systems and sold to Grow More Seed Company, Mityana Farm Supplies Ltd and farmers.

There is however, need to equip farmers and extension staff' with skills and knowledge in pre and postharvest management; creating awareness about improved varieties and regular assessment of seed quality. And these are areas that CPM and partners are putting emphasis on.

CPM is part of the Feed the Future Uganda Value Chain Development Project that builds on more than 20 years of agricultural development experience and lessons learned by USAID/Uganda, Ugandan partners, and other donors. CPM is implemented by Chemonics International, Inc.



A NABE variety beans garden



Edward Kyazze, loading one of his trucks with beans in Mubende town.

“Now I know My Farmers and I am Assured of Volumes and Good Quality” - Trader

When a season begins, from the start I know who my farmers are and I have an estimate of how much volumes I expect. Before I started working with CPM, I wasn't sure of how much I would get because farmers sold to many traders. This season we gave 100 farmers 20 kilograms of seed each and we expect 50 metric tons.” An excited Edward Kyazze a trader under Ssanyu Investments noted. Ssanyu Investments is a grain buying company based in Mubende town. The company buys maize and beans from Mubende, Kibaale and Kyegegwa Districts.

In 2013, Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing Activity (CPM) identified Ssanyu Investments as one of the traders to

work with to increase the production and marketing of beans and maize in Uganda. The Activity provides training, information and linkages to traders and their village agents on good agricultural practices, promotion of good seed varieties, use of agro-inputs, postharvest handling, as well as access to markets and other support services. The traders and their agents in turn pass on these skills and knowledge to the small holder farmers.

Edward like any other trader works through agents who move within the districts to buy produce from farmers at different collection centres. He points out that, initially, he did not have any close relationship with the farmers and largely depended on his agents. However, ever since his company began working with CPM, they have developed a good working relationship with farmers and village agents. He observes that farmers used to sell to any trader – there was no loyalty and they did not trust each other. Furthermore, farmers also complained of cheating by traders and their agents and traders also complained of poor quality of produce from the farmers.

Through CPM-supported learning sites and field days, Edward is interacting more closely with his farmers and training them to produce more and of good quality. “Farmers have learnt to produce good quality because I pay more for quality.” The Activity has also exposed him to more markets through linkages and business-to-business meetings with other traders and bigger buyers; such as Grow More Seeds, a company that has just signed a contract with him and his farmers to grow bean seeds. Edward himself has also started engaging in farming as a business. With the knowledge he gained, he has planted 10 acres of maize and 3 acres of beans.

In terms of volumes, Edward notes that working through the organized village agents and farmers, his volumes for beans and maize have increased by more than 30 percent. With the increase in volumes, his market base has also widened. He is now connected to buyers like Tonga and other traders whom he did not know before such as those in Busia, a border town known for trading.

As a way forward, Edward is looking at training more farmers to increase his supply base and improve the quality. He wants the livelihoods of his farmers and agents to improve as he also increases his income. Edward is currently looking for more partners who can supply his farmers with good seed and agro-chemicals at subsidized prices. In addition, he is planning to approach companies like AbiTrust to negotiate grants and simple loans for his farmers. He also started running radio programmes to teach his farmers. “Farmers have come to trust me and many more are coming on board.” Edward says.

Trader-Led Field Days Strengthening Relationships and Productivity

Mr. Edward Kyazze is a trader based in Mubende District, operating under Ssanyu Investments Company. The company deals in maize and beans produce and has been in operation for 10 years. Edward has a network of agents through which he works

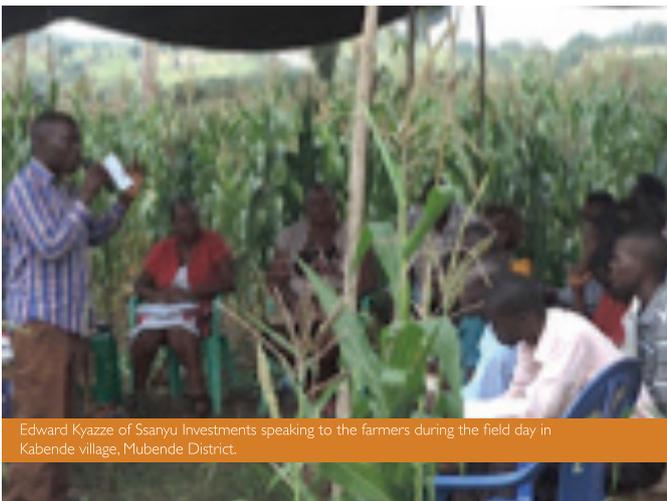


Harriet Nanyonjo one of the farmers admiring the maize in the KKAMIKKA garden in Kabende village, Mubende District

