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# AGRO-INPUTS PROJECT

## Implementation Plan

**Year 1: September 17, 2012 – September 30, 2013**

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## Acronyms

AAPI	Accelerating Agricultural Productivity Improvement
ACI	Advance Chemical Industries
ADS	Administrative Directive System
AF	Ashroy Foundation
AIP	Agro-Inputs Project
AIQCSS	Agro-Input Quality Control and Standard Specialist
AIRN	Agro-Input Retailers' Network/ Astha Agro-Input Retailers' Network
AIS	Agricultural Information Services
AISCA	Agricultural Input Supply Chain Advisor
AOR	Agreement Officer's Representative
AVAS	Association of Voluntary Actions for Society
BADC	Bangladesh Agriculture Development Corporation
BARC	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council
BARI	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute
BASC	Business Advisory Services Centre
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BCPA	Bangladesh Crop protection Association
BEC	Business Ethics Committee
BFA	Bangladesh Fertilizer Association
BPRSSP	Bangladesh Policy Research and Strategy Support Program
BS	<i>Banchte Shekha</i>
BS	Baseline Survey
BSA	Bangladesh Seed Association
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CEGIS	Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services
CIP	International Potato Center
CNA	Child No Adult
COP	Chief of Party
CPP	Crop Protection Products
CPRS	Communication and Public Relation Specialist
CSISA	Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia
DAE	Department of Agriculture Extension
DAM	Department of Agricultural Marketing
DO	Development Objective
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
EDD	Environmental Due Diligence Review
EG	Economic Growth
ES	Environmental Specialist
FE	Final Evaluation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FNM	Adult Female No Adult Male
FTF	Feed the Future
FY	Fiscal Year
GIS	Geographical Information System
GIS SP	Geographical Information System Specialist
GLC	Gender Lens Committee
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GPS	Global Positioning Satellite

Grnt SP	Grants Specialist
GS	Gender Specialist
HKI	Helen Keller International
IDE	International Development Enterprises
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IR	Intermediate Result
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
LOP	Life of Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
M&EA	Monitoring & Evaluation Advisor
M&F	Male and Female Adults
MD	Managing Director
MEP	Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
MFI	Micro-finance Institution
MIS	Management Information System
MIS	Market Information System
MNF	Adult Male no Adult Female
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
PEEA	Policy and Enabling Environment Advisor
PERSUAP	Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan
PI	Performance Indicator
PIRS	Performance Indicator Reference Sheet
PRICE	Poverty Reduction through Increasing Competitiveness of Prices
PROSHAR	Program for Strengthening Household Access to Resources
RF	Results Framework
RRF	Rural Reconstruction Foundation
SABA	Senior Agribusiness Advisor
SCA	Seed Certification Agency
SCBA	Senior Capacity Building Advisor
SHOUHARDO	Strengthening Household Ability to Respond to Development Opportunities
SMS	Short Message Service
SO	Strategic Objective
SOW	Scope of Work
SPRING	Strengthening Partnerships, Results and Innovations in Nutrition Globally
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
STE	Senior Training Expert
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
ToT	Training of Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
WFC	World Fish Center

## Introduction

### Project background

AIP's Goal is to improve the availability and use of quality agricultural inputs. Its central effort is the creation of a sustainable Agro Input Retailers Network (AIRN) through Intervention 1. Interventions 2- 4 are designed to work in concert and holistically with Intervention 1. AIP's four interventions are:

- 1) Establishment of an Agro-Input Retailers **Network**;
- 2) Development of **Market Information Systems**;
- 3) Setting **Quality Control Standards** for inputs and lessening **Regulatory Constraints**; and
- 4) **Strengthening Local Organizations** towards direct implementation.

The creation of AIRN will leverage 3,000 retailers to be certified in 20 districts, to supply quality, unadulterated agricultural inputs to over 1 million farmers. Amongst the 3,000 retailers, 300 will be women-owned, and who will be eligible for grants and other technical assistance. All retailers will be supported to make informed business decisions for efficient, ethical, and science-based operations.

Market information systems will create and distribute an Ag-Inputs Monthly Price outlook bulletin primarily on seeds, fertilizers and plant protection products. The bulletin will be underpinned by a Geographic Information System (GIS). This will depict visual representation of input distribution networks, transportation infrastructure, client concentrations, cropping patterns, product and price trends, and other important information.

Improving quality control standards and regulatory constraints will involve working with industry associations and GoB to develop industry standards for each of the major crops, and building capacities of associations to assert their voice to the GoB. AIRN will conduct "Business Ethics Audits" of certified retailers for transparency and consistency.

AIP will build the capacity of local organizations so that they become independent enough to be implementers of USAID activities in future. This will be made possible through capacity building and providing financial assistance to the organizations like NGOs, microfinance institutions, research institutes and government agencies.

### Introduction to Year 1 Implementation Plan

This implementation plan presents four inter-related Interventions in sequence. Two audiences are addressed: the AIP project team, and USAID. The plan is a product of all to-date AIP staff. It enlists activities and steps, but is not intended as a precise to-the-letter blueprint. It is clear to all actors that some sequencing may change, some steps may be performed simultaneously, and unforeseen approaches may appear as more is learned.

The presentation of AIP's four Interventions each includes a narrative description and an activity schedule for the year presented in GANTT format. Each also has a table depicting quantifiable outputs to be achieved in Year 1 and projections for Years 2 – 5.

The Cross Cutting section addresses Gender and Environment activities for Year 1. Gender focuses on the AIP's first Gender Assessment and its uses. Environment focuses on mandated studies to be completed in Year 1 and their follow up. Environment is a chain of events that depends on the results of the first study, Environmental Due Diligence.

Two Annexes present project infrastructure-related startup activities for 6 months, and programmatic activities for Year 1 by Intervention. These latter are presented in a longer, more exacting way than those embedded in the main body of the text. They are intended for project internal use.

## **Intervention 1: Establish Agro Input Retail Network**

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1.3.3	e-books' improvement	

AIRN's (Agro Input Retailer's Network) creation is central to the achievement of AIP's Goal (*Improved availability and use of quality agricultural inputs*). AIP is designed to work in concert with AIRN and project Interventions 2 – 4, ultimately to improve the sustained availability of high quality inputs to farmers. AIP's Intervention 1 aims to establish a network of at least 3,000 certified retailers, who will make informed business decisions for profitable, ethical, and science-based operations. The AIRN will be formed as retailers participate in AIP trainings and earn certification by the Astha Seal of Quality (to be explained below). In its formative stage, AIRN will begin as an informal network as opposed to a legally registered association. A legally incorporated AIRN may not be necessary to achieve the project's objectives, and an early focus on incorporating AIRN as an association could diffuse project efforts in its first year. AIRN's incorporation however will remain a definite option and will be pursued. AIP will continually lead AIRN members to the best informed decision by examining incorporation's benefits and drawbacks, with the commitment to AIRN's post-project sustainability and success through whatever organizational form best suits these aims.

### **1.1 AIRN Formation**

#### **1.1.1 Selection of 90 out of 122 *Upazillas* in 20 FtF Districts**

AIP will first narrow its geographical focus in which to work with retailers. Narrowing is necessary to draw a balance between the need to achieve improved sales of retailers and physical accessibility to retailers. While considering criteria of population density, relative food insecurity, poverty, and biophysical factors e.g. soil salinity trends and flood proneness, AIP will utilize primarily a geographic, targeting independent and a sub-set of end of supply-chain retailers, approach to assess all aspects of quality input availability at the retail level.

AIRN will commence its development of input retailers based on geographic lines with the initial selection of five-Feed the-Future districts, and within those districts, five upazillas from each. The five upazillas with most market potential will be selected by identifying land use and other data obtained from the location's private sector suppliers and other sources, e.g. registration and licensing offices. From each district all input retailers will be made aware of AIP activities through an awareness campaign (membership drive), and local input associations will be kept abreast of all AIP activities. All retailers in selected regions will be free to apply to be given basic training on business ethics and the safe use of agricultural inputs. Following successfully completing the training the selection criteria and final decisions on the successful retailers will be made in consultation with Bangladesh Fertilizer Association (BFA), Bangladesh Seed Association (BSA), Bangladesh Crop Protection Association (BCPA), Association of Voluntary Actions for Society (AVAS), *Banchte Shekha*, Ashroy Foundation, Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) and the Accelerating Agricultural Productivity Improvement (AAPI), FtF Horticulture, and Program for Strengthening Household Access to Resources (PROSHAR). It will be the aim of AIP to coordinate the input requirements of other FtF interventions allowing them to use the sustainable quality input supply chains and retailers that have received the seal of quality. The identified collaborations will be developed as part of the Year 2 Implementation Plan in a Collaboration Agenda.

### **1.1.2 Assessments of Private Sector Agricultural Input Companies**

In parallel AIP will conduct assessments of several input suppliers in Bangladesh in order to assess the state of their supply chains, which will help determine the readiness for affiliated retailers to participate in the AIP and eventually become a part of the AIRN. AIP will work with existing associations and other actors in the input sector to develop selection procedures for these input suppliers. Initially, some of the country's supply chain leaders will be involved in the program to demonstrate the types of services that AIP will provide. AIP will mitigate the risk of initially developing these "lead" input suppliers by supporting the development of a large, competitive set of assessed supply chains in a public, transparent, and participatory way which serves retailers in all targeted geographic areas. However, it is only when AIP more fully understands the retailer businesses better, then the criteria for network and seal of quality can be defined. As the criteria for selection of retailers is developed, it will come clear which suppliers are the major suppliers and therefore to be assessed.

