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

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

A USAID FEED THE FUTURE INITIATIVE

PY 2016 Annual Implementation Plan



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Acronyms

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

Introduction

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

The 2016 implementation plan was conceptualized, discussed and deliberated by the full complement of all ADVANCE staff, as well as senior managers from the implementing partners, who met for a full week in July 2015.

The planning workshop was attended by the Senior Director for Project Management who has oversight responsibility for ADVANCE at the ACD/VOCA Headquarters, and the Senior Projects Coordinator, also based in the ACDI/VOCA Headquarters and backstops the ADVANCE project. Both headquarters staff have great experience in training and work plan development, using STAIRS, a comprehensive planning module developed by ACD/VOCA.

This implementation plan for FY2016 touches on all aspects of the project's three main components. The plan includes strategies for collaborating with other feed the future implementing partners to ensure synergies and avoid any form of duplication. The plan briefly describes the project approach and how this will be monitored during implementation and a conscious effort to document the processes, outputs and immediate outcomes to ensure effective learning and adaptive management.

The three sub purposes of the project are presented and specific activities identified that will lead to the attainment of the broad objectives. Activities for cross cutting areas (gender, environment and grants) are also presented as well as an elaborate monitoring, evaluation and learning plan.

The plan has been designed based on previous experience and will be followed as much as possible, however, there may be a need to modify some of the strategies as new learning occurs. Any such modifications will not affect the targets but rather enhance their attainment in the most efficient manner.

A. Project Management

A.1 Implementing Partners

ADVANCE is managed by ACDI/VOCA as the prime contractor and has a well-balanced and experienced project team, most of who were carried over from the first ADVANCE project, as well as the implementing partners: ACDEP, PAB Consult and TechnoServe. This team has great experience in northern Ghana and has the technical capabilities to manage this complex project. Together, the implementing partners have a combined total of 108 staff (see Annex 2) working on the project and posted to various locations in the intervention zone.

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

A.2 Office Operations & Staffing

The project has five office locations. The ACDI/VOCA Country Office in Accra houses the ADVANCE Project office where the COP (Dr Emmanuel Dormon), and the DCOP for Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Quality Assurance (Dr. Nirinjaka Ramasinjatovo) are based. A few key staff also operate from Accra including the Program Director for the promotion of hybrid maize seed (Kweku Koranteng), Senior Accountant (Patrick Addai), Office Manager (Eunice M Atubga), Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator (William Ayinga), Project Database Manager (Robert Sackey), Technical Leader for Trade and Marketing (Nicholas Issaka Gbana), Program Specialist for Policy and Advocacy (Roland Akabzaa), and the Program Specialist for Public Relations/Communications (Adowa Mensima Sey).

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

Regional technical teams are led by Regional Coordinators (RC) who are experienced staff returning from the ADVANCE I project. The regional technical team based in Wa (Upper West Region) is led by Emmanuel Gyarteng, the Bolgatanga team (Upper East Region) is headed by Paa Kwesi Awuku-Darko, and the RC for the Northern Region team in Tamale is Francis Essuman. The Kumasi office, established to focus attention on the market catchment areas for the target staple crops, also serves as the coordination point for the maize hybrid program in the

maize belt of Brong Ahfo, Ashanti and Eastern Regions. It is the smallest of the five offices, with four technical staff, and an Administrator/Accounts Officer. There are four Senior Agricultural Production Officers (SAPOs) who work directly on promoting the adoption of hybrid maize seeds and are based in Sunyani, Konongo, Techiman and Ejura and cover 25 districts in that maize zone below the 8th parallel.

A.3. Development Partner Coordination

ADVANCE will continue to play an active role in the coordination and leveraging of the FTF projects namely; Agricultural Technology Transfer (ATT), Financing Ghanaian Agriculture Project (FinGAP), Resiliency in Northern Ghana (RING), the Agricultural Policy Support Project (APSP), and the World Bank/USAID Ghana Commercial Agriculture Project (GCAP) as well as the SPRING Project. Periodic COP meetings (CCC) have been taking place on a regular basis to discuss coordination, work plans, grants, among others, and will continue to do so in the coming year to avoid duplication. Other technical sub-groups from the projects will also continue to meet regularly, including the teams from PR&C, M&E, and Grants. METSS has led the coordination of the all the FTF projects' effort on knowledge management and learning (KM&L) and we will continue to support that effort.

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

The project will link its activities with other key development players through collaboration with the large value chain projects in the North including but not limited to the MOFA/IFAD/ADB's Northern Rural Growth Program (NRGP), AGRA/IFDC's Farmer to Markets, John Deere/TechnoServe Smallholder Production Development project, MEDA's soybean program in the western corridor in Upper West Region, and the Rice Sector Support Project (RSSP). This will entail periodic collaborative review meetings and joint workshops with key value chain stakeholders in the three target crops.

B. Implementation Strategy

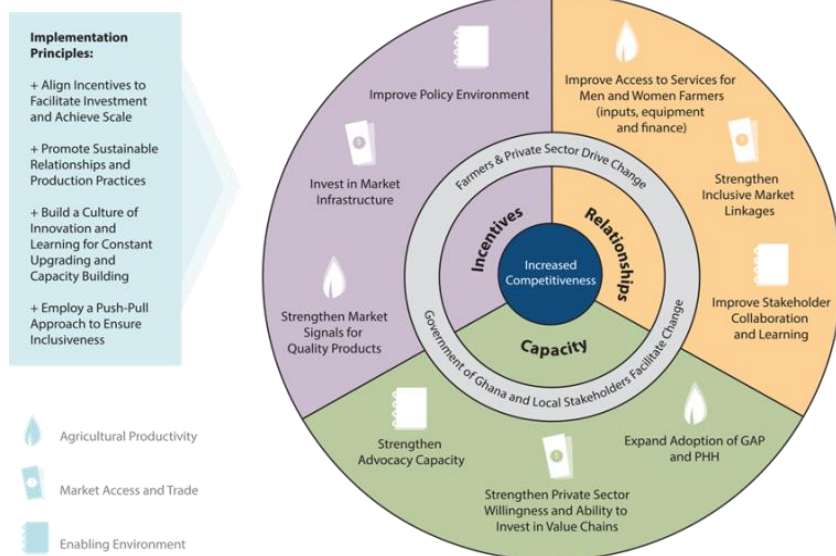
B.1 Background

Northern Ghana has interrelated economic, health, and environmental challenges that contribute to poverty and food insecurity for many of the 4.3 million people (17% of total Ghana population) living there. Low levels of literacy, poor nutrition, inconsistent weather patterns, geographic isolation from market centers, periodic insecurity, inaccessibility of inputs, and inadequate knowledge of modern farming techniques and practices have hindered productivity. Women smallholder farmers are even more disadvantaged due to limited access to and control over land and other production resources, lower education levels, less access to training, and an unfavorable cultural context that impacts negatively on women.

Ghana's steadily increasing inflation, currently at 17.9 (as at July (July 2015) percent¹, and the constant devaluation of Ghanaian currency, has eroded purchasing power, furthering a necessity for import-substitution policies, while creating more competitive regional export opportunities. Currently, Ghana imports nearly 50 percent of the rice, most of the processed soy products and 15 percent of the maize it consumes. With urban populations and incomes on the rise, demand for such staple foods is increasing. Such social and economic conditions, while challenging, present clear opportunities for the North, whose economy relies heavily on production of key staple food crops. Government and development partners, as well as the private sector, are investing heavily in commercial agriculture initiatives banking on Ghana's agricultural potential.

The ADVANCE theory of change posits that there are three functions of value chain competitiveness—agricultural productivity, market access and trade, and an enabling environment—which are catalyzed by three enablers of competitiveness - clear incentives for investment,

strong local capacity, and mutually beneficial relationships. Underpinning the theory is that private sector actors, including men and women farmers, are the drivers of competitiveness, while the GOG and local stakeholders are facilitators. The ADVANCE strategy to transform the agricultural sector is in line with USAID FTF objectives. The project seeks to invest in



¹ Ghana Statistical Service 2015

empowering the private sector actors through capacity building and innovation promotion. The proposed activities within the project's framework adhere to four main implementation principles and contribute to both the functions and enablers of VC competitiveness.

The 2016 implementation plan is designed to create commercial opportunities for targeted farmers that result in access to markets, long-term relationships with businesses investing in the value chain, improved access to market information, improved access to services and products including financing, high-quality inputs, new technologies, and mechanization services, and improved ability to meet market requirements. The end result is increased productivity and profitability for both large and smallholder farmers, as well as the other value chain actors.