to collect produce from farmers scattered over Mubende and surrounding areas. Two years ago Ssanyu investments did not have a close relationship with the farmers. At the end of the day, his main concern was the volume of beans and maize he gets from them and he was paying agents/middlemen to mobilise the quantities he needed. He had many quality and quantity challenges because he did not know the farmers and depended on the agents. The farmers on the other hand did not care whom they sold to since they did not have allegiance to Ssanyu Investments and would sell to any trader who came by. Majority of the farmers paid no attention to quality.



A cross-section of farmers and other actors attending the field day in Kabende village, Mubende District.



Edward Kyazze of Ssanyu Investments speaking to the farmers during the field day in Kabende village, Mubende District.

The coming of Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing Activity (CPM) changed the way Edward's company works with farmers. Through training, mentorship and linkages, Edward has come to see farmers as an important link in his trade. CPM is part of Feed the Future Uganda/USAID's Value Chain Development Project that builds on more than 20 years of agricultural development experience and lessons learned by USAID/ Uganda. CPM is implemented by Chemonics International Inc.

"Farmers did not trust us. They used to say that we cheat them and yet sometimes the quality of their produce was not good. We pay according to quality." He said. On June 17, 2015, Ssanyu Investments working in collaboration with CPM organized a farmer field day at Kabende village, Kiyuuni subcounty, Mubende District. The field day was hosted by a youth group KKAMIKKA operating under Ssanyu investments, at their maize garden which they set up after acquiring knowledge and skills in good farming practices at a nearby learning site. They are early adopters. Over 100 people attended the event. During the field day, different players including input dealers, AKORION a youth ICT agricultural service provider, YOFACO (Young Farmers Coalition), village agents and other actors in the value chain shared their experiences.

Edward called upon farmers to be more vigilant and engage in farming as a business. He encouraged them to always ensure they put into practice good agricultural practices, use improved seed varieties, quality agro-inputs and ensure they keep records of how much they put in their farming

to enable them understand how much profit they are earning. Just like any other businessman.

He also emphasized good quality if farmers are to get good prices for their produce. "As traders, we reduce prices because what you bring to us is sometimes not good quality. Ensure the beans are well sorted, do not mix the different types and that there are no stones. If not, the trader has to pay other people to do the sorting which affects your prices." Edward noted. He reported that he already has a contract with the farmers and Grow More Seeds Company, to produce bean seed at 1,600 Uganda shillings per kilogram. "If we have the right quality and volumes we can easily link to big buyers like Grow More Seeds which has signed contracts with us." Edward said. He emphasized that if both the trader and farmers do their part, their relationship will be strengthened and their incomes will increase.

Farmers noted that the field day was a good opportunity for them to interact with the different players and such activities help to strengthen their relationships with traders. "We are grateful to CPM for supporting us and for such forums where we can interact and share experiences." said Justine Nayiga one of the youth under KKAMIKKA group. The group also has a spraying team that is providing services to other farmers at a fee. Two of their members were part of the group trained with support from CPM in safe use and handling of agro-chemicals.

"We should have more of these field days. This has given me the opportunity to interface with my farmers and village agents in one place. It will help us to build relationships." Edward noted. He encouraged the youth to access more land to increase their production.



Justine receiving her certificated in safe use and handling of agrochemicals

Mr. Bashir Kasekende who spoke on behalf of CPM encouraged the trader to take the initiative and organize more field days for his farmers in the various locations. He also encouraged farmers to get to know the right measurements for their land and ensure proper record keeping. "It is important that you know the exact measurements for your land to avoid using wrong quantities of inputs." Bashir noted.