The assessments will include an examination of the production of domestic input products in Bangladesh, the import procedures for agricultural input products being distributed throughout the country, and the product tracking systems presently used by the companies. The assessments will include an analysis of the distribution channels of the input products in order to identify the weaknesses and opportunities in the system(s), and to identify the roles, volumes and influence that mobile sales currently have in the supply chain. In addition, the assessments will provide recommendations for improvements that can be made along the supply chain, and offer innovative ideas that will ensure quality product is received by the farmers doing business with the retailers.

### **1.1.3 Identify Training Needs of Retailers**

AIP will assess the current training practices, gaps, and other needs for retailers. Interested retailers in the program areas will be given the opportunity to participate in basic training on business ethics and safe use of agricultural inputs. These trainings will identify those retailers who are interested in and committed to sell only quality inputs and have the skills to adopt the training. Once these retailers are defined, the criteria to identify those participants who have the capacity to be part of the growing AIRN will have been finalized.

As AIP and its stakeholders move forward with selection of retailers, it is important to bear in mind that the present trend in the input sector is the branded shop. This gives the industry confidence that their product can be controlled. They believe that this is the only way to maintain quality. Therefore the industry will have to be convinced that retailers with AIP training and then company training can be trusted by farmers, quality retailers, and quality suppliers. As the project progresses the training will be integrated into the private sector training for sustainability.

Based on their needs and on the goals of the program, AIP will create modules and develop training modalities which will allow for better training of retailers so that they can become certified members of the AIRN. Topics to be considered will include business training, safe use of agricultural input products information, and environmental awareness. In addition, AIP will work with the companies and retailers to develop a code of ethics and standards, the principles of which will be included as part of these trainings as they are designed.

AIP will also plan study tours to with other agricultural projects, research institutions, and pre-existing training facilities owned by established input suppliers, with the costs being shared by partners and participants. The trainings and study tours will be designed to increase capacities of wholesalers and retailers to manage their businesses profitably, ethically, and on science-based grounds. At the retailer level, capabilities will be established for the provision of improved knowledge and advice (including information from the Department of Agricultural Extension) on technologies, as an embedded service to farmers during sales of agro inputs. It is important that wholesalers who supply retailers have the same knowledge base to better enable them to understand the needs of retailers to supply quality products.

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

This activity will determine the preliminary purpose, objectives, and modalities of AIRN. These will be reviewed as AIRN matures they may change through AIRN's increasing self-direction.

- **STTA(s)** by readily available in-country expertise will make initial recommendations on modalities. However, international STTA will be utilized if needed.
- **Dialogues with associations, companies, and wholesalers** will be held with these critical stakeholders to inform them on AIRN's purpose and objectives, and gain their input and support for AIRN. Dialogues aim to sensitize these stakeholders that they ultimately stand to increase profits through AIRN members' sales of quality, unadulterated products in packaging appropriate for small farmers.
- **Group discussions with wholesalers and retailers** will then be held with small groups in project districts to elicit feedback on the posited objectives and member services of AIRN. Feedback will be used to further sharpen the definition of AIRN's objectives and member services. An important output from this level of discussion will be exacting criteria for the selection of AIRN members.
- To develop **GoB** awareness of and garner support for AIRN, discussions will be held with DAE, BADC, and BARI. These discussions will focus on AIRN's purpose, objectives, and

modalities, and include how AIRN's success is dependent upon project success in achieving objectives in its Interventions 2 – 4 (Market Information Services, improved quality control and regulatory environment, and capacity building).

### 1.1.5 AIRN Structure and Members

While conducting a membership drive to garner the interested of motivated self-identified retailers who desire to adopt voluntary standards for their communities, a sub-set of retailers will also be targeted from quality supply chains, the AIP will build the AIRN that reflects the voice of retailers and farmers in Bangladesh's agricultural supply chain. The sub-set of retailers affiliated with companies' retailers can be engaged as potential members of the AIRN by participating in AIP trainings and demonstrations. Once the retailers receive the required AIP trainings and participate in the demonstrations with farmers, the retailers will have the opportunity to earn the "Asta" Seal of Quality ("astha" means "trust" in Bangla). Receiving the Astha Seal of Quality will automatically make the retailer a member of the AIRN. As retailers become certified with the Astha Seal of Quality, the network will thereby be formed.

As this occurs, the following roles will take shape:

- An **AIRN Coordinator** will be hired when required. This role is termed 'Managing Director' (MD) in the AIP Program Description; however until AIRN's objectives, modalities, and member services are finalized through feedback from new members, a coordinating rather than a directive role is required. If AIRN is firmly established through registration with a definitive charter the AIRN Coordinator position would be switched to MD.
- An **AIRN Advisory Board** is foreseen to guide AIRN towards meeting its purpose and objectives, and to help evolve and adjust its modalities. Its initial composition will be driven by the project, and will draw from agri-input stakeholders in the private sector and the GoB. NGOs and projects with agri-inputs' related objectives will also be considered. The Board will guide the Coordinator to develop AIRN to maturity and post-project sustainability. It will refine and evolve AIRN's objectives and modalities, and member services. It will advise on AIRN's operational means and modalities including its financing, financial sustainability, and staff. The Coordinator will be accountable to the Board for financial transparency.
- **AIRN Field Agents** will raise awareness amongst retailers about AIRN's purpose, objectives, and modalities. This will be done simultaneously with the first membership drive (below) which they will conduct at the field level. Field Agents will also be engaged in data plotting for the GIS system that supports Market Information Services (Intervention 2), as well as monitoring of members for product quality control. 6 Field Agents will be hired in Year 1, and their home base(s) will be finalized.

**1.1.5b AIRN Membership drive:** AIP will develop criteria for the selection of retailers at the upazilla level. Once these criteria have been developed and in consultation with the input associations and other relevant input suppliers, an AIRN membership drive will commence. This approach ensures a balance of retailers who have a choice and thus opportunity to represent market demand for inputs in their respective communities.

### 1.1.6 Credit Guarantee Funds

AIP has a \$250,000 facility to provide credit for working capital for AIRN member-retailers. It is expected that this guarantee can be leveraged to increase lending to agro-retailers by reducing the risk to banks and/or MFIs. To expand the amount of loans served by this guarantee, AIP will seek

partnerships in which 50% of the risk is borne by the AIP guarantee, while 50% is taken on by the financial institution itself. Due to this decrease in risk for the lender, it is anticipated that AIRN member borrowers will also receive more favorable terms than typically offered by the lenders. The portion taken on by the financial institutions will be “tapped” first in the event a borrower is unable to pay back the full amount of their loans, and only once this is fully utilized will the AIP guarantee be drawn upon (and only if necessary). As AIP envisions this guarantee as more of a tool to encourage an increase in lending to agro-retailers rather than a guarantee which will actually be required due to delinquency, the expected unused guarantee funds will remain with AIRN to further invest in members’ operations, if agreed by USAID.

In Year 1 the following activities will be undertaken to identify the ways in which an AIP credit guarantee could be utilized to further program objectives:

- An assessment of the current credit practices by agricultural input retailers (specifically members of the AIRN);
- An assessment of the remaining credit needs of AIRN members, and the obstacles to meeting those needs; and
- Identification of partners (MFIs, NGOs) capable of servicing AIRN members through an AIP credit guarantee.

### 1.1.7 Gender Lens Committee (GLC)

In Year 1 AIP will establish and subsequently be guided by a Gender Lens Committee (GLC) over the LOP. The GLC will have several roles: ensuring gender integration in all aspects of AIP, guiding AIRN on gender-specific member services and trainings as a permanent specialized cell within AIRN, and overseeing the modalities of matching grants to establish female operations in the input retail sector. It will be composed of outside stakeholders. In Year 1 three organizations will be approached for inclusion as members: *Banchte Shekha*, the Ashroy Foundation, the Rural Reconstruction Foundation (RRF), and AVAS. The GLC will advise AIP on all its gender activities, the composition and terms of partnership for matching grants targeting the establishment of new female retailers, the development and content of a specialized business and technical training course for female agro-dealers, specialized training and demonstration activities, and the incorporation of gender messaging into project activities.

- **Dialogues with potential GLC** members will explain the GLC’s purposes, and will enjoin female-run NGOs (*Banchte Shekha*, the Ashroy Foundation, and the Association of Voluntary Actions for Society i.e. AVAS). AIP’s Gender Specialist will chair the GLC. The Gender Specialist, like the AIRN Coordinator and AIRN Field Agents, is envisioned to be a permanent, post-project staff of AIRN.
- The **GLC’s mandate and roles** will be crafted by the Gender Specialist in consultation with the GLC’s initial members. The Specialist will also work directly with the AIRN coordinator to ensure that continuing education is accessible and appropriate for GLC members. The Gender Specialist will initially set the GLC agenda, build the capacity of committee members, and ensure that GLC decisions are incorporated across project implementation. The GLC will also be responsible for identifying female retailer grantees, ensuring that business management and technical trainings’ content targeting female retailers is appropriate, including specialized nutrition awareness modules to be used during demonstration events that target all retailers, both male and female. These will encourage retailers to stock female-friendly inputs such as small packs of inputs and nutrient-dense vegetable seeds.

