



Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement Feed the Future Activity (ADVANCE II)

A USAID FEED THE FUTURE INITIATIVE



2015 Annual Implementation Plan

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Table of Contents

ACRONYMS.....	II
FOREWORD	III
A. PROJECT MANAGEMENT.....	1
A.1 IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS	1
A.2 OFFICE OPERATIONS & STAFFING	1
A.3 PROCUREMENT AND EQUIPMENT	2
A.4 DEVELOPMENT PARTNER COORDINATION	2
B. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY – NORTH GHANA	3
B.1 BACKGROUND.....	3
B.2 TECHNICAL CHALLENGES	5
C. ADVANCE II IMPLEMENTATION PLAN – PY 2015	6
1.0 SUB-PURPOSE 1: INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY IN TARGETED COMMODITIES	6
2.0 SUB-PURPOSE 2: INCREASED MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE OF TARGETED COMMODITIES	13
3.0 SUB-PURPOSE 3: STRENGTHENED CAPACITY FOR ADVOCACY AND ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION	17
4.0 PROGRAM SUPPORT - GENDER MAINSTREAMING	20
5.0 PROGRAM SUPPORT - ENVIRONMENT	24
6.0 PROGRAM SUPPORT - PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION.....	25
7.0 SUPPORT PROGRAM - GRANTS.....	26
8.0 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING	27
ANNEX 1. ADVANCE II IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TRACKING SHEET - PY 2015.....	31
ANNEX 2. GAMSAP AND PY 2015 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	44

Acronyms

ACDEP	Association of Church-based Development NGOs
ADVANCE	Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement
ASWG	Agriculture Sector Working Group
BDS	Business Development Service
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program
DCA	Development Credit Authority
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FASDEP II	Food and Agriculture Sector Development Policy II
FBE	Farmer Based Enterprise
FBO	Farmer Based Organization
FinGAP	Financing Ghanaian Agriculture Project
FTF	Feed the Future
GAIP	Ghana Agricultural Insurance Program
GAMSAP	Ghana Advanced Maize Seed Adoption Program
GCX	Ghana Commodity Exchange
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GGC	Ghana Grains Council
GIS	Geographic Information System
GIZ	German Development Cooperation
GPRTU	Ghana Private Road Transporters Union
GRIB	Ghana Rice Inter-professional Body
GSA	Ghana Standards Authority
Ha	Hectare
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFDC	International Fertilizer Development Center
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
METASIP	Medium Term Agriculture Sector Investment Plan
MIS	Market Information Services
MMDA	Metropolitan, Municipality, and District Assembly
MoFA	Ministry of Food And Agriculture
MSME	Micro, Small And Medium Enterprise
MT	Metric Ton
NF	Nucleus Farmer
NGRP	Northern Rural Growth Program
OB	Outgrower Business
OG	Outgrower
PERSUAP	Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safe Use Action Plan
PPRSD	Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate
RaFIP	Rural and Agricultural Finance Program
SARI	Savanna Agricultural Research Institute
SASL	Sinapi Aba Savings and Loans
SEG	Small Equipment Grant
SMFM	Sell More for More [market tool for FBOs]
SSP	Spraying Service Provider
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Foreword

The ADVANCE II Project, Cooperative Agreement # Aid-641-A-14-0001, was awarded to ACDI/VOCA on February 5th, 2014 and is scheduled to end on September 30th, 2018. This four-year and eight month program is a follow-on to the Ghana Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement (ADVANCE I) project which ended on March 13th, 2014.

This 2015 Annual Implementation Plan covers the second (and first full) program year of the project (October 2014 to September 2015) and is a full technical implementation plan for the 2014 market season covering the crops produced in 2014, and the 2015 crop season that starts in the north between May/June.

The ADVANCE II plan also covers the Ghana Advanced Maize Seed Adoption Program (GAMSAP), the \$4 million DuPont Pioneer Global Development Alliance (GDA) initiative integrated into the ADVANCE II program by USAID on June 12th, 2014. For monitoring, budgeting and reporting purposes this “all-Ghana” program is submitted as a stand-alone program under the management of ADVANCE II. The “North” program under ADVANCE II has incorporated the GAMSAP program as part of its regular technical delivery and has included GAMSAP activities without budget addition. The “South” program, below the 8th parallel, will be funded by the joint \$4 million DuPont/Pioneer and USAID budget add-on. Although the GAMSAP program is not limited geographically per se, in addition to the three Northern Regions financed under ADVANCE II, funding provided by the GDA limits the program to the Brong Ahafo Region (BAR) and parts of the Ashanti Region (AR) – commonly referred to as the “maize-belt” of Ghana.

Both ADVANCE II, and GAMSAP under ADVANCE II, have successfully completed start-up activities in 2014 allowing for full concentration on technical delivery under the 2015 plan. ADVANCE has re-opened and re-staffed the field offices in Tamale, Bolga and Wa; and has leased and staffed the new office in Kumasi shared with GAMSAP staff. GAMSAP has procured new vehicles and equipment for the newly recruited agronomists posted to Sunyani, Techiman and Ejura; and the GAMSAP Business Services Officer and M&E Officer have been posted to Kumasi. Kweku Koranteng has been recruited as the Program Director, based in Accra.

The 2015 implementation plan was discussed, deliberated and conceptualized by the full complement of all ADVANCE II and GAMSAP staff who met for a full week in August 2014. Project stakeholders representing nucleus farmers, bankers, processors and associations as well as management from the implementing partners also participated in the planning workshop. The workshop was facilitated by William Sparks, the ACDI/VOCA specialist in training and work planning, using STAIRS, a comprehensive planning module.

A. Project Management

A.1 Implementing Partners

ADVANCE II, managed by the prime contractor ACDI/VOCA, has a well-balanced and experienced project team that has carried over from ADVANCE, including ACDEP, Pab Consult and TechnoServe. This team has deep experience in northern Ghana and has the technical strength to manage this complex project. All partners have a combined total of 91 staff working on ADVANCE II and GAMSAP.

ACDI/VOCA provides overall management, technical direction, administrative services; reporting to USAID; coordination with other donor activities; and oversight of sub-awardees' activities. Coordination among partners ensures maximum benefit of each partner's technical expertise, and is driven by the COP through the ADVANCE II Management Steering Committee comprised of the leadership of the partner organizations. The committee meets on a quarterly basis to review project progress on indicators and objectives. The committee resolves contractual issues, updates staff requirements, and assesses project approaches, project design and activities.

A.2 Office Operations & Staffing

The project has a total of five office locations. The ACDI/VOCA Country Office in Accra houses the ADVANCE II Project office where the COP (Thomas Carr), and the DCOP and Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning Specialist (Dr. Emmanuel Dormon) are based. Several key staff also operate from Accra including the Senior Accountant Patrick Addai, Office Manager Eunice M Atubga, Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator William Ayinga, Technical Leader for Trade and Marketing Nicholas Issaka Gbana, Program Specialist for Policy and Advocacy Roland Akabzaa, and the Program Specialist for Public Relations/Communications Adwoa Mensima Sey. The GAMSAP Program Director, Kweku Koranteng also works out of the Accra office.

The Tamale office is the main hub for the project in the North. The new Technical Director, Allan Pineda, directs all technical programs in the North along with Technical Leaders for agricultural production (Peter Asibey-Bonsu), business services (Doris Owusu), and capacity development (Chrysante Ataarem). This team is supported in Tamale by program specialists for ICT outreach (Collins Boafo), gender (Ayishetu Mikey Iddrisu), environment (Victor Mombu), and rural advocacy (Gervin Chanase). The project's Operations/Grants Manager (Philip Ataarem) and the operations/grants team also operate from the Tamale office.

Regional technical teams are led by Regional Coordinators (RC) who are experienced staff returning from the ADVANCE I project. The regional technical team based in Wa (Upper West Region) is led by RC Emmanuel Gyarteng, the Bolgatanga team (Upper East Region) is headed

by RC Paa Kwesi Awuku-Darko, and the RC for the Northern Region team in Tamale is Francis Essuman. The Kumasi office, established to focus attention on the market catchment areas for the target staple crops, is shared with GAMSAP, with priority placed on the maize belt of BAR and AR. It is the smallest of the five offices, with just four staff, and is administered by Barbara Mingle.¹

A.3 Procurement and Equipment

Although vehicles and equipment were procured for both ADVANCE II and GAMSAP in 2014, the successful (and unprecedented) scaling up of stakeholders and actors under ADVANCE II has made it clear that additional vehicles are required in Tamale, Wa and Bolga to handle the workload and effectively serve the new participants. As ADVANCE II-budgeted vehicles have been procured for GAMSAP, management plans to request three additional vehicles from USAID early in PY 2015.²

A.4 Development Partner Coordination

ADVANCE II will continue to play a leading role in the coordination and leveraging of the FTF projects, Agricultural Technology Transfer (ATT), Financing Ghanaian Agriculture Project (FinGAP), Resiliency in Northern Ghana (RING), the new Agricultural Policy Support Project (APSP), and the large World Bank/USAID Ghana Commercial Agriculture Project (GCAP). Periodic COP meetings (CCC) have been taking place on a regular basis to discuss coordination, work plans, base line surveys, grants, etc. Other technical sub-groups from the projects have also met separately including the teams from PR&C, M&E, and Grants. METSS has led the coordination for a “full FTF team” effort on KM&L. It was recently agreed that the Tamale-based management of the FTF projects will also meet on a regular basis.

The ADVANCE II Management team also works closely with MOFA at the district and regional levels, including the AGRA-funded and MOFA-hosted North Ghana Project Coordinating Unit in Tamale. With the large number of VC initiatives in the North, there is a strong need to ensure consistency across technical assistance programs and for carefully measured investments grounded in sound market development practices that put local partners and private sector actors at the forefront of planning and implementation.

The ADVANCE II project links its project activities with other key development players through collaboration with the large value chain projects in the North including but not limited to the MOFA/IFAD/ADB’s Northern Rural Growth Program (NRGP), AGRA/IFDC’s Farmer to Markets,

¹ Note that the GAMSAP delivery model promotes the concept of field based technicians; none of the four agronomists are based in Kumasi. The four staff in Kumasi are Barbara, Nabeel Adum-Atta (TMS, ADVANCE II), David Darkoh (BSO, GAMSAP), and the M&E officer Thompson Abagna.

² Five vehicles were procured for GAMSAP prior to receipt of GAMSAP funding using available ADVANCE II funds earmarked for vehicle procurement.

John Deere/TechnoServe Smallholder Production Development project, MEDA’s soybean program in the western corridor in Upper West Region, DIFID’s MADE Project, and the Rice Sector Support Project (RSSP). This entails periodic collaborative review meetings and joint workshops with key value chain stakeholders in the three target crops.

