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## **EVALUATION**

# **MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE WEST AFRICA TRADE AND INVESTMENT HUB AND USAID ASSISTANCE TO REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

**October 2017**

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## ABSTRACT

This mid-term performance evaluation of USAID's West Africa Trade and Investment Hub ("WATIH") addresses activities since the project started in March 2014, and answers three questions:

1. To what extent has WATIH achieved or is on track to achieve outcomes related to IR1 and IR2 and the respective sub-IRs in support of USAID's intended objectives?
2. What are the benefits and trade-offs of having WATIH as a discrete mechanism for capacity building, value-chain support, and trade facilitation?
3. To what extent have selected partners supported through the USAID trade portfolio, including the ACA, GSA, and Borderless Alliance, become effective and sustainable regional institutions in terms of their organizational objectives?

The evaluation team conducted qualitative interviews with 89 key public and private sector stakeholders across 12 countries, three focus group discussions, structured observations, and a review of project documents.

The evaluation concluded that WATIH has made progress toward improving grades and standards and market information systems, but access to finance is lagging due to implementation capacity challenges and macroeconomic factors. Linkage events for buyers and sellers have not resulted in many executed deals despite the high attendance and popularity of these events. Many local stakeholders would prefer to have a direct relationship with USAID, but the coordination and administrative burdens of transferring the hub's reach to a series of direct partnerships would be prohibitive. USAID's support has been critical to the effectiveness of key regional organizations. However, many of these groups are reliant on donor funds and do not appear to be progressing toward sustainability.

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## ACRONYMS

ACA	African Cashew Alliance
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunities Act
ATRC	AGOA Trade Resource Centers
BA	Borderless Alliance
BIC	Border Information Center
CILSS	<i>Comité permanent Inter-Etats pour la Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel</i> /Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
COFENABVI	<i>Confédération des Fédérations Nationales de la Filière Bétail Viande de l'Afrique de l'Ouest</i> /Confederation of National Associations of the Meat and Livestock Sector of West Africa
CORAF	West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development
DCA	Development Credit Authority (USAID)
E3	Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (USAID)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ETLS	ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme
EG	Economic Growth
EQ	Evaluation Question
FENACOBVi-CI	Fédération Nationale des Coopératives Bétail-Viande de Côte d'Ivoire
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FinGAP	Financing Ghanaian Agriculture Project (USAID)
GIZ	<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i> /German Corporation for International Cooperation
GSA	Global Shea Alliance
IR	Intermediate Result
KII	Key Informant Interview
MIS	Market Information Systems
MSI	Management Systems International
OCA	Organizational Capacity Assessment
REC	Regional Economic Community
RESIMAO	West African Market Information Network
SOW	Statement of Work
TRR	Office of Trade and Regulatory Reform (USAID/E3)
UEMOA	<i>Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine</i> /West African Economic and Monetary Union
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WA	West Africa Mission (USAID)
WAGN	West Africa Grains Network
WATIH	West African Trade and Investment Hub

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the mid-term performance evaluation of the United States Agency for International Development’s (USAID’s) West Africa Trade and Investment Hub (“WATIH” or the Trade Hub hereafter) and investigates the sustainability of select USAID partner organizations. USAID/West Africa (WA) and the Office of Trade and Regulatory Reform in USAID’s Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (E3/TRR) commissioned the evaluation.

USAID/WA, as well as staff in USAID/E3/TRR and possibly other country missions, will use this evaluation to inform the design and implementation of future trade activities and make any necessary mid-course adjustments for activities under the USAID/WA trade portfolio.

### Background

Trade in West Africa is characterized by low exports of processed goods, a low degree of intra-regional trade, and reliance on extractive rather than value-added exports. Stagnant incomes and low agricultural productivity are integrally linked to weaknesses in the business enabling environment and private sector capacity that limit trade and investment. Farmers and firms produce and trade in primarily localized markets, and do not receive the benefits of transformative investment that accompany access to international markets. This is due to internal and external constraints such as inefficient transportation, trade barriers at borders, a lack of access to low-cost finance, and the lack of competitiveness of products from West African farmers and firms in the international marketplace.

### WATIH Overview

Abt Associates implements WATIH through a \$48.6 million contract with a three-year base period (March 2014 – February 2017) and two option years, the first of which USAID/WA has exercised. This is the third iteration of the Trade Hub activity; CARANA Corporation, now part of the Palladium Group, held the previous two implementation contracts. It also incorporates programmatic aspects of two preceding projects implemented by Abt Associates that focused on regional trade and staple food crops and livestock, management information systems, and partner capacity development.

WATIH’s main implementation office is in Accra, Ghana, with satellite offices in Senegal, Cote d’Ivoire, and Burkina Faso. The Trade Hub works in partnership with and on behalf of the three main regional economic integration bodies: Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), and Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) as well as national government actors, national and regional representative associations, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and both West African and global companies. The Trade Hub covers the 15 ECOWAS countries, with occasional outside requests for assistance from other countries outside of what is generally considered West Africa (e.g., Chad, Mauritania, Cameroon, Central African Republic).

WATIH works to improve access to finance, strengthen staple food value chains, address transport inefficiencies and non-tariff trade barriers, facilitate African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) trade, manage grants, and develop capacity within West African regional organizations. Key elements of the Trade Hub’s approach to support these objectives include increasing the number of public and private dialogue opportunities, linking farmers and firms to value-added processors and international buyers, and facilitating a better understanding of end-user market requirements.



Joint USAID-WATIH partnerships set up under previous iterations of the Trade Hub include the Global Shea Alliance (GSA), Africa Cashew Alliance (ACA), and the Borderless Alliance (BA). Since 2012, USAID/WA has also promoted the creation of the nine-country West Africa Grains Network (WAGN) and also maintains a longstanding partnership with the Confederation of National Associations of the Meat and Livestock Sector of West Africa (COFENABVI), which covers eight countries.

## Development Hypothesis

USAID believes that if the demonstration of successful commercial ventures is coupled with an integrated market offering an increasingly conducive business-enabling environment, then this will catalyze increased private sector investment in West Africa. As part of this hypothesis, USAID believes that private sector associations developed with Agency support will encourage investment and, ultimately, attract transformative investment from within the region and abroad. USAID hypothesizes that this approach will result in a flourishing of investment and incentives to invest once trade barriers, regional fragmentation, and other costs have been reduced.

WATIH activities aim to achieve two intermediate results (IRs):

1. Improved capacity of West Africa's farmers and firms in targeted regional and global value chains (e.g. maize, rice, sorghum, millet, livestock, apparel, mango, cashew, and shea).
2. Improved business-enabling environment by addressing transport constraints and trade barriers affecting the efficiency of the region's corridors and borders.

Six sub-IRs further specify activities, results, and objectives.

## Evaluation Questions

The evaluation answers the following evaluation questions (EQs):

1. To what extent has WATIH achieved or is on track to achieve outcomes related to IR1 and IR2 and the respective sub-IRs in support of USAID's intended objectives?
2. What are the benefits and trade-offs of having WATIH as a discrete mechanism for capacity building, value-chain support, and trade facilitation?
3. To what extent have selected partners supported through the USAID trade portfolio, including the ACA, GSA, and Borderless Alliance, become effective and sustainable regional institutions in terms of their organizational objectives?

## Evaluation Methodology

This evaluation employed a qualitative approach, conducting 89 key informant interviews (KIIs), 3 focus group discussions (FGDs), structured observations, and a desk review of key project documents. This research included five weeks of in-country primary data collection across two phases in four West African countries (Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria). The team used planned/actual comparisons and pattern/content analysis to analyze these data and develop findings and conclusions for each EQ.

## Findings and Conclusions by Evaluation Question

### **EQ1: To what extent has WATIH achieved or is on track to achieve outcomes related to IR1 and IR2 and the respective sub-IRs in support of USAID’s intended objectives?**

The Trade Hub made uneven progress toward IRs 1 and 2 during the period under the evaluation. It made notable progress in expanding the use of grades and standards (sub-IR 1.2) and increasing access to and use of market information (sub-IR 1.3). Progress has been mixed in regards to improving buyer and seller intermediation (sub-IR 1.1), where targets as far as counts were met, but the translation of linkage events to new sales was less clear. WATIH has had limited progress toward increasing access to and use of financial services (sub-IR 1.4), improving the competitiveness of the transport and logistics sector (sub-IR 2.1), and reducing legal and regulatory barriers (sub-IR 2.2).

While the Trade Hub has succeeded in some areas, it has been spread too thin to meet its objectives and provide relevant, sustainable assistance in target sectors. Delays in grant funding due to grant manual and approval requirements, as well as transitions between gaps in staffing, may have limited the project’s capacity development efforts among intended beneficiaries, particularly in the first year of implementation.

Key conclusions and findings for EQ1 include:

- WATIH’s support for buyer-seller linkages has improved market information, but resulted in relatively few new deals given the number of attendees. Relationships were often established through exchanges or agreements that prompted few executed contracts directly after these events.
- WATIH has helped increase awareness of grades and standards although the extent of this outreach is unclear. The Trade Hub has played a critical role in increasing access to market information services by regional and sectoral organizations, but there are ongoing challenges in raising awareness and use of these systems.
- The Trade Hub’s support for increasing access to finance has had some successes, but has been fairly limited in meeting both demand and supply sides. The introduction of USAID’s Development Credit Authority (DCA) into WATIH’s activities was welcomed by financial advisors, Trade Hub, and USAID staff.
- WATIH’s transportation and logistics outreach has done little to address deep-seated challenges such as road harassment and corruption.
- Representatives from regional organizations that address transport and trade policies reported having very little engagement with WATIH staff.

### **EQ2: What are the benefits and trade-offs of having WATIH as a discrete mechanism for capacity building, value-chain support, and trade facilitation?**

The benefits of having WATIH as a discrete mechanism largely lie in its ability to address supply- and demand-side constraints across multiple actors and sectors without requiring USAID to administer dozens of direct partnerships and activities. As originally formulated, WATIH provides a potentially sustainable and effective mechanism – if funded adequately, enabling the necessary resources to respond to actual cooperation needs (i.e., a demand-driven approach). However, the scope of the Trade Hub and its progress toward meeting its objectives, as discussed in the findings and conclusions for EQ1, suggest that in trying to do all things at all times, covering multiple countries with a budget at the scale of an individual bilateral project, it is having mixed success. Trade Hub communication and the lack of follow-

up are symptoms of this broad scope and have limited the project's ability to properly respond to regional stakeholders. The level of communication, information sharing, and visibility of WATIH has been insufficient given its planned outreach, but – with rare exceptions – those who have worked with the Trade Hub hold it in high esteem.

Through interviews with dozens of staff from the U.S. government, WATIH, other donors, and regional and local actors, the evaluation team concluded:

- WATIH, and USAID generally, have a strong reputation in West Africa.
- The Trade Hub has built strong partnerships and developed local capacity through trainings and technical assistance, particularly in the apparel and mango sectors and AGOA-related activities.
- There are clear comparative advantages to the Trade Hub approach, particularly on standards and creating networks for buyers and sellers. Similarly, direct support from USAID has allowed local organizations to stay afloat administratively and benefit from capacity building provided by other activities, such as WATIH. However, USAID should consider whether the Trade Hub mechanism is the right cross-cutting mechanism, compared to activities designed to address one or two IRs within the region or in sub-regions.
- Interviewees in the cereals, livestock, transport, and apparel sectors viewed the process of providing deliverables, requesting assistance, and submitting applications through the Trade Hub as time consuming and difficult and multiple respondents noted that the gap between submission of a request or plan and implementation is often too long.

### **EQ3: To what extent have selected partners supported through the USAID trade portfolio, including the ACA, GSA, and Borderless Alliance, become effective and sustainable regional institutions in terms of their organizational objectives?**

Partners supported through the USAID trade portfolio are largely reliant on continued technical and material support. The GSA, ACA, and BA represent a wide spectrum of needs and sustainability. The effectiveness of these partners is more difficult to ascertain, as respondents largely reported positive outcomes from their activities and the data that the evaluation collected are not robust enough to determine whether sectoral achievements can be tied to these groups and their work.

The evaluation team reached the following conclusions for EQ3:

- The GSA is en route to sustainability and appears to be increasing its reach and effectiveness. USAID's support has been integral to its growth and effectiveness. However, it still requires donor support to fund its operations. The alliance is increasingly moving toward public-private partnerships and leveraging donor funding with private sector funding to effectively implement its activities.
- The ACA has faced several management and funding constraints in the recent past, and is struggling to effectively represent the cashew sector. It is not clear that USAID support has made the ACA more effective and the organization faces existential challenges despite new management goals.
- The BA faces a public goods problem and its funding model is unsustainable in the absence of donor support. USAID's support has helped make the alliance an effective group and positioned it as a regional actor addressing transportation policy.
- The apparel sector presents an opportunity for additional direct partnerships throughout the region. There are several young apparel manufacturers, many export opportunities through AGOA, and gaps in local support for the sector that USAID could fill.

## Recommendations

Based on its findings and conclusion, the evaluation provides recommendations to USAID and the Trade Hub around three areas: the sub-regional approach, communication, and partner support.

### Scope and Scale of Activities

- USAID/WA should consider how to continue supporting regional integration, including outreach to regional organizations.
- USAID/WA should consider amending the sectoral reach of its Trade Hubs.
- USAID/WA should roll out and expand finance from the current Trade Hub.
  - Similarly, whether through the Trade Hub or as a separate mechanism, USAID/WA should continue to support programs that enhance linkages to banks as this creates more sustainable access to finance and helps build local capacity and understanding of constraints.

### Communication

- WATIH should employ improved follow-up surveys with stakeholders at regular intervals (e.g., every two to three months), to better understand how they are using the Trade Hub and its partners' support to ensure that beneficiaries understand what resources may still be available and can address on-going challenges that arise after initial support.
- The Trade Hub should adjust its approach to buyer-seller intermediation events to include systematic and regular follow-up in multiple phases, to see how to best target and connect buyers and sellers.
- In addition, WATIH should assess the management capacity of firms to meet buyer demands prior to investing in travel, technical assistance, and other financial support as part of improving market linkages.
- The Trade Hub should increase its outreach to UEMOA, as well as other Francophone organizations and ECOWAS.
- To the extent possible, WATIH should be in regular contact with local government stakeholders beyond just the Chambers of Commerce, which will foster a better understanding of what the Trade Hub and USAID is doing.
- The Trade Hub should continue to enhance its outreach activities to the U.S. private sector, with a focus on those already doing business in the region.

### Partner Support

- USAID/WA should identify ways to structure non-donor funding to address the public goods nature of the BA's outreach. Funding through non-donor institutional members may be one approach (e.g., local trucker unions or an ECOWAS office), but the BA should assess the best way to address this issue. USAID guidance and technical expertise may be useful in developing new fee structures, but BA must lead the way.
- If USAID/WA wants to continue supporting AGOA Trade Resource Centers (ATRCs), then WATIH or USAID/WA should increase training and support for the ATRCs, through materials and resources for learning and outreach, to ensure staff have adequate information and can answer questions without relying on USAID or its activities.
- The BA should work with local and national governments to ensure that the BICs are promoted among customs agencies, that officials are aware of their existence, and that both sides of a

border are adequately served. USAID could play a role in supporting the BA as part of an awareness campaign.

- USAID/WA should ensure its programs have strong beneficiary/partner ownership and are phased to start with market-led identification of farming systems and integrated supply chains that will be supported to achieve the program's objectives.
- WATIH and USAID/WA should better target and design training of trainers programs to build sustainable capacity for relevant Trade Hub targeted stakeholders in the value chain. This should include knowledge on savings and credit, trade finance, export marketing, warehousing, and quality control. Further, the training of trainers should be part of a larger program that also guarantees and incentivizes follow-on trainings, to keep beneficiaries engaged and exposed to best practices.
- WATIH should establish a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder public-private partnership approach that leverages direct private sector funding and brings in funding from other donors. This would be similar to what the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) is implementing under the ComCashew initiative, or the GSA on its cooperative warehouse scheme. Donors that support ECOWAS have provided resources to ComCashew, potentially making the support sustainable beyond GIZ funding. There must be an exit strategy for the donor and this must be explicit from the start, ensuring a strong business case for activities beyond the donor's mission.

# INTRODUCTION

This report presents findings, conclusions, and recommendations from the mid-term performance evaluation of the United States Agency for International Development’s (USAID’s) West Africa Trade and Investment Hub (“WATIH” or the Trade Hub hereafter), as well as USAID’s direct support to selected West African organizations. USAID/West Africa (WA) and the Office of Trade and Regulatory Reform in USAID’s Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment (E3/TRR) commissioned the evaluation, and the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project designed and implemented it.<sup>1</sup> Annex A provides USAID’s statement of work (SOW) for the evaluation.

The report is organized as follows:

- Overview of the purpose, audiences, and intended uses of this evaluation
- Background on WATIH and the development hypothesis behind Trade Hub activities.
- Evaluation questions
- Evaluation methodology, including team composition, sampling considerations, data collection and analysis methods, and limitations
- Findings and conclusions by evaluation question
- Recommendations
- Annexes

## EVALUATION PURPOSE, AUDIENCES, AND INTENDED USES

### Purpose

The purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to assess and document the extent to which WATIH has achieved its objectives and to inform USAID’s future decisions on trade programming. The evaluation also examines whether support to selected private sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions, is meeting private-sector demands for greater technical support and information, and is successfully advocating for improved enabling environments for the supported value chains. Furthermore, the evaluation addresses the relative merits of the Trade Hub mechanism in and of itself, and provides insight into how best to support West African private sector associations and organizations to better inform future partnership processes and criteria.

### Audiences and Intended Uses

The primary audiences for this evaluation are USAID/WA, implementing partners, and other West African organizations involved in trade. USAID/WA, as well as staff in USAID/E3/TRR and possibly other country missions, will use this evaluation to inform the design and implementation of future trade activities and make any necessary mid-course adjustments for activities under the USAID/WA trade portfolio.

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<sup>1</sup> Management Systems International (MSI) implements the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project in partnership with Development and Training Services, (dTS, a Palladium company); and NORC at the University of Chicago. dTS recused itself from participating in activities under this evaluation.

## BACKGROUND

### USAID/WA Trade Portfolio

USAID/WA's Mission-wide goal is the West African-led advancement of social and economic well-being. Several development objectives support this goal, including "broad-based economic growth and resilience advanced through West African partners."<sup>2</sup> African-led regional development is consistent with USAID's commitment to strengthen local capacity and help regional organizations better deliver on the promise of regional economic integration.

USAID/WA's trade portfolio aims to enhance the ability of West Africa's key agricultural, livestock, and collected product value chains to compete within the region and in the world market. The trade access accorded by the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA), coupled with the AGOA trade-promotion activities of USAID's present and prior West Africa trade hubs, have produced tangible gains in diversifying West African exports to the U.S. in textile and handicraft products. Support for private sector associations to meet market requirements for quality and volume has led to increased sales from targeted staple foods, agricultural inputs, and value-added sectors, directly affecting the livelihoods of millions of West Africans.

### WATIH Overview

Abt Associates implements WATIH through a \$48.6 million contract (#AID-624-C-13-00002-00). The Trade Hub has a three-year base period (March 2014 – February 2017) with two option years, the first of which USAID/WA has exercised. This is the third iteration of the Trade Hub activity; CARANA Corporation, now part of the Palladium Group, held the previous two implementation contracts.

WATIH's main implementation office is in Accra, Ghana, with satellite offices in Dakar, Senegal; Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire; and Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The Trade Hub works in partnership with and on behalf of the three main regional economic integration bodies: Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), and Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS)<sup>3</sup> as well as national government actors, national and regional representative associations, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and both West African and global companies.

WATIH works to improve access to finance, strengthen staple food value chains, address transport inefficiencies and non-tariff trade barriers, facilitate AGOA trade, manage grants, and develop capacity within West African regional organizations. Key elements of the Trade Hub's approach to support these objectives include increasing the number of public and private dialogue opportunities, linking farmers and firms to value-added processors and international buyers, and facilitating a better understanding of end-user market requirements.

Activities implemented under WATIH include training and capacity development (e.g., for government agencies and private sector actors to improve implementation of the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme [ETLS] and other protocols);<sup>4</sup> workshops (e.g., in Ouagadougou to foster greater female participation in value-added activities in the cereal sector);<sup>5</sup> technical assistance (e.g., providing

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<sup>2</sup> See USAID/WA "Regional Development Cooperation Strategy: 2015-2019." <https://www.usaid.gov/west-africa-regional/rdcs>.

<sup>3</sup> WATH has also worked closely with the Abidjan-Lagos Corridor Authority.

<sup>4</sup> See FY2016 Annual Report, pp. 9-10, 13, 16, 18.

<sup>5</sup> See FY2016 Annual Report, pp.36-37.

government agencies in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Togo with support to address AGOA);<sup>6</sup> hosting, organizing, and facilitating networking and linkage events (e.g., facilitating relationships and sales in the livestock sector around the Tabaski holiday in Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Niger, and Cote d'Ivoire);<sup>7</sup> and addressing access to financing (e.g., collaboration with financial advisors across the region as well as working with USAID's Development Credit Authority (DCA) to connect with local financial institutions, Oikocredit, and Coris Bank to obtain loan guarantee support).<sup>8</sup> The Trade Hub has provided direct grants to beneficiaries, worked with local and regional policy makers, and implemented activities to address transportation issues along key corridors.

Joint USAID-WATIH partnerships set up under previous iterations of the Trade Hub include the Global Shea Alliance (GSA), Africa Cashew Alliance (ACA), and the Borderless Alliance (BA). In June 2016, USAID/WA signed a new five-year Global Development Alliance with the GSA. USAID supports the ACA directly, through a two-year Global Development Alliance that ran through March 2017. The BA has also received funding via implementation letters between USAID/WA and CILSS. Since 2012, USAID/WA (originally via the Agribusiness and Trade Promotion project and the Expanded Agribusiness and Trade Promotion project) has also promoted the creation of the West Africa Grains Network (WAGN), a nine-country cereals value chain representative association. In addition, USAID/WA maintains a longstanding, close partnership with the Confederation of National Associations of the Meat and Livestock Sector of West Africa (COFENABVI), a regional livestock body covering eight countries.

## **WATIH Development Hypothesis**

USAID believes that if the demonstration of successful commercial ventures is coupled with an integrated market offering an increasingly conducive business-enabling environment, then this will catalyze increased private sector investment in West Africa. As part of this hypothesis, USAID believes that private sector associations developed with Agency support will encourage investment and, ultimately, attract transformative investment from within the region and abroad. USAID hypothesizes that this approach will result in a flourishing of investment and incentives to invest once trade barriers, regional fragmentation, and other costs have been reduced.

WATIH activities aim to achieve two intermediate results (IRs):

1. Improved capacity of West Africa's farmers and firms in targeted regional and global value chains (e.g. maize, rice, sorghum, millet, livestock, apparel, mango, cashew, and shea).
2. Improved business-enabling environment by addressing transport constraints and trade barriers affecting the efficiency of the region's corridors and borders.

Six sub-IRs further specify activities, results, and objectives under WATIH. As shown in Figure 1, which illustrates the basic results framework for USAID/WA's trade portfolio, these include:

- IR 1: Increased private sector capacity
  - 1.1 Improved buyer and seller intermediation
  - 1.2 Expanded use of grades and standards
  - 1.3 Increased access to and use of market information
  - 1.4 Increased access to and use of financial services
- IR 2: Improved enabling environment for trade and trade facilitation
  - 2.1 Improved competitiveness of transport and logistics sector
  - 2.2 Reduced legal and regulatory barriers to trade (policy)

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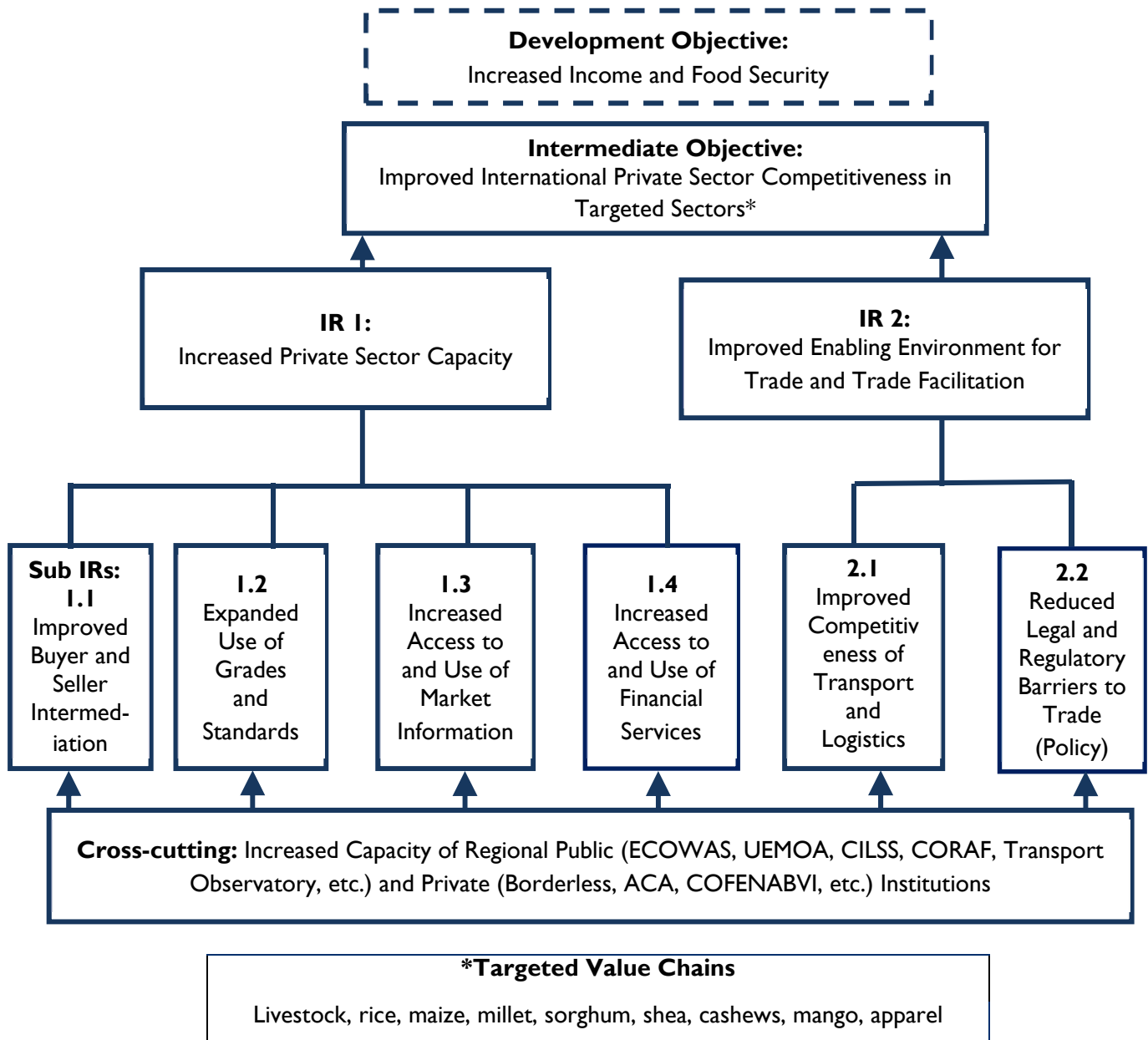
<sup>6</sup> See FY2016 Annual Report, pp. 66 and 68.

<sup>7</sup> See FY2015 Annual Report, p. 19.

<sup>8</sup> See FY2015 Annual Report, p. 55, and FY2016 Annual Report, pp. 79-80.



**FIGURE 1: USAID/WA TRADE PORTFOLIO RESULTS FRAMEWORK**



## EVALUATION QUESTIONS

This report answers the following evaluation questions (EQs), which are identical to those in USAID’s approved SOW (see Annex A):

1. To what extent has WATIH achieved or is on track to achieve outcomes related to IR 1 and IR 2 and the respective sub-IRs in support of USAID’s intended objectives?
2. What are the benefits and trade-offs of having WATIH as a discrete mechanism for capacity building, value-chain support, and trade facilitation?
3. To what extent have selected partners supported through the USAID trade portfolio, including

the ACA, GSA, and Borderless Alliance, become effective and sustainable regional institutions in terms of their organizational objectives?

In answering these questions, the evaluation team also considered the following lines of inquiry in relation to the three EQs:

- 1.1 What are the areas in which WATIH could focus interventions to better achieve outcomes?
- 2.1 What is the reputation and “brand” of the Trade Hub among the U.S. government and Embassies in the region, as well as regional partner organizations (ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS) and with key private sector associations and counterparts?
- 2.2 In what ways has WATIH built partnerships and developed local capacity to increase the effectiveness of local and regional public and private organizations?
- 2.3 How do the trade-offs and benefits of WATIH compare to direct assistance mechanisms?
- 3.1 How financially and operationally viable and sustainable are the selected partners supported through the USAID/WA trade portfolio?
- 3.2 How has USAID funding shaped selected partners’ development and activities?
- 3.3 What opportunities are there to engage new partners in the portfolio to better achieve project objectives?

## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

This evaluation employed a qualitative approach, conducting key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), structured observation, and document review, including five weeks of in-country primary data collection in four West African countries (Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria). Annex B provides the evaluation’s Getting to Answers matrix summarizing the data sources, data collection and analysis methods, and sampling approaches.

### Team Composition

Evaluating WATIH presented several methodological challenges. This multi-country activity stretches across Francophone, Lusophone, and Anglophone countries with varying degrees of economic, human capital, and infrastructure development. There are regional political and economic dynamics that affect the implementation of border agreements, trade, and transportation. In addition, there are many programs that USAID and other U.S. government agencies, other bilateral and multilateral donors, local regional organizations, national governments, and local organizations operate in the same space to address similar trade- and value chain-related issues. To address some of these challenges, the evaluation team included country nationals from Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria, as well as other specialists with extensive experience across West Africa. This team makeup furthered the evaluation’s understanding of contextual dynamics and norms, local policies, and helped build trust with respondents.

The evaluation team consisted of evaluation specialists, subject matter experts, and project management specialists from MSI. The core evaluation team consisted of:

- Trevor Simumba, Team Leader/Evaluation Specialist
- Yarri Kamara, Deputy Team Leader and Trade Facilitation Specialist (based in Burkina Faso)
- Samuel Kouakou, Local Evaluation Specialist (based in Cote d’Ivoire)
- Macdonald Acquah and Patrick Zeal, Local Evaluation Specialists (based in Ghana)
- Oliver Ujah, Local Evaluation and Trade Facilitation Specialist (based in Nigeria)
- Moussa Ouedraogo, Field Assistant (based in Burkina Faso)

- Ines Melissa Koue, Field Assistant (based in Cote d'Ivoire)
- Mai Yang, Field Research Coordinator
- Jacob Patterson-Stein, Evaluation Coordinator

Annex J provides brief profiles of these team members. The team members signed conflict of interest disclosure statements, which are retained by the MSI home office and available upon request.

## Sampling Considerations

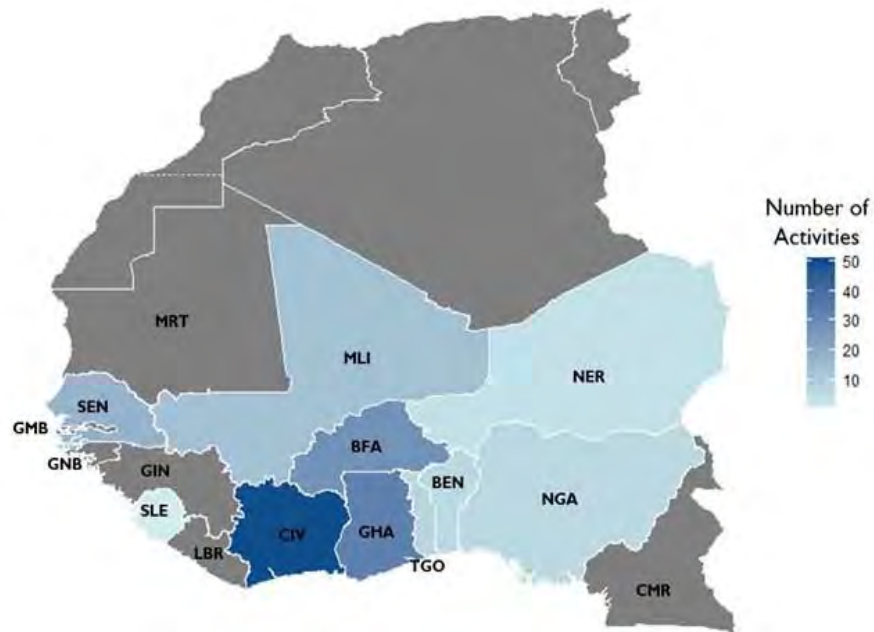
### Activity Selection

The evaluation team prioritized WATIH activities for inclusion in the evaluation research based on the availability of relevant respondents during data collection, their regional scope, budget, staffing, and contribution toward the IRs. The evaluation team selected partners for data collection based on project documentation and input from WATIH and USAID staff. The evaluation team found that the following organizations were the five most referenced groups in the two existing WATIH annual reports:

1. BA
2. COFENABVI
3. ACA
4. GSA
5. WAGN

As detailed below, the evaluation team conducted FGDs with BA, COFENABVI, and ACA stakeholders, and interviewed four cashew sector respondents and five shea respondents for approximately one hour each. The team then used the FY2016 WATIH work plan's Activities by Strategy tables to develop a geographical breakdown of implementation. The map in Figure 2 provides the geographic distribution of current or planned WATIH activities that are country based, i.e. excluding the transport corridors, based on the FY2016 work plan. There is sectoral concentration and variety within this geographic range.

**FIGURE 2: NUMBER OF WATIH ACTIVITIES BY COUNTRY**



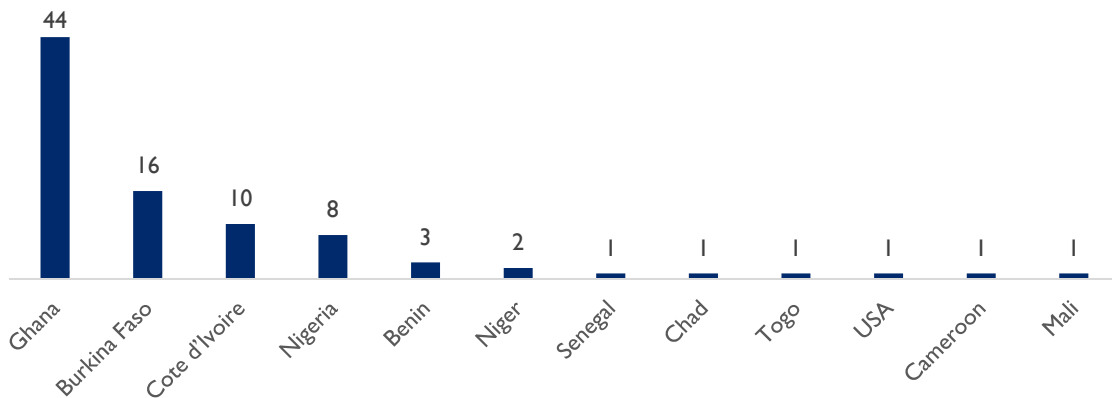
*Map based on data from the 2016 WATIH work plan*

The evaluation team selected seven categories of respondents to interview:

- Implementation staff
- Local government officials
- Staff from other donor projects
- Partners and partner members
- Regional organization Staff
- USAID staff
- Other U.S. government staff

Most interviews took place in Ghana, but the team sought to conduct interviews wherever relevant individuals were based, whether remotely or in-person, and where people were available. Figure 3 shows the number of interviews the evaluation conducted by the country where respondents were located.

**FIGURE 3: EVALUATION INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED BY COUNTRY**



## Respondent Selection

The selection of key informants for the evaluation involved stratification by the type of EQ to be addressed, although there was significant overlap for many of the interviews. The evaluation team used the following strata: EQ topic (e.g. the Trade Hub's reputation), respondent sector, country, and role/organization.<sup>9</sup> Within strata, the evaluation applied purposive and convenience sampling, seeking to identify individuals who were adequately informed about aspects of the activity or its stakeholder community to speak credibly about activity progress, organizational sustainability, and other related EQ topics. For example, for EQ1, the evaluation team addressed access to finance (topic), who may have had experience with borrowing or loan guarantees (sector), which respondents were in target countries (location), and the respondent's role in his or her organization. This sampling approach did not preclude the evaluation team from speaking with respondents outside of the key strata as appropriate.

The evaluation team took the following steps as part of the purposive sampling approach and to finalize the list of respondents and instruments for this evaluation:

1. Completed an inventory of the different Trade Hub activities undertaken against each IR. The team organized activities by categories (e.g., technical assistance, trainings).
2. Compared the list of activities by IR to a list of activities by scope based on the reach of WATIH's work, such as number of people trained, as reported in project documentation.
3. Collated and combined the list of activities by IR and by scope to develop a final list by contribution and scope. Annex I provides this list of activities.
4. Used the inventory of activities, in addition to consultations with WATIH and USAID staff, to identify an appropriate range of potential key informants and to finalize the respondent types and lists of contacts for KIs.
5. Updated and customized the data collection instruments for different strata of interviewees, based on initial field interviews that the team conducted.

