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AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND VALUE CHAIN ENHANCEMENT PROJECT (ADVANCE)

FY 2017 Q3 REPORT: APRIL - JUNE 2017

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ACRONYM LIST

(M)SME	(Medium) Small and Micro Enterprise
ACDEP	Association of Church-Based Development Projects
ADVANCE	Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement
AEA	Agriculture Extension Agent
AgNRM	Agriculture and Natural Resources Management Project
AMPLIFIES	Assisting Management in the Poultry and Layer Industries by Feed Improvement and Efficiency Strategies
APO	Agricultural Production Officer
ATT	Agricultural Technology Transfer
BDS	Business Development Services
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CREMA	Community Resource Management Areas
DAIP	District Agricultural Investment Plan
DVCC	District Value Chain Committees
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
F2F	Farmer-to-Farmer
FaaB	Farming as a Business
FBE	Farmer-Based Enterprise
FBO	Farmer-Based Organization
FI	Financial Institution
FTF	Feed the Future
FY	Fiscal Year
GAIP	Ghana Agricultural Insurance Pool
GAP	Good Agronomic Practice
GGC	Ghana Grain Council
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPP	Ghana Poultry Project
GPRTU	Ghana Private Road Transport Union
GPS	Global Positioning System
GRIB	Ghana Rice Inter-Professional Body
GSA	Ghana Standards Authority
I-3	Innovation and Investment Incentive Grants
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDRW	International Day of Rural Women
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
IP	Implementing Partner
KML	Knowledge Management and Learning
LDC	Louis Dreyfus Company
LPM	Live Presenter Mention
MMDA	Metropolitan Municipal and District Assemblies
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MWRS	Manual Warehouse Receipt System
NF	Nucleus Farmer
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NORTHCODE	Northern Region Western Corridor Development
NPK	Nitrogen, Phosphorous, and Potash
NR	Northern Region

NRGP	Northern Rural Growth Programme
NSAICU	Northern Sector Agriculture Investment Coordination Unit
OB	Outgrower Business
OBM	Outgrower Business Management
OG	Outgrower
OVCF	Outgrower Value Chain Fund
PERSUAP	Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safe Use Action Plan
PFI	Partner Financial Institution
PHH	Post-Harvest Handling
PPE	Personal Protection Equipment
PPRSD	Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate
PRC	Public Relations and Communication
PROTOA	Progressive Transport Owners Association
RMG	Regional Marketing Group Concept Limited
RDF	Rural Development Fund
SARI	Savanna Agricultural Research Institute
SEG	Small Equipment Grant
SIF	Social Investment Fund
SMFM	Sell More for More
SOW	Scope of Work
SSP	Spray Services Providers
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance
TNS	TechnoServe
UDS	University of Development Studies
UENR	University of Energy and Natural Resources
UER	Upper East Region
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWR	Upper West Region
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WIAD	Women in Agriculture Department
WRS	Warehouse Receipt System

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the main achievements and key activities implemented by the USAID Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement (ADVANCE) project during the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17).

During the quarter, ADVANCE reached 29,029 individuals from 27,014 households, including 28,670 smallholders among whom 15,150 or 53 percent were women. These figures bring the total number of smallholder beneficiaries supported during FY17 to 87,207 (49 percent women) against the target of 80,000, and the life of project achievement to 122,134 (48 percent women) against the target of 113,000.

A total of 29,007 of these individuals (including 15,171 or 52 percent women) were trained on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), Grain Quality Standards, Nutrition Education and Soybean Utilization, Farming as a Business (FaaB), Numeracy, Business, Leadership and Entrepreneurship, Outgrower Business Management (OBM) among others. This brings the number of beneficiaries trained to date to 79,097 or 99 percent of the FY17 target of 80,000, and the life of project achievement to 111,775, higher than the overall target of 100,000.

Furthermore, ADVANCE supported 686 producer organizations and private firms mostly through trainings, grants, and business development services during the reporting quarter.

A total of GHS 249,337.5 (\$58,249.6¹) of cash loans were disbursed to project beneficiaries for the purchase of equipment and inputs for production as well as working capital. With this achievement, the total amount of loans disbursed since the project started amounts to \$3,656,724 or 85 percent of the overall target. ADVANCE will make additional efforts to facilitate more loans in the next quarter.

In addition, a total of GHS 536,731 (\$125,390) of capital investment was made by the Outgrower Business (OB) beneficiaries, bringing the total amount of capital investment made to \$3,122,551 since the project started, which represents 78 percent of the overall life of project target. In addition, during the quarter, through the outgrower scheme, end buyers invested GHS 16,699,234 (\$3,895,955) as production support to smallholders.

During the reporting period, ADVANCE facilitated 97 contracts covering 4,825 MT of maize, paddy rice and soybean, valued at almost GHS 7 million (\$1,635,323).

To manage and mitigate the impact of the Fall Armyworm (FAW) outbreak, the project developed a FAW awareness campaign. The campaign included messages on identifying the presence of FAW, the crops they feed on and actions to take when FAW is detected in the farm. These messages are being disseminated through jingles in English and 10 local Ghanaian languages on 16 radio stations. The messages and jingles were also shared with the FAW National Task Force to be used for the national awareness campaign across the regions where ADVANCE does not operate.

The project acquired three hotlines from the mobile telecommunication companies for farmers to call and report any incidence of FAW in their field, or request any information about the pest. Two different pictorial posters were designed and 37,000 copies were printed and distributed to households and in highly visible sites across the project's operational areas. These posters provide the hotline numbers and also include messages on how to scout and identify the FAW.

¹ Exchange rate used throughout the report is \$1=GHS 4.2805

In addition to the hotlines, 27 heliothis traps have been mounted with FAW and African armyworm lures to monitor their prevalence. ADVANCE and MoFA jointly set this monitoring system to serve as an early warning system to alert farmers to scout their farms for signs of the pest and take appropriate action when they are detected.

Since the FAW outbreak, ADVANCE has used every training it organizes to sensitize the farmers and stakeholders on the pest and their potential damage to crops.

B. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the main accomplishments of the USAID ADVANCE project implemented by ACDI/VOCA and its sub-awardees, ACDEP, PAB, and TechnoServe, during the third quarter of FY17 (April to June 2017). ADVANCE's goal is to increase the competitiveness of the maize, rice and soya value chains in Ghana. The report summarizes the project's achievements against this goal and its indicators, and presents the main activities undertaken during the quarter. It is organized along the project's intermediate results as follows:

- Increased agricultural productivity in targeted commodities
- Increased market access and trade of targeted commodities
- Strengthened capacity for advocacy and activity implementation

The report starts with the collaboration ADVANCE has had with other organizations, projects, and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), followed by a summary of key results. It also covers the project's cross-cutting activities including gender, environment, grants, and monitoring, evaluation and learning activities.

C. COLLABORATION

1. Collaboration with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture

During the third quarter of 2017, ADVANCE continued collaborating with the Department of Agriculture (DoA) of the Ministry of Food Agriculture (MoFA) at the national, regional and district levels. Ten Agricultural Extension Agents (AEAs) from Kintampo North and South assisted in establishing selected demos and educating smallholder farmers (SHF) on Good Agriculture Practices (GAPS) such as row planting and effective methods of fertilizer application, use of certified seed, and conducting germination tests.

Furthermore, 59 MoFA AEAs were trained by the project on effective scouting and control of Fall Army Worm (FAW) on maize fields. Also, through the ADVANCE 'Farm Clinics', these AEAs educated SHFs on general pest and disease identification, scouting, and control, with particular emphasis on the FAW infestation.

In addition, ADVANCE and the MoFA Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate (PPRSD) jointly held radio discussions and awareness campaigns on FAW infestation and control. ADVANCE also worked with the PPRSD to establish a Surveillance system. MoFA PPRSD and ADVANCE also collaborated to train 256 people as Spray Service Providers (SSPs).

Additionally, MoFA's Women in Agriculture Development (WIAD) officers trained 825 (463 female and 362 males) ADVANCE smallholder farmer beneficiaries on Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture. The training aimed at increasing the utilization of locally grown crops such as soybean that has potential to improve the nutritional status of household members, especially women and children in the farming communities. The officers taught the participants how to prepare different dishes using their locally grown soy and quality protein maize varieties.

2. Collaboration with Other Partners

AFGRI-Ghana/John Deere

During the reporting quarter, ADVANCE and AFGRI-Ghana/John Deere jointly established two Model Farms in Adidwan (Ashanti Region) and Adyiaem (Brong Ahafo Region). The Model Farms are large demonstration plots to promote at a commercial level mechanized land preparation, planting, and agrochemical application along with other non-mechanized GAPs and high yielding seeds. John Deere and AFGRI Ghana

provided the equipment and technical support while the two Outgrower Businesses (OBs) hosting the demonstrations provided all the inputs and a tractor operator.

Agricultural Policy Support Project (APSP)

During the quarter, ADVANCE and the Agriculture Policy Support Project (APSP) collaborated to train 90 selected executives and members of 30 Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs) from Northern Region for the latter to become Farmer Based Enterprises (FBEs). The training took the participants through the concept and practice of Advocacy, Networking for Advocacy, and Agricultural Policies in Ghana, including the recent MoFA initiative on 'Planting for Food and Jobs'. The collaboration enabled cross-fertilization of experiences, expertise and knowledge between the two projects for the benefit of the trainees.

Farm Radio International

During this period, ADVANCE collaborated with Farm Radio International, the FAW Awareness/Sensitization Committee, and the FAW National Task Force to create awareness on the FAW through radio campaigns (radio jingles & announcements), flyers and posters across all regions of Ghana.

Farmer to Farmer (F2F)

Through a collaboration with the 'Farmer to Farmer' (F2F) project, ADVANCE benefited from a second visit by F2F Volunteer Professor and FAW expert, Dan Mc' Grath, to support the project tackle the Fall Army Worm outbreak in the country. Professor Mc'Grath trained MoFA Extension Agents, PPRSD staff and other agriculture professionals on setting and monitoring pheromone traps to detect presence of the FA on time.

Nestlé Ghana Limited

ADVANCE and Nestlé continued implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in December 2016 which aims at improving farmers' capacities to improve the quality of their produce in order to meet high end buyer requirements. During the reporting period, officials from Nestlé visited OBs and their smallholder farmers in the Northern Region who ADVANCE has trained on mycotoxin management to meet Nestlé's quality standards. During the visit, Nestlé inspected and certified warehouses of three OBs (Kha-ma Farms in Karaga, Kukobila Nasia Farms, and Gundaa Produce Company in Tamale) selected to sell to Nestlé. The company concluded a contract with Kha-ma Farms and Kukobila Nasia Farms to supply 80 MT of maize at GHS 1,400 per MT.

Furthermore, on June 30, 2017, five representatives of these OBs visited Nestlé's Tema factory to strengthen the business relationship and learn first-hand about Nestlé's food safety and product quality requirements.

Northern Sector Agriculture Investment Coordination Unit (NSAICU)

ADVANCE partnered with NSAICU, to train and create awareness on FAW control and management for over 80 participants including MoFA staff, District assemblies, Department of Agriculture technical staff and other members of NSAICU.

Radio Stations

Two more radio stations are currently collaborating with the project, bringing the total number of partner radio stations working with the project to 31 during the reporting period. Through the collaboration, the radio stations will broadcast messages on GAPs and other information to beneficiary farmers. ADVANCE engaged 16 of these stations in the FAW radio campaign across the project's operational zones. The campaign aired FAW awareness and preventive messages through radio jingles and Live Presenter Mentions in English and 10 local languages.

Voto Mobile

ADVANCE collaborated with VOTO Mobile and AFGRI-Ghana/John Deere to develop voice messages in local dialects on basic tractor maintenance tips to be shared with 16 OBs owners of John Deere tractors and their operators in the Northern Region. This innovation aims to improve tractor operation and maintenance.

Furthermore, both organizations jointly trained 13 OBs and 257 outgrowers on how to use the voice messaging system to communicate to their outgrowers, the services he or she will provide in their various communities and the time these services will be provided. This will improve their working relationship, reduce OBs' operational costs and encourage the outgrowers to repay for the services provided to them.

University of Development Studies (UDS)

Sixty-Two Interns and National Service Persons from the University of Development Studies (UDS) are working with the project, learning and supporting on agricultural activities, record keeping, grants, accounting and other important activities. Most of the students are attached to OBs in the field to support and improve their outgrower business management.

Yara Ghana Ltd.

For a third consecutive year, Yara sponsored several types of fertilizers to showcase on ADVANCE maize, rice and soybean demo sites in the five regions of operation. Yara also participated in the community inputs promotion events organized by the project.