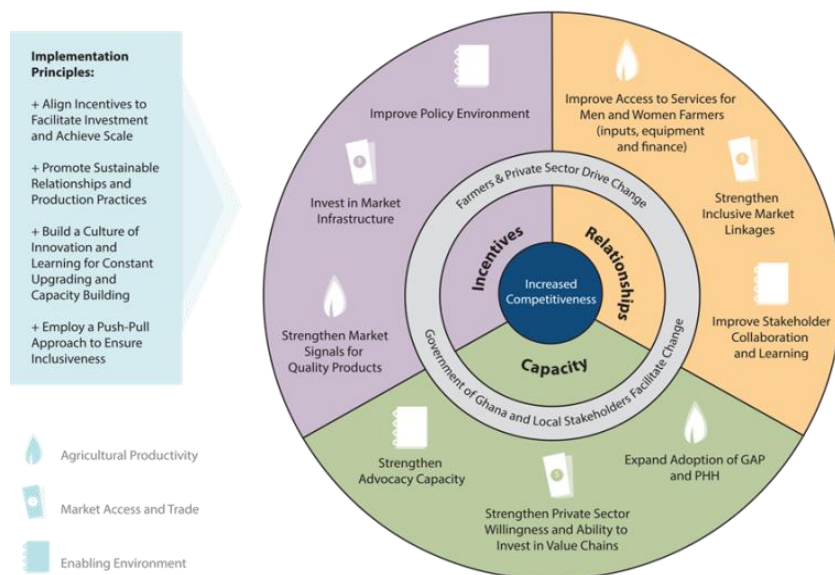
B. Implementation Strategy – North Ghana

B.1 Background

While Ghana has one of the fastest growing economies in Africa and is one of the few countries on track to meet its Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty by half by 2015, stark inequality exists between the northern and southern regions. Northern Ghana has interrelated economic, health, environmental and educational challenges that have contributed to this disparity for the majority of its 4.3 million people (17% of total Ghana population). Low levels of literacy, poor nutrition, inconsistent weather patterns, geographic isolation from market centers, periodic insecurity, inaccessibility of inputs, and lack of knowledge of modern farming practices have hindered productivity. Women smallholder farmers are even more disadvantaged due to limited access to and control over land and resources, and lower education levels and access to training.

Ghana’s steadily increasing inflation, currently at 15.3 percent³, and the current foreign exchange crisis, has eroded purchasing power, furthering a necessity for import-substitution policies, while creating more competitive regional export opportunities. Currently, Ghana imports nearly 50 percent of the rice, most of the processed soy products and 15 percent of the maize it consumes. With urban

populations and incomes on the rise, demand for such staple foods is increasing. Such social and economic conditions, while challenging, present clear opportunities for the North, whose economy relies heavily on production of key staple food crops. Government and development partners, as well as the private sector, are now investing heavily in commercial agriculture initiatives banking on the northern region’s agricultural potential.



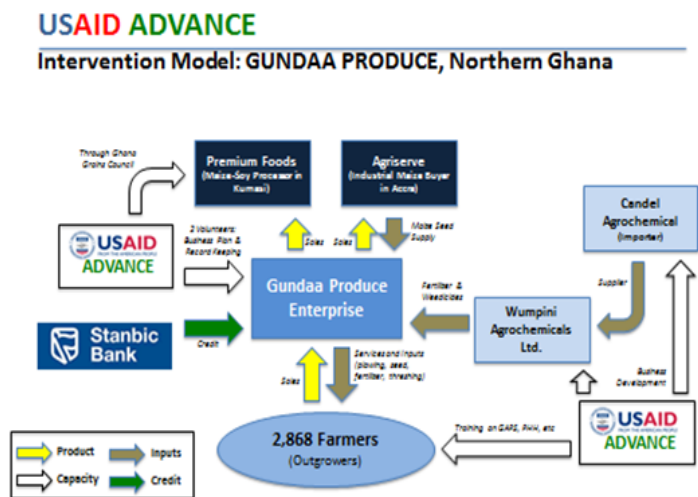
³ Ghana Statistical Service 2014

The ADVANCE II theory of change posits that there are three functions of value chain competitiveness—agricultural productivity, market access and trade, and an enabling environment—which are catalyzed by three enablers of competitiveness - clear incentives for investment, strong local capacity and mutually beneficial relationships. Underpinning the theory is that private sector actors, including men and women farmers, are the drivers of competitiveness, while the GOG and local stakeholders are facilitators, empowered by ADVANCE II investment, capacity building and innovation promotion. The proposed activities within the framework adhere to four main implementation principles and contribute to both the functions and enablers of VC competitiveness.

The ADVANCE II strategy to transform the agricultural sector is in line with FTF/Ghana objectives. The 2015 implementation plan is designed to create commercial opportunities for targeted farmers that result in access to markets, long-term relationships with businesses investing in the value chain, improved access to market information, improved access to services and products including financing, high-quality inputs, new technologies, and mechanization services, and improved ability to meet market requirements. The end result is increased productivity and profitability for both large and smallholder farmers.

The central approach is to focus on end-market opportunities that provide compelling incentives for businesses throughout the value chain to invest in the chain, including upgrading their own performance. For example, competition from imported rice is driving investment in Ghana’s domestic rice value chain by millers to expand their capacity and the quality of the end product with upgraded machinery; by traders to develop dedicated smallholder farmer suppliers; and by farmers to improve productivity through the efficient use of quality inputs and improved varieties. ADVANCE II’s strategic focus on growing end-markets also attracts investment from businesses in supporting markets such as financial institutions, input dealers, and equipment service providers who recognize the potential to grow their own businesses by servicing actors in these value chains. Ultimately, the upgrades to the value chains sustainably benefit smallholder farmers by building their capacity and improving their access to markets, information and services.

To encourage businesses to make these investments, ADVANCE II employs a facilitative approach. The project targets lead firms in the value chains and supports markets that are able to impact large numbers of smallholders and are willing and able to invest in performance upgrades to serve as a role model for the industry. ADVANCE II ensures that targeted lead firms demonstrate considerable commitment and exert ownership of the upgrading process.



B.2 Technical Challenges

The vast majority of buyers, aggregators, inputs suppliers, financial services providers, and other service providers continue to be based in the South; however many are now setting up agencies in northern locations and establishing firm linkages to farmers in the North as a result of the ADVANCE I and II projects' interventions. New processors, such as private sector AVNASH rice processing mill and the MiDA-sponsored Agri-Business Centers, offer northern smallholder farmers a greater choice of buyers. ADVANCE II continues to focus its partnerships on these value chain actors that are investing in the North. This strategy is crucial to the ADVANCE II project's sustainable, market-driven approach to improving the economic conditions of farmers.

The ADVANCE II project targets smallholders through business service providers that provide them with either in-kind or cash-up-front services. These providers (processors, commercial farmers, input dealers) reach large numbers of smallholders and are willing and able to invest in upgrading the value chain. Of the farmers participating in the ADVANCE II project, 99 percent are smallholders with an average farm size of 1.9 ha or less; and all of them are linked to one or more service providers.

The ADVANCE II project's target smallholder farmer population in the North is defined by their challenges and therefore the project is implemented with those constraints in mind. The technical interventions described in this implementation plan are designed to consolidate the gains from ADVANCE, and leverage where momentum is occurring in new technology adoption, more efficient use of mechanization, stronger links to end markets, and actors' willingness to invest in the value chain and industry.

Activities will continue to be implemented in the South to promote markets or services to smallholder farmers in the North – the planned Kumasi office is a case in point. Kumasi office activities include support to processors, poultry sector businesses, aggregators and other buyers who source product from the North and are willing to invest in the value chain. These lead firms also include financial service providers with branches in the North; input and equipment suppliers whose market channels extend to the North; industry professional bodies whose membership and service base extends to the North, such as GRIB and the Ghana Grains Council (GGC); and outreach partners such as radio stations whose listener base extends to the North.

C. ADVANCE II Implementation Plan – PY 2015

1.0 Sub-Purpose 1: Increased Agricultural Productivity in Targeted Commodities

Objective 1: Adoption of improved productivity-enhancing technologies, services and practices by women and men farmers increased.

Objective 2: Sustainable [business] systems for financial, advisory, aggregation and on-farm, post-harvest service provision and input distribution strengthened.

Objective 3: Incentives for smallholder investment in new productivity enhancing technologies, services and practices strengthened.

The ADVANCE II technical team will carry out several activities in 2015 that will enhance crop productivity and improve gross margins while remaining cognizant of the need to introduce climate smart sustainable systems that will both mitigate negative climate change factors and address cost of production issues. An ADVANCE II “Compact”, similar to a MOU, will be negotiated between ADVANCE II and all participating actors (especially NFs and FBOs) and will guide all project interventions. Note that all activities are inclusive of GAMSAP objectives and are integrated into the production improvement program. All activities are also assessed as to appropriate linkage to other FTF programs or other donor programs with similar activities.

1.1 **Actor supported technology demonstration sites.** New sites will be selected for 2015 to increase the spread effect of this effective initiative. Popular with both the private sector input companies who donate 100% of the materials for the sites, and the farmers that learn from the sites, the project will seek out new participants (18 companies including DuPont Pioneer supported the sites in 2014) for the 200 sites planned for 2015.⁴

- Sites selected strategically for easy access by farmers, qualified lead farmer, and productivity factors⁵
- Sponsors identified for all inputs required
- GAP and PHH training to take place at all sites (and selected farms) with private sector firms, nucleus farmer and MOFA AEA where possible.⁶
- 50 sites will be exclusive for GAMSAP and Pioneer seed varieties. Training on these sites will be reported under ADVANCE II and the GAMSAP program.
- Sites monitored and data recorded on results

⁴ ATT will be consulted on technology recommendations

⁵ ATT will be consulted on site sections to avoid duplication

⁶ Note that GAP and PHH is also conducted on lead farmer farms that are not demonstration sites. This is necessary to reach as many OGs as possible.

1.2 **Standard crop production protocols.** Production protocols for each crop⁷ will be updated and tailored to the diverse regions of northern Ghana. Training modules based on specific crop protocols will be used and disseminated at demo sites.

- ADVANCE II will coordinate with partners to develop standard crop protocols, modify existing ADVANCE training modules and share extension information through outgrower networks, private sector partners and information and communication technology (ICT) platforms.
- ICT Outreach to disseminate planting advice through SMS/voice message service providers, call centers, the media, mainly radio and radio listener groups. Radio drama will be emphasized in 2015.
- Pioneer may contribute to maize production protocols with printed material that can be distributed with their seed varieties

1.3 **Field Management Program.** The nucleus farmer field management program started in 2014 will be expanded in 2015, both in the number of participating Nucleus Farmers, now referred to as Outgrower Businesses (OB), and in of the number of services provided. OBs are encouraged to invest in a field manager to be trained with project assistance while mobility costs can be offset through the ADVANCE II grant program.

- Identify interested OBs, discuss, prepare and sign project compact with OB
- Field management is incorporated into the OB business plan and becomes part of the OBM curriculum
- Services include tractor service management, OG input distribution, post-harvest mechanization, GAP/PHH training, demo site management, product collection and aggregation, community liaison, lead farmer development, and marketing
- Grant program to be used as incentive to start field management services and to offset startup costs - limited to motorcycle or “motor-king” to aid in necessary mobility required for the job.

1.4 **Pre-Season Agri-Business Forum.** This event is co-managed by ADVANCE II, ATT, and MOFA and is focused on pre-season priorities including inputs, equipment, finance, messaging services and crop income potential.⁸

- All OBs and viable FBOs are invited
- Private sector are key participants⁹ for inputs, finance, equipment and other services
- Collaboration on event management between FTF and other programs
- Deliver key messages on crop production issues and profit potential
- Pioneer/GAMSAP to host a booth and provide pre-season intelligence

1.5 **Farmer Mentor Program.** This Ghanaian “farmer-to-farmer” program introduces new or inexperienced farmers to more established OB operations. This “seeing is believing”

⁷ The three staple crops of maize, rice and soybean will be sub-categorized to include white and yellow maize, pure long-grain rice varieties versus mixed and short-gra, etc.

⁸ This pre-season event is led by ATT with an ADVANCE partnership

⁹ FinGAP and their actors have an important role at the pre-season event

concept is important for new associate farmers and for those more wary of risk factors in expansion.