## Data Collection Methods

The evaluation team employed four data collection methods:

- Desk review of performance reports and other project documents and data
- KIs
- FGDs
- Structured observations

Based on a review of WATIH work plans and other documentation,<sup>10</sup> the evaluation focused on WATIH activities in Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria, with additional outreach to stakeholders in Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo, and the U.S. The team only conducted in-country data collection in four countries: Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria. The team focused on these countries because nearly two-thirds of activities in the WATIH 2017 work plan take place in Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Burkina Faso, while Nigeria has by far the largest population and economy in West Africa. In addition, key regional actors are based in these countries, as ECOWAS is headquartered in Abuja, Nigeria, and UEMOA and the CILSS secretariat are in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Due to the responsiveness of key informants and security concerns, the number of interviews the team conducted in Nigeria was lower than the other three field work countries.

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<sup>9</sup> The evaluation team interviewed several founders/directors whose role was largely synonymous with their organization as they had a small staff.

<sup>10</sup> Annex F provides the full list of project documents that the team reviewed.

The evaluation team collected data in two phases. Phase I, from March 14-24, 2017, largely focused on interviewing USAID, other U.S. government, and Trade Hub staff. Phase II, which took place from April 11-28, 2017, collected data from USAID, U.S. government, and Trade Hub staff, as well as local partners, regional stakeholders, and WATIH beneficiaries.

## Primary Data Collection

The evaluation team used three primary data collection approaches: KIs, FGDs, and structured observations.

## Key Informant Interviews

The evaluation team conducted 89 semi-structured KIs with a broad range of stakeholders, including in-person interviews in and around Abidjan, Abuja, Accra, and Ouagadougou. In addition to WATIH staff, key informants included staff from USAID/WA, bilateral USAID missions, ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, customs and trade offices, regional trade and transit associations, other regional trade initiatives, other donor activities in the region, members of WATIH- and USAID-supported associations, and beneficiaries who received technical assistance or funding from WATIH. Table I shows the number of key informants that the team interviewed by sector/organization, and the number of respondents who were female.

**TABLE I: KII RESPONDENTS BY SECTOR AND GENDER**

<b>Sector/Organization</b>	<b># Interviewed</b>	<b># Female</b>
Trade Hub staff	20	8
U.S. government	14	4
Multiple value chains	8	1
Cereal	7	2
Regional organizations	6	0
AGOA	6	4
Shea	5	1
Apparel	5	4
Finance	4	1
Cashew	4	2
Livestock	3	1
Transportation	3	1
Other USAID projects	2	1
Mango	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>30</b>

Annex C provides the instruments the team used for these interviews. KII questions differed based on the respondent's relationship to USAID and the Trade Hub; however, most key informants were asked about their relationship to the Hub or USAID activities, their perceptions of these activities, challenges and opportunities they face in trade or value chains, and how their interaction with these activities has affected their work.

The evaluation team used interview responses related to each EQ to weigh, compare, and contrast responses to implementation data and documentation and develop an understanding of outcomes beyond basic counts or indicator data. In some cases, the number of respondents who spoke about a specific aspect of WATIH was small, in which case the evaluation team considered the respondents' roles and relationship to USAID and WATIH, their level of involvement in and familiarity with activities

discussed, how their responses compare to available documentation, and other forms of bias that may skew their perspective or responses.

### Focus Group Discussions

To further investigate perceptions of the Trade Hub and key target group experiences with WATIH activities, the evaluation team conducted three FGDs with members of the ACA, BA, and livestock sector members of COFENABVI.<sup>11</sup> Although the evaluation team sought to have FGDs be gender balanced and include 8 to 10 participants to generate fruitful discussion and develop a full understanding of the discussion topics, it proved difficult to find participants who were available during the data collection period. Table 2 shows the number of participants per FGD and the number of those participants who were female.

**TABLE 2: FGD PARTICIPANTS BY SECTOR AND GENDER**

Sector	# of Participants	# Female
Cashew	3	1
Transportation	4	1
Livestock	9	3

The team prepared a FGD guide, provided in Annex D, which covered key discussion topics such as challenges to trade, perception of USAID and WATIH activities, and organizational stability. The team found it difficult to obtain sufficient FGD participation, but to the greatest extent possible it structured the FGDs to account for appropriate stratification, with a focus on including participants with shared common traits.

### Structured Observations

The evaluation made two structured observation visits to Border Information Centers (BICs) at Aflao, along the Togo-Ghana border, and at Dakola, near the Burkina Faso-Ghana border. The team also made three unannounced, “mystery shopper” visits to AGOA Trade Resource Centers (ATRCs) in Abidjan, Accra, and Ouagadougou. The goal of these visits was to assess the capacity of staff to answer questions related to their centers’ functions. The evaluation then compared these data with interviews conducted with BIC and ATRC staff during the analysis phase to help determine how well WATIH and USAID activities are being implemented, as well as to inform any confounding factors such as the presence of other activities nearby.

For the “mystery shopper” approach, a member of the evaluation team visited each center as an interested client of services and made observations based on a structured protocol (provided in Annex E) and a script of questions to pose to staff. The goal of these observations was to obtain information directly from activity sites rather than from recollection and perception. These data provide additional context and help to check details that come up during KIIs or FGDs. Since the structured observation instrument is open-ended, the evaluation team can make general “unstructured” observations about onsite activity implementation. In cases where observations diverged from reported outcomes, the evaluation team put more weight on a combination of observations and documentation review to balance countering data from interviews; however, the observations and interviews generally aligned and respondents at the ATRCs and BICs were open and realistic about their roles.

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<sup>11</sup> Livestock focus group participants were from Fédération Nationale des Coopératives Bétail-Viande de Côte d’Ivoire (FENACOBVi-CI).

## Secondary Data Collection

The evaluation team reviewed available key project documents, and then undertook content analysis of all available data relevant to the evaluation. Annex F lists the project documents that the team reviewed, which included the two annual reports, the 2014 through 2017 work plans, the 2015 performance management plan, the ACA annual reports, GSA Annual Reports, BA Annual Reports, the 2015 Regional Development Strategy Report, as well as the Trade Hub Organizational Capacity Review documentation.

This desk review permitted the evaluation team to better understand where existing gaps in information could be filled through the field work. The project documentation provided key details on its grant making and training activities, summarized progress toward indicators, and captured the change in implementation focus. The evaluation team developed a rough timeline and inventory of WATIH activities from these documents. The main gaps that the evaluation team found in this documentation were in connecting inputs to outcomes. For example, in the 2015-2016 WATIH Annual Report, trainings held and the number of producers trained is reported in detail, but the connection between these trainings and changes in production *for these producers* is not clear. The evaluation team sought to fill such gaps through in-country data collection. Similarly, mentions of linkage events, such as apparel trade shows, provide excellent summaries of WATIH activities and support of actors in this sector, but the outcomes from these events related to specific production and economic activity are not clear. This is not necessarily the fault of the Trade Hub; it is reasonable to expect a lag between a linkage event and an actual contract execution. The evaluation team's interviews were intended to gain insights that may not be reflected in existing reporting.

## Data Analysis Methods

To analyze over 6,700 minutes of KIIs, 6 hours of FGDs transcripts, and notes from the ATRC and BIC visits, the evaluation team employed two main approaches: planned/actual comparisons and pattern/content analysis.

First, the team reviewed all the data and uploaded it into MaxQDA, a qualitative analysis software. The team coded all KII and FGD data with a two-pronged approach, using the analysis software. Open coding captured themes and broader trends as they emerged during an initial review of the data and helped to ensure that codes were relevant to the text (as opposed to being set *ex ante*). The team then refined its analysis approach through follow-up coding that assessed themes between codes and the EQs. For example, a section coded for its reference of confounding factors or gender might be cross-coded for its coverage of sub-IR 1.1. The team used the coded sections to analyze the type of response, number of responses by theme and by EQ, and responses by respondent category.

To compare the data and documentation in regards to targets and planned activities, the team assessed project descriptions, work plans, indicator targets, and performance data. The goal of this planned/comparison approach was to inform the examination of WATIH performance relative to overall compliance and to timely fulfillment of proposed activities.

The team also examined qualitative data from KIIs and FGDs for patterns and comparisons, seeking to identify themes and trends relevant to each EQ to better understand meaning and context. Where relevant, the team identified patterns in the data to highlight changes over time (e.g., how progress toward the sub-IRs proceeded from 2014 to 2016). The team also employed text mining approaches that break down text into small chunks that can provide a quantifiable way to track conversation themes that may not be apparent from a review of notes or transcripts. For example, FGDs may cover many



topics but certain words or phrases may repeat over the course of the discussion in relation to different themes. Pattern analysis provides another tool for assessing what ideas, phrases, and words are repeated.

## Limitations and Biases

The design and implementation of this evaluation faced several limitations and potential biases from respondents, which the evaluation team sought to mitigate to the best of its ability.

### Limitations

- Cannot directly attribute reported impact to the activity: Trade and exports are driven by multiple interacting factors within an economy. It is difficult to determine whether, and how much, change is directly attributable to a USAID-sponsored activity rather than to complex macro- and micro-economic developments such as changes in global demand for certain commodities or varying interest rates nationally. A strong non-experimental methodology that considers multiple perspectives can account for some of these complex and unknown factors, but cannot completely control for them. To address this challenge, the evaluation team contacted other donors and regional stakeholders working on trade-related issues. Although the number of people who responded to these requests was small, the evaluation team was able to gain some idea of what other actors are doing regionally to promote an enabling environment for trade. However, the evaluation cannot parse out all of the confounding factors present.
- Implementation scope: USAID/WA's trade activities take place across multiple countries in a diverse region. The evaluation team was only able to visit a sample of countries in the region and a limited set of Trade Hub activities within those countries. Experiences with WATIH will vary from country to country, so any sample of experiences will omit some perspectives of participants and stakeholders. The evaluation team attempted to have the broadest possible reach, but logistical, linguistic, and time constraints limited where and with whom the team could collect data.
- Scheduling risk: Data collection took place in two phases over five weeks. Several stakeholders were unable to meet during this time, and other interviewees had to cancel at the last minute and not all rescheduling requests could be accommodated. There is little the evaluation team could do to incentivize people to respond to interview requests or adjust their schedules to fit the available data collection period. This report notes when the evaluation team is aware of gaps in its data, but other gaps may exist due to respondents who could not be interviewed.

### Potential Biases

- Response bias: The evaluation team selected KII and FGD participants through purposive sampling. This helps to ensure the team obtains data from the most relevant sources available. There may be bias in the types of responses these participants gave to the evaluation team because of an expectation that the team was looking for a certain type of answer. To mitigate this kind of biased response, the evaluation team rigorously tested its discussion templates and interview instruments and protocols to ensure there were no leading questions, that the purpose of the evaluation was clear, that respondents were not primed with information that could skew their responses, and that respondents felt comfortable speaking truthfully. Coding all responses and post-interview analysis helped identify responses that may have been biased or where the measurement process was skewed in some way.
- Recall bias: While the current iteration of the Trade Hub has been implementing activities for approximately two years, some partnerships with USAID were developed over a decade ago. It

is likely that respondents will remember recent Trade Hub and partnership activities more clearly than activities that took place further in the past, and those activities that they do recall may not be very detailed or accurate. Recall bias may lead to exaggerated negative or positive perceptions of past experiences, as people tend to remember only key aspects or feelings as time passes. The KII template and interview guidance were designed to prompt respondents to address only Trade Hub activities implemented since 2014; however, beyond using documentation to construct a timeline of activities and progress early in WATIH's implementation, and use this to inform analysis of interview data, the evaluation approach was limited in its ability to address recall bias.

- **Selection bias:** This evaluation relied on qualitative data based on perceptions and recall using data collected over a short period. Not all KII and FGD participants were available or willing to respond to the evaluation team. Those who were willing to share their views may not have been fully representative of activity participants. The sampling approach applied in this evaluation aimed to select respondents with various experiences and roles, but the data are still subject to the availability of KIIs. However, the non-random design of this evaluation was not able to completely avoid this challenge. Another challenge in evaluating an activity of such large scope is that the people with the best understanding of the activity are those who implement it, but they may have little incentive to provide criticism. Non-Trade Hub respondents may know something about one or two aspects of the project, but they rarely have a broader view of WATIH's work, and may not differentiate between WATIH and USAID more generally. This information asymmetry required the evaluation team to check all Trade Hub staff statements against beneficiary KIIs and FGDs, where possible, as well as corroborate with documentation. The team noted where these responses diverged and attempted to use responses on overlapping topics to inform the analysis.

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

### **EQ1: To what extent has WATIH achieved or is on track to achieve outcomes related to IR1 and IR2 and the respective sub-IRs in support of USAID's intended objectives?**

The Trade Hub has made uneven progress toward achieving its two main IRs. WATIH was designed to align with USAID/WA's goal of advancing of West Africans' social and economic well-being. As detailed below, the Trade Hub has made the most progress toward sub-IRs 1.2 and 1.3, mixed progress toward sub-IR 1.1, and limited progress toward sub-IRs 1.4, 2.1, and 2.2.

The Trade Hub has implemented a vast array of activities that cut across key target sectors (some of which are detailed in Annex I). The number of WATIH inputs is notable and impressive, from facilitating some of the first market exchanges in key agricultural sectors, to helping formalize livestock trading and new buyer-seller linkages as part of the Tabaski holiday, to providing grants for regional organizations like the ACA. The evaluation team found that the Trade Hub is making strong attempts to provide interventions that address the IRs. A review of project Annual Reports and other documentation shows that the Trade Hub is making progress in the number of activities implemented. However, the evaluation focused the extent to which these activities have achieved or are on track to achieve outcomes related to the two IRs.

Some challenges toward IR progress involve WATIH itself, while other factors are related to the implementation of activities. Staff turnover in key leadership positions (such as the chief of party and

AGOA facilitation positions), coupled with delays in grant funding, limited the project's capacity development efforts among intended beneficiaries. The Trade Hub experienced delays of at least one year in all its components, due to structural changes initiated by USAID. These changes included: reducing the grant component, which had been a key element of the implementation proposal; requesting that the Trade Hub invest significantly in a Cote d'Ivoire-specific program; the complexity of working on a region-wide project; USAID approval requirements; and staffing vacancies. Inefficiencies in project implementation, combined with changes to WATIH's implementation focus, had an adverse effect on the project's performance. A USAID interviewee confirmed that "the Hub was struggling to get their work plan approved and they were not achieving results, had issues with targets, and the Mission was concerned that project was not on track, particularly around exports, sales, and finance."

This status was confirmed in the 2015 WATIH Annual Report, which noted that "After a good deal of back and forth<sup>12</sup> about how to measure progress toward this and related objectives and how to adjust our Performance Management Plan (PMP) with the harmonized Trade Hub PMP, we agreed with USAID on 26 performance indicators" (page 2). Reviews of project documents and interviews with key informants revealed a dynamic implementation environment where priorities and capacity diverged from planned activities and goals. According to the FY2015 WATIH Annual Report and interviews with USAID and Trade Hub staff, there was extensive discussion with USAID regional and country offices on issues related to the project's scope, how to measure progress against the Trade Hub's objectives, and how to adjust the activity's performance management plan with the harmonized Trade Hub performance management plan.<sup>13</sup> According to the WATIH FY2015 Annual Report, from October 2014 to November 2015 the Trade Hub only met or exceeded its targets on 50 percent of the 26 indicators. In FY2016, this declined to 40 percent.<sup>14</sup> The complex landscape, USAID approval requirements for every action taken (until contraction modification 10 was executed May 2016), and limited resources delayed the implementation team, and early in the project WATIH struggled to meet some of its goals. The evaluation concludes that WATIH has succeeded in some areas, but was spread too thin to meet its goals and provide relevant, sustainable assistance in target sectors within the period covered by this evaluation.<sup>15</sup> The rest of this section highlights key findings and conclusions regarding WATIH's progress toward its two main IRs and respective sub-IRs.

## **IR I: Increased Private Sector Capacity**

The Trade Hub's attempts to increase private sector capacity and USAID/WA's support of partners and other programming provide a study in contrasts. The evaluation found that many of the Trade Hub's attempts to promote private sector activities achieved some of their target goals in certain sectors, such as mango and livestock. Certain partners that USAID/WA supports have found linkages with processors and buyers regionally and internationally, improved in their application of international best practices in grades and standards, and gained access to critical market information.

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<sup>12</sup> Management Support and Technical Assistance Services, a USAID/Washington-based activity, provided support to ensure consistency in reporting across all the Trade Hubs. However, the attempt to ensure consistency across dissimilar projects with different target issues delayed finalization of indicators for at least a year, complicating discussions between WATIH and USAID/WA and resulting in delays in agreeing on a framework of indicators and targets.

<sup>13</sup> See FY2015 Annual Report, pp. 2, 3, and 15.

<sup>14</sup> See FY2015 Annual Report, pp. 6 and 7, and FY2016 Annual Report, pp. 6 and 7.

<sup>15</sup> Quarterly reporting for WATIH indicators suggest that the Trade Hub is on track to meet many of its goals. However, the perceptions, findings, and conclusions of this report still identify areas where improvements can be made and inform future programming. The Trade Hub's FY2017 annual report is available at: [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PA00N417.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00N417.pdf). The evaluation team did not review this report for this evaluation as it was published after the evaluation was completed and is outside of its scope.

**TABLE 3: TRADE HUB PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT INDICATORS**

Indicator	FY15 Target	FY15 Actual	FY15 Difference	FY16 Target	FY16 Actual	FY16 Difference
2. Value of new private sector investment in the agriculture sector or food chain leveraged by USAID implementation	\$18,500,000	\$1,300,126	-\$17,199,874	\$42,500,000	\$33,567,200	-\$8,932,800
<i>Of which, women</i>	\$2,775,000	\$1,233,290	-\$1,541,710	\$4,725,000	\$4,307,193	-\$417,807
3. Value of new private sector investment in non-agricultural targeted sectors leveraged by USAID implementation	\$1,500,000	\$300,000	-\$1,200,000	\$3,500,000	\$12,000	-\$3,488,000
<i>Of which, women</i>	\$225,000	\$300,000	\$75,000	\$300,000	\$12,000	-\$288,000

### IR 1.1 Improved Buyer-Seller Intermediation

The Trade Hub's linkage events and activities attempt to address the gap in communication and the limited outlets that many regional actors have for finding buyers or sellers for their goods. WATIH documents showed that that these events increased from FY2015 to FY2016, particularly in the apparel sector, which went from 5 to 11 linkage events.<sup>16</sup> The evaluation found that:

- Trade Hub intermediation events have connected buyers and sellers in many sectors, particularly in mango, livestock, cereal, and apparel.
- WATIH activity participants are excited about these opportunities, but they cannot afford to organize or attend them without Trade Hub support.
- Many deals were reported from these intermediation events, but the number of deals relative to attendance was low depending on the sector, particularly in apparel.

While WATIH has made progress in connecting buyers and sellers, businesses' ability to translate these connections into sales and greater firm capacity to act on these activities has been evolving. For example, the Trade Hub reports 103 "linkages" created in FY2014-2015 (of which 18 were women), and 1,279 in the following year. Both linkages figures surpass overall targets and the target of 7 women linkages established in 2015.<sup>17</sup> The gender impact of these exchanges also varies by sector. The apparel sector supports female workers, with one Trade Hub subcontractor estimating that "workers are 75 percent women and 25 percent men. The African Development Bank notes that 80 percent of textile and apparel supplier entrepreneurs in Cote d'Ivoire are women,<sup>18</sup> while apparel KII in Benin noted that 90 percent of the 70 workers were women. One mango processor respondent estimated that the mango sector, which has developed key partnerships with exporters, was 90 percent male, while a respondent from a local mango association that worked with WATIH said, "Membership of the association is made up of 160 men and 40 women, some of whom are in leadership positions." WATIH may have improved buyer-seller intermediation in many cases, including through improved networking, it is unclear whether this has progressed from linkages to increased private sector capacity, or at least improved sales. As previously noted, the Trade Hub fell short of overall investment targets and sales targets for assisted firms, surpassed targets in 2015 (target: \$30 million, actual: \$56.8 million), but fell short by \$587,636 for 2016 (target: \$50 million). Attribution can be difficult in market settings where a mixture of prices, macroeconomic factors, and pre-existing conditions affect not just volumes, but also the number of deals that can be made.

<sup>16</sup> See FY2015 Annual Report, pp 23-25, 30, 32-33, and 37 and FY2016 Annual Report, pp. 34-35, 41-45, 49-53, and 56.

<sup>17</sup> See FY15 Annual Report, p. 83, and FY2016 Annual Report 6.

<sup>18</sup> See African Development Bank, "Investing in the Creative Industries: Fashionomics."

Two key conclusions emerge from respondents who had knowledge of or participated in buyer-seller linkage activities through the Trade Hub.

- **IR 1.1 Conclusion 1: Sales outcomes of many intermediation events and activities were limited but have evolved over time as value chain participants become more comfortable with the skill sets they are learning.**

Focus group participants and key informants were enthusiastic about WATIH's exchanges, support for attending sectoral events, and other linkage outreach. Respondents across the stakeholder groups had positive experiences with the Mango Symposium, Regional Livestock Salon, Operation Tabaski, and cereal exchanges. These events serve to not only formalize networks, but also help industries with large and growing female labor participation. There was a disconnect between implementation reporting and respondent perceptions. The Trade Hub reported 894 transactions from September 2015 through June 2017 as part of the Livestock Fattener Network, with a total sales value of \$24 million across Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. However, a comment from a livestock sector FGD participant about the Livestock Salon is representative of the general feedback provided:

*This salon helped build business relationships with actors across the chain (producers, traders, butchers) from Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali. One of the participants went to the salon with 40 animals, didn't sell any, but made promising connections for the future.*  
– Regional livestock organization member

Nine of 22 key informants who specifically mentioned buyer-seller intermediation and exchanges noted that often relationships were established through exchanges or agreements made, but as one KII stated, “these are just on paper,” and little has resulted in sales or purchases after these events. USAID staff and value-chain actors who attended the exchanges echoed this sentiment.

Interviewees responses to the evaluation team show a disconnect between Trade Hub targets and the experience of attendees. For example, WATIH passed its new sales target in 2015 and fell short in 2016,<sup>19</sup> but these volume measures may not reflect the number of individual producers who executed deals thanks to exchanges and other events. Success under this measurement approach could be achieved if a single producer increased exports exponentially over the previous year, even while inequitable market access continues for a majority in a sector.<sup>20</sup> Based on WATIH data from cereal exchanges and livestock fatteners activities, the number of contracts executed supports the perceptions expressed by key informants that for some participants, relationships do not translate into new business. Figure 4 shows the total number of attendees at cereals exchange events through March 2017, the period covered by the evaluation, and the number of actual contracts executed based on attendance numbers that the Trade Hub reported in press releases covering the events.<sup>21</sup> Of the 420 reported

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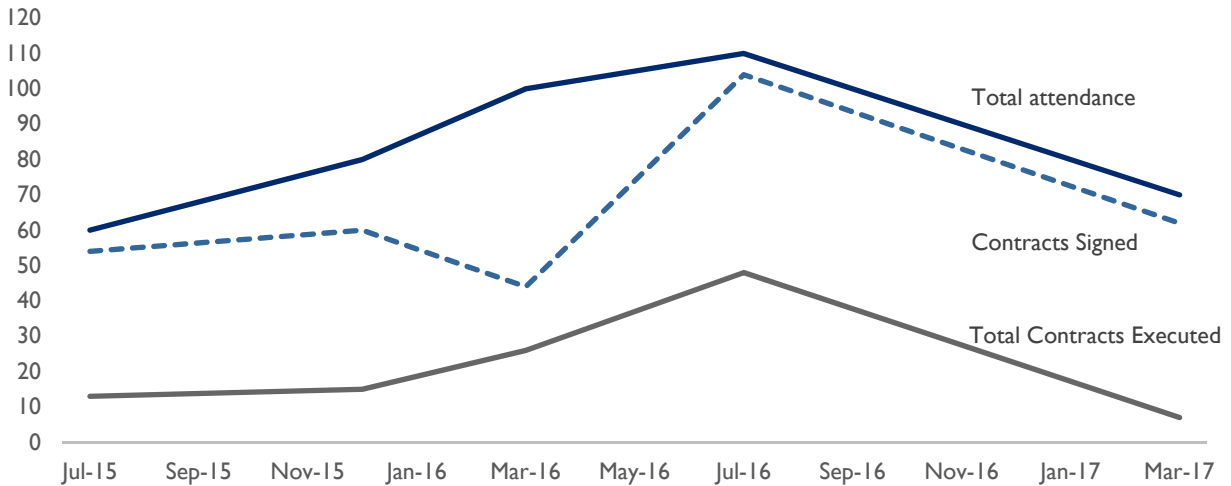
<sup>19</sup> See FY2015 Annual Report, p. 82 and FY2016 Annual Report, p. 6.

<sup>20</sup> The Trade Hub notes that \$49,412,364 (\$831,827.00 short of the target) in new sales occurred from FY2015-2016 based on the “value of transactions stemming from project assistance.” See “Trade Hub Indicators Methodologies 2015” and FY2015-2016 Annual Report.

<sup>21</sup> This table is based on data from the Trade Hub, “Cereals Exchange Results Analysis,” which provides the contracts signed, executed, USD value, and volume of sales. The evaluation team combined this data set with exchange event attendance reported by the Trade Hub online and confirmed with Trade Hub staff. For more on the cereals exchanges, see <https://www.watradehub.com/en/negotiating-cereals-trades-with-written-contracts/>; <https://www.watradehub.com/en/partners-step-fifth-cereals-exchange-mali/>; <https://www.watradehub.com/en/abidjan-hosts-fourth-regional-cereals-exchange/>; <https://www.watradehub.com/en/dakar-exchange-attracts-independent-observers-regional-institutions/>; and <https://www.watradehub.com/en/cereals-traders-from-9-west-africa-countries-sign-purchase-contracts/>.

attendees, 77 percent signed contracts and approximately 26 percent executed contracts after the exchanges, with about a third of all signed contracts being executed (109 of 324 signed contracts).<sup>22</sup>

**FIGURE 4: CEREAL EXCHANGE ATTENDANCE AND CONTRACTS EXECUTED THROUGH MARCH 2017**



While Trade Hub staff reported great success in improving buyer-seller linkages, of the 44 respondents who mentioned buyer-seller intermediation, only 5 of 22 non-WATIH, non-U.S. government staff mentioned specific deals that came out of these exchanges. The evaluation was not able to capture a representative sample of WATIH activity participants, but key informants generally described the value of intermediation in terms of education and communication, rather than outcome-oriented results. Interviewees were generally positioned to have some knowledge about their organizations’ deals.

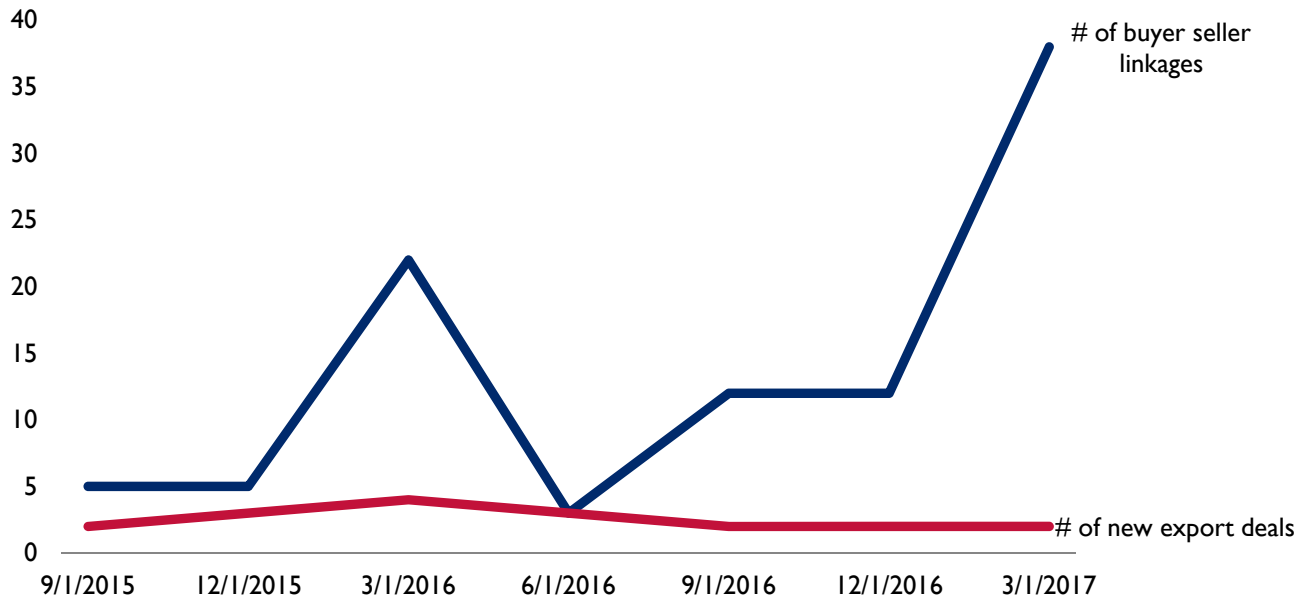
The evaluation team also analyzed WATIH quarterly monitoring reporting forms for two apparel sector firms. These forms provide detail on volume and dollar value exported, where firms are exporting, and the number of linkages and new deals. In general, the value of exports and the number of new deals and number of linkages appear to be unrelated.<sup>23</sup> While the firms noted in a majority of the monitoring data (71 percent and 57 percent of the time, respectively) that they were more profitable thanks to Trade Hub support, it is difficult, as with many of the WATIH activities, to claim attribution. Clearly most of the time, the firms felt there was *contribution* from the Trade Hub for their sales.<sup>24</sup> These firms also reported an increase in hiring, particularly of female workers over the period under review. One firm reported that, of the new workers hired over the period covered, 73 percent were female, while the other firm reported that 69 percent of new hires were female.

<sup>22</sup> A direct attendance to contract execution comparison should keep in mind that each contract execution requires two attendees (buyer and seller) and some buyers may have contracted with multiple sellers. However, it is informative to track these trends over time and see what, if any, general relationship exists.

<sup>23</sup> One of the firms for which monitoring forms were provided only noted two new linkages from 2015-2017 through the Trade Hub, despite growing export value.

<sup>24</sup> This comes from a yes/no question in the data about whether the firms were more profitable compared to the previous year, rather than actual financial analysis.

**FIGURE 5: NUMBER OF LINKAGES AND NEW EXPORT DEALS FOR A GHANIAN WATIH BENEFICIARY APPAREL FIRM**



Note: for the last three quarters, the number of new export deals were reported as “potential deals”

Of the 44 respondents who spoke in detail<sup>25</sup> about buyer-seller intermediation, 54 percent were Trade Hub partners and beneficiaries, such as regional organizations or sector actors. Across the board, this group viewed WATIH’s intermediation events as opportunities to learn and promote themselves. In many cases, the Trade Hub-sponsored activities were the first opportunity for sellers to meet regional peers, or international purchasers in some cases (e.g., the apparel sector). However, WATIH and USAID staff as well as beneficiary partners such as WAGN noted that the sustainability of the buyer-seller intermediation attempts was questionable, since the Trade Hub covered much of the costs for attendance or organization of these events in the early years of the project. Since 2016, however, the Trade Hub has made increasing efforts to require cost share from participants, including cereals exchanges being held solely by WAGN, Afrique Verte, and other partners. Trade Hub beneficiaries and USAID staff also noted that cost-sharing attempts were difficult to implement after participants have already received per diem, travel expenses, and other cost subsidies for past linkage opportunities. However, Trade Hub staff felt that cost-sharing was progressing toward a sustainable balance of partner fee coverage and project support. While one key informant from a regional agricultural organization thought that cost-sharing attempts were worthwhile and a “best practice,” this interviewee noted that other donors in the region still cover costs and large organizations are perhaps best suited to pay rather than small business or local agricultural sector actors. A shea producer put things bluntly, “West African firms are not yet able to make the kinds of volumes in sales that would allow them to cover the costs of participating in such fairs on their own.” However, none of the respondents reported avoiding Trade Hub or USAID events due to cost sharing or the expenses associated with attendance.

- **IR 1.1 Conclusion 2: Targeting of buyer-seller intermediation has seen mixed success.**

As noted above, the Trade Hub has made admirable efforts to create linkage opportunities, with attendance at these events rising over time and indicator targets met and surpassed. The challenge that follows is translating this success into sustainable sales and capacity that can withstand volatile sales cycles in many sectors. Two of the three respondents in the livestock sector and two of the five

<sup>25</sup> “In detail” here means that the respondent specifically mentioned exchanges or other linkage events and demonstrated their participation in or knowledge of these events.

respondents in the apparel sector noted that they lack some critical capacity, such as the ability to meet required standards to export to the U.S. or an understanding of different local markets, to take advantage of unique exchange opportunities that the Trade Hub has facilitated. As one respondent put it, “A lot of money goes into organizing meetings in a lot of fancy hotels. You take someone from his cattle farm to a five-star hotel, and he’s lost. This is not very useful, money could be used on buying equipment.”

Certain events, such as the MAGIC apparel convention in Las Vegas, were popular with those who attended – every respondent involved said that it was an opportunity that they would not have had without the Trade Hub’s support – but their ability to build on the experience was limited. The Trade Hub reported that “more than 60 contacts were made” during the 2016 MAGIC convention.<sup>26</sup> However, the respondents we spoke with noted challenges capitalizing on this opportunity. As one KII noted, “Many constraints must be overcome to boost the exportation level[s].” These challenges included technical capacity and local transportation. Another key informant stated, “The contacts at MAGIC were good, but follow up is a bit problematic because of language and cultural barriers.” This may also be a good example of how Trade Hub activities do not lead to immediate outcomes, as the process of obtaining contacts is followed by sample submission, and then by order placement.<sup>27</sup>

Among 39 Trade Hub and USAID staff and intermediation event attendees interviewed, eight people expressed concerns around WATIH’s targeting beyond the issue of capacity. These concerns range from a feeling that Trade Hub focuses too much on smallholder producers instead of small- and medium-sized processors and firms (three respondents), that the Trade Hub’s intermediation is not pro-poor enough (one respondent), and that the selection of firms and sectors is too broad to be productive (four respondents).

## **IR 1.2 Expanded Use of Grades and Standards**

Through interviews and document review, the evaluation found that WATIH has made progress toward sub-IR 1.2, largely through trainings, compliance support, and contracts assistance. Perception of WATIH’s activities in this area is overwhelmingly positive. Respondents noted specific changes they have made as a result of WATIH’s assistance on grades and standards, and clearly saw the value in these endeavors. Key findings on the project’s progress toward this IR include:

- Twenty-seven of 33 respondents who mentioned grades and standards assistance noted a positive outcome from a WATIH-supported activity, i.e., one that resulted in a specific improvement in operations, production, or sales.
  - Of the respondents who noted a positive outcome, 14 were not from USAID or the Trade Hub, and 4 of these respondents were female.
- Cereals and mango sector respondents most frequently reported specific outcomes from WATIH support on grades and standards. Respondents from these sectors expressed an increase in formal contracting due to WATIH training and support.
- ATRC staff reported a desire for more training in general, but four of six ATRC respondents mentioned standards for labelling, packaging, and documentation.

The mango sector saw export and national sales grow over the course of Trade Hub implementation. From 2015 to 2017, the number of export transactions grew in Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana and Senegal, although the value of mango exports generally fell over this same period except in Cote d’Ivoire.

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<sup>26</sup> See FY2015-2016 Annual Report, p. 50.

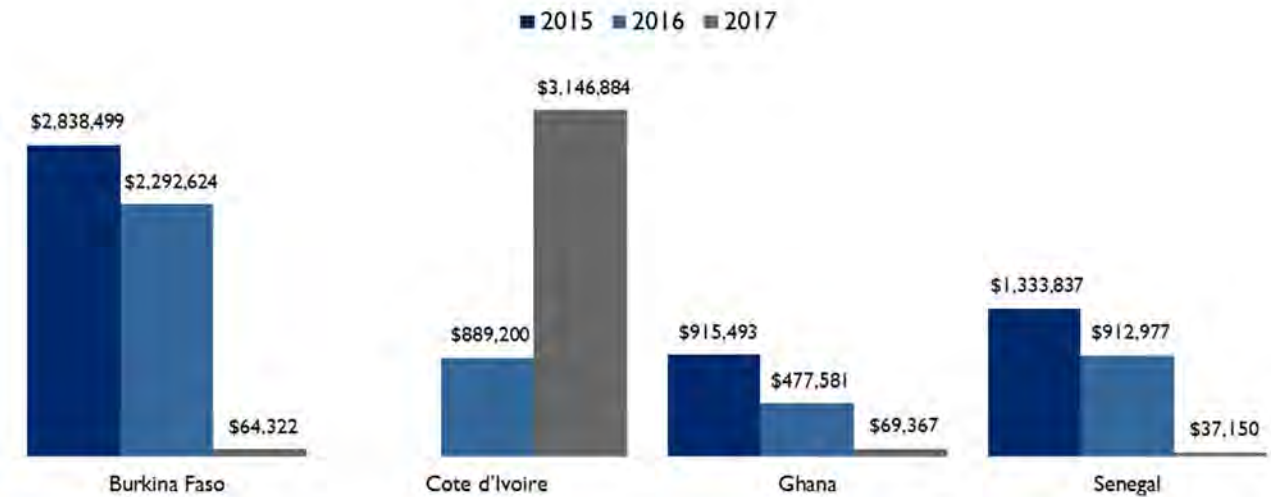
<sup>27</sup> Data provided outside the purview of the evaluation period show that an apparel firm in Benin that attended the MAGIC convention recently secured a \$223,778 order from Hurleys Religious Goods. See WATH Quarterly Report April – June 2017.