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

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

C. ADVANCE Implementation Plan – PY 2016

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

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

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

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

The ADVANCE technical team will carry out several activities in 2016 that will enhance crop productivity and improve gross margins while scaling up the promotion of climate smart agricultural technologies introduced in the 2015 crop season to mitigate the effects of climate change, particularly the late and erratic rainfall in northern Ghana and allow for earlier land preparation. All activities have been planned to ensure appropriate linkage with the other FTF programs or other donor programs with similar activities in the same geographic areas.

Field Management Program

The nucleus farmer Field Management Program (FMP) was started in 2014 and, based on initial success, will be expanded further in 2016 to include at least 50 new Outgrower Businesses (OBs). The field management program will be integrated into the business plans developed with and for OBs and is part of the Outgrower Business Management (OBM) strategy. Outgrower Businesses will be encouraged to invest in a field manager to be trained with project assistance while mobility costs may be subsidized initially, through the ADVANCE grant program. Services will include plowing, outgrower input distribution, GAP/PHH training, post-harvest mechanization, demo site management, product collection and aggregation, lead farmer development, and marketing. Some specific steps to be followed include:

- Identifying interested OBs and discuss the FMP with them
- Incorporate the field management program into the OBs business plans
- Use part of the grant funds to support the startup of the field management services and to offset some of the startup costs. This will be limited to motorcycle or “motor-king” to aid in necessary mobility required for the job.

Farmer Mentor Program

This Ghanaian “farmer-to-farmer” program introduces new or inexperienced farmers to more established OB operations. Introduced in 2015, the program has proved to be a persuasive “seeing is believing” methodology for new associate nucleus farmers and for those more wary of risk factors in expansion. Specific steps will include:

- Inviting well-established OBs to mentor new actors and explain the program’s benefits and risks and how to manage them effectively.
- Organize field visits for prospective OBs to more established OBs operations for first-hand experience in what a multi-service operation can look like.

Improved input access at community level through Spraying Service Providers (SSP)

The objective of this activity is to facilitate wider distribution of certified seeds, chemicals and fertilizer through improved linkages between dealers and community agents and out-grower business, FBOs and OGs. Specific steps will include:

- Identify targeted communities which are potential good markets where there is no input retailer or agent who retails agriculture inputs
- Facilitate community input agents setup, through linkages with distributors and local retailers. The business made by these community agents will be on a cash basis.
- Spraying Service Providers (SSP) will be trained and equipment acquired through matching grant funds. The training will be done in collaboration with the EPA.

Facilitate OB Networking

Outgrower Businesses will be grouped based on their operational zones, and these will be narrowed to 14 zones. To kick start formalization of the OB networks, 14 OB forums will be organized to introduce the concept of the Outgrower Business Network. The first network meeting will be facilitated by the project staff and turned over to the OBs in subsequent meetings. The network of OBs, among other things, will serve as a mouth piece for OBs to engage government officials when issues that affect their operations, like fertilizer subsidy, seed importation and distribution etc, arise.

Farm Business Planning

The business services team, together with the APOs, will work with all veteran and new actors to develop or update their annual OB business plans. These plans are critical documents that guide both the actors and technical facilitation in scheduling activities and determine what resources will be required to implement them. The plans will follow a fiscal year format that will cover all of the planting and production season and most of the post-harvest and marketing season. The main objective of the plan is to encourage investment in OG services that include, but are not limited to tractor services, input provision of seed, fertilizer and chemicals, post-harvest mechanization for shelling and threshing, and aggregation marketing services. Specific steps to follow include:

- Administer a business diagnostics tool to new OBs prior to the planning process to identify significant strengths and weaknesses of their operation
- The business plan will determine what, if any, financial assistance is required through commercial credit or grants. The team will work closely with FinGAP on commercial credit access.
- Follow up on the plan – making adjustments where necessary.
- Longer-term four-year strategic plans will be developed for OBs that have been identified as well-established OB leaders

Outgrower Business Management

The Outgrower Business Management (OBM) capacity-building program was started in the previous season with good acceptance by the OBs. The OBM program builds on ADVANCE

training resources and lessons learned to develop a certified training program for OBs. Program participants will be required to complete a core business curriculum that will include a mix of classroom time, study tour visits and practical application exercises. Annual farm business plans updates and budgets will be produced through this program. This will be done through the following steps:

- The business team will revise the OBM curriculum based on the trainings given in 2015.
- Training will take place throughout the year by regions, making the topics relevant to the season. The project's BSOs will continue to provide the training.
- Training should enable the OB or his/her manager to effectively manage an expanded business service operation that profitably assists OGs in their farming operations including but not limited to:
 - Tractor services,
 - Input provision of seed, fertilizer, and chemicals,
 - Post-harvest mechanization for shelling and threshing, and
 - Aggregation marketing services.

Topics for workshops can be identified and implemented on a demand basis and will include:

- Contracts and arbitration
- Business accounting using simple spreadsheets
- Computer and internet use
- Tractor operation and maintenance

OB Office Program.

Outgrower Businesses will be encouraged to create an "office" at their business locations where they and/or their managers can conduct business, maintain records and safely keep computer equipment for accounting and record keeping.

- In line with business training, business planning and management recruitment (where desired), the project will continue to promote the office concept, which was popular with OBs in 2014 and 2015. Farmer exchange visits will be used to spread this concept.
- Interns from University for Development Studies (UDS) will be assigned to OBs to assist the OB manager with new office systems and procedures.
- The grant program can be accessed to offset part of the cost of office investment - limited to provision of laptop computers, QuickBooks, and internet access for MIS

Financial Services.

The business service team will encourage alternative sources of finance and also continue to provide the linkage between actors and appropriate financial institutions. Specifically, the team will:

- Promote Rural Savings and Loans with emphasis on women groups and FBOs
- Encourage smallholder farmers to use share-outs from VSLAs to purchase inputs and small equipment. We will collaborate with Sung Foundation, an NGO based in the Northern Region to implement this activity
- Promote finance through tripartite arrangements i.e. FI, Buyer and OB to facilitate credit recovery

- Identify needs of the FIs and collaborate with FinGAP to address these needs where possible
- Link actors to FIs based on investment gaps in business plans;

Input Dealer Business Development Program.

This activity addresses the need to improve farmer access to inputs through improvement of input dealer services, better management practices and expansion of business operations. The program started in 2015 and was developed in collaboration with ATT. This season the project will expand the program to more input dealers through the following:

- Survey of input access points in all regions (existing survey review)
- Assess the capacities of existing Input Dealers (which didn't receive the training in the previous season) using a Business Diagnostic Tool
- Use the material and agenda designed for implementation of input dealer workshops
- Assist through STTA, and grants for dealer expansion; the grants will be limited to ICT-related technology
- Assist dealers in expanding community agent concept and develop business plans for the ones with more potential to expand.
- Work collaboratively with Dizzengof and input dealers on hybrid seed distribution opportunities. Link them to financial services if required.
- ICT outreach options explored and facilitated (messaging services, MIS, internet) to better enable the community agent model

Pre-Season Agri-Business Forum.

This event is co-managed by ADVANCE, ATT, and Ghana Input Dealers Association and is focused on pre-season priorities including inputs, equipment, technology, finance, messaging services and crop income potential.²

- All OBs from the 3 Regions of the North and viable FBOs will be invited
- Private sector are key participants³ for inputs, finance, equipment and other services and will play a prominent role
- The forum will provide opportunities for service providers to deliver key messages on crop production issues and profit potential
- Pioneer-Dupont through Dizzengof will host a booth and provide pre-season intelligence

Land for Women Program

Designed to encourage farmers and local leaders to make land available for women farmers. This program yielded some success in 2015. Key to the program is both land availability and productive farm-land near their homestead.

This will continue in the coming season through:

- Continued messages to OBs and community leaders to consider appropriate farm sites. This will be achieved through community awareness campaigns, sharing success stories from other communities/districts.

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

Smallholder Investment.

ADVANCE will align incentives through increased access to market information, appropriate risk management strategies, and higher value market segments that encourage smallholders to invest in production. The project will also promote sustainable relationships for smallholders with OBs and service providers by scaling up the nucleus farmer-outgrower and community input agent models. Special attention will be drawn to women’s access to land close to homesteads and financial literacy. Specifically;

- Smallholders will be encouraged to link up with FBOs and OBs to gain economies of scale, access inputs and better market commodity off-take.
- Competitive market opportunities will be identified for OBs and FBOs through contractual linkages with lead firms and aggregators to increase smallholder market options
- GAIP (crop insurance) and Ignitia (weather forecasting) will be supported to expand their customer base and payment models, and tailor products to ADVANCE target groups in order to mitigate production risk.