D. KEY RESULTS

I. Direct Beneficiaries

During the quarter, ADVANCE reached 29,029 individuals from 27,014 households, including 28,670 smallholders among whom 15,150 or 53 percent were women (Table 1). These figures bring the total number of smallholder beneficiaries supported during FY17 to 87,207 (with 49 percent being women) against the target of 80,000, and the life of project achievement to 122,134 against the target of 113,000.

Table 1: Smallholders direct beneficiaries by gender and duration

Gender	Duration	Q3FY17	FY17 Total
Female	Continuing	10,491	33,229
	New	4,209	9,832
	Total	15,150	43,061
Male	Continuing	10,346	35,968
	New	3,174	8,178
	Total	13,520	44,146
TOTAL		28,670	87,207

The project trained 29,007 individuals (including 15,171 or 52 percent women) on GAPs, Grain Quality Standards, Nutrition Education and Soybean Utilization, Farming as a Business (FaaB), Numeracy, Business, Leadership and Entrepreneurship, and Outgrower Business Management². This brings the number of beneficiaries trained to date to 79,097 or 99 percent of the FY17 target of 80,000, and the life of project achievement to 111,775, higher than the overall target of 100,000.

² Number of beneficiaries of each training is presented in section E. and F.

Table 2: Q3FY17 training beneficiaries by gender and zone

Zone	Female	Male	Total
Kintampo	845	865	1,710
Northern	6,163	5,120	11,283
South	1,179	2,482	3,661
Upper East	4,268	3,496	7,764
Upper West	2,716	1,873	4,589
	15,171	13,836	29,007

Furthermore, ADVANCE supported 686 producer organizations and private firms through trainings, in-kind cost-share grants, and business development services during the reporting quarter. With this achievement, ADVANCE has assisted 1,034 such organizations in the current fiscal year.

Table 3: Number of producer organizations and private firms supported

Zone	Q3FY17	FY17 Total
Kintampo	163	286
Northern	186	248
South	80	113
Upper East	159	270
Upper West	102	126
	686	1,034

2. Value of Agricultural and Rural Loans and New Private Sector Investments

The project continues to facilitate access to loans by value chain actors from financial institutions where necessary. This quarter, a total of GHS 249,337.5 (\$58,249.6) on cash loans were disbursed to project beneficiaries for the purchase of equipment and inputs for production as well as working capital. With this achievement, the total amount of loans disbursed since the project started amounts to \$3,656,724 or 85 percent of the overall target. ADVANCE will make additional efforts to facilitate more loans in the next quarter.

In addition, a total of GHS 536,731 (\$125,390) of capital investment was made by the OB beneficiaries, bringing the total amount of capital investment facilitated to \$3,122,551 since the project started, which represents 78 percent of its overall target. Moreover, through the outgrower scheme, end buyers invested GHS 16,699,234 (\$3,895,955) as production support to smallholders during this quarter.

3. Business Development Services

During the reporting quarter, the project provided business development services to 20,984 individuals, of which 11,001 (52 percent) were women. The services included the development and update of business plans, developing crop budgets, business diagnostics, facilitating access to loans, and training. With these figures, beneficiaries of the project's business development services increased to 94,820 since the project started.

E. PROGRESS WITH TECHNICAL DELIVERY

This section is organized under the three main project sub-purposes where the major activities and outputs are presented.

I. Sub-purpose I: Increased Agricultural Productivity in Targeted Commodities

During the quarter, the project focused on:

- Combating FAW
- Setting up demonstration sites and conducting GAPs and PHH trainings
- Continuing the use of ICT to disseminate GAPs and improve adoption of technologies
- Continuing to increase access to inputs
- Conducting farm clinic activities
- Continuing the enhancement of OBs' management capacity
- Reinforcing the provision of business development services
- Facilitating farmer mentorship

I.I. COMBATING FAW

Anti FAW activities were not part of the project's work plan for FY17 but have become an important part of the FY17 actions due to invasion of this pest. The pest has the potential to significantly reduce the production of maize in all West Africa if farmers are not alerted early and trained to control it. The following activities were carried out to support farmers to reduce the FAW's potential damage.

Fall Army Worm Awareness Creation

As part of the efforts to prevent, monitor and control the infestation of the FAW outbreak in ADVANCE operational zones and the nation, ADVANCE in collaboration with the Farmer to Farmer Program, media partners, MoFA, Farm Radio International, the FAW National Task Force and many other organizations have been creating awareness about FAW to farmers and the public.

A general awareness message on the presence of Fall Army Worm in Ghana, the crops the pest feeds on and how to identify them, was developed into jingles and are being aired on 16 radio stations, in English and 10 local Ghanaian languages, to create awareness and management of the FAW outbreak. The messages and jingles were shared with the FAW National Task Force to be used for the national awareness campaign across the 10 regions of Ghana.

Also, the project acquired three hotlines from the Telco's for farmers to call and report FAW incidents in their field or request information on the pest. Two different pictorial posters were designed and 37,000 copies were printed and distributed to households and in highly visible sites across the project's operational areas. These posters provide the hotline numbers as well as guidelines for identifying the presence of the FAW.

One of the FAW posters



Since the FAW outbreak, ADVANCE has used every training opportunity to sensitize the farmers and stakeholders on FAW.

Training Ag professionals on the Pest

In April 2017, 164 Agricultural Extension Professionals made up of Agricultural Extension Agents (AEAs), Plant Protection Officers, MoFA Regional and District Directors, private sector agricultural experts and staff from various NGOs were trained on two important topics for FAW control:

- Biology, population dynamics, and armyworm control
- Monitoring with pheromone traps, field scouting that will lead to early detection

Following these trainings, 70 AEAs, two National Disaster and Management Organization staff and eight OBs have benefited from practical field demonstration of standard FAW field scouting and how to use data to make informed decisions to control the FAW. These AEAs will support farmers with information from standard field scouting during their outreach activities.

Establishing a Surveillance System at National Level

In addition to the hotlines, 27 heliothis traps were mounted with FAW and African armyworm lures to monitor prevalence. ADVANCE and MoFA jointly set this monitoring system to scout and alert farmers to observe their farms for signs of the presence of the pest and take appropriate action in a timely manner.

The MoFA AEAs are monitoring and collecting data from the pheromone traps on a weekly basis. They also scout the farms on which the pheromone traps are located using a standard scouting protocol for signs of

FAW, including lesions on leaf window panes, shot holes and infested whorls. The proportion of these signs on the farm informs what actions are recommended to the farmer and other farmers within that locality. The two Model Farms in Adidwan and Ahyiem, in the Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo Regions respectively, were effectively saved from FAW infestations through this system.

1.2. FARM CLINICS

ADVANCE organized five Farm Clinics in Kintampo and in Northern and Upper West Regions for 284 SHFs (184 males, 100 females), 10 tractor owners, and 27 tractor operators on FAW identification, early detection, recommended pesticide applications and other best management practices.



Farm Clinic on FAW at Janvia community (UWR)

A total of 6,492 smallholders and 67 OBs were trained on Fall Armyworm management and control in the Northern Region, as the farmers prepared for the production season. Farmers were taken through the identification of early signs of infestation, life cycle, damage to crops and treatment to reduce losses.

Insecticidal application field observation

During the quarter, ADVANCE established three insecticidal observation sites in Paninamisa, Pamdu and Babato Kuma in Kintampo. This activity helped determine the effectiveness of K-optimal, Ecopel and Spinosad for the control of the FAW.



An APO mounting a trap for the observation

1.3. DEMONSTRATION SITES AND GAPS TRAININGS

Actor Supported Demonstration Sites

Demonstration sites continue to be a key strategy to introduce smallholders to improved technologies. Below are examples of the demonstration sites' focus:

- Superior performance of certified seeds in general and hybrids in particular
- Positive effect of good agronomic practices
- Cost-benefit analysis of investing in improved agronomic practices
- Benefits of implementing proper PHH practices.

The project's 2017 actor-supported demonstration target is 542, comprising 446 conventional demonstration sites and 96 Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) demonstration sites. Out of this target, 100 demonstration sites were planned for the South (50 for the major agricultural season and another 50 for the minor one). Maize constitutes 74 percent while rice was 9 percent and soya 17 percent of the total targeted.

Table 4: 2017 Actor-Supported Demonstrations Target

2017 CONVENTIONAL DEMOS TARGET						
	Northern	Kintampo	Upper East	Upper West	South	Total
MAIZE	46	60	52	68	90	316
RICE	15	8	15	6	0	44
SOY	38	0	19	29	0	86
TOTAL	99	68	86	103	90	446
2017 CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE (CSA) DEMOS TARGET						
	Northern	Kintampo	Upper East	Upper West	South	Total
MAIZE	22	10	27	16	10	85
RICE	2	0	1	2	0	5
SOY	2	0	2	2	0	6
TOTAL	26	10	30	20	10	96
GRAND TOTAL	125	78	116	123	100	542

At the end of the third quarter, all 542 potential demonstration sites have been selected in the project regions. Despite the drought during the major season, the project established 42 conventional demonstration sites, six organic-product demonstration sites, and five CSA demonstration sites in the South. Twenty-one maize demonstration sites were established in Kintampo North and South Districts. In northern Ghana, field lay-out and land preparation were the major demo activities conducted during the reporting quarter, waiting for the rains to stabilize before the planting and basal fertilization.

In 2017, ADVANCE planned to establish twelve maize model farms. So far, the project has set up two of them in the South with a total of 18.6 acres (about 7.5 ha). The two model farms will be harvested in July. As mentioned in section B.2., ADVANCE set up these farms in partnership with AFGRI Ghana/John Deere. Model Farms are 10 to 20 acre farms on which mechanization of land preparation, planting and fertilizer application is promoted in addition to other improved technologies and practices. A major technology being demonstrated through the model farms is the use of rippers for minimum land tillage, instead of the conventional ploughing and harrowing. The farms are intended to make commercial farmers understand, apply, and promote to their peers these technologies to substantially increase their yields. Maize yields from these model farms are expected to be at least five metric tons per hectare.

Demonstration sites sponsors

ADVANCE secured inputs for the demonstration sites through the sponsorship/donation by 19 sponsors and several OBs. More inputs from these sponsors and other new sponsors are expected within the next few weeks.

Table 5: Actor-Sponsored Inputs for 2017 Demos

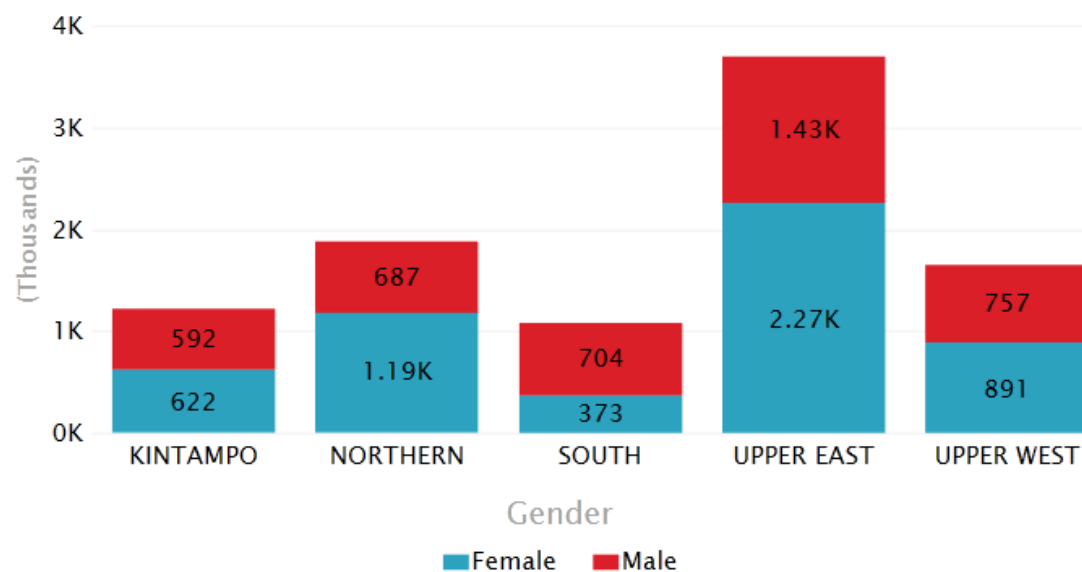
Actor-Sponsors	Inputs
YARA Ghana Ltd	Fertilizers
RMG	Hybrid Seed Maize (Pan 12, Pan 53, Pioneer 30Y87); Agro-chemicals
Chemico Limited	Fertilizers
M&B	Seed Maize (Opeaburo, Abontem, var. Suhudoo)
Farmers' Hope	Organic Fertilizer
Best Agro Ghana Limited	Fertilizers; Seed Maize
Timothy Agro Chemical	Herbicides
Sky 3 Agro Business Centre	Fertilizers; Herbicides

Actor-Sponsors	Inputs
IITA/N2Africa	Rhizobium Inoculant; Seed Soybean
SARI	Seed Maize; Seed Rice; Seed Soybean
Demeter Ghana Ltd	Granulated CaCO ₃ (Liming material)
Heritage Seeds Co. Ltd.	Seed Maize; Seed Soybean; Seed Rice
Antika Company Limited	Seed Maize; YARA Fertilizers
Ariku Farms	Seed Maize
Hadiola	Herbicides
The Candel Co. Ltd.	Herbicides
18 April Limited	Seed Soybean
OBs	Seed Soybean; Fertilizers; Herbicides

PHH Training and Beneficiaries/PHH Training and Beneficiaries

During the reporting quarter, with support from MoFA AEAs, ADVANCE conducted both off-site and on-site demonstration GAPs trainings for 9,517 farmers (out of whom 5,343 or 56 percent were females). Topics treated included acquisition of appropriate agro-inputs, site selection, quality land preparation, use of improved seed, seed germination testing, row planting, fertilization at planting, types and rates of fertilizer application. Additionally, the project included the identification of presence of FAW, monitoring and scouting for their presence, timely and effective control and applying insecticides approved and listed in the project’s Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safe Use Action Plan (PERSUAP).