**TABLE 4: NUMBER OF MANGO EXPORT TRANSACTIONS**

Country	2015	2016	2017	Total
Burkina Faso	4	6	1	11
Cote d'Ivoire	0	2	10	12
Ghana	3	7	2	12
Senegal	1	4	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>41</b>

**FIGURE 6: VALUE OF MANGO EXPORT TRANSACTIONS (IN USD)**



The evaluation reached two main conclusions related to sub-IR 1.2:

- **IR 1.2 Conclusion 1: WATIH has helped increase awareness of grades and standards.**

Of the 33 respondents who mentioned grades and standards, 19 noted a specific improvement or change that resulted from the training or support. Eight of these respondents were non-WATIH, non-USAID staff.

Improvements reported from the expanded use of grades and standards included:

- Understanding contracts (25 percent of respondents noted WATIH's support);
- Information on quality control and produce disease prevention (30 percent of respondents noted WATIH's support); and
- Navigating certification processes (13 percent of respondents noted WATIH's support).

Interviews revealed beneficiaries and organizations without prior knowledge of the grades, standards, or processes to export beyond their home-country borders. This was found for both male and female respondents. For example, five stakeholders in the grain sector noted that WATIH's assistance in understanding contracts resulted in diminished disputes, more efficient practices, and more market opportunities, such as access to supermarkets.

Respondent perception of trainings in the mango, transportation, and cereals/grain sectors were aligned in the WATIH documentation<sup>28</sup> and in-person interviews. These respondents noted that the trainings

<sup>28</sup> See FY2016 Annual Report, pp. 9-10, 13, 16, 18 (transportation), 36-37 (cereal), and 42-44 (mango).

addressed relevant issues, such as fruit flies in the mango sector or aflatoxin in cereals, and that they have been able to apply what they learned.

- **IR 1.2 Conclusion 2: Additional support is needed and the reach of grades and standards outreach remains unclear.**

Respondents' critiques of the Trade Hub's support around grades and standards related to the project's support falling short of demand. ATRC staff who received training on grades, standards, and AGOA generally noted that they needed more training on standards required to export to the U.S. ATRC respondents in Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso expressed that training on grades and standards felt inadequate. While demonstrating standards expertise may not be a key job duty for ATRC staff, understanding export quality standards broadly is important for taking advantage of AGOA. Mystery shopper visits to ATRCs revealed that ATRC staff were unsure about standards and told evaluation team members to contact the Trade Hub for follow-up.

Focus group participants and key informants noted that, although WATIH has helped "get information out there," there is still a lack of understanding around contracts and standards, and limited financial support to enact the changes needed to meet standards. While 19 of 31 respondents who mentioned grades and standards spoke positively about their training on the topic and noted how it has changed the way they do business, all of those in the cereals sector said they face challenges with the same issues. A respondent in the livestock sector expressed a lack of follow-up to trainings with support to act on the information: "Trainings are not followed by funds for implementing new practices (e.g., training on cattle fattening for new cattle fatteners, but no startup funds)." Respondents face issues including aflatoxin, fruit flies, road harassment, and contract disputes, even as they report incorporating or trying to incorporate the best practices they learned into their own work. One respondent summarized it as, "This is a livelihood for many, and change in behavior is slow to come when they have been doing same thing for generations." Trade Hub staff also recognized this challenge, with one describing adoption of best practices in contracting as "timid" despite WATIH's best efforts.

### **IR 1.3 Increased Access to and Use of Market Information Services**

There has been mixed progress on and perception of the Trade Hub's activities with market information systems (MIS). Findings related to the progress toward sub-IR 1.3 include:

- From FY2014 through FY2016, WATIH support of MIS was largely limited to regional and sectoral organizations (i.e., the West African Market Information Network [RESIMAO], COFENABVI, and ACA). Respondents from each of these organizations noted that raising awareness of MIS was an ongoing challenge. All RESIMAO respondents noted the challenge of getting producers to engage with their MIS platform.
- Thirty-one respondents and participants in two focus groups mentioned MIS. MIS-related comments from fifty-three percent of non-USAID, non-WATIH staff noted the lack of technical follow-up support or financial support for MIS.
- Seven of 9 USAID staff, 2 of 10 WATIH staff, and 4 of 12 Trade Hub activity beneficiaries noted a desire to improve access to information about U.S.-based buyers and importers in the context of MIS. This sentiment was echoed in conversations not directly tied to MIS, and in FGDs, from respondents at ATRCs, in the livestock sector, and at national chambers of commerce.

The evaluation's main conclusions related to sub-IR 1.3 are:

- **IR 1.3 Conclusion 1: WATIH has provided worthwhile initial MIS infrastructure to help target organizations.**

Based on comments from key informants and FGD participants related to MIS and in discussions where MIS was not mentioned, it is clear that value chain actors across all of the Trade Hub’s target sectors and within national and regional organizations crave more information about potential buyers regionally and in the U.S. WATIH has worked to meet this demand with three organizations that are well-positioned to employ MIS: RESIMAO, COFENABVI, and ACA. Connecting relevant users to the systems WATIH has helped support is an ongoing challenge and respondents repeatedly raised the issue of communication regarding these systems. Partners who have benefited from WATIH’s MIS outreach are in a tenuous situation where the capacity to maintain, promote, and utilize MIS is not clear.

- **IR 1.3 Conclusion 2: There is still a need to connect end users to MIS and ensure that relevant information is provided in the systems.**

The Trade Hub has offered training and support for MIS, but respondents noted a lack of follow-up and a sense that WATIH does not understand why communication efforts are needed. As one respondent put it, “We need to do awareness-raising among future users of the MIS. We have asked WATIH for support with this. Initially they said yes, but now they don’t seem to understand the utility.” This is born out in the Trade Hub’s reporting data, which show that there were 20,000 new users of MIS in the first year of implementation, which slowed to nearly 12,000 users the following year.<sup>29</sup> The Trade Hub’s MIS support has been an important first step, but the capacity to build on this support is unclear. Across respondent categories, the desire for better market information suggests that MIS efforts are still not meeting demand and that the capacity to maintain and sustain these systems may be limited without ongoing support.

**IR 1.4 Increased Access to and Use of Financial Services**

Forty-four respondents (13 female and 31 male) mentioned WATIH’s financial access activities. Most non-WATIH, non-USAID respondents noted the ongoing challenge of accessing finance more generally; both male and female KIIs reflected these perceptions. Respondents at ATRCs, within USAID, at the Trade Hub, and from other donors stated that financial access is a complex challenge in West Africa, where many firms and borrowers may not have formal documentation, financial statements, or appropriate collateral to obtain loans. About 84 percent of the 44 respondents who spoke directly about access and use of financial services felt that the Trade Hub’s sub-IR 1.4 activities were inadequate, poorly targeted, or inefficient. Some of these perceptions are supported in the monitoring data, which show that the Trade Hub missed its targets in 2015 and 2016.

**FIGURE 7: WORDS FREQUENTLY MENTIONED IN RELATION TO SUB-IR 1.4**



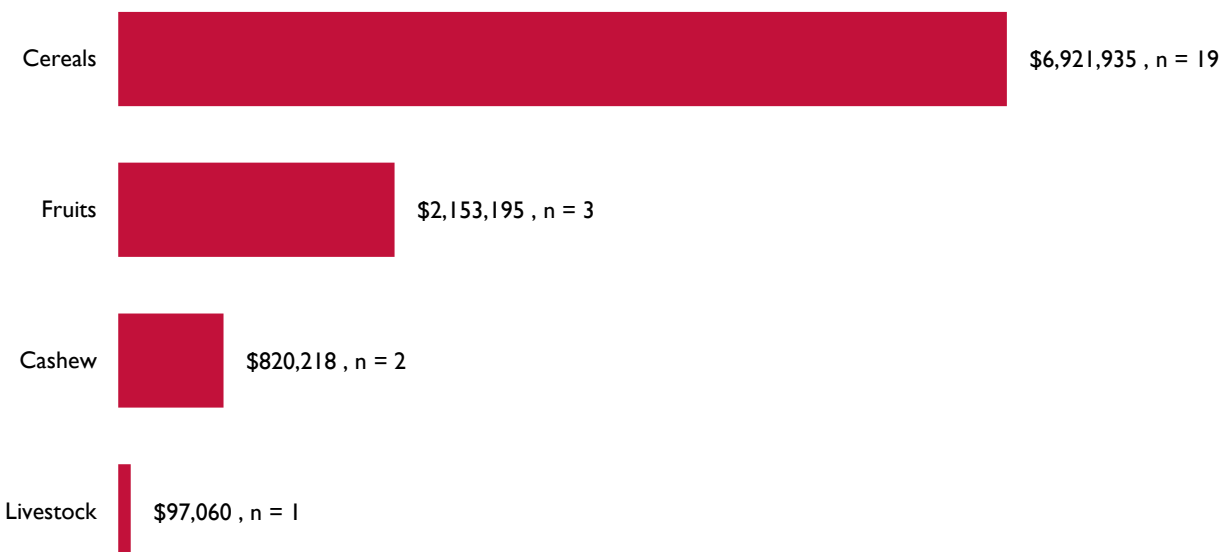
However, this is also a reflection of factors beyond WATIH’s control, such as high collateral requirements and capacity constraints among small- and medium-sized borrowers. This is also a reflection of the need

<sup>29</sup> See FY2014-2015 Annual Report p. 85 and FY2015-2016 Annual Report p. 133. Notably, the Trade Hub has exceeded its 2017 target of 8,000 new MIS users, with 19,697 users reported through Q3 2017 per the latest available quarterly report.

for finance across all value chains, but there are limits to which value chains the Trade Hub can actually facilitate loans due to actual or perceived sectoral risks and capacity constraints. WATIH has addressed this issue through supply- and demand-side approaches, including partnerships with banks, provision of financial advising and training, and facilitation of DCA-backed loans. The Trade Hub has built strong relationships on the supply side with financial institutions, such as Oikocredit and Coris Bank, and provided trainings and capacity building support to facilitate demand. In 2015, WATIH fell short of its \$10 million (total value) loan target by \$9.1 million. Notably, however, WATIH data for this year show that new loans went exclusively to female borrowers. Although WATIH fell short of its target of \$2 million in loan value for women by \$1.1 million, and cumulatively fell short by \$2.25 million on its targets through 2016 for women, the Trade Hub nearly reached its \$10 million overall target in 2016.<sup>30</sup>

For 2015, when WATIH missed its loan value target, all project-facilitated loans were on the demand side, and three out of four were in the cereals sector, with one loan going to a fruit packing warehouse. In 2016, the Trade Hub almost hit its target in terms of value and the sectoral reach increased as well, as shown in Figure 8, but key sectors such as apparel are difficult to obtain financing for, which may explain why respondents noted a perception of limited support for accessing finance. The number of new loan deals also increased to 25 over this period, and 2017 data – which is beyond the scope of this evaluation – suggest that the number of loans and the sectoral reach have continued to grow.<sup>31</sup>

**FIGURE 8: WATIH FY2015-2016 LOAN VALUE BY SECTOR**



Key findings related to sub-IR 1.4 include:

- Financial advisors expressed frustration with the Trade Hub’s approach and processes.
- The introduction of DCA into WATIH’s activities was welcomed by financial advisors, Trade Hub, and USAID staff.

<sup>30</sup> See FY2014-2015 Annual Report, p. 85, FY2015-2016 Annual Report p. 133. Subsequent data provided by the Trade Hub, but outside of the scope of the evaluation, show that for April-June 2017, WATH helped facilitate almost \$33 million in new loans, surpassing the 2017 target. This increase in loans may be a function of the learning curve on the part of financial advisors, and the time and effort it takes to get credit seekers to have bankable business plans and financial statement. the influence of the DCA, or other factors.

<sup>31</sup> As of Q3 2017, the number of new deals was 43 for 2017. Shea and cocoa sector actors also received loans in 2017.

- Both USAID staff and financial advisors noted capacity constraints within the Trade Hub as a challenge to making progress on sub-IR 1.4 in its first two years.

The evaluation team interviewed four financial advisors, all of whom felt that the Trade Hub’s processes were onerous and time consuming. As one advisor noted, “WATIH’s administration is slow. If one person is not available, we cannot do anything. The Trade Hub is very rigid in their procedures.” Trade Hub administrative staff were repeatedly mentioned as a constraint in relation to sub-IR 1.4. Trade Hub staff themselves noted that progress toward increasing access to financing had been difficult and that, as one respondent noted, “our model works well, but takes time because of the time needed to process loans.” While delays may be a function of general finance procedures in the region, it also speaks to the Trade Hub’s setting of expectations and communicating with financial advisors. The fact that the number of financial deals was low in the first year, and then jumped from 4 to 25 in the second year, while still missing value targets, suggests that there was a lag time in facilitating the finance portion of implementation. One respondent recalled bringing deals in fertilizer and vegetable oil to the Trade Hub, but because “they didn’t fit in with the Trade Hub’s value chains, they didn’t want to work on it.” While WATIH and USAID have attempted to relax this type of rigidity to expand the Trade Hub’s financial assistance, there was a perception across respondent types – financial advisors, U.S. government staff, and even Trade Hub staff – that the Trade Hub’s approach to finance was too narrowly defined. KII with financial advisors and U.S. government staff also noted limits in the Trade Hub’s internal capacity to address access to financing.

The Trade Hub conducted outreach with banks to improve supply side financial access, with the most success occurring with Oikocredit and Coris Bank. Table 5 lists the banks with which WATIH held discussions.

**TABLE 5: BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS WITH WHICH WATIH HELD DISCUSSIONS**

<b>Bank</b>	<b>Country</b>
Barclays Bank	Ghana
Coris Bank	Burkina, multiple
NSIA Bank	Côte d’Ivoire
Ecobank	Senegal
BSIC	Senegal & Togo
Diamond Bank	Togo
Banque Atlantique	Côte d’Ivoire
Société Interafricaine de Banque	Togo
Bank of Industry	Nigeria
Nigerian Import and Export Bank	Nigeria
<b>Other Financial Institutions</b>	
Africa Agricultural Development Company	Ghana
Databank Agrifund Manager Ltd.	Ghana
Oikocredit	Togo, multiple
Investisseurs et Partenaires	Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire
Grofin	Nigeria
Sahel Capital	Nigeria
Root Capital	Senegal, Ghana

Financial advisors and staff from WATIH and USAID celebrated the improved progress on sub-IR 1.4 with the introduction of DCA. As one KII noted, “DCA is a tool to achieve more impact. People will trade if they have security and access to larger capital.” Another key informant mentioned that the

introduction of DCA cut the time to finish financial deals, despite the added complexity of a government guarantee. WATIH staff echoed this point, with one member noting, “We should work more with the DCA program on access to finance. This was an excellent idea that was not initially in the project plan.” DCA support requires coordination between USAID, implementation staff, financial intuitions, and borrowers, and can take time for due diligence and the procedures that go along with obtaining a guarantee. Despite these factors, it was clear that DCA was viewed as a valuable addition to WATIH’s activities.

Respondent assessments of WATIH’s capacity to address sub-IR 1.4 ranged from a perception of “dead weight in the WATIH office” to a well-meaning but flawed approach given the needs of firms and borrowers. Respondents related this to challenges in recruitment, internal Trade Hub processes (as noted above), and its overall capacity as a wide-ranging rather than finance-oriented project. WATIH staff reporting illustrates these challenges. As one Trade Hub interviewee put it, “it took us nine months to hire staff [in finance], it took a year to find appropriate financial advisors.” Financial advisors expressed a sense that Trade Hub staff and subcontractors were unfamiliar with the local financial context. In one case, a financial advisor noted that his Trade Hub contact almost caused a deal to fall apart due to the contact’s treatment of the borrower.

The evaluation team also spoke to a cereal sector respondent who received a discounted line of credit with WATIH support. However, this respondent was upset and claimed that, “Trade Hub’s website misrepresented information about activity they did with us. They said we got a loan from bank, but it’s a discount line only.” This respondent also felt that the Trade Hub’s finance policies did not support small businesses: “The Trade Hub should allocate funding to [support with collateral] and enable some flexibility in their programing so that SMEs can access financing. To work with SMEs, need to also work at the policy level. In terms of accessing banks and financing, they can restructure to help grassroots more.” One of the apparel firms for which the evaluation team obtained monitoring form data noted that it needed finance support four out of the five quarters that it noted areas for additional assistance needs. The evaluation team was not able to find additional respondents who had received loans facilitated by the current iteration of the Trade Hub, and it is important not to make too much of a single respondent’s experience. However, this interviewee’s perceptions of receiving financial assistance through the Trade Hub aligned with that of the finance professionals interviewed.

Access to finance is a binding constraint across the region. It is a complex challenge that requires specialized expertise and oversight, and is affected by political and macroeconomic changes over which no single activity has control. Assessment of the Trade Hub’s progress and the frustrations voiced by respondents must keep these factors in mind.

The evaluation team reached the following conclusions for sub-IR 1.4 based on the findings above:

- **IR 1.4 Conclusion 1: The Trade Hub’s capacity to efficiently and effectively address access to finance was limited in the first two years of implementation.**

USG and financial advisors, as well as Trade Hub indicator data, suggest that it was difficult for WATIH to effectively and quickly address access to finance as the project was attempting to dedicate time, staff, and resources to multiple areas simultaneously, and in many countries. In addition, the Trade Hub missed its loan value targets (indicator 22) for female borrowers, with \$1.7 million of the targeted \$4 million met from 2014 through 2016 according to the Trade Hub annual reports.<sup>32</sup>

The limited incentives for financial advisors, who reported an arduous process for getting deals approved that had limited payoffs and the capacity constraints of the Trade Hub limited progress toward improving access to finance. As one WATIH staff member put it, “We started with 30 [financial]

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<sup>32</sup> See FY2014-2015 Annual Report, p. 85 and FY2015-2016 Annual Report, p. 133.

advisors, now we have 20. Of the 20 that we are currently working with, only 10 have strong capacity.” It took implementation time to develop an understanding of financial advisor management and performance, which, along with other administrative learning curve challenges, may have delayed progress toward targets in the first years of the Hub. The supply-side outreach presents a different picture, where the Trade Hub has also had some success, particularly in outreach to local institutions such as Coris Bank and Oikocredit, in training and capacity building.

- **IR 1.4 Conclusion 2: WATIH coordination with DCA has been good for facilitating loans and improving progress toward sub-IR 1.4.**

Financial advisors working on the demand side, and Trade Hub staff working with lenders on the supply side, reported a positive change in WATIH’s finance work once coordination with DCA began. As a result of DCA as well as the Trade Hub’s close work with Oikocredit, as of the third quarter of 2017 11 loans have been granted using the DCA mechanism. The introduction of DCA has helped the Trade Hub and its financial advisors facilitate loans and provide additional risk mitigation in sectors traditionally viewed as financially risky, such as agriculture. In addition, work with banks such as Oikocredit helped facilitate loans, which may present a model for future work where DCA assistance is not possible or is slow to start.

Overall, the issues that have challenged WATIH implementation and hindered its progress have also affected this sub-IR. WATIH’s work in finance suggests the project has been stretched thin due to limited capacity and process constraints, such as early established USAID limitations on which value chains will be accepted. The gains from the Trade Hub’s capacity development activities and supply side outreach may have been slow to accrue, but the obstacles of the first years of implementation are important to consider when viewing later progress and thinking about future programming.

## **IR 2: Improved Enabling Environment for Trade and Trade Facilitation**

The evaluation team assessed WATIH’s progress toward IR2 through 21 KIIs that directly addressed IR2 topics, 1 FGD with BA stakeholders, and structured observations via direct visits to the Dakola and Aflao BICs and mystery shopper visits to ATRCs. WATIH documentation and these interviews revealed a continued disconnect between *de jure* and *de facto* policy progress in this area. The challenges of bridging Francophone and Anglophone countries, working across national and regional organizations, and monitoring progress are acute and entrenched.

The Trade Hub has attempted to address sub-IRs 2.1 and 2.2 through its work with the BA and BA’s support of BICs. For IR2, the evaluation found that:

- Regional traders expressed concerns around road harassment and corruption (largely through bribery).
- BIC staff and truckers at the border and those interviewed reported little-to-no use of BIC resources.
- ATRC staff were not available in Cote d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso during mystery shopper visits.
- Representatives from regional organizations that address transport and trade policies reported little engagement with WATIH staff.

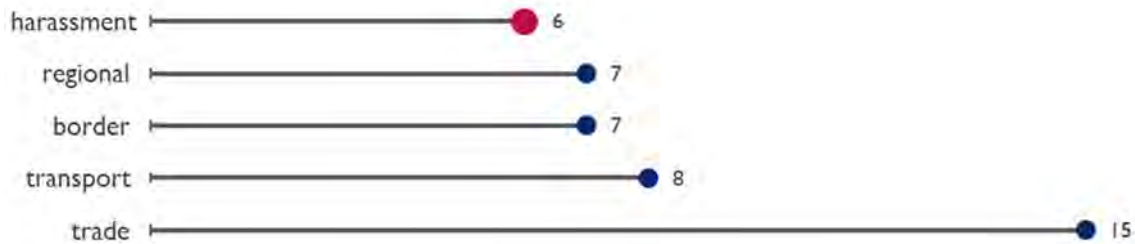
Among respondents who addressed issues related to IR 2, harassment came up frequently, as shown in Figure 7. Textual analysis<sup>33</sup> of all IR2-related comments shows that harassment was the fifth most

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<sup>33</sup> Analysis is based on word count with stopwords and punctuation removed based on Feinerer, K. Hornik, and D. Meyer. Text mining infrastructure in R. *Journal of Statistical Software*, 25(5): 1-54, March 2008. ISSN 1548-7660.

frequently cited topic, with the other most common words largely related to the proposed FGD themes: border trade and transportation.

**FIGURE 9: HARASSMENT WAS FREQUENTLY MENTIONED IN DISCUSSIONS RELATED TO IR 2**



Respondents said they are often asked to pay “fees” on one side of a border before being allowed to cross. The challenge of “goro boys,” middlemen who collect fees at the border, was raised repeatedly in FGDs, by border officials, and by truckers interviewed at the border. The BA has worked with the Trade Hub to develop printed materials and provide trainings on standards, regulations, and legal rights, but respondents noted that these efforts have not affected behavior on the ground. WATIH staff also noted this challenge. One WATIH staff member summarized, “WATIH is trying to end road harassment, but three months later people are back to bad habits. For the moment, we have not found the structural solution to resolve these issues definitively.”

On a visit to a BIC at the Dakola border in Burkina Faso, five truck driver interviewees expressed a general frustration, which other key informants described as well. The Dakola drivers described having read brochures produced by the BA that they received from their union. However, they said it felt useless to go to the BIC since bribery and harassment have been ongoing for years. Two women interviewed at the Dakola border were freight forwarders. One reported no particular difficulties based on her gender, while the other simply said, “all women’s work is difficult,” but would not provide specifics. Truck drivers interviewed at the Ghana-Togo border had not heard of the local BIC.

**FIGURE 10: SIGN FOR THE DAKOLA BIC**



Credit: Yarri Kamara, MSI.

A customs official interviewed at the border between Ghana and Togo noted that he had heard of the BIC, but had not been there because, “the location does not permit people to access the information they need. The BIC is not visible enough. I don’t think people utilize the BIC. There is the need to do proper information branding for people to know the kind of information they can get from the BIC.” On visits to BICs, the evaluation team found signage noting the location of the BICs missing, misplaced (see Figure 8) or, in the case with Aflao, limited signage in a corner opposite the BIC.

When the evaluation team asked Dakola BIC staff about the number of visitors, an offsite BIC officer contacted via phone said that the BIC services about 20 visitors per month. However, the evaluation team met a representative from the *Conseil Burkinabe des Chargeurs* onsite at the time of this visit who noted that there had not been any users in the past month. The BIC at the Togolese side of the Aflao



border was not operational and there were no parking spaces on the Ghanaian side. The most recent 2016 numbers from the BA show that there were 30 people assisted at the Aflao BIC, up from 19 in the previous year, and 83 at the Dakola BIC, down from 121 in 2015, while the Paga BIC reportedly only received 8 people in 2015, with no data available for 2016.<sup>34</sup> To put these numbers in perspective, a census of truck crossings covering the third quarter of 2015 (the latest data available) at Dakola counted 7,912 in-bound and out-bound trucks, while Paga saw 8,628 trucks; data were not available for Aflao.<sup>35</sup> At the policy level, key informants in the cereal sector in Cote d'Ivoire mentioned WATIH's work on eliminating certificates of origin requirements as a critical contribution. However, interviewees from WATIH and the U.S. government, respondents across sectors, and truckers all noted that police checkpoints and border policies that slowed or prohibited trade were constant challenges. At the Aflao border, one trucker detailed going through eight police checkpoints. In another case reported by a key informant in Benin and repeated by several WATIH staff, officials at the border refused transport of goods through the crossing until the intervention of an ECOWAS customs official was prompted by the Trade Hub.

### FIGURE 11: LOCKED DOOR TO THE ABIDJAN ATRC



Credit: Yarri Kamara, MSI.

In addition to the ATRC KIs, the evaluation team made unannounced “mystery shopper” visits to ATRCs in Accra, Abidjan, and Ouagadougou. The goal of these visits was to see how the ATRCs would serve an average customer. The evaluation team’s experiences in Abidjan and Ouagadougou were similar. In both cities, the location of the ATRC was not clear. The ATRC in Abidjan is housed in the offices of the Ivorian export promotion agency, but there is no signage for the ATRC or the agency. In Ouagadougou, the ATRC is in the chamber of commerce, but guards there were unsure where it was and it took them several minutes to direct the team to the correct office. Prior to going to the Abidjan ATRC, the team called the ATRC officer to ensure someone would be present, but he was not in the office as planned when the team arrived and the office door was locked.

In Ouagadougou, the ATRC representative was also out of the office, and the team was directed to email him; the office was open because it is in the documentation center of the *Maison de l’Entreprise*, another private sector support organization. Inside the Ouagadougou office, the only documents related to AGOA were two printed PowerPoint handouts on export procedures that could not be taken out of the ATRC. Accra presented a completely different experience. The ATRC is also inside the Ghanaian Chamber of Commerce, but the receptionist knew where it was and the office was staffed by a member of the chamber. The ATRC staff member printed documents about AGOA for the evaluation team, directed the team to contact the Trade Hub for additional support, and seemed to understand the general guidelines for AGOA. The ATRCs appear to rely heavily on the availability and interest of staff who have dual titles and may have competing duties. The Accra ATRC provides something of a counter

<sup>34</sup> See Borderless Alliance Annual Report 2015, pp. 17-18, and Borderless Alliance Annual Report 2016, pp. 38-40

<sup>35</sup> See Borderless Alliance Annual Report 2015, p. 19.

example, although the staff member, who was later interviewed, mentioned the difficulty of managing both his Chamber of Commerce position and the ATRC work.

The relationship between WATIH and regional organizations that drive trade policy was described in mixed terms. Of the five ECOWAS officials interviewed, a customs official and a director in agricultural development described their communication and relationship with WATIH as infrequent. The other three ECOWAS officials spoke to engagement with WATIH while in Accra, on regional corridors, and for the ETLs. However, one official noted that despite this engagement there is a lack of follow-up from the Trade Hub and that, “I think they need to step up their collaboration with the Commission, with my Directorate especially if they want to make impact in the area of trade facilitation and free movement of goods.” An official who had worked closely with the Trade Hub echoed this point, saying “WATIH cannot just go to member states and try to get them to move. This must be done with ECOWAS. Let ECOWAS play its role and make things move.” One ECOWAS official was largely engaged with the Trade Hub through the BA, where a good friend of his works. A trade facilitation advisor for ECOWAS recalled that one of the Trade Hub contacts with whom he worked productively was actually a former ECOWAS employee, which has helped with coordination. Respondents cited the cooperative agreement signed between the Trade Hub and ECOWAS as a positive step toward better collaboration, but all ECOWAS interviewees noted a desire for additional and improved communication. The evaluation team’s communications with UEMOA were limited due to respondent availability, but an interview with a customs and market official demonstrated no familiarity with WATIH. Trade Hub staff also noted that they have had little interaction with UEMOA. Four of the 20 respondents from the Trade Hub mentioned some familiarity with UEMOA. Two of these respondents expressed negative perceptions of the work with UEMOA, with one noting, “The relationship with UEMOA was good, but not so much now” while another made a comparison to ECOWAS, saying, “With UEMOA, activities are less effective than with ECOWAS.” However, one respondent noted an effective working relationship and another expressed potential for future collaboration.

Improving the enabling environment for trade and trade facilitation requires addressing systemic issues across physical and linguistic borders. The evaluation’s two main conclusions for IR2 are:

- **IR 2 Conclusion 1: WATIH has made some progress toward reducing barriers to trade and increasing transportation competitiveness. However, this speaks to the scale of the challenge as much as the Trade Hub’s attempts to address it.**

The continued presence of checkpoints – which respondents noted are generally just excuses to extract bribes – road harassment, and the limited free flow of goods reported by U.S. government, Trade Hub, and key informants across sectors and at the border suggest reversion to a status quo despite the efforts of the Trade Hub and the BA. While the Trade Hub, USAID, and the BA should not be held responsible for the lack of substantial change to long-held corrupt practices and the continued intransigence of rent-seeking activities and harassment lead the evaluation team to conclude that current approaches are not appropriately addressing these challenges. All respondents interviewed along the Burkina Faso and Ghana borders mentioned these challenges, while research conducted by the BA also highlights these problems. For example, on a recent corridor verification trip that a BA team conducted between the Abidjan-Ouagadougou corridor, it was stopped at 25 checkpoints and paid 26,000 CFA in Cote d’Ivoire and was stopped at 18 checkpoints and was asked to pay 4,000 CFA in Burkina Faso. These stops led to 630 minutes of delay during the single corridor trip.<sup>36</sup> The support to BICs has created well-intentioned, but little used, resources that sit in the shadow of ongoing harassment and policy violations. The location and marketing of BIC services are not conducive to improving transportation and trade, or even helping customs officials and truck drivers gain access to information. In addition, support on one side of the border will not help the enabling environment if corruption is

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<sup>36</sup> See Borderless Alliance Annual Report, pp. 30-31.

rampant on the other side of the border. The ATRC in Burkina Faso has struggled with visibility. The ATRC coordinator in Ouagadougou reported that the center receives around five calls a month, but added that “the center is not very visible. There are very few in-person visitors; people tend to go first to the export promotion agency or the Ministry of Commerce.” These centers also seem to be dependent on a single individual’s ability to juggle two jobs and be present for potential walk-ins.

- **IR 2 Conclusion 2: Outreach to regional organizations, particularly in Francophone countries, can be improved.**

Building a strong relationship between the Trade Hub and regional organizations requires interest, communication, and trust from both sides. While one ECOWAS official noted that he could try harder to reach out to USAID and WATIH, the evaluation team focused on outreach from the Trade Hub to other organizations, rather than the other way around. WATIH appears to have missed some opportunities for collaboration and leveraging resources with the Regional Economic Community (REC) such as UEMOA, and has had limited coordination with ECOWAS. WATIH’s policy outreach appears to have been intermediated through the support of the BA, which has then made connections with regional organizations. This arrangement is worthwhile as it puts local, and potentially sustainable, actors in the role of lobbying for liberalized trade. However, one potential risk in this approach is that familiarity with the Trade Hub and its reach within ECOWAS is then limited, which may affect other opportunities for collaboration. The ECOWAS-WATIH relationship is highly dependent on individuals, rather than institutions, which could also affect its ability to affect sustainable change. WATIH’s communication challenges and perceived lack of follow up have left regional stakeholders with an uncertain view of the Trade Hub’s value and role in creating a positive enabling environment for trade.

#### Summary of EQ I Conclusions

- WATH has made progress toward improving standards and MIS.
- WATH’s support of buyer-seller linkages has improved market information, but has shown limited success in creating new deals.
- WATH’s efforts to improve access to finance has had some successes, but those have been fairly limited on the demand side.
- WATH’s transportation and logistics outreach has done little to address deep-seated challenges such as road harassment.
- WATH has made little outreach to UEMOA and has a limited direct relationship with ECOWAS to address trade policy issues.

## **EQ2: What are the benefits and trade-offs of having WATIH as a discrete mechanism for capacity building, value-chain support, and trade facilitation?**

The benefits of having WATIH as a discrete mechanism largely lie in its ability to address supply- and demand-side constraints across multiple actors and sectors without requiring USAID to administer dozens of direct partnerships and activities. As originally formulated, WATIH provides a potentially sustainable and effective mechanism – if applied flexibly to respond to actual cooperation needs (i.e., a demand-driven approach). However, the scope of the Trade Hub and its progress toward meeting its objectives, as discussed in the findings and conclusions for EQ1, suggest that in trying to do all things at all times, it is having mixed success. Trade Hub communication and the lack of follow-up are symptoms of this broad scope and have limited the project’s ability to properly respond to regional stakeholders. The level of communication, information sharing, and visibility of WATIH has been insufficient given its

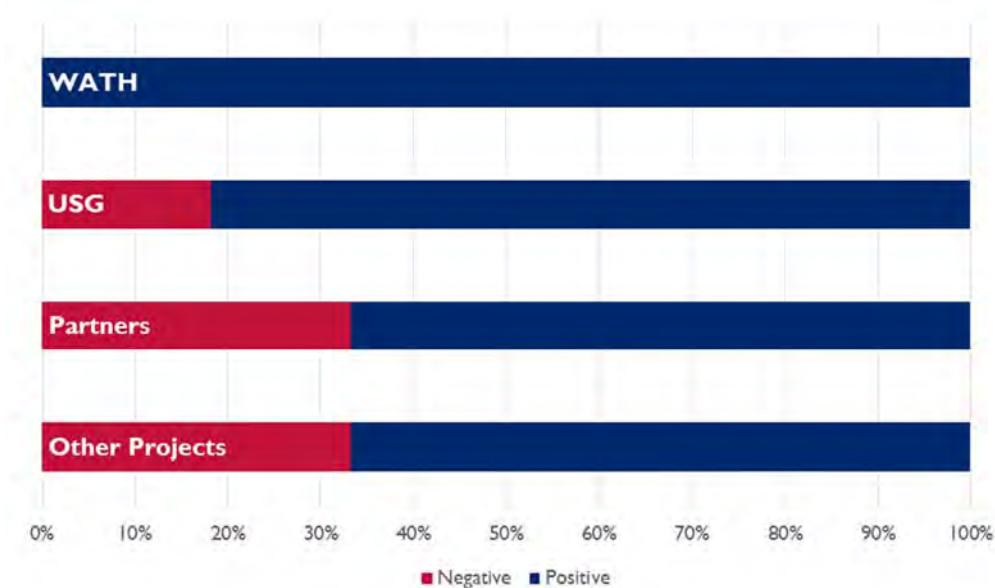
planned outreach, but – with rare exceptions – those who have worked with the Trade Hub hold it in high esteem.

WATIH has developed good partnerships and successfully targeted capacity building; this is particularly true in case of the GSA and the livestock and mango value chains. In many cases, WATIH is the reason many of the organizations it works with are able to survive, and it has shaped the way that these groups operate. This section explores the trade-offs of WATIH as a mechanism by looking at its reputation, exploring the Hub’s ability to build partnerships, and making comparisons to direct assistance.

### WATIH’s Reputation

Seventy-two percent of interviewees viewed the Trade Hub positively. The Trade Hub was well known and viewed as doing good work across all respondent types. Several respondents noted that WATIH was doing well given the broad scope of its activities and the deeply ingrained nature of some of the constraints it is trying to alleviate. U.S. government staff in countries with less regional programming or smaller missions than USAID/WA noted an appreciation for the Trade Hub’s attention. The evaluation team asked each key informant, “What is the reputation here in [location]?” Based on the sentiment reported, the team grouped these responses into positive or negative categories. Sentiment was based on a combination of analyzing negation in responses (e.g., “I do not like this activity”), key words (e.g., “good,” “bad”), and phrases (e.g., “this was good,” “this was bad”). Figure 10 shows respondents’ general perceptions, with two-thirds of partners and 82 percent of U.S. government respondents viewing WATIH positively. One KII with a small country mission noted that WATIH knew how to navigate local and U.S. government procedures, and that it was one of the few projects to ensure its consultants visit the mission while in country, saying “Super at that – no other partners are that good.”

**FIGURE 12: PERCEPTION OF THE TRADE HUB BY RESPONDENT TYPE**



U.S. government respondents noted little disruption due to turnover of WATIH leadership, while key informants from partners repeatedly expressed gratitude to the Trade Hub. Similarly, Trade Hub staff reported positive perceptions of their work, WATIH management, and its regional reputation. Positive responses related to WATIH and its staff being “credible” and “willing to roll their sleeves up and get

work done,”<sup>37</sup> “effective” and “adding clear value,”<sup>38</sup> and “focused.”<sup>39</sup> One U.S. government interviewee shared an anecdote that highlights why WATIH is so well regarded: “When I was in Nigeria, the Chamber of Commerce talked to me about work they did with the Trade Hub on AGOA. Nigerian seafood exports have issues, and the Trade Hub played a great role in this area to help improve exports [through AGOA]. It’s great to have local agency applaud something like the Trade Hub.” Both male and female respondents had a positive perception of the Trade Hub; only three female respondents reported a negative perception.