- In addition to approving female retailer grants **the GLC will meet quarterly** to assess the effectiveness of their previous grant selection efforts. From this meeting recommendations will be made to AIP and AIRN for improvements as necessary. They will also make recommendations on additional support women retailers may need, improving capacity building efforts, adjusting activities of the implementing female-based NGOs, identify market opportunities, and identify areas where advocacy is required.

#### 1.1.8 Creation of Women Retailers through AIRN

A minimum of 300 women-owned agro-input retailers will be established over the LOP. This key activity will strengthen the agricultural sector in the South, and improve the status of women in agriculture and their communities. AIRN, assisted by AIP, will implement in Year 1 at least 20 matching grants of up to \$1,000 to selected new or existing woman retailers.

- Three strong **women-led local NGOs** have already been identified in the project area that are experienced in female agricultural activities: the Ashroy Foundation, *Banchte Shekha*, and the Association of Voluntary Actions for Society (AVAS). These are presently operational in Khulna, Jessore, and Barisal Regions respectively. They will be given AIP sub-awards to implement grant making to female retailers, capacity building, and associated M/E.
- **Selection criteria** for potential women retailers for matching grants will be set by the GLC.
- **Identification of potential female grantees** will first be conducted by sub-awarded NGOs, following recommendations from the GLC and those of other USAID FtF implementers. It is especially important to collaborate with FtF projects as some already work with women that could make excellent retailers; this could further their own objectives. The Horticulture Project and AAPI are two that have already been identified and with which initial discussions have been held.
- Sub-awarded NGOs will then conduct dialogues with communities **to ascertain the choice of grantees**. Since women agro input retailers are relatively unheard of in Bangladesh and support of their male counterparts is critical to their success, forums will be held in the targeted areas to create awareness, garner support, and choose applicants.
- **Applications** for matching grants will be invited when a community is adjudged to be prepared to support a woman retailer. The Grant Application format will be determined by the GLC in consultation with criteria specified in the AIP Grants Manual. The GLC will issue its **approval**, followed by that of the (internal to AIP) Grants Committee. **Grants' delivery** will be overseen by sub-awarded NGOs.

#### 1.1.9 Strengthen Agricultural Input Wholesale Associations

This effort aims to build strong project-wide input supply chains of quality products to AIRN member retailers, ultimately to induce widespread demand for quality products by farmers. A Directory of input supply companies and wholesalers will be produced for multiple uses. AIP will implement capacity building trainings that target three wholesaler associations to enhance industries' quality standards, their member services, and business ethics: the Bangladesh Seed Association (BSA), the Bangladesh Fertilizer Association (BFA), and the Bangladesh Crop Protection Association (BCPA). Training delivery will be contracted to national private sector organizations. AIP will also collaborate with IFPRI's Bangladesh Policy Research and Strategy Support Program (BPRSSP) to develop advocacy and outreach capacities of these three wholesaler associations. These combined efforts will compliment project efforts towards achieving outputs of its Intervention 4.

In addition, AIP activities to strengthen agricultural input wholesale associations will serve to promote the use of environmentally-sound, safe agricultural input products which will decrease the environmental hazards associated with the application of some agricultural inputs. In addition, the promotion of environmentally safe, high-quality products will help avoid contributing to environmental degradation at the farm-level.

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

A Directory of input supply companies and wholesalers will inventory their contact and ordering information, and available products and services. This will be a searchable relational database and will link to the GIS-based Market Information Services in Intervention 2. Hard copies will be printed for use by district-level retailers.

- At its outset the Directory will include companies and wholesalers who channel products and services to the FtF 20 Districts. The Directory will be regularly updated by AIRN in future. AIRN is foreseen to enjoin members outside of the 20 districts at project's end, and the list would expand to bring in companies and wholesalers in new areas.
- In Year 1 AIP will obtain existing data from wholesale associations (BFA, BSA, BCPA), GoB agencies (DAE, BADC), and input companies (e.g. Farok Fertilizer, ACI, Metal Agro, and BayerCrop). These will be combined and collated into a uniform format.
- Gaps in information fields will be filled between enlisted companies and wholesalers.
- The Directory will have multiple uses. Hard copies will aid retailers in identifying product and service opportunities. Its database form linked to GIS will aid the three wholesaler associations in their strategic direction for member services, and identifying each other's products, will aid other agricultural development projects and the GoB, and will have internal uses for AIP.

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

Capacity building of BSA, BFA, and BCPA aims to improve quality standards, business ethics, and these associations' member services. Initial assessments of the associations will be led AIP's Senior Capacity Building Advisor (SCBA) to identify critical challenges and opportunities to build upon. Assessments' outputs will determine best approaches and training content for trainings to start in Year 1. These outputs will enable the shaping of SOWs of in-country training service providers who have already been identified: GMark Consulting Ltd. and the Business Advisory Services Centre (BASC). Training modules will be constructed by the SCBA together with GMark and BASC. Up to 8 trainings will be conducted in Year 1 by these training service providers in concert with the SCBA.

#### **1.1.9.3 Collaboration with BPRSSP**

AIP-assisted collaboration with IFPRI's Bangladesh Policy Research and Strategy Support Program (BPRSSP) will be directed at improving the advocacy performing capacities of BSA, BFA, and BCPA. The aim is to enable these three input supply associations to assert changes in the legal and regulatory environments that affect their respective industries. Outputs from this task will also feed into and complement Intervention 4 efforts to strengthen BSA, BFA, and BCPA amongst others. In Year 1 AIP will effect a collaborative agreement with BPRSSP, initiate advocacy capacity building in BSA, BFA, and BCPA, and conduct up to 2 seminars targeting the MoA in concert with the private sector.

Initial AIP meetings with BPRSSP will examine both parties' objectives and identify synergies for working together. This will be followed by the joint development of a cooperating agreement between AIP and BPRSSP. Under this arrangement BPRSSP will first assess the three associations' present advocacy-related capabilities and capacities. This will be followed by development of training modules and their delivery by BPRSSP. Thus empowered, the associations will be assisted by AIP to conduct up to 2 seminars for Ministry of Agriculture and other government officials. Seminars will identify key policy, legal, and regulatory constraints and identify pathways and means for addressing them with responsibilities outlined for both public and private sectors.

## **1.2 Trainings and Study Tours**

Trainings and study tours aim to increase capacities of wholesalers and retailers to manage their businesses profitably, ethically, and on science-based grounds. Receiving these trainings will be a prerequisite for retailers seeking to obtain the Astha Seal of Quality. At the retailer level capabilities will be established for the provision of improved knowledge and advice on technologies, as an embedded service to farmers during sales of agro inputs. It is important that wholesalers who supply retailers have the same knowledge base to better enable them to understand the needs of retailers to supply quality products. AIP will also organize national and international study tours over the LOP for input retailers based on their best performance. These will expose retailers to best innovative business practices in input production, distribution, and associated services.

In Year 1 training modules will be developed, master trainers will be trained in their use, and 100 AIRN member retailers will be trained. Up to 8 trainings will be delivered to wholesalers. CropLife Asia's Safe Use training will also be taught to 100 AIRN member retailers. A specialized nutrition awareness training will be delivered to 60 women retailers. Preparations for Year 2 study tours will take place in Year 1.

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

CNFA's well-developed business management training modules will be tailored and contextualized by GMark and BASC in consultation with the SCBA and AIP's Senior Training Expert based on the local business environment. Technical agronomic training modules will separately be developed by BASC with the assistance of AIP's Senior Training Expert. Their subject matter will include best agronomic practices, and the promotion of nutrient dense crops for nutrition and health. All training modules will be translated into *Bangla*.

### **1.2.2 Master Trainers' Selection, ToT, and Trainings**

For training delivery to retailers a core of 5 male master trainers will be drawn on contract from GMark and BASC. 2 female master trainers will be identified by the GLC. BASC and Gmark will be contracted to deliver the ToT. After selection and training of all master trainers, they will be certified by CNFA staff in delivery of both basic and advanced courses in business management and agronomic technical subject matter, including the environmentally-responsible use of agricultural inputs.

An adapted version of the same ToT as above will be aimed at the separate audience of commercial trainers who are employed by the input associations (BSA, BFA and BCPA). This ToT will help these associations provide better services to their members. AIP's Senior Training Expert will conduct the training needs assessment and together with BASC and GMark, make appropriate adaptations to the curriculum. BASC and GMark will develop training modules and deliver the trainings. Training modules will encompass business management, best agronomic practices, and other topics based on the needs assessment.

A **Safe Use training** developed by CropLife Asia will be taught to both male and female retailers (combined 120 in Year 1). CropLife Asia has proven expertise in providing “safe use” of agro inputs’ training programs to the members of BCPA. A contract will be signed between AIP and CropLife Asia to conduct this training. The “safe use” training will include safe handling, storage and use of seed, fertilizer, and pesticides, and integrated pest management practices. This training will improve farmer productivity, and ensure that inputs being recommended and sold by retailers are fully understood by both retailers and buyers.

**An additional training for women retailers on nutrition improvement** will be developed by the Gender Specialist in collaboration with the GLC. In Year 1, 1 such training will be conducted by the female master trainers to 20 would-be female retailers. Women retailers in turn will provide nutrition information to farmers as an embedded service during sales.

AIP's **study tours** for retailers will serve as incentives for good performance, and as a medium to demonstrate best practices in retail input supply. AIRN members will be selected to participate on a competitive basis at the end of each project year, using criteria designed to reward the best performers, as well as those in the best position to serve as models for a large number of farmer customers. By the end Year 1, retailers’ selection criteria, study tours’ content development, and venues’ selection by AIRN will be completed with the assistance of AIP staff. In Year 1 no study tours are predicted to take place; this will pick up from Year 2 onwards.