Figure I: GAP trainings beneficiaries





Smallholders learning planting distance measurement during GAPs training in Kintampo



Under Tree GAPs Training at Yinduri, UER

I.4. ICT OUTREACH AND PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY DISSEMINATION

ADVANCE contracted Voto Mobile to disseminate agronomic tips and market price information to 20,000 project beneficiaries across the operational zones from June 2017 to March 2018. The agronomic tips will be disseminated through a Voice Messaging Service in local languages while the market price information will be transmitted through SMS. A training of trainers (lead farmers, field agents, and interns) to sensitize beneficiary farmers on the service, particularly the Voice Messaging Service, is on-going and the dissemination will commence in July.

The project is also working with AFGRI-Ghana/John Deere and Voto Mobile to develop voice messages on basic tractor maintenance to be shared with OBs and their operators to improve on tractor operations and management. Furthermore, as mentioned in section B.2. ADVANCE and Voto Mobile are collaborating to support OBs communication service provision and timeframes with their outgrowers through voice messages.

During the reporting period, ADVANCE continued its partnership with Grameen Foundation to support OBs and their field agents to provide e-extension services to SHFs through the use of Smartex software, a solution-based tablet application, portable Pico projectors, Bluetooth speakers and SD cards. During the quarter, 58 field agents were monitored and coached on effective use of the Smartex system. Some agents were tasked to mentor their colleague agents and to sensitize radio listenership groups under their OBs' supervision. The project continued to provide remote technical assistance through the regional WhatsApp groups to field agents who needed assistance. So far, 77 field agents are actively using the Smartex application.



Field Agents being coached on their field activities in UER

Monitoring Field Agents' activities

I.5. INCREASED ACCESS TO INPUTS AND EQUIPMENT

During the quarter, ADVANCE facilitated 160 community input promotions with reported sales of GHS 320,616 (\$74,902). A total of 130 inputs agents were supported. ADVANCE trained 19 of them and set them up on MTN mobile money to ease the transactions between them and the farmers.

"The community input promotion idea is very good, within two days I have made close to GHS 5,000 from the promotion and three people have already made a follow up to my shop to buy more agro-inputs, I am very happy and wish to thank ADVANCE for identifying me". Tang Gomda, a local input dealer in Karaga, Northern Region

Through these events, the project has linked the OBs and their outgrowers to major input dealers and importers such as YARA, RMG, AFGRI-Ghana, SOLANIKA, Sunshine, AFCOT, AMG, LDC, North Gate, Danaa Agro-Inputs and Best Foliar fertilizer. Farmers have also been introduced to various agrochemical products and been educated on safe and effective use of these products. This empowers the OBs to make direct requests for all their future inputs requirements and equipment needs.

Furthermore, ADVANCE trained 17 input dealers on how to develop proper management systems including financial planning, records keeping, stock management, legal requirements to set up agro dealerships, costing and pricing, and marketing. The project also connected the participating input dealers to 138 community agents to serve as alternative sales channels to enhance the accessibility of inputs at the village level.

I.6. OUTGROWER BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Outgrower Business Management Training

The project continues to train OBs using an eight module Outgrower Business Management curriculum aimed at supporting them to operate efficiently and profitably. The eighth module is dedicated specifically at building capacity of female OBs and female FBO leaders.

During the quarter under review, ADVANCE trained 41 OBs on business and financial planning; 143 OBs on tractor operation and management, and 212 female OBs and FBO leaders trained on women entrepreneurship and leadership.

Field Management Program

As part of the field management program, ADVANCE trained 169 community field agents/lead farmers and 18 OBs on GAPs for maize, rice, and soya, including basic extension in Northern, Upper East, and Upper West Regions and in Kintampo.

OB Office Program

The project continuously encourages OBs to set up small office units from where they can manage their operations and safely keep their records. In the quarter, two OBs set up small office units in their homes for this purpose.

Furthermore, ADVANCE conducted a refresher training for eight OBs in the South on how to use the Sales Tracker software developed by the project. In the past year, these OBs received in-kind grants comprising of laptops with a three-in-one printer/scanner/photocopier from ADVANCE enabling them to keep verifiable records and make profitable business decisions.

The project has recruited and trained 68 student interns from the UDS, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, and the University of Energy and Natural Resources and placed them with OBs in their communities to support them to keep records of the services they provide, such as ploughing, cost of tractor maintenance, and tracking inputs delivery to farmers. These students will also assist the project in tracking the services provided and delivered by trained Spraying Services Providers in these communities.

The project also trained 15 OBs (13 males, 2 females) on record keeping systems. Some of the topics addressed include:

- Type of records keeping system required for the successful operation of an Outgrower Business.
- Type of records and information to be collected
- Identifying the possible users of these information
- The type of system to use in collecting, managing and processing the information

Khalid Abubakari of Asawaba Farms has recruited Kwaku Paul who was an intern placed with him during the 2016 production season student internship program. Kwaku Paul graduated from UDS in 2017 and is very happy to be engaged by the OB to assist in the management of his outgrower scheme

I.7. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Farm Business Planning

During the quarter, ADVANCE supported eight new OBs to develop their business plans and eight continuing OBs to update theirs. These business plans guide the operations of the OBs to enhance their outgrower business management and to accurately ascertain the financial services they will require. It also helps the project to identify the most appropriate technical assistance to the OBs to achieve the various projections in the plans.

The project administered business diagnostic tools on two OBs and supported 41 OBs to develop their crop budgets to enable them to plan and decide on the acreage to cultivate, outgrowers to support with their working capital, and the profitability of in-kind lending of inputs and tractor services to the smallholder farmers.

Furthermore, the project supported seven OBs including two input dealers to register and legalize their operations with the Registrar General's Department and thus, enable them transact business with better established end markets and input suppliers.

Financial Services

With financial institutions

During the quarter, the project facilitated a meeting between Opportunity International and an OB who defaulted on the payment of his loan of GHS 205,436.5 (\$47,994). The latter took the loan to finance inputs

on credit for his 153 outgrowers. Through the project's facilitation, the bank has recovered over 60 percent of the loan. The reasons for low recovery reported by the lead farmers were inadequate rainfall and low prices from aggregators.

ADVANCE introduced First Allied Savings and Loans to six OBs in the South. The project sensitized the OBs on their agency banking products including fast deposit and withdrawals, instant money transfers, account opening, Ezwich transaction and payment of bills. The bank plans to set up agency/branches within the communities for farmers to have easy access to financial services.

ADVANCE also assisted three OBs in the Northern Region to secure contracts with Vestor Oil and Royal Danemac and used the contracts to support their loan applications totaling GHS 65,000 (\$15,185) from Opportunity International, Agriculture Development and Prudential Banks. The agreements stipulated that the end market will pay for the produce supplied to the respective financial institutions after the delivery of soybeans by the OBs. This arrangement ensured a more sustainable way for the OBs to access working capital as well as a secured market for their produce.

Another initiative that started during the quarter is the project's facilitation of financial institutions entering in an inputs support scheme. Opportunity International is piloting an input support scheme for 101 outgrowers in three communities in the Northern Region to access inputs on credit to produce soybean this 2017 production season. The loan of GHS 260 (\$60.74) per acre covers the costs of triple superphosphate (TSP), inoculants, ploughing and Jenguma seeds. Imbedded in the loan costs is the 5 percent production cost as crop insurance against drought.

Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA)

To strengthen relationships between the OBs and their outgrowers, the latter are encouraged to make their own savings to promptly pay for services and depend less on the inputs credit. The project started the process of forming 500 new VSLAs in the previous quarter and completed the formation of the groups in the period under review. The VSLAs have 12,425 outgrowers (3,935 males, 8,490 females) as members. The groups save between GHS1 (\$0.23) to GHS 10 (\$2.33) per share per week and a social fund contribution of GHS 0.20 (\$0.04) to GHS 0.50 (\$0.12) per person per week depending on the constitution adopted by the group.

With the new groups, the total number of VSLAs supported by the project increased to 826. A total of 571 of these groups were monitored during the share out of their savings this reporting quarter. The groups had made total savings of GHS 1,063,487.5 (\$248,449), and 348 of them had given out loans amounting GHS 387,760 (\$90,587) to its members.

Twelve of these groups made up of 875 members have been linked to three financial institutions (Brong-Ahafo Catholic Co-operative Society for Development, Kintampo Rural Bank and GN Bank) to open group savings bank accounts. This will enable them save safely, earn interest on their savings (e.g., GN Bank is offering 9% on savings and a life insurance for each group member) and be financially included.

FBOs have also embraced the VSLA concept as a means of savings and accessing loans for their farming activities. Through ADVANCE's facilitation, 80 FBOs are engaged in VSLAs across the intervention areas. They have raised over GHS 100,000 (\$23,362) from which some of the FBOs purchased inputs for their members.



FBO VSLA share out

Digital Finance

ADVANCE continuously promotes mobile money to the OBs and their outgrowers as a savings platform and a means to safely transact business with buyers and input dealers. During Q3FY17, nine new OBs have been set up as merchants and their 284 outgrowers as subscribers on MTN, while 218 who have been sensitized are yet to sign up. Additionally, as mentioned in section D.1.1.4., 19 community input agents were set up on MTN Mobile Money.

One OB was set up as a Vodafone agent in Northern Region, while six representatives of OBs who have been signed on Vodafone Cash as merchants in their communities were trained on registering subscribers, Cash-in and Cash-out, and keeping records of transactions. The six representatives are serving as Vodafone Merchants for their OBs in their various communities.

Though the mobile money drive has made some gains, the uptake has been low due to the low ownership of mobile phone handsets among the small holder farmers. To address this, the project has arranged with a phone supplier to set up shop to sell low end phones to interested beneficiaries in their communities.

Monitoring transactions of two OBs who were trained through the project and set up as merchants transacted GHS 723,073 (\$168,923) and served 6,644 subscribers during this reporting period.

Crop Insurance

Through the project's facilitation, 35 agents of OBs were trained by the Ghana Agricultural Insurance Pool (GAIP) to serve as sales agents for crop insurance in the communities especially those who have village savings and loans. This was to bring crop insurance education to the door step of the outgrowers. GAIP has for the 2017 production season reduced the cost per policy to five percent of production cost for drought and three to five percent for Multi-Peril insurance. An OB in Upper West took out a policy against drought worth GHS 3,456 (\$807) to cover 40 acres of farmland. So far, for the 2017 season, GAIP sold 62 policies valued at GHS 1,330 (\$311). A total of additional 80 OGs have registered but are yet to pay their premiums. Furthermore, for the 2017 season, two Financial Institutions (OISL and Bonzali Rural Bank) and four OBs have purchase Multi-Peril insurance policies valued at GHS 650,608 (\$151,993).

I.8. FARMER MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

ADVANCE organized trainings on Effective Mentoring for eight mentor OBs from the Northern Region. Topics discussed included: what it takes to be a good mentor, purpose of mentorship, the roles and responsibilities of a mentor, ethics in mentoring and mentorship under ADVANCE project.

The project also organized mentorship for 10 mentee OBs in the areas of records keeping, aggregation and sales, communication with outgrowers, the use of agents for extension and repayments in Wapuli, Northern Region. Two mentor OBs, including Muyo Nante and Nicholas Lambini, shared their experience over the years with others on successfully turning defaulting outgrowers in specific communities into worthy OGs to achieve 100 percent repayments. OB profitability, breakeven analysis and depreciation of equipment, and the need to have a plan to acquire new equipment with time were discussed as well.



Enoch Akisiba of Ewakisi Enterprise engaging OBs on records keeping during a mentorship activity

Similarly, through the project’s facilitation, Enoch Akisiba mentored four OBs on proper records keeping, production, and field asset management in Upper East Region.