Village Agents Exposed to Safe Use and Handling of Agrochemicals

Agrochemicals are vital to the agricultural industry to improve production of enterprises and they are quite effective when used appropriately. However, many stockist and farmers in rural areas especially the small scale holders are selling or using

agrochemicals without knowledge of potential risks involved in handling them. Through public-private partnership the Feed the Future Uganda-Commodity Production and Marketing Activity (CPM) organized a training on safe use and handling of agrochemicals in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF). CPM is part of Feed the Future Uganda/USAID's Value Chain Development Project that builds on more than 20 years of agricultural development experience and lessons learned by USAID/Uganda, Ugandan partners, and other donors. CPM is implemented by Chemonics International, Inc.

The training which was held at Mukono Zonal Agricultural Research & Development Institute (MUZARDI) on 25-29 May 2015 mainly targeted partner traders, their village agents and the youth who provide spray services. They were drawn from the central region districts of: Masaka, Mubende, Luwero, Mukono, Rakai, Kayunga, Kiboga, Kyankwanzi and Buikwe. It was the first of its kind. The objective of the training was to build capacity of trader partners and village agents on product knowledge, safe use and handling agrochemicals with attention to health and environmental protection.

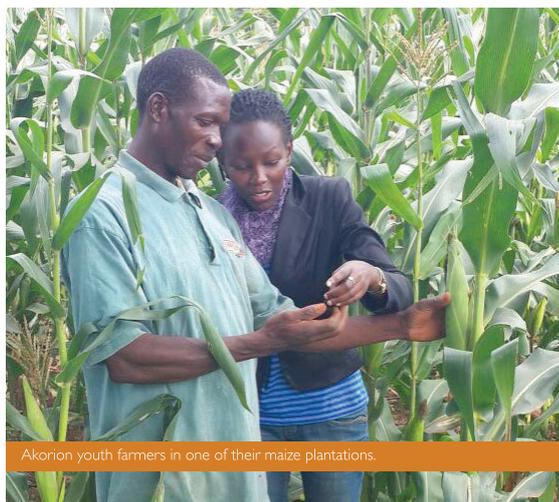
Ms. Justine Naiga aged 30 from KAMIKKA youth group in Mubende noted that she had been buying, selling and handling agrochemical without any knowledge and skills. She was doing it for money and was not

aware of the risks posed to her and her clients. "This training has been very useful to us. Personally I am going to continue selling the agrochemicals and inputs but also be mindful of how my farmers handle and apply them. I am going to pass on this knowledge to all my farmers." Justine observes that ever since the Activity facilitated them to increase productivity and improve quality of their produce, many farmers have adopted the use of agricultural inputs in production. What has been lacking is how to safely handle these inputs. All participants were awarded with certificates which will help them to register with MAAIF as certified suppliers of agrochemicals.

She also noted that they would buy chemicals from stockists in their locality but with no thorough knowledge of how to safely handle these chemicals. Stockists could only tell her that it is for killing weeds. "Just mix with water and spray they would tell us". Justine said. She also notes that since they partnered with the CPM most of their queries have been solved and acquiring knowledge and skills on safe use and handling agrochemicals is a stepping stone to improved farming. On the other hand, Mr. Christopher Mujabi a village agent from Mityana noted that the training has opened his eyes for more business opportunities. "I will increase the types of agrochemicals I sell to farmers because the training has exposed us to more inputs we did not know. I will also buy and sell protective gear to my farmers." Nayiga and other participants were very grateful for the exposure and pledged to use the agrochemicals safely and also ensure they train their farmers.



Traders, village agents and youth who participated in the agrochemicals training at MUZARDI displaying their certificates.



Akorion youth farmers in one of their maize plantations.