### 1.3 AIRN Promotion – Prepare and Distribute Brochures

The promotion of AIRN – its existence and purpose – and the Astha Seal of Quality will begin in Year 1 to mixed audiences through mixed media. The development of concepts and themes of AIRN promotional materials and media will be well developed. Content will include AIRN purpose, objectives, and modalities. Printed materials will include organizational structure of AIRN and technical knowledge, high quality generic products, and assurance that AIRN retailers can be trusted. AIP will maintain the AIRN acronym but call the network ‘*Astha*’ (English: trust). One of the key aims of AIP is to promote viable relationships of trust between smallholders and input retailers; the word *Astha* in AIRN’s logo captures this spirit.



A proposed AIRN logo conveys the Astha “seal of quality”. It will be featured on AIRN member certificates, to be affixed in every certified agro-input retailer shop. This will promote certified dealers as businesses where farmers can access the “right advice for the right product at a right price”. One of the key goals of the project is to promote trust between farmers and input retailers. The word *Astha* (trust) in the logo captures this spirit. The strategy of AIRN is to induce demand for quality products, leading to increased sales of retailers to farmers.

#### 1.3.1 Branding and Marketing Campaign for AIRN

Up to 3 workshops and seminars will take place in Year 1 for the education of audiences on AIRN and the best uses of printed promotional materials. Workshops and seminars are to explain and ‘market’ AIRN to its primary audiences and beneficiaries: agro-input retailers, wholesaler

associations, and the Government of Bangladesh (GoB). Indirect audiences to be reached by retailers are their farmer customers during sales and Field Days for demonstration plots.

**Media campaigns** will begin with building relationships with print and electronic media. **Print media** would include e.g. top English and *Bangla* newspapers like The Daily Star, Financial Express, The New Age, *Prothom Alo*, *Ittefaq*, *Sangbad*, and *Amader Shomoy*. Up to 6 wide scale publications will take place in Year 1 to sensitize the broader public about AIRN and its purpose. Themes and contents of media briefing will first be developed, and then the securing of CNFA and USAID approval to comply with the Branding Strategy and Marking Plan of CNFA and USAID. Media briefings in Year 1 will first sensitize the **electronic media** such as BDLINK, Star Advertisers Ltd, and Transparent Design and Communication on AIRN's purpose. No broadcasts are foreseen to be conducted in Year 1; as project results with AIRN's development emerge in Year 2, electronic media campaigns will begin.

### **1.3.2 Public Awareness Campaign for Proper Use of Seed, Fertilizer and Pesticides**

AIP will work with AIRN in the production of information, brochures, and other forms of promotional material to advocate the importance and techniques of proper use of quality inputs. AIRN will develop and publish up to 4 educational materials aimed at farmer audiences for the use of seed, fertilizer, and crop protection, and will utilize its developing network for distribution of materials. Their use will be explained and advocated during Demonstration Plots' Field Days.

### **1.3.3 E-books' Improvement**

AIP will select 14 major crops of the project area in consultation with the MoA. 'e-books' have already been developed by DAE's Agriculture Information Service, however they are cumbersome and not user-friendly. In Year 1 AIP will contract a firm to upgrade and make the e-books user friendly. Their intended use is by wholesalers, retailers, information centers, and farmers.

## **Table 1: Activity calendar, Intervention 1, Year 1**

Task #	Project Task	2012			2013								Leads, partners and Collaboratores			
		O ct	N ov	D ec	Ja n	Fe b	M ar	A pr	M ay	Ju n	J ul	A ug	Se p	AIP staff lead	Implement ing Partner	Collaborat ing Partner
<b>Intervention 1: Establish Agro Input Retail Network</b>														AIP staff lead	Implement ing Partner	Collaborat ing Partner
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Agro Inputs Network Dvelopment</b>															
<b>1.1.1</b>	<b>Selection of 90 of 122 Upazillas over 20 FtF Districts</b>													SCB A	BFA, BSA, BCPA; AVAS, Banchte Shekha, Ashroy Foundation, RRF	AAPI, Horticulture and PROSHAR Projects
<b>1.1.4</b>	<b>Working purpose, objectives and modalities of AIRN</b>													SAB A	BFA, BSA, BCPA; Lal Teer, BayerCrop, Farok Fertilizer, Metal Agro, ACI, Auto Crop, Golden Barn	
<b>1.1.5</b>	<b>AIRN Structure and members</b>													SAB A, AISC A and AIRN Cord	BFA, BSA, BCPA; Lal Teer, BayerCrop, Farok Fertilizer, Metal Agro, ACI, Auto Crop, Golden Barn	BADC, APPI, Katalyst, IDE-B

1.1.6	Credit Guarantee funds												SAB A	TBD	TBD	
1.1.7	Gender Lens Committee (GLC)												GS	Ashroy, AVAS, Banchte Shekha		
1.1.8	Creation of women retailers through AIRN												SAB A, GS and Grnt SP	Ashroy, AVAS, Banchte Shekha	Horticulture , AAPI, PROSHAR projects	
1.1.9	Strengthen Agricultural Input Wholesale Associations															
1.1.9.1	Directory of input supply companies and wholesalers													M&E A and SAB A	BFA, BSA, BCPA; Lal Teer, BayerCrop Sc,Syngent a, Farok Fertilizer	Lal Teer, BayerCrop , Farok Fertilizer, Metal Agro, ACI, Auto Crop, Golden Barn, BADC, DAE,BSA, BCPA, BFA
1.1.9.2	Capacity building of the BFA, BSA and BCPA													SAB A and STE	GMark and BASC	
1.1.9.3	Collaboration with BPRSSP													SAB A		IFPRI
1.2	Trainings and Study Tours															
1.2.1	Development of training modules													STE	Gmark, BASC,	Horticultur e, AAPI,

														Ashroy, AVAS, Banchte Shekha	CSISA projects	
1.2.2	Master trainers' selection ToT and Trainings												STE	GMark and BASC		
	ToT for commercial trainers employed by the input associations												STE	GMark and BASC		
1.3	AIRN promotion– Prepare and Distribute Brochures															
1.3.1	Branding and marketing campaign for AIRN													AIRN Cord and CPRS	Gmark, BASC, Ashroy, AVAS, Banchte Shekha; Star Ad, BD Link	BCPA, BFA, BSA; Daily Star,Prptho m Alo, Financial Express,Ch ennel I, Boishakhi TV
1.3.2	Public awareness campaign for proper use of seed, fertilizer and pesticide													CPRS		Daily Star, Prpthom Alo, Financial Express, Chennel I, Boishakhi TV
1.3.3	e-books improvement													SAB A, AIQC SS and GIS SP		DAE- AIS

**Table 2: Outputs, Intervention 1, Year 1 (projected for Years 2 – 5)**

Activity	LOP Target	Year 1 Target	Projected Targets			
			Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>1</b>	<b>Establish Agro Input Retail Network</b>					
<b>1.1.</b>	<b>Establish the Agro Input Retailers Network</b>					
	Improved capacity of leading input industry associations (BSA, BFA, BCPA, and AIRN) (# org.)	4	1	2	1	
	Develop new member services (# services)	12	2	3	4	3
	Develop new strategic partnerships with multi-national companies (# company)	12	2	4	4	2
	Conduct policy dialogue events by assisted associations with government officials (# policy dialogues)	32	4	6	6	8
	Provide matching grants (\$1,000) to women retailers (# women retailer)	300	20	200	80	
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Trainings/seminars/national and international study tours</b>					
	Conduct AIRN business and technical training sessions (# session)	160	24	96	40	
	AIRN retailers attend business and technical training (# retailer)	3,000	432	1728	840	
	Conduct regional and local study tours (5 regional + 5 local) (# of tour)	10		3	3	3
	Retailers and other stakeholders participate in the study tours (at least 20% are women) (# participant)	125		35	42	40
						8
	New business models introduced and adopted by input retailers (# module)	8		2	2	2
	New business models introduced and adopted by input wholesalers (# module)	3				2
	Provide ToT on Business Management Training to master trainers (Male 5, Female 2) (# person)	7	7			
	Conduct training of trainer sessions for commercial trainer (# person)	20	5	15		
	Commercial trainers conduct training to AIRN, BSA, BFA and BCPA members (#	3,015	515	2,000	500	

	participant)						
	Conduct CropLife Asia designed 'safe use' training to AIRN retailers (# participant)	3,000		1,000	1,000	1,000	
	Conduct village sessions on garnering support from families and neighbours for women retailers (# sessions)	300	20	200	80		
<b>1.3</b>	<b>AIRN promotion – Prepare and Distribute Brochures</b>						
	Enhancement of existing best practice materials and develop guides for key crops (# crops)	14	2	4	4	4	
	Distribute print materials on key crops (# copy)	10,000	1,450	2,850	2,850	2,850	
	Develop new educational publications (# publication)	23	3	5	5	5	5
	Develop new materials by the private sector companies (# material)	9		2	3	4	
	Create AIRN logo	1	1				
	Develop project brochure	1	1				

## Intervention 2: Market Information Systems

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2.3.1 Identification of collaborators and plots	
2.3.2 Field Days	
2.3.3 Demonstrations to promote high value nutritious crops and technologies	

In Year 1 AIP will implement preparatory activities for the Year 2 launch of the *Ag-Inputs Monthly Price Outlook* bulletin. The bulletin will focus primarily on seeds, fertilizers, and plant protection products, and their price trends and other information. The bulletin aims to improve an existing input market information system that is managed by the GoB. Bulletins' contents will be underpinned by a GIS system to be developed in Year 1. This will be an interactive tool for analyzing and disseminating strategic market information. Agricultural exhibitions will be hosted by input supply business associations in the FtF Regions. These will bring in stakeholders from the Bangladesh and international input supply sectors to promote new products, services, and best management practices to farmers, retailers, companies, and wholesalers. Demonstration plots of high quality adapted inputs and best agricultural practices aim to stimulate demand by male and female farmers for high quality inputs, that they will be able to purchase from certified AIRN member retailers.