1.9. CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE

The project continued to promote Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) technologies and practices. A new technology introduced during the reporting period is the use of rice straw and rice bran for compost and mushroom production. This quarter’s activities also covered minimum tillage and rice systems. Over 274 acres of land belonging to 34 OBs was prepared using minimum tillage.

Rice farmers in irrigated areas produce large quantities of straw that is normally burnt. The same happens to rice bran produced by rice mills. To change this practice, and to ensure that rice by-products are put to beneficial uses, the project has started working with two OBs in the Upper East Region to turn rice by-products into compost and mushroom substrates.

The use of compost should progressively improve soil structure with consequent benefits on water retention, nutrient availability, enhanced root development and overall fertility potential, translating into increased productivity. Mushroom production would provide cash for further investment in rice milling and household income, as well as in supporting mushroom production.

During the reporting period, ADVANCE trained 75 outgrowers (51 females, 24 males) on the use of rice by-products for composting. This is a new and a pilot activity that the project is testing through a volunteer from F2F. If the pilot succeeds, ADVANCE will scale it up in irrigation sites. In addition, in that regard, it set up one demonstration on rice compost technology to help farmers learn further.

2. Sub-purpose 2: Increased Market Access and Trade of Targeted Commodities

During the reporting period, the project continued with the following activities:

- Developing market linkages between OBs and large buyers (primarily large aggregators and processors)
- Reinforcing lead firms’ competitiveness
- Supporting trade associations
- Strengthening community based marketing

2.1 MARKET LINKAGE DEVELOPMENT

New Buyers Identified

ADVANCE identified three new buyers with total annual purchase requirement of 2,200 MT during the quarter. Their annual purchase requirement for 2017 is 500 MT of maize, 800 MT of rice paddy, and 900 MT of soybean (Table 6).

Table 6: New Buyers Identified

Firm Name	Region	Firm Type	Purchase Requirement for 2017 (Mt)		
			Maize	Paddy	Soy
U3 AgriNet	Northern	Aggregator	500	200	100

Firm Name	Region	Firm Type	Purchase Requirement for 2017 (Mt)		
			Maize	Paddy	Soy
Savanna Foods Empire	Upper West	Processor Soy Mill			800
H. Rukaya Enterprise	Northern	Aggregator		600	
Annual Purchase Requirement for 2017			500	800	900

Two-way Trade Missions

Trade missions consist of buyers visiting OBs and their OGs to connect with them, assess the capacities of OBs and OGs, and share their specifications of the produce the buyers would procure. ADVANCE organized six trade missions for four buyer firms and 91 OBs and farmer groups during the quarter. Two of them were between Agricare and farmers in the Northern and Upper East Regions to discuss their outgrower support package for the 2017 crop season. Royal Danemac and E-GABs Ghana met with farmers from the Northern and Upper East Regions to discuss outgrower support for soybean cultivation during the 2017 crop season. Nestle visited Kha-ma Farms and Kukobila Nasia farms in Northern Region to finalize the purchase agreement for 80 MT of maize worth GHS 112,000 (\$25,165).



A Nestle official discussing purchase and supply agreement with Kha-ma farms in Karaga, Northern Region

Table 7: Trade Missions Facilitated

Name of Buyer	Location of Buyer	No of Participating OBs/FBOs	Regional Coverage of OBs/FBOs	Commodity
Agricare	Kumasi	78	All Regions	Maize
Nestle	Accra	3	Northern	Maize
Royal Danemac	Kumasi	5	Northern	Soy
E-GABs GH	Sunyani	5	Northern & Upper East	Soy
Total		91		

Furthermore, as mentioned in section B.2., Nestlé inspected and certified the warehouses of Kha-ma Farms in Karaga, Kukobila Nasia Farms, and Gundaa Produce Company in Tamale. On June 30, 2017, five representatives of the OBs visited Nestlé’s Tema factory to strengthen the business relationship and learn first-hand about Nestlé’s food safety and product quality requirements.



Nucleus farmers with Nestle and ADVANCE team at Nestle Tema Factory

Contract Facilitation

During the reporting quarter, ADVANCE facilitated 97 contracts covering 4,825 MT of maize, rice paddy and soybean, and valued at almost GHS 7 million (\$1,635,323) for new business relationships between OBs and buyers. In addition, OBs and buyers with existing relationships signed contracts and executed transactions using the skills and experience gained from previous market linkage facilitation and training provided by the project.

Table 8: Contracts Facilitated

Type of Contract ³	Number of Contracts	Volume (MT)	Value (GHS)*
Closed Contracts	12	1,183	1,855,380
Closed Sale without Formal Contract	84	3,392	4,805,488
Purchase and Supply Agreements	1	250	300,000
Grand Total	97	4,825	6,960,868

*For contracts with values

Transport Linkages

The project established a relationship with the Upper West Region branch of the Progressive Transport Operators Association (PROTOA) as an additional haulage service provider to OBs and buyers. This is in addition to the existing relationship with the cargo wing of the Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU).

³ Closed contracts are definitive and binding agreements between buyers and farmers for the exchange of a specified quantity of produce at a specified price within a specified period. Outgrower contracts are agreements where the buyer provides mechanization services and inputs to the farmer, with the farmer paying back with produce at harvest. Purchase and supply agreements are non-binding contracts between buyers and farmers with key terms like quantities, price, and delivery period to be agreed between the parties at a later date. These contracts have been a key feature of the trade missions. Typically, the buyer and farmer do not commit to a definitive price and supply volume at the initial meeting. The contracts are eventually finalized and executed by the parties at a later date.

Training of Farmers in Produce Quality Requirements and Standards

During the quarter, ADVANCE trained 10,069 (including 4,193 women) smallholder farmers on maize and soybean grain quality standards⁴. This brought the total number trained during FY17 to 39,632 out of the targeted number of 50,000 which will be reached in the fourth quarter.

Table 9: Number of Smallholders Trained in Produce Quality Requirements and Standards

Operational Area	# Trained during Q3	# Trained in FY17	FY 17 Target
Northern Region	4,162	12,812	16,000
Upper West Region	1,177	14,740	14,000
Upper East Region	2,146	7,442	14,000
South	2,584	4,638	6,000
Total	10,069	39,632	50,000



A cross section of participants at the community training sessions on quality standards in the Northern and Upper West Regions

Key Market Developments

In this section, the quarter's commodity price trends from key markets monitored weekly by the project are presented.

Maize

Overall, maize prices rose between March and June 2017 in most of the key markets tracked during the quarter. In Upper West, maize prices increased in April and May, and fell in June in the major maize cultivation areas like Gwollu and Tumu (see Figure 2). This fluctuation is in response to the initial hoarding of the produce in speculation for higher prices, and the eventual release of stocks by farmers to pay for mechanization services and inputs for production in the new season. However, in the Wa market, the price of maize remained relatively stable due to purchases by caterers for the school feeding. The price of maize in Jirapa rose in June because supply in the market was inadequate to meet demand by buyers, especially for the school feeding program.

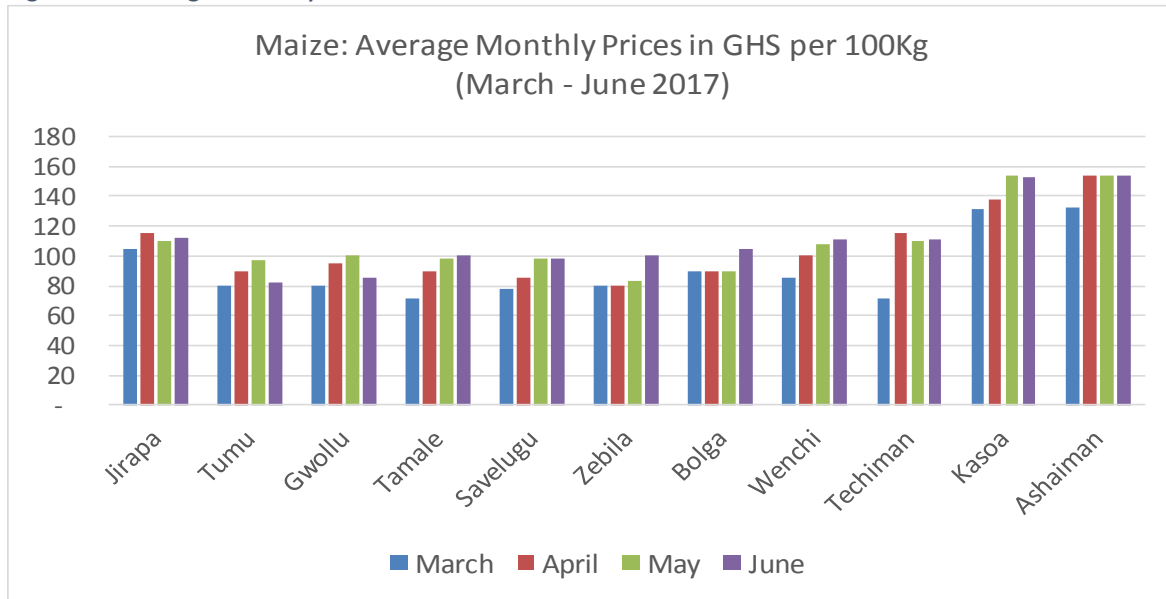
In the Northern Region, prices rose in April and largely remained unchanged through June because farmers sold stocks to buy production inputs and to pay for mechanization services for the upcoming farming season.

Maize prices in the Brong Ahafo Region began rising after March with decreased supplies from farmers. Prices are generally low in March as farmers sell stocks to finance the major season planting. Towards the end of June prices rise as the stocks of well dried old maize begins to run out.

⁴ Based on the Ghana National Standards for maize (GSS 211: 2013: Specification for Maize) and soybean (GSS 1039: 2013: Specification for Soybean)

Kasoa and Ashaiman experienced a price increase in tandem with increased prices from the supply sources in the North and Brong Ahafo Region.

Figure 2: Average Monthly Maize Prices from Selected Markets



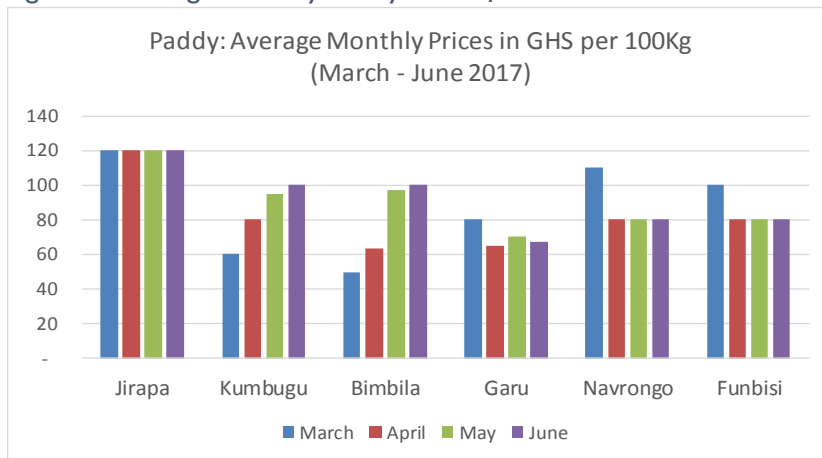
Source: ADVANCE market monitoring

Rice Paddy

Paddy prices in the irrigated areas of the Northern Region increased during the period while remaining relatively stable in the Upper East and West Regions.

The price hike in the Northern Region is attributed to the commencement of harvesting from the irrigated fields. The paddy from these freshly harvested fields are high in moisture content, and typically attract strong demand from millers seeking paddy for straight milling. In the Upper East and West Regions, paddy prices declined after March 2017 and remained stable till the end of the quarter. Paddy demand by AVNASH Industries has however increased the demand for aromatic rice varieties like Jasmine and Agra rice. In Upper West, even though there were increased purchases, prices have not been affected as the general supply of paddy matched the demand.