Agriculture Lending and Product Development

ADVANCE will collaborate with FINGAP on diagnosing existing agriculture finance products in the market and train interested FIs to develop adequate ones that are feasible for them and for farmers. This will improve the capacity of FIs to augment their agriculture portfolio, impacting on an increase in the investment and services provided by OBs to their OGs. The steps to follow will include to:

- Identify interested financial institutions with presence in the regions of the North
- Diagnose their existing agriculture financial products
- Conduct a training based on the deficiencies found and the increase in agricultural portfolio they want to achieve
- Coach FIs to develop/modify agricultural finance products to suit the changing environment

Actor supported technology demonstration sites

New sites will be selected for 2016 to increase the spread effect of this effective initiative for training farmers. Popular with both the private sector input companies who donate 100% of the materials for the sites, and the farmers that learn from the sites, the project will seek out new participants for the 400 sites planned for 2016.

- Sites will be selected strategically for easy access by farmers, qualified lead farmer, and productivity factors (productivity maps)
- Sponsors will be identified and acknowledged for all inputs required
- GAP and PHH training will take place at all sites (and selected farms) with private sector firms, nucleus farmers and MOFA AEA where possible.
- 50 sites in north Ghana will be exclusive for Pioneer seed varieties and 200 in the south to cover the major and minor seasons.

- Sites will be monitored and both production and financial data will be recorded and analyzed at the end of the season

Climate Smart Conservation Agriculture.

ADVANCE aims to increase competitiveness of the maize, rice and soy agricultural value chains in northern Ghana to promote economic growth and reduce poverty. In order to reduce the impact of climate change to the beneficiaries of the project and reduce the impact of their activities on the environment, ADVANCE has developed a Climate Smart Strategy to promote techniques which are environmentally friendly, adapt better to the drought-sensitive zones in northern Ghana and seek to improve soil fertility. Aside from using drought tolerant seed varieties, promoting the use of minimal tillage practices, ADVANCE will implement a conservation agriculture (or climate smart agriculture) wherever possible. The activities implemented during the 2015 crop season will be expanded in 2016. The project will undertake the following specific tasks in 2016:

- Establishment of 30 demo plots for the 2016 season
- Field days to teach farmers the concept of climate smart agriculture and conservation agriculture and the benefits including improvement of soil water conservation, controlling soil erosion and boosting nutrient management
- Sensitization on increasing organic matter in soils (the harmfulness of slash and burn approaches will be the main focus of sensitization)
- Upscale the no-burn campaign using radio broadcasting
- Establishment of one research and demonstration center per region on cover crops which will breed seed for use post-harvest 2016

Organize Farm Clinics

New agronomic challenges each season, which cannot be predicted at workplanning may occur during the course of the year. Farm clinics present an opportunity for farmers to consult an expert on immediate agronomic issues and use the affected farm to teach not only ADVANCE's beneficiaries but also its staff. The project will:

- Identify farms with peculiar agronomic challenges
- Identify experts and organize visit to farm (clinics). Use the farm as a teaching platform for OGs and staff
- Sensitize OGs on the relevant intervention

Produce adoptable tools/equipment

The project will support the local fabricators to develop, market and service locally demanded tools and equipment. Support will include:

- Undertaking an inventory and assess the capacity of local fabricators
- Identifying Mechanical Engineers and Technical Welders to train manufacturer's staff where necessary
- Building capacity through practical training funded by the project
- Linking manufacturers to OBs and processors

Incorporation of e-wallet in OBs/OGs operations

As an expansion of this activity which was started in 2015, more OBs will be able to make transactions through mobile-money to pay their OGs and also have the option of becoming merchants or agents which can turn mobile money into cash and vice versa. Activities include:

- Link OBs/OGs to Mobile Money Service providers (20 OBs/5000OGs)
- Register/Setup OB/OGs
- Coach OBs/OGs to incorporate service into operations

Outgrower/Smallholder Farmers Credit Management

In order to reduce the risk of OBs who provide services on credit to OGs, the latter will be sensitized and trained on credit management. Different team members will train in order to reach 20,000 OGs.

- Identify OGs receiving credit services
- Develop an internal credit manual to train own staff on credit basics which will be used as a guidance to train OGs
- Train APOs (ToT), TMOs and CDOs on credit management
- Implement the training with project team and some FIs

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

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

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

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

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

Throughout 2016 ADVANCE will continue to work to build the capacity of trade-related businesses, associations and financial institutions. The expected growth in demand for trade financing as a result of the development of OBs and smallholder service providers will help build the capacity of current financial suppliers lending to the agriculture market. ADVANCE will coordinate closely with FinGAP on finance-related activities.

ADVANCE will increase efforts to establish incentives from identified end-market opportunities for lead firms, FBOs, financial institutions and BDS providers to invest in the VC and build their capacity to respond to opportunities. Similarly, the project will facilitate mutually beneficial relationships to capitalize on incentives through market facilitation that match appropriate buyers and sellers as well as service providers to technical and financing needs. ADVANCE will also accelerate trade facilitation efforts to broker deals and public private partnerships with expanding agribusiness firms demanding a reliable and consistent supply of commodities. The trade with bordering countries will be analyzed and supported, as there are indications that it is happening in an informal way. This is an additional market which beneficiaries should consider. The project will collaborate with the West Africa Trade Hub project to explore the potentials and link interested beneficiaries to identified opportunities.

Market Linkage Development

ADVANCE will continue to play a major role in the development of sustainable market linkages. The project has a trade and marketing officer at each of the three regional offices in the North as well as a senior marketing officer in Kumasi. The focus of the marketing team is to support local market information systems and their providers and develop the market data further to provide buyer-seller linkage options for a more sustainable and accessible system. Specific sub activities will include:

- Demand and supply data update. The Trade and Marketing (T&M) team completed a second lead buyer survey in 2015 which was instrumental in identifying new and interested actors to the program and also lead to a surge in trade missions (see below). Data from this survey will be updated in 2016 again. The Trade and Marketing Officers (TMOs) in the three northern regions prepared for the upcoming 2015/16 harvest and market season by gathering data on potential commodity supply and determining what quantities require markets. This data will be discussed at the Pre-Harvest event, and this activity will be repeated in 2016. Also, the project will work with two upcoming USDA funded projects in the poultry sector to increase contracted gran purchases from integrated poultry producers and poultry feed mills
- Two Way Trade missions- Trade missions were a very effective and popular activity with buyers and producers alike and will be continued in 2016, with the addition of selected OBs visiting Buyers' processing plants to understand their needs in terms of quantity and quality. Interested lead buying firms are invited to visit producers at their cost to secure dedicated commodity supply chains. Non-legally binding pre-contract agreements are prepared to document discussions and verbal agreements – pending legally binding contracts that are negotiated at a later date. These trade missions are a precursor to more formal lead firm investment directly with suppliers to ensue longer-term supply relationships.
- Pre-Harvest Agri-Business Conference and Exhibition. Held every October, since 2011, the pre-harvest event has been the most influential model of bringing commodity buyers and commodity suppliers together under one roof. Hosted by GGC, assisted by the ADVANCE Project, in partnership with FTF partners and other donor projects, the Pre-Harvest Agri-Business Conference and Exhibition kick-starts the marketing season with presentations on commodity supply-demand issues and national economic challenges, and allows for direct buyer-seller interchange during special sessions allocated per commodity and during the time for networking considered in the agenda.
- Buyer Seller Event in the South. A meaningful number of maize buyers have a preference for this commodity produced in southern regions. Considering this, ADVANCE plans to organize a special event for OBs from the south only, to establish new linkages producer-market and strengthen relations between the southern actors. The event will take place at the end of January 2016, considering the upcoming major season below the 8th parallel. It is important to note that these buyers wouldn't participate in the Pre-Harvest event in Tamale as it would be a repetition of the same activity.
- Transport linkages- All OBs will be linked with transporters
- Cross Border Trade Facilitation (with WTH/Borderless Alliance)
- Training of OBs in Sales and Marketing (part of OBM curriculum)

- Training of OGs in Produce Quality Requirements
- Market Information Services. ESOKO will provide web-based and SMS supported MIS services. This company along with other voice and SMS messaging services are encouraged to market directly to actors and not to projects, establishing a more sustainable long-term service.
- Trade finance is not only required at the lead firm/buyer level but also, and perhaps more so, at the OB level. Field aggregation of commodity is difficult and challenging and OB aggregation will be again the focus of the T&M team for 2016, which will work closely with both the BS team and FinGAP.