- Well-established NFs invited to mentor new actors to the program benefits and risks.
- Groups of prospective NFs will visit NF farms for first-hand experience in what a multi-service operation can look like.
- Key to promotion of hybrid seed is to promote farmer visits to GAMSAP sites to view the merits of high quality hybrid seed.

1.6 **Input/equipment access improved.** Facilitate wider distribution of certified seeds, chemicals and fertilizer through improved linkages between dealers and out-grower business and FBOs, supported by commercial finance (with FinGAP) and commodity off-take contracts.

- Work with out-grower businesses to develop benefit/cost scenarios in regards to in-kind lending of inputs and tractor services to smallholder farmers.
- Using readily available directories, and a local survey, staff will identify all new and established community input retailers to participate in the project's business improvement program. This includes all equipment dealers and local manufacturers who may be eligible to participate in the project's Small Equipment Grant (SEG) program.
- Working with tractor dealers such as John Deere and Mechanical Lloyd, the APO team will design and roll-out the Tractor Service Operators and Maintenance Training Program
- The grant program will be used strategically to promote mechanization especially with small equipment grants under \$6,000.¹⁰

1.7 **Farm Business Planning.** The business services team, with APOs, will work with all veteran and new actors to develop an annual OB business plan that will guide both the actor and the facilitators in annual scheduling and will determine what resources will be required to implement each plan. The plans will follow a January – December format that will cover all of the planting and production season and most of the post-harvest and marketing season. The main objective of the plan is to encourage investment in OG services that include but are not limited to tractor services, input provision of seed, fertilizer and chemicals, post-harvest mechanization for shelling and threshing, and aggregation marketing services.

- Administer a business diagnostics tool prior to the planning process to identify significant strengths and weaknesses of the operation
- The business plan will determine what, if any, financial assistance is required through commercial credit or grants. The team will work closely with FinGAP on commercial credit actions.¹¹
- Continue to follow up on the plan – making adjustments where necessary.

¹⁰ ADVANCE and ATT must collaborate closely on grants in 2015 to avoid 2014 overlap

¹¹ FinGAP has encouraged ADVANCE to refer actors to them for assistance

- Longer-term four-year strategic plans will be developed for OBs which have been identified as well-established OB leaders

1.8 Outgrower Business Management. The 2015 Outgrower Business Management (OBM) capacity-building program has two tracks, one for existing NFs and one for new Outgrower Businesses (OBs). The OBM program will build on ADVANCE training resources and lessons learned to develop a certified training program for OBs. Program participants will be required to complete a core business curriculum that will include a mix of classroom time, study tour visits and practical application exercises. Annual farm business plans and budgets will be produced through this program.

- The business team will design the OBM curriculum that will start the process of a structured and scheduled business management model which can be easily adapted to fit individual farm business requirements.
- Training will take place during the off-season by regions. Business service providers will be identified to provide training with BSO participation.
- Training should enable the OB or his/her manager to effectively manage an expanded business service operation that profitably assists OGs in their farming operations including but not limited to:
 - Tractor services,
 - Input provision of seed, fertilizer, and chemicals,
 - Post-harvest mechanization for shelling and threshing, and
 - Aggregation marketing services.
- Topics for workshops can be identified and implemented on a demand basis: include:
 - Contracts and arbitration
 - Computer accounting
 - Computer and internet

1.9 OB Office Program. OBs will be encouraged to create an “office” at their business locations where they and/or their managers can conduct business, maintain records and safely keep computer equipment for accounting and record keeping.

- In line with business training, business planning and management recruitment (where desired), the project promotes the office concept which was popular with OBs in 2014. Farmer-to-farmer visits will support this concept.
- Interns from University of Development Studies (UDS) will be assigned to OBs to assist the OB manager with new office systems and procedures.
- The grant program can be accessed to offset the cost of office investment - limited to provision of laptop computers, QuickBooks, and internet access for MIS

1.10 Financial Services. The business service team will continue to provide the linkage between actors and appropriate financial institutions.

- Identify needs of the PFIs
- Credit recovery through contracts/third-party

- Link actors to FIs based on investment gaps in business plans; improved seed
- Promotion of rural savings, especially through FBOs
- Coordination of PFI and actor development with FinGAP

1.11 Input Dealer Business Development Program. This activity addresses the need to improve farmer access to inputs through improvement of input dealer services, better management practices and expansion of business operations. This activity needs to be coordinated with ATT.

- Survey of input access points in all regions (existing survey review)
- Needs assessment on input business strengths and weaknesses
- Design and implementation of input dealer workshops (possibly BDS)
- Assistance through STTA, TA, and grants for dealer expansion; grants limited to ICT-related technology
- Assist dealers in expanding community agent concept
- Work collaboratively with Dizengoff and input dealers on hybrid seed distribution opportunities. Link to financial services if required.¹²
- ICT outreach options explored and facilitated (messaging services, MIS, internet)

1.12 Smallholder Investment. ADVANCE II will align incentives with increased access to market information, appropriate risk management services, and higher value market segments that encourage smallholders to invest in production. Capacity of producers and FBOs will be developed through the demonstration of new GAP and Post-Harvest Handling (PHH) technologies and practices through commercial partners and outgrower networks. The project will also promote sustainable relationships for smallholders with NFs and service providers by scaling up ADVANCE's nucleus farmer-outgrower and community input agent models. Special attention is drawn to women's access to land close to homesteads and financial literacy.

- Smallholders will be encouraged to link up with FBOs and NFs to gain economy of scale, access inputs and better market commodity off-take.
- Competitive market opportunities for NFs and FBOs through contractual linkages with lead firms and aggregators will increase smallholder market options
- Esoko and other ICT companies encouraged to develop a more robust marketing campaign to directly engage NF/FBO out-grower networks.
- ADVANCE II will continue to mitigate production risk by working with GAIP (crop insurance) and Ignitia (weather forecasting) to expand customer base and payment models, and tailor products to ADVANCE II target groups.
- Financial risk and benefit will be taught to farmers by the BSO team through tailored financial literacy modules and workshops (with FinGAP participation).

1.13 Land for Women Program: Designed to encourage farmers and local leaders to make available land for productive women farmers, this program had significant success in 2014. Key to the program is both land availability and productive farm land near their homestead.

- Continued messages to OBs and community leaders to consider appropriate sites

¹² This credit support to input dealers can be ADVANCE and/or FinGAP

- Access to tractor services – as scheduled alongside male-managed farm sites
- Access to inputs through OB or direct credit from FI if formed as a viable group
- Link women maize farmers to GAMSAP for improved hybrid seeds

1.14 **Climate Smart Conservation Agriculture.** ADVANCE II aims to increase competitiveness of the maize, rice and soy agricultural value chains in northern Ghana to promote economic growth and reduce poverty. In order to reduce to minimize the impact of agriculture, ADVANCE has developed a Climate Smart Strategy to promote techniques which are environmentally friendly, adapt better to the drought-sensitive zones in Ghana and seek to restore soil fertility. Aside from using drought tolerant varieties, promoting the use of low impact agriculture practices and training on their proper use, ADVANCE intends to implement a Sustainable Crop Production Intensification SCPI (Climate Smart Agriculture Sourcebook, 2013). The following document describes how and when ADVANCE will introduce Climate Smart Agricultural production systems and management practices to increase maize, soybean and rice productivity for increased incomes and food security in the three Northern regions and Kintampo North District of the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana. This effort will be carried out, in collaboration with the following entities/projects:

Centre for No-till Agriculture- Practitioners of no-till farming systems and training of farmers, Savannah Agricultural Research Institute of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR-SARI), Forest and Horticultural Crops Research Centre- Kade (FOHCREC, Agriculture Technology Transfer Project (ATTP), Africa Rising implemented by IITA and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA). The program has the following tasks for 2015:

- Research on the best options of equipment to import and then follow procurement of 1 ripper and 1 crimper for 2015
- Training to ADVANCE APO and RCs staff on no-tillage benefits (Technical Director and TL Agriculture Production)
- Establishment of 30 demo plots for the next season with the first step of no-tillage (using rippers first 2 years in the demo plots)
- Field days to teach farmers on Climate Smart Agriculture and the benefits it will bring considering the erratic precipitation of last years, the increase in price of fertilizers and the wash away of nutrients their “old” soils are going through due to the lack of organic matter in them
- Sensitization of communities in which zero-tillage will be demonstrated in order to achieve the desired results of increasing organic matter in soils (harm of slash and burn will be the main issue to sensitize about)
- Establishment of one research and demonstration center per region (2014) on cover crops which will breed seed for use post-harvest 2015
- Once the benefits of no-till technology are demonstrated private companies will be supported to import equipment or manufacture locally

- Try on a pilot basis a no-burn policy in a district area of operation. Nucleus farmers, outgrowers, District Assembly, MOFA and traditional authorities to coordinate

2.0 Sub-Purpose 2: Increased Market Access and Trade of Targeted Commodities

Objective 1: Availability and use of affordable/sustainable services increased.

Objective 2: Capacity of women and men (and firms) to participate in markets improved.

Objective 3: Private sector investment and innovation to support value chain development increased.

Objective 4: Depth and breadth of benefits from market participation for women, men and firms expanded.

Throughout 2015 ADVANCE II will build the capacity of trade-related businesses and associations including transport and logistics firms, and financial institutions. The expected growth in demand for trade financing as a result of the development of NFs and smallholder service providers will help build the capacity of current financial suppliers lending to the agriculture market. ADVANCE II will coordinate closely with FinGAP on finance-related activities.

ADVANCE II will help to establish incentives from identified end-market opportunities for lead firms, FBOs, financial institutions and BDS providers to invest in the VC and build their capacity to respond to these opportunities. Congruently, the project will facilitate mutually beneficial relationships to capitalize on incentives through market facilitation that match appropriate buyers and sellers as well as service providers to technical and financing needs. ADVANCE II will accelerate trade facilitation efforts to broker deals and public private partnerships with expanding agribusiness firms demanding a reliable and consistent supply of commodities.

2.1 Market Linkage Development. ADVANCE II will continue to play a major role in the development of sustainable market linkages. The project has placed a trade and marketing officer at each of the three regional offices in the North as well as a senior marketing officer in Kumasi. The key challenge is to support local market information systems and their providers and develop the market data further to provide buyer-seller linkage options for a more sustainable and accessible system.¹³

- **Supply and Demand Data.** The Trade and Marketing (T&M) team completed a lead buyer survey in 2014 which was instrumental in identifying new and interested actors to the program and also lead to a surge in trade missions (see below). This survey will be updated in 2015. The Trade and Marketing Officers (TMO) in the three northern regions prepared for the upcoming 2014/15 harvest and market season by gathering data on potential commodity supply and determining what quantities require markets. This data will be discussed at the pre-harvest event, and this activity will be repeated in 2015.
- **Trade missions** are a very effective and popular activity with buyers and producers alike and will be continued in 2015. Interested lead buying firms are invited to visit producers at their cost to secure dedicated commodity supply chains. Non-legally binding pre-contract agreements are prepared to document discussions and verbal

¹³ GAMSAP will take advantage of the Senior T&M Specialist posted to Kumasi to handle maize marketing demands for maize produced in the GAMSAP area of operation.

agreements – pending legally binding contracts that are negotiated at a later date. These trade missions are a precursor to more formal lead firm investment directly with suppliers to ensue longer-term supply relationships.