Figure 3: Average Monthly Paddy Prices from Selected Markets

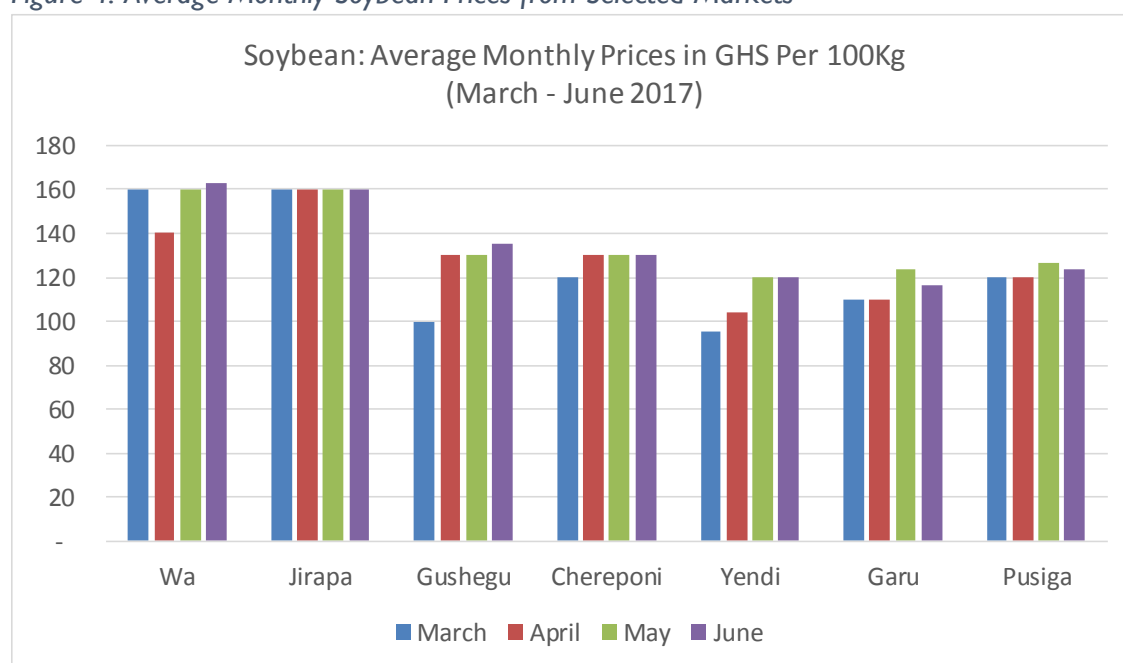


Source: ADVANCE market monitoring

Soybean

Soybean prices rose slightly in April and remained fairly stable in May and June. Demand in the Northern and Upper East Regions was strong, and was matched by supplies from farmers who offloaded stocks to raise cash to finance the coming season. The Upper West Region is a marginal supplier of soybean and accompanying low volume of trades, hence the relatively high prices.

Figure 4: Average Monthly Soybean Prices from Selected Markets



Source: ADVANCE market monitoring

2.2. LEAD FIRM COMPETITIVENESS

Support for Buyer Outgrower Development

During the quarter, ADVANCE supported eight buyers to implement outgrower schemes for the 2017 farming season. For the first time, all three value chains have buyers providing almost GHS 20 million (\$4,672,351) worth of inputs to farmers. In all, 84 OBs and their smallholder farmers will benefit from these schemes. Below (Table 10) is a summary of investment made by these firms to support production.

Table 10: Buyer Investments in Outgrower Schemes for 2017 Farming Season

Buyer Name	Firm Type	Scheme Type	Total Value of Support (GHS)
Akate Farms	Poultry Farm	Maize	13,240,000
Agricare Company Ltd	Feed Mill Processor	Maize	6,335,724
Sahel Grains	Aggregator	Maize	8,000
Duna Farms	Aggregator	Maize	1,200
Premium Foods	Aggregator	Maize	92,680
AVNASH Industries Ghana	Processor Rice Miller	Rice	108,492

Buyer Name	Firm Type	Scheme Type	Total Value of Support (GHS)
Royal Danemac	Processor Soybean	Soy	81,000
E-GABs GH Ltd	Processor Soybean	Soy	2,400
Grand Total			19,867,096

Business Development Services for Buyers

In addition to the concluded buyer outgrower schemes mentioned above, ADVANCE supported Yedent Agro Group, a food processing company, to assess the feasibility and prepare for an outgrower scheme. Also, the project conducted a quality audit of locally produced soy cake from Royal Danemac. Vester Oil, Inter-Grow, G. Bosomtwe, and E-GABs, using imported soy cake as a benchmark. The sampling and testing are ongoing and will be completed in the coming quarter.

2.3. TRADE ASSOCIATION SUPPORT

The Ghana Grains Council (GGC) continued implementing activities under the grant agreement of US\$200,000 for the period September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017. The primary objective of this grant is to establish a formal marketing system targeted particularly at the level of farmers, aggregators, traders, and rural and community banks. The following activities were carried out during the quarter.

Objective 1: Restructuring and Strengthening the WRS to meet emerging challenges and expansion prospects

- A Facebook page was created for GGC warehouses to reach out to a wider audience using social media <https://www.facebook.com/ggcwarehouses/>. The page is linked to the “Ghana Business Network”
- The GGC trained 12 community warehouse managers in the Brong Ahafo Region on inventory recordkeeping
- Hartet Technologies Ltd completed the upgrading of the Central Depository (CD) software system to permit data entry and tracking of stocks from community warehouses

Objective 2: Optimize GGC Members’ Benefits

By way of revenue, the GGC received subscriptions of GHS 13,700 (\$3,201) from their members, and signed a EUR 48,228 grant agreement with GIZ – Green Innovation Center to equip 16 community warehouses in the Brong Ahafo Region. The GGC will earn a commission on grains traded by these warehouses. Also, *Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt* (PTB), the German Metrology Institute, will support the upgrade of 16 community warehouses in the Brong Ahafo Region with 50 kg test weights under a matching grant fund. PTB will fund the training of the warehouse managers to use test weights, weighing scales and moisture meters.

2.4. NORTH GHANA PROCESSING UPGRADE

The project has continued efforts to develop the processing capacity and increase the quality of grain output from the north.

Rice milling upgrade

An update of progress of work on the three rice mills targeted in the Northern region for expansion and upgrade is summarized in the table below.

Table 11: North Ghana MSME Agro Processors Identified for Milling Expansion and Upgrade

Enterprise	Location	Processing Capacity (MT)/ Hr	Milling Upgrade Needs	Status of Engagement
Tiyumba Women's Rice Processing Centre	Tamale, Northern region	0.13	Rehabilitation of processing center	The grant agreements were signed, and procurement for the equipment items commenced
AMSIG Resources / Shekinah Agribusiness Centre	Worebuoggu (near Nyankpala), Northern region	0.5	Replacement of specific components of the mill, and provision of grader	
Nyebu Nyona Rice Processing Centre	Nyerizi, Northern region	0.13	New rice mill upgrade	

Food (Maize/Soy) Processing Upgrade

During the quarter, ADVANCE identified as a potential future beneficiary the Savanna Foods Empire, a processor located in Wa in the Upper West Region. The firm processes soy into soy cake for the poultry industry and edible oil for human consumption. In addition, Total Foods, a Tamale based maize and soybean foods processor, started constructing a factory at a new site to relocate their operations. A grant application to ADVANCE to support the upgrade of its processing equipment was begun.



Refined soybean oil from Savana Foods Empire and the firm's soybean extractors

2.5. COMMUNITY BASED MARKET SYSTEMS STRENGTHENED

To strengthen community based market systems, the project organized several activities for the FBOs during the quarter. These included community-based input promotions and the establishment of agents to render input services to FBO members.

ADVANCE trained 30 participants from 15 FBOs in Tamale on marketing and access to finance during the reporting period. Furthermore, the project trained 25 FBO members on Sell More for More (SMfM) and 403 individuals on Farming as a Business (FaaB). Both trainings exposed FBOs to sourcing mechanization services, use of certified seed, collective purchase of inputs, etc. for their members. Imoro Alhassan, member of Diare had this to say: *“Last year, I planted late because I could not get the services of a tractor, but this year thank God, for belonging to an active group that sourced tractor services for us, to get our plots ploughed on time.”*

3. Sub-purpose 3: Strengthened Capacity for Advocacy and Activity Implementation

Under sub-purpose three, the project focused on:

- (i) Building capacities of local organizations to implement value chains related activities
- (ii) Advocacy capacity development of project actors
- (iii) Smallholders' numeracy skills and FaaB capacity development
- (iv) FBO capacity development

3.1. LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS' CAPACITY BUILDING

As part of ADVANCE's mandate to build the capacity of local organizations to be eligible for funding and implement value chain activities, during Q3FY17, the project trained 10 local NGOs that operate in the project's operational area on ACDIVOCA grant management and procurement. The training also helped the participants understand USAID's requirements and design USAID compliant financial proposals. The program was facilitated by ACDIVOCA's Vice President for Global Support and Award management practices supported by the Award Manager at ACIDI/VOCA Headquarters, Washington D.C..



Chito Padilla, ACDIVOCA VP, supporting participants during group work during the training

3.2. ADVOCACY CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Support to FBOs Network

ADVANCE and the Agriculture Policy Support Project (APSP) collaborated to conduct two training sessions for 90 executives (75 men and 15 women) of 30 FBOs who are being transitioned into Farmer Based Enterprises (FBEs). The training enhanced participants' understanding of the concepts of advocacy, steps in the advocacy process, how to identify advocacy issues, forming FBOs network and the components of the "Planting for Food and Jobs" program. As a result of the training, the beneficiary FBOs expressed interest in forming three zonal FBO networks in the Northern Region to enable them initiate and implement advocacy issues in the future, undertake collective sales and purchases of inputs and produce and share experiences and knowledge.

Also, ADVANCE carried out an assessment of the Upper West Regional FBOs Network. The exercise was part of a process to strengthen the FBOs' Network to function effectively. The assessment



A participant contributing during the workshop

focused on previous work carried out by ACDEP and ADVANCE towards the formation of the Regional Network, progress made since the formation and launch of the network, strengths and challenges and way the

forward. The findings showed that the regional FBOs network has all internal structures required for their effective functioning but they are confronted with challenges such as limited recognition, inadequate funding, irregular meetings, and dispersed locations of the executives. As a way forward, the network planned to hold one general meeting before the end of 2017 to address some of their challenges, identify and establish linkages with development partners in the region and districts and start a process of developing funding proposals on identified issues that affect majority of members.

In addition, ADVANCE facilitated a one-day training workshop for 35 FBO leaders in the Kintampo South District on the concept and practice of advocacy. The 35 FBO leaders, representing 16 FBOs of the network, were trained on the concepts of advocacy, enabling environment, identifying partners and issues on advocacy, and steps in undertaking advocacy. The training led to the identification and prioritization of two advocacy issues, namely the lack of an Agriculture Sub-Committee at the Kintampo South District Assembly and the non-utilization of weights and measures in agriculture commodity trade.

OBs Network Formation



Participants at the assessment

ADVANCE assessed the internal structures of 11 Zonal OBs Networks initiated in 2016 (bank account, constitution, leadership, registration, contribution etc.) to ascertain their current respective strengths and weaknesses following the project support. A total of 94 OBs (88 males and six females) participated in the exercise at their various zonal levels. Findings shows that some of the OBs networks (e.g., Bawku and Wa Zonal OBs Networks) were progressing steadily with establishing and strengthening their internal structures as well as engagement meetings with regional and District level policy makers. However, other networks lacked some of the building blocks

required for effective functioning as networks. Based on the assessment, the project has developed an action plan to address the lapses identified.

Advocacy Grant

During the reporting quarter, ADVANCE received nine advocacy proposals aimed at addressing various enabling environment constraints such as limited access to subsidized fertilizer, high ratio Agriculture Extension Agents and inappropriate handling and disposal of agrochemical inputs containers among others were received. The project is currently assessing them.

Furthermore, the Coalition for Development of Western Corridor of Northern Region (NORTHCODE) has started the implementation of activities under a grant provided the project to undertake advocacy for access to land by women through the establishment of “Land Banks” in West Gonja, Sawla/Tuna/Kalba, Mion and West Mamprusi Districts. By the end of the grant period, 1000 women would have accessed suitable lands for their farming activities.

The project is also supporting four Community Resource Management Areas (CREMA) to undertake advocacy actions to influence their respective District Assemblies to pass, gazette and enforce CREMA bye laws to control bush fires and other negative environmental practices affecting agricultural activities. Two Advocacy Consultants and Video Documentary Experts have been contracted to help the CREMAs carry out and

document the advocacy actions. The implementation of this advocacy activity will start in the early part of the fourth quarter.

3.3. SMALLHOLDER CAPACITY BUILDING

Numeracy Training

By improving farmers’ capacity to carry out basic arithmetic calculations, numeracy trainings only increase their knowledge but also their self-confidence to deal with aggregators in their daily transactions. The project has developed a numeracy curriculum covering nine training sessions which are held during the evenings, when women are usually done with their daily chores. Numeracy training in the communities ended in April 2017 with a total of 12,830 SHFs benefiting as against the targeted number of 12,000. Out of this 7,636 representing 60 percent were women.