## 2.1 Ag-Inputs Monthly Price Outlook bulletin - Analysis and Distribution

- **Consultations with Department of Agricultural Marketing (DAM), Associations, and Lead Input Suppliers**

The Department of Agricultural Marketing (DAM, under the DAE) operates an online searchable database of agricultural product prices amongst other information fields, but with limited geographical coverage in the FtF Regions. It frequently has technical difficulties and suffers from outdated information. AIP will collaborate with DAM to improve and augment this system. The aim is to post current, accurate, user-friendly agro inputs' (seeds, fertilizers, and plant protection products) prices and trends. In its Year 1, AIP will engage consultative meetings with DAM to thoroughly review the system towards its improvement and future use. Information fields will be analyzed, geographic and information gaps identified, and user-friendliness and technical issues analyzed. Its current usage rate will be examined with the aim to increase it. The Associations and Lead input suppliers will be brought into the consultative process so that AIP can incorporate their prices and trends into the Monthly Price Outlook bulletin, and potentially their monthly publications, such as *This month in Agriculture* by Bayer Crop Science. These lead suppliers will be selected based on their roles as existing, highly-visible, trusted providers of quality agricultural inputs. These combined steps will result in finalizing the bulletin's electronic and printed formats for launch in Year 2.

- **Consultations with companies and AIRN retailers on prices and trends and bulletins' use**

The above will proceed simultaneously in Year 1 with a series of consultative meetings with AIRN member retailers and representatives (as described above) to explore and finalize modalities for collection and incorporation of input price information. It is anticipated that AIRN retailers will act as both price data collection points, and bulletin distribution centers. Means to disseminate the bulletins will be explored: online through DAM and Bayer Crop Science, hard copy formats for different users, and possibly SMS. Printed formats and electronic viewing points' availability will be explored for use at retailer shops as an AIRN member service.

### 2.1.1. GIS development

- **Spatial Systems Associates and collaboration**

In Year 1 a series of steps will take place to result in the creation of an online accessible GIS system to give visual representation of strategic agri-inputs marketing information. A SOW for the USA-based **Spatial Systems Associates** will be developed in concert with CNFA's Washington headquarters, for the system's architecture, capturing of data sets, and collaborative relationships with Bangladeshi actors, resulting in a contractual agreement. USAID's monitoring uses and data format compatibility, and other FtF projects' information needs will be incorporated.

The Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services (CEGIS), the DAE-Agricultural Information Services (AIS) and the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) all have **existing GIS** capabilities within their organizations. In addition to fields of information the project will acquire and generate itself, AIP will enjoin Spatial Systems Associates with these actors to finalize a strategy and modalities for acquiring and using relevant data from their systems to merge into AIP's GIS. Expected data sets to incorporate will include input distribution networks, transportation infrastructure, client concentrations,

cropping patterns, product and price trends, and other information. AIP's GIS Specialist will be closely involved throughout.

- **Exploration on electronic tablets for use by AIRN member-retailers** will take place in Year 1. Inexpensive devices and associated software are available for use by retailers. This could track stock purchase prices, sales data (to whom, what, when, sales price), GPS location data (demo plots, shop location), and a retailer's stock inventory (quantities and expiration dates).
- **Use of the GIS system** is aimed at a mixed audience of wholesalers and their associations, USAID, AIRN, the GoB, other projects, retailers, and farmers.
- **Training of AIRN Agents on Global Positioning System (GPS) use**  
AIP's GIS Specialist will train 6 AIRN Field Agents in Year 1 on GPS device use for field-based data capture and uploading. Types of retail shops will be defined beforehand as separate data fields e.g. large, medium, small, purely agri-based, and agri mixed with aquaculture. These same Agents in future will be used to extend the GIS system, once developed, to field-level end users, and for plotting demo plots' locations (2.3 below). In Year 1 the trained 6 AIRN Agents will travel broadly to retailers' shops and plot locations.
- **AIRN Retailers Directory**  
Farmers need information to identify retailers who ascribe to sound business ethics and stock high quality agri-input products. Plotting of retailers' locations (above) will engage simultaneously the collection of data to include their profiles, contact information, and available products and services. This effort will result in the publication through electronic and printed media of an AIRN Retailers Directory. Its uses are several: as a source for farmers to avail products and services, and for companies and wholesalers for marketing.
- **Mobile Monitoring**  
AIP will utilize fiscal memory machines with mobile capabilities to monitor AIRN retailers' business operations. The AIP will establish a platform which will be able to track retailers' inventories, sales, etc. via mobile technology. The fiscal memory devices will be equipped with a SIM card, which transmits sales and client data through a mobile phone system to the platform established by AIP. The fiscal memory devices will be put in place in each certified AIRN retailer, and will track information regarding the number and types of products sold, up-to-the minute inventories, and data regarding client patterns as well.

## 2.2 Agricultural Exhibitions

- AIP will support key associations (**BSA, BFA, BCPA**) to organize **Agricultural Exhibitions** in the project area from the second year of implementation targeting the month of December. This time is usually a comparative slack period of main field crops' cultivation and business transactions in the input supply calendar. These exhibitions are planned as two day events designed to demonstrate innovative management techniques and products, as well as environmentally-responsible agricultural input practices. Participants will include farmers, retailers, equipment and finance companies, regional and national wholesalers, international input manufacturers, and agro-processors. Five exhibitions are planned over the LOP; AIP will catch up by arranging two exhibitions in one of its years 3, 4, or 5.

- To prepare for the first exhibition in December 2013, AIP in Year 1 will engage a **consultative process** with associations – who in turn will bring in manufacturers, wholesalers and related stakeholders - to settle matters regarding cost sharing modalities, participants, and venues' selection. The project will treat this flexibly; more than one venue and event may emerge as appropriate in a given year.

### **2.3 Demonstration Plots with FTF programs**

In collaboration with the with other FTF projects, including public and private supply companies and institutions which have retailers participating in AIP trainings, subject to the findings of the environmental due diligence, the program will provide demonstrations to display the benefits of using high-quality agricultural inputs for the production of selected crops. The demonstrations will also show the appropriate application practices for agricultural inputs, which take into account farmers' net return, health and safety, and impact on the environment. These demonstrations will strengthen linkages between farmers and the retailers participating in AIP (and who ultimately aim to become certified AIRN retailers), as they will educate farmers on the benefits of purchasing quality products from retailers participating in AIP training, and who ultimately receive the AIRN's seal of quality.

Demonstration plots that utilize quality inputs will be established primarily in the environs of individual AIRN member retailers, so that customers - once convinced of the profitability and effectiveness of the inputs and techniques used in plots - can purchase input supplies from the same retailers who are as near as possible to their farms. Plots will be established when and where appropriate in collaboration with other FtF projects. This will not be a given for all plots; some will be solely driven by wholesalers without FtF projects' collaboration. A relatively smaller number of plots to demonstrate mostly nutrient-dense vegetables will be established by the three sub-awarded female-based NGOs in consultation with the GLC. The balance between numbers of plots that are linked to other FtF projects and those that are not will be determined once dialogues with wholesalers and FtF projects have taken place. Plots' productivity and the environmental impacts of agricultural activities will be monitored to compare their output with that of nearby controls that do not utilize higher quality inputs and environmentally-responsible application practices.

#### **2.3.1 Identification of Collaborators and Plots**

Consultations will take place with retailers, wholesalers, companies (e.g. Farok Fertilizer, ACI, Metal Agro, BayerCrop), Feed the Future implementers (e.g. FtF Horticulture, AAPI), and the Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA) in Bangladesh for setting up cost sharing modalities, selecting focal crops, and pinpointing demonstration plots' locations as near as possible to AIRN member retailers. Special attention will be given to include germplasm in plots that is designed for climate change resilience, e.g. saline tolerance in surge-prone and rising water table areas, and damping-off disease resistance for vegetables. Retailers and companies' representative crops and their respective technologies will be identified for demonstration. With the help of retailers, demo farmers' land will be selected and plots' locations will be identified. Control plots' locations will also be determined with the help of retailers. All plots' locations will be plotted by GPS. In Year 1, 60 demonstration plots will be established, both those done with or without collaboration with FtF project implementers. AIP is targeting the pre-monsoon season of March-April for establishment of the first plots in Year 1. Based on an anticipated outcome of the Environmental Due Diligence study (see Cross Cutting, this work plan), a PERSUAP may have to be done. CPPs' choice and use are the principal concern. As this exacting exercise is time consuming, March-April plots will not use CPPs as inputs, but only seed and fertilizer.

#### **2.3.2 Field Days**

For each demonstration plot 3 Field Days will be organized during setup, vegetative stage, and crop harvesting stage. Best management practices will be taught, including environmentally-sound agricultural input application practices, water management, cultivation, and use of Integrated Pest Management and CPPs. In Year 1, a total of 180 field days will be organized for 60 demo plots and their associated control plots. Participatory monitoring will compare outputs of plots using high quality inputs with control plots. Quantitative measurements of yields will be recorded for project M/E, and to illustrate to farmers net profits from use of high quality inputs.