Some U.S. government and partner respondents viewed WATIH negatively, with one respondent from another donor-funded project expressing skepticism about the in-house agricultural expertise at the Trade Hub. Financial analysts and interviewees from RESIMAO expressed frustration with WATIH and thought it had limited local understanding; one respondent said that, “The problem with American projects is that they neglect the context.” For those U.S. government interviewees who were critical, there was a sense that the Trade Hub was “going in too many directions” and that it had not done an adequate job communicating its work. The communication issue was echoed by local partners, who also felt that there was not enough coordination or trust between the Trade Hub and certain value chain actors. As one respondent put it, “communication has been practically nonexistent for the past year. WATIH tends to communicate a lot with certain CILSS staff members who formerly worked at the Agribusiness and Trade Promotion project with WATIH staff in Accra. The relationship should be institutional to be sustainable and not just based on individual affinities.”

WATIH is also perceived less positively in areas such as financial access, where its processes and staffing are seen as slow and unresponsive. These critiques speak to some of WATIH’s own processes, such as its capacity in the finance sector, but also to its outreach and communication efforts. With one exception, all U.S. government staff who criticized the Trade Hub’s outreach were outside Ghana and Cote d’Ivoire. While WATIH has created a good impression among the missions it has visited, some staff felt passed over or had not heard of the Trade Hub until a WATIH consultant or staff member scheduled a meeting with them.

To conclude, the Trade Hub is generally well perceived, but its communications approach has left certain partners with misplaced expectations and some U.S. government staff unaware or uncertain about its value and achievements.

## **Building Partnerships and Developing Local Capacity**

WATIH’s work is in many ways directed at increasing the effectiveness of local and regional organizations. The Trade Hub’s training, capacity building, and technical assistance have all set out to strengthen local capacity. The Trade Hub has commissioned studies of associations that are relevant to the regional partners, to help these organizations learn from best practices for financial sustainability. Similarly, in developing partnerships, WATIH has had some progress in certain sectors, but limited progress in fostering relationships with regional organizations.

The evaluation’s key findings related to this aspect of EQ2 are that:

- The apparel and mango sectors, and respondents in AGOA-related positions, most frequently expressed the importance of the Trade Hub’s capacity-building efforts.
- Interviewees from the U.S. government, the Trade Hub, and partners reported little interaction or relationship building with regional organizations such as ECOWAS and UEMOA.

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<sup>37</sup> Apparel sector respondent

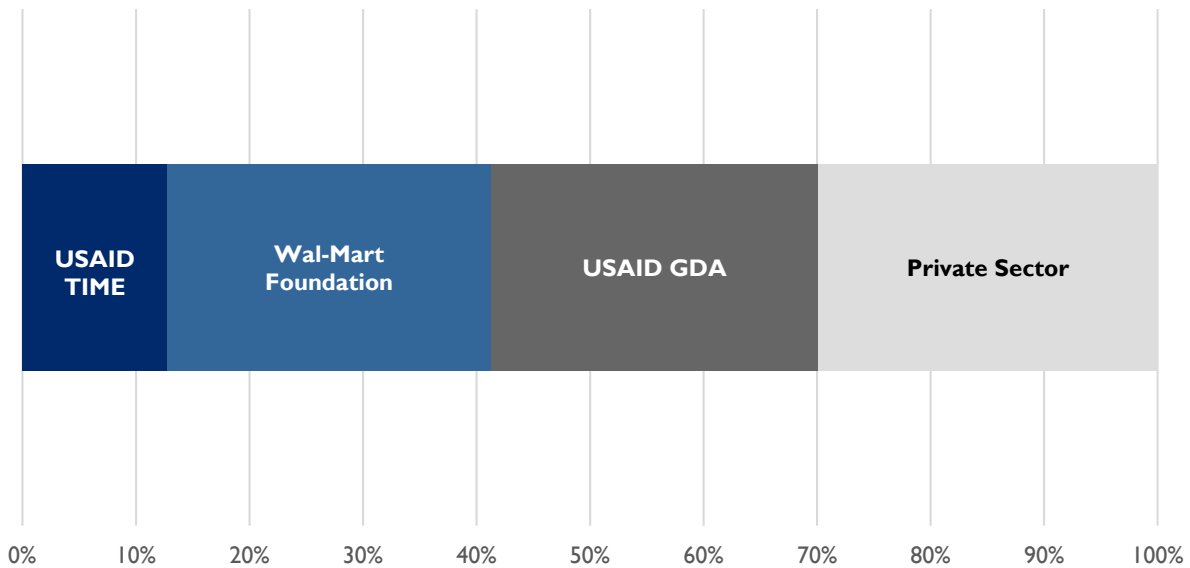
<sup>38</sup> ATRC interviewee

<sup>39</sup> U.S. government respondents in Nigeria, Ghana, and Cote d’Ivoire.

The evaluation team found that the strongest relationships and local capacity reported among respondents were related to AGOA and in the apparel and mango sectors. All interviewees in the apparel sector noted that this sector has received limited attention and support from other donor projects or local governments. Respondents valued WATIH’s support through grants, exchanges, and customs and standards and highlighted it as critical to shaping the development of, in some cases, a nascent industry. Key informants in the apparel sector noted that, “The Trade Hub has advocated for us,” that “prior to Hub support we were running at 30-40 percent capacity, now we’re at 60-70 percent”, and that the Trade Hub has changed the way one apparel company handles, “accounting, administration, and technical aspects [of their business].”

A review of audited financials from the target partner organizations support the responses from interviewees and shows a heavy reliance on donor funding for all aspects of operations. For example, 81 percent of the BA’s expenditures are funded by donor grants, according to its 2015 audited financial report (the latest for which data were available). The BA is almost entirely dependent on grant funding for travel-related expenses (with the exception of lodging) and for salaries, which comprise the largest share of its expenses. The ACA faces a similar situation, with 70 percent of its 2015 revenue coming from donor and foundation grants. Notably, in its 2015 annual report, the ACA projected private sector revenue to increase by about 50 percent. Figure 11 summarizes the 2015 revenue accounts for ACA.

**FIGURE 13: 2015 ACA REVENUE SOURCES**



Similar to the ACA and BA, GSA’s income was largely driven by grants. However, the total share of income from grants fell from 2015 to 2016 from around 84 percent to 81 percent, as its non-grant income increased. GSA’s total spending fell from 2015 to 2016, with its end of year comprehensive income for 2016 better positioned than for 2015, going from -\$81,241 to \$95,823 per GSA’s 2016 annual report.

The evaluation reached two main conclusions related to these findings:

- **Conclusion I: Partners have benefitted from some of WATIH’s activities, from ETLs and AGOA support to capacity building and training, and this has increased local effectiveness.**

In many of the sectors that WATIH targets, the development of local capacity and the building of partnerships may not present immediate or obvious results. The six ATRC staff who the evaluation team interviewed were enthusiastic about the partnerships created through WATIH and the capacity development that the Trade Hub has provided. WATIH's provision of materials and ongoing assistance were repeatedly invoked as critical to the functioning of the ATRCs. As one respondent said, "The Chamber of Commerce provides the logistics and local knowledge, while WATIH provides funding, experts (or pays for these) and teaching materials." A respondent in Nigeria summarized this point by saying that, "The [ATRC] itself will not exist without the Trade Hub. Also, the capacity required for U.S. market penetration will not exist without the Trade Hub. The synergy within [the ATRC] and the networking it provides, with colleagues in the sub-region, will also not exist without the Trade Hub. Clearly, there is missing link if the Hub is not there." The collaboration and resources that WATIH brings were repeatedly cited as key to ensuring that the resource centers are effective. As an ATRC interviewee in Burkina Faso noted, "With WATIH there is a lot of learning by doing. Nothing is imposed, activities are identified together and dialogue is fruitful."

The Trade Hub's influence in the mango sector has made organizations such as Yilo Krobo Mango Farmers Association more effective and relevant for their members. As one of the two respondents from the mango sector said, "WATIH was very influential [...]. This is because it was after the training in how to identify and handle fruit flies, the Association was able to increase yields from 200 metric tons to 350 metric tons." Except for finance, shea, and livestock, every sector-specific interviewee with whom the evaluation team spoke noted that importance of WATIH's support to their ongoing development and functioning. "We would not be able to do this without the Hub" was a common refrain throughout the interviews.

- **Conclusion 2: WATIH's partners still face financial constraints and some partners are unhappy with their Trade Hub relationship.**

Interviewees suggested that without the Trade Hub capacity building activities in the sectors noted above as well as other sectors (e.g., mangos), partners' operational and staff capabilities would be lower. Training and technical assistance are changing the way many respondents view their work and affecting their processes to better align with necessary export standards. It is not clear that they are meeting these goals, as many respondents still expressed anxiety about ongoing financial and production challenges, but WATIH has raised awareness and provided an important first step.

However, some actors have mixed perceptions and the relationships appear to be strained due to a sense of differing priorities, lack of trust, and inconsistent communication. In other areas, respondents discussed the Trade Hub's partnership development in less glowing terms. WAGN members felt that WATIH's approach to partnership building was not based around mutual understanding or trust. Interviewees in this group repeatedly expressed the sentiment that, "The WATIH activity is not always entirely aligned with our strategic plan." As noted above, interviewees noted limited exchange between WATIH and ECOWAS and UEMOA, two of the largest regional organizations in West Africa. Partners' reliance on financial support for basic operations suggests that Trade Hub and USAID support is keeping organizations afloat rather than fully alleviating financial constraints and easing access to sustainable sources of funding.

No interviewees from the finance sector suggested they would not be able to do their work without WATIH, but one financial analyst summarized the Trade Hub's local capacity development in his work as, "We would still exist if the Trade Hub did not continue, but through the Trade Hub, we've done work with apparel companies which we would not have done if not for the Trade Hub due to their high risk. We would not have AGOA expertise without the Trade Hub. We would also not have links to Francophone countries. WATIH complements what we are doing."

## Tradeoffs of WATIH Compared to Direct Assistance

Direct assistance and third-party implementation can be structured in a variety of ways and through many mechanisms. The evaluation team sought to gauge how respondents perceived the technical merits of a cross-cutting, third party Trade Hub approach as compared to the provision of direct assistance from USAID.

Respondents perceived several tradeoffs between the support provided through WATIH compared to direct assistance. Interviewees in the cereals, livestock, transport, and apparel sectors viewed the process of providing deliverables, requesting assistance, and submitting applications through the Trade Hub as time consuming and difficult. One interviewee each in transportation, apparel, grain, and finance noted that often the gap between submission of a request or plan and implementation was too long under the overarching Trade Hub approach. These respondents speculated that direct assistance would ease this gap and give them more freedom to act on their plans without oversight from WATIH. Related to this, interviewees from regional organizations who have worked with the Trade Hub on events such as workshops and exchanges expressed feeling little ownership in the process. This feeling was strongest among grain sector respondents, who reported wanting to strengthen cooperation on training, events, and collaboration. There was a sense among these interviewees that the Trade Hub did not give local partners enough responsibility or a strong enough role to shape their own priorities. A member of a grains group noted that, “WATIH needs to learn to delegate more, to give more responsibility to others.” These respondents assumed that direct assistance would present technical value over third-party intermediation in that they would have more autonomy. However, the Trade Hub has adapted to these concerns. WAGN and Afrique Verte ran cereals exchanges in 2017 in Bamako and Lome, suggesting that this transfer of responsibility is taking hold. Based on these comments, the results achieved and perception among partners and recipients may not be contingent on the administrative arrangement, but rather be a function of responsiveness and communication.

The results obtained through the Trade Hub compared to direct grants or partnerships might be better considered by their end goals and progress. The GSA, ACA, and BA all rely on USAID support for general financial stability (as discussed in the next section), which allows them to provide services to their members. The Trade Hub, in contrast, can supplement this through the provision of capacity building and expertise that can, ideally, be quickly leveraged in response to demands as they arise. While all USG respondents noted that more mechanisms would require additional management oversight, the nature of technical support currently provided directly through USAID, such as grants to partners, lays the groundwork for additional technical assistance by any number of third-party mechanisms. Trade Hub staff described key benefits to the Hub approach including its ability to communicate across the region, rather than at a country level; find experts in multiple value chains and at the industry and firm levels; and assist with small-scale capacity support on issues such as record keeping and formalization. This points to an issue of framing. The question of the Trade Hub approach compared to USAID direct assistance may be best viewed as how these approaches complement each other and what are their limits. As noted above, the broad scope of the Trade Hub adds value, but it has limits such as in finance, when implementation may take time to get going or results are contingent on complex factors and are slow to accrue.

Oversight, reporting requirements, and a sometimes opaque bureaucracy can be cumbersome, so it is unsurprising that 18 local partner interviewees expressed a strong desire for direct assistance. However, this assumes that direct assistance would not come with these or other challenges, so such perceptions should not be taken as a path forward. The Trade Hub has achieved key results in certain sectors and this perceived burden is based on a supposition that the key issue is the administrative arrangement, not the technical input. However, the evidence gathered in relation to EQ2 suggests that communication shortfalls and unclear expectations, as well as a broad implementation scope with limited capacity to



provide sufficient attention and follow-up to local partners, may have led to these critiques of the Trade Hub approach. In some cases – such as policy outreach, in which there have been limited results and bribery and road checkpoints continue to be problems – USAID’s support to local and regional organizations might be more effective than what the Trade Hub can provide.

Based on the conclusions for EQ1 about WATIH’s efforts to address standards and MIS, the EQ2 conclusions around the Trade Hub’s strong reputation and ability to strengthen certain partners’ capacity, and the clear divide between U.S. government and local partner interviewees, the evaluation team concludes that the technical reach of a Trade Hub approach can help build on and supplement direct assistance from USAID in certain areas. As one interviewee put it, the issue may not be Trade Hub versus direct assistance, but rather how the Trade Hub implements its assistance. The comparative advantage of the Trade Hub can be seen in the areas in which success was quick to arrive and has been sustained: grades and standards, creating market networking opportunities, and MIS capacity building. Sectors such as finance and policy outreach – in which there are many macro-level challenges as well as the need for local organizational partners such as the BA – have proved challenging to the Trade Hub. In these cases, USAID’s technical input may be more advantageous.

The data suggest that third-party implementation, in theory and to some extent in practice, can provide the cross-cutting support needed to improve certain outcomes. However, as discussed in the recommendations, the data do not suggest that the Trade Hub approach, as currently implemented, is necessarily the best alternative to direct USAID funding of local groups.

#### Summary of EQ 2 Conclusions

- WATH, and USAID generally, have a strong reputation in West Africa.
- WATH has built strong partnerships and developed local capacity through training and technical assistance, particularly in the apparel and mango sectors and AGOA-related activities.
- The Trade Hub approach and direct assistance each have a comparative advantage. Direct USAID assistance or technical guidance may be best suited for the areas in which the Trade Hub has struggled or is slow to achieve results.

### **EQ3: To what extent have selected partners supported through the USAID trade portfolio, including the ACA, GSA, and Borderless Alliance, become effective and sustainable regional institutions in terms of their organizational objectives?**

In conversations with USAID and Trade Hub partners, and as noted under EQ2, the evaluation found that supported organizations are largely reliant on continued technical and material support. The GSA, ACA, and BA represent a spectrum of needs, sustainability, and progress. The effectiveness of these partners is more difficult to ascertain, as respondents largely reported positive outcomes from their activities and the data that the evaluation collected are not robust enough to determine whether sectoral achievements can be tied to these groups and their work.

The Trade Hub’s mid-term Organizational Capacity Assessments (OCA) of five partner organizations in 2014 and 2016 show that organizational capacity scores have increased by an average of 56 percent in the last two years, and these organizations are generally becoming more effective at offering services to members. Progress, however, has been slow; with the exception of WAGN, which started with an extremely low sustainability score, in general the partners have only marginally improved since 2014.

**TABLE 6: OCA SUSTAINABILITY SCORES, 2014 AND 2016**

Partner	OCA Category	Score on a 6-Point Scale		% Change
		May 2014	July 2016	
ACA	Sustainability	4	4.3	6%
BA	Sustainability	3	4.0	33%
COFENABVI	Sustainability	3	2.8	-8%
RESIMAO	Sustainability	3	3.8	25%
WAGN	Sustainability	1	3.8	275%

These organizations' reliance on donor funding remains a challenge for sustainability. The ACA, BA, and GSA are all 70 to 80 percent reliant on donor and grant funding, which presents a stark contrast to the WATIH-sponsored OCA data presented above. The GSA, which is perhaps in the strongest position of the partners, is growing, but has had to use USAID grants to fund initiatives and maintain outreach. The OCA scores present a picture that is somewhat contradicted by the audited financial statements. If USAID and WATIH were to stop their support of these organizations, they would clearly struggle or be unable to function.

### Global Shea Alliance

The evaluation concludes that the GSA is on its way to sustainability and has become increasingly effective for its members. The alliance has grown its membership year over year since its inception in 2011, but still requires donor support to fund its operations. Like all partners selected for this evaluation, the GSA uses donor funding for salaries, consultants, travel, and related expenses. USAID's share of GSA's total expenses increased from 2014 to 2016, from about 60 percent in 2014 to around 77 percent in 2016 (the latest year for which there are financial audits). However, the share of non-donor funding for expenses increased from around 11 percent in 2015 to almost 15 percent in 2016; over this same period the amount of non-donor funded expenses increased by 31 percent. This points to GSA's goals to increase its non-donor sources of income and expenditure. The GSA is increasingly moving toward public-private partnerships and leveraging donor funding with private sector funding to effectively implement its activities. This worked well in 2015, when the GSA – with the support of WATIH – launched a partnership to provide 20 warehouses and trainings for women's groups, which reached over 50,000 women beneficiaries. Indeed, given the large role of women in the shea sector, GSA's progress represents a small step toward progress for many women.<sup>40</sup> Interviews suggest that USAID has played a key role in GSA's organizational objectives and helped with the development of market linkages, which as GSA members report, led to an increase in sales volumes of more than 40 percent. The GSA increased its non-grant income by 25 percent from 2015 to 2016 and reduced its total expenditures over the same period. The Alliance's general fund spending, i.e., spending not aligned with a donor project such as WATIH, also increased from 2015 to 2016 by 30 percent. GSA's total current assets, a good measure of an organization's ability to fund operations, in 2016 almost increased by a factor of four. These facts show the beginnings of progress toward more operational stability.

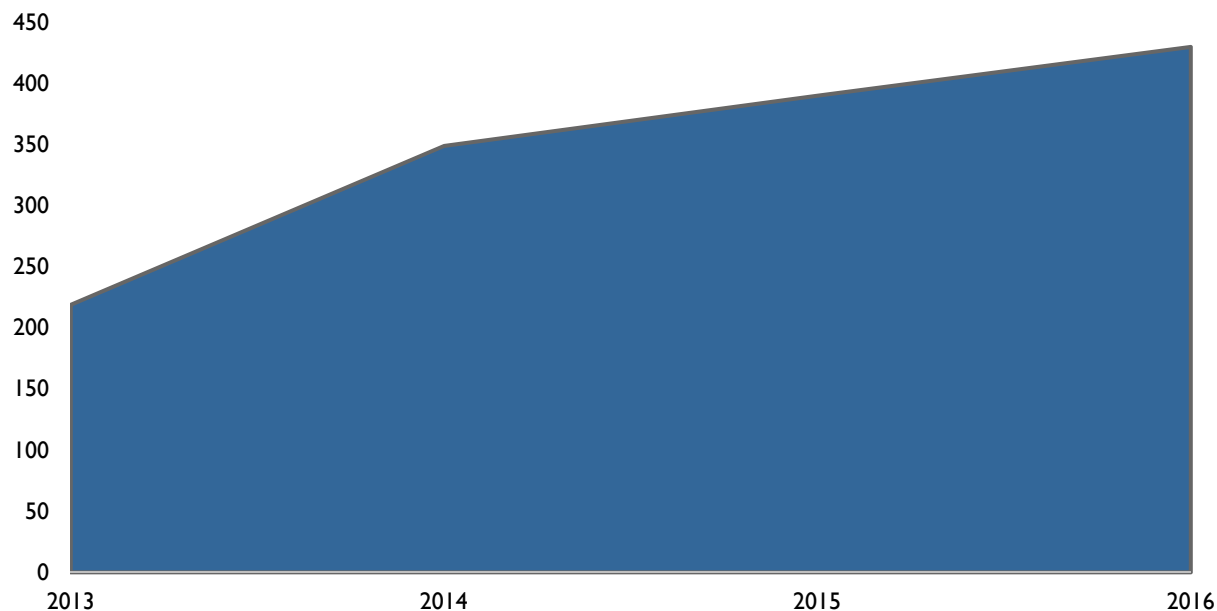
The GSA has grown its membership year over year, according to organization documentation. Although the rate of new membership has slowed from 130 new members in 2013 to 44 new members in 2016, the overall level of membership has increased. As shown in Figure 14, the GSA now has 430 members in over 30 countries.<sup>41</sup> From 2015 to 2016, income from membership dues increased by 61 percent per GSA's audited financial reports. In addition, the share of total income from membership dues went from around 7 percent in 2015 to 10 percent in 2016. This is a promising trend given that not only is

<sup>40</sup> By their own account, there were 130,000 beneficiaries of GSA partner activities. See GSA Annual Report 2016, p. 5.

<sup>41</sup> See GSA Annual Reports 2013 through 2016.

membership growing, but the GSA is also managing its finances around this growing membership base toward less donor reliance.

**FIGURE 14: TOTAL GSA MEMBERSHIP: 2013-2016**



GSA interviewees suggested that USAID funding was critical in shaping its activities early on, but the alliance has moved toward more autonomy and less reliance on foreign assistance as it has grown. Although market linkages supported by USAID through partnerships in the shea sector may be inadequate as producers were reported as being “at the mercy of the traders who dictate the price,” GSA interviewees reported growth and improved conditions. According to the Sustainable Shea Initiative Program Director, average income per ton for women members went from U.S.\$150 per ton to U.S.\$216 per ton. Members and leadership reported operational sustainability in regards to funding and activities; the alliance has a broad reach among western shea purchasing firms, such as Burt’s Bees. The GSA has seen its membership grow and members who previously worked with the Trade Hub or USAID reported receiving technical and logistics support directly from the GSA now. Interviewees in the shea sector had differing opinions on how far the GSA was from full sustainability without donor support, ranging from one to five years. One interviewee from the shea sector in Benin summarized GSA’s growth:

*GSA has been able to mobilize diverse partners attracted by the opportunity to have impact providing opportunities to women producers. Examples are L’Oréal, AAK, Jergens who are all members of GSA and sponsor various activities to support members and build their capacity to be more productive.[...] GSA has also recently set up offices in Europe and the US to do more fundraising.*

Interviewees from the private sector also noted the value and growth of the GSA, and saw it as a way to bridge the private and public sectors. As one interviewee noted, “There is often a disconnect between the private sector and USAID because people are often not in the same room; GSA is good at connecting these two, as well as everyone along the supply chain, to drive sustainability.” All shea-related interviewees noted USAID’s support of the GSA and the relationship between the two as an asset. Many private sector respondents also saw the GSA as a way to connect with USAID and learn more about its work.

## African Cashew Alliance

The ACA has had limited effectiveness as its activities have changed over time. While it has had some successes for members through the hosting of conferences, support for research on local cashews, and the development of business plans for members, it still relies heavily on donor support. There are some positive signs. From 2014 to 2015, the ACA increased its total revenue from dues by 61 percent. Unrestricted revenue from private (i.e., non-donor) sources increased by about 40 percent.<sup>42</sup> However, the share of dues as a percentage of revenue only increased by 10 basis points, from 3.4 to 3.5 percent, while the share of private (i.e., non-dues) income fell over this period, from 30 percent to 28 percent. One area in which the private share of income fell was in personnel and consulting expenses. From 2014 to 2015, private (i.e. non-donor funded) personnel expenses fell by almost 8 percent. Private expenses for consultants increased by almost 12 percent, but the overall share of both private personnel expenses and private spending on consultants was higher in 2014 than in 2015. In 2014 the ACA's personnel expenses were 19.4 percent private, compared to almost 12 percent in 2015. However, this is partly a function of increased expenses (as well as revenue) and sources of expenditure and income. In other words, the overall number of functional expense sources increased in 2015, so even if ACA had maintained its 2014 spending levels, the rate for private personnel expenses would have fallen. As one interviewee reported, "we still need the support of the Trade Hub to get to a phase of sustainability."

The evaluation team's interviews found that the ACA's reliance on donor funding is only part of the story. The ACA has undergone several transitions and appears to be an organization in search of a mission. As one cashew sector interviewee explained, "ACA has gone through many phases. It started as a supranational association working a lot on producer training and standards. Then it moved through a phase in which it was doing a lot of project implementation. This distracted them a bit from their core business." Respondents from the ACA, the cashew sector, and WATIH noted that the ACA now wants to focus on local value addition, i.e., processing cashews locally rather than in Asia. One interviewee noted that, "ACA has had a rocky road. They are struggling. They function as a project implementer more so than as an association" and this creates problems for focusing on priorities. The ACA has also had management challenges as it has tried to adapt to "changing markets, changing national federation goals, and organizational problems," one interviewee explained. The alliance has acted as both a regional association that represents producer groups and cashew actors, as well as a project implementer for donors; each of these endeavors require different management approaches and skills, which the ACA has struggled to balance, according to respondents.

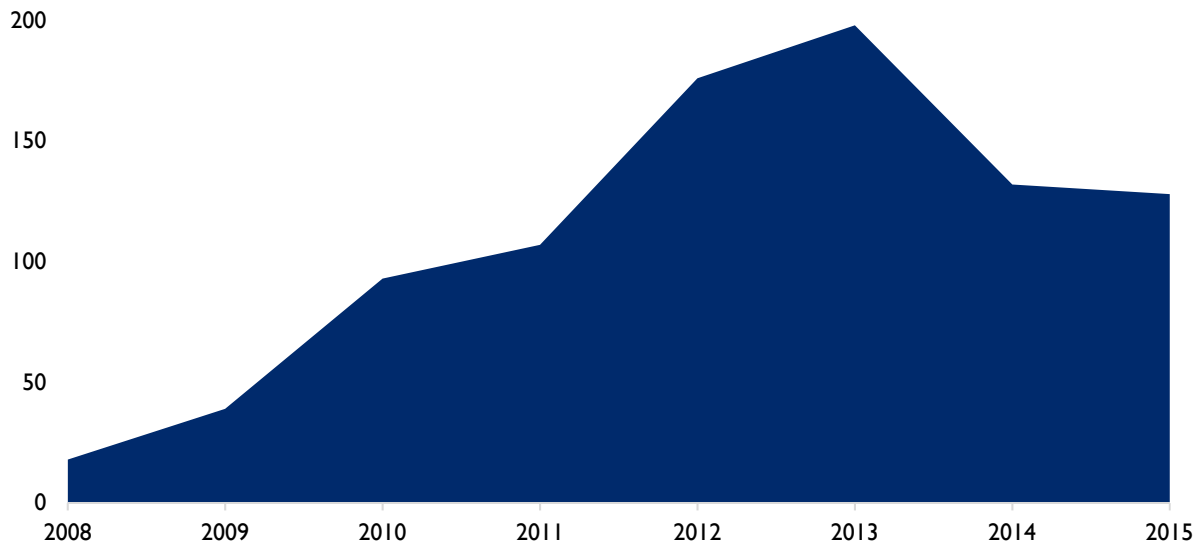
Membership in the ACA reflects some of this managerial and administrative imbalance. As shown in Figure 14, ACA membership peaked in 2013 at almost 200 members and declined by 35 percent through 2015 to 128 members.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> According to the 2014 audited financials for the ACA, membership dues fell from 2013 to 2014, but overall total revenue was higher in 2013 and the percentage of dues to total revenue was 4.5 percent.

<sup>43</sup> See ACA Annual Report 2015.

**FIGURE 15: ACA MEMBERSHIP 2008-2015**



The ACA currently is the beneficiary of a program by the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), ComCashew. However, ComCashew also performs many of the functions that interviewees and documents from the ACA suggest that the alliance wants to represent, such as promoting local processing. As one interviewee noted in regards to the ACA, “There are contradictions in its existence. They want to do processing now, but had been focused on producing only. There are competing interests on the board.” Focus group participants from the cashew sector also noted the overlap between the ACA and ComCashew, with one saying, “We see a competition between ACA and ComCashew. Everybody wants a brother in us. But they have also come together as partners to provide support.”

KII and FGD respondents noted contractions in the cashew market and difficulties in production and processing. Participants in the cashew sector FGD mentioned processing 11 times, and frequently discussed loans and banking. Cashew sector actors see the ACA as critical to addressing these priorities; as one respondent put it, “Scaling down [due to financial pressure] is a big challenge in our industry. We have to scale up. Our partnership with ACA has brought light in trying to address it.”

The evaluation’s findings suggest that the ACA is still grappling with organizational changes, a volatile market, and an unfocused mission and role. GIZ has provided funding for key staff, the ACA’s annual conference, and financial and organizational management training and capacity building since 2014. Over this time, however, interviewees across all respondent categories noted a pattern of instability. The ACA has already positioned itself as a sector representative across the continent, and sector actors clearly desire assistance coupled with expertise to address production needs and processing goals. Just under half of its revenue and spending is from USAID sources for 2015.<sup>44</sup> However, it is not clear that USAID funding has shaped the ACA’s development into a sustainable organization that can fulfill its role as a regional leader.

### **Borderless Alliance**

The BA is effectively promoting information, reaching out to regional bodies such as ECOWAS, and providing resources to BICs. Its sustainability is questionable, however, as it has struggled to raise funds outside of donor support. BA covers less than 1 percent of technical and office personnel costs (i.e.,

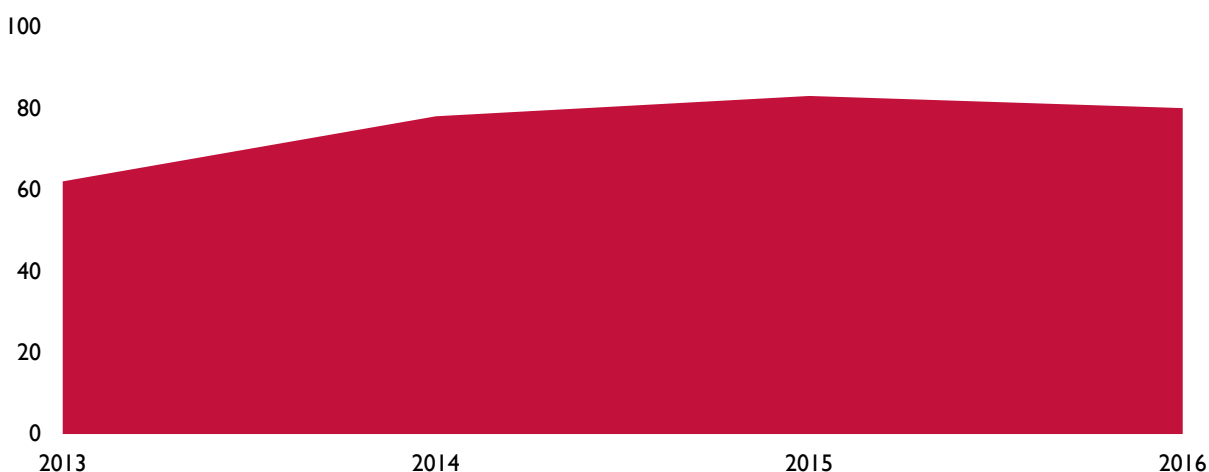
<sup>44</sup> See ACA Annual Report 2015, p. 16.

salaries), with this funding coming almost entirely from grants. Donor funding covered almost 87 percent of the BA's total expenses for 2015 (the latest year for which audited financials were available), with 99.7 percent of office costs, (e.g., rent, utilities, supplies) covered through grants.<sup>45</sup>

The evaluation team saw BA stickers at BIC visits, ECOWAS interviewees mentioned the alliance, and truckers interviewed along the Aflao and Dakola borders were familiar with its work. However, as one respondent noted, the Alliance is “90 percent funded by USAID” and has received “fixed grants and cost reimbursement grants” from the Agency to function. Around 97 percent of the BA's consultancy fees are paid through grantor funding, while all its expenditures on communications and conference materials are funded by donors. Without USAID support, it is not clear how the BA could function since its spending (except lodging, conference package fees, certain media fees, and insurance), is largely covered through outside support. While the BA has also received support from the African Development Bank and ECOWAS, 86 percent of its spending was from donors. This reliance on donor funds highlights another issue raised in interviews.

Membership has remained relatively stable at the BA, but it has not seen the increases that the other partners have experienced. As shown in Figure 16, from 2013 to 2016, the BA went from 62 to 80 member organizations.<sup>46</sup>

**FIGURE 16: BORDERLESS ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP 2013-2016**



BA respondents expressed concern about the “public goods” problem: the alliance’s activities benefit the public and thus there is no real incentive for any single private actor to pay for membership when everyone benefits from it. As one BA interviewee, who described major successes in removing certificates of origin and addressing the lack of parking lots at the border and inadequate staffing of customs officials, explained:

*Financing is our main institutional challenge. The BA is not a value chain. We produce public goods, which, unfortunately, very few people are willing to pay for. Some of our members do not understand why they should pay membership dues if the results that we obtain are sometimes beneficial to their competitors.*

<sup>45</sup> Unlike the other audited financials referenced in this report, the BA's reporting does not break down spending by donor source.

<sup>46</sup> See Borderless Alliance 2014 Annual Report, p. 17; BA 2015 Annual Report, p. 1; BA 2016 Annual Report, p. 6.

The BA has tried to address this challenge through various fora, technical assistance, and meetings. For example, at its National Committees Conference in 2015, BA worked with its national committees to discuss growing its membership base and explore ways to become more sustainable. The BA also held a two-day forum in Accra in 2015 to address its sustainability. Conclusions from this forum included expanding the membership base, strengthening national committees, and expanding services to non-members to increase payments.<sup>47</sup> While these are all worthwhile attempts, it is not clear from documentation or interviews that these approaches adequately address the non-excludability of the benefits it provides. However, increasing the membership base and improving local support of national committees could increase funding streams.

**FIGURE 17: BORDERLESS ALLIANCE POSTER AT THE AFLAO BIC**



FGD participants and interviewees from the BA noted intransigent border crossing challenges, including corruption, harassment, and “goro boys.” As one participant said, “Issues at the borders are addressed, but they come back.”

Those in the transport sector who are aware of the alliance’s activities highly value BA’s work. The BA’s attempts to address harassment and corruption, its work on certificates of origin, and the resources it provides at the border (e.g., printed material, call-in numbers) are highly valued. However, the ongoing viability of BA activities is unclear given that it has struggled financially and many of the challenges it has attempted to address are part of larger issues related to governance (e.g., inadequate customs officials, lack of oversight, limited application of ETLs) and limited financial resources. The BA’s membership structure does not appear to provide adequate buy-in to support the scale of its activities. There was no evidence from the evaluation’s interviews and documents reviewed that the BA’s current funding approach will find a sustainable solution to the non-excludability of its activities (i.e., removal of certificates of origin or support at BICs). Although the BA appears to be improving in its reach and has developed a strong reputation regionally, this appears to be a key weakness.

With the BA and WATIH both based in Accra, it is difficult to have regular contact and dialogue with ECOWAS. However, the BA’s public goods problem presents a potential opportunity for USAID to engage new partners at the BICs, in ECOWAS, and among other transportation and transit policy organizations to develop areas of collaboration. There is demand for further collaboration between countries that have a common border and a common objective that USAID could exploit.

### **Future Opportunities**

Many respondents from regional organizations, notably in the grain sector as well as in apparel, noted that they would like to see increased USAID support. Three apparel sector respondents specifically

<sup>47</sup> See Borderless Alliance Annual Report 2015, pp. 2-6.

noted that their local governments have done little to support the sector. As one said, “There isn’t much support [for apparel] from anyone else including local government or other development agencies. This is hugely valuable because the sector supports and employs women, and low-income and uneducated women.” In addition to the fact that apparel often provides opportunities for women, it would also allow local companies to further utilize AGOA. USAID could fill the gap left by local disinterest in this sector and develop stronger local and regional partnerships with apparel manufacturers and exporters.

Groups such as WAGN are growing rapidly and hope to extend their reach. Given that USAID funds many agricultural, capacity building, and training activities that intersect with cereals and grains, strengthening partnerships in these sectors would help producers and local actors tap into markets through more effective regional organizations.

### Summary of EQ 3 Conclusions

- The GSA is on a path to sustainability and appears to be increasing its reach and effectiveness. USAID support has been integral to its growth and effectiveness.
- The ACA has faced several management and funding constraints in the recent past, and it is struggling to effectively represent the cashew sector. It is not clear that USAID’s support has made the ACA more effective and the organization faces existential challenges despite new management goals.
- The BA faces a public goods problem and its funding model is unsustainable in the absence of donor support. USAID’s support has helped make this organization effective and positioned it as a regional actor addressing transportation policy.
- The apparel sector presents a good opportunity for future USAID partnerships.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion noted in the previous section, the evaluation provides recommendations to USAID and the Trade Hub in three areas: the sub-regional approach, communication, and partner support.