- **Pre-Harvest Agri-Business Conference and Exhibition.** Held every October since 2011, the pre-harvest event has been the most influential model of bringing commodity buyers and commodity suppliers together under one roof. Hosted by GGC, assisted by the ADVANCE II Project, in partnership with FTF partners and other donor projects, the Pre-Harvest Agri-Business Conference and Exhibition kick-starts the marketing season with presentations on commodity supply-demand issues and national economic challenges, and allows for direct buyer-seller interchange.
- **Market Information Services.** MFarms and ESOKO provide web-based and SMS supported MIS services, ESOKO going one step further with a call center. These companies along with other voice and SMS messaging services are encouraged to market directly to actors and not to projects, establishing a more sustainable long-term service. Web-based “bids and offers” services are key to linking buyers to suppliers and the project will be promoting this concept through the OB “office” concept and computer grants.
- **Trade finance** is not only required at the lead firm/buyer level but also, and perhaps more so, at the OB level. Field aggregation of commodity is difficult and challenging and OB aggregation will be the focus of the T&M team for 2015, which will work closely with both the BS team and FinGAP.¹⁴

2.2 Lead Firm Competitiveness. The 2014 market lead firm and processor survey has started the process of creating a more focused and actor-involved program on the buyer/processor end of the value chain. The project will continue its strong market linkage program that formed the foundation of the marketing program under ADVANCE I, and will also work directly with regional and domestic firms on a one-on-one basis to determine how to upgrade operations, move into value-added products, and expand their raw material base. Firms in growing and higher-value end-market segments that can drive demand for commodities within the FTF value chains will be targeted.

- A T&M Specialist has been posted to Kumasi specifically to work with market lead firms. An office has been opened in Kumasi to support both this activity and the GAMSAP program.
- The 2014 assessment of market lead firms and processors which procure commodity for North Ghana (and from the GAMSAP zone) will be updated in 2015
- 2014 survey identified areas of cooperation and support that will be supported by MOUs, STTA and possibly grants where VC investment is involved.
- T&M team will conduct an assessment to design a strategic marketing campaign (“Buy Ghana”) to improve brand image of Ghanaian food products.
- Identify finance needs for trade and capital improvements; work with FinGAP

¹⁴ ADVANCE II will collaborate with FinGAP on lead firm financial requirements, for trade finance and business improvement needs.

2.3 Trade Association Support. Trade associations such as GGC, Borderless Alliance, GAIDA, Techiman Maize Traders Association, and GRIB to name a few, are important to the grain (and staple) sector. Provision of services to members and the public alike is important for their long-term purpose – and for sustainability. Some of these associations may become eligible to participate in the USAID Forward program if effectively prepared.

- Customize Capacity Development Assessment Tool for Associations.
- Determine relationship status with associations and identify areas of assistance if required. MOUs, STTA, and grants are options for further support.
- “Contract” grant for Ghana Grain Council is set on several deliverables:
 - Management improvement; MD recruitment
 - Inclusion of the rice and soybean sectors in membership and programing
 - WHR review conducted in 2014 guides plan for 2015; Warehouse Receipts program resumes
 - Strategic plan in place; BOD endorsement
 - New policy and advocacy unit
 - Negotiated role in GCX
 - Home for MIS linkage system – with ESOKO

2.4 North Ghana Rice Milling. Under ADVANCE I, milling assistance was targeted to southern based aggregators who procured from the North. It is expected that the newly constructed Avnash Rice Mill (500/mt/day capacity) will be operational in 2015 and collaboration discussions were well under way in 2014 to set up a supply delivery system with northern rice farmers. In addition, local milling capacity is limited and requires expansion and upgrading, the assumption being that not all paddy rice can be marketed to Avnash.

- T&M staff will work with Avnash to set up a paddy rice delivery system depending on variety preference and seasonal timing. It is assumed that primarily rain-fed (non-perfumed) varieties, which tend to be parboiled due to a mixture of varieties that shatter easily due to over dryness, will be the main source of paddy rice, though this remains to be proven.
- An assessment and survey of the northern Ghana rice milling capacity was conducted in 2012 by the ADVANCE I program and will be used to focus attention on localized milling using appropriate rice milling options. The grant program and linkage to credit will be used to promote localized milling expansion and upgrade for community/township use. Up to four new mills will be considered in this initiative in 2015, depending on cost, market studies, and business plans.

2.5 Regional/Cross Border Trade and Transport. Ghana’s steadily increasing inflation, currently at 15.3 percent, and the current foreign exchange crisis, have eroded purchasing power, furthering the necessity for import-substitution policies, while creating more competitive regional export opportunities. Currently, Ghana imports nearly 50 percent of the rice, most of the processed soy products and 15 percent of the maize it consumes. Ghana is also exporting staples cross border to Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, and Togo but very little is known of this mostly informal trade.

- Work with WATH to discuss ways to monitor cross border trade (inter) and extra regional exports of commodity staples. Work with GGC on trade data dissemination.
- Cross-border trade study can be commissioned, perhaps jointly with WATH
- Work with Borderless Alliance; focus on north-south corridor and northern cross-border trade.
- Engage with GPRTU and MTTU to identify transport/haulage needs/challenges and develop an engagement/support plan. Suggested actions:
 - Develop and share database of transport associations members, contact and vehicle capacity with NFs/FBOs
 - Contact and explore linkages with transport associations at each regional/district capital in the North and the GAMSAP zone.
 - Assist with transporter linkage/back haulage

2.6 Community-based market systems strengthened. To increase market participation benefits to smallholders, ADVANCE II will ensure that outgrower networks and FBOs have the capacity to take advantage of identified market opportunities through collective marketing, PHH and storage and training. The program will work to increase FBO capacity to market produce collectively through affiliated NFs and aggregators connected to larger institutional buyers, or in some cases directly to the processors.

- Tailor Sell More for More (SMFM) curriculum and materials for Ghana language and context –focus on FBOs.
- Develop female FBO leadership module for SMFM.
- Conduct SMFM TOTs to FBO leaders.
- Complete FBO M4 assessment to identify those that can best support member services for commodity marketing.
- Develop and start FBO capacity strengthening program.
- Re-commence numeracy and FAAB community training for OGs. NF business model to include aggregation and marketing plans and training.

3.0 Sub-Purpose 3: Strengthened Capacity for Advocacy and Activity Implementation

Objective 1: Advocacy capacity of value chain actors and their associations strengthened to address identified value chain-specific enabling environment constraints particular to the north

ADVANCE II will increase the capacity of actors to participate in the development process for the upgrades and benefits of the enabling environment necessary for VC competitiveness. The project will build organizational capacity to affect change and promote investment and improve the business enabling environment for targeted VCs. The project will also strengthen VC relationships that increase stakeholder collaboration, and deepen its local partnerships through a robust capacity building program built around USAID's Organizational Capacity Assessment process.

3.1 Advocacy Group Development. The cost of doing business in agriculture will remain high as long as commercial credit remains expensive, standardized grades and measures are weak, enforcement is inconsistent, transport costs are high and North-South linkages are fragile. Addressing these policies will help the rice, maize and soy value chains to drive down costs and become more competitive. ADVANCE II's Farmer Advocacy Officer will organize policy forums with NFs, FBOs and other appropriate organizations on themes such as input subsidies and imports to discuss the implications and feedback to national stakeholders and the USAID Policy Support and ATT projects.

- Conduct/complete Policy Advocacy Capacity Assessment
- Organize farmer forums with participating FBOs and other appropriate organizations
- Plan and implement training in advocacy capacity gaps identified by the assessment
- Organize forums to develop policy platforms and strategies
- Work with FBOs and other appropriate organizations on strengthening advocacy tools
- Work with VC actors to develop long-term approach to policy change
- Apply strategies to district level initiatives through networks and coalitions

3.2 Advocacy Capacity for National Organizations Strengthened. The Ghana Grains Council and other national trade associations are in a unique position to effectively advocate for improvements to the enabling environment for grain production (subsidies), haulage (non-tariff barriers), and marketing (import/export restrictions). Working closely with APSP¹⁵:

- The ADVANCE II Senior Policy and Advocacy Specialist is seconded to GGC to work on developing a long-term viable policy platform and options for approach
- GGC will provide an advocacy counterpart at the end of 2015 to work independently in 2016.
- GGC (with APSP) to host policy events and forums to lead a private sector approach to policy resolution

¹⁵ Agricultural Policy Support Project is a FtF project managed by Chemonics

- GGC to produce a bi-annual policy paper and topic-specific issues papers with STTA assistance

3.3 District Assembly Plans for Agricultural Investment. The Senior Policy and Advocacy Specialist will oversee a process to encourage greater investment driven by district and national investment plans. The Ghana Investment Promotion Council (GIPC) drives the development and implementation of the national investment plan; however, it does not focus on the staple crops sector. ADVANCE II will encourage Metropolitan, Municipality, and District Assemblies (MMDA) to support coordination of MMDA-level investment plans in agriculture (focused but not limited to staple food crops) through a centralized database of investment opportunities that would be shared with potential investors.

- Engage and assess the desire and need for district investment plan
- Create awareness on agricultural investment potential
- Support MMDAs to develop agriculture investment plans
- Assist/support MMDAs to implement investment plans

Objective 2: Local institutions strengthened to implement inclusive value chain development and become eligible for USAID funding

The second objective for “capacity development for activity implementation” has two parts, and activities have been designed accordingly for the targeted local institutions including NGOs and FBOs. Under the first part, most of the institutions targeted for capacity development for USAID funding eligibility will be the larger and viable NGOs and associations, as well as ADVANCE II implementing partners. ACDI/VOCA has renewed contracts with its local partners, ACDEP, in outgrower business service support, and PAB Consult, in agronomic technical assistance. Each organization has been provided more focused technical and management roles on the project. Both organizations have requested increased support to improve their technical capacity and internal structures to successfully fulfill their subcontract roles and look to eventually manage USAID funds as a prime contractor.

The second part of this objective is focused on FBOs, and as such, some of the activities have been previously mentioned under sub-purposes one and two. The aim of this objective is to transform non-commercial farmer based FBOs into farmer based enterprises (FBE). These FBOs fall into two distinct groups: (1) Those that are informal community groups linked/affiliated to an outgrower business which are assisted to become more formal FBEs with the aim of distributing inputs or aggregate off-take through the OB structure, with their members also being counted as OB beneficiaries. (2) Those FBOs which are independent of an OB, or those which wish to become independent, and strive to deliver commercial services to their members with the ultimate objective of becoming a registered FBE (which could become an OB in its own right).

3.4 Capacity development for program implementation

- Identify eligible institutions to participate in the program; conduct organizational capacity assessment; select start-up candidates.
- Develop capacity building plans with selected implementing partners.
- Provide or facilitate access to necessary organizational development assistance for those institutions requiring it.

3.5 Capacity development for FBEs. Staff will strengthen ties with known FBO groups and will identify new FBOs to join the program. FBOs will also undergo a capacity assessment and will work with staff to develop a business plan and a training plan which will guide all assistance and resource allocation.

- Access to inputs; distribution of inputs with in-kind or cash payment. A small input shop is also an option if the FBE qualifies. Ties to input dealers willing to work with FBE. Training required.
- FBE as demo site host to be considered
- Access to MIS and weather forecasting; training required
- Access to finance must be guided by strict protocols and criteria; also determined by viability of FBE and purpose of finance. Emphasis on rural savings is given equal or greater status as credit.
- Bulk output marketing from in-kind payment of inputs; connection to next market link from FBE (NF, aggregator, processor) FBE selling rice to Avnash is an example.
- Numeracy and FAAB training sub-contracted out to BDS – focus on FBO membership and NF OGs

4.0 Program Support - Gender Mainstreaming

ADVANCE II will mainstream gender equity across all project sub-purposes, in addition to ensuring that a targeted approach is employed, designating specific activities and resources towards lessening the inequality between women and men. The project's vision is to create equitable and sustainable opportunities for women and men along the target value chains. Based on the analysis presented in the gender strategy submitted in 2014 we have designed an approach that will identify and address inequality, build public and private sector awareness and capacity, strengthen networks of individuals and organizations promoting gender equity, create public awareness and target innovation investments in areas of benefit to women.