Lead Firm Competitiveness

The project will continue its strong market linkage program that forms the foundation of the marketing program under ADVANCE, and will continue to work directly with regional and domestic firms on a one-on-one basis to determine how to upgrade operations, move into value-added products, and expand their raw material base. These engagement with firms in the south is yielding good results as some buyers have expanded their capacity, improved their quality and are improving their marketing strategy. Firms in growing and higher-value end-market segments that can drive demand for commodities within the FTF value chains will continue to be targeted. Some specific activities will include;

- Update the 2014 and 2015 assessment of market lead firms and processors which procure commodity for North Ghana (and from the South Regions) in 2016 again
- Support Buyer Outgrower Development as a finance and market option for OGs, through the OBs, which will contribute in the scheme with the land preparation services and other services.
- Finance facilitation for Buyers. Identify finance needs for trade and capital investments developing business plans for the companies in collaboration with FinGAP
- Business Development Services support for buyers

2.3 Trade Association Support

Trade associations such as GGC, Borderless Alliance, GAIDA, Techiman Maize Traders Association, and GRIB to name a few, are important to the grain (and staple) sector. Provision of services to members and the public alike is important for their long-term purpose – and for sustainability. In this regard, the project will engage them by;

- Determining the relationship status with these associations and identify areas of assistance if required. MOUs, STTA, and grants are options for further support.
- Provision of Market Information & Intelligence Services (GGC)
- Promotion of grain standards with Trade Associations (GGC, GRIB, etc.)

2.4 North Ghana Processing Upgrade

It is expected that the newly constructed Avnash Rice Mill (450/mt/day capacity) will be operational by the beginning of 2016. Collaboration discussions have been renewed (as their staff was rotated and there were delays on the startup) on the supply chain development from northern rice farmers. In addition, local milling capacity is limited and requires expansion and

upgrading, the assumption being that not all paddy rice can be marketed to Avnash. This year support to maize and soy processors to upgrade their capacity will be considered as well. Specific activities will be as follows:

- T&M and Ag Production staff will work with Avnash to set up a paddy rice delivery system depending on variety preference and seasonal timing. The preference will be for aromatic rice, but due to inability of many farmers to harvest on time, the plant has the capacity to parboil and that way process rice with very low moisture.
- Based on the update made in 2015 of the assessment of several rice mills in the north, the grant program and linkage to credit will be used to promote localized milling expansion and upgrade for community/township use. Up to four new mills will be considered in this initiative in 2016, depending on cost, market studies, and business plans. Furthermore the initiative will be expanded and an assessment will be done to maize and soybean processors and three would be selected for upgrades, using matching grants and finance to execute them.

2.6 Community-based market systems strengthened

To increase market participation benefits to smallholders, ADVANCE will ensure that outgrower networks and FBOs have the capacity to take advantage of identified market opportunities through collective marketing, PHH and storage. The program will work to increase FBO capacity to market produce collectively through affiliated OBs and aggregators connected to larger institutional buyers, or in some cases directly to processors. This will be achieved through;

- Strengthening implementation of SMFM with the training of leaders from 108 FBOs. SMFM implementation will provide the framework for upgrading from FBOs to FBEs.
- Participate in FBO meetings to support issues brought up and guide them to develop more services for their members
- Continue numeracy and FaaB community training for OGs.

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

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

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

Identifying and addressing specific Enabling Environment Constraints

Following up on the forums completed in several locations in the north in 2015, the project team will identify and address specific Enabling Environment Constraints. This will be done through specific tasks and activities as follows:

- Compile and prioritize enabling environment constraints
- One key organization from each region will be selected to undergo capacity building to develop advocacy skills. These organizations will be awarded grants to implement specific advocacy actions to address enabling environment hurdles.
- Mapping of advocacy effort and actors in the 2 southern regions
- Award grant to 1 organization in the south to implement specific advocacy actions to address specific enabling environment constraints

Build capacity of OBs and FBOs on policy and advocacy

Policy and advocacy capacity building will be integrally linked with the development of OB networks mentioned above. The process will be replicated with FBOs after basic capacity building is completed. Activities will include:

- Holding meetings with OBs and FBOs on formation of networks
- Supporting OBs and FBOs to elect leadership, and develop rules of engagement
- Training OBs and FBO network leadership on the local governance system, policy processes at the local levels and how to influence policy at the local level

Development and Promotion of District agricultural investment plans

The Senior Policy and Advocacy Specialist will continue to oversee a process to encourage greater investment driven by district and national investment plans which was started in 2015. The Ghana Investment Promotion Council (GIPC) drives the development and implementation of the national investment plan; however, it does not focus on the staple crops sector. ADVANCE will encourage Metropolitan, Municipality, and District Assemblies (MMDA) to support coordination of MMDA-level investment plans in agriculture (focused but not limited to staple food crops) through a centralized

database of investment opportunities that would be shared with potential investors. This will be achieved by undertaking the following:

- Review outputs and lessons from the development of the first two DAIPs which are underway
- Based on the first two, develop an SOW for 10 more DAIPs
- Hire an external consultant to support DA s implement DAIPs

Objective 2: Local institutions strengthened to implement inclusive value chain development

The second objective for “capacity development” has two parts, and activities have been designed accordingly for the targeted local institutions including NGOs and FBOs. The first part is to build capacity of local institutions and the second will focus on developing capacity of FBOs to become FBEs.

Build capacity of local institutions

As part of the capacity building of local institutions, the Capacity Building team will continue the selection process (started in 2015) of 3 local organizations which will be eligible to conduct capacity building of smallholder farmers and OGs themselves. The trainings will be on Numeracy and/or FaaB, both for which ADVANCE has a curriculum prepared already. The steps to follow will include:

- Identifying local organizations which can implement capacity building programs for farmers
- Selecting one (1) organization per region
- Preparing ToT in FaaB and Numeracy
- Building capacity of organizations on compliance with USAID procurement rules, presentation of reports, etc.
- Grantee Organizations conducting training to farmers, according to annual targets

Capacity development for FBEs

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

The project will continue to support FBO groups trained on SMFM. FBOs will undergo a capacity assessment and will work with staff to develop a business plan and a capacity building plan, which will guide all assistance and resource allocation. Specific activities will include the following:

- Select FBOs to host demonstrations. An initial number of 25 were achieved in 2015.
- Classification of FBOs according to their capacity and based on that develop a working plan to reach FBEs
- Link FBOs to service providers to enable them access services for their members

- Support FBOs to collectively market produce of their members
- identify eligible FBOs and take them through the OBM training
- Organize input promotions during establishment of demos
- Access to finance will be guided by strict protocols and criteria; also determined by viability of FBE and purpose of finance. Emphasis on rural savings/VSLAs will be given equal or greater status as credit.

4.0 Program Support - Gender Mainstreaming

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

The gender specialist will regularly access ACDI/VOCA's material and interact with the gender community of practice, consult with colleagues, use materials from similar programs and build on lessons learned. The Gender Specialist based in ACSDI/VOCA's headquarters will provide technical backstopping to the ADVANCE team periodically and as required.

Highlights of our approach include:

Gender equity training linked to technical support: The integration of gender-equitable approaches is the responsibility of every staff member on the project. Therefore it is necessary that they are all aware of (1) how gender influences their own assumptions and actions, (2) why gender is important to the project, and (3) how they can and should integrate gender into their daily work. Training for staff, partners and beneficiaries was conducted in in the first two years of the project to enable staff integrate gender into activities. During the 2016 project year, short follow-up trainings will be integrated into other staff trainings, workshops, or team meetings to reinforce the importance of unbiased gender equity in their work.

Evidence based approach: The project's gender strategy is based on our own research as well as results of the WEAI. ADVANCE gender and M&E staff will continue to explore the finding of the WEAI to ensure project activities are responsive to identified constraints, and will continue to gather data throughout project life. Results from the mid-term population based survey will also be used to restructure the project strategy on gender where necessary. Informal communication between field staff and beneficiary populations, more formal analysis on an annual basis and regular monitoring will help keep activities on track. This will also be used in identifying some of the gender issues that may have been missed during the gender strategy design stage. This kind of ongoing analysis will serve to identify new activities to expand women's empowerment and participation in the value chain, such as increasing the number of female nucleus farmers and women-run businesses and promoting women's leadership in value chain governance.

Coordination and leverage: The project will coordinate with government, donor and civil society organizations carrying out gender-related activities in the field to avoid duplication, expand outreach and share success stories and lessons learned. We will look to leverage other programs to increase opportunities for women in the target value chains, including all the other FTF projects.