### 2.3.3 Demonstrations to promote high value nutritious crops and technologies

- **Dialogues with companies, retailers, and GLC**  
The GLC will select a broad range of primarily high value and nutrient-dense vegetable crops aimed at promotion to female farmers and gardeners. Special attention will be given to include germplasm that is designed for climate change resilience, e.g. saline tolerance in surge-prone and rising water table areas, and damping-off resistance. As in 2.3.1 (above) cost sharing modalities will be developed with partners.
- With the help of retailers, together with feedback from the GLC, female-run partner NGOs will **select female farmers** and gardeners to determine female participants and plots' locations.
- In Year 1, at least 5 demonstration **plots will be established** in women farmers' fields. This pace will pick up in subsequent project years.
- For each demonstration plot 3 **Field Days** will be organized during plots' establishment stage, peak vegetative growth stage, and peak crop harvesting stage. In Year 1, a total 15 field days will be organized.

#### Table 3: Activity calendar, Intervention 2, Year 1

Task #	Project Task	2012				2013								Leads, partners and Collaborators				
		Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	AIP staff lead	Implementing Partner	Collaborating Partner (projects, GOB)	
<b>Intervention 2: Market Information Systems</b>																		
2.1	Ag-Inputs Monthly Price Outlook bulletin – Analysis and Distribution															M&EA	AIRN	DAE-DAM, Bayer Crop Science
2.2.1	GIS development															SCBA and GIS Sp	AIRN; Spatial Systems Associates	CEGIS, DAE-AIS, BARC
2.2	Agricultural Exhibitions															SABA	BSA, BFA, BCPA, AIRN	IFDC-AAPI, CIP-Horticulture, IRRI-CSISA
2.3	Demonstration Plots with FTF Programs																	
2.3.1	Identification of collaborators and plots															SABA and	BSA, BFA, BCPA, AIRN; Input Companies (i.e. Lal Teer, BayerCrop, Syngenta, Farok Fertilizer, Metal Agro, ACI, Auto Crop, Golden Barn)	IFDC-AAPI, CIP-Horticulture, IRRI-CSISA, WFC-Aquaculture
2.3.2	Field Days															AISCA	AIRN; Input Companies (i.e. Lal Teer, BayerCrop, Syngenta, Farok Fertilizer, Metal	IFDC-AAPI, CIP-Horticulture, IRRI-CSISA, WFC-

																Agro, ACI, Auto Crop, Golden Barn)	Aquaculture
<b>2.3.3</b>	<b>Demonstrations to promote high value nutritious crops and technologies</b>														SABA and GS	GLC and AIRN; Input Companies (i.e. Lal Teer, BayerCrop, Syngenta, Farok Fertilizer, Metal Agro, ACI, Auto Crop, Golden Barn)	HKI-SPRING, CIP-Horticulture

**Table 4: Outputs, Intervention 2, Year 1 (projected for Years 2 – 5)**

Activity	LOP Target	Year 1 Target	Projected Targets				
			Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
<b>2</b>	<b>Market Information Systems</b>						
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Ag-Inputs Monthly Price Outlook bulletin – Analysis and Distribution</b>						
	Publish Ag-Input Monthly Price Outlooks (# Outlook)	48		12	12	12	12
	Distribute print version through retailers and advisory centres across (# copy)	200,000		50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
	Utilize GPS to plot retailers assigning unique identification numbers (# retailer)	3,000	500	2,000	500		
	Develop a directory of retailers (# retailer)	3,000	500	2,000	500		
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Agricultural exhibitions</b>						
	Facilitate annual exhibitions (# exhibition)	5		2	1	2	
	National companies participating in the exhibition (# company)	80		25	18	37	
	Multinational input supply companies participate the exhibition (# company)	20		6	4	10	
	Exhibition of new products (# product)	100		25	15	60	
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Demonstration plots with other FTF programs</b>						
	Organize demonstration plots (# demonstration plot) make consistent with WP int. 2	500	65	150	150	85	50
	Farmers participate in the demonstration plots (# of farmer)	50,000	5,000	15,000	15,000	10,000	5,000
	Test and adopt new input products (# of product)	30	3	7	8	8	4
	Results of demonstration trials' results disseminated through radio and other media outlets (# event)	15	2	5	5	2	1

## Intervention 3: Quality Control and Regulatory Standards

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3.3	<b>Monitoring</b> .....	30
3.4	<b>Policy, legal, regulatory constraint</b> .....	30

AIP will engage industry associations and the GoB to develop industry standards for each of the major crop inputs (seed, fertilizer, and crop protection products). Multi-stakeholder support and transparency is required to address persistent problems of low quality seed, improper fertilizer formulation, and adulteration of crop protection products. It is at the retail level where most admixture and adulteration takes place for fertilizer and CPPs. The pertinence and efficacy of existing quality control standards will be analyzed, with the aim to adjust existing standards and create new standards, both to be advocated. Once determined, this body of information will be promoted to AIRN retailers, associations' member wholesalers, and distributors for continual adoption. The composition of AIRN retailers' certificate of membership will be developed. These will be developed in concert with the AIRN Advisory Board (1.1.5 this work plan) and an AIRN Business Ethics Committee to oversee agreement by AIRN member retailers to a code of ethics that embraces adherence to high quality, unadulterated products. The Business Ethics Committee will be formed from associations' members, AIRN, and the GoB to formulate and update a retailers' business ethic code, and commission and guide independent monitoring audits of retailers.

### 3.1 Adherence to Industry Standards

Year 1 will focus on seed quality standards of the three classes of inputs (seed, fertilizer, CPPs). At least 2 seed quality standards will be developed in Year 1 in collaboration with BSA and concerned government departments i.e. DAE, BADC and the Seed Wing of the MoA.

- **Review of existing seed quality standards, development of new seed quality standards**

AIP will first undergo the **collection of existing input quality standards** for seed, e.g. the Seed Policy of GoB through which set seed standards in the country. This regulates parameters like seed genetic purity, germination rates, production technique, processing, storage, packaging, labeling, and marketing. A major drawback in rules' enforcement is that only GoB organizations like the BADC, and some reputed national and multinational seed companies, comply with seed rules. Some smaller private enterprises' reluctance to follow rules leads to questionable product quality. This dynamic will be further assessed.

- AIP will initiate **consultations** with the BSA, BADC, and the Seed Certification Agency (SCA) a directorate under the DAE. Consultations aim to analyze causes and constraints for ineffective enforcement of seed rules. Together with this exercise AIP will analyze the adequacy of existing seed standards that are intended to maintain seed quality. The state of the art of seed quality standards with regard to climate change resilience (e.g. saline tolerance and waterlog resistance) will also be analyzed.

- **Public-private sector seminars**

A key output from analyses will be briefs to advance to the GoB for upgrading old and developing new standards as necessary. The BSA will be assisted by AIP to conduct seminars for the Ministry of Agriculture and other government officials from the SCA and the Seed Wing of the MoA (see also 1.1.6.3, this work plan). Seminars will identify key policy, legal, and regulatory constraints and identify pathways and means for addressing them with responsibilities outlined for both public and private sectors.

### 3.2a AIRN Certification

- AIP will assist AIRN in the content and structure of a **certificate template for AIRN** member retailers, in consultation with BSA, BFA, BCPA, and the Business Ethics Committee (see 3.3 below). The template will include mandatory business ethics and quality standards compliance.
- After successful completion of business management and technical trainings (see 1.2, this work plan) **retailers will receive an AIRN certificate** embellished by the Astha Seal of Quality. The Seal of Quality indicates to the public that a given AIRN member retailer is selling only quality inputs at fair prices, coupled with the provision of agricultural and safe-use advice. Certificates are to be prominently displayed in shops for customers to view.

### 3.2b AIRN Business Ethics Committee

A Business Ethics Committee (BEC) within AIRN will be created in Year 1. Its basic mandate will be to determine a set of business ethics criteria necessary for AIRN certification and membership. The BEC will consist of at least one representative from each of the three major input associations, one farmer group representative, one high level official from DAE, one male and one female AIRN retailer, and the Gender Specialist. The BEC will guide the AIRN Advisory Board on ethics, and will commission independent audits of AIRN retailers (3.3 below). The BEC will meet quarterly.

### 3.3 Monitoring

- Two monitoring functions - independent audits and a consumer hotline - will be set up over the LOP to ensure that AIRN member retailers live up to their code of business ethics and that their products are of quality to conform with industry-approved standards. The first of these will be set up in Year 1. This **independent audit function** will be made operational, and the first of yearly independent audits will take place in Year 2. The BEC of AIRN, aided by AIP, will commission an outside auditing firm for field level audits of certified retailers. Annual monitoring of retailers is necessary for the long term value of AIRN certification to remain intact, and that proper quality control practices continue so that members' certification remains valued and trusted.
- AIRN's **Field Agents** will be closely involved in audits. Auditors will have access to information that will be continually gathered by AIRN Field Agents. This information will encompass monitoring fields on standardized check lists to be developed in Year 1. Check lists will include general stock analyses of input amounts, types, prices and checks on products' dates' expiry, packaging size, labeling, and purity. Monthly price and product data submitted to the GIS system will also be verified. Field Agents' continuous checks will serve to collect information for the GIS and price bulletins. They will also allow independent auditors to investigate for counterfeit products and adulteration. The monitoring information will be used to further inform AIP approaches in retailer training, AIRN services, and policy efforts.