The project staffing structure has been designed to support gender integration across all activities. The Gender Advisor based in Tamale will oversee the mainstreaming of gender throughout the life of the project. She will facilitate gender-equity and women's empowerment training for all ADVANCE II partner staff and will participate substantively in activities designed to ensure female smallholder farmers access data, skills, equipment and finance to improve their livelihoods. She will be able to access ACDI/VOCA's gender community of practice to consult with colleagues, use materials from similar programs and build on lessons learned. Highlights of our approach include:

Gender equity training linked to technical support: The integration of gender-equitable approaches is everyone's responsibility. Therefore it is necessary that all staff members are aware of (1) how gender influences their own assumptions and actions, (2) why gender is important to the project, and (3) how they can and should integrate gender into their daily work. Training for staff, partners and beneficiaries in Year 1 will enable technical and field staff to integrate gender into activities. Short follow-up trainings will be integrated into other staff trainings, workshops, or team meetings to reinforce the importance of unbiased gender equity in their work.

Evidence based approach: The initial gender strategy is based on our own research as well as results of the WEAI. ADVANCE II gender and M&E staff will explore the findings of the WEAI to ensure project activities are responsive to identified constraints, and will continue to gather data throughout project life. Informal communication between field staff and beneficiary populations, more formal analysis on an annual basis and regular monitoring will help keep activities on track. This will also assist in identifying some of the gender issues that may have been missed during the gender strategy design stage. It will contribute to designing and implementing of timely strategies to address the identified gender issues/barriers. This ongoing analysis will serve to identify new activities to expand women's empowerment and participation in the value chain, such as increasing the number of female nucleus farmers and women-run businesses and promoting women's leadership in value chain governance.

Coordination and leverage: The project will coordinate with government, donor and civil society organizations carrying out gender-related activities in the field to avoid duplication, expand

outreach and share success stories and lessons learned. We will look to leverage other programs to increase opportunities for women in the target value chains, including the other FTF projects and Ghana Commercial Agriculture Project (GCAP).

Child Labor: The value-chain beneficiaries of the USAID-funded ADVANCE II program in Northern Ghana are smallholder farmers, nucleus farmers, aggregators, processors, input dealers and financial institutions. ADVANCE works closely with farmers, businessmen and women to ensure that they upgrade and invest in their agribusiness operations to improve crop productivity and processing, increase purchases and sales through market linkages, and ultimately improve household incomes. By doing so, we can help these families earn the monetary resources to invest in their children's primary and secondary education for both boys and girls. ADVANCE program activities alerts beneficiaries to the safe use, storage and disposal of hazardous agro-chemicals, and the correct use of agricultural equipment to ensure children's safety on the farm or business.

Link to Nutrition: Although the project has no specific directive to engage in nutrition related activities we will link with RING/SPRING regarding opportunities to integrate nutrition where the value chain approach provides a particular advantage. Where appropriate, ADVANCE will continue information dissemination through the existing outreach program with local radio stations and at the community level. The use of local private firms with incentives to underwrite nutritional education programs as part of their commercial or social responsibility marketing program will be a focus.

The work plan for PY 2015 will cover the following activities:

4.1 Women engaged in increased agricultural productivity in targeted commodities

- Establish Women as Nucleus Farmer (NF): Increase women entrepreneurs' ability to manage outgrower networks, as many have not met ADVANCE's initial criterion of having the capacity and willingness to provide services to smallholder farmers and be linked to a formal structured market.
- The Outgrower Business Management (OBM) program will have a dedicated women's leadership and entrepreneurship course to support aspiring women NFs.
- Actively engage women in capacity building: Target and include women farmers in training provided in improved technologies/GAP-including productivity, PHH, adding value, upgrading, and so on, through various capacity building programs such as Farming as a Business/Farming as a Family Business:
 - Announce publicly that both women and men are invited to attend the training.
 - Communicate social and economic benefits of women's economic participation to village chief's cooperative leaders, and other community members.
 - Encourage men to bring their wives or other women in the household to training.
 - Reach out to women's groups.

- Ensure materials are gender appropriate and that trainings/location of demo plots and organization of field days are offered at times and locations that allow women to attend.
- Help women invest in their livelihood. Encourage village savings and loan groups for women and men, and link these groups to market opportunities.
 - Provide in-kind grants with flexible leverage requirements depending on vulnerability.
 - Work with financial institutions to develop a range of products and services aimed at women entrepreneurs and women-led organizations and associations.
- Recognize relevant technology: Through demand-driven approach, identify technologies that meet women's needs and preferences, which usually means that they are time saving, less physically demanding, and affordable:
 - Through partnerships with private sector, encourage research and development of suitable technologies.
 - Showcase these new technologies through demonstration plots.
 - Encourage access to and adoption of these time/labor saving devices through credit or grants.
- Raise awareness of land rights: Raise awareness of the importance of land ownership/larger land size for women to farm through running a campaign; organizing informal meetings in every village or cluster; promoting success stories to demonstrate impact on the community; organizing community meetings or conferences; etc.
- Support youth spraying and women rice transplanting groups: Recruit young adults from outgrower networks to form spraying groups to service farms where such services are in demand. Help spraying groups to form their own enterprises assisted through start-up kits, safe-use training and links to existing input businesses and/or NFs.
- Ensure women have access to information: Promote appropriate technologies such as use of mobile devices and women's listenership clubs targeted to women's specific information needs.

4.2 Increase women market access and trade of targeted commodities

- Build capacity of women to access markets: Provide training in business, financial and IT skills to women's business owners and group members

- Introduce market linkages: Link women farmers and women’s groups (e.g., self-help groups, village saving and loans groups, women’s producer groups) to formal markets and put in place structures to help them maintain control over their income.
- Explore off-season or alternative livelihoods for women: Use the market or value chain analysis to identify other income-generating opportunities for women that require limited access to land, such as management of storage facilities, input supply management, seed storage and breeding, extension services and paravet services. Do not limit income-generating opportunities for women to what are considered traditional women’s roles.
- Build women’s leadership capacity: Conduct skills and leadership training for women at different levels of the value chain (producer/marketing groups, associations, business manager, etc.).
 - When working with FBOs, integrate women’s leadership training into the Sell More for More (SMFM) training program.
 - Set up a role model or mentorship program and networking opportunities.
 - Conduct awareness campaigns targeting both men and women on the benefits of having women in decision making positions in cooperatives, associations, or other groups.
 - Take women on exposure visits to places where they see their peer women in leadership roles in order to raise their aspirations and confidence.
 - Create opportunities for women to speak in public at events such as conferences and fairs or around International Women’s Day or other such days
- Expand Numeracy Training: Identify FBO groups to receive numeracy training facilitated by local NGOs. The project will target both sexes, though we expect to reach a majority of women.

4.3 Strengthened women’s’ capacity for advocacy and activity implementation

- Build the capacity of local organizations that focus on women’s issues so they can represent members more effectively.
- Facilitate women’s access to land: Use the existing NF-outgrower structures in communities to help leverage land so it is more readily available for productive women farmers, through the traditional chief and sub-chief structures.
- Work with advocacy groups on access to and control over land issues, specifically to empower women to be able to lease land and negotiate for use of land.

5.0 Program Support - Environment

In PY 2015, the ADVANCE II project will focus on agrochemical management, support to climate change adaptation, and water management, and general compliance with title 22 of the code of federal regulations section 216 (22CFR216). The program will continue to support small holder farmers and agrochemical dealers with training and outreach in both the print and electronic media on safeguards. The efforts towards building climate change resilience will continue through the support of the weather index drought insurance scheme in collaboration with the Ghana Agricultural Insurance Pool (GAIP); and weather forecasting through Ignitia Ltd. Climate smart agriculture is also a new activity area under sub-purpose 1. Environmental management will also ensure compliance with United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) environmental regulations through the implementation of the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP).

5.1 Improving agrochemical management. The ADVANCE field offices will continue to collaborate with the media, EPA and the major agrochemical importers and retailers to ensure that nucleus farmers and SHF continue to receive training on pesticide safeguards and management of pesticides, particularly recognizing banned chemicals. The program will collaborate with other NGOs and FTF Projects operating within the three northern regions to scale up activities and campaigns that will further strengthen pesticide handling amongst clients. In PY 2015 the ADVANCE program will update the Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safe Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) to ensure that the recommended pesticide list is up to date with the EPA register of agrochemicals on the market.

- Conduct refresher trainings on approved PERSUAP with field staff and clients
- Develop outreach content on safe pesticide handling in collaboration with EPA and others. Information used by radio firms, ICT, NF, etc.
- Prepare environmental and safety management systems for four agrochemical dealers

5.2 Improve smallholder farmer adaptation and resilience to climate change. The declaration by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) fourth assessment report of increased frequency of catastrophic events; in this specific case drought and flooding events will put small holder farmers in a disadvantaged position to escape from the poverty net. In the 2012 planting season the ADVANCE I program introduced small holder farmers to the weather index based drought insurance scheme. ADVANCE will once again collaborate with the Ghana Agricultural Insurance Pool (GAIP) to make the insurance product available to small holder farmers. ADVANCE II will continue its promotion and use of weather forecasting through SMS technology delivered through the private company Ignitia Ltd. Additional tasks include:

- Engage radio and ICT firms in communicating messages on drought index insurance scheme
- Develop radio content on weather and climate change messages in collaboration with research institutions (e.g. SARI/IITA)
- Provide GAIP grant funding to post marketing staff in North Ghana to increase volume of policies and promote value of crop insurance

- Contract Ignitia to provide “sample” weather forecasting through SMS technology to new project participants
- Conduct training for all new users

5.3 Climate smart and water management. We have expanded the duties of the environment specialist to include conservation agriculture which is described mostly under sub-purpose 1. Sustainable agriculture, especially in drought prone Northern Ghana with its weathered soils and high cost of inputs, makes sense from an economic and agronomics view. Northern Ghana has numerous check dams that may have eroded into non-use but the status is unclear. This will be tackled under this activity and a status report will provide some insight into what can be done.

- Work closely with the APO team to determine climate smart alternatives to a highly mechanized farm system dependent on expensive imported inputs.
- Instigate a study on check dams and determine an appropriate course of action

5.4 General environmental compliance with Regulation 216.

- Update ADVANCE staff on environmental and mitigation and monitoring plan
- Ensure grants and new activities are in the scope of the initial environmental evaluation
- Promote use of safety clothing and implement safety training for appropriate grantees with production and processing equipment, and with established spraying gangs

6.0 Program Support - Public Relations and Communication

The ADVANCE II Public Relations and Communications (PR&C) Officer, in coordination with USAID, will ensure high visibility and wide media outreach through the creation and dissemination of professional information products to project stakeholders and media. The PR&C Specialist will work with the COP and technical staff to frame communications strategies and develop specific communication outputs to ensure maximum impact on targeted communities.

Communication continues to play an important role in projecting and promoting the activities, progress, impact and successes of the ADVANCE II project. The ADVANCE Program will focus on communicating the impact of the project through a variety of methods. These include:

6.1 USAID contracted reporting. The project will periodically develop success stories and submit these and other reports and informational products to USAID’s Development Experience Clearinghouse. All materials and activities will comply with ADVANCE II’s Branding Implementation and Marking Plan.