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

The work plan for PY 2016 will cover the following specific areas and activities:

Women engaged in increased agricultural productivity in targeted commodities

- Promote and encourage more women to establish and operate outgrower businesses. This will be achieved by increasing women entrepreneurs' ability to manage outgrower networks, as many still struggle to meet ADVANCE's initial criterion of having the capacity and willingness to provide services to smallholder farmers and be linked to a formal structured markets.
- Encourage women OBs and female lead farmers to host environmentally friendly technology demonstration
- Recognize relevant technology: In 2015 several small equipment for mechanical planting and fertilizer application was tested and some have undergone modification to perform better (private sector has been willing to invest in research) under our field conditions. These planters meet women's needs and preferences because they are time saving, less physically demanding, and affordable. The technology would be introduced through the support of grants especially to women. This will be done by:
 - Continuously showcasing these new technologies through demonstration plots.
 - Encouraging access to and adoption of these time/labor saving devices through credit or grants.
 - Targeting women groups. Some of these may be interested in establishing planting and/or fertilizing gangs.
- The Outgrower Business Management (OBM) program dedicated for women's leadership and entrepreneurship course, which was started in 2015 will be continued and used in 2016 to support aspiring women who are interested in establishing OBs.
- Link women farmers and women farmer groups to OBs to access technology and services
- Help women invest in their livelihood. Work with Sung Foundation to establish village savings and loan groups for women and men to raise money and invest in their farming operations without over relying on credit.
- Provide in-kind grants with flexible leverage requirements depending on vulnerability.
- Work with financial institutions to develop a range of products and services aimed at women entrepreneurs and women-led organizations and associations

- Support youth spraying and women rice transplanting groups: Recruit young adults from outgrower networks to form spraying groups to service farms where such services are in demand. Help spraying groups to form their own enterprises assisted through start-up kits, safe-use training and links to existing input businesses and/or OBs.
- Being particularly more vulnerable, women will be discouraged from applying pesticides and encouraged to access commercial service providers
- ADVANCE will continue to actively engage women in capacity building: Target and include women farmers in training provided on improved technologies/GAP-including productivity, PHH, adding value, upgrading, and so on, through various capacity building programs such as Farming as a Business/Farming as a Family Business. Some specific steps will include:
 - Announcing publicly that both women and men are invited to attend impending trainings.
 - Communicating social and economic benefits of women's economic participation to village chief's, community leaders, and other community members.
 - Encouraging men to bring their wives or other women in the household to training.
 - Reaching out to women's groups.
 - Ensuring materials are gender appropriate and that trainings/location of demo plots and organization of field days are offered at times and locations that allow women to attend.
- Raise awareness of land rights: Raise awareness of the importance of land ownership/larger land size for women to farm by running a campaign; organizing informal meetings in every village or cluster; promoting success stories to demonstrate impact on the community; organizing community meetings or conferences; etc.
- Facilitate women's access to land using the existing NF-Outgrower structures; traditional authorities and other donor partners to help leverage land acquisition
- Ensure women have access to information: Promote appropriate technologies such as use of mobile devices and women's listenership clubs targeted to women's specific information needs.
- Expand Numeracy Training: The project will target both sexes, though data shows this program reaches a majority of women.

Increase women market access and trade of targeted commodities

- Build capacity of women to access markets: provide training in business, financial and IT skills to women's business owners and group members
- Introduce market linkages: Link women farmers and women's groups (self-help groups, village saving and loans groups, women's producer groups) to formal markets and encourage them to open and operate bank accounts as a possible means of maintaining control over their income.
- Build women's leadership capacity: Conduct skills and leadership training for women at different levels of the value chain (producer/marketing groups, associations, business manager, etc.). Some specific activities will include the following:

- Conduct awareness campaigns targeting both men and women on the benefits of having women in decision-making positions in cooperatives, associations, or other groups.
- Take women on exposure visits to places where they see their peer women in leadership roles in order to raise their aspirations and confidence.
- Create opportunities for women to speak in public at events such as conferences and fairs or around International Women's Day or other such days

Strengthened women's' capacity for advocacy and activity implementation

- Build the capacity of local organizations that focus on women's issues so they can represent members more effectively
- Work with advocacy groups on access to and control over land issues, specifically to empower women to be able to lease land and negotiate for use of land

5.0 Program Support - Environment

The project will continue to focus on agrochemical management, support to climate change adaptation, and general compliance with title 22 of the code of federal regulations section 216 (22CFR216). The program will support small holder farmers and agrochemical dealers by training them and using outreach media like print, radio broadcast and other electronic media on safe use of agrochemicals. The efforts towards building climate change resilience will continue through the support of the weather index drought insurance scheme in collaboration with the Ghana Agricultural Insurance Pool (GAIP); and weather forecasting through Ignitia Ltd. Climate Smart Agriculture implementation was started in 2015 and will be expanded considerably in the coming year. Project management will also ensure environmental compliance through the implementation of the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP).

General environmental compliance

The ADVANCE field offices will continue to collaborate with the media, EPA and the major agrochemical importers and retailers to ensure that nucleus farmers and SHF continue to receive training on pesticide safeguards and management of pesticides, particularly recognizing banned chemicals. The project will collaborate with other NGOs and FTF Projects operating within the three northern regions to scale up activities and campaigns that will further strengthen pesticide handling amongst clients. Some specific activities will include:

- Update ADVANCE PERSUAP again to ensure the list of recommended pesticides are up to date with the EPA register of agrochemicals on the market.
- Conduct refresher trainings on approved PERSUAP with field staff and clients
- Ensure sub-grant activities are in the scope of the Initial Environmental Examination
- Promote use of safety clothing and implement safety training for appropriate grantees with production and processing equipment, and with established spraying service groups

Improving agrochemical management

The Environmental Specialist started in 2015 to assess input dealers with the purpose of improving their agrochemical physical and managerial systems. This work will continue in 2016 to ensure more of the input dealers (small or wholesalers) have an adequate environment and safety management system. Specifically, the project will:

- Facilitate implementation of environmental and safety management systems for agrochemical dealers
- Develop outreach content on safe pesticide handling in collaboration with EPA and others and disseminate them through radio firms, ICT, OBs, etc.
- Support training for new SSPs on safe pesticide handling and application
- Continue working with ATT to develop and implement a pesticide container management system and pilot with 10 input dealers

Improve smallholder farmer adaptation and resilience to climate change.

The declaration by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) fourth assessment expects increased frequency of catastrophic events including drought and flooding. This will put

increased hardship on small holder farmers and require improved coping mechanisms. In the 2012 planting season the ADVANCE I program introduced small holder farmers to the weather index based drought insurance scheme. ADVANCE will once again collaborate with the Ghana Agricultural Insurance Pool (GAIP) to make the insurance product available to small holder farmers. The GAIP strategy will be to reach small holder farmers through Outgrower Businesses. This approach will reduce transaction cost, increase uptake and provide critical market awareness of the service.

ADVANCE will continue its promotion and use of weather forecasting through SMS technology delivered through the private company Ignitia Ltd. Additional tasks include:

- Engage radio and ICT firms in communicating messages on drought index insurance scheme
- Develop radio content on weather and climate change messages
- Provide GAIP grant funding to post marketing staff in North Ghana to increase volume of policies and promote value of crop insurance
- Contract Ignitia to provide “sample” weather forecasting through SMS technology to new project participants
- Conduct training for all new users through the service providers themselves

Climate Smart Agriculture.

Since 2015, the responsibilities of the environment specialist have expanded to include conservation agriculture. Specific activities are described under sub-purpose 1. The first efforts were made in 2015 to test several cover crops which can provide a range of benefits and increase the source of seeds in country. Those activities will be expanded and improved based on early results. In addition, the project will:

- Work closely with OBs to determine climate smart alternatives to a mechanized farm system dependent on expensive imported inputs. This will have as an outcome, an update to ADVANCE’s CSA strategy to reflect the additional tests/activities performed in 2015
- Develop radio content on climate smart messages in collaboration with EPA..

6.0 Program Support - Public Relations and Communication

Communication continues to play an important role in projecting and promoting the activities, progress, impact and successes of the ADVANCE project. The ADVANCE Public Relations and Communications (PR&C) Specialist, in coordination with USAID, will ensure high visibility and wide media outreach through the creation and dissemination of professional information to project stakeholders and the general public. The PR&C Specialist will work with the COP and technical staff to frame communications strategies and develop specific communication outputs to ensure maximum impact on targeted communities. The impact of the project will be communicated through various media.

Reporting to USAID.

The project will periodically develop success stories and other reports and informational products to USAID. All materials and activities will comply with the project's branding and marking plan.

Some specific media to be used to disseminate project impact and activities will include:

- Success stories, "Telling our Story", or personal interest stories submitted each quarter
- Weekly bullets to USAID that illustrate ADVANCE's continued impact throughout the year
- Increased publicity at organized events to reflect the Feed the Future initiative
- Adherence to USAID branding and marking plan during program activities (demonstration sites, field days, etc.)
- Four video productions each year depicting project achievements and personal interest stories
- Quarterly and annual reports
- Contribute significantly to the multi-project FTF KM&L team's activities
- Four quarterly ADVANCE newsletters; distributed to a target 1,000 email recipients
- Quarterly staff photo contests and regular staff training to achieve a high quality photo database

Create public awareness of ADVANCE's impact by involving the media (radio and newspapers) at key milestone program activities and the use of press releases on accomplishments in demonstrations and field days. The project will also use promotional materials (leaflets, brochures, fliers) and support actors to assist them to market and brand themselves more effectively.