### Scope and Scale of Activities

- **USAID/WA and WATIH should amend the sectoral reach of the Trade Hub.**

The value of a third-party implementation approach compared to direct assistance mechanisms is clear: it allows the cross-cutting aspects of creating an enabling environment to exist in one place. However, certain aspects of the Trade Hub involve complex macroeconomic and political factors that require deep technical guidance and capacity. Rolling out finance support and policy engagement to separate mechanisms would allow the Trade Hub, or a Hub-like mechanism, to focus on sectors that can be more easily managed under one roof, while allowing regional finance and policy activities to exploit the comparative advantage that comes from specialization.

The Trade Hub has been relatively successful in promoting standards, improving information access, and building networks between buyers and sellers. Its work in finance was slow to develop, however, particularly when compared to other finance-focused USAID activities such as the Financing Ghanaian



Agriculture Project (FinGAP).<sup>48</sup> To properly address finance or policy reform in multiple countries, having three specialists is insufficient. Comparisons to single-country activities, like FinGAP, omit the complexity of the Trade Hub's scope, but also highlight how a mechanism dedicated to finance can quickly achieve targets in that area. Similarly, lobbying for border reform, implementation of ETLs, and other important regional issues requires research, expertise, and – perhaps most importantly – time to dedicate for travel, meetings, building relationships, and working within multiple political contexts.

In the absence of rolling out finance to its own regional mechanism from the current Trade Hub, **USAID/WA should continue to support programs that build on and enhance linkages to banks** (e.g., developing training programs and how-to materials that explain to beneficiaries how formalized banking and credit function would be helpful to many producers across sectors). This could help promote standards on the demand side as well, by helping banks and producers work together to ensure people understand what is needed to obtain access to finance.

## Communication

WATIH is well known and well perceived generally, but even within the U.S. government some are unfamiliar or uncertain about what the Trade Hub does or how it aligns with the rest of USAID/WA's trade portfolio. The Trade Hub needs to improve communication on two fronts: stakeholder outreach and follow-up, and communication with regional and local governments and organizations. Wider dissemination of WATIH documentation and research could also help broaden the understanding of what the Trade Hub has done and how it could assist stakeholders in the region.

### Stakeholder Outreach and Follow-up

- **WATIH should employ follow-up surveys with stakeholders at regular intervals (e.g., every two months), to better understand how they are using the Trade Hub and its partners' support.**

Improved outreach will also help better align expectations with what the Trade Hub can provide. Formal agreements with partners, such as WAGN, on an activity basis (e.g., ahead of shared organizing of events) will help keep both sides accountable and make expectations clear. Creative approaches to stakeholder and beneficiary follow-up, such as the use of WhatsApp groups, could help avoid survey fatigue while allowing the Trade Hub to easily understand partner progress and challenges as they occur.

- **The Trade Hub should adjust its approach to buyer-seller intermediation events to include systematic and regular follow-up in multiple phases, to see how to best target and connect buyers and sellers.**
- **In addition, WATIH should assess the management capacity of firms to meet buyer demands prior to investing in travel, technical assistance, and other financial support as part of improving market linkages.**

### Communication with Regional and Local Governments and Organizations

- **The Trade Hub should increase its outreach to UEMOA, as well as other Francophone organizations and ECOWAS.**

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<sup>48</sup> FinGAP hit 434 percent of its target for value of agricultural and rural loans in Year 2 of implementation, for a total of value of \$34,701,596.00, a majority of which went to small and medium enterprises. See FinGAP Year 2 Annual Report, p. 5.

- **To the extent possible, WATIH should be in regular contact with local government stakeholders beyond just the Chambers of Commerce, which will foster a better understanding of what the Trade Hub and USAID is doing.**
- **The Trade Hub should continue to enhance its outreach activities to the U.S. private sector, with a focus on those already doing business in the region and smaller buyers looking to gain access to the region.** Enhanced communication will also help promote the Trade Hub's activities and gain better access to the opportunities that USAID is creating. Targeting outreach to small buyers that regional firms can accommodate (i.e. whose orders will not far exceed the capacity of local firms) should continue and be strengthened.<sup>49</sup>

## Partner Support

Many USAID and WATIH activities were well-received, but have resulted in limited sustainable change. There are several areas where improved targeting of participants and partners, as well tailored support, would help improve outcomes.

### Improved Management and Organizational Support

Many of the partners supported by the Trade Hub and USAID are reliant on donor funding, with a small portion of income from membership fees. Although the GSA appears to be progressing toward sustainability, it remains dependent on donors. The ACA and BA are highly dependent on operational support funded by donors. If USAID were to step away from these organizations tomorrow, it is not clear that they would be able to continue.

- **The BA, with input from USAID/WA, should identify ways to structure non-donor funding to address the public goods nature of the BA's outreach. Funding through non-donor institutional members may be one approach (e.g., local trucker unions or an ECOWAS office), but the BA and USAID/WA should work together to assess the best way to address this issue.<sup>50</sup>**

### Increase Training for ATRC Staff and Improve Promotion of BICs

ATRC staff are enthusiastic and dedicated to their jobs in AGOA promotion. However, they rely heavily on WATIH for information, which limits their effectiveness as they cannot readily meet requests in-house. The BICs, in contrast, face a situation of benign neglect.

- **If USAID/WA wants to continue its support of the ATRCs, WATIH should increase training and support for the Centers, through materials and resources for learning and outreach, to ensure staff have adequate information and can answer questions without relying on USAID or its activities.**
  - **USAID should consider assessing the impact of the ATRCs, since it is not clear that the Centers could stand on their own given the lack of expertise and dependence on staff with competing responsibilities.**
- **If USAID/WA wants to continue its support of the BICs, it should work with local and national governments to ensure that the Centers are promoted among customs agencies, that officials are aware of their existence, and that both sides of a**

<sup>49</sup> After data collection for this evaluation was completed, the Trade Hub reported that the April 2017 Mango Symposium in Cote d'Ivoire targeted small U.S. buyers with some success, which could be a model for future activities.

<sup>50</sup> WATIH reported after the initial draft of this report, it held trainings in 2017 with the BA to address its challenges; however, USAID should continue to seek ways to work with BA and the rest of the partners to decrease their donor reliance.

**border are adequately served.** This is work that may be best facilitated through the BA, but specific guidance appears necessary given the current state of the BICs.

- The BICs are underutilized and supply information where demand is uncertain. **If USAID/WA does not want to continue supporting the BICs, it should focus instead on customs agencies and policies, border guards, and checkpoints and policing standards.** A policy-oriented activity could work with governments to address these issues at the local level and regionally.

### Phased Delivery of Market and Enterprise-Led Activities

- **USAID/WA should ensure its programs have strong beneficiary/partner ownership and are phased to start with market-led identification of farming systems and integrated supply chains that will be supported to achieve the program’s objectives.** Small-scale farmers, local farmer organizations, and other local entrepreneurs – including traders and processors – benefit from advisory services with a business orientation. By helping these groups access markets, financial and input supply services, and knowledge oriented to their value chains, local agribusiness development services would gain capacity to support innovation and entrepreneurship. **The capacity to provide local agribusiness development services must be developed at the association or producer group level and at the institutional level to be sustainable.** There is need for USAID to embed sustainable business models. A lot more work is needed to develop the business skills of the beneficiaries and **there should be a strong business case for ensuring commercial viability beyond the support from USAID.** By more effectively empowering associations of farmer groups or producers, the regional program could focus on market development and would not need to get down to the farmer level, which farmer groups or associations would reach.
- **WATIH and USAID/WA should better target and design training of trainers programs to build sustainable capacity for producers working through the regional partners. The difference in approach would be that the Trade Hub would facilitate capacity development of the selected partners that would enable them to become self-sustaining beyond USAID support. This should include knowledge on savings and credit, trade finance, export marketing, warehousing, and quality control. Further, the training of trainers should be part of a larger program that also guarantees and incentivizes follow-on trainings, to keep beneficiaries engaged and exposed to best practices.** Exposure and incentives can include field visits (e.g., to successful agribusiness groups and warehouses) or invitations to attend trainings with regional and U.S. experts.<sup>51</sup>
- **WATIH should establish a multidisciplinary and multistakeholder public-private partnership approach, similar to what is being implemented by GIZ under ComCashew or the GSA on its cooperative warehouse scheme.** This will enable WATIH to leverage its resources with those of other donors and the private sector. Most donors, including USAID, focus on the smallholder farmer level (e.g., cooperatives, women’s groups). However, there is need for partnerships that link these farmers with strong commercial organizations and link the private sector with smallholder farmers to ensure sustainability beyond donor support. This approach was exemplified by the support to the GSA through a grant for the warehousing scheme that attracted more private sector funding and is now a sustainable program linking women farmers to warehousing and opportunities for consolidation of products for export. Warehouse receipt systems and grain aggregation appear to have a wide

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<sup>51</sup>The Trade Hub reported to the evaluation team that in 2017, it shifted some of its approach to cascade trainings that follow this recommendation, with other organizations serving as the lead trainers and organizers of training events, as well as developing materials with experts. This may be a model for USAID moving forward, as well.

reach, from smallholder farmers to emerging commercial farmers; continuing to strengthen these systems could affect the whole value chain, including transporters, processors, and handlers. Good examples of regional platforms for market information and market linkages that can be replicated in West Africa, in line with models established in East Africa, include the East Africa Grain Council Grain Trade Summit, the Regional Agricultural Trade Information Network, and the G-Soko Trading Platform.

## **ANNEX A: EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK**

This Statement of Work is for a mid-term performance evaluation (PE) commissioned by the West Africa Mission of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID/WA), in collaboration with the Office of Trade and Regulatory Reform in USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (USAID/E3/TRR). The evaluation will examine the West Africa Trade and Investment Hub and the African Partners Network (WATH), as well as additional trade-related partnership activities that fall under the trade portfolio supported by USAID/WA.

### **I. Project Background**

West Africa's trade is characterized by a reliance on imported staple foods, a low degree of intra-regional trade, and reliance on extractive rather than on value-added exports. Overcoming the challenges of poverty and malnutrition in West Africa will require addressing stagnant incomes and low agricultural productivity. These challenges are integrally linked to weaknesses in the business enabling environment and private sector capacity that produces a pattern of limited trade and investment. Essentially, farmers and firms produce and trade in primarily localized markets, and do not receive the benefits of transformative investment that accompanies access to international markets. This is due to a number of internal and external constraints, such as inefficient transportation, trade barriers at borders, lack of access to low cost finance, and the lack of competitiveness of West African farmers and firms' products in the international marketplace.

#### **USAID/WA Trade Portfolio**

The Mission-wide goal of USAID/WA is the West African-led advancement of social and economic well-being. This goal is supported by several development objectives, including "broad-based economic growth and resilience advanced through West African partners." This goal articulates the commitment of USAID/WA to support African-led, regional development and underscores the Mission's commitment to support the development of local capacity with the direct aim of supporting regional organizations to better deliver on their respective mandates.

USAID/WA's trade portfolio aims to address critical constraints to trade competitiveness, demonstrate the commercial viability of West African farmers and firms, and catalyze greater private sector investment. By linking West African farmers and firms to regional processors and international buyers, the portfolio seeks to facilitate a better understanding of market requirements. Activities under the portfolio provide technical assistance to help farmers and firms – through private sector associations – to meet market requirements of quality and volume and succeed in the international market place. It is expected that the livelihoods of millions of West Africans will be directly affected by increased sales from targeted staple foods, agricultural inputs, and value added sectors.

#### **West Africa Trade and Investment Hub and African Partners Network**

WATH is managed through a \$48.6 million contract (#AID-624-C-13-00002-00) with Abt Associates. The project has a three-year base period (March 2014 – February 2017) with two option years, the first of which has been exercised. Cory O'Hara is the USAID/WA Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) for this activity. The implementation office is in Accra, Ghana, with satellite offices in Dakar, Senegal; Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire; and Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

The components of WATH include improving access to finance, staple food supply chain strengthening, addressing non-tariff trade/transport barriers, African Growth Opportunities Act (AGOA) facilitation, grants management, and capacity development for regional organizations. The project provides these

activities through partnerships with local associations, regional alliances government actors, and private firms.

The African Partners Network includes the Global Shea Alliance (GSA), Africa Cashew Alliance (ACA), and the Borderless Alliance, which were set up under the previous Trade Hub contract that ended in 2013. In June 2016, USAID/WA signed a new five-year Global Development Alliance (GDA) with GSA. USAID supports ACA directly, through a two-year GDA that was modified and extended to end in March 2018. The Borderless Alliance has also received funding via implementation letters signed with Permanent Interstate Committee for drought control in the Sahel (CILSS).

## 2. Development Hypothesis

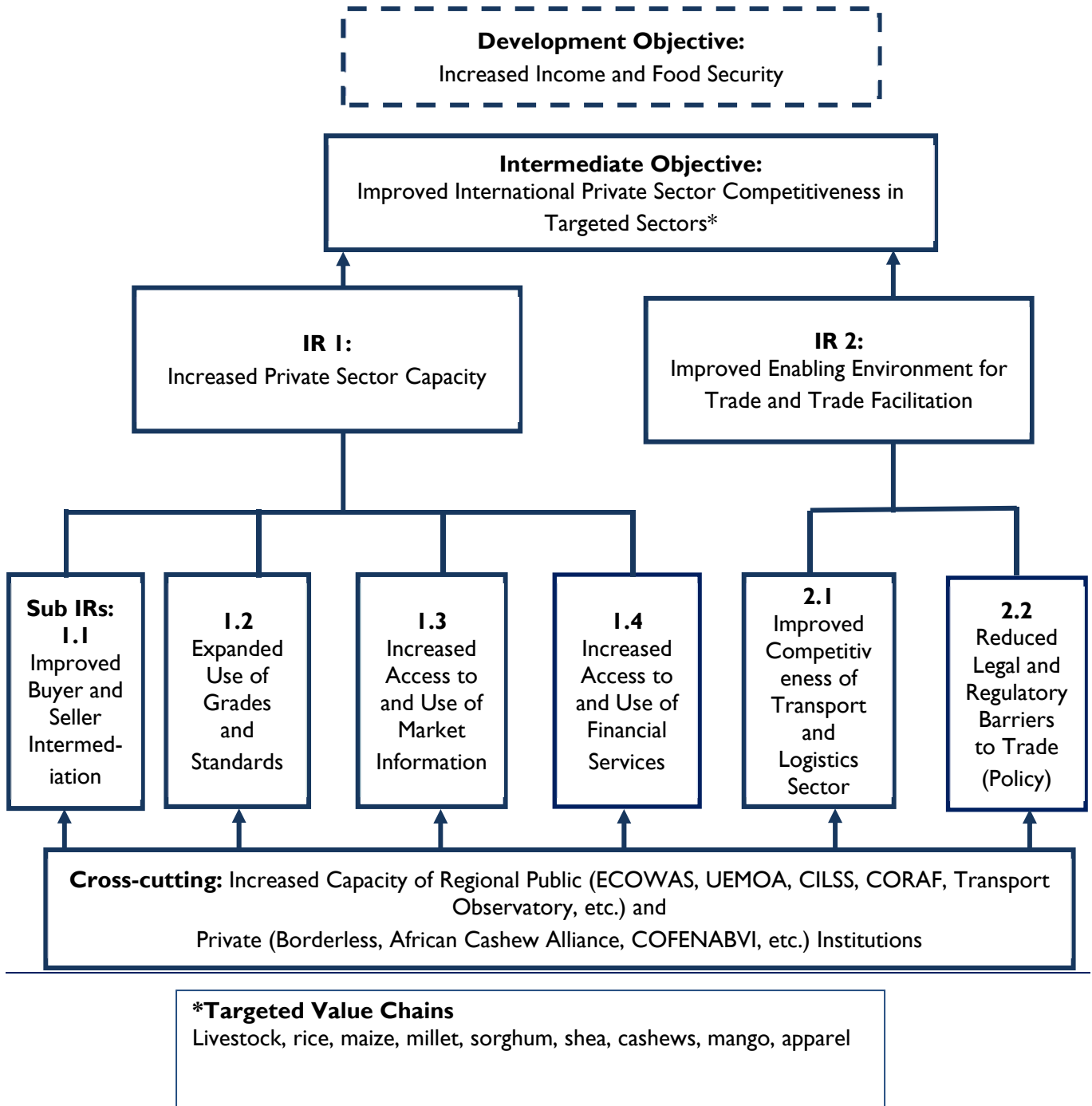
USAID believes that if the demonstration of successful commercial ventures is coupled with the greater unrealized potential of an integrated market offering an increasingly conducive business-enabling environment, then this will catalyze increased private sector investment in West Africa. Private sector associations developed with USAID support through the African Private Sector Alliances will encourage this investment, and ultimately, attract transformative investment from within the region and from abroad. Removing trade barriers and regional fragmentation as well as reducing costs will create the necessary incentives to unleash this crucial investment.

Activities under the USAID/WA trade portfolio contribute to the Mission's development objective by achieving two intermediate results:

- 1) Improving the capacity of West Africa's farmers and firms in targeted regional and global value chains (maize, rice, sorghum, millet, livestock, apparel, mango, cashew and shea)
- 2) Improving the business-enabling environment by addressing transport constraints and trade barriers affecting the efficiency of the region's corridors and borders.

Figure I illustrates the relationship between activities, results, and objectives, and serves as the basic WATH results framework.

**FIGURE I: WATH RESULTS FRAMEWORK**



### 3. Existing Performance Information Sources

USAID/WA has shared the following documents with the evaluation team in support of the desk review.

1. West Africa Trade and Investment Hub Contract, including all modifications
2. West Africa Trade and Investment Hub monitoring and evaluation plan and indicator table including any data quality assessments completed
3. West Africa Trade and Investment Hub annual work plans
4. USAID West Africa FtF strategy
5. USAID West Africa Regional Development Cooperation Strategy
6. Miscellaneous reports prepared by the West Africa Trade Hub
7. Partner Selection and Assessment Report
8. Cashew Value Chain Assessment Report
9. Sesame Value Chain Assessment Report
10. Honey Value Chain Assessment Report
11. Apparel Value Chain Assessment Report
12. Rice Value Chain Assessment Report
13. Millet and sorghum Value Chain Assessment Report
14. Sorghum Value Chain Assessment Report
15. Livestock Value Chain Assessment Report
16. Mango Value Chain Assessment Report
17. Shea Value Chain Assessment Report
18. Maize Value Chain Assessment Report
19. Value Chain Strategy document
20. Market Information Systems Supply and Demand Analysis
21. Transport and Trade Enabling Environment Assessment
22. West Africa Trade Hub Annual Report (October 14 – September 15)
23. Borderless Alliance Fixed Obligating Grant
24. Global Shea Alliance FOG
25. Global Shea Alliance GDA

The following additional documents have not yet been provided to the evaluation team, but will be shared electronically via email as they become available:

- All future quarterly and annual WATH project management and progress reports
- Copies or detailed descriptions of the content of trade portfolio activities
- Available MEL updates, data, and reports

In addition to information provided by USAID and implementation partners, the evaluation team will need to access other types of secondary data, including macroeconomic and trade-related data from a variety of sources. This will likely involve accessing published government sources, or obtaining the information from implementing partner staff who are knowledgeable about existing data for specific sectors and target beneficiaries. These sources should be used to obtain existing information on any local trade agenda (planning, projects, budget, resources, etc.) and on trade regulations or other factors that could affect outcomes in the region.



## 4. Evaluation Purpose, Audience, and Intended Use

### Purpose

The purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to assess and document the extent to which WATH has achieved its objectives and to inform future decisions on trade programming in the Agency. The evaluation will also help USAID/WA learn if its support to selected private sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions that are meeting private sector demands for technical support and information, as well as successfully advocating for improved enabling environments of the supply chains they support.

The evaluation will fulfill the following objectives for USAID/WA:

- Document any successes, best practices, lessons learned, and challenges that WATH and direct partnership activities have encountered to date.
- Ascertain the extent to which the trade portfolio activities advanced effectiveness, sustainability, and empowerment of local West African partners.
- Propose any recommendations based on the findings that would help inform future USAID/WA trade programming as well as support learning by USAID's regional partners and other donors.

### Audience

The primary audiences for this evaluation will be USAID/WA, as well as the implementing partners and other local West African organizations involved in trade.

### Intended Use

This evaluation will be used by USAID/WA, as well as staff in USAID/E3/TRR and possibly other country Missions, to inform the design and implementation of future trade activities and make any necessary mid-course adjustments for activities under the USAID/WA trade portfolio. In addition, the evaluation will serve as a tool for USAID regional partners and other donors to learn about experience to date in supporting development of regional private sector associations and organizations.

## 5. Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will address the following questions:

1. To what extent has WATH achieved or is on track to achieve outcomes related to IR1 and IR2 and the respective sub-IRs in support of USAID's intended objectives?
2. What are the benefits and trade-offs of having WATH as a discrete mechanism for capacity building, value-chain support, and trade facilitation?
3. To what extent have selected partners supported through the USAID trade portfolio, including the ACA, GSA, and Borderless Alliance, become effective and sustainable regional institutions in terms of their organizational objectives?

The evaluation team will also consider the following additional lines of inquiry in relation to the three evaluation questions above:

- 1.1 What are the areas in which WATH could focus interventions to better achieve outcomes?
- 2.1 What is the reputation and "brand" of the Trade Hub among the USG and Embassies in the region, as well as regional partner organizations (ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS) and with key private sector associations and counterparts?

2.2 In what ways has WATH built partnerships and developed local capacity to increase the effectiveness of local and regional public and private organizations?

2.3 How do the trade-offs and benefits of WATH compare to direct assistance mechanisms?

3.1 How financially and operationally viable and sustainable are the selected partners supported through the USAID/WA trade portfolio?

3.2 How has USAID funding shaped selected partners' development and activities?

3.3 What opportunities are there to engage new partners in the portfolio to better achieve project objectives?

## 6. Gender Considerations

In line with USAID's Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy and Automated Directives System 203.3.1.5, the evaluation will consider gender-specific and differential effects of WATH and other activities under the trade portfolio. For example, the evaluation team may investigate how WATH's work with GSA has affected incomes, decision-making power, and market activity for men and women. The evaluation team will disaggregate all available data by gender at multiple points along the Theory of Change to analyze the potential influence these effects have on activities and outcomes. Quantitative data collected under this evaluation will be gender-disaggregated to identify gender differences with respect to benefits and outcomes, as well as lessons learned from female users and beneficiaries of trade facilitation and technical support services. This could include looking at how and whether trade facilitation capacity building activities included outreach to men and women. The evaluation team will conduct further inquiry on gender themes as they emerge during data analysis. The evaluation team will also be expected to apply gender-sensitive methods while conducting interviews to ensure that accurate data are collected. For example, if the evaluation team asks about loan usage to learn more about the finance portion of WATH, it may be helpful to survey men and women separately.

## 7. Evaluation Design

The evaluation team will be responsible for developing an evaluation design and methodology for this PE that should include a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis approaches, where appropriate. The evaluation team's Evaluation Design Proposal should detail, on a question-by-question basis, the proposed design and data collection and analysis methods to be used for answering the evaluation questions.

## 8. Data Collection and Analysis Methods

Data collection methods for this evaluation are likely to include, but will not necessarily be limited to:

- In depth interviews: this is expected to include KIIs with project stakeholders, including national and municipal level government staff, USAID staff, WATH and other implementation staff, representatives of financing institutions, and importer/exporters. Where necessary and appropriate, a USAID/WA staff member may participate in meetings with regional economic community representatives.
- Focus group discussions: FGDs may be conducted in the project target areas and held with members of the local community and with local entrepreneurs. The evaluation team should work to ensure diversity of ages, gender, and income levels for participants in FGDs.

- **Observations:** It is anticipated that the evaluation team will observe the businesses and products supported through activities under the trade portfolio. The evaluation team will independently select observation sites.
- **Mystery shoppers:** The evaluation team may consider using unannounced visits to WATH partners, such as the AGOA Trade Resource Centers, to collect data and assess their readiness to provide services to their clients.

USAID anticipates the use of mix-methods analysis for interpreting and drawing inferences from the data collected and triangulating findings to answer the evaluation questions. The evaluation team will prepare descriptive statistics for all quantitative data, and calculate inferential statistics if appropriate. In addition, content and pattern analysis should be considered for interpreting and tracking trends to connect qualitative responses to answering the evaluation questions.

### Sampling Plan

The evaluation team should aim to obtain documentation and data from a representative sample of relevant countries in West Africa. The countries where field-based research will take place should be selected based on a sampling plan to be proposed by the evaluation team in its Evaluation Design Proposal, and the selection should be done in collaboration with USAID/WA. A mix of Francophone and Anglophone countries will be selected for the majority of data collection; however, unannounced visits to AGOA resource centers and information centers may take place in a wider sample of countries. The extent of travel will be determined by the evaluation design and data needs as agreed upon between the evaluation team and USAID/WA.

## 9. Evaluation Strengths and Limitations

### Strengths

- **Trade Hub Evidence:** USAID has funded several trade Hub activities in Africa. This evaluation will add to the body of knowledge and provide a comparison case by which to judge the value of the trade Hub model. The proposed evaluation design will help USAID further understand what value the trade Hub approach brings compared to direct funding of activities.
- **Mid-course correction:** The timing of the evaluation of WATH is important for informing the management of project activities in the last half of implementation, as well as how USAID can approach any future trade-related activities in the region. The timing of the evaluation and proposed design will provide accessible, actionable guidance for USAID/WA.
- **Examining Support for Local Partners:** The evaluation will also examine how the local partners that the trade portfolio has supported are performing and where the approach has been most effective. Incorporating this component into the PE will make the final analysis stronger by providing a fuller picture of the portfolio's progress toward the Mission's overall objectives.

### Limitations

- **Cannot definitively attribute reported impact to the activity:** Trade and exports are driven by multiple factors within an economy. It is difficult to parse whether and how much change is directly attributable to a trade Hub or USAID-sponsored activity and how much is the result of complex macro- and micro-economic developments. A strong non-experimental methodology that accounts for multiple perspectives can account for some of these complex and unknown factors, but cannot completely control for them.
- **Implementation scope:** USAID/WA's trade activities take place across 15 countries. The evaluation team will only be able to visit a sample of countries in the region. Experiences with WATH and trade portfolio will vary from country to country, so any sample of experiences will

likely omit some perspectives of participants and beneficiaries. It will be critical for the evaluation team to carefully select the countries it visits and ensure that any recommendations account for the full implementation context of WATH and the trade portfolio, not just those countries visited for fieldwork. In addition, the evaluation team should propose mitigation strategies to account for the broad scope of WATH and somewhat limited scope of the evaluation.

- **Reliance on Partners:** The value of the final evaluation’s analysis will only be as strong as the data and information provided by the WATH partners. If only a few partners provide high-quality data and documentation, this could present a skewed picture of the portfolio’s performance and WATH’s engagement. The evaluation team will need to provide clear guidance and early outreach to trade partners in order to ensure that as much information is made available as possible.

## 10. Evaluation Deliverables

The evaluation team will be responsible for the following deliverables under this SOW. More details on the select deliverable tasks are provided below.

Deliverable	Estimated Due Date
1. Draft Evaluation Design Proposal	o/a four weeks following USAID/WA approval of this SOW
2. Final Evaluation Design Proposal	o/a two weeks following receipt of USAID/WA feedback on Draft Evaluation Design Proposal
3. Oral debrief with USAID on preliminary evaluation findings	To be proposed in Evaluation Design Proposal
4. Draft Evaluation Report	To be proposed in Evaluation Design Proposal
5. Regional Learning Event Report	To be proposed in Evaluation Design Proposal
6. Final Evaluation Report	o/a three weeks following receipt of USAID comments on Draft Evaluation Report

All documents and reports will be provided electronically to USAID. The evaluation team should also submit 15 hardbound copies of the Final Evaluation Report to USAID/WA. All qualitative and quantitative data will be provided in electronic format to USAID in a format consistent with Automated Directives System (ADS) 579 requirements. All debriefs will include a formal presentation with slides delivered both electronically and in hard copy for all attendees.

### Evaluation Design Proposal

Prior to implementation of this evaluation, the evaluation team will deliver an Evaluation Design Proposal that describes the conceptual framework for the evaluation and the justification for selecting this approach. It must detail the evaluation methodology (i.e. how each question will be answered by way of data collection and analysis methods, data sources, and sampling). The report must also contain a work plan, which indicates the phases in the evaluation with key deliverables and milestones. USAID/WA will review this report and the evaluation team must receive its approval before it begins implementing the evaluation plan. The Design Proposal must clearly document and discuss how gender analysis will be integrated into the design of the evaluation.

The Design Proposal must at least contain the following:

- Discussion of the overall approach of the evaluation, highlighting the conceptual model(s) adopted by evaluation question. This must incorporate an analysis of the intervention logic of the program.
- Discussion of the methodological approach that will be used.
- Discussion of risks and limitations that may undermine the reliability and validity of the evaluation results.
- Discussion of the data collection and data analysis methods that will be used for each question and the limitations for each method. Include the level of precision required for quantitative methods and value scales or approach to coding that will be employed for qualitative methods.
- Detail key data sources that will be selected to answer each evaluation question.
- Discussion of the sampling approach, including area and population to be represented, rationale for selection, sampling procedures, sample size (for each unit of analysis), sample precision, and confidence and limitations.
- Summarized evaluation methodology in an evaluation planning matrix that must contain the following column headings: evaluation question, measure(s) or indicator(s), data collection method(s), data source, design strategy/framework for each question, sampling methodology, data collection instrument(s) for each question and data analysis methodology on each question.
- Timeline showing the evaluation phases (data collection, data analysis, and reporting) with their key deliverables and milestones.
- Specific responsibilities and qualifications of each team member for each evaluation phase.
- Discussion of logistics of carrying out the evaluation. Include specific assistance that will be required from USAID, such as providing arrangements for key contacts within the Mission or Government.
- Estimated budget

## **Draft Evaluation Report**

The draft evaluation report must contain the following sections:

- **Executive Summary:** This section should be no more than five pages in length and must describe the purpose, project background, evaluation design and methodologies including main evaluation questions, key findings, conclusions, and recommendations and lessons learned from the evaluation.
- **Background:** This section must provide a brief description of the project that highlights the scope of the project, project development hypothesis, activities undertaken in the project, key impact indicators of the project and impact areas of the project. Other activities that complemented the project activities directly or indirectly in the intervention districts must also be highlighted.
- **Methodology:** This section must detail the methodology and related research protocols undertaken in conducting the evaluation, data collection, analysis, selection criteria/sampling, and related constraints or limitations encountered during the project implementation and evaluation.
- **Findings:** This section must present findings collected from the evaluation. The evaluation findings must be presented as analyzed facts, evidence, and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay, or the compilation of people's opinions. The evaluation findings must assess key outcomes and impacts as structured around the organizational framework of the evaluation questions. The findings must be specific, concise, and supported by strong quantitative and qualitative evidence analyzed through scientifically plausible methodologies. Sources of

information used in arriving at the findings must be properly acknowledged and listed in an annex.

- **Conclusions:** Evaluation conclusions must be presented for each key finding. The conclusions are interpretations and judgments based on the findings presented, and must logically follow from the gathered data and findings. These must be explicitly justified. If necessary, the evaluation team must state its assumptions, judgments, and value premises in presenting a conclusion so that readers can better understand and assess them.
- **Recommendations:** This section must precisely and clearly present recommendations that must be drawn from specific findings and conclusions. The recommendations must be stated in an action-oriented fashion, must be practical, specific, and with defined target audience(s).

## **Final Evaluation Report**

Following receipt of USAID's comments on the Draft Evaluation Report, the evaluation team will prepare a final version that will incorporate the feedback to USAID's satisfaction.

The Final Evaluation Report should contain the same sections as noted above for the Draft Evaluation Report and should also include:

- **References:** This section should include a list of all documents reviewed, including background documentation and records of technical data application and decision-making.
- **Annexes:** These may include, but are not limited to, the evaluation statement of work, tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklist, and discussion guides, any statements of differences received, as well as other relevant sources of information.

## **Learning Workshop and Report**

In coordination with USAID, and in support of Agency collaboration, learning, and adaption methodologies, the evaluation team will organize a learning workshop in collaboration with USAID/WA's Analytical Support Services and Evaluations for Sustainable Systems (ASSESS). This workshop should take the form of a similar one organized by ASSESS after USAID/WA completed its energy evaluation, and is expected to be a full day in length. The focus of the workshop is to generate varied and diverse learning points including useful and actionable suggestions or proposals for addressing recurrent development challenges (based on the specific activity evaluation). A specific focus for this event will include lessons learned in working to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of regional private sector organizations.

The workshop must bring together key stakeholders jointly identified by the evaluation team, USAID, and activity beneficiaries to stimulate discussion around the evaluation topic. Inclusion of a wide array of stakeholders will bring to bear different contextual experiences to broaden the learning base, share best practices, exchange knowledge on critical activity lessons, evaluation results, discuss barriers, and recommend approaches to further enrich learning and the success of USAID activities. This will inform operational, tactical, and strategic decisions into other ongoing programs and the planning of future programs, as well as capture a broad array of stakeholder thought processes.

The specific objectives of the learning event are:

- To disseminate findings and recommendations from the evaluation;
- To review in depth the key lessons and their implication for future programs; and

- To engage stakeholders on the evaluation topic, to share lessons learned, barriers, successes, discuss recommendations and to generate a dialogue that captures stakeholder input, thoughts, and ideas on the technical approach used to achieve activity results as presented in the evaluation.

The evaluation team will be responsible for documenting the learning points that will emanate from the discussions and knowledge sharing. The evaluation team will record and share these in a workshop report with USAID, workshop participants and other targeted audiences that captures the learning dialogue and discussion surrounding key findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The report should include an executive summary, activity background, description of the purpose of the workshop, and detailed summary of the workshop proceedings focused on outcomes and takeaways surrounding the workshop discussion.

ASSESS will be responsible for all logistical costs related to the workshop, including but not limited to: invitations, agenda, facilitation, coffee breaks, lunch, and appropriate branding materials. The evaluation team, in coordination with ASSESS and USAID/WA, will produce an event agenda, generate a list of invitees, develop the workshop materials, acquire a venue, and provide other required assistance to ensure a successful workshop.

## II. Team Composition

In its Evaluation Design Proposal, the evaluation team will propose a staffing plan for this evaluation including specific positions and CVs for proposed individuals to serve in those positions. USAID/WA encourages the use of local West African personnel on the team, as feasible and appropriate. Evaluation team members will be provided with USAID's conflict of interest statement that they will sign before conducting any field research.

The evaluation team may also include one to two technical experts from USAID/Washington's Pillar Bureaus.

### Roles and Responsibilities

To the extent possible, schedules should be coordinated so that the evaluation team can draw on USAID's expertise in meetings with counterparts. In general, USAID staff participating in the evaluation would be anticipated to have less time available for the field visits than independent evaluators. The writing of the report will be the sole responsibility of the independent evaluators; however, if mutually agreed, the USAID staff members working on the evaluation may be asked to contribute to the report in their technical discipline. USAID team members will participate in interviews and meetings, but the independent evaluators may wish to have certain interviews without USAID staff present.

### Core Evaluation Team Positions

USAID expects evaluation team members to have relevant prior experience in Africa, familiarity with USAID's objectives, approaches, and operations, and prior evaluation/assessment experience. In addition, individual team members should have the technical qualifications identified for their respective positions. The evaluation team should consist of a range of experts and supporting staff, based on the specific tasks and sub-tasks required to carry out the activities described in this SOW.

Illustrative position descriptions are provided below, although the evaluator is free to propose a different configuration:

**Team Leader (Evaluation Specialist):** The Team Leader should have a minimum of a Master's Degree in a relevant discipline (International Trade Law, Economics, etc.) and at least five years' of experience conducting performance evaluations with experience in Africa and leading teams collecting

data across multiple countries. The Team Leader should have excellent analytical and report writing skills as well as demonstrated skills in applied economic analysis, project management, and survey administration. S/he should also possess sound knowledge of regional integration and regional experience in West Africa. French language skills are highly preferred.

**Trade and Integration Specialist:** The Trade and Integration Specialist should have a minimum of a Master's Degree in a relevant discipline (International Trade Law, Economics, etc.) and eight years of experience in international trade. S/he should have experience with evaluation methods and projects, with experience in Africa preferred. The candidate should have demonstrated abilities in statistical and economic analysis, as well as sound knowledge of regional integration efforts and approaches with preference for knowledge of West Africa. French language skills are highly preferred.

**Agricultural Specialist:** The Agriculture Specialist should have a minimum of a Master's Degree in agricultural economics or a related field and at least eight years' experience in international trade with an emphasis on agricultural products. S/he should have excellent analytical and report writing skills as well as demonstrated skills in applied economic analysis and survey administration. S/he should also have a sound knowledge of agricultural policies in the ECOWAS region. French language skills are highly preferred.