Chasing the \$42-Per-Farmer Dream: How Youth Are Making Money with ICT in Agriculture

Uganda has the world's youngest population with over 78 percent of its population below the age of 30. Though the country also has one of the highest youth unemployment rates in Sub-Saharan Africa, many of Uganda's young adults have limited interest in pursuing careers in agriculture because they see it as a subsistence livelihood, or simply lack the agribusiness skills, finance and market awareness to make agriculture profitable. Through the U.S. Government's Feed the Future Uganda Commodity Production and Marketing Activity, USAID/Uganda took a step toward reversing this perception by organizing a national youth agriculture event last

September called Youth and Agriculture: Exploiting Opportunities – "Go for Gold." Inspired by the event, five youth-led ICT companies banded together to form the limited liability company Akorion, which means "farmers" in Ateso (the language of the Teso sub-region in Uganda).

Akorion aims to provide up-to-date agricultural information and best practices via mobile technology which can be used to increase the productivity and competitiveness of smallholder farmers in Uganda. Akorion developed an ICT platform that serves as an input/output application. It works like this: Using their smartphone, the village agent collects a farmer's records (bio and demographic data, production data, inputs demand, and product supply) and maps the cultivated land using GPS. Through the smartphone, the village agent also provides extension services to farmers on topics such as better agronomic practices, weather forecasts, market prices, digital financial services such as savings, transactions and credit and crop insurance. The platform also acts as a virtual trading center with electronic networks connecting producers, buyers, sellers, input suppliers, exporters, crop insurance and financial institutions with Akorion, the managers of the data.

So far, Akorion has focused on digital profiling to provide access to financial services and crop insurance. With fourteen village agents, they have grown their client base to 1,200 farmers from the NALG Area Cooperative Enterprise (ACE) in Iganga and the Bukusu ACE in Manafwa. Both will grow maize and beans in the 2015 season with the help of a new loan of 1.2 billion Ugandan shillings, which was accessed through Akorion's profiling service. They have also signed a contract with Ankole Coffee Processors, Ltd. in Ibanda and Kabarena Coffee Growers in Kapchorwa, bringing an additional 18 village agents and 1,083 farmers cultivating over 2,200 acres. Using the soil sample training they received, the village agents will conduct soil testing along with digital profiling to encourage traceability of the coffee from "garden to cup." Akorion will then provide the data to Savannah Commodities so that they can blend the appropriate fertilizer for the farms. Akorion will then distribute the fertilizer, thus earning a commission on both the testing of the soil and distribution. With the package of different services they offer, Akorian can earn up to \$42 for each farmer they serve. By the end of 2015, Akorion plans to build a base of 300 well-equipped village agents to create a client list of 36,000 farmers to whom they can deliver services, bringing in a projected revenue stream of \$240,000. To do this, they are establishing commercial partnerships with agro-input companies such as Agrohao, Hanzou Chemicals, Balton, BrazAfrica, Ensol, and Grow More Seed. They are also working with financial services institutions such as Uganda Development Bank, UAP Insurance, Jubilee and Lion insurance and Mobipay. Akorion plans to expand its client list of bankable farmers to 260,000 by 2017. In doing so, they expect to employ 8,000 youth along the agriculture value chains they have targeted. Akorion is poised to change the image of agriculture among the youth of Uganda and prove to them that there is potential for expanded production and profits.

Farmer Field Days: A platform for Farmers to Share Knowledge to Increase Incomes

Farmer field days provide a platform for farmer-led practical events where farmers, researchers and private sector players come together to share knowledge and build community connections. Because farmers are the experts on their farming systems, they believe that sharing their knowledge, innovations, experiences, challenges, and successes will help fellow farmers to increase productivity and incomes.

One farmer group, Kyazanga Farmers' Cooperative Society, which is located in Lwengo District, is engaged in bean seed multiplication at community level. With support from Commodity Production and Marketing Activity (CPM), the cooperative society held a farmers'

field day event on May 20, 2015 that attracted more than 190 participants. CPM is part of Feed the Future Uganda/USAID's Value Chain Development Project that builds on more than 20 years of agricultural development experience and lessons learned by USAID/Uganda.

The event provided a platform for information dissemination on how to increase household income and improve nutrition through bean seed multiplication. Steven Begumisa and Joseph Asiimwe who are members of the farmer group, guided the participants and shared knowledge and skills. This was followed by open discussions. Farmers listened very attentively and participated actively with eagerness. As a result of the field day, more farmers have been motivated and encouraged to start up community bean seed multiplication to improve their livelihood.





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