- Success stories, “Telling our Story”, or personal interest stories submitted each quarter
- Weekly bullets to USAID that illustrate ADVANCE II’s continued impact throughout the year
- Increased publicity at organized events to reflect the Feed the Future initiative

- Adhere to USAID branding and marking plan during program activities (demonstration sites, field days, etc.)
- Four video productions each year depicting project achievements and personal interest stories
- Quarterly and annual reports
- Member and contributor of the multi-project FTF KM&L team

6.2 Build public awareness of ADVANCE II's impact by involving the media (radio and newspapers) at key milestone program activities and the use of press releases on demonstrations and field days accomplishments.

- ADVANCE II will support the use of promotional materials (leaflets, brochures, fliers) for actors to assist them to market and brand themselves more effectively.
- Four quarterly ADVANCE newsletters; distributed to a target 1,000 email recipients
- Quarterly staff photo contests and regular staff training to achieve a high quality photo database

7.0 Support Program - Grants

The \$5 million grant program has two parts: the Innovation and Investment Incentive (I-3) fund and the Local Partnership Grant Fund (LPG).

7.1 The \$2.5 million I-3 is a flexible financing mechanism to reduce risk associated with investing in new technology and business approaches, foster innovation, leverage resources, and provide incentives to stimulate private sector investment and mitigate constraints in the targeted VCs in northern Ghana. A total of \$400,000 of this is earmarked for construction projects at roughly \$100,000 per year. No construction grants are planned for 2015.

- The PY 2015 grants program will follow up on stakeholders' use of small and large equipment provided to actors in previous program years. It is expected that numerous NF, aggregators and FBOs will procure small equipment using the small equipment grant (SEG) scheme where equipment is valued at less than \$6,000.
- The grants team will also monitor all equipment use, facilitate with the APO and BSO teams to train actors on record keeping and determine the equipment value as a profitable asset to the farmer/aggregator business.

7.2 The \$2.5 million Local Partnership Grant Fund will enable ADVANCE II to engage local NGOs, BDS providers, trade groups and other actors to directly provide services to VC actors while building the capacity of the local institutions through the grant management process. The Operations/Grants Manager will manage both the I-3 and the LPG funds, in collaboration with the Technical Director and Technical Leaders. LPG funds will be managed through the following process:

- Pre-award Survey: All applicants selected through the Local Partnership Grant Fund will be required to undergo a survey to determine eligibility for funding and to identify financial, administrative and legal gaps where direct support can be provided.
- Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA): The OCA process supports the Implementation and Procurement Reform efforts under USAID Forward. Recipients will be tiered and grouped by the various levels and type of support required, for which a portion of each grant will be earmarked for capacity building support.
- Direct Capacity-Building Support: Direct support in capacity-building areas such as human resources, financial planning or MIS will be contracted in accordance with recipient's grant requirements and support plans.
- Mid-Term OCA: Each recipient will be required to repeat the OCA midway through their ADVANCE II grant. Repeat OCAs will be used to determine if interventions achieved required results and to update and modify their respective support plans.
- LPG grants underway or under discussion are
 - GGC
 - GAIP
 - GRIB

7.3 Grants Monitoring. Throughout the year, the grants team will continue to work with the technical teams and grantees to monitor the use and impact of grant awards.

- The grants team will prepare quarterly grants reports and updates highlighting funds obligated to the various value chains and private sector resources leveraged, and these will be disaggregated by value chain and geographic location.

8.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

The project's monitoring, evaluation and learning component comprises two interrelated areas: (i) monitoring, evaluation and reporting and (ii) knowledge management and learning.

8.1 Monitoring and Evaluation.

The focus of monitoring and evaluation during the second year of the project will be to aggressively strengthen program measurement, documentation and communication of change relating to improved gross margins and subsequently income of project beneficiaries. We will concentrate on populating our database, further developing systems for data capture and storage, retrieval and analysis; assessing data quality and taking corrective measures to address any shortfalls. We will also strengthen the program M&E team and build staff capacity to assess and attribute change to project interventions as well as well as reporting.

Data collection, analysis and data quality assurance. A Management Information System (MIS) database is being established for ADVANCE II and a will be completed and fully functional by November 2014. Also the project team is developing a Data Quality Strategy

(DQS) and this will be completed by November 2014 as well. In the first year, data collection forms were designed to make data collection, entry and retrieval easier, effective and efficient.

The M&E team will make regular visits to observe field activities and interact with field staff and project beneficiaries. These visits will enable the M&E officers provide on-site technical support on data collection and also contribute to the M&E officers' understanding of program interventions for better attribution and interpretation of results. In addition we will undertake routine data collection on all project indicators including, but not limited to the following:

- Number of farmers receiving training directly or indirectly through the project,
- Investments by the various value chain actors
- Access to value chain financing and direct loans
- Process of facilitating access to inputs and markets and the number of beneficiaries who access such resources
- Number of farmers adopting new/improved technology
- Number of hectares under improved technologies
- Changes in crop yields and gross margins

Causality and Attribution of Observed Results. During the year, every effort will be made to observe and document all changes (incremental or otherwise, positive or negative) occurring as a result of project activities. The PMP will be used to track outputs and outcomes and also use non-indicator based documentation and reporting in order to capture important change that is not covered directly by the program performance monitoring indicators.

The project team will monitor closely the success factors as well as any challenges and shortcomings of the ADVANCE II outgrower business model and adapt it where necessary to ensure that results are not only achieved but are recorded in a manner that can be attributed to the project's interventions.

Documentation and Reporting. In accordance with the Cooperative Agreement we will submit progress reports within 30 days of the end of each quarter and the one in the fourth quarter will be an annual report. The quarterly reports will illustrate results against those indicators for which progress can reasonably be expected within the reporting timeframe for project implementation. The annual report will include progress on all project performance indicators. In addition to the quarterly and annual reports, we will continue to provide human interest and 'significant change' stories to provide real life examples of project results.

Capacity Development in Monitoring and Evaluation. ADVANCE II will work to maintain M&E staff capacity at a level that ensures that quality data is collected and handled through the data flow system with precision. During the second year, the project will organize refresher training on all the PMP indicators and data quality strategy for M&E officers and all field staff. Staff will also be trained to use the MIS database (especially retrieval and analysis of data and report production) as soon as it is completed and data populated. Other staff development activities will focus on alternate means of documenting change using audio and visuals, assessing attribution and report writing skills.

Tracking Gender Improvements. Gender is central to the FTF program and to the core ADVANCE II strategy. The project will maintain the current approach to measuring equitable access to the project by all gender groups. ADVANCE currently measures gender impact in three ways: (i) disaggregating, when applicable, by sex; (ii) using a “gender lens” when developing evaluation questionnaires to ensure good understanding of the differential impact project interventions can have on men and women; and (iii) using qualitative data collected through focus group discussions in gender assessments. Specific topics to be explored in focus groups and evaluations include women’s roles in decision making; women’s access to production resources; women’s leadership positions within the community and in the household; and labor allocation. ADVANCE II will also track the number of women and women’s organizations directly benefitting from the project.

Geographical Information System (GIS). The project uses GIS as a tool to gather accurate data to improve the efficiency of specific supply chains and improve competitiveness of the respective commodity value chains. GIS is also used to support the M&E functions of the project. Below is a list of the major GIS activities to be undertaken in the coming year. The project will undertake GIS mapping of rice, maize and soya fields in three northern regions as well as the GAMSAP zone of influence in Ashanti and Brong Ahafo Regions of sampled farmers to collect data for yield and gross margin analysis. We will also continue data processing and analysis for the collected Gross Margin.

The project will also develop a booklet containing maps of as many activities as possible throughout the entire project duration including:

- Map the location of all ADVANCE Nucleus farmers and FBOs (including women groups) locations;
- Map the locations of all input dealers working with ADVANCE;
- Map the locations of all beneficiaries of ADVANCE’s small input and equipment grants;
- Map the location of all beneficiaries of ADVANCE’s volunteer program;
- Map demonstrations sites;
- Update existing maps on financial service providers, tractor inventories and inputs and equipment and dams.

8.2 Knowledge Management and Learning.

The project remains committed to an internal learning agenda that will help the project team to better measure whether and how we are contributing to the transformation of Ghana’s agriculture sector. Some learning topics are of broad relevance and may be pursued in tandem with other projects under the METSS KM&L group; other topics may be relevant only to ADVANCE II and will be pursued by project staff.

In accordance with the initial ME&L work plan submitted to the mission, in July 2014 1-day KM&L workshops were held in Tamale, Bolga and Wa with the objectives of coming to a shared understanding of KM&L and agreeing on how staff can engage in learning and how the project can best engage project beneficiaries in the process. Based on feedback from staff the following steps will be taken to create an environment that is conducive to learning and brings in all technical and operational staff.

The MEL Specialist will oversee the establishment of project office-level internal KM&L groups headed by the RCs. This group will be responsible for organizing and hosting a quarterly learning event in each region open to ADVANCE II staff, staff of other FTF projects and other sector stakeholders. Each event will include a presentation on a topic relevant to the project and of interest to participants followed by an opportunity for discussion. Presentations can be made by both internal and external presenters.

Several steps are being taken to ensure smooth flow of implicit and explicit information between field offices. The Technical Director has started preparing a weekly set of bullet points that are shared with all technical staff. A bulletin board will be placed in the common area in each field office and will display information to promote sharing and learning display, such as photos of ongoing work from the three regions with brief captions and the name of the photographer for easy follow-up with any questions. To give staff an opportunity to voice their ideas and share their experiences more informally, the MEL Specialist will set up a monthly story contest. Shortlisted stories will be posted on the bulletin boards and a prize will be awarded for the best one.

MS-SharePoint has been introduced to the project. It will help manage overflow of information through document storage and increased accessibility. It will also allow for setting up an internal community of practice where staff members can informally ask questions, share information and post documents, events, links and other useful pieces of information. Component team members will meet two times a year in person to discuss challenges and lessons learned.

Annex 1. ADVANCE II Implementation Plan Tracking Sheet - PY 2015

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
1.0 SUB-PURPOSE 1: INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY IN TARGETED COMMODITIES																			
1.1	Actor supported technology demonstration sites		170 NFs 50,000 SHF													30,000	7,500	12,500	
	Sites selected strategically for easy access by farmers, qualified lead farmer, and productivity factors	TLA/APO	200 sites													100	45	55	
	Sponsors identified for all inputs required	TLA/APO	20 firms																
	GAP and PHH training to take place at all sites (and selected farms) with private sector firms, nucleus farmer and MOFA AEA where possible.	TLA/APO	1000 training events 15,000 SHF													7,500	3,000	4,500	
	50 sites will be exclusive for GAMSAP and Pioneer seed varieties. Training on these sites will be reported under ADVANCE II and the GAMSAP program.	PD/TLA/APO	50 sites 200 trainings													2500	1000	1500	
	Sites monitored and data recorded on results	TLA/APO	200 sites													100	45	55	
1.2	Standard crop production protocols																		
	Coordinate with partners to develop standard crop protocols, modify existing ADVANCE training modules and share extension information through outgrower networks, private sector partners and information and communication technology (ICT) platforms.	TLA/ICT	3 protocols 5000 distributed													2500	1125	3775	
	Disseminate planting advice through SMS/voice message service providers, call centers, the media, mainly radio and radio listener groups. Radio drama will be emphasized in 2015.	ICT/TLA	10,000 sms 5,000 voice 25 radio stations 20 radio dramas 10,000 MIS 150 listener grps													5000 2500 15 10 5000 80	2000 1000 5 5 1000 30	3000 1500 10 5 1500 40	
	Pioneer may contribute to maize production protocols with printed material that can be distributed with their seed varieties	D/P, PD	10,000 distributed													6000	1500	2500	
1.3	Field Management Program																		
	Identify interested OBs, part of project compact with OB	Team	50 OBs													25	10	15	
	Field management is incorporated into the OB business plan and becomes part of the OBM curriculum	TL/AAPO	50 total OBs													25	10	15	
	Services include tractor service management, OG input distribution, post-harvest mechanization, GAP/PHH training, demo site management,	TLA/APO	50 total OBs													25	10	15	