**Researchers/Logisticians:** Researchers supporting the evaluation team should have a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree and at least two years' experience in international trade with an emphasis on agricultural projects. They should have excellent analytical and report writing skills and proven experience with carrying out semi-structured interviews. They should possess sound knowledge of agricultural policies and be familiar with the ECOWAS region. They may also provide logistical support to the evaluation team including the scheduling of interviews and travel preparations. French language skills are highly preferred.

**Activity Coordinator:** The Activity Coordinator should hold a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree with at least two years of relevant research and evaluation experience. The Activity Coordinator is expected to help coordinate, support, and oversee the evaluation team's efforts across the required tasks to ensure their successful completion.

Home Office support will be provided by the firm(s) that will be implementing this evaluation, as required, including quality assurance, research support, administrative oversight, and logistics.

## 12. USAID Participation

An interactive and collaborative process is envisioned between the evaluation team, USAID/WA, and USAID/E3/TRR to carry out this evaluation. USAID and the evaluation team will be engaged during the design process to consider options for answering the evaluation questions, to ensure agreement on the focus and approaches for the design and delivery of the evaluation. Technical oversight for the evaluation will be provided by USAID/WA's Trade and Investment Team. A designated contact person from the Trade and Investment Team will serve as the primary point of contact and Activity Manager for the PE. The evaluation team will keep this point of contact apprised of changes and developments that necessitate/require any significant decision-making or modification of the approved Evaluation Design Proposal.

The desirability of USAID participation in evaluation activities such as data collection will be considered prior to the initiation of field research.

## 13. Scheduling and Logistics

The following Gantt chart provides an illustrative overview of the estimated timeframe for the evaluation and key deliverables. The Evaluation Design Proposal will include a detailed schedule and



proposed delivery dates. The overall period of performance for completion of the review is expected to last approximately eight months. The schedule below assumes USAID approval of this SOW by November 2016.

### ANTICIPATED EVALUATION TIMELINE

2016-2017								
Task/Deliverable	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Finalize SOW								
Desk Review								
Evaluation Design Proposal								
Data Collection – U.S.								
Data Collection – West Africa								
Data Analysis								
Oral Debrief on Preliminary Findings								
Draft Evaluation Report								
Regional Learning Event								
Final Evaluation Report								

The evaluation team will be responsible for all logistics, including coordinating all travel throughout the region, lodging, printing, office space, equipment, car rentals, etc. USAID/WA will provide support to set up initial meetings with key stakeholders in the Regional Economic Community (ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS) and other stakeholders as requested.

## 14. Reporting Requirements

The format of the Evaluation Report should follow USAID guidelines set forth in the USAID Evaluation Report Template (<http://usaidlearninglab.org/library/evaluation-report-template>), the How-To Note on Preparing Evaluation Reports (<http://usaidlearninglab.org/library/how-note-preparing-evaluation-reports>), and the Checklist for Assessing USAID Evaluation Reports. The Final Evaluation Report should not exceed 50 pages, excluding references and annexes. A copy of the final evaluation report will be delivered to the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) within 30 days of USAID’s acceptance of the final evaluation report and approval to post it on the DEC.

All members of the evaluation team should be provided with USAID’s mandatory statement of the evaluation standards they are expected to meet, shown in the text box below.

## USAID EVALUATION POLICY, APPENDIX I

### CRITERIA TO ENSURE THE QUALITY OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

- The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why.
- Evaluation reports shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the technical officer.
- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists, and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- Evaluation findings will assess outcomes and impact on males and females.
- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical, and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

### Data Management

The storage and transfer of data collected for this evaluation will adhere to the requirements laid out in USAID's Automated Directives Systems (ADS) 579.<sup>52</sup> The evaluation team should also follow applicable Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidance on data security and confidentiality. Final datasets are expected to be submitted to USAID in a format consistent with ADS 579.

## 15. Estimated Budget

The evaluation team responding to this SOW will provide a detailed estimated budget in its Evaluation Design Proposal, for USAID's review and approval prior to commencing implementation of the evaluation.

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<sup>52</sup> See <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/579.pdf>

## ANNEX B: GETTING TO ANSWERS MATRIX

This Getting to Answers matrix shows how the evaluation team collected and used secondary and primary data to develop answers to each EQ.

EQs/Additional Lines of Evidence	Evidence Needed	Data Source(s)	Data Collection Methods	Data Collection Instruments	Sampling Approach	Data Analysis Methods	
1. To what extent has WATIH achieved or is on track to achieve outcomes related to IRI and IR2 and the respective sub-IRs in support of USAID's intended objectives?	Yes/No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IP staff</li> <li>- USAID staff</li> <li>- Hub partners</li> <li>- Hub beneficiaries</li> <li>- Structured observation</li> <li>- Hub reports (quarterly, annual, assessments)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KIs</li> <li>- Photographs</li> <li>- Desk review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respondent-specific discussion guide</li> <li>- Structured observation guide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purposeful sampling for qualitative in-depth interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planned/actual comparisons</li> <li>- Pattern/content Analysis</li> </ul>	
	Y						Description
	Y						Comparison
	Y						Explanation
1.1 What are the areas in which WATIH could focus interventions to better achieve outcomes?	Yes/No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IP staff</li> <li>- USAID staff</li> <li>- Hub partners</li> <li>- Hub beneficiaries</li> <li>- Hub reports (quarterly, annual, assessments)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KIs</li> <li>- Desk review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respondent-specific discussion guide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purposeful sampling for qualitative in-depth interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planned/actual comparisons</li> <li>- Pattern/content Analysis</li> </ul>	
	Y						Description
	Y						Comparison
	Y						Explanation
2. What are the benefits and trade-offs of having WATIH as a discrete mechanism for capacity building, value-chain support, and trade facilitation?	Yes/No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IP staff</li> <li>- USAID staff</li> <li>- Hub partners</li> <li>- Hub beneficiaries</li> <li>- Hub reports (quarterly, annual, assessments)</li> <li>- Partner reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KIs</li> <li>- Desk review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respondent-specific discussion guide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purposeful sampling for qualitative in-depth interviews</li> <li>- Focus group discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pattern/content Analysis</li> </ul>	
	Y						Description
							Comparison
	Y						Explanation
2.1 What is the reputation and "brand" of the Trade Hub among the USG and Embassies in the region, as well as regional partner organizations (ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS) and with key private sector associations and counterparts?	Yes/No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hub partners</li> <li>- Hub beneficiaries</li> <li>- Government/sector organization stakeholders</li> <li>- Private sector association leaders (non-Hub partners)</li> <li>- Local Embassy staff</li> <li>- Other donor project staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KIs</li> <li>- FGDs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respondent specific discussion guides</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purposeful sampling for qualitative in-depth interviews</li> <li>- Purposeful sampling for FGDs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pattern/content Analysis</li> </ul>	
	Y						Description
							Comparison
	Y						Explanation
2.2 In what ways has WATIH built partnerships and developed local capacity to increase the effectiveness of local and	Yes/No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IP staff</li> <li>- USAID staff</li> <li>- Hub partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KIs</li> <li>- FGDs</li> <li>- Desk review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Respondent specific discussion</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pattern/content Analysis</li> </ul>	
	Y						Description
							Comparison

EQs/Additional Lines of Evidence	Evidence Needed		Data Source(s)	Data Collection Methods	Data Collection Instruments	Sampling Approach	Data Analysis Methods
<i>regional public and private organizations?</i>	Y	Explanation	- Local/regional public organization stakeholders - Hub reports (quarterly, annual, assessments)		guides	- Purposeful sampling for in-depth interviews - Purposeful sampling for FGDs	
<i>2.3 How do the trade-offs and benefits of WATIH compare to direct assistance mechanisms?</i>	Yes/No		- IP staff - USAID staff - IP staff - Hub partners - Hub beneficiaries - Partner beneficiaries - Local/regional public org - Hub reports (quarterly, annual, assessments)	- KIs - FGDs - Desk review	- Respondent specific discussion guide	- Purposeful sampling for qualitative in-depth interviews - Purposeful sampling for FGDs	- Pattern/content analysis
	Y	Description					
		Comparison					
	Y	Explanation					
<i>3. To what extent have selected partners supported through the USAID trade portfolio, including the ACA, GSA, and Borderless Alliance, become effective and sustainable regional institutions in terms of their organizational objectives?</i>	Yes/No		- Partners - Partner beneficiaries - Regional organizational stakeholders - Sector experts	- KIs - Desk review	- Respondent-specific discussion guide	- Purposeful sampling for qualitative in-depth interviews	- Pattern/content analysis
	Y	Description					
		Comparison					
	Y	Explanation					
<i>3.1 How financially and operationally viable and sustainable are the selected partners supported through the USAID/WA trade portfolio?</i>	Yes/No		- Hub partners - IP staff - USAID staff	- KIs - FGDs - Desk review	- Respondent-specific discussion guide	- Purposeful sampling for qualitative in-depth interviews - Purposeful sampling for FGDs	- Pattern/content analysis
	Y	Description					
		Comparison					
	Y	Explanation					
<i>3.2 How has USAID funding shaped selected partners' development and activities?</i>	Yes/No		- IP staff - USAID staff - Hub partners - Hub reports (quarterly, annual, assessments) - Partner documentation - Sector experts - Other donor project staff	- KIs - FGDs - Desk review	- Respondent-specific discussion guide	- Purposeful sampling for qualitative in-depth interviews - Purposeful sampling for FGDs	- Pattern/content analysis
	Y	Description					
		Comparison					
	Y	Explanation					
<i>3.3 What opportunities are there to engage new partners in the portfolio to better</i>	Yes/No		- IP staff - USAID staff	- KIs - Desk review	- Respondent specific	- Purposeful sampling for	- Pattern/content analysis
	Y	Description					

EQs/Additional Lines of Evidence	Evidence Needed		Data Source(s)	Data Collection Methods	Data Collection Instruments	Sampling Approach	Data Analysis Methods
<i>achieve project objectives?</i>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hub partners</li> <li>- Sector experts</li> </ul>		discussion guide	qualitative in-depth interviews	
		Comparison					
		Explanation					

# ANNEX C: KII GUIDES

## PHASE I

### Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in interviews as part of the performance evaluation of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) West Africa Trade and Investment Hub (WATIH). This performance evaluation is being conducted independently by the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project, which is funded by USAID and implemented by Management Systems International (MSI) and Palladium.

#### Evaluation Purpose

In collaboration with the West Africa Mission (USAID/WA), the Office of Trade and Regulatory Reform in USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (USAID/E3/TRR) has commissioned a mid-term performance evaluation of WATIH activities. The purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to assess and document the extent to which WATIH has achieved its objectives and to inform USAID's future decisions on trade programming. The evaluation will also suggest whether support to private sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions and is meeting private-sector demands for greater technical support and information and successfully advocating for improved enabling environments for the supported value chains.

#### Participation

Your participation in this evaluation is entirely voluntary. You can choose not to participate at all or to leave the interview at any time without any consequences.

You are being asked to participate in this evaluation because you have been identified as a knowledgeable stakeholder for WATIH implementation activities and can provide insight into the Project that may help answer the evaluation questions.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to take part in at least one interview, with potential for subsequent interviews as this evaluation progresses. The purpose of this interview and any follow-on interviews will be to collect primary data as well as to provide answers to the evaluation questions as well as inform the next phase of data collection including determining key informants and site selection. Each interview should last about 30 – 60 minutes. The interviewer will take notes as well as record your interview, should you provide your consent in the box on the following page. Recording is not a requirement for participation, and these recordings will solely be used by the evaluation team for accuracy and analysis purposes. The recordings will not be shared outside of the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project (Project Team).

What you say during this interview will remain anonymous unless you provide your explicit consent to be identified. Identifying information about you may be collected, but will not be shared with a third party outside of the Project Team. And any identifying information will be de-identified when shared unless you separately provide your consent to being identified.

Data for this evaluation will be kept in both paper and digital formats. Access to both the paper and digital data will be protected. Only members of the Project Team will have access to the data. De-identified data may be shared with stakeholders and interested parties outside of the Project Team. While you may not experience any direct benefits from participation, information collected in this evaluation will benefit others in the future as this evaluation will serve to inform USAID's future programming related to the West Africa Trade and Investment Hub.

If you have any questions regarding the interview or this evaluation in general, please contact the evaluation team leader, Trevor Simumba or the evaluation deputy team lead, Yarri Kamara. By taking part in this interview, you are indicating your consent to participate in this evaluation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I: I consent to this and subsequent interviews being recorded:

- Yes
- No

**For Interviewer:**

Place where interview was conducted:

- Location

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

- Interview was conducted by:
  - In-Person
  - Phone

Time of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Informant Interview Data Collection Instruments**

This guide presents the KII instruments that will be used for the key broad respondent categories for the Mid-term Evaluation of the West Africa Trade Hub Project:

- USAID WATIH Staff
- USAID/USG Staff
- Regional Economic Community (REC) Partner Staff
- Private Sector Partners/Other Stakeholders
- Public sector stakeholders
- International donors, policy experts and academics

The purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to assess and document the extent to which WATIH has achieved its objectives and to inform future decisions on trade programming in the Agency. The evaluation will also help USAID/WA learn if its support to selected private sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions that are meeting private sector demands for technical support and information, as well as successfully advocating for improved enabling environments of the supply chains they support. The evaluation will address the following Evaluation questions (EQ's):

1. To what extent has WATIH achieved or is on track to achieve outcomes related to IR1 and IR2 and the respective sub-IRs in support of USAID's intended objectives?
2. What are the benefits and trade-offs of having WATIH as a discrete mechanism for capacity building,

value-chain support, and trade facilitation?

3. To what extent have selected partners supported through the USAID trade portfolio, including the ACA, GSA, and Borderless Alliance, become effective and sustainable regional institutions in terms of their organizational objectives?

The evaluation team will also consider the following additional lines of inquiry in relation to the three evaluation questions above:

1. What are the areas in which WATIH could focus interventions to better achieve outcomes?
2. What is the reputation and “brand” of the Trade Hub among the USG and Embassies in the region, as well as regional partner organizations (ECOWAS, UEMOA, and CILSS) and with key private sector associations and counterparts?
3. In what ways has WATIH built partnerships and developed local capacity to increase the effectiveness of local and regional public and private organizations?
4. How do the trade-offs and benefits of WATIH compare to direct assistance mechanisms?
5. How financially and operationally viable and sustainable are the selected partners supported through the USAID/WA trade portfolio?
6. How has USAID funding shaped selected partners’ development and activities?
7. What opportunities are there to engage new partners in the portfolio to better achieve project objectives?



## KII Topic Guide – WATIH Staff (KII A)

This Topic Guide is intended for use in field research with representatives of USAID WATIH staff. This evaluation will assess the effectiveness of Trade Hubs' technical assistance projects, embedded within the Trade Hubs' broader mission, and further, will inform USAID's future decisions on trade programming and suggest whether support to selected private sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions and is meeting private-sector demands for greater technical support and information and successfully advocating for improved enabling environments for the supported value chains. It should be followed as closely as possible to **guide** key informant interviews with these respondents. There are a few questions where a specific set of responses are provided in order to assist in the collection of data that can be more easily quantified. Instructions to the interviewer are in red.

### I. Introduction (~ 3 minutes)

- a. Thank the respondent for taking the time to participate in the interview
- b. Introduction to the researcher and the research
  1. Introduce yourself: I am a Consultant residing in \_\_\_\_\_. I represent an evaluation team fielded by Management Systems International, a Washington DC based firm that has been contracted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to conduct an independent evaluation of the USAID WATIH program.
  2. As part of its own planning for the next few years, USAID has asked us to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the program to assess its progress toward achieving its objectives. So, what we are trying to evaluate are the strengths and weaknesses of the program, its accomplishments but also its shortcomings, best practices and how it can be more effective and better aligned with future USAID trade programs.
  3. Research will be used to ascertain the extent to which the trade portfolio activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability, and empowerment of local West African partners. It will also be used to propose recommendations based on the findings to inform future trade programming by USAID/WA, regional partners, and other donors.
- c. Description of the objectives of the discussion
  1. Obtain information on the perceptions and views of various key respondents.
  2. Understand better the issues and challenges faced by USAID WATIH and its partners.
  3. Document successes, best practices, lessons learned and ascertain the extent to which WATIH activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability and empowerment of local West African partners
- d. We will follow privacy protocols to protect your anonymity [interviewers will be trained to be compliant with USAID policy in regards to the "USG Common Rule" for the protection of human subjects]:
  1. Explain confidentiality and anonymity and note whether the respondent would like to remain anonymous, and that the assessment team will ask permission if would like to use a quote from the respondent in the final report.
  2. Explain how collected data will be stored without identifying information.
  3. Ask if the respondent is willing to be recorded and note their response.
- e. Explain recording, length and nature of discussion
- f. Check whether respondents have any questions.

### II. Background Information (~ 2 minutes)

- a. Respondent

1. Position/Role
2. Length of time with the organization
3. Can you please describe your job and unit within the Trade Hub project?

### **III. Outcomes Achieved related to IRI and IR2 (~25 minutes)**

**Transition:** *I would like to spend a little time speaking with you about the extent to which WATIH has achieved its outcomes in support of USAID's intended objectives as they relate to increased private sector capacity and improved enabling environment for trade and trade facilitation.*

- a. How well has the Trade Hub made progress in implementing activities? (Ask about each separately and record response):
  1. Improved buyer and seller intermediation?
  2. Expanded use of grades and standards?
  3. Increased access to and use of market information?
  4. Increase access to and use of financial services?
  5. Improved competitiveness of the transport and logistics sector?
  6. Reduced legal and regulatory barriers to trade?
- b. What were the elements of Trade Hub assistance that proved most effective in achieving those results? Why?
- c. Can you describe one activity, such as training or technical assistance, that exemplifies the Trade Hub's impact?
- d. To what extent does the current management structure of the project support effective implementation? (for our purposes, effective means implementing activities in a cost-effective manner).
- e. How do you view the Trade Hub's relationship with ECOWAS and UEMOA?
- f. What is your perception of how WATIH activities compare to other donor, either USG or non-USG, activity in the region, particularly with a focus on increasing private sector capacity and the enabling environment for trade and trade facilitation?

### **IV. Key Challenges Faced and Strategies Employed (~30 minutes)**

**Transition:** *I would like to now focus on some of the challenges you have faced in implementation and also get your perspective on the sustainability of your support to partners in the region.*

- a. (What challenges did the Trade Hub encountered that impeded effective implementation of Trade Hub activities? If so, can you please describe?)
  1. Improved buyer and seller intermediation?
  2. Expanded use of grades and standards?
  3. Increased access to and use of market information?
  4. Increase access to and use of financial services?
  5. Improved competitiveness of the transport and logistics sector?
  6. Reduced legal and regulatory barriers to trade?
- b. What measures did the Trade Hub take to deal with these impediments, and were they successful?
- c. What are the possible lessons learned that might be taken into account in design / implementation of future trade promotion assistance activities?
- d. To what extent have selected partners like the ACA, GSA and Borderless Alliance supported through USAID trade portfolio become effective and sustainable regional institutions? What more can be done to ensure sustainability?
- e. What activities do you think should be scaled up or scaled down in order to maximize project results during the remainder of its implementation?

- f. What is the value-added of the Trade Hub? (i.e. What would not exist if the Trade Hub did not continue?)
- g. Do you have any additional recommendations that you'd like to share with USAID about future program implementation?
- h. Is there anything that you'd like to share or are there other questions that I should have asked but didn't?

## KII Topic Guide – USAID/USG Staff (KII B)

**This Topic Guide is intended for use in field research with representatives of USAID and USG staff. This evaluation will assess the effectiveness of the Trade Hubs' technical assistance projects, embedded within the Trade Hubs' broader mission, and further, will inform USAID's future decisions on trade programming and suggest whether support to selected private sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions and is meeting private-sector demands for greater technical support and information and successfully advocating for improved enabling environments for the supported value chains. It should be followed as closely as possible to **guide** key informant interviews with these respondents. There are a few questions where a specific set of responses are provided in order to assist in the collection of data that can be more easily quantified. Instructions to the interviewer are in red.**

### I. Introduction (~3 minutes)

- a. Thank the respondent for taking the time to participate in the interview
- b. Introduction to the researcher and the research
  1. Introduce yourself: I am a Consultant residing in \_\_\_\_\_. I represent an evaluation team fielded by Management Systems International, a Washington DC based firm that has been contracted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to conduct an independent evaluation of the USAID WATIH program.
  2. As part of its own planning for the next few years, USAID has asked us to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the program to assess its progress toward achieving its objectives. So, what we are trying to evaluate are the strengths and weaknesses of the program, its accomplishments but also its shortcomings, best practices and how it can be more effective and better aligned with future USAID trade programs.
  3. Research will be used to ascertain the extent to which the trade portfolio activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability, and empowerment of local West African partners. It will also be used to propose recommendations based on the findings to inform future trade programming by USAID/WA, regional partners, and other donors.
- c. Description of the objectives of the discussion
  1. Obtain information on the perceptions and views of various key respondents.
  2. Understand better the issues and challenges faced by USAID WATIH and its partners.
  3. Document successes, best practices, lessons learned and ascertain the extent to which WATIH activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability and empowerment of local West African partners
- d. We will follow privacy protocols to protect your anonymity [interviewers will be trained to be compliant with USAID policy in regards to the "USG Common Rule" for the protection of human subjects]:
  1. Explain confidentiality and anonymity and note whether the respondent would like to remain anonymous, and that the assessment team will ask permission if would like to use a quote from the respondent in the final report.
  2. Explain how collected data will be stored without identifying information.
  3. Ask if the respondent is willing to be recorded and note their response.
- e. Explain recording, length and nature of discussion
- f. Check whether respondents have any questions.

## II. Background Information (~ 2 minutes)

### a. Respondent

1. Position
2. Length of time at current position
3. Can you please describe your job, and your unit within the public sector organization?

## III. USAID and USG Overall Perspective of WATIH (~30 minutes)

**Transition:** *I would like to spend a little time speaking with you about the extent to which WATIH has achieved its in support of USAID's intended objectives...*

- a. How would you describe your interaction with the WATIH implementation team? Has there been regular dialogue?
- b. Describe for us your perspective on the activities that have been implemented by WATIH. What outcomes have you observed?
- c. To what extent does the current management and structure of the project support effective (achievement of activities in cost-effective manner) implementation?
  1. How do you assess the project's approach in determining needs?
- d. What changes have you observed amongst Trade Hub partners over the last two years?
  1. Specifically, how have the ACA, Borderless Alliance, and GSA changed?
- e. How do you view WATIH's relationship with ECOWAS, UEMOA, and national governments? (This includes CILLS and RESIMAO who are both part of ECOWAS)
- f. Taking into account the level-of-effort or other project expenditures on various Trade Hub export promotion and value chain support assistance elements, which would you say were the most cost-effective in producing tangible and sustainable results? Why?

## IV. Impact of WATIH Activities (~25 minutes)

**Transition:** *I would like to now focus on the impact of WATIH activities in the region and the feedback you have received from beneficiaries and partners and also get your perspective on the sustainability of WATIH support to partners in the region.*

- a. (What challenges did the Trade Hub encounter that impeded effective implementation of Trade Hub activities? If so, can you please describe?
  1. Improved buyer and seller intermediation?
  2. Expanded use of grades and standards?
  3. Increased access to and use of market information?
  4. Increase access to and use of financial services?
  5. Improved competitiveness of the transport and logistics sector?
  6. Reduced legal and regulatory barriers to trade?
- b. What changes in WATIH would add value and increase effectiveness?
- c. What activities do you think should be scaled up or scaled down in order to maximize project results during the remainder of its implementation?
- d. How well has the Trade Hub engaged different groups? (Ask this, and then ask about the following specific stakeholder categories and examples):
  1. Demographic (geographic, age, gender, other various and diverse groups)
  2. Sector (various trade sectors relevant targeted value chains)
  3. Regional (various groups that have more regional representation)
- e. How well known is WATIH amongst the local (national) government stakeholders with whom you communicate?
- f. What is the reputation of the Trade Hub among the USG and other Embassies in the region?
- g. In what ways could the Trade Hub better coordinate with other trade-related donor-funded activities in the region?

- h. To what extent do you think the Trade Hub has contributed to enhanced donor coordination in the area of trade programs?
- i. How well do you think the Trade Hub contract mechanism has facilitated partnerships and trade outcomes compared to:
  - i. Direct contracting of individual activities?
  - ii. Direct grants to partners from USAID and the USG?
  - iii. Support through local governments?
  - iv. Support through pre-existing regional organizations?
- j. What is your perception of how WATIH activities compare to other donor, either USG or non-USG, activity in the region, particularly with a focus on increasing private sector capacity and the enabling environment for trade and trade facilitation?
- k. Overall, what is your judgment of the value of this project?
- l. Do you have any additional recommendations that you'd like to share with USAID about future program implementation?
- m. Is there anything that you'd like to share or are there other questions that I should have asked but didn't?

**I. Conclusion:**

- Thank the respondent for their time.
- Tell the respondent they are welcome to contact you to ask questions at a later date.

Ask permission of the respondent to use their name in the report if you might use a quote. Note their response: \_\_\_\_\_

## KII Topic Guide - Regional Economic Community Partner Staff (KII C)

This Topic Guide is intended for use in field research with representatives of the RECs namely; ECOWAS and UEMOA. This evaluation will assess the effectiveness of the Trade Hubs' technical assistance projects, embedded within the Trade Hubs' broader mission, and further, will inform USAID's future decisions on trade programming and suggest whether support to selected private and public sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions and is meeting private-sector demands for greater technical support and information and successfully advocating for improved enabling environments for the supported value chains. It should be followed as closely as possible to guide key informant interviews with these respondents. There are a few questions where a specific set of responses are provided in order to assist in the collection of data that can be more easily quantified. Instructions to the interviewer are in red.

### I. Introduction (~3 minutes)

- a. Thank the respondent for taking the time to participate in the interview
- b. Introduction to the researcher and the research
  - i. Introduce yourself: I am a Consultant residing in \_\_\_\_\_. I represent an evaluation team fielded by Management Systems International, a Washington DC based firm that has been contracted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to conduct an independent evaluation of the USAID WATIH program.
  - ii. As part of its own planning for the next few years, USAID has asked us to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the program to assess its progress toward achieving its objectives. So, what we are trying to evaluate are the strengths and weaknesses of the program, its accomplishments but also its shortcomings, best practices and how it can be more effective and better aligned with future USAID trade programs.
  - iii. Research will be used to ascertain the extent to which the trade portfolio activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability, and empowerment of local West African partners. It will also be used to propose recommendations based on the findings to inform future trade programming by USAID/WA, regional partners, and other donors.
- c. Description of the objectives of the discussion
  - i. Obtain information on the perceptions and views of various key respondents.
  - ii. Understand better the issues and challenges faced by USAID WATIH and its partners.
  - iii. Document successes, best practices, lessons learned and ascertain the extent to which WATIH activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability and empowerment of local West African partners
- d. We will follow privacy protocols to protect your anonymity [interviewers will be trained to be compliant with USAID policy in regards to the "USG Common Rule" for the protection of human subjects]:
  - i. Explain confidentiality and anonymity and note whether the respondent would like to remain anonymous, and that the assessment team will ask permission if would like to use a quote from the respondent in the final report.
  - ii. Explain how collected data will be stored without identifying information.
  - iii. Ask if the respondent is willing to be recorded and note their response.
- e. Explain recording, length and nature of discussion
- f. Check whether respondents have any questions.

## II. Background Information (~ 2 minutes)

- a. Role of Respondent
  1. Position
  2. How long have you been at this organization?
  3. What is the extent of your involvement with the WATIH project?

## III. Overall Perspective on WATIH Activities (~30 minutes)

**Transition:** *I would like to spend a little time speaking with you about the extent to which WATIH has achieved its in support of USAID's intended objectives.*

- a. Describe your relationship with WATIH.
  1. In what ways can WATIH improve this partnership?
- b. How would you describe your interaction with the WATIH implementation team? Has there been regular dialogue?
- c. Describe for us your perspective on the activities that have been implemented by WATIH. What outcomes have you observed?
- d. Do you think these results would have been achieved even without the project's involvement?
  - i. Yes/No – please explain.
- e. How has the Trade Hub's export promotion assistance contributed to trade facilitation capacity within the targeted value chains? (i.e. livestock, rice, maize, millet, sorghum, shea, cashews, mango, apparel)
  - i. Have exports increased for the firms since partnering with WATIH? Describe significant elements that may have contributed to this increase.
- f. How have you found the quality of the personnel at WATIH, or provided by WATIH to the institution? Please explain.
- g. How has trainings and dissemination of information provided by WATIH affected the work of partner organizations?
- h. How has WATIH supported the RECs in domesticating regional protocols amongst member states?
- i. How well has the Trade Hub engaged different groups? (Ask this, and then ask about the following specific stakeholder categories and examples):
  1. Demographic (geographic, age, gender, other various and diverse groups)
  2. Sector (various trade sectors relevant targeted value chains)
  3. Regional (various groups that have more regional representation)

## IV. Impact of WATIH Activities (~25 minutes)

**Transition:** *I would like to now focus on the impact of WATIH activities in the region and the feedback you have received from beneficiaries and partners and also get your perspective on the sustainability of WATIH support to partners in the region.*

- a. Have the national Governments been responsive to WATIH activities?
  - i. How have they viewed this support from USAID?
- b. What is the reputation of the Trade Hub among the public sector in the member states?
- c. To what extent do you think the Trade Hub has contributed to enhanced donor coordination in the area of trade programs?
- d. To what extent have selected partners like the ACA, GSA and Borderless Alliance supported through USAID trade portfolio become effective and sustainable regional institutions? What more can be done to ensure sustainability?
- e. What activities do you think should be scaled up or scaled down in order to maximize project results during the remainder of its implementation?



- f. In what ways could WATIH add more value and increase effectiveness to the work of ECOWAS and UEMOA?
- g. What would you recommend for the Trade Hub for future activities?
- h. Do you have any additional recommendations that you'd like to share with USAID about future program implementation?
- i. Is there anything that you'd like to share or are there other questions that I should have asked but didn't?

**V. Conclusion:**

- Thank the respondent for their time.
- Tell the respondent they are welcome to contact you to ask questions at a later date.

Ask permission of the respondent to use their name in the report if you might use a quote. Note their response: \_\_\_\_\_

## PHASE II

### Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in interviews as part of the performance evaluation of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) West Africa Trade and Investment Hub (WATIH). This performance evaluation is being conducted independently by the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project, which is funded by USAID and implemented by Management Systems International (MSI) and Palladium.

#### Evaluation Purpose

In collaboration with the West Africa Mission (USAID/WA), the Office of Trade and Regulatory Reform in USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (USAID/E3/TRR) has commissioned a mid-term performance evaluation of WATIH activities. The purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to assess and document the extent to which WATIH has achieved its objectives and to inform USAID's future decisions on trade programming. The evaluation will also suggest whether support to private sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions and is meeting private-sector demands for greater technical support and information and successfully advocating for improved enabling environments for the supported value chains.

#### Participation

Your participation in this evaluation is entirely voluntary. You can choose not to participate at all or to leave the interview at any time without any consequences.

You are being asked to participate in this evaluation because you have been identified as a knowledgeable stakeholder for WATIH implementation activities and can provide insight into the Project that may help answer the evaluation questions

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to take part in at least one interview, with potential for subsequent interviews as this evaluation progresses. The purpose of this interview and any follow-on interviews will be to collect primary data as well as to provide answers to the evaluation questions as well as inform the next phase of data collection including determining key informants and site selection. Each interview should last about 30 – 60 minutes. The interviewer will take notes as well as record your interview, should you provide your consent in the box on the following page. Recording is not a requirement for participation, and these recordings will solely be used by the evaluation team for accuracy and analysis purposes. The recordings will not be shared outside of the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project (Project Team).

What you say during this interview will remain anonymous unless you provide your explicit consent to be identified. Identifying information about you may be collected, but will not be shared with a third party outside of the Project Team. And any identifying information will be de-identified when shared unless you separately provide your consent to being identified.

Data for this evaluation will be kept in both paper and digital formats. Access to both the paper and digital data will be protected. Only members of the Project Team will have access to the data. De-identified data may be shared with stakeholders and interested parties outside of the Project Team. While you may not experience any direct benefits from participation, information collected in this evaluation will benefit others in the future as this evaluation will serve to inform USAID's future programming related to the West Africa Trade and Investment Hub.

If you have any questions regarding the interview or this evaluation in general, please contact the evaluation team leader, Trevor Simumba via email, or the evaluation deputy team lead, Yarri Kamara.

By taking part in this interview, you are indicating your consent to participate in this evaluation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I: I consent to this and subsequent interviews being recorded:

- Yes
- No

**For Interviewer:**

Place where interview was conducted:

- Location

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

- Interview was conducted by:

- In-Person
- Phone

Time of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Informant Interview Data Collection Instruments**

This guide presents the KII instruments that will be used for the key broad respondent categories for the Mid-term Evaluation of the West Africa Trade Hub Project:

- USAID WATIH Staff
- USAID/USG Staff
- Regional Economic Community (REC) Partner Staff
- Private Sector Partners/Other Stakeholders
- Public sector stakeholders
- International donors, policy experts and academics

The purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to assess and document the extent to which WATIH has achieved its objectives and to inform future decisions on trade programming in the Agency. The evaluation will also help USAID/WA learn if its support to selected private sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions that are meeting private sector demands for technical support and information, as well as successfully advocating for improved enabling environments of the supply chains they support. The evaluation will address the following Evaluation questions (EQ's):

- I. To what extent has WATIH achieved or is on track to achieve outcomes related to IR1 and IR2 and the respective sub-IRs in support of USAID's intended objectives?

2. What are the benefits and trade-offs of having WATIH as a discrete mechanism for capacity building, value-chain support, and trade facilitation?
3. To what extent have selected partners supported through the USAID trade portfolio, including the ACA, GSA, and Borderless Alliance, become effective and sustainable regional institutions in terms of their organizational objectives?

The evaluation team will also consider the following additional lines of inquiry in relation to the three evaluation questions above:

1. What are the areas in which WATIH could focus interventions to better achieve outcomes?
2. What is the reputation and “brand” of the Trade Hub among the USG and Embassies in the region, as well as regional partner organizations (ECOWAS, UEMOA, and CILSS) and with key private sector associations and counterparts?
3. In what ways has WATIH built partnerships and developed local capacity to increase the effectiveness of local and regional public and private organizations?
4. How do the trade-offs and benefits of WATIH compare to direct assistance mechanisms?
5. How financially and operationally viable and sustainable are the selected partners supported through the USAID/WA trade portfolio?
6. How has USAID funding shaped selected partners’ development and activities?
7. What opportunities are there to engage new partners in the portfolio to better achieve project objectives?

## KII Topic Guide – WATIH Staff (KII A)

**This Topic Guide is intended for use in field research with representatives of USAID WATIH staff. This evaluation will assess the effectiveness of Trade Hubs’ technical assistance projects, embedded within the Trade Hubs’ broader mission, and further, will inform USAID’s future decisions on trade programming and suggest whether support to selected private sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions and is meeting private-sector demands for greater technical support and information and successfully advocating for improved enabling environments for the supported value chains. It should be followed as closely as possible to **guide** key informant interviews with these respondents. There are a few questions where a specific set of responses are provided in order to assist in the collection of data that can be more easily quantified. Instructions to the interviewer are in red.**

### V. Introduction (~ 3 minutes)

- a. Thank the respondent for taking the time to participate in the interview
- b. Introduction to the researcher and the research
  1. Introduce yourself: I am a Consultant residing in \_\_\_\_\_. I represent an evaluation team fielded by Management Systems International, a Washington DC based firm that has been contracted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to conduct an independent evaluation of the USAID WATIH program.
  2. As part of its own planning for the next few years, USAID has asked us to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the program to assess its progress toward achieving its objectives. So, what we are trying to evaluate are the strengths and weaknesses of the program, its accomplishments but also its shortcomings, best practices and how it can be more effective and better aligned with future USAID trade programs.
  3. Research will be used to ascertain the extent to which the trade portfolio activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability, and empowerment of local West African partners. It will also be used to propose recommendations based on the findings to inform future trade programming by USAID/WA, regional partners, and other donors.
- c. Description of the objectives of the discussion
  1. Obtain information on the perceptions and views of various key respondents.
  2. Understand better the issues and challenges faced by USAID WATIH and its partners.
  3. Document successes, best practices, lessons learned and ascertain the extent to which WATIH activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability and empowerment of local West African partners
- d. We will follow privacy protocols to protect your anonymity [interviewers will be trained to be compliant with USAID policy in regards to the "USG Common Rule" for the protection of human subjects]:
  1. Explain confidentiality and anonymity and note whether the respondent would like to remain anonymous, and that the assessment team will ask permission if would like to use a quote from the respondent in the final report.
  2. Explain how collected data will be stored without identifying information.
  3. Ask if the respondent is willing to be recorded and note their response.
- e. Explain recording, length and nature of discussion
- f. Check whether respondents have any questions.

## **VI. Background Information (~ 2 minutes)**

- a. Respondent
  1. Position/Role
  2. Length of time with the organization
  3. Can you please describe your job and unit within the Trade Hub project?