7.0 Support Program - Grants

In year three, through our interaction with partners and stakeholders across the supply chains the project will identify opportunities to strategically support development through grants program. ADVANCE grants will target activities with most potential to maximize impact on the supply chain and expected outcomes. Project management will study the needs of the major players and decide on the most efficient and appropriate way to apply those funds. The grants program will follow up on stakeholders' use of small and large equipment provided to actors in previous years. It is expected that numerous OBs, aggregators and FBOs will procure small equipment using the small equipment grant (SEG) scheme where equipment is valued at less than \$5,000.

Actors will be recommended by our regional staff and selected based on their ability to invest in their businesses which could move them to full-fledged enterprises. With the recent expansion of the regional teams and the introduction of new procedures, grants staff will meet with all field staff to roll out strategies for grant activities, and discuss eligibility, application and selection of beneficiaries and the award process.

In the past year, the project supported procurement of large scale equipment including tractors and shellers on a cost share basis. For large scale equipment procurements including tractors, the program will develop an equipment grants/financing mechanism through financial institutions with grants funding available to cover a percentage of the stakeholder's equity capital. Other grants will be targeted to enable access to small and medium size production and harvesting equipment from local manufacturers to increase yield and reduce labor cost for all project commodities; demonstrate new technology; improve post-harvest handling and upgrade storage and processing capacity at the community level. A number of grants will also be awarded to support outreach efforts by cost sharing air time with radio stations and the provision of radio sets to listener clubs for agricultural programming and the dissemination of information on good agricultural practices.

Specifically in the rice sector, the project will complete the delivery and installation of the rice mill equipment for some rice mills in the north. We will continue to assess the availability and condition of rice mills in northern Ghana and provide grant support where needed to upgrade processing capacity of these mills. Grant funding will be available to aggregators willing to grow and establish demonstration sites with the new rice varieties. The maize and soya bean sectors will see step up efforts at assisting seed producers with equipment to process good quality seed for the next season.

The grants program will target the promotional efforts to push out technology, improve seeds, inputs, small equipment, develop improved managerial structures, and develop more effective distribution networks – among other possible options. Furthermore, in kind grants will be awarded to local communities to improve on post-harvest handling through the use of tarpaulins and the provision of shellers and threshers. Other small equipment, such as power tillers, donkey carts, dibblers and seed drills will be made available to actors through cost share grants

ADVANCE will engage local NGOs, BDS providers, trade associations and other actors to provide services to VC actors while building the capacity of the local institutions through the grant management process.

Capacity building of local organizations under USAID Forward

In line with the objects of USAID Forward, the project will develop a curriculum to train the project's local implementing partners (ACDEP and PAB Consult) as well as major grantees (GGC, GAIP, GRIB). This effort will be led by Jacob Gray, a capacity development specialist based in the ACDI/VOCA headquarters and will be supported by STTA procured through local consultants. The focus of the curriculum will be to build the capacity of trainee organizations to manage USAID and other donor awards.

Depending on the initial capacity assessment, the training may be extended over a period of weeks if needed. This will be followed by directly delivering, or providing some technical assistance to the partners/trainee organizations to support them to implement activities in the ISPs they will develop.

Following such capacity building, the project will evaluate their readiness to implement components of the ADVANCE project in specific geographic locations or for a specific period. ADVANCE will continue to collaborate with and support the Ghana Grains Council, the Ghana Agricultural Insurance Pool and other relevant bodies to facilitate the achievement of set objectives. We will build the capacities of these organizations through the award of simplified grants, and work towards self-sustainability after the project life.

LPG funds will be managed through the following process:

- Pre-award Survey: All applicants selected through the Local Partnership Grant Fund will be required to undergo a survey to determine eligibility for funding and to identify financial, administrative and legal gaps where direct support can be provided.
- Mid-Term OCA: Each recipient will be required to repeat the OCA midway through their ADVANCE grant. Repeat OCAs will be used to determine if interventions achieved required results and to update and modify their respective support plans. LPG grants underway or under discussion are GGC, GAIP, GRIB

Grants Monitoring.

Throughout the year, the grants team will work with the technical teams and grantees to monitor the use and impact of grant awards. The team will prepare quarterly grant reports and updates highlighting funds obligated to the various value chains and private sector resources leveraged, and these will be disaggregated by value chain and geographic location. To ensure easy and effective monitoring, a grants tracker is maintained to track the status of every grant throughout the year.

8.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

This FY16, the ME&L team will continue ensuring its roles of providing quality data for project reporting, management, learning and communication. The ME&L Unit will strengthen the project's implementation progress and outcomes measurement, documentation and sharing through an improvement in data management systems and processes as well as effective capacity building of the staff. ADVANCE will also reinforce the identification and showcasing of the project's successes and address shortfalls through reliable and timely data. Recommendations from the USAID/METSS FY15 Data Quality Assessment will be implemented.

A. Monitoring and Evaluation

Improvement of the databases

The project uses three interlinked databases:

- A Sharepoint database for the storage and backup of all ADVANCE's data and dashboards and entry of some data
- The Data Capture Interface (DCI) for the profiling and entry of high volume data such as farmers' trainings
- The Sales Tracker that records all services the project's OBs are providing to their OGs and that is also a management tool for the OBs.

ADVANCE will design additional dashboards that will be permanently accessible to the Accra and field teams through the Sharepoint platform. Those user friendly dashboards will provide real time actual values of the project's indicators and key implementation data. They will be dynamic, so that one can select to view only one or several regions, sexes and any other relevant disaggregation types.

In addition, more forms will be developed and existing ones improved and tested to collect key information recently requested by the project management and technical team (e.g., profiling of the policy and advocacy beneficiaries, investment of buyers in the outgrower scheme development, contracts made after the pre-season and pre-harvest events).

The Sales Tracker software will be enhanced based on the findings from the FY15 piloting phase. Hundred more OBs will receive the software as well as a laptop and a printer this year, while 26,000 card holders will be purchased to protect the beneficiaries' smart cards.

Capacity development in M&E

This FY, the ME&L team will conduct a refresher training for 53 field technical staff on the DCI data entry and reporting, definitions of the project's indicators as well as collection forms and data management processes. They will also be trained on how to access, read and use the Sharepoint dashboards above-mentioned.

Eleven M&E staff members will receive training on:

- Data retrieval from the databases, analysis and advanced use of Excel and Access

- Data quality checks
- Data entry using the Access Web App

Moreover, every quarter, the M&E team will meet and share the challenges they faced and lessons they learned and will design the priority activities for the following quarter. Some of the training activities will be undertaken during those quarterly meetings.

Before each annual survey, the project will train the enumerators and supervisors. All interns and National Service personnel involved in data collection and entry of ADVANCE's data will also be trained and mentored. Finally, 100 new OB beneficiaries of the Sales Tracker software and laptops, as well as their support staff will be trained on their utilization.

Support profiling and routine data collection

Profiling data entry and routine data collection are part of the M&E Unit's regular activities in support of management and the technical team. Profiling of new beneficiaries will be done mostly during the off season periods. ADVANCE targets to reach 78,000 smallholder farmers this FY16. The M&E Unit will make sure that:

- All profiled individuals and entities are registered in the DCI or the Access Web App files
- Every individual will receive their smart cards
- All activities are recorded using the relevant forms and processes, including those implemented by consultants or contractors.

Annual surveys

The M&E team will lead two annual quantitative surveys, one in the North and one in the South, to collect data for the following indicators:

1. Gross margin per hectare of (Maize, Rice and Soy)
2. Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices
3. Number of farmers applying improved technologies or management practices

Samples of each survey will be representative at 95 percent confidence interval and 5 percent margin of error of the six subpopulations of the project's smallholder beneficiaries: male in maize, female in maize, male in rice, female in rice, male in soya, female in soya. Data to inform the implementation progress and outcomes of the ADVANCE gender strategy will also be collected during those surveys.

A crop cut method will be used to estimate the yields and the produce for the gross margin calculation, as described in the ADVANCE gross margin collection protocol. As such, each of the above-mentioned surveys will include two phases, one for the area demarcation and collection of the inputs costs incurred before and during the planting, and a second phase for the harvesting and collection of the remaining data on inputs costs.

In addition, a survey of a sample all the beneficiaries firms supported by the project will be conducted to collect data on the indicator "number of firms now operating more profitably". A sample of OBs and firms will be surveyed as well to collect the data on the number of private sector enterprises and others that have applied improved technology or management practices.

Mapping and spatial analysis

The project will continue using its geographic information system (GIS) to produce quality maps and conduct spatial analysis that will illustrate the activities and guide the implementation of the project. All data linked with geographic coordinates will be mapped and analyzed. Those include the gross margin survey data, profiling data, demonstration sites, grants, as well as any other activity that one can spatialize.