Table 12: Number of Farmers Trained on Numeracy

Suboffice	FY17 Targets	# Males trained	# Females trained	Total
Northern	5,200	2,594	3,364	5,958
Kintampo	800	634	672	1,306
Upper East	3,000	1,077	1,885	2,962
Upper West	3,000	773	1,675	2,448
Total	12,000	5,194	7,636	12,830



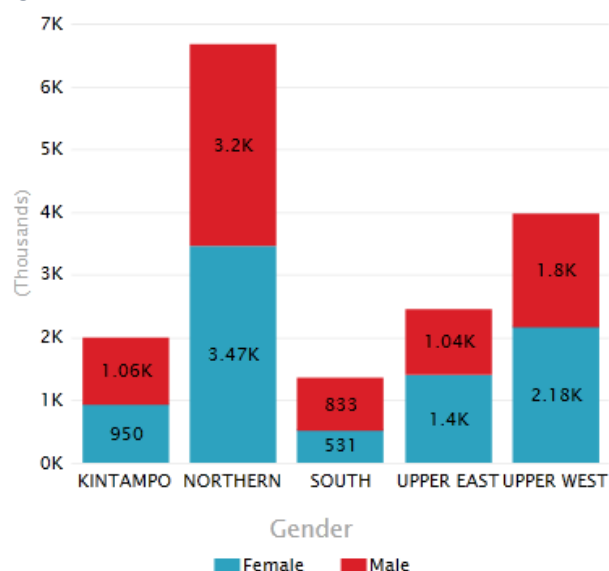
A numeracy training session in Glan in the Upper West Region

Memunatu of Zawara in the Upper East Region said: “the numeracy activity has helped [me] to be able to identify [my] VSLA number on my passbook and help [my] children in lower primary to write some numerals, thanks to the ADVANCE Project.”

FaaB Trainings

ADVANCE trained 16,467 people (including 8,535) women in Farming as a Business (FaaB) by the end of April, against a target of 13,000.

Figure 5: Number of Farmers Trained on FaaB in FY17



FaaB community Training in Kintampo South

3.4. FBO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

As part of the process of transforming more FBOs to FBEs, ADVANCE is currently conducting the third assessment of potential FBEs across the intervention zone. As the potential FBEs progress steadily towards model FBEs status, the project engages them in several capacity building activities including good record keeping, hosting group farms, organizing mechanization services for their members, collective sales, collective purchase of inputs, engaging the services of extension agents etc. Below are some of the activities conducted by some FBOs during the reporting period.

Table 13: Activities performed by transforming FBOs and FBEs

Zone	Record keeping	Group farms	Demo sites	Mechanization services	Collective sales	VSLA	Inputs	Total # of FBO
Upper East	20	7	0	4	6	10	0	25
Kintampo	35	16	5	23	7	22	9	37
Northern	36	26	28	15	18	23	21	48
Upper West	25	15	12	20	8	25	20	25
Total	116	64	45	62	39	80	50	135

F. PROGRAM SUPPORT

I. Gender Program

The ADVANCE program has promoted women’s empowerment this quarter through increased access to credit and loans through VSLAs as well as increased access to information and capacity building through other trainings, as described in section D.1. ADVANCE trained women leaders to improve their leadership and entrepreneurship skills and completed the nutrition education and soybean utilization training for women beneficiaries. The project also conducted targeted activities and initiatives to improve women’s access to land and to small equipment under the in-kind grant scheme.

I.1. BUILDING WOMEN'S BUSINESSES, LEADERSHIP AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS

During the quarter under review, the project trained 284 female value chain leaders on gender equality and leadership and entrepreneurship. The main objective was to build the capacity of female value chain actors to manage their outgrower schemes and farms as businesses enterprises. Using a participatory adult learning approach, the following topics were discussed; gender sensitization, gender and female leadership (self-awareness, acts of leadership, communication, public speaking, conflict management, planning, time management, and participatory decision making) and entrepreneurship.

As immediate result, 20 of the 150 women trained in the Kintampo zone have taken up leadership positions in their respective farmer-based organizations which include men and women members.



Female value chains leaders at Leadership and Entrepreneurship training in UWR

I.2. IMPROVING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LAND

During the quarter, 263 OBs and their outgrowers, traditional authorities, husbands and MoFA staff took part in three meetings that ADVANCE held in three communities in the Upper East and Upper West Regions. The meetings raised participants' awareness on the need to improve women's access to production resources, especially land, to enable them expand their farms or gain access to fertile lands.

Furthermore, as mentioned in section D.3.1.2. NORTHCODE has received a grant from the project to conduct advocacy activities that will increase 1,000 women's access to land.

I.3. NUTRITION EDUCATION AND SOYBEAN UTILIZATION TRAINING

During the quarter under review, the project continued its collaboration with the MoFA Directorate of Women in Agricultural Development (WIAD) to organize nutrition education and training on soybean utilization for the farmers, especially the women. The aim was to improve the nutritional status and food security of their households. The OBs and their smallholder farmers provided the soybeans and maize for the cooking demonstrations. In total, 825 smallholder farmers (463 females, 362 males) were trained during the period. The farmers were taught how to process soybean into quality and nutritious flour, and to blend them with different cereals and grains to improve their local recipes. They learned how to prepare different dishes (Tubani, soy khebab, soy-fortified banku, soy porridge or tombrown, soy milk and Aprapransa) with these blends.



Snapshots of the nutrition education and soybean utilization trainings

1.4. WOMEN'S ACCESS TO IMPROVED TECHNOLOGIES

During the quarter under review, the project promoted labor saving technology and equipment such as dibblers, manual planters, animal traction equipment, and tractors which is estimated will impact approximately 10,000 women beneficiaries. This equipment was showcased through nine demonstration and trainings by four local vendors, and made available through the project matching grants. To further enhance affordability for women, the matching grants for dibblers were reduced to 15% from the usual 30% for women. The effect of this effort will be monitored and measured in the next quarter through a gender empowerment study and gross margin analysis.

2. Environment Support

In addition to the climate smart activities mentioned in section 1.9., the project also focused on:

- Ensuring compliance with Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulation, section 216
- Improving agrochemical management and handling among project actors

2.1. GENERAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

Environmental Screening of rice mills

ADVANCE screened two rice mills (AMSIG Resources Ltd and Nyebu Bi Yoona Processing Centre) as part of the evaluation process for applications received for support to upgrade the facilities. The main environmental concerns were minimal and related to inadequate fire safety and first aid plans and occupational health and safety.

Mitigation actions recommended were as follows:

- Workers of the mills be trained on fire safety from the Ghana National Fire Service
- Fire safety procedures be put in place with guidance from the Ghana National Fire Service

- The appropriate number of fire extinguishers be purchased and placed at vantage points in the premises and workers instructed adequately on their proper use
- First Aid kit must be placed on-site, as well as someone familiar with its use trained in basic first aid
- All workers must be trained on safety and health to ensure safe work practices, the proper use of personal protective equipment, and their safety and health protections under law
- A written policy regarding worker health and safety must be put in place and complied with in accordance with the Labor Act.

PERSUAP revision

A total of 39 active ingredients are now approved in the project's PERSUAP. They are made of 20 insecticides, three fungicides and 16 herbicides. A total of 94 commercial products with these active ingredients are available on the market and approved for use by the Ghana EPA. They include 40 insecticides, six fungicides, and 48 herbicides.

Out of the list of recommended pesticides, six active ingredients are useful against the FAW, and 15 commercial products containing them are available in the market.

The total number of approved active ingredients are based on the Ghana ADVANCE II PERSUAP, 2016. Amendment #1. Approved 5/11/2017 ([ECD Link](#)), ADVANCE II PERSUAP Amendment 2: Additional Insecticides for Fall Armyworm (FAW) Management. Approved 5/25/2017, and the Bureau for Food Security Programmatic PERSUAP for Fall Armyworm Management in Africa ([ECD Link](#)), Ghana_ADVANCE_PERSUAP_071812 ([DOCX](#)) ([PDE](#)), approved 07/18/2012.

2.2. IMPROVING AGROCHEMICAL MANAGEMENT

During the reporting quarter, ADVANCE trained 256 new individual sprayers linked to 88 OBs/FBEs/Input dealers in safe handling and application of agrochemicals. In collaboration with the Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Department of MoFA, the training covered the following areas.

- Definition of Pesticides
- Classification of Pesticides
- Understanding of product label
- Pesticide Poisoning and First Aid
- Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
- Use of Knapsack and Calibration
- Disposal of Empty containers and Obsolete Pesticides
- Practical demonstration on rinsing of empty containers
- Record Keeping
- Practical demonstration herbicide application

The project also equipped these 256 individuals and the 280 individuals trained in Quarter 2 with in-kind grants comprising a 16L Knapsack sprayer, an overall, and a pair of chemical resistant hand gloves. The beneficiaries in turn procured wellington boots, goggles, respirators and a set of large plastic bags for retrieving empty pesticide containers after spraying.

3. Grants Program

3.1. INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT INCENTIVE GRANTS (I-3)

In the third quarter, ADVANCE processed and awarded 20 tractors and accessories to 20 OBs. The team has also awarded 23 rippers costing \$131,100 to encourage Climate Smart Agriculture through minimum tillage. A total of 845 pieces of small agricultural equipment were approved for 294 grantees. The project has also commenced the process for the award of 78 shellers, two pneumatic planters, seven power tillers with reapers, four boom sprayers, and other large equipment to farmers as an incentive for adopting expensive but effective farming technology in their production and post-harvest activities.

Table 14: Zonal distribution of the small equipment granted

Equipment	Northern	Upper East	Upper West	Advance South	Total
Tarpaulins	152	79	97	107	435
Weighing Scales	16	5	9	6	36
Dibblers	38	100	188		326
Manual Planters	13	-	4	-	17
Moisture Meters	4	1	1	1	7
Bullock Ploughs	-	19	-	-	19
Harrows	-	3	-	-	3
Donkey Carts	-	2	-	-	2
TOTAL	223	209	299	114	845

Furthermore, the project has approved applications from three processors to upgrade their rice mills and promote the processing and marketing of quality local rice. The grant also targets good packaging and labelling to make the produce attractive to consumers. The beneficiaries are Tiyumba Women Rice Processing Center, Nyebu Biyoona Women Rice Milling Center and AMSIG Resources, all based in the Northern Region. The upgrade of the three rice mills will facilitate easy and quality processing of rice and encourage farmers to produce more.

3.2. LOCAL PARTNERSHIP GRANTS (LPG)

The project support to the Ghana Agricultural Insurance Pool (GAIP) ended in the reporting quarter, with a total amount of USD 21,000.00 being disbursed for operational and other field activities. Through the grant, GAIP was able to

- Produce and air jingles promoting the use of crop insurance for the 2017 crop seasons
- Train six staff members to effectively market the insurance products
- Train 45 AEAs in Volta, Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions to assist in assessing farms to be insured by GAIP as well as sensitizing them on agricultural insurance products
- Organized a workshop for Financial Institution to collaborate and promote agricultural insurance tied to loans for 21 banks. The workshop was organized in collaboration with the Social Investment Fund
- Trained 50 Community-based Marketing Officers of Innovation for Poverty Action for the 2017 season to market crop insurance
- Trained 37 Community-Based Facilitators of the ADVANCE VSLAs in Tamale for the 2017 season

The grant, together with other support from other partners, enable GAIP to increase their premium income from GHS 151,835 (\$35,471) in 2014 to GHS 643,372 (\$150,303) in 2016.

Furthermore, Sinapi Aba Savings and Loans, Bessfa, and Bonzali Rural Banks have agreed to collaborate with GAIP in bundling their loans with agricultural insurance products for the 2017 season.

The project continued to support the Ghana Grains Council during the reporting period to promote trade in the grains industry. Details of the activities and achievements of GGC are presented in the section D.2.2.3.

As part of ADVANCE's plan to collaborate with local institutions to implement the project's activities in very remote locations as well as build their capacities, a Fixed Amount Sub-Award (FAA) was made to NORTHCODE, a local NGO based in Tamale. As mentioned in section D.3.3.1., the objective of the award is to enhance women's productivity in maize, rice and soybean value chains through access to improved seeds and productive lands in the region. NORTHCODE has been tasked to work with relevant stakeholders to secure productive land for over 1,000 women in communities in four districts of the Northern Region.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

4.1. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

During the reporting period, ADVANCE continued its routine data collection on activities such as training, VSLA, loans, investments etc. and undertook data verification exercises in the field. The project is also conducting the annual gross margin surveys and launching learning research and learning activities.

Database and data collection forms

ADVANCE continues improving its database. During the quarter, the Demosys database deployed in FY16 to collect, analyze and store data from the demonstration sites was revised to capture additional activities such as minimum tillage which has been introduced to more sites this year.

All data collection tools have also been reviewed based on challenges and various requests from the field staff. To answer additional data needs, new forms were developed, such as the Minimum Tillage Farm tracking form and Fall Army Worm tracking tool.

Gross margin data collection

ADVANCE implements an annual gross margin survey in three phases. The first phase, conducted right after planting, collects costs of inputs, application of technology and demarcates the crop cut area for harvesting at the second phase of the survey. The second phase, at harvest, is to collect the remaining inputs costs and technology application practices, and to estimate yields. The third phase, in April and July is for the collection of the sales data of the produce harvested.