## **VII. Outcomes Achieved related to IRI and IR2 (~25 minutes)**

**Transition:** *I would like to spend a little time speaking with you about the extent to which WATIH has achieved its outcomes in support of USAID's intended objectives as they relate to increased private sector capacity and improved enabling environment for trade and trade facilitation.*

- a. How well has the Trade Hub made progress in implementing activities? (Ask about each separately and record response):
  1. Improved buyer and seller intermediation?
  2. Expanded use of grades and standards?
  3. Increased access to and use of market information?
  4. Increase access to and use of financial services?
  5. Improved competitiveness of the transport and logistics sector?
  6. Reduced legal and regulatory barriers to trade?
- b. What were the elements of Trade Hub assistance that proved most effective in achieving those results? Why?
- c. Can you describe one activity, such as training or technical assistance, that exemplifies the Trade Hub's impact?
- d. To what extent does the current management structure of the project support effective implementation? (for our purposes, effective means implementing activities in a cost-effective manner).
- e. How do you view the Trade Hub's relationship with ECOWAS and UEMOA?
- f. What is your perception of how WATIH activities compare to other donor, either USG or non-USG, activity in the region, particularly with a focus on increasing private sector capacity and the enabling environment for trade and trade facilitation?

## **VIII. Key Challenges Faced and Strategies Employed (~30 minutes)**

**Transition:** *I would like to now focus on some of the challenges you have faced in implementation and also get your perspective on the sustainability of your support to partners in the region.*

- i. (What challenges did the Trade Hub encounter that impeded effective implementation of Trade Hub activities? If so, can you please describe?
  7. Improved buyer and seller intermediation?
  8. Expanded use of grades and standards?
  9. Increased access to and use of market information?
  10. Increase access to and use of financial services?
  
  11. Improved competitiveness of the transport and logistics sector?
  12. Reduced legal and regulatory barriers to trade?
- j. What measures did the Trade Hub take to deal with these impediments, and were they successful?
- k. What are the possible lessons learned that might be taken into account in design / implementation of future trade promotion assistance activities?
- l. To what extent have selected partners like the ACA, GSA and Borderless Alliance supported through USAID trade portfolio become effective and sustainable regional institutions? What more can be done to ensure sustainability?

- m. What activities do you think should be scaled up or scaled down in order to maximize project results during the remainder of its implementation?
- n. What is the value-added of the Trade Hub? (i.e. What would not exist if the Trade Hub did not continue?)
- o. Do you have any additional recommendations that you'd like to share with USAID about future program implementation?
- p. Is there anything that you'd like to share or are there other questions that I should have asked but didn't?

## KII Topic Guide – USAID/USG Staff (KII B)

**This Topic Guide is intended for use in field research with representatives of USAID and USG staff. This evaluation will assess the effectiveness of the Trade Hubs' technical assistance projects, embedded within the Trade Hubs' broader mission, and further, will inform USAID's future decisions on trade programming and suggest whether support to selected private sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions and is meeting private-sector demands for greater technical support and information and successfully advocating for improved enabling environments for the supported value chains. It should be followed as closely as possible to **guide** key informant interviews with these respondents. There are a few questions where a specific set of responses are provided in order to assist in the collection of data that can be more easily quantified. Instructions to the interviewer are in red.**

### II. Introduction (~3 minutes)

- a. Thank the respondent for taking the time to participate in the interview
- b. Introduction to the researcher and the research
  4. Introduce yourself: I am a Consultant residing in \_\_\_\_\_. I represent an evaluation team fielded by Management Systems International, a Washington DC based firm that has been contracted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to conduct an independent evaluation of the USAID WATIH program.
  5. As part of its own planning for the next few years, USAID has asked us to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the program to assess its progress toward achieving its objectives. So, what we are trying to evaluate are the strengths and weaknesses of the program, its accomplishments but also its shortcomings, best practices and how it can be more effective and better aligned with future USAID trade programs.
  6. Research will be used to ascertain the extent to which the trade portfolio activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability, and empowerment of local West African partners. It will also be used to propose recommendations based on the findings to inform future trade programming by USAID/WA, regional partners, and other donors.
- c. Description of the objectives of the discussion
  4. Obtain information on the perceptions and views of various key respondents.
  5. Understand better the issues and challenges faced by USAID WATIH and its partners.
  6. Document successes, best practices, lessons learned and ascertain the extent to which WATIH activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability and empowerment of local West African partners
- d. We will follow privacy protocols to protect your anonymity [interviewers will be trained to be compliant with USAID policy in regards to the "USG Common Rule" for the protection of human subjects]:
  1. Explain confidentiality and anonymity and note whether the respondent would like to remain anonymous, and that the assessment team will ask permission if would like to use a quote from the respondent in the final report.
  2. Explain how collected data will be stored without identifying information.
  3. Ask if the respondent is willing to be recorded and note their response.
- e. Explain recording, length and nature of discussion
- f. Check whether respondents have any questions.



## II. Background Information (~ 2 minutes)

### a. Respondent

4. Position
5. Length of time at current position
6. Can you please describe your job, and your unit within the public sector organization?

## III. USAID and USG Overall Perspective of WATIH (~30 minutes)

**Transition:** *I would like to spend a little time speaking with you about the extent to which WATIH has achieved its in support of USAID's intended objectives...*

- g. How would you describe your interaction with the WATIH implementation team? Has there been regular dialogue?
- h. Describe for us your perspective on the activities that have been implemented by WATIH. What outcomes have you observed?
- i. To what extent does the current management and structure of the project support effective (achievement of activities in cost-effective manner) implementation?
  2. How do you assess the project's approach in determining needs?
- j. What changes have you observed amongst Trade Hub partners over the last two years?
  2. Specifically, how have the ACA, Borderless Alliance, and GSA changed?
- k. How do you view WATIH's relationship with ECOWAS, UEMOA, and national governments? (This includes CILLS and RESIMAO who are both part of ECOWAS)
- l. Taking into account the level-of-effort or other project expenditures on various Trade Hub export promotion and value chain support assistance elements, which would you say were the most cost-effective in producing tangible and sustainable results? Why?

## IV. Impact of WATIH Activities (~25 minutes)

**Transition:** *I would like to now focus on the impact of WATIH activities in the region and the feedback you have received from beneficiaries and partners and also get your perspective on the sustainability of WATIH support to partners in the region.*

- a. (What challenges did the Trade Hub encounter that impeded effective implementation of Trade Hub activities? If so, can you please describe?
  1. Improved buyer and seller intermediation?
  2. Expanded use of grades and standards?
  3. Increased access to and use of market information?
  4. Increase access to and use of financial services?
  5. Improved competitiveness of the transport and logistics sector?
  6. Reduced legal and regulatory barriers to trade?
- b. What changes in WATIH would add value and increase effectiveness?
- c. What activities do you think should be scaled up or scaled down in order to maximize project results during the remainder of its implementation?
- d. How well has the Trade Hub engaged different groups? (Ask this, and then ask about the following specific stakeholder categories and examples):
  4. Demographic (geographic, age, gender, other various and diverse groups)
  5. Sector (various trade sectors relevant targeted value chains)
  6. Regional (various groups that have more regional representation)
- e. How well known is WATIH amongst the local (national) government stakeholders with whom you communicate?
- f. What is the reputation of the Trade Hub among the USG and other Embassies in the region?
- g. In what ways could the Trade Hub better coordinate with other trade-related donor-funded activities in the region?

- h. To what extent do you think the Trade Hub has contributed to enhanced donor coordination in the area of trade programs?
- i. How well do you think the Trade Hub contract mechanism has facilitated partnerships and trade outcomes compared to:
  - i. Direct contracting of individual activities?
  - ii. Direct grants to partners from USAID and the USG?
  - iii. Support through local governments?
  - iv. Support through pre-existing regional organizations?
- j. What is your perception of how WATIH activities compare to other donor, either USG or non-USG, activity in the region, particularly with a focus on increasing private sector capacity and the enabling environment for trade and trade facilitation?
- k. Overall, what is your judgment of the value of this project?
- l. Do you have any additional recommendations that you'd like to share with USAID about future program implementation?
- m. Is there anything that you'd like to share or are there other questions that I should have asked but didn't?

**II. Conclusion:**

- Thank the respondent for their time.
- Tell the respondent they are welcome to contact you to ask questions at a later date.

Ask permission of the respondent to use their name in the report if you might use a quote. Note their response: \_\_\_\_\_

## KII Topic Guide - Regional Economic Community Partner Staff (KII C)

This Topic Guide is intended for use in field research with representatives of the RECs namely; ECOWAS and UEMOA. This evaluation will assess the effectiveness of the Trade Hubs' technical assistance projects, embedded within the Trade Hubs' broader mission, and further, will inform USAID's future decisions on trade programming and suggest whether support to selected private and public sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions and is meeting private-sector demands for greater technical support and information and successfully advocating for improved enabling environments for the supported value chains. It should be followed as closely as possible to guide key informant interviews with these respondents. There are a few questions where a specific set of responses are provided in order to assist in the collection of data that can be more easily quantified. Instructions to the interviewer are in red.

### VI. Introduction (~3 minutes)

- a. Thank the respondent for taking the time to participate in the interview
- b. Introduction to the researcher and the research
  - iv. Introduce yourself: I am a Consultant residing in \_\_\_\_\_. I represent an evaluation team fielded by Management Systems International, a Washington DC based firm that has been contracted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to conduct an independent evaluation of the USAID WATIH program.
  - v. As part of its own planning for the next few years, USAID has asked us to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the program to assess its progress toward achieving its objectives. So, what we are trying to evaluate are the strengths and weaknesses of the program, its accomplishments but also its shortcomings, best practices and how it can be more effective and better aligned with future USAID trade programs.
  - vi. Research will be used to ascertain the extent to which the trade portfolio activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability, and empowerment of local West African partners. It will also be used to propose recommendations based on the findings to inform future trade programming by USAID/WA, regional partners, and other donors.
- c. Description of the objectives of the discussion
  - iv. Obtain information on the perceptions and views of various key respondents.
  - v. Understand better the issues and challenges faced by USAID WATIH and its partners.
  - vi. Document successes, best practices, lessons learned and ascertain the extent to which WATIH activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability and empowerment of local West African partners
- d. We will follow privacy protocols to protect your anonymity [interviewers will be trained to be compliant with USAID policy in regards to the "USG Common Rule" for the protection of human subjects]:
  - i. Explain confidentiality and anonymity and note whether the respondent would like to remain anonymous, and that the assessment team will ask permission if would like to use a quote from the respondent in the final report.
  - ii. Explain how collected data will be stored without identifying information.
  - iii. Ask if the respondent is willing to be recorded and note their response.
- e. Explain recording, length and nature of discussion
- f. Check whether respondents have any questions.

## **VII. Background Information (~ 2 minutes)**

- a. Role of Respondent
  4. Position
  5. How long have you been at this organization?
  6. What is the extent of your involvement with the WATIH project?

## **VIII. Overall Perspective on WATIH Activities (~30 minutes)**

**Transition:** *I would like to spend a little time speaking with you about the extent to which WATIH has achieved its in support of USAID's intended objectives.*

- a. Describe your relationship with WATIH.
  2. In what ways can WATIH improve this partnership?
- b. How would you describe your interaction with the WATIH implementation team? Has there been regular dialogue?
- c. Describe for us your perspective on the activities that have been implemented by WATIH. What outcomes have you observed?
- d. Do you think these results would have been achieved even without the project's involvement?
  - i. Yes/No – please explain.
- e. How has the Trade Hub's export promotion assistance contributed to trade facilitation capacity within the targeted value chains? (i.e. livestock, rice, maize, millet, sorghum, shea, cashews, mango, apparel)
  - i. Have exports increased for the firms since partnering with WATIH? Describe significant elements that may have contributed to this increase.
- f. How have you found the quality of the personnel at WATIH, or provided by WATIH to the institution? Please explain.
- g. How has trainings and dissemination of information provided by WATIH affected the work of your partner organizations?
- h. How has WATIH supported the RECs in domesticating regional protocols amongst member states?

## **IX. Impact of WATIH Activities (~25 minutes)**

**Transition:** *I would like to now focus on the impact of WATIH activities in the region and the feedback you have received from beneficiaries and partners and also get your perspective on the sustainability of WATIH support to partners in the region.*

- a. Have the national Governments been responsive to WATIH activities?
  - i. How have they viewed this support from USAID?
- b. What is the reputation of the Trade Hub among the public sector in the member states? (How is WATIH viewed by the public sector?)
- c. To what extent do you think the Trade Hub has contributed to enhanced donor coordination in the area of trade programs?
- d. To what extent have selected partners like the ACA, GSA and Borderless Alliance supported through USAID trade portfolio become effective and sustainable regional institutions? What more can be done to ensure sustainability?
- e. What activities do you think should be scaled up or scaled down in order to maximize project results during the remainder of its implementation?
- f. In ways could WATIH add more value and increase effectiveness to the work of ECOWAS and UEMOA?
- g. What would you recommend for the Trade Hub for future activities?

- h. Do you have any additional recommendations that you'd like to share with USAID about future program implementation?
- i. Is there anything that you'd like to share or are there other questions that I should have asked but didn't?

**X. Conclusion:**

- Thank the respondent for their time.
- Tell the respondent they are welcome to contact you to ask questions at a later date.

Ask permission of the respondent to use their name in the report if you might use a quote. Note their response: \_\_\_\_\_

## KII Topic Guide – Private Sector Partners/Beneficiaries (KII D)

**This Topic Guide is intended for use in field research with representatives of the main private sector partners and other beneficiaries and non partner stakeholders. This evaluation will assess the effectiveness of the Trade Hubs’ technical assistance projects, embedded within the Trade Hubs’ broader mission, and further, will inform USAID’s future decisions on trade programming and suggest whether support to selected private sector partners in the targeted value chains has created effective and sustainable regional institutions and is meeting private-sector demands for greater technical support and information and successfully advocating for improved enabling environments for the supported value chains. It should be followed as closely as possible to **guide key informant interviews with these respondents. There are a few questions where a specific set of responses are provided in order to assist in the collection of data that can be more easily quantified. Instructions to the interviewer are in red.****

### I. Introduction (~2 minutes)

- a. Thank the respondent for taking the time to participate in the interview
- b. Introduction to the researcher and the research
  - i. Introduce yourself: I am a Consultant residing in \_\_\_\_\_. I represent an evaluation team fielded by Management Systems International, a Washington DC based firm that has been contracted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to conduct an independent evaluation of the USAID WATIH program.
  - ii. As part of its own planning for the next few years, USAID has asked us to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the program to assess its progress toward achieving its objectives. So, what we are trying to evaluate are the strengths and weaknesses of the program, its accomplishments but also its shortcomings, best practices and how it can be more effective and better aligned with future USAID trade programs.
  - iii. Research will be used to ascertain the extent to which the trade portfolio activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability, and empowerment of local West African partners. It will also be used to propose recommendations based on the findings to inform future trade programming by USAID/WA, regional partners, and other donors.
- c. Description of the objectives of the discussion
  - vii. Obtain information on the perceptions and views of various key respondents.
  - viii. Understand better the issues and challenges faced by USAID WATIH and its partners.
  - ix. Document successes, best practices, lessons learned and ascertain the extent to which WATIH activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability and empowerment of local West African partners
- d. We will follow privacy protocols to protect your anonymity [interviewers will be trained to be compliant with USAID policy in regards to the "USG Common Rule" for the protection of human subjects]:
  - i. Explain confidentiality and anonymity and note whether the respondent would like to remain anonymous, and that the assessment team will ask permission if would like to use a quote from the respondent in the final report.
  - ii. Explain how collected data will be stored without identifying information.
  - iii. Ask if the respondent is willing to be recorded and note their response.
- e. Explain recording, length and nature of discussion
- f. Check whether respondents have any questions.

## II. Background Information (~ 3 minutes)

- a. Respondent
  1. Position/Role
  2. Length of time with the organization
  3. Can you please describe your job and unit within the organization/firm (as it relates to the Trade Hub)?

## III. Activities implemented with WATIH and Other Donors (~ 20 minutes)

### Work with WATIH:

- a. How long has your organization been working with the Trade Hub?
  1. What are the key activities in which you have participated/lead with the support of WATIH within the last two years.
  2. How have these activities contributed/contribute to the achievement of your organization's objectives and development?
  3. **For businesses/firms: What were your sales (in value or volume) prior to working with WATIH?**
    - i. **What are they now?**
    - ii. **How influential was WATIH in this change?**
  4. What are lessons learned regarding your experience with the WATIH project?

### Work with other donors:

- b. How would you compare your organization's experience with the Trade Hub and other donors/NGOs with whom you have worked within the last two years (within trade promotion and private sector capacity improvement)?

**Prompt:** Names of specific donors and what support was provided through this.
- c. What, if anything, could the Trade Hub learn from these other donors and/or projects?
- d. What, if anything, could the Trade Hub teach these other donors and/or projects? What is the reputation of the Trade Hub here in [COUNTRY]?
- e. How, if at all, would you recommend the Trade Hub adjust its programming to better meet the needs of businesses in West Africa?

## IV. Institutional Work (~ 20 minutes), trade specific actors

**Transition:** *I would like to spend a little time speaking with you about your organization and its own work as they relate to trade and/or value chains.*

- a. How involved has your organization been in attempting to export or trade across borders both regionally and to markets outside of West Africa? **(If not involved in trade, skip next question).**
- b. What are the key challenges your organization faces in exporting?
  1. How do you think the trade hub has addressed these challenges?
- c. What have you done to engage new support partners within this portfolio (trade promotion and private sector capacity improvement)?
- d. How diverse is your beneficiary base? **(Beneficiaries = (for firms, beneficiaries are suppliers, employees; for associations, beneficiaries are members)**

**Prompt:** Demographic (geographic, age, gender, other groups), sector, regional groups?
- e. What are some institutional capacity challenges that your organization has faced in past two years?

- f. In terms of your institutional capacity, what support has WATIH provided? [**Prompt if necessary: training, staffing, advisory support, financial support, organizational development**]
- g. Has this support adequately addressed your challenges?
- h. Are there one or two institutional issues still facing your organization right now that are especially important?
- i. Are there any additional recommendations you'd like to share with WATIH?
- j. What are recommendations you'd like to share with USAID for its larger trade programming?
- k. Is there anything else you'd like to share?

**Conclusion:**

- Thank the respondent for their time.
- Tell the respondent they are welcome to contact you to ask questions at a later date.

Ask permission of the respondent to use their name in the report if you might use a quote. Note their response: \_\_\_\_\_.



## KII Topic Guide – Public Sector Stakeholders (KII E)

This Topic Guide is intended for use in field research with representatives from public sector bilateral agencies responsible for providing services or supporting policies related to trade facilitation/ customs or regional economic communities (RECs) that support trade policy implementation at the national level. These include agencies like the Ministries of Trade, key trade related sector Ministries and Departments, revenue authorities, standards agencies, and trade and investment support institutions. It should be followed as closely as possible to guide KIIs with these respondents. There are a few questions where a specific set of responses are provided in order to assist in the collection of data that can be more easily quantified. Instructions to the interviewer are in red.

### I. Introduction (~2 minutes)

- a. Thank the respondent for taking the time to participate in the interview
- b. Introduction to the researcher and the research
  - i. Introduce yourself: I am a Consultant residing in \_\_\_\_\_. I represent an evaluation team fielded by Management Systems International, a Washington DC based firm that has been contracted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to conduct an independent evaluation of the USAID WATIH program.
  - ii. As part of its own planning for the next few years, USAID has asked us to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the program to assess its progress toward achieving its objectives. So, what we are trying to evaluate are the strengths and weaknesses of the program, its accomplishments but also its shortcomings, best practices and how it can be more effective and better aligned with future USAID trade programs.
  - iii. Research will be used to ascertain the extent to which the trade portfolio activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability, and empowerment of local West African partners. It will also be used to propose recommendations based on the findings to inform future trade programming by USAID/WA, regional partners, and other donors.
- c. Description of the objectives of the discussion
  - i. Understand better the challenges faced by the government in supporting trade facilitation.
  - ii. Understand better what the stakeholder views as the most important steps that could be taken to make trading across borders easier and why.
  - iii. Document successes, best practices, lessons learned and ascertain the extent to which WATIH activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability and empowerment of local West African partners
- d. We will follow these privacy protocols to protect your anonymity if you prefer not to be quoted [interviewers will be trained to be compliant with USAID policy in regards to the "USG Common Rule" for the protection of human subjects]:
  - i. Explain confidentiality and anonymity and note whether the respondent would like to remain anonymous, and that the assessment team will ask permission if would like to use a quote from the respondent in the final report.
  - ii. Explain how collected data will be stored without identifying information.
  - iii. Ask if the respondent is willing to be recorded and note their response.

- e. Explain recording, length and nature of discussion.
- f. Check whether respondents have any questions.

## II. Background Information (~ 3 minutes)

- a. Respondent
  1. Position/Role
  2. Length of time with the ministry/agency
  3. Can you please describe your job and unit within the organization/firm?
- b. What role does your Agency play in trade promotion and regional integration?

## III. Activities implemented with WATIH and Other Donors (~ 20 minutes)

- a. Tell me about activities in which you have participated/lead with the support of WATIH within the last two years?
- b. How have these activities contributed/contribute to the achievement of your Government's objectives of trade promotion and development?
- c. How would you compare your organization's experience with the Trade Hub and other donors/NGOs with whom you have worked within the last two years (within trade promotion and private sector capacity improvement)?
 

**Prompt:** Names of specific donors and what support was provided through this.
- d. What, if anything, could the Trade Hub learn from these other organizations?
- e. What, if anything, could the Trade Hub teach these other organizations?
- f. How does your agency coordinate national implementation of Hub activities?
- g. How does your agency coordinate the various activities being implemented by the various donors with which you work?
- h. Are there any partners (**trade associations, alliances, etc.**) you are working with that USAID should also be working with?

## IV. Institutional Work (~ 20 minutes)

**Transition:** *I would like to spend a little time speaking with you about your organization and its own work as they relate to trade and/or value chains.*

- a. ~~How involved has your agency been in attempting to export or trade across borders both regionally and to markets outside of West Africa?~~
- b. What are the biggest challenges faced in your country for those wishing to export?
- c. In what ways has your organization worked with the Trade Hub in addressing some of these key challenges?
  1. Has WATIH provided any institutional capacity development or technical assistance to deal with these challenges?
- d. What is the value-add of the Trade Hub? What would not exist without the Trade Hub?
- e. How, if at all, would you recommend the Trade Hub adjust its programming in its next iteration?
- f. Are there any additional recommendations you'd like to share with WATIH?
- g. What are recommendations you'd like to share with USAID?
- h. Is there anything else you'd like to share?

### Conclusion:

- Thank the respondent for their time.
- Tell the respondent they are welcome to contact you to ask questions at a later date.

Ask permission of the respondent to use their name in the report if you might use a quote. Note their response: \_\_\_\_\_.

## KII Topic Guide – Other International Donors (KII F)

This Topic Guide is intended for use in field research with representatives of international donors, as well as independent trade policy experts and academics. It should be followed as closely as possible to guide KIIs with these respondents. There are a few questions where a specific set of responses are provided in order to assist in the collection of data that can be more easily quantified. Instructions to the interviewer are in red.

### I. Introduction (~2 minutes)

- a. Thank the respondent for taking the time to participate in the interview
- b. Introduction to the researcher and the research
  - Introduce yourself: I am a Consultant residing in \_\_\_\_\_. I represent an evaluation team fielded by Management Systems International, a Washington DC based firm that has been contracted by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to conduct an independent evaluation of the USAID WATIH program.
  - As part of its own planning for the next few years, USAID has asked us to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the program to assess its progress toward achieving its objectives. So, what we are trying to evaluate are the strengths and weaknesses of the program, its accomplishments but also its shortcomings, best practices and how it can be more effective and better aligned with future USAID trade programs.
  - Research will be used to ascertain the extent to which the trade portfolio activities have advanced effectiveness, sustainability, and empowerment of local West African partners. It will also be used to propose recommendations based on the findings to inform future trade programming by USAID/WA, regional partners, and other donors.
- c. Description of the objectives of the discussion
  - Understand better what other donors are doing in the region as it relates to trade and investment
  - Understand the perceptions and views of independent experts of the work of the Hub and generate ideas that could be used to better enhance the effectiveness of the work of the Hub
  - Explore existing research and other processes underway that might be relevant for this survey.
- d. We will follow these privacy protocols to protect your anonymity if you prefer not to be quoted [interviewers will be trained to be compliant with USAID policy in regards to the "USG Common Rule" for the protection of human subjects]:
  - Explain confidentiality and anonymity and note whether the respondent would like to remain anonymous, and that the assessment team will ask permission if would like to use a quote from the respondent in the final report.
  - Explain how collected data will be stored without identifying information.
  - Ask if the respondent is willing to be recorded and note their response.
- e. Explain recording, length and nature of discussion.
- f. Check whether respondents have any questions.

### II. Background Information (~ 3 minutes)

- a. Role of Respondent

1. Position/Role
2. Length of time with the organization
3. Can you please describe your job and unit within the organization/firm?

### III. Current Areas of Support (~ 30 minutes)

**Transition:** *I would like to spend a little time speaking with you about your experience studying/researching/working on trade promotion and value chain development*

- a. Can you please describe briefly your current programs on trade promotion or value chain development?
  1. Project name:
  2. Type of Activity:
  3. Value chains covered:
  4. Countries covered:
- b. What are the key constraints to growth in the value chains that your project supports?
  1. How is your project addressing these constraints?
- c. How would you compare your activities with other donor activities within the same sector?
  1. Are there specific activities that you'd like to highlight?
- d. How well do you know the WATIH project?
  1. How do you interact and how often?
- e. What value-add do you think they bring?
- f. What weaknesses do you see in the WATIH approach?
- g. **GIZ: Talk about your activities specific to the ACA? /DFID and EU: Talk about your specific activities to BA (or other specific activities)?**
- h. **To what extent has this alliance become an effective and sustainable regional institution?**
- i. Are there any partners (**trade associations, alliances, etc.**) you are working with that USAID should also be working with?

### IV. Lessons Learned/Recommendations (~30 minutes)

**Transition:** *Thank you very much for all of that information. I would like to switch topics a bit and speak to you about some of the specific lessons learned that would help enhance future trade programming by USAID and other donor partners.*

- a. How do you assess donor coordination in the field of trade promotion/VC development? [What are the coordination bodies? How well do they function?]
- b. How much do you think USAID participates in coordination activities?
- c. What recommendations would you make for better coordination?
- d. Are there any additional recommendations you'd like to share with WATIH?
- e. What are recommendations you'd like to share with USAID for its larger trade promotion agenda?
- f. Is there anything else you'd like to share?

#### Conclusion:

- Thank the respondent for their time.
- Tell the respondent they are welcome to contact you to ask questions at a later date.

Ask permission of the respondent to use their name in the report if you might use a quote. Note their response: \_\_\_\_\_.

# ANNEX D: FGD GUIDE

## Informed Consent Form

You are invited to participate in these Focus Group Discussions as part of the performance evaluation of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) West Africa Trade and Investment Hub (WATIH). Thank you for agreeing to participate. We are very interested to hear your valuable opinion on how the WATIH Program can be further enhanced and improved. This performance evaluation is being conducted independently by the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project, which is funded by USAID and implemented by Management Systems International (MSI) and Palladium.

### Evaluation Purpose

In collaboration with the West Africa Mission (USAID/WA), the Office of Trade and Regulatory Reform in USAID's Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (USAID/E3/TRR) has commissioned a mid-term performance evaluation of WATIH activities. The purpose of this mid-term evaluation is to assess and document the extent to which WATIH has achieved its objectives and to inform USAID's future decisions on trade programming. The evaluation will also suggest whether support to private sector partners has created effective and sustainable regional institutions and is meeting private-sector demands for greater technical support and information and successfully advocating for improved enabling environments for the supported value chains.

### Participation

Your participation in this evaluation is entirely voluntary. You can choose not to participate at all or to leave the group discussion at any time without any consequences.

You are being asked to participate in this evaluation because you have been identified as a knowledgeable stakeholder for WATIH implementation activities and can provide insight into the Project that may help answer the evaluation questions.

The purpose of this Focus Group and any follow-on interviews will be to collect primary data as well as to provide answers to the evaluation questions as well as inform the next phase of data collection including determining key informants and site selection. There are no right or wrong answers. Rather, we want to have an open and honest conversation about your experiences, perceptions, and thoughts on the Trade Hub and related activities. Each discussion should last about 60 minutes. The discussion moderator and facilitators will take notes as well as record the discussion, should you provide your consent in the box on the following page. Recording is not a requirement for participation, and these recordings will solely be used by the evaluation team for accuracy and analysis purposes. The recordings will not be shared outside of the E3 Analytics and Evaluation Project (Project Team).

What you say during the discussion will remain completely anonymous unless you provide your explicit consent to be identified. Identifying information about you may be collected, but will not be shared with a third party outside of the Project Team. And any identifying information will be de-identified when shared unless you separately provide your consent to being identified.

Data for this evaluation will be kept in both paper and digital formats. Access to both the paper and digital data will be protected. Only members of the Project Team will have access to the data. De-identified data may be shared with stakeholders and interested parties outside of the Project Team.

While you may not experience any direct benefits from participation, information collected in this evaluation will benefit others in the future as this evaluation will serve to inform USAID's future programming related to the West Africa Trade and Investment Hub.

If you have any questions regarding the focus group discussion or this evaluation in general, please contact the evaluation team leader, Trevor Simumba via email at [tsimumba@gmail.com](mailto:tsimumba@gmail.com), or the evaluation deputy team lead, Yarri Kamara at [yarri.kamara@outlook.com](mailto:yarri.kamara@outlook.com).

By taking part in this focus group discussion, you are indicating your consent to participate in this evaluation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I: I consent to this and subsequent interviews being recorded:

- Yes
- No

**For Evaluation Team:**

Place where Focus Group Discussion was conducted:

- Location

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Discussion: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Focus Group Discussion Guidelines (Trade and Transport facilitation, Cereals value chain, Livestock Value Chain, Mango value chain and Apparels value chain) – Groups that are part of FGDs may not have necessarily had direct interaction with WATIH.**

Key highlights about focus groups:

- We learn from you (positive and negative)
  - Open conversation: no right answers, respect for all perspectives
  - Not trying to achieve consensus, we're gathering information
  - No virtue in long lists: we're looking for priorities
1. I'd like to go around and ask each of you to think back to the activities that WATIH implemented within your organization/institution. What did you think of these activities? What was good and what was bad?
  2. What do you think has been the contribution of WATIH to improving regional Private Sector Competitiveness in Targeted Sectors i.e. the value chains in Ghana and the sub region?  
OR
    - a. How do you think private sector competitiveness has improved over the last couple of years?
    - b. How has the trade environment changed?
  3. How would you compare your experience with the WATIH (or the alliance/association with which they are members) and other donors/NGOs with whom you have worked with in the last two years (within trade promotion and private sector capacity improvement)? Could you give examples of specific donors and type of support that was provided?
  4. In terms of your institutional capacity, how has [the leadership of] your organization been able to address challenges? How much of this can be attributed to support provided by WATIH (or alliance/association)? Has WATIH enabled your various organizations to become more sustainable? **[Prompt if necessary: training, staffing, advisory support, financial support, organizational development]**
  6. Where would you like to see your organization in 5 years? 10 years? What is your organization doing now to ensure you get there? What kind of support would enable you to get there? (sustainability)
  7. If WATIH ended tomorrow, how would your organization's operations change?
  8. What recommendations would you make to WATIH? USAID? Other donors (if no interaction with WATIH or USAID)
  9. Suppose you had a chance to talk for five minutes with the WATIH leadership. What would use your five minutes to discuss?

For Borderless Alliance:

- In the past two years, have you noticed any changes in the procedures involved for border crossing the border?
  - What are the ways that your organization has changed in the past two years? How much of a role did WATIH play in those changes?
  - Where do you think WATIH can best provide support? (i.e. policy advocacy, regulatory reform, capacity building, technical assistance, etc.)
10. What other general comments would you like to make on WATIH?

## ANNEX E: BORDER INFORMATION CENTER AND ATRC OBSERVATION GUIDE

The goal of observational data would be to obtain information directly from activity sites rather than from recollection and perception. Observational data would help provide additional context and serve as a way to check details that may come up during KIs or FGDs. The structured observation instrument would contain **open-ended questions** for the evaluation team to make general, “unstructured” observations about onsite activity implementation.

We are working under a very tight time schedule and we would expect that you would not have more than a few hours to spend at the border. Much of your work will be to observe what is going on at the border generally but specifically to also observe the activities at the Border Information Centre. Look out for a sign and any other prominent display information. If not this should be a point of observation. The following would be your key checklist:

1. Conduct key interviews with key stakeholders at the borders to ask general questions on whether they are aware of the information centre and if yes whether they utilize it to obtain information. Do they know about USAID and/or the WATIH project?
2. What are the opening hours of the centre? Does it keep a record of traders and others who use it to get information?
3. What reporting, information sharing and technologies do they use and how adequate are these?
4. Identify key products you can see moving across the border. How much can you observe is formal and going through normal customs procedures and how much seems informal that is, people carrying goods on bicycles, consolidation of cargo onto smaller vehicles and once it is across pack them back into big trucks
5. Ask about some of the key constraints to cross-border trade? Are traders aware of ECOWAS Trade Liberalisation Scheme (ETLS)? Specifically identify key constraints that affect women cross border traders.
6. How best can WATIH and USAID enhance the activities of the Information Centres?

### ATRC Mystery Shopping Guide

#### STEP 1:

What is the process for finding and entering the ATRC?

#### STEP 2:

Introduce yourself as interested in the ATRC, AGOA, and exports.

#### Step 3: General questions

2. What do I need to do to export dried mango to the US?
3. Is there a directory of US buyers? Do you know how big the market is for dried fruits?
4. What is available at the Center to help me? Is there someone that can help me?
5. Are there any producers in the region that are exporting similar products? I'd like to talk to them to see what their experience has been like.



## **ANNEX F: WATIH PROJECT DOCUMENTS REVIEWED**

- West Africa Trade and Investment Hub contract, including all modifications
- West Africa Trade and Investment Hub monitoring and evaluation plan and indicator table
- West Africa Trade and Investment Hub annual work plans
- USAID West Africa Feed the Future strategy
- USAID West Africa Regional Development Cooperation Strategy
- West Africa and Investment Hub 2014 Draft PMP and 2015 PMP
- Miscellaneous reports prepared by the West Africa Trade Hub
- Partner Selection and Assessment Report
- Cashew Value Chain Assessment Report
- Sesame Value Chain Assessment Report
- Honey Value Chain Assessment Report
- Apparel Value Chain Assessment Report
- Rice Value Chain Assessment Report
- Millet and sorghum Value Chain Assessment Report
- Sorghum Value Chain Assessment Report
- Livestock Value Chain Assessment Report
- Mango Value Chain Assessment Report
- Shea Value Chain Assessment Report
- Maize Value Chain Assessment Report
- Value Chain Strategy document
- Market Information Systems Supply and Demand Analysis
- Transport and Trade Enabling Environment Assessment
- West Africa Trade Hub Annual Report (October 14 – September 15)
- Borderless Alliance Fixed Obligating Grant
- Global Shea Alliance FOG
- Global Shea Alliance GDA

## ANNEX G: KEY INFORMANTS INTERVIEWED

The table below summarizes the anonymized role of the KII respondents, their sector, and the location of the interviews.