The project will explore the feasibility of updating existing maps such as the ones on financial service providers, tractor inventories, inputs dealers, equipment and dams, through collaboration with those entities or other projects. Finally, the project will develop a booklet that will contain all relevant maps produced since the beginning of the project, to share with its main stakeholders.

Data Quality Review

The project's Data Quality Strategy (DQS) will be improved further, following the recommendations from the data quality assessment by USAID/METSS in June 2015. In line with the DQS, and as part of the quarterly data quality review activity, the M&E team will conduct field visits to verify the accuracy of data reported. Such verification will be done through visits and short interviews of a small of randomly selected beneficiaries.

In order to ensure the quality of the project's data, the M&E staff will regularly assess the effectiveness and compliance of the filing system, and of the completeness of data collection forms. Consistency between the data in the databases and those in the completed forms will be checked.

Logs of the operations undertaken on the databases will be analyzed by the Database Manager to detect any potential misuse or manipulation. Any shortfall noticed during the data quality review will be addressed. In addition, the project will undertake an internal data quality audit by the ACDI/VOCA West Africa Regional M&E Specialist.

B. Knowledge Management and Learning

Learning studies

In FY2016, the project will continue identifying and implementing learning surveys. Each survey can be qualitative or quantitative and will answer knowledge needs of the project team. These needs will be identified by the regional offices in form of three learning topics per office in the course of the year. All learning quantitative surveys data collection will be implemented using mobile devices.

Knowledge forums

The findings of the learning studies will be shared and discussed with the project's staff and main stakeholders during quarterly knowledge forums that will be held in each region. After each forum, clear action plans will be drawn from those findings and discussions and implemented to improve the project implementation.

Quarterly technical review meetings

Every quarter, the technical specialists, the M&E Unit, and the project management team will meet to discuss the project's achievements during the quarter, assess any potential

underperformance, and redefine, when necessary, the priorities for the following quarter. The Sharepoint dashboards, the findings from the learning studies as well as staff's inputs will inform those activities.

Annual work planning workshop

During the last quarter of FY2016, the project will bring together all staff members to design the FY2017 work plan. Like the quarterly meeting, the dashboards, the learning studies, and staff's inputs will help the team to take stock from FY2016's successes and potential shortfalls and set the approaches and activities for FY2017.

Midterm evaluation

In order to assess the project's implementation progress and likely impacts, a midterm evaluation will be conducted during FY16 by external evaluators. The ADVANCE M&E team will assist the external evaluators by providing inputs into the scope of work, sharing data and any other resource needed for the exercise as well as making inputs into the report as required.

Documenting and communicating the project's results and activities

ADVANCE will continue using several channels to showcase project successes and activities on a regular basis. Besides the regular "Telling our stories", quarterly newsletters and weekly bullets, the team will prepare short videos on demonstrations sites and other activities such as gross margin data collection, profiling and many more.

The PR&C specialist, with support from a Peace Cop Volunteer working with the project, will provide refresher training for all field technical staff on documenting change using audio and visuals, assessing attribution and story writing skills.

The unit will also coordinate all media events at all the regional offices and head office levels to ensure that the right message in the right context is appropriately delivered to the project's stakeholders and Ghana at large.

Annexes

Annex 1: ADVANCE Implementation Plan Tracking Sheet - PY 2016

Activity/Tasks	Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
1.0 SUB-PURPOSE 1: INCREASED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY IN TARGETED COMMODITIES																		
1.1 Actor supported technology demonstration sites		170 OBs 56,000 SHF													30,000	7,500	12,500	6,000
Sites selected strategically for easy access by farmers, qualified lead farmers, and productivity factors	TLA/APO	480 sites													150	60	70	200
Sponsors identified for all inputs required	TLA/APO	20 firms																
GAP and PHH training to take place at all sites (and selected farms) with private sector firms, nucleus farmer and MOFA AEA where possible.	TLA/APO	1000 training events 30,000 SHF													12,500	5,000	7,500	5,000
280 sites will be exclusive for pioneer hybrid maize seeds in both the north and south.	PD/TLA/APO	560 sites 200 trainings													12,500	5000	7500	5000
Sites monitored and data recorded on results	TLA/APO	480 sites													150	60	70	200
1.2 Standard crop production protocols																		
Coordinate with partners to develop standard crop protocols, modify existing ADVANCE training modules and share extension information through outgrower networks, private sector partners and information and communication technology (ICT) platforms.	TLA/ICT	3 protocols 5000 distributed													2500	1125	3775	
Disseminate planting advice through SMS/voice message service providers, call centers, the media, mainly radio and radio listener groups. Radio drama will be emphasized in 2015.	ICT/TLA	10,000 sms 5,000 voice 25 radio stations 20 radio dramas 10,000 MIS 150 listener grps													5000 2500 15 10 5000 80	2000 1000 5 5 1000 30	3000 1500 10 5 1500 40	
Pioneer may contribute to maize production protocols with printed material that can be distributed with their seed varieties	D/P, PD	10,000 distributed													3,000	1500	2000	3,500
1.3 Field Management Program																		
Identify interested OBs, part of project compact with OB	Team	80 OBs													30	10	15	25
Field management is incorporated into the OB business plan and becomes part of the OBM curriculum	TL/AAPO	80 total OBs													30	10	15	25
Services include tractor service management, OG input distribution, post-harvest mechanization, GAP/PHH training, demo site management, production collection and aggregation, community liaison, lead farmer development	TLA/APO	80 total OBs													30	10	15	25
Grant program to be used as incentive to start field management services and to offset startup		30 grants to OBs \$300,000													10	6	8	6

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	costs - limited to motorcycle or "motor-king" to aid in necessary mobility required for the job																		
	Support OBs with grants to use ICT tools (tablets, Pico projectors etc) for extension to their OGs	ICT/Grant /AP	80																
1.4	Pre-Season Agri-Business Forum																		
	All OBs and viable FBOs are invited		200 OBs and FBOs													100	40	60	
	Private sector are key participants for inputs, finance, equipment and other services		30 exhibitors																
	Collaboration on event management between FTF and other programs		5 FTF proj.																
	Deliver key messages on crop production issues and profit potential																		
	Pioneer/HYBRID MAIZE to host a booth and provide pre-season intelligence																		
1.5	Farmer Mentor Program																		
	Well-established OBs invited to mentor new actors to the program benefits and risks		60 OBs mentor													30	12	18	
	Groups of prospective OBs will visit NF farms for first-hand experience in what a multi-service operation can look like		60 OBs visit OBs													30	12	18	
	Key to promotion of hybrid seed is to promote farmer visits to HYBRID MAIZE sites to view the merits of high quality hybrid seed		50 OBs visit sites													25	10	15	
1.6	Input/equipment access improved																		
	Work without-grower businesses to develop benefit/cost scenarios in regards to in-kind lending of inputs and tractor services to smallholder farmers	TLB/BSO	150 OBs													75	35	40	
	Staff will identify all new and established community input retailers to participate in the project's business improvement program.	TLB/BSO	30 dealers																
	Tractor Service Operators and Maintenance Training Program	TLA/APO	15 workshops 150 operators													8 75	3 35	4 40	
	The grant program will be used strategically to promote mechanization especially with small equipment grants	GM/TLA	\$500,000 in SEG grants																
1.7	Farm Business Planning																		
	Administer a business diagnostics tool prior to the planning process to identify significant strengths and weaknesses of the operation	TLB/BSO	All 170 OBs													85	35	50	
	The business plan will determine what, if any, financial assistance is required through commercial credit or grants. The team will work closely with FinGAP on commercial credit actions	TLB/BSO/ APO	All 170 OBs with farm plan 100 assisted with finance													85	35	50	
	Continue to follow up on the plan – making	TLB/BSO/	170 plans													85	35	50	