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	production collection and aggregation, community liaison, lead farmer development																		
	Grant program to be used as incentive to start field management services and to offset startup costs - limited to motorcycle or "motor-king" to aid in necessary mobility required for the job		30 grants to OBs \$150,000													15	5	10	
1.4	Pre-Season Agri-Business Forum																		
	All OBs and viable FBOs are invited		200 OBs and FBOs													100	40	60	
	Private sector are key participants for inputs, finance, equipment and other services		30 exhibitors																
	Collaboration on event management between FTF and other programs		3 FTF proj.																
	Deliver key messages on crop production issues and profit potential																		
	Pioneer/GAMSAP to host a booth and provide pre-season intelligence																		
1.5	Farmer Mentor Program																		
	Well-established NFs invited to mentor new actors to the program benefits and risks		60 NFs mentor													30	12	18	
	Groups of prospective NFs will visit NF farms for first-hand experience in what a multi-service operation can look like		60 NFs visit NFs													30	12	18	
	Key to promotion of hybrid seed is to promote farmer visits to GAMSAP sites to view the merits of high quality hybrid seed		50 NFs visit sites													25	10	15	
1.6	Input/equipment access improved																		
	Work with out-grower businesses to develop benefit/cost scenarios in regards to in-kind lending of inputs and tractor services to smallholder farmers	TLB/BSO	150 NFs													75	35	40	
	Staff will identify all new and established community input retailers to participate in the project's business improvement program.	TLB/BSO	30 dealers																
	Tractor Service Operators and Maintenance Training Program	TLA/APO	15 workshops 150 operators													8 75	3 35	4 40	
	The grant program will be used strategically to promote mechanization especially with small equipment grants	GM/TLA	\$500,000 in SEG grants																
1.7	Farm Business Planning																		
	Administer a business diagnostics tool prior to the planning process to identify significant strengths and weaknesses of the operation	TLB/BSO	All 170 NFs													85	35	50	
	The business plan will determine what, if any, financial assistance is required through	TLB/BSO/ APO	All 170 NFs with farm plan													85	35	50	

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	commercial credit or grants. The team will work closely with FinGAP on commercial credit actions		100 assisted with finance																
	Continue to follow up on the plan – making adjustments where necessary.	TLB/BSO/APO	170 plans													85	35	50	
	Longer-term four-year strategic plans will be developed for OBs which have been identified as well-established OB leaders	TLB/BSO	120 NFs													60	25	35	
1.8	Outgrower Business Management																		
	The business team will design the OBM curriculum that will start the process of a structured and scheduled business management model which can be easily adapted to fit individual farm business requirements	TLB/BSO	OBM designed [and contracted]																
	Training will take place during the off-season by regions. Business service providers will be identified to provide training with BSO participation	TLB/BSO	Three programs; 120 NFs																
	Training should enable the OB or his/her manager to effectively manage an expanded business service operation that profitably assists OGs in their farming operations	TLB/BSO/APO	150 NFs expand their business													75	30	45	
	Topics for workshops can be identified and implemented on a demand basis	TLB/BSO																	
1.9	OB Office Program																		
	In line with business training, business planning and management recruitment (where desired), the project promotes the office concept which was popular with OBs in 2014. Farmer-to-farmer visits will support this concept	TLB/BSO	100 OBs with "office"													50	20	30	
	Interns from University of Development Studies (UDS) will be assigned to OBs to assist the OB manager with new office systems and procedures	TLB/BSO	30 interns													15	5	10	
	The grant program can be accessed to offset the cost of office investment - limited to provision of laptop computers, QuickBooks, and internet access for MIS	GM/TLB/BSO	100 OBs with computer \$100,000													50	20	30	
1.10	Financial Services																		
	Identify needs of the PFIs	TLB/BSO	30 PFIs													15	5	10	
	Credit recovery through contracts/third-party	TLB/BSO/APO/TM	30 contracts													15	5	10	
	Link actors to FIs based on investment gaps in business plans; especially on improved seed	TLB/BSO	150 actors linked to credit													75	30	45	
	Promotion of rural savings, especially through FBOs	TLB/BSO	30 FBOs start													15	5	10	
	Coordination of PFI and actor development with FinGAP	TD/TLB/FinGAP	20 examples of collaboration																

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
1.11	Input Dealer Business Development Program																		
	Survey of input access points in all regions	TLB/BSO/APO	Completed																
	Needs assessment on input business strengths and weaknesses	TLB	4 regional workshops													1	1	1	1
	Design and implementation of input dealer training workshops	TLB	With BDS/ATT																
	Assistance through STTA, TA, and grants for dealer expansion; grants limited to ICT-related technology	TLB																	
	Assist dealers in expanding community agent concept	TLB/BSO	TBD																
1.12	Smallholder Investment																		
	Smallholders will be encouraged to link up with FBOs and NFs to gain economy of scale, access inputs and better market commodity off-take.	Team	50,000 new SHF																
	Competitive market opportunities for NFs and FBOs through contractual linkages with lead firms and aggregators will increase smallholder market options	Team	170 OBs and 100 FBOs													85 50	35 20	50 30	
	Esoko and other ICT companies encouraged to develop a more robust marketing campaign to directly engage NF/FBO out-grower networks	TD/ICT	Direct sales to actors																
	ADVANCE II will continue to mitigate production risk by working with GAIP (crop insurance) and Ignitia (weather forecasting) to expand customer base and payment models, and tailor products to ADVANCE II target groups	TD/TLB	150 GAIP policies 20,000 SHF with forecasting													75 10,000	35 4,000	40 6000	
	Financial risk and benefit will be taught to farmers by the BSO team through tailored financial literacy modules and workshops (with FinGAP participation)	TLB/BSO/CDO	170 OBs 100 FBO													85 50	35 20	50 30	
1.13	Land for Women Program																		
	Continued messages to OBs and community leaders to consider appropriate sites	APO/GS	1000 F													500	200	300	
	Access to tractor services – as scheduled alongside male-managed farm sites	APO/GS	200 F													100	40	60	
	Access to inputs through OB or direct credit from FI if formed as a viable group	APO/GS	100 F													50	20	30	
	Link women maize farmers to GAMSAP for improved hybrid seeds	APO/GS	TBD																
1.14	Climate Smart Agriculture																		
	Research on the best options of equipment to introduce	TD/TLP	Research completed																
	Training to ADVANCE APO and RCs staff on no-tillage benefits	TD/TLP	Training completed																

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	Establishment of 30 demo plots for the next season with the first step of no-tillage (using rippers first 2 years in the demo plots)	TD/TLP	30 demos													15	7	8	
	Field days to teach farmers on Climate Smart Agriculture and the benefits it will bring considering the erratic precipitation of last years,	TD/TLP/APO	600 participants													300	100	200	
	Sensitization of communities in which zero-tillage will be demonstrated in order to achieve the desired results	TD/TLP	Sensitization completed																
	Establishment of one research and demonstration center per region (2014) on cover crops which will breed seed for use post-harvest 2015	TD/TLP/RCs	4 pilot sites													1	1	1	1
	Once the benefits of no-till technology are demonstrated private companies will be supported to import equipment or manufacture locally	TD/TLP	Importation discussed																
	Try a pilot no-burn policy in a district area of operation. District Assembly, MOFA and policy to coordinate	TD/TLP/RCs	1 District																

2.0 SUB-PURPOSE 2: INCREASED MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE OF TARGETED COMMODITIES

2.1	Market Linkage Development																		
	Supply and Demand Data. End-buyer survey will be updated in 2015.	TLT/TMO	Updated Oct																
	Supply and Demand Data. Regional data on potential commodity supply and determining what quantities require markets.	TMO	Completed Oct.																
	Trade missions and non-legally binding pre-contract agreements are prepared to document discussions and verbal agreements – pending legally binding contracts that are negotiated at a later date.	TLT/TMO	50 trade missions													25	10	15	
	Pre-Harvest Agri-Business Conference and Exhibition	TD/TLT	40 lead buyers and transporters attend																50
	Market Information Services. MFarms and ESOKO provide web-based and SMS supported MIS services	TD/ICT	Support to or creation of a standard MIS system																
	Trade finance –OB for field aggregation of commodity. Work closely with both the BS team and FinGAP	TLT/TLB	50 examples																
2.1	Lead Firm Competitiveness																		
	A T&M Specialist has been posted to Kumasi specifically to work with lead firms. An office has been opened in Kumasi to support both this activity and the GAMSAP program.	TLT/TMS	50 firms																50

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	The 2014 survey and assessment of lead firms and processors will be updated in 2015	TLT	Oct.																
	2014 survey on lead firms identified areas of cooperation and support that will be supported by MOUs, STTA and possibly grants where VC investment is involved.	TLT/TMS	5 grants 5 STTA for lead firms																5 5
	T&M team will conduct an assessment to design a strategic marketing campaign ("Buy Ghana") to improve brand image of Ghanaian food products.	TLT	Design and implementation STTA																
	Identify finance needs for lead firms for trade and capital improvements; work with FinGAP	TLT	TBD																
2.3	Trade Association Support																		
	Customize Capacity Development Assessment Tool for Associations, and conduct assessments	TLT/TMS	5 associations completed																
	Determine relationship status with associations and identify areas of assistance if required. MOUs, STTA, and grants are options for further support.	TLT	3 STTAs 3 grant options																
	"Contract" grant for Ghana Grain Council is set on deliverables	TLT/GM	Contract																
2.4	North Ghana Rice Milling.																		
	T&M staff will work with Avnash to determine if a rice delivery system depending on variety preference and seasonal timing is beneficial to actors	TLT/TLA	Delivery system working																
	The updated 2012 rice mill survey will be used to focus attention on localized milling using appropriate rice milling options. The grant program and linkage to credit will be used to promote localized milling expansion and upgrade	GM/TLT	4 mills upgraded													2	2		
2.5	Regional/Cross Border Trade and Transport																		
	Work with WATH to discuss ways to monitor cross border trade (inter) and extra regional exports of commodity staples. Work with GGC on trade data dissemination	TLT	Cross border trade plan																
	Cross-border trade study can be commissioned, perhaps jointly with WATH	TLT	STTA/WATH																
	Work with Borderless Alliance; focus on north-south corridor and northern cross-border trade.	TLT	Plan formed, collaboration																
	Engage with GPRTU to identify transport/haulage needs and develop an engagement/support plan	TLT	Plan formed, collaboration																
2.6	Community-based market systems strengthened																		
	Tailor Sell More for More (SMFM) curriculum and materials for Ghana language and context –focus on FBOs.	TLT/TLC	100 FBOs/ workshops													50	20	30	

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	Develop female FBO leadership module for SMFM	TLC	20 workshops													10	4	6	
	Conduct SMFM TOTs to FBO leaders	TLC	10 trainers																
	Complete FBO M4 assessment to identify those that can best support member services for commodity marketing	TLC	100 FBOs completed													50	20	30	
	Develop and start FBO capacity strengthening program	TLC/CDO	100 FBE													50	20	30	
	Re-commence numeracy and FAAB community training. NF business model to include aggregation and marketing plans and training.	CDO	10,000 SHF trained													5000	2000	3000	