### 3.4 Policy, legal, and regulatory constraints

- This Task will take place simultaneously with 3.1 (above) in Year 1 for the seed sector, with an emphasis on GoB laws and policies governing the seed sector. More than the seed sector's quality standards, AIP will work in close consultation with IRRI and IFPRI to **identify policy, legal and regulatory constraints and opportunities** in the business enabling legal and policy environment. AIP's Policy and Enabling Environmental Advisor will collect existing

seed sector policies from DAE, BARC, and IFPRI and analyze for lapses and constraints. Findings from the first Gender Assessment (see Cross Cutting, this work plan) to identify gender related policy constraints.

- AIP staff and representatives of the BSA will participate in a **seed sector policy dialogue group** established in coordination with the GoB, and interested projects and donors. The BSA will be assisted by AIP to conduct seminars for the Ministry of Agriculture and other government officials from the SCA and the Seed Wing of the MoA. Seminars will cite data from IFPRI's BRRSP studies and AIRN early experience on field level quality control. The seminars aim to identify key policy, legal, and regulatory constraints, and to identify means to address them.

**Table 5: Activity calendar, Intervention 3, Year 1**

Task #	Project Task	2012			2013									Leads, partners and Collaborators				
		Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	AIP staff lead	Implementing Partner	Collaborating Partner (projects, GOB)	
<b>Intervention 3: Quality Control and Regulatory Standards</b>																		
3.1	Adherence to Industry Standards															AIQSS	AIRN	DAE, BARC, IFPRI
3.2	AIRN Certification															AIRN Cord and SAB A	BFA, BSA, BCPA	
3.3	AIRN Business Ethics Committee															SAB A and GS	BFA, BSA, BCPA	DAE
3.4	Monitoring															AIRN Cord ;BE C	AIRN, Independent Audit Firm	
3.5	Policy and legal analyses															PEE A and SAB A	BSA, BFA, BCPA	DAE, IFPRI

**Table 6: Outputs, Intervention 3, Year 1 (projected for Years 2 – 5)**

Activity		LOP Target	Year 1 Target	Projected Targets			
				Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>3</b>	<b>Quality control and regulatory standards</b>						
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Adherence to industry standards</b>						
	Develop, adopt, and monitor new input quality standards (# standard)	6	1	2	1	1	1
<b>3.2a &amp; 3.2b</b>	<b>AIRN Certification and AIRN business ethics Committee</b>						
	Create quality standards and business ethics monitoring committee (# committee)	1		1			
	Certification of retailers (# retailer)	3,000		2,000	500	500	
	Smallholders served by certified retailers (# smallholder)	1,000,000		700,000	175,000	125,000	
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>						
	Input companies participate in the Business ethics committee (# of company)	3		3			
	Conduct audit annually by independent auditors on business ethics (# audits)	4		1	1	1	1
	Retailers audited renewing certification each year (80% of the retailers) (# of retailer)	2,400		1,600	400	400	
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Policy, legal and regulatory constraints</b>						
	Identify policy constraints and present to the policy dialogue group (# policy constraint)	8		2	2	2	2
	Conduct gender assessment and follow-up assessment (# assessment)	2	1			1	
	Form Program Advisory Committee consisting of public and private stakeholders (# committee)	1		1			
	Organize semi-annually meetings of AIP Advisory Committee (# meeting)	8		2	2	2	2

## Intervention 4: Strengthening Local Organizations

4.1	Organizational capacity assessment .....	33
4.2	Training design.....	33

The aim of Intervention 4 is twofold. The first is to cultivate AIP’s four principal partners (AIRN, BSA, BCPA, and BFA) to sufficient organizational maturity in order to qualify for direct implementation awards by USAID and for direct implementation of project activities. The second is to build capacities of related local organizations to prepare them to implement project activities through AIP sub-awards. In Year 1 AIP will conduct initial assessments of three business associations and start training design for all local organizations.

A preface is necessary to understand Year 1’s activities in context. BSA, BCPA, and BFA will be trained in Year 2 to meet requirements of USAID’s Standards for Financial Management Systems. AIP may selectively use fields of evaluation from the Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) to adjudge their overall readiness. In addition an independent auditing firm will be retained to train them in USAID standards. In Year 2 AIP will also adjudge AIRN’s readiness for direct awards. AIRN would only qualify once having become sufficiently autonomous from AIP.

Over the LoP the AIP aims to cultivate at three local organizations to be qualified to directly receive USAID funding. If by end of Year 2 BSA, BFA, BCPA, and AIRN are not adjudged ready, AIP instead may opt to work with a larger number of organizations to instead make eligible for Fixed Obligation Grants (FOGs), which have a lower threshold of institutional capacity building with a ceiling of \$500,000 per year.

In Year 2 AIP will also begin assessments of existing organizational capacities of local organizations e.g. *Ashroy* Foundation, AVAS, and *Banchte Shekha*, MFIs, and in the private sector. Based on this, trainings will be designed to increase their capacities in order to implement AIP activities under sub-awards towards e.g. better input supply, gender integration, financial and working capital development of retailers, and interfacing AIP’s objectives with nutrition and livelihoods programs.

### 4.1 Organizational Capacity Assessment

Towards the end of Year 1 organizational and financial management capability assessments will be carried out for three of the four principal partners (BSA, BCPA, and BFA). Based on outcomes, design work will begin on organizational capacity training for both sets of organizations. The medium term goal over the LOP is for both sets of organizations to be transitioned into direct implementation roles with AIP’s strong mentoring and oversight.

### 4.2 Training Design

Training content for organizational capacity building will begin towards the end of Year 1 as assessments’ findings emerge. The general syllabus will follow relevant selection from the seven major fields of OCAT, e.g. organizational governance, financial management, organizational management, and program management. Heavy concentration will be on financial management. An independent auditing firm will be identified to train organizations against criteria stipulated in USAID’s Standards for Financial Management Systems.

**Table 7: Activity calendar, Intervention 4, Year 1**

Task #	Project Task	2012				2013									Leads, partners and Collaborators		
		Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	AIP staff lead	Implementing Partner	Collaborating Partner (projects, GOB)
<b>Intervention 4: Strengthening Local Organizations</b>																	
4.1	Organizational assessments														SCB A	BSA	
4.2	Training design														SCB A	BSA	

**Table 8: Outputs, Intervention 4, Year 1 (projected for Years 2 – 5)**

Activity	LOP Target	Year 1 Target	Projected Targets			
			Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<b>4. Strengthening local organizations</b>						
Provide subawards to local implementing partners (# awards)	30		10	15	5	
Develop specific technical assistance package for all local organizations (# package)	1	1				
Value of subawards provided to local implementing partners	\$750,000		to be determined			
Local organizations and businesses developed to deliver improved input service provision (# organization)	20			10	10	
Provide TA to develop pre-award survey by local accounting firm (# tech assistance)	1		1			
Local organizations qualify to implement USG-funded programming (# organization)	3				2	1

## Cross Cutting

### I. Gender

#### Gender Assessment

Two gender assessments will take place over the LOP to integrate gender equity into policy and advocacy initiatives to be taken up by the GLC, and to ensure that gender programming is appropriate and well-targeted. GLC members will be trained by the Gender Specialist in the use of USAID's Women's Empowerment Agricultural Index (WEAI) tool, whose 10 indicators across 5 domains will be adapted to the particular setting of women-operated agricultural input retail shops, and guide the structure of the assessments in Years 1 and 3. The WEAI will measure change in empowerment from Year 1 to 3. It is assumed that most women retailers will not achieve the requisite 80% to be adjudged 'empowered' by the WEAI in Year 1, as the vast majority will not have started businesses. The major objective of the first gender assessment in Year 1 will thus be to identify specific actions the AIP can take to address the primary constraints facing women face in the agricultural inputs sector in the southern delta of Bangladesh, with particular focus on women retailers and the availability of input packages appropriate for women's needs.

Below is an example of an AIP adaptation of the WEAI. It will be used by GLC to gauge empowerment changes of women retailers. The first Domain and its two Indicators have been changed from its original orientation intended for women's involvement in field production to be more relevant to the implementation areas of the AIP:

Domain	Indicators	Score	Weight
Business	Input in business management decisions		1/10
	Autonomy in retail operation		1/10
Resources	Ownership of assets		1/15
	Purchase, sale, or transfer of assets		1/15
	Access to and decisions on credit		1/15
Income	Control over use of income		1/5
Leadership	Group member		1/10
	Speaking in public		1/10
Time	Workload		1/10
	Leisure		1/10

A **SOW** in Year 1 will first be developed by the Gender Specialist. A key output will be a determination of study approaches that will gauge how AIRN may best foster women- owned and - operated retail agri-input businesses. Approaches to determining the range of products that female retailers could sell to their customer base – both female and male – will also be elements of the SOW. This determination will encompass profitability, keeping in mind objectives of the broader USAID FtF objectives of food availability, accessibility, and nutritional diversity.

The SOW will also help determine the most appropriate modalities and terms of partnership to implement matching grants to female retailers for business start-ups or to bolster existing businesses. AIP's Policy Advisor, who has considerable experience conducting Gender Assessments, will support the efforts of the Gender Specialist in the SOW's development in concert with the GLC.