Title/Role	Sector	Location
AGOA coordinator	AGOA	Burkina Faso
AGOA coordinator	AGOA	Burkina Faso
AGOA coordinator	AGOA	Cameroon
AGOA coordinator	AGOA	Cote d'Ivoire
AGOA coordinator	AGOA	Nigeria
AGOA coordinator	AGOA	Senegal
Director	Apparel	Benin
Director	Apparel	Ghana
Director	Apparel	Ghana
Director	Apparel	Ghana
Director	Apparel	Ghana
Director	Cashew	Burkina Faso
Director	Cashew	Burkina Faso
Director	Cashew	Ghana
Accountant and finance director	Cashew	Ghana
Director	Cereal	Benin
President	Cereal	Burkina Faso
National Coordinator	Cereal	Burkina Faso
Program Manager	Cereal	Cote d'Ivoire
Executive Chair	Cereal	Ghana
Outreach Coordinator	Cereal	Ghana
Executive Secretary	Cereal	Togo
Financial Advisor	Finance	Cote d'Ivoire
Financial Advisor	Finance	Ghana
Financial Advisor	Finance	Ghana
Financial Advisor	Finance	Ghana
Secretary	Livestock	Burkina Faso
Country Representative	Livestock	Burkina Faso
President	Livestock	Cote d'Ivoire
Managing Director	Mango	Ghana
Chairman	Mango	Ghana
Director	Regional organization	Burkina Faso
Head of Research	Regional organization	Ghana
Director	Regional organization	Nigeria
Program officer	Regional organization	Nigeria
Director	Regional organization	Nigeria
Senior Advisor	Regional organization	Nigeria
Director	Shea	Benin
Technical Coordinator	Shea	Burkina Faso
Supply Chain Manager	Shea	Ghana
National Director	Shea	Ghana
Associate Director	Shea	USA

<b>Title/Role</b>	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Location</b>
Sector Specialist	Trade Hub	Burkina Faso
Sector Specialist	Trade Hub	Burkina Faso
Sector Specialist	Trade Hub	Cote d'Ivoire
Sector Specialist	Trade Hub	Cote d'Ivoire
Program Manager	Trade Hub	Cote d'Ivoire
Sector Specialist	Trade Hub	Ghana
Sector Specialist	Trade Hub	Ghana
Manager	Trade Hub	Ghana
M&E Specialist	Trade Hub	Ghana
Chief of Party	Trade Hub	Ghana
Sector Specialist	Trade Hub	Ghana
Activity Coordinator	Trade Hub	Ghana
Sector Specialist	Trade Hub	Ghana
Sector Specialist	Trade Hub	Ghana
M&E Specialist	Trade Hub	Ghana
Sector Specialist	Trade Hub	Ghana
Deputy Chief of Party	Trade Hub	Ghana
Communications Specialist	Trade Hub	Ghana
Team Leader	Trade Hub	Ghana
Sector Specialist	Trade Hub	Ghana
M&E Specialist	Trade Hub	USA
Chief of Party	Regional organization	USA
Executive Secretary	Transportation	Ghana
Sector Specialist	Transportation	Ghana
Program Officer	Transportation	Nigeria
Program Manager	USG	Burkina Faso
Program Specialist	USG	Burkina Faso
Agriculture Officer	USG	Burkina Faso
Economic and Commercial Officer	USG	Chad
Sector Specialist	USG	Cote d'Ivoire
Economic Growth Officer	USG	Cote d'Ivoire
Sector Specialist	USG	Ghana
Sector Specialist	USG	Ghana
Program Manager	USG	Ghana
Regional Agriculture Manager	USG	Ghana
Program Manager	USG	Nigeria
Office Director	USG	Nigeria
Office Director	USG	Ghana
Program Management Specialist	USG	Ghana
Sector Specialist	Value chains	Burkina Faso
Director	Value chains	Cote d'Ivoire
Director	Value chains	Ghana
Director	Value chains	Ghana
Director	Value chains	Ghana
Regional Coordinator	Value chains	Mali
Executive Secretary	Value chains	Niger
Sector President	Value chains	Niger

## ANNEX H: OCA CRITERIA

This OCA of the African Partners Network was carried out by a team of consultants, Kanava International, for the Trade Hub in July 2016. The team used the OCA tool as well as an Impact Strengthening Development tool established by Kanava, ISDTM. Kanava used the ISDTM tool and the OCA to assess the five partners in nine areas: Governance and Ethics, Administration, Human Resources Management, Financial Management, Organizational Management, Program Management, Project Performance Management, Leadership and Team Dynamics, and Organizational Sustainability. The scoring under ISDTM is “No = 0”, “In Process = 0.5”, and “Yes = 1”. The ISDTM result is then compared to a four-level ranking system to see how the organization scores. The result can be used to compare the five organizations assessed to see how they compare. The ISDTM assessment is a management tool, not an audit of the organization’s systems. There are no right or wrong answers.<sup>53</sup> The ISDTM tool can validate current practices and introduce new ideas that the organization may not have considered. It provokes discussion and contemplation of the way forward within the organization. Ultimately, the process leads to developing priorities to guide capacity building. The assessed organization should use it as a tool to strengthen its own capacity to be sustainable beyond its current reliance primarily on a single donor.

The table below compares the scores obtained through this OCA to the baseline scores gathered by the Trade Hub in May 2014. It is clear that the partners network organizations still have a long way to become self-sustaining and all five partners scored lowly (with the highest score at 4.3 for the ACA) in terms of sustainability.

OCA Category	Score on a 6-Point Scale				
	% Change from May 2014 (Baseline) to July 2016 (OCA score) Partners				
	BA	WAGN <sup>54</sup>	COFENABVI	ACA	RESIMAO
1. Governance	35	150	53	45	35
2. Administration	45	340	13	40	240
3. Human Resource Management	48	—	122	42	--
<b>4. Financial Management</b>	25	283	0	46	33
5. Service Delivery	83	225	17	25	50
6. External Relations	33	50	-25	17	33
<b>7. Sustainability</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>289%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>70%</b>

<sup>53</sup> Extracted from the African Partners Network OCA Reports of July 2016 from Annex A ‘Methodology for Assessment from page 14.

<sup>54</sup> WAGN showed an overall score increase of 289 percent. This high score was mainly a result of starting from a low baseline in 2014.

## ANNEX I: WATIH 2015-2016 REPORTED ACTIVITIES MATCHED TO IRS

Sector	Specifics	Country Breakdown	Organizations that Benefit	Page # in Document	IR
<b>General Activities (incl. grants, outreach, coordination)</b>					
Trade and Transport Enabling Environment	a. (1) addressing issues on four corridors; b.(1) hosted a "Fair on the Enabling Environment for ETLs Foods Crops"; c.(2) support the harmonization of transit procedures between Cote d'Ivoire and Mali and advocate for full implementation of the ISRT; d.(1) worked with partners to permanently remove road blocks for transit goods; e. (1) supported efforts to implement an e-platform for reporting non-tariff barriers (NTBs) along Tema-Ouagadougou corridor	b. Cote d'Ivoire	Borderless Alliance	p.9;12;16	2
Livestock	(4) worked with key livestock traders from Mali and Cote d'Ivoire to promote use of written contracts and weighing scales in their cross-border transactions, including several other activities: trade mission, preliminary test contract, second test contract	Mali and Cote d'Ivoire		p.25	1
Mango	(7) reviewed and approved seven in-kind grants to support key mango value chain partners	Burkina Faso, Ghana, Senegal		p.46	1
Cashew	a. (1) gave a grant to ACA to fund three kinds of activities; b.(1)delivered a loan for working capital to Unite Natio Cajou in Mali	Countries that benefitted from the activities: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal; b.Mali	a.ACA; b.Unite Natio Cajou	p.55-56	1
Shea	a.(2) provided one grant to GSA to support a one-year pilot activity and another to GSA to cover the cost of having local development partners deliver training; b(1) helped cover some costs in GSA sponsoring members to attend African Cosmetics Exhibition 2016		GSA	p.59	1
AGOA	a. (1) signed a letter with TradelInvest to open and run an ATRC in Cabo Verde; b.(1) grant to support Cameroon's	a. Cabo Verde; b.Cameroon;	a. TradelInvest; b.ATRC	p.67;69	1;2

Sector	Specifics	Country Breakdown	Organizations that Benefit	Page # in Document	IR
	ATRC delivering trainings and workshops on export readiness and opportunities; c.(1) ATRC grant to support bi-weekly series of AGOA/ETLS workshops for ERCs in various industries; d.(5) grants to ATRC of five countries to cover costs of technical assistance	c.Cote d'Ivoire; d. Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal			
<b>Training</b>					
Trade and Transport Enabling Environment	a. (1) training government agencies and private sector actors to improve implementation of ETLS and other protocols; b. (1) conducted several training and outreach events in main centers of commerce and at borders; c. (1) project's Transport Specialist trained cereals procedures to ensure that they fully understand the ETLS requirements; d.(1) organized a workshop on "Improved Agribusiness Management Practices and Entrepreneurship for Women in Cereals Processing"; e. (1) delivered a training presentation on the requirements for export and import of live animals within the ECOWAS zone; f. (1) train almost 100 livestock traders and transporters on Ghana's existing security, transport, and import rules and regulations; g. (2) kicked off workshops to identify specific capacity development needs of each country's NTFC	a. ECOWAS; b. Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire; c. Togo; d. Burkina Faso; g. Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal	e. COFENABVI, CILSS, FAO; f. Borderless Alliance, GHAFLIP, CILSS; g. UNCTAD and ITC	p.9-10;13; 16;18	1;2
Livestock	a. (1) one-week training workshop to share the Burkinabe and Malian networks' experiences; b.(1) a lessons learned workshop with the participating Malian and Ivorian traders to review their experiences with the test contract; c. (1) conducted a workshop in Abidjan with 40 data collectors to review the process for collection of sales data	a. Niger; c. Cote d'Ivoire	c. FENACOFBVI-CI	p.25;27	1
Cereals	a. (2) organized two regional workshops to promote the use of written contracts within the cereals value chain; b.(1) organized a workshop in Ouagadougou to foster greater female participation in value-added activities, "Improved Agribusiness Management Practices and Entrepreneurship for Women in Cereals Processing"	a. Togo and Senegal; b. Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo	a. WAGN	p.36-37	1
Mango	a. (4) delivered training on best harvesting practices for producers and harvesters; b. (1) training of trainers; c. (3) cascade training: farmer-trainers trained other farmers	a. Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal; b.	d. AREXMA and Nembel; e. PTRAMAB; f. YKMFA, DAMFA, APEMAB	p.42-44	1

Sector	Specifics	Country Breakdown	Organizations that Benefit	Page # in Document	IR
	through practical demonstrations; d. (2) trained pack house staff, proper packaging techniques; e. (1) collaborated with SNV to organize certification training for 33 PTRAMAB members; f.(2) developed training programs to help producers and exporters in Ghana and Burkina Faso obtain GLOBALG.A.P certification prior to 2016 mango season	Ghana; c. Burkina Faso, Ghana, Senegal; d. Cote d'Ivoire and Senegal; e. Burkina Faso; f. Burkina Faso and Ghana			
Apparel	a. (1) co-hosted a workshop on export documentation requirements with emphasis on exports under AGOA; b.(1) one-day workshop for procedures for exporting under AGOA and describing opportunities for Ghanaian exporters	a. & b. Ghana	a. GCCI, MOTI, GEPA, Ghana Review Authority, Customs Division, AGAM; b. AmCham and GCCI	p.51	1;2
AGOA	a.(1) one-day customs documentation workshop; b.(1) collaborated with GCCI to train private sector businesses and freight forwarders on export documentation; c.(1) co-hosted a one-day workshop with Ghanaian-American Chamber of Commerce and GCCI; d.(1) organized an AGOA workshop that highlighted the benefits of AGOA, strategy to take advantage of Act, and shared company success stories; e. (1) partnered with NEPC put on a one-day workshop on ins and outs of customs documentation under AGOA and ETLs; f.(1) trained entrepreneurs on AGOA, export-readiness, and export requirements for US market: YOUTHCAN 2016	a. Benin; b. & c. Ghana; d. Mauritania; e. Nigeria; f. Togo	b.GCCI; f. AWEP	p.66-68	1;2
<b>Technical Assistance</b>					
Trade and Transport Enabling Environment	a. (5) intervened to help reduce documentation requirements and improve traders' and transporters' understanding of how to complete and submit proper documentation for their transactions; b. (1) conducted a wide range of consultations with stakeholders to determine the mandatory documentation requirements and associated legitimate costs to export and import cereals and livestock; c. (1) produced easy-to-use training materials; d. (1) conducted research and interviews to identify other countries where the COO requirements still exists; e. (1) joined forces with Borderless Alliance and UEMOA representatives to press Ivorian Customs to	a. Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin; e. Cote d'Ivoire; f. Burkina Faso; h. Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire and Togo; j. Ghana	e. Borderless Alliance and UEMOA; g. Borderless Alliance; j. bilateral mission and MOTI; k.& l. ECOWAS	p.10-11;14; 17-19	1;2

Sector	Specifics	Country Breakdown	Organizations that Benefit	Page # in Document	IR
	issue a new Note de Service; f. (1) contributed to the development of the preliminary road map and action plan for task force activities for the period of July-Dec 2016; g. (1) advised on technical issues and helped ensure that the meeting focused on implementing reforms to reduce time and cost spent on documentation; h. (3) collected information on requirements for and barriers to mutual recognition of SPS certificates in priority countries; i.(1)completed needs assessment missions in cooperation with Nathan Associates and the LPFM II project ; j.(2) conducted a needs assessment the country's NTFC and drafted a terms of reference for technical assistance to the committee; k.(1)carry out a study to investigate irregularities in the region and model a workable strategy to guide the development and management of efficient road corridors across the region; l.(1) with ECOWAS, evaluated and selected consulting company to conduct the "Study for the Development of an ECOWAS Corridor Development and Management Strategy and Action Plan"				
Livestock	a. (1) worked with supervisors of FEBEVIM and FEBEVIB to improve the quality of data and level of detail of the data collected each quarter; b.(1) project team worked with the livestock federation of Niger to create a similar network of fattening enterprises in that country; c. (1) with COFENABVI carried out research along the Bamako-Abidjan corridor; d. (1) calculated and analyzed the transaction data gathered during week prior to Tabaski; e. (2) provide direct support for a regional trade show, SIBVAO, including significant technical assistance in planning the event (covering a large budget percentage for the event)	a. Mali and Burkina Faso; b. Niger; d. Cote d'Ivoire; e. Cote d'Ivoire	a. FEBEVIM and FEBEVIB; c. & e. COFENABVI	p.24-25;27;29	I
Cereals	a. (2) the Hub, WAGN, and Afrique Verte worked together to track contracts signed at the three cereals exchanges and monitor the completion rate; b.(1) Hub provided capacity building support to strengthen the network's ability to organize similar events on its own in	a. & c. Burkina Faso, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire	a. WAGN and Afrique Verte; b. WAGN	p.35;38	I



Sector	Specifics	Country Breakdown	Organizations that Benefit	Page # in Document	IR
	the future; c. (1) assisted a number of cereals value chain companies in their efforts to access finance for growth and expansion				
Mango	a. (1) developed a training plan to take place during the short mango export season; b.(1) technical assistance so that working group could address the details of creating a regional alliance	a. Cote d'Ivoire		p.42;45	I
Apparel	a. (4) collaborated with EAA to enhance competitiveness of apparel sector by providing technical training and support to four targeted companies; b.(2) technical assistance and advocacy support to DTRT in the company's expansion and increased sales to US market; c.(1) support ANC as it prepares to launch into international export market (including funding and tech support to produce samples of men's shirts); d.(1) hired Growth Mosaic, consulting firm that specializes in preparing firms to access and manage growth capital, to build ANC's internal financial management capacity	b. Ghana; c. &d. Benin	a. KAD Manufacturing, Anowah Afrique, Studio 189 in Ghana, ANC in Benin; b. DTRT; c. & d. ANC	p.48;51-52	I
Cashew	supported a workshop organized by ACA on access to finance in the cashew value chain	Nigeria	ACA	p.56	I
Shea	a.(1) support the finalization of the curriculum developed by GSA as a resources; b.(1) worked with FIKA-CI to complete a baseline organizational capacity assessment (OCA); c.(4) supported a start-up shea butter and oil processing plant being set up by ADI-Prod (contribute to market research(1), technical feasibility analyses(1), environmental and structural design for proposed facility(2))	b. Cote d'Ivoire; c.Burkina Faso	a. GSA; b.FIKA-CI; c.ADI-Prod	p.59-60	I
AGOA	a.(1) staff members worked with key Ivoirian government officials and other donors on development of country-specific AGOA strategy; b. (1) provided expertise and input for meeting of Ghanaian technical team drafting a national AGOA strategy; c.(1) provided documentation on export strategies to Togo's Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Trade and Small and Medium Enterprises to help government begin drafting AGOA export strategy; d. (1) partnered with NACC to develop program and invite	a. Cote d'Ivoire; b.Ghana; c. Togo; d. Nigeria; e. Togo		p.66;68	I;2

Sector	Specifics	Country Breakdown	Organizations that Benefit	Page # in Document	IR
	local stakeholders; e.(1) provided technical assistance to Togo's Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Trade and Small and Medium Enterprises and the National AGOA Committee of Togo to jump-start process of country to submit textile visa application				
<b>Linkages</b>					
Trade and Transport Enabling Environment	a. (1) met with authorities to discuss ways that the government could achieve full ETLS compliance; b. (1) project's Transport Specialist went to discuss Togo's COO procedures with the Commission of Customs and Indirect Taxes; c.(1) participated in the first Technical Meeting of the ETLS Task Force; d. (1) host the first meeting of the ETLS Task Force in Accra, Ghana; e. (1) supported Borderless' efforts to convene a regional police commanders' forum in Kumasi, Ghana; f.(1) facilitated a meeting between the Chamber of Commerce in both Mali and Cote d'Ivoire	a. Burkina Faso; b. Togo; c. Burkina Faso; d. Ghana; e. Ghana; f.Mali and Cote d'Ivoire	e. Borderless Alliance	p.11;14-15	2
Livestock	(1) in collaboration with FENACOFVI-CI the Hub added 11 new markets in Cote d'Ivoire	Cote d'Ivoire	FEBEVIB and FENACOFVI-CI	p.26	1
Cereals	a. (3) three cereals exchanges	a. Burkina Faso, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire	a. WAGN and Afrique Verte (attendees include ECOWAS Food Security Reserve, EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation, CNOFG)	p.34-35	1
Mango	a. (2) scoping mission on mango sector meeting with potential partners; b.(1) supported a technical working group that met in conjunction with a four-day Mango Week Conference	a. Mali and Cote d'Ivoire; b. value chain actors came from Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, and Senegal		p.41-42;45	1
Apparel	a. (5) Hub sent apparel industry partners to five trade shows (Origin Africa, MAGIC, Africa, Coterie, Uniform Retailers Association trade show); b. (1) facilitated	b. & c. Ghana; d. Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria	a. EAA; c. MOTI, AmCham, AGAM, EAA	p.49-51;53	1

Sector	Specifics	Country Breakdown	Organizations that Benefit	Page # in Document	IR
	collaboration between Ghanaian government and apparel companies; c. (1) host a round table for apparel producers and apparel industry stakeholders; d. (4) scouting trip to identify potential apparel sector partners				
Cashew	connected INC with a Financial Advisor who facilitated a loan from the local affiliate of a large global bank	Cote d'Ivoire	INC	p.56	1
AGOA	collaborated with Cameroon's Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Craft for an event	Cameroon		p.67	2
<b>Finance and Investment (cuts across sectors)</b>					
General	a. (1) worked closely with USAID's Office of Development Credit to select financial institutions for placement of a DCA instrument which is a loan portfolio guarantee (LPG); b.(1) DCA is also offering a Portable Guarantee (provides an identified potential borrower with letter of guarantee commitment)	a. regional; b. Cote d'Ivoire	b. INC	p.79-80	1
Training	a. (1) hosted a B2B workshop at the Borderless Alliance conference; b.(1) hosted a B2B workshop in collaboration with African Cashew Alliance; c.(1) hosted a B2B workshop with the export sector; d.(1) trained cereal and rice processors under Gender Access to Finance Strategy initiative	a. Benin; b. Nigeria c. Cote d'Ivoire; d. Burkina Faso	a. Borderless Alliance; b. African Cashew Alliance	p.74;78	1;2
Technical Assistance	a. (1) contributed to government and nongovernment institutional meetings to promote export-oriented businesses; b.(1) assessed investment potential in apparel sectors; c. (2) provide direct, hands-on assistance to processing businesses in terms of transaction support; d.(1) support apparel firm ANC in Benin (hired Growth Mosaic); e.(2) developed a targeted, gender-focused strategy to address key systemic constraints at the borrower level and launched the Hub's Gender Access to Finance Strategy; f.(1) provides a package of technical assistance to Coris Bank; g.(1) in line with the Gender Access to Finance Strategy, Hub conducted an assessment of the financial needs of Ivorian women business owners and identified potential partners; h.(1) Hub is collaborating with a well-recognized regional investment	a. Nigeria; b.Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria; c. Burkina Faso; d. Benin; e. Burkina Faso; f. Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal; g. Cote d'Ivoire	c. SODEPAL and ADI-Prod; d.ANC; e. Afrique Verte and other microfinance institutions (MFIs)	p.74-77;81-82	1;2

Sector	Specifics	Country Breakdown	Organizations that Benefit	Page # in Document	IR
	firm, Injaro Investments, to help agricultural SMEs access investment funds				
Linkages	a. (4) introduced Hub-supported companies to the representatives of USAID's Office of Development Credit when investigating possible DCA partners; b.(1) worked closely with Naatal Mbay to identify areas for collaboration; c. (2) signed contract to create partnership with Financiere Africaine and LocAfrique; d.(1) signed an agreement with Coris Bank to provide technical support in loans to SMEs in a range of project value chains; e. (1) brokered a formal arrangement with NSIA Bank (for gender strategy)	a. Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal; c. Senegal; d. Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Togo, Benin, Senegal; e. Cote d'Ivoire	b. Naatal Mbay	p.73;76;81-82	1
<b>Capacity Building (cuts across sectors)</b>					
Activities	a. (1) Hub awarded a subcontract to the Ghanaian firm Image-AD to develop a new MIS platform for the regional livestock value chain; b.(7) signed in-kind grant agreements for three mango farmers and processor associations in Ghana, three in Burkina Faso, and one in Senegal; c.(1) support for the cashew value chain provided through a grant to ACA that covered three categories of assistance (trainings and strengthen data collection); d. (2) grant to GSA covered training for warehouse managers and attendance at a cosmetics trade show in South Africa; e. (7) provided FAA and in-kind grants to seven ATRCs to cover specific program elements in plans; f.(1) provided in-kind grants to some ATRCs to help strengthen their capacity to deliver services to private businesses; g.(1) capacity building grant to fund a 2-day training for FEBEVIB and FENABEV; h.(19) Hub provided grants to 19 groups, organizations, etc	b. Ghana, Burkina Faso, and Senegal; e. Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal	c.ACA; d.GSA; g. COFENABVI, FEBEVIB, and FENABEV; h. ACA, GSA, DAMFA, YKMFA, Akorley Pack House, Cooperative des Producteurs de Fruits et Legumes de Keur Mbir, APROMA-B, Sanle Sechage, Rose Eclat, Borderless Alliance, COFENABVI, RESIMAO, Ghana ATRC, Benin ATRC, Cameroon ATRC, Cote d'Ivoire ATRC, Senegal ATRC	p.93;96-101	1; 2
Training	a. (1) organized a workshop on the creation of livestock sector cooperatives in compliance with OHADA; b.(1) provided training on financial resource mobilization; c.(1) organized a number of learning events to develop business management skills for women-owned enterprises across our target value chains	a. Burkina Faso; b. Togo and Mali	a. COFENABVI	p.92-93;98-99	1

Sector	Specifics	Country Breakdown	Organizations that Benefit	Page # in Document	IR
Technical Assistance	<p>a. (10) conducted mid-term assessments of five partners to measure their progress to date &amp; provide each partner with an updated plan that lays out specific recommendations for FY17 capacity building activities; b. (2) provided direct capacity building support while also delivering assistance through a cost-reimbursable grant; c. (1) with support from the Hub, Borderless continued to implement several activities that were part of the strategy that arose from the workshop (including financing development of a fee-for-service survey, diversification of funding streams, and paying for a communications and marketing company to help Borderless improve visibility); d.(5) delivered capacity building support through a fixed-amount award (FAA) grant that supported national federations in 5 countries; e.(2) provided direct technical and financial support for the development and analysis of COFENABVI's new 5 year action plan; f.(2) provided significant technical and financial assistance to plan and carry out the first regional livestock trade fair (SIBVAO); g.(2) directly funded COFENABVI's expansion drive in Ghana by providing technical and financial support for the launch of GHAFILIP; h.(2) provided financial and technical support for May 2016 workshop to review, finalize, and validate a procedures manual; i.(1) assisted in Ghana's introduction to RESIMAO network and the MIS association; j.(1) provided substantial support for a technical working group that met as part of a large conference on the establishment of a regional mango alliance; k.(1) facilitated a participatory OCA exercise for the FIKA-CI, drawing on the findings of the assessment to develop a capacity building plan for FIKA-CI; l. (1) conducted an assessment of the needs of women-owned businesses in our value chains in Cote d'Ivoire</p>	<p>d. Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Benin, Togo; g. &amp; i. Ghana; k. &amp; l.Cote d'Ivoire</p>	<p>a. WAGN, RESIMAO, COFENABVI, Borderless Alliance, ACA; b. &amp; c. Borderless Alliance; d.-f. COFENABVI; g. COFENABVI and GHAFILIP; h.WAGN; i. RESIMAO; k. FIKA-CI</p>	<p>p.89-99</p>	<p>1</p>

## ANNEX J: EVALUATION TEAM MEMBER PROFILES

### **Trevor Maliwanda Simumba**, Team Leader/Evaluation Specialist

Trevor Maliwanda Simumba is an evaluation and trade facilitation specialist with over twenty years of experience managing technical assistance support programs in international trade. His areas of expertise include project cycle management and logical framework approach from programming to evaluations. Currently he serves as a Senior Associate for Maxwell Stamp PLC, representing the company in Southern Africa, leading its preparation of Africa strategy, proposals, and new business initiatives. Previously he was the Team Leader for Imani and Trademark East Africa to design cross-border trade strategies and programs, responsible for conducting field visits as well as preparing and validating country cross-border trade strategy workshops for Burundi, South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Earlier in his career, Mr. Simumba was Senior Trade Adviser to the Government of Sierra Leone, gaining hands-on experience of managing and delivering high level strategic planning and public sector capacity building programs and developing trade negotiations strategies. Mr. Simumba holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Finance and Business Studies from Oxford Brookes University and a Post Graduate Certificate in Macroeconomic Policy and Management from Harvard University's JFK School of Government. He is proficient in French.

### **Yarri Kamara**, Deputy Team Leader and Trade Facilitation Specialist (based in Burkina Faso)

Ms. Yarri Kamara is an evaluation and survey specialist with 13 years' experience in project management and data analytics. Her areas of expertise include business development and capacity building strategy. Currently she serves as president for a panel of expert project assessors for an international fund supporting initiatives and policies aimed at fostering new or strengthening existing cultural industries in developing countries. Ms. Kamara assess around 20 proposals for funding per year. Previously she was a Consultant and Cultural Economy Expert for the UK Department for International Development (DFID) where she undertook rapid diagnosis of the business and policy environment of the cultural economy in Kenya. She also identified opportunities for business environment reform intervention for the scoping mission under DFID's Business Environment Reform Facility. Earlier in her career, Ms. Kamara was an Economist for the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Burkina Faso in which she analyzed needs for infrastructure in support of economic activity, particularly in the agricultural sector, in the 13 regions of Burkina Faso. She holds a Master of Arts in Development Studies from the Institut d'Etudes politiques de Paris, France and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and in French Language Studies from the University of Virginia. She is fluent in English and French.

### **Samuel Kouakou**, Local Evaluation Specialist (based in Cote d'Ivoire)

Mr. Kadjo Samuel Alain Kouakou is a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist with 17 years' experience in agriculture and rural development. His areas of expertise include rural engineering, civil engineering, sanitation engineering, water management, energy, as well as international environmental and water law. Currently he serves as Deputy Director of Evaluation and Projects Sustainability for the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) where he participates in project feasibility studies, planning and implementation as well as performing external monitoring and evaluation activities for projects. Previously, Mr. Kouakou was a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer for the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI) where he monitored and evaluated rural development projects. He also promoted policies for rural infrastructures' sustainability. Mr. Kouakou holds a Diploma in International Environmental Law from the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, and a Master of Engineering Diploma from the International Institute for Water and Environmental Engineering.

**Macdonald Acquah**, Local Evaluation Specialist (based in Ghana)

Macdonald Acquah is a M&E specialist with eight years of experience in project implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and training and capacity building. He has acted as a consultant with the Urban Poverty Reduction Project, where he developed a M&E framework and performance indicators for tracking project results. He has also held the position of team leader for the Functional and Organizational Assessment Tool around the Accra and Volta regions. Mr. Acquah is currently a senior consultant and head of project monitoring and evaluation, decentralization, governance and community development with Pentax Management in Ghana. Mr. Acquah holds a Master's Degree in Development and International Relations from the University of Aalborg in Denmark.

**Patrick Zeal**, Local Evaluation Specialist (based in Ghana)

Patrick Zeal is a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) specialist with over eight years of experience in agricultural analytics and performance evaluation. His areas of expertise include sustainable project and program management. Currently he serves as a M&E Researcher for the Ghana Cocoa Board, where he is developing a M&E system for Phase II of the Coffee Development Program. Mr. Zeal was previously an Assistant Research Officer for the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana, where he monitored and evaluated socio-economic interventions as well as conducted socio-economic research design, data collection and analysis in relation to community development. Mr. Zeal holds a Masters of Philosophy in Agricultural Administration from the University of Ghana and a Bachelor of Science (BSc.Hons.) in Agricultural Science from the University of Cape Coast, and is fluent in English and Twi. Mr. Zeal had to leave the evaluation team after Phase I of data collection, and Mr. Acquah took his place on the team.

**Oliver Ujah**, Local Evaluation and Trade Facilitation Specialist (based in Nigeria)

Dr. Oliver Chinedu Ujah is a Resource and Environmental Economics Specialist with over 13 years' experience in strategic planning, management and development. His areas of expertise include economic research and analysis as well as monitoring and evaluation. Currently he serves as the Executive Director for the Research and Competence Centre (WSA-RCC) where he conducts, commissions and supervises research that strengthens the case for pro-poor WASH issues and policies. Previously he was an Economic and Strategic Marketing Advisor for WSA where he provided economic, advisory and technical inputs into the various aspects of the Gates funded sludge management project in Dakar, Senegal. He holds a Ph.D. in Resource and Environmental Economics from the University of Nigeria, as well as a Master's of Science in Resource and Environmental Economics and a BS in Agricultural Economics from the University of Nigeria.

**Moussa Ouedraogo**, Field Assistant (Burkina Faso)

Mr. Moussa Ouedraogo is a M&E specialist with a concentration in data collection and analysis as well as the design and execution of surveys and analysis. He has experience working in Burkina Faso, Benin, Guinea and Mali. Mr. Ouedraogo currently serves as the Burkina Faso planning expert with a mining operation, developing a stakeholder engagement plan. Mr. Ouedraogo holds a Master's in Economics from the University of Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso.

**Ines Melissa Koue**, Field Assistant (Cote d'Ivoire)

Ms. Melissa Koue is a development professional based in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. She has over four years' experience in event planning and administrative activity management. She specializes in taking detailed notes and arranging logistical necessities for her teams. Ms. Koue holds a Master's Degree in Management Science with a Concentration in Organization Management from Minot State University in Minot, North Dakota.

**Mai Yang**, Field Research Coordinator

Mai Yang is an international development practitioner with experience in monitoring and evaluation, program development and management. She has reviewed performance management plans and reporting systems of large projects to help develop an organization-wide monitoring and evaluation plan and system to enable better understanding of impact. She authored a report on market potential of cashew apples to support USDA funded cashew enhancement value chain project implemented in Senegal and The Gambia. She has conducted data collection and data quality assurance in multiple countries to support evaluations, research activities, and monitoring and evaluation systems of projects. She is proficient in French. Ms. Yang will support in-country data collection activities and provide quality assurance support for the MSI home office. Ms. Yang holds a Master's in International Affairs from the New School in New York, New York.

**Jacob Patterson-Stein**, Evaluation Coordinator

Jacob Patterson-Stein has over five years of global work experience in survey design, quantitative analysis, and designing and implementing impact and performance evaluations. He has technical knowledge of different experimental and quasi-experimental evaluation methods, as well as practical experience managing the execution of these evaluations. Mr. Patterson-Stein is proficient in qualitative analysis techniques and software. In addition, Mr. Patterson-Stein has served as a consultant for the performance evaluation of a girl's education program in Liberia, conducted research on intra-provincial agricultural trade in Indonesia, and studied the effects of foreign direct investment. Mr. Patterson-Stein is primarily responsible for overseeing and coordinating the execution of the evaluation design, ensuring efficient and timely reporting, developing and ensuring the timely submission of deliverables, and monitoring the fidelity of the evaluation design. Mr. Patterson-Stein holds a Master's Degree in International Development Policy from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.



## ANNEX K: TRADE HUB 2017 Q3 RESULTS

This evaluation was designed and written as a mid-term assessment of the Trade Hub through 2016, with data collection taking place in the first quarter of 2017. As mentioned in footnotes throughout this report, WATIH has made progress in several key areas in 2017. The table below was included to show this progress, which was outside of the original scope of the evaluation. The evaluation team felt that this information should be included given that there may not be an endline evaluation of this iteration of the Trade Hub. Data from 2014-2015 come from the 2015 annual report, pages 82-86; 2015-2016 come from the 2016 Annual report, pages 6-7; and data from 2017 come courtesy of the Trade Hub. This table highlights that in many areas targets were not met or exceeded until year three of implementation. This does not detract from the findings in the body of this report; rather, it speaks to the recommendations on scope and communication, as well as the complex nature of trade-focused activities.

#	Indicator	2014-2015 Target	2014-2015 Actual	2015-2016 Target	2015-2016 Actual	2016-2017 Target	2017 Results through June
1	Value of exports in targeted non-agricultural and agricultural commodities from Hub-supported firms/associations/entities (DO 1.1, EG.3.2-23)	\$223,653,446	\$233,286,552	\$42,500,000	\$33,567,200	\$40,000,000	\$18,113,787
2	Value of new private sector investment in the agricultural sector or food chain leveraged by Trade Hub implementation (DO 1.2, EG.3.2-22)	\$18,500,000	\$1,300,126	\$31,500,000	\$18,093,077	\$36,000,000	\$37,659,469
3	Value of new private sector investment in non-agricultural targeted sectors leveraged by Trade Hub implementation (DO 1.3)	\$1,500,000	\$300,000	\$3,500,000	\$12,000	\$2,000,000	\$413,949
4	Number of agriculture and non-agriculture full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs created with USG assistance (IO 1.2, EG.3.2-21)	Indicator not reported	Indicator not reported	12,000	8,395	4,000	1,409
5	Number of firms that are more profitable or associations that are more financially self-sufficient due to USG assistance (IO 1.1, EG.3.2-21)	Indicator not reported	Indicator not reported	50	33	20	20
6	Number of for-profit private enterprises that applied improved organizational-level technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance (IR 1.1, EG.3.2-20)	120	131	140	851	80	41

#	Indicator	2014-2015 Target	2014-2015 Actual	2015-2016 Target	2015-2016 Actual	2016-2017 Target	2017 Results through June
7	Number of buyer/seller linkages established in targeted agricultural sectors as a result of Trade Hub assistance (IR 1.2)	18	103	150	1,279	100	97
8	Number of assisted agricultural sector firms/associations meeting international grades and standards to export (IR 1.3)	120	702	500	692	250	30
9	Number of for-profit non-agricultural sector private enterprises that applied improved organizational-level technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance (IR 2.1, Modified EG.3.2-20)	3	2	5	3	4	8
10	Number of buyer/seller linkages established in targeted non-agricultural sectors as a result of Trade Hub assistance (IR 2.2)	2	5	3	101	75	83
11	Number of assisted non-ag sector firms/assoc meeting international standards to export (IR 2.3)	3	2	5	2	4	6
12	Time to trade goods across borders and along corridors as a result of Trade Hub assistance (IR 3.1)	5% reduction	Data collected in second year	-5% Change (Reduction)	Avg. -3.9%	-3%	Reported annually; WATIH will not complete a time and cost survey in 2017.
13	Cost to trade goods across borders and along corridors as a result of Trade Hub assistance (IR 3.2)	5% reduction	Data collected in second year	-5% Change (Reduction)	Avg. -4%	-3%	Reported annually; WATIH will not complete a time and cost survey in 2017.
14	Number of enabling environment policies analyzed, consulted on, drafted or revised, approved and implemented with USG assistance (IR 4.1, EG.3.1-12)	12	8	12	8	5	5
15	Value of new sales of assisted firms/members of associations due to USG assistance	\$ 30,000,000	\$56,887,560	\$50,000,000	\$49,168,173	\$50,000,000	\$25,768,052
16	Number of for-profit private enterprises, producers organizations, trade and business associations, and CBOs receiving USG food	120	275	220	498	598	89

#	Indicator	2014-2015 Target	2014-2015 Actual	2015-2016 Target	2015-2016 Actual	2016-2017 Target	2017 Results through June
	security related organizational development assistance (EG.3.2-4). <i>(Cumulative Indicator)</i>						
17	Score in percent of combined key areas of organization capacity amongst USG direct and indirect local implementing partners (CBLD-5, now archived)	2.1	Data collected in 2017	60%	56%	Trade Hub will not be completing OCAs for organizations receiving capacity building support in 2017.	
18	Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training (EG.3.2-1)	40	1,015	600	1,137	400	1,487
19	Number of participants in Trade Hub-supported capacity building events related to improving trade or attracting investment	400	2,774	2,500	3,244	2,000	3,512
20	Number of new dues paying members in private business associations as a results of USG assistance	200	Data collected in second year	300	Will collect in FY17	200	613
21	Total number of users of new MIS services	20,000	8,200	40,000	11,969	8,000	19,697
22	Value of new loans made to clients in targeted sectors. (EG.3.2-6)	\$10,000,000	\$886,646	\$10,000,000	\$9,992,406	\$25,200,000	\$32,968,618
23	Number of MSMEs receiving business development services from USG assistance (FTF 4.5.2-37)	70	70	40	179	50	59
24	Number of firms in targeted sectors receiving loans from partner banks (EG.3.2-3)	70	3	25	25	40	44
25	Number of actions (audit, reports, presentations, tools developed, etc.) taken to facilitate compliance of member states with ECOWAS Trade Liberalization Scheme	5	6	5	8	7	1
26	Number of individuals who have received USG trainings on trade and transport enabling environment	40	39	50	347	60	207

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