The first phase of the gross margin data collection was completed in May 2017 for the ADVANCE South operational zones for 302 smallholder farmers. The third phase of the 2016 gross margin survey started in April to collect data on sales up to March 2017. The sales data will be used to update the gross margin figures for the 2016 crop season.

Capacity Development

During the quarter, ADVANCE held a three-day M&E review meeting during which achievements and shortfalls were reviewed. Refresher trainings on the projects results framework, theory of change, project indicator definitions, data collection and analysis, report writing as well as navigation through the project

dashboard that provides live access to the indicator values, were provided to help the team better collect, analyze data and share the information. Also, the team was introduced to statistical tests, sample size determination and performing relational dataset analysis using excel modelling queries.

Annual work planning

The project held its annual review and work planning meeting in Sunyani in June 2017 and was attended by all project staff. Lessons learned, achievements, and shortfalls from FY16 were presented, and this provided the context in which the strategies and activities geared towards scaling up and sustaining the project's successes and impacts were designed.

Regional Data Verification

During the quarter, the project conducted regional data verification exercises to authenticate data on activities undertaken in the field. Challenges were highlighted, discussed and addressed with all staff involved in the data collection, cleaning, entries, analysis, reporting and filing processes.

Learning studies

Procurements are under way to implement the following learning studies:

- The extent to which OBs can engage end markets without support from the project
- Which is more profitable; ploughing or ripping
- Why more women farmers are trained yet technology application is lower for women
- Effect of Faab and Numeracy training on yield and income of smallholder farmers
- Economic impact of field agents on outgrower business schemes
- Asset utilization and maintenance among grant beneficiaries
- Distribution of profits in outgrower schemes among the various value chain actors

These studies will be completed by the end of 2017.

4.2. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) AND MAPPING

During the quarter, using NASA's Fire Information for Resource Management System, ADVANCE produced maps of areas where there was incidence of bush fires. Using GIS and remote sensing, it was established that, out of the 10 districts where campaigns were held, three had no bush fire incidence within the period while they were significantly reduced in all the other districts.

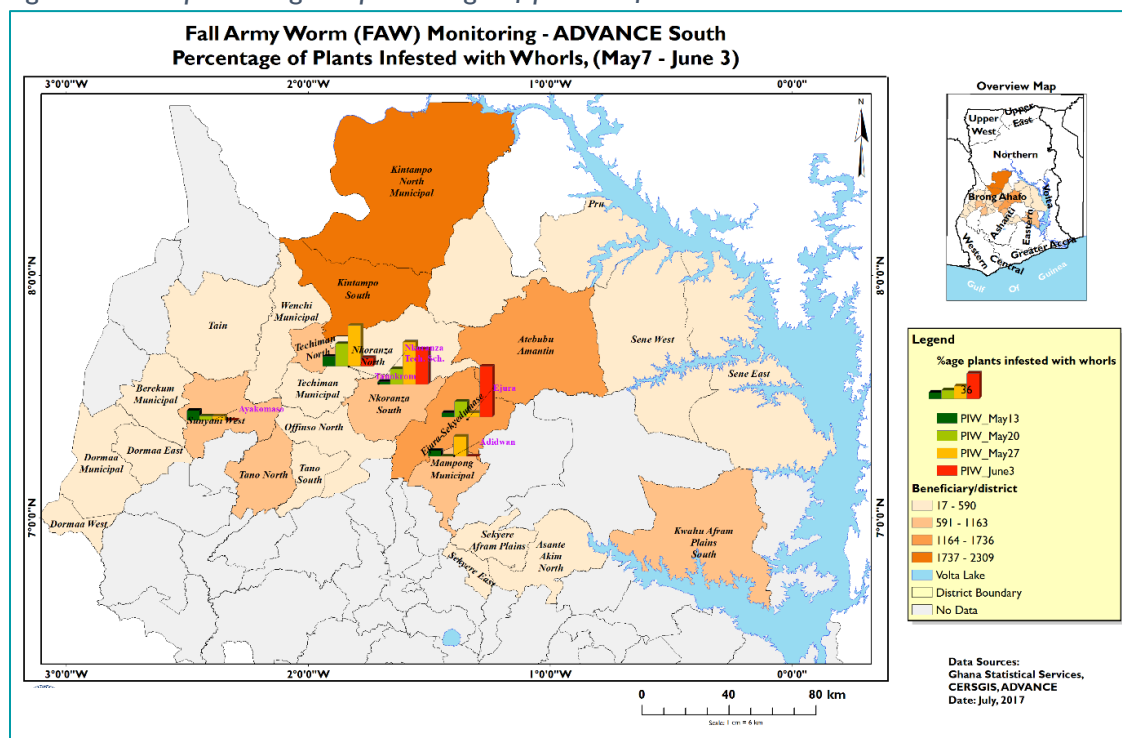
Also, ADVANCE trained nine enumerators on GPS (Global Positioning System) principles and GPS usage for the gross margin data collection. The enumerators are collecting data for the gross margin exercise as well as other data needs of the project.

Furthermore, the project is mapping weekly data on Fall Army Worm prevalence and variables.

Other maps were produced as well including

4. Commodity Maps for the three value chains – Maize, Rice and Soy - (3maps)
5. Demonstration location and Demonstration type maps - (8maps)
6. Community Agent location map for Northern Region – (1map)

Figure 6: A map showing the percentage of plants infested with whorls and FAW



5. Public Relations and Communications

The project continues to ensure its visibility and that of USAID by ensuring that the project’s activities, progress, impact and successes were shared using various media.

Bi-weekly Bullets

During the quarter, six informational bi-weekly bullets were submitted to USAID. The bullets outlined ADVANCE’s key activities, results and impact. They highlighted major field activities including how ADVANCE was facilitating effective business services, rolling out interventions to combat the fall armyworm invasion, promoting climate smart agriculture, expanding access to market and building the capacity of farmer based organizations on advocacy and agriculture policies. The bullets also covered monitoring activities on the project’s model farms and a joint visit with Regional Directors of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) to model farm sites.

Quarterly Newsletter

The June 2017 edition of the ADVANCE Newsletter, the project’s quarterly newsletter which illustrates ADVANCE’s continued support and impact, was published and distributed to over 1,000 stakeholders including partners, clients and actors involved in the project, in both electronic and printed forms.

Media Coverage for Events

On April 20, 2017, the Daily Graphic published a story on how well farmers in Wa West District in the Upper West Region received assistance from one of ADVANCE’s outgrower business and a one-time Best Farmer in Wa West District in 2006, Alhaji Seidu Alhassan. Also, ADVANCE’s fall armyworm training for key agribusiness actors on April 26-27, 2017, in Tamale, received media coverage. Other press publications included

B&FT's news item on April 28, 2017, on how 140,000 farmers have benefited from USAID interventions, including ADVANCE.

<http://thebftonline.com/business/agribusiness/24404/usaids-advance-trains-key-agric-actors-to-arrest-fall-army-worm-invasion.html>



USAID ADVANCE trains key agric actors to arrest fall armyworm invasion (B&FT May 11, 2017).pdf



Armyworm invasion must be tackled before it brings hunger (B&FT May 11, 2017).pdf



Farmers receive assistance in WA (Daily Graphic Publication _April 21, 2017).pdf



140,000 farmers benefit from USAID interventions (B&FT April 28, 2017).pdf

Other promotional materials

As part of efforts to mitigate the fall armyworm invasion in the country, ADVANCE produced and distributed over 37,000 fall armyworm posters in both pictures and text for farmers and agriculture extension agents as well as other value chain actors.

Also, the project developed a success story journal, a compilation of major project success stories, which was added to the pool of existing promotional materials given to the USAID Mission Director during his visit to the model farm at Ahyiem. The posters and success story journal are attached below:



Fall Armyworm Poster_Community (with new picture_revised).pdf



FAW Poster_For AEs and OBs.pdf



Success stories Journal FINAL (new).pdf

ANNEX I: INDICATOR TABLE

Indicator Source	Indicator Type	Indicator/Disaggregation	FY17 Target	FY17 Q3 Actuals	% FY17 Achievement	Comments
CI	OP1	Number of direct project beneficiaries	80,000	28,670	91.2%	The progress made so far shows that the target for the year will be achieved
		Male	44,000	15,150		
		Female	36,000	13,520		
FTF	OP2	Number of private enterprises (for profit), producers organizations, water users associations, women's groups, trade and business associations, and community-based organizations (CBOs) receiving USG assistance	450	686	189.56%	The progress made so far was due to more FBOs, OBs, Aggregators and Input dealers receiving training on PHH, GAPs training, quality standards, etc
FTF	OP3	Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security trainings	60,000	29,007	105.2%	More individuals are receiving training through on farm demonstration trainings as the crop has commenced in the North.
		Male	33,000	15,171		
		Female	27,000	13,836		
FTF	OP4	Value of agricultural and rural loans	\$1,000,000	\$58,249.20	5.82%	Loans applied for will be disbursed by FIs as the season progresses
		Male				
		Female				
FTF	OP5	Value of new private sector investment in agricultural sector or value chain (USD)	\$800,000	\$79,010.23	13.46%	More investment will occur when the season starts later this year
FTF	OP6	Number of MSME including farmers receiving USG assistance to access loans	10,000	937	11%	The progress made so far was due to farmers assessing loans through VSLA groups. Further progress will be made as the crop season progresses
FTF	OC1	Gross margins per hectare for selected crops US Dollar under marketing arrangements fostered by the activity (USD/ha)				Results reported are provisional as actual results will be reported in Q4
		Maize				
		Male	499	\$850.10		
		Female	522	\$839.72		
		Rice				
		Male	908	\$866.63		
		Female	875	\$760.10		
		Soy				
Male	537	\$788.96				

Indicator Source	Indicator Type	Indicator/Disaggregation	FY17 Target	FY17 Q3 Actuals	% FY17 Achievement	Comments
		Female	490	\$483.27		
FTF	OC2	Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	70200	72,659.18	103.50%	Results reported here are provisional as actual results will be reported in Q4 to include OBs and other VC actors (excluding SHFs) applying technologies and management practices
FTF	OC3	Number of farmers and others who have applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	70,200	85,363	121.60%	Results reported here are provisional as actual results will be reported in Q4 to include OBs and other VC actors (excluding SHFs) applying technologies and management practices
		Male	38,610	46,548		
		Female	31,590	39,091		
FTF	OC4	Number of private enterprises (for profit), producers organizations, water users associations, women's groups, trade and business associations, and community-based organizations (CBOs) that applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	338	N/A		Profitability Survey will take place in Q4 and data will be reported in Q4
FTF	OC5	Value of incremental sales (collected at farm-level) attributed to FTF implementation	\$ 36,000,000	N/A		Due to the agricultural calendar, data will be provided in Q4
		Maize	\$14,310,000			
		Rice	\$15,710,000			
		Soy	\$5,980,000			
FTF	OC6	Number of firms (excluding farms) or Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) engaged in agricultural and food security-related manufacturing and services now operating more profitably (at or above cost) because of USG assistance	75	N/A		Profitability Survey will take place in Q4 and data will be reported in Q4
CI	OC8	Number of organizations/enterprises identified as high potential for future awards	5	N/A		Activities will start in the next quarter
CI	OP8	Number of organizations/enterprises receiving capacity building support against key milestones	40	10	25%	Activities will continue in the next quarter
F	OP9	Number of awards made directly to local organizations by USAID	4	1	25%	One award made to Northcode

Indicator Source	Indicator Type	Indicator/Disaggregation	FY17 Target	FY17 Q3 Actuals	% FY17 Achievement	Comments
FTF	OP10	Number of Households benefiting directly from the Project	56,000	27,014	133.37%	The progress made far was due to a lot of rural vulnerable households receiving trainings on PHH and AG-tips from Esoko
FTF	OP12	Number of members of producer organizations and community based organizations receiving USG assistance	6,750	1085	104.38%	More members from FBOs received trainings on FaaB and Numeracy
FTF	OP13	Number of MSMEs including farmers, receiving Business Development Services as result of USG assistance	32,000	20,984	198.68%	The progress made so far is more VC actors receiving capacity building in FaaB, Numeracy, Produce Quality
CI	OC9	Value chain actors accessing finance	225	47	32%	Actors will access loans as the season continues

ANNEX 2: SUCCESS STORIES

Community Input Promotion Contributes to Increased Patronage of Input and Sales Revenue

Tang Gomda Enterprise Increased Sales and Revenue through Community Input Promotions in Karaga District of the Northern Region



Fuseini Ziblim, an input dealer, poses in his shop containing inputs such as seed, herbicides and knapsack sprayers

Community inputs promotions are events organized by USAID ADVANCE to increase farmers' access to inputs through bringing input dealers in the communities when the farmers' Village Savings and Loans Associations are sharing out their savings.