3. SUB-PURPOSE 3: STRENGTHENED CAPACITY FOR ADVOCACY AND ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION

3.1	Advocacy Group Development																		
	Conduct/complete Policy Advocacy Capacity Assessment	PS/S	10 institutions																
	Organize farmer forums with participating FBOs	PS/N	50 forums													25	10	15	
	Organize district forums to develop district policy platform	PS/S	48 forums/platforms																
	Work with FBOs on strengthening advocacy tools	PS/S	100 FBOs													50	20	30	
	Work with VC actors to develop long-term approach to policy change	PS/N&S	3 workshops													1	1	1	
3.2	Advocacy Capacity for National Associations Strengthened	APSP																	
	The ADVANCE II Senior Policy Analyst is seconded to GGC to work on developing a viable policy platform and options for approach	PS/S	Policy platform and strategy developed																
	GGC will provide an advocacy counterpart at the end of 2015 to work independently in 2016.	PS/S	Policy specialist recruited																
	GGC to host policy events and forums to lead a private sector approach to policy resolution	PS/S and GGC	2 forums																
	GGC to produce a bi-annual policy paper and topic-specific white papers with STTA assistance	PS/S	10 papers																
3.3	District Assembly Plans for Agricultural Investment																		
	Engage and assess the desire and need for district investment plan	PS/N	30 DA													15	5	10	
	Create awareness on agricultural investment potential	PS/N	30 workshops													15	5	10	
	Support DAs to develop agriculture investment plans	PS/N	30 DA plans													15	5	10	
	Assist/support DAs to implement investment plans	PS/N	30 plans implemented													15	5	10	

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
3.4	Capacity development for program implementation																		
	Identify eligible institutions to participate in the program; conduct organizational capacity assessment; select start-up candidates	TLC	2 NGOs selected and assessed																
	Develop capacity building plans with selected implementing partners	TLC	2 Plans completed																
	Provide or facilitate access to necessary organizational development assistance for those applicants requiring it.	TLC	Assistance provided																
3.5	Capacity development for FBEs		100 FBOs													50	20	30	
	Access to inputs; distribution of inputs with in-kind or cash payment. Ties to input dealers willing to work with FBE. Training required.	CDO	30 FBEs managing inputs													15	5	10	
	FBE as demo site host to be considered	CDO	30 FBEs with demo site													15	5	10	
	Access to MIS and weather forecasting; training required		100 FBOs													50	20	30	
	Access to finance must be guided by strict protocols and criteria; also determined by viability of FBE and purpose of finance. Emphasis on rural savings is given equal or greater status as credit.	CDO/ BSO	20 FBEs access finance 20 FBEs start savings plan													10 10	3 3	7 7	
	Bulk output marketing from in-kind payment of inputs; connection to next market link from FBE (NF, aggregator, processor)	DCO/TM	30 FBEs bulk sell crops													10	3	7	
	Numeracy and FAAB training sub-contracted out to BDS – focus on FBO membership and NF OGS	CDO	10,000 participants													5000	2000	3000	

4.0 Program Support – Gender Mainstreaming

4.1	Women engaged in increased agricultural productivity in targeted commodities																		
	Establish Women as Nucleus Farmer (NF):	GS/APO/ BSO	4 women as NFs																
	The Outgrower Business Management (OBM) program will have a dedicated women's leadership and entrepreneurship course to support aspiring women NFs.	GS/BSO	Course designed and included																
	Actively engage women in capacity building: through various capacity building programs such as Farming as a Business	GS/CDO	9000													4500	2000	2500	
	Help women invest in their livelihood. Encourage village savings and loan groups for women and men, and link these groups to market opportunities	GS/CDO/ BSO	Inclusion 40%																

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	Recognize relevant technology: Through demand-driven approach, identify technologies that meet women's needs and preferences, which usually means that they are time saving, less physically demanding, and affordable	GS/APO	Inclusion																
	Raise awareness of land rights: importance of land ownership/larger land size for women to farm through running a campaign; organizing informal meetings in every village or cluster; promoting success stories to demonstrate impact on the community; organizing community meetings or conferences; etc.	GS	Inclusion																
	Support youth spraying and women rice transplanting groups: Recruit young adults from outgrower networks to form spraying groups to service farms where such services are in demand. Help groups to form their own enterprises assisted through start-up kits, training and links to existing input businesses and/or NFs.	GS	Inclusion																
	Ensure women have access to information: Promote appropriate technologies such as use of mobile devices and women's listenership clubs targeted to women's specific information needs	GS	Inclusion																
4.2	Increase women market access and trade of targeted commodities																		
	Build capacity of women to access markets: Provide training in business, financial and IT skills to women's business owners and group members	GS	Inclusion 40%																
	Link women farmers and women's groups (e.g., self-help groups, village saving and loans groups, women's producer groups) to formal markets and put in place structures to help them maintain control over their income	GS	Included in markets																
	Explore off-season or alternative livelihoods for women: Use the market or value chain analysis to identify other income-generating opportunities for women that require limited access to land, such as management of storage facilities, input supply management, seed storage and breeding, extension services	GS	Explored, designed, instigated																
	Build women's leadership capacity: Conduct skills and leadership training for women at different levels of the value chain (producer/marketing groups, associations, business manager,	GS/CDO	500 women trained in leadership													250	100	150	
	Expand Numeracy Training: Identify FBO groups to receive numeracy training facilitated by local NGOs. The project will target both sexes, though we expect to reach a majority of women.	GS/CDO	9,000 including FAAB													4500	2000	2500	
4.3	Strengthened women's' capacity for advocacy and activity implementation																		

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	Build the capacity of local organizations that focus on women's issues so they can represent members more effectively	GS	Capacity built, ongoing																
	Facilitate women's access to land: Use the existing NF-outgrower structures in communities to help leverage land so it is more readily available for productive women farmers, through the traditional chief and sub-chief structures.	GS	1000													500	200	300	
	Work with advocacy groups on access to and control over land issues, specifically to empower women to be able to lease land and negotiate for use of land	GS/PS	Advocacy includes women's' issues																

5.0 Program Support - Environment

5.1	Improving agrochemical management																		
	Conduct 4 refresher trainings on approved PERSUAP with field staff and clients	ES	Updated PURSUAP and 4 trainings													1	1	1	1
	Develop outreach content on safe pesticide handling in collaboration with EPA and others. Information used by radio firms, ICT, NF, etc	ES	10 program content developed																
	Prepare environmental and safety management systems for agrochemical dealers	ES	10 dealers assisted																
5.2	Improve smallholder farmer adaptation and resilience to climate change																		
	Engage radio and ICT firms in communicating messages on drought index insurance scheme	ES/ICT	Firms engaged																
	Develop radio content on weather and climate change messages in collaboration with research institutions (e.g. SARI/IITA)	ES/ICT	Engaged																
	Provide GAIP grant funding to post marketing staff in North Ghana to increase volume of policies and promote value of crop insurance	BSO/ES	Marketing improved																
	Contract Ignitia to provide "sample" weather forecasting through SMS technology to new project participants	ES/ICT	New participants with access																
	Conduct training for all new users	ES/ICT	Training completed																
5.3	Climate smart and water management																		
	Work closely with the APO team to determine climate smart alternatives to a highly mechanized farm system dependent on expensive imported inputs.	ES/TLP	Climate smart program started in 2015																
	Instigate a study on check dams and determine an appropriate course of action	ES	Check dam program decided																

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
5.4	General environmental compliance with Regulation 216.																		
	Update ADVANCE staff on environmental and mitigation and monitoring plan	ES	Staff updated																
	Ensure grants and new activities are in the scope of the initial environmental evaluation	ES	Program compliant																
	Promote use of safety clothing, production and processing equipment with up to 238 small and large equipment grantees, and with established spraying gangs	ES/APO	Matters on safety implemented																

6.0 Program Support - Public Relations and Communication

6.1	USAID contracted reporting																		
	Success stories, "Telling our Story", or personal interest stories submitted each quarter	PRC	4 stories/quarter																
	Weekly bullets to USAID that illustrate ADVANCE II's continued impact throughout the year	PRC	Weekly																
	Increase publicity at organized events to reflect Feed the Future Initiative	PRC	Events publicized																
	Adhere to USAID branding and marking plan during program activities (demonstration sites, field days, etc.)	PRC	Branding compliant																
	Four video productions each year depicting project achievements and personal interest stories	PRC	4 videos																
	Quarterly and annual reports	DCOP/ COP	Quarterly																
	Member and contributor of the multi-project FTF KM&L team	PRC/ COP/ DCOP	When scheduled																
6.2	Build public awareness																		
	ADVANCE II will support the use of promotional materials (leaflets, brochures, fliers) for actors to assist them to market and brand themselves more effectively.	PRC	As programmed																
	Four quarterly ADVANCE newsletters; distributed to a target 1,000 email recipients	PRC	Quarterly																
	Quarterly staff photo contests and regular staff training to achieve a high quality photo database	PRC	Annual training																

7.0 Support Program - Grants

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
7.1	The \$2.5 million I-3 is a flexible financing mechanism		\$500,000																
	It is expected that numerous NF, aggregators and FBOs will procure small equipment using the small equipment grant (SEG) scheme where equipment is valued at less than \$6,000.	GM	200 grants																
	The grants team will also monitor all equipment use	GM	M&E Ongoing																
7.2	The \$2.5 million Local Partnership Grant Fund		\$500,000																
	Pre-award Survey:	GM/TLC	10 LPG surveys																
	Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA):	GM/TLC	6 OCAs																
	Direct Capacity-Building Support:	GM/TLC	4 grantees assisted																
	Mid-Term OCA:	GM/TLC	4 OCA midterms																
7.3	Grants Monitoring																		
	The grants team will prepare quarterly grants reports and updates highlighting funds obligated to the various value chains and private sector resources leveraged	GM	Quarterly																

8.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

8.1	Monitoring and Evaluation																		
	A Management Information System (MIS) database established for ADVANCE II and a will be completed and fully functional by November 2014	DCOP/ M&E	Operational																
	The M&E team will make regular visits to observe field activities and interact with field staff and project beneficiaries	DCOP/ M&E	Regular field visits																
	Causality and Attribution of Observed Results. During the year, every effort will be made to observe and document all changes (incremental or otherwise, positive or negative) occurring as a result of project activities	DCOP/ M&E	Observed results reported																
	Documentation and Reporting. In accordance with the Cooperative Agreement we will submit progress reports within 30 days of the end of each quarter and the one in the fourth quarter will be an annual report	DCOP/ M&E	Reports submitted																
	Capacity Development in Monitoring and Evaluation. ADVANCE II will work to maintain	DCOP/ M&E	Capacity maintained																

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	M&E staff capacity at a level that ensures that quality data is collected and handled through the data flow system with precision																		
	Tracking Gender Improvements. Gender is central to the FTF program and to the core ADVANCE II strategy	DCOP/ M&E	Gender focus established																
	Geographical Information System (GIS). The project uses GIS as a tool to gather accurate data to improve the efficiency of specific supply chains and improve competitiveness of the respective commodity value chains	DCOP/ M&E	GIS Mapping adopted																
8.2	Knowledge Management and Learning																		
	The MEL Specialist will oversee the establishment of project office-level internal KM&L groups headed by the RCs.	DCOP	KM&L Groups established																
	Ensure smooth flow of implicit and explicit information between field offices.	DCOP	Data flow system established																
	SharePoint has been introduced to the project. It will help manage overflow of information through document storage and increased accessibility.	DCOP	Installed and used																
	Component team members will meet two times a year in person to discuss challenges and lessons learned.	DCOP	2 M&E meetings																

Annex 2. GAMSAP and PY 2015 IMPLEMENTATION Plan