The **first gender assessment in Year 1** will identify how AIRN can enable the successful establishment and running of women-owned input retailers, and address gender-based challenges to increasing women's access to and safe use of quality agricultural inputs. This will take in the current degree of participation of women in the agricultural input sector, as retailers and consumers. Outputs will aid AIRN and sub-awarded female-operated NGOs to integrate appropriate approaches into strategic program direction and activities. The assessment will help determine the following:

- major limitations and challenges to women farmers to acquire inputs,
- major limitations and challenges to women selling inputs,
- the role AIRN, and AIP, can play in addressing these limitations and challenges,
- recommendations on adjusting modalities of matching grants, and
- a strategic plan with specific actions to integrate findings into the AIP.

## II. Environment

The Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) approved by USAID has determined that most interventions anticipated within AIP meet Categorical Exclusion requirements and, therefore, are excluded from any further environmental review requirements. However, expected AIP linkages with Sustainably Increased Agricultural Productivity and Cross Cutting Activities and the award of small sub-grants indicate that a Negative Determination with Conditions may apply to one or more interventions. This indicates that if these activities are implemented per the specified conditions, they are expected to have no significant adverse environmental effect, but does require completion of additional due diligence and review activities prior to intervention implementation.

Accordingly, AIP will undertake a number of concrete steps to conduct environmental due diligence and put in place the necessary manuals, checklists, systems and reviews to ensure that no AIP activities will have adverse environmental effects. Per 22 CFR 216, will undertake the following:

Initial environmental activities, to be completed by the end of Month 6, comprise the development and approval by USAID of three critical documents:

- ✓ **Environmental Due Diligence Review** (for proposed AIP activities not previously determined by the IEE to cause no environmental effects)
- ✓ **Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan**, including planned reporting
- ✓ **Environmental Manual** (to guide the implementation of AIP activities and ensure compliance with environmental standards and requirements)

While the first set of activities listed above will determine the need for additional environmental tools and procedures, it is anticipated that the following will also be required, and these will be completed immediately upon completion of the above (Months 7-9):

- ✓ Pesticides Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (**PERSUAP**)
- ✓ **Grants Environmental Review (ER) Checklist** (to screen grant proposals for adverse environmental impact)
- ✓ **Demonstrations Environmental Review (ER) Checklist** (to screen demonstration plots for adverse environmental impact)

Once the above manuals, tools, and procedures are in place, AIP will conduct environmental activities on an on-going basis, according to the requirements outlined in the Environmental Manual. Specifically, the project will:

- ✓ Ensure that all AIP activities comply with the Environmental Manual
- ✓ Ensure compliance with the PERSUAP, as applicable
- ✓ Complete an environmental review checklist for every grant proposal before approval or grants disbursement and a mitigation/monitoring plan if required
- ✓ Complete an environmental review checklist for every planned demonstration plot
- ✓ Incorporate environmental review into the site visits to grantee enterprises and demonstration plots
- ✓ Include information on environmental impacts and mitigation measures in each quarterly performance report and other reporting to USAID
- ✓ Include environmental compliance actions, and updated mitigation/monitoring plans as required, in subsequent work plans for Years 2-5

In addition, there will be significant efforts made throughout the program intervention areas to ensure that the agricultural input products and practices introduced and/or promoted by the AIP are environmentally responsible and contribute to the avoidance of the potential harmful environmental consequences of misusing or overusing certain agricultural inputs. This will be a key aspect of the material provided at the field days at the demonstration plots, and will also be integrated into the capacity building of AIRN members and agricultural input associations.

**Table 9: Activity calendar, Cross Cutting, Year 1**

Activity	2012				2013								Leads, partners and Collaborators			
	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	AIP staff lead	Implementing Partner	Collaborating Partner (projects, GOB)
<b>Cross Cutting</b>																
<b>Gender</b>																
First Gender Assessment														M&E A, GS		AVAS, AS, BS
<b>Environment</b>																
Environmental Due														COP		

Diligence study																				
PERSUAP																				COP

## Other Key Issues

### Grants

An AIP grant fund will be maintained for tactical matching grant assistance to strengthen the input supply network of Bangladesh. The **Agro Input Retailer Grants** are a part of AIP Intervention 1, specifically targeting women retailer startups (pending findings of the initial AIP Gender Assessment). These awards will utilize a 1:1 ratio up to a maximum \$5,000 grant from the project, which may be funded through a combination of cash and in-kind donation.

Throughout implementation of the Agro-Inputs Project (AIP) in Bangladesh, CNFA will remain committed to a competitive and transparent award process and will draw upon its extensive grant-making and subcontracting experience, utilizing existing systems and procedures to quickly develop and roll-out this process. The Gender Lens Committee (which will play a key role in evaluating grant applications) will promote grant opportunities throughout the program’s target areas. In Year 1, the AIP will finalize its Grants Manual with approval from USAID.

### Sub-Recipients

Currently, most Bangladeshi organizations do not have the corporate capabilities or experience to manage USAID awards, thus hindering USAID’s plans to work directly through Bangladeshi entities for future program activities in the agricultural inputs sector. The Agro-Inputs Project (AIP) in Bangladesh will support overcoming this obstacle by providing sub-awards to build the capacity of local organizations and also to carry out initiatives linked to AIP activities and objectives. CNFA will identify three local organizations that can become qualified to receive USAID funding directly and carry out agro-input sector development activities under AIP.

As the ultimate goal of each sub-award will be to enhance the capacity of the recipient organization to implement agricultural inputs-related activities funded directly by USAID in the future, these varying types of activities are all expected to be able to contribute towards the achievement of this objective. Using funds to implement projects similar to future USAID-funded activities will increase the organizational capability to effectively manage funds while working towards achieving measurable successes in the agricultural inputs sector. For sub-awards in which the funds are used to obtain services or equipment which more directly strengthen the internal operations and management of the organization, recipients will become more competitive, efficient, and/or qualified guardians of USAID funds.

As AIP develops its understanding of the agricultural inputs value chain, the selection of industry partners will be made. Following agreement with USAID, specific technical assistance packages will be designed for each group by the Senior Capacity Building Advisor, so that by the end of Program Year 3, management, financial accountability, and operational standards for assistance are met during USAID pre-award surveys.

### Research and Technology

AIP will introduce new technologies (i.e. improved varieties of seed and other higher-quality inputs) and encourage their adoption by the agricultural input retailers and their clients. AIP will track the new products introduced into participating Astha retailers, and will also monitor sales via fiscal memory devices for each retailer.

### **Nutrition Integration**

As indicated in Intervention 1, training for women retailers on nutrition improvement will be developed by the AIP Gender Specialist in collaboration with the GLC. In Year 1, one such training will be conducted by the female master trainers to 20 would-be female retailers. Women retailers in turn will provide nutrition information to farmers as an embedded service during sales.

### **Global Climate Change Mitigation**

AIP trainings and demonstrations will include information on how the responsible handling and use of agricultural inputs can assist in dealing with the negative effects of climate change. This will include a focus on soil health, integrated pest management, and water use.

### **Financial Progress**

Cooperative Agreement No.:	AID-388-A-12-00005
Date of Issuance:	September 17, 2012
Total Potential Amount:	\$14,028,602
Amount Obligated to date:	\$3,221,306
Total Project Funds Expended through 09/30/12	\$6.566
Project Funds Projected for 12 month period (through 09/30/13)	\$ 3,168,337

Cost share is ultimately expected in later years of the program, to be provided via matching contributions for the \$300,000 in grants to be awarded in upcoming program years.

### **Communication Strategy**

A communication strategy will be developed annually and updated periodically. Communication materials are being developed to promote AIP in order to encourage program participation and disseminate key accomplishments and announcements. The Agro-Inputs Project will use the following mediums for project promotion: frequent press releases to announce project launch, activities and results; success stories; and public relations materials including project brochures and newsletters.

- **Program Brochures** – a brochure that explains clearly and concisely the aim of the project, its approach and the expected results is being developed. The brochure will include project objectives, developments, collaboration with key partners, and contact information. The first draft was sent out to CNFA HQ for review. Due to the changes in the project goal there has been a delay in writing a final draft of the brochure. A final draft is expected by the middle of the second quarter..
- **One-page Program Summary** – A brief, one-page program summary has been produced. This document will be suitable for email circulation or hand-out at events to anyone interested in an overview of the project.
- **Geographical Map**- A map of the project areas is depicted in color. This map will be updated as AIP establishes main offices and satellite offices in each of the target districts.
- **PowerPoint Presentation**- A general presentation has been developed and is being used in meetings with different associations and stakeholders.
- **Website**- Accessing the web for project information is a great way to disseminate information. AIP will soon develop a website to promote the project by reaching out to larger audiences. Currently the team is developing a call for proposals and scope of work to create a website. AIP will seek proposals from at least three vendors and will choose the best one from the three. AIP intends to launch the project website in April.

The website shall include the following:

- The website to be developed shall take into account design elements of CNFA website (<http://www.cnfa.org>)
  - The website will contain information about AIP, resource centre, opportunities, and different sectors of the project
  - The website will be dynamic and should allow easy information to update
  - The website will have photo gallery which will allow the AIP to post project photos along with captions and additional information
  - The website will also include an email campaign manager to help AIP compose and send out newsletters, success stories, and market information to stakeholders who care for them
- **Public Events**
    - **Project Launch:** After consultation with USAID, it was determined the best time for the project launch event to take place will be in May 2013, during the first year of program implementation. To make the launch more effective and collaborative, AIP will involve the associations, partners, USAID, and the GoB.

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