The project worked with input dealership Tang Gomda Enterprise, operated by Fuseini Ziblim to implement the community inputs promotions in Karaga Town, Karaga District in 2017.

Until Fuseini Ziblim met USAID ADVANCE and was engaged on the community input promotion activities, he operated his inputs shop actively in Karaga market days where he competed with other input dealers. Tang Gomda Enterprise was introduced by the project to farmers in nine remote communities where the VSLA share out took place. Close to 400 smallholder farmers, mostly women, used part of their share value to purchase inputs comprising seed, herbicides and knapsack sprayers worth over GHS 20,000 during the period of the promotions. After the input promotion, his daily sales, which was an average of GHC 1,500 in 2016, has increased to an average of GHC 3,200 in 2017 and the shop is always busy. He now covers more than 10 extra communities

The community input promotion facilitated by ADVANCE is very good. Within two days I made GHS 5,000 of profit from the promotion and since then, the community agents made a follow up to my shop to buy more inputs. My sales have increased with the number of people visiting my shop I am very happy and wish to thank ADVANCE for identifying me.

Fuseini Ziblim, an input dealer

in the districts serving over 1,000 farmers under the USAID ADVANCE project with inputs including fertilizer, seeds, agrochemical and especially insecticides to control fall armyworm.

Fuseini Ziblim excitingly narrates ***"The community input promotion facilitated by ADVANCE is very good. Within two days I made GHS 5,000 of profit from the promotion and since then, the community agents made a follow up to my shop to buy more inputs. My sales have increased with the number of people visiting my shop I am very happy and wish to thank ADVANCE for identifying me"***.

In the bid to further improve on his relationship with farmers and improve on sales, Tang Ngomda has gone ahead to support the establishment of 24 demonstrations on maize and donated 0.1 metric tons of NPK, K-Optimal and weedicides valued at GHS 1,500 to train smallholder farmers in Karaga District.

Project wide, during Q3FY17 only, ADVANCE facilitated 160 community inputs promotions with reported sales of GHS 320,616 (\$74,902) by 130 inputs agents.

Expanding Farmers' Market Access to High End Food Processors

USAID ADVANCE nucleus farmers visit Nestlé Ghana to strengthen business relationship and learn about food safety and product quality



ADVANCE Team and Nucleus farmers in their Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) after a tour to the production plants at Nestle factory

The linkage with Nestle and the trip has opened business an opportunity which without USAID ADVANCE would not have been possible for me. I am looking forward to expanding my supply to include rice and millet beyond the maize supply to Nestle in future. Knowing from the factory visit that aflatoxin is a serious hindrance to Nestle purchase of maize locally, I am making myself an ambassador to promote the adoption of practices that will eliminate the poison from my grains and that of my smallholder farmers.

The Managing Director of Kharma Farms, Alhaji Muhib Hussein

USAID ADVANCE is committed to developing mutually beneficial business relationships between commodity buyers and farmers as suppliers in the maize, rice and soy value chains, and create opportunities for the latter to sell to high end industrial markets profitably. In this regard, USAID ADVANCE executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Nestle Ghana Limited, in December 2016, to collaborate and build the capacity of selected USAID ADVANCE maize farmers in the Northern Region to meet the quality and supply requirements of Nestle.

Further to this MoU, Nestle contracted two of three selected nucleus farmers to supply 80 metric tons of maize at GHS 1,400 per ton. To obtain firsthand understanding of Nestlé's production

processes, food safety and grain quality requirements, project's staff and the farmers visited the Nestle Factory at Tema on Friday, June 30, 2017. The three hour visit to the factory included presentations by Nestle on their history, organizational structure and operations, discussions in sourcing grains and other raw materials locally, and a tour of the production floor and measures taken by Nestle to avoid food contamination.

In a presentation by Nestlé's Public Affairs and Corporate Communications Manager, Ama Amoah stressed Nestlé's interest in improving quality and food safety in the maize supply chain and increasing farmers' access to high end industrial markets. She remarked, "Our number one priority is safety". To this end, she revealed Nestlé's excitement about their collaboration with USAID ADVANCE as this would enable farmers increase their yields and also produce to meet Nestlé's quality standards. She cited aflatoxin as the main reason they usually reject maize grains from farmers. Ama was however positive that through USAID ADVANCE, farmers will adopt agronomic and post-harvest practices to reduce aflatoxin contamination. "Our expectation is that farmers, through USAID ADVANCE's trainings and trade missions, will get the right produce. We buy quality grains. And if it is possible, we will source all raw materials locally", she enthusiastically affirmed. "Let's continue to take USAID ADVANCE trainings seriously so that we can have more aflatoxin free produce from you", she urged the farmers. The Public Affairs Manager also revealed that Nestle was in the process of acquiring Rapid Testing Machines for aflatoxins in Ghana. As part of Creating Shared Value (CSV), the Public Affairs manager elaborated on how Nestle views the well-being of farmers, rural communities and suppliers as vital to their long-term success. She expressed Nestlé's gratitude to USAID ADVANCE for the collaboration. The team toured the cereal, beverage and packaging plants.



Nestlé's Corporate Communications and Public Affairs manager, Ama Amoah, (standing left) making a presentation on Nestlé's organizational structure and operations to the visiting team

The farmers were grateful to USAID ADVANCE for facilitating the visit and expressed optimism that they will adopt the best practices to sustain the relationship. The Managing Director of Kharma Farms, Alhaji Muhib Hussein, asserted: "The linkage with Nestle and the trip has opened business an opportunity which without USAID ADVANCE would not have been possible for me. I am looking forward to expanding my supply to include rice and millet beyond the maize supply to Nestle in future. Knowing from the factory visit that aflatoxin is a serious hindrance to Nestle purchase of maize locally, I am making myself an ambassador to promote the adoption of practices that will eliminate the poison from my grains and that of my smallholder farmers". He urged USAID ADVANCE to continue to build their capacity to enable them consolidate the business relationship with Nestle.

The nucleus farmers who participated in this visit included the Managing Director of Kharma Farms, Alhaji Muhib Hussein; the Operations Manager Kharma Farms, Amin Muhib Kharma; Operations Manager of Kukobila Nasia Farms, Hisham Seidu; Managing Director of Gundaa Produce Co., Alhaji Zakaria Alhassan; and Operations Manager, Gundaa Produce Co., Musah Alhassan. The USAID ADVANCE team included the Trade and Marketing Team Leader, Northern Region Coordinator, Public Relations and Communications Specialist, and Trade and Marketing Officers. Nestle was represented by their Corporate Communications and Public Affairs Manager, Agriculture Services Manager for Central and West Africa, and Tema Factory Performance Manager.



Facilitating Economic Development through Climate Smart Agriculture Practices

USAID ADVANCE Spraying Services Provision Has Contributed to Improved Livelihoods of Youth in Northern Ghana



A spray service provider in his Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) spraying a farm land

I was able to generate GHC 2,544 from the 318 acres I sprayed last season. Through this, I was able to buy nine bags of fertilizers to apply on my four acre maize farm. This enabled me to increase my yield from 1.3 metric tons for four acres of maize to 3.9 metric tons. I give credit to USAID ADVANCE for exposing me to a business opportunity within my own neighbourhood and providing me with enough food to feed my family

Dauda Yakubu is a spray service beneficiary in the Northern Region

The health and safety of farmers especially the vulnerable in farming communities has been one of the prime concerns of USAID ADVANCE. The vulnerable, who are mostly women and children, use crop protection and weed management products to reduce the cost of labor and drudgery involved in current production practices. In northern Ghana, most smallholder farmers now use pesticides without protecting themselves from the hazardous effect of these pesticides. Notwithstanding the economic benefits of using these products, they turn to pose environmental and health risk to users and other natural resources. The effect of the pesticides on the environment has a potential of reducing biodiversity and aquatic life if not handled well. There have been evidence of food poisoning and many skin diseases attributed to inappropriate use and handling of agricultural pesticides by direct users in the country.

As a response to mitigate the harmful effect of pesticides on users and the environment at large, USAID ADVANCE in collaboration with Plant Protection Regulatory Services Departments (PPRSD) of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA), set up and trained 151 young spraying services providers across Northern, Upper East and Upper West Regions of Ghana. These spray services providers were taken through the uses of various products, assembling and servicing of the knapsack. Training also included the importance of the use of personal protection equipment, customer care, and basic

records keeping. This was to equip them with the knowledge and requisite skills to provide professional spraying services with a high level of professionalism and expediency.

In 2016, trained spraying service providers offered services for **2,953** smallholder farmers with a total service value of **GHC 64,675**. A total land area of **7,907.5** acres was covered during the same period. Additionally, **7,630 liters** of various assorted products ranging from pesticides and crop protection were used by these spray service providers trained by the project.

The service provision has provided seasonal jobs for the spray service providers who provided these services at a fee. It provided additional income which enabled service providers to increase their productivity through investment into production inputs. Women and children who previously applied these pesticides on their own, now depend on the spray service providers for their spraying needs and thus, reducing drastically their contact with these products. This would largely reduce the effect of the pesticides on their farms, families and the environment at large. The additional income obtained were also used in social activities such as funerals, payments of school fees among others.

Dauda Yakubu is a beneficiary from the Northern Region and he remarked: *“I was able to generate GHC 2,544 from the 318 acres I sprayed last season. Through this, I was able to buy nine bags of fertilizers to apply on my four acre maize farm. This enabled me to increase my yield from 1.3 metric tons for four acres of maize to 3.9 metric tons. I give credit to USAID ADVANCE for exposing me to a business opportunity within my own neighborhood and providing me with enough food to feed my family”.*

Moving forward to make the spraying services more accessible and available to smallholder farmers, USAID ADVANCE is expanding its spraying services portfolio by training additional 536 sprayers across the three northern regions of Ghana in 2017. Sustainability which has always been the hallmark of the USAID ADVANCE program is not left out in this regard. The project has taken steps to develop dedicated supply chains for these spray service providers by linking them to private sector input firms, telecommunication networks, banks and outgrower businesses to establish business relationships that will inure to the benefit of parties involved in this kind of collaboration.

Strengthening Marketing Linkages for Increased Commodity Sales

USAID ADVANCE's facilitated market linkages has led to the expansion of commodity sales by outgrower businesses in the Northern Region of Ghana



Imoro Tijani by the side of his stored grain in Gushegu

As a result of these linkages, the OBs and FBOs have supplied and sold a total of 3,159.74 MT of maize, paddy rice and soybeans valued at GHS 3,329,314.40 within six months in 2017 commodity sales period compared to GHS 1,100,000.00 in 2016 during the same period.

One of the main objectives of the USAID ADVANCE project is to increase market access and trade for maize, rice and soybean farmers in the project's zones of operation. The project's approach to achieving this objective is through a multi-facilitated market linkage approach including trade missions involving buyer and seller business exchange visit, pre-harvest events market or trade fairs and events, transport linkages and capacity development of the value chain actors to participate actively in the value chain.

In pursuit of this objective, since January 2017, USAID ADVANCE had assisted 36 outgrower businesses (OBs) and 12 farmer based organizations (FBOs) who are linked to more than 10,080 smallholders in the Northern Region of Ghana to expand trade and market opportunities with formal end market buyers as well as strengthening existing trade relationships. Majority of these end market buyers are in the southern part of Ghana especially Ashanti and Brong Ahafo Regions who need soy, maize and paddy rice for processing. The end market buyers included Vester Oil Mills Limited, Royal Danemac limited (soymeal processors based in

Kumasi), GhanaNuts, Yedent Agro Industries and EGABs Ghana Limited (soymeal and food processors based in Sunyani), Agricare Company, Premium Foods Limited and Agrisolve company (maize buyers and food processors based in Kumasi and Tema). AVNASH Industries Ghana Limited, Nyebu Biyoona, Tiyumba women rice processing centres based in Northern region and Wurawura Rice Company in Volta Region were the major rice buyer.

As a result of these linkages, the OBs and FBOs have supplied and sold a total of 3,159.74 MT of maize, paddy rice and soybeans valued at GHS 3,329,314.40 within six months in 2017 commodity sales period compared to GHS 1,100,000.00 in 2016 during the same period.

Imoro Tijani, for example, is one of the outgrower businesses who has benefited from similar project's intervention on market access. Imoro Tijani joined the project in 2015 with 64 outgrowers but now expanded his reach to 250 outgrowers in the Gushegu District of the Northern Region cultivating soya and rice. He was linked to Royal Danemac, one of the major soya processors in Kumasi, in 2015. Imoro supplied and sold 54 metric tons of soy to Royal Danemac in Kumasi for processing into soya cake and soymeal. Currently, Royal Danemac provides pre-financing arrangements to Imoro Tijani for aggregation with a total supply of 119.20 metric tons of Soya valued at GHS 140,935.

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