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

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	Needs assessment on input business strengths and weaknesses	TLB	4 regional workshops													1	1	1	1
	Design and implementation of input dealer training workshops	TLB	With BDS/ATT																
	Assistance through STTA, TA, and grants for dealer expansion; grants limited to ICT-related technology	TLB																	
	Assist dealers in expanding community agent concept	TLB/BSO	TBD																
1.12	Smallholder Investment																		
	Smallholders will be encouraged to link up with FBOs and OBs to gain economy of scale, access inputs and better market commodity off-take.	Team	50,000 new SHF																
	Competitive market opportunities for OBs and FBOs through contractual linkages with lead firms and aggregators will increase smallholder market options	Team	170 OBs and 100 FBOs													85 50	35 20	50 30	
	Esoko and other ICT companies encouraged to develop a more robust marketing campaign to directly engage NF/FBO out-grower networks	TD/ICT	Direct sales to actors																
	ADVANCE will continue to mitigate production risk by working with GAIP (crop insurance) and Ignitia (weather forecasting) to expand customer base and payment models, and tailor products to ADVANCE target groups	TD/TLB	150 GAIP policies 20,000 SHF with forecasting													75 10,000	35 4,000	40 6000	
	Financial risk and benefit will be taught to farmers by the BSO team through tailored financial literacy modules and workshops (with FinGAP participation)	TLB/BSO/ CDO	170 OBs 100 FBO													85 50	35 20	50 30	
1.13	Land for Women Program																		
	Continued messages to OBs and community leaders to consider appropriate sites	APO/GS	1000 F													500	200	300	
	Access to tractor services – as scheduled alongside male-managed farm sites	APO/GS	200 F													100	40	60	
	Access to inputs through OB or direct credit from FI if formed as a viable group	APO/GS	100 F													50	20	30	
	Link women maize farmers to HYBRID MAIZE for improved hybrid seeds	APO/GS	TBD																
1.14	Climate Smart Agriculture																		
	Research on the best options of equipment to introduce	TD/TLP	Research completed																
	Training to ADVANCE APO and RCs staff on no-tillage benefits	TD/TLP	Training completed																
	Establishment of 30 demo plots for the next season with the first step of no-tillage (using rippers first 2 years in the demo plots)	TD/TLP	30 demos													15	7	8	

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

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

2.1	Market Linkage Development																		
	Supply and Demand Data. End-buyer survey will be updated in 2015.	TLT/TMO	Updated Oct																
	Supply and Demand Data. Regional data on potential commodity supply and determining what quantities require markets.	TMO	Completed Oct.																
	Trade missions and non-legally binding pre-contract agreements are prepared to document discussions and verbal agreements – pending legally binding contracts that are negotiated at a later date.	TLT/TMO	50 trade missions													25	10	15	
	Pre-Harvest Agri-Business Conference and Exhibition	TD/TLT	40 lead buyers and transporters attend																50
	Market Information Services. MFarms and ESOKO provide web-based and SMS supported MIS services	TD/ICT	Support to or creation of a standard MIS system																
	Trade finance –OB for field aggregation of commodity. Work closely with both the BS team and FinGAP	TLT/TLB	50 examples																
2.1	Lead Firm Competitiveness																		
	A T&M Specialist has been posted to Kumasi specifically to work with lead firms. An office has been opened in Kumasi to support both this activity and the HYBRID MAIZE program.	TLT/TMS	50 firms																50
	The 2014 survey and assessment of lead firms and processors will be updated in 2015	TLT	Oct.																

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	2014 survey on lead firms identified areas of cooperation and support that will be supported by MOUs, STTA and possibly grants where VC investment is involved.	TLT/TMS	5 grants 5 STTA for lead firms																5 5
	T&M team will conduct an assessment to design a strategic marketing campaign ("Buy Ghana") to improve brand image of Ghanaian food products.	TLT	Design and implementation STTA																
	Identify finance needs for lead firms for trade and capital improvements; work with FinGAP	TLT	TBD																
2.3	Trade Association Support																		
	Customize Capacity Development Assessment Tool for Associations, and conduct assessments	TLT/TMS	5 associations completed																
	Determine relationship status with associations and identify areas of assistance if required. MOUs, STTA, and grants are options for further support.	TLT	3 STTAs 3 grant options																
	"Contract" grant for Ghana Grain Council is set on deliverables	TLT/GM	Contract																
2.4	North Ghana Rice Milling.																		
	T&M staff will work with Avnash to determine if a rice delivery system depending on variety preference and seasonal timing is beneficial to actors	TLT/TLA	Delivery system working																
	The updated 2012 rice mill survey will be used to focus attention on localized milling using appropriate rice milling options. The grant program and linkage to credit will be used to promote localized milling expansion and upgrade	GM/TLT	4 mills upgraded													2	2		
2.5	Regional/Cross Border Trade and Transport																		
	Work with WATH to discuss ways to monitor cross border trade (inter) and extra regional exports of commodity staples. Work with GGC on trade data dissemination	TLT	Cross border trade plan																
	Cross-border trade study can be commissioned, perhaps jointly with WATH	TLT	STTA/WATH																
	Work with Borderless Alliance; focus on north-south corridor and northern cross-border trade.	TLT	Plan formed, collaboration																
	Engage with GPRTU to identify transport/haulage needs and develop an engagement/support plan	TLT	Plan formed, collaboration																
2.6	Community-based market systems strengthened																		
	Tailor Sell More for More (SMFM) curriculum and materials for Ghana language and context –focus on FBOs.	TLT/TLC	100 FBOs/ workshops													50	20	30	
	Develop female FBO leadership module for SMFM	TLC	20 workshops													10	4	6	
	Conduct SMFM TOTs to FBO leaders	TLC	10 trainers																

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

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

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

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

4.0 Program Support – Gender Mainstreaming

4.1	Women engaged in increased agricultural productivity in targeted commodities																		
	Establish Women as Nucleus Farmer (NF):	GS/APO/ BSO	4 women as OBs																
	The Outgrower Business Management (OBM) program will have a dedicated women's leadership and entrepreneurship course to support aspiring women OBs.	GS/BSO	Course designed and included																
	Actively engage women in capacity building: through various capacity building programs such as Farming as a Business	GS/CDO	9000													4500	2000	2500	
	Help women invest in their livelihood. Encourage village savings and loan groups for women and men, and link these groups to market opportunities	GS/CDO/ BSO	Inclusion 40%																
	Recognize relevant technology: Through demand-driven approach, identify technologies that meet women's needs and preferences, which usually means that they are time saving, less physically	GS/APO	Inclusion																

Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	demanding, and affordable																		
	Raise awareness of land rights: importance of land ownership/larger land size for women to farm through running a campaign; organizing informal meetings in every village or cluster; promoting success stories to demonstrate impact on the community; organizing community meetings or conferences; etc.	GS	Inclusion																
	Support youth spraying and women rice transplanting groups: Recruit young adults from outgrower networks to form spraying groups to service farms where such services are in demand. Help groups to form their own enterprises assisted through start-up kits, training and links to existing input businesses and/or OBs.	GS	Inclusion																
	Ensure women have access to information: Promote appropriate technologies such as use of mobile devices and women's listenership clubs targeted to women's specific information needs	GS	Inclusion																
4.2	Increase women market access and trade of targeted commodities																		
	Build capacity of women to access markets: Provide training in business, financial and IT skills to women's business owners and group members	GS	Inclusion 40%																
	Link women farmers and women's groups (e.g., self-help groups, village saving and loans groups, women's producer groups) to formal markets and put in place structures to help them maintain control over their income	GS	Included in markets																
	Explore off-season or alternative livelihoods for women: Use the market or value chain analysis to identify other income-generating opportunities for women that require limited access to land, such as management of storage facilities, input supply management, seed storage and breeding, extension services	GS	Explored, designed, instigated																
	Build women's leadership capacity: Conduct skills and leadership training for women at different levels of the value chain (producer/marketing groups, associations, business manager,	GS/CDO	500 women trained in leadership													250	100	150	
	Expand Numeracy Training: Identify FBO groups to receive numeracy training facilitated by local NGOs. The project will target both sexes, though we expect to reach a majority of women.	GS/CDO	9,000 including FAAB													4500	2000	2500	
4.3	Strengthened women's' capacity for advocacy and activity implementation																		
	Build the capacity of local organizations that focus on women's issues so they can represent members more effectively	GS	Capacity built, ongoing																
	Facilitate women's access to land: Use the	GS	1000													500	200	300	

Activity/Tasks	Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
existing NF-outgrower structures in communities to help leverage land so it is more readily available for productive women farmers, through the traditional chief and sub-chief structures.																		
Work with advocacy groups on access to and control over land issues, specifically to empower women to be able to lease land and negotiate for use of land	GS/PS	Advocacy includes women's' issues																

5.0 Program Support - Environment

5.1	Improving agrochemical management																	
	Conduct 4 refresher trainings on approved PERSUAP with field staff and clients	ES	Updated PURSUAP and 4 trainings												1	1	1	1
	Develop outreach content on safe pesticide handling in collaboration with EPA and others. Information used by radio firms, ICT, NF, etc	ES	10 program content developed															
	Prepare environmental and safety management systems for agrochemical dealers	ES	10 dealers assisted															
5.2	Improve smallholder farmer adaptation and resilience to climate change																	
	Engage radio and ICT firms in communicating messages on drought index insurance scheme	ES/ICT	Firms engaged															
	Develop radio content on weather and climate change messages in collaboration with research institutions (e.g. SARI/IITA)	ES/ICT	Engaged															
	Provide GAIP grant funding to post marketing staff in North Ghana to increase volume of policies and promote value of crop insurance	BSO/ES	Marketing improved															
	Contract Ignitia to provide "sample" weather forecasting through SMS technology to new project participants	ES/ICT	New participants with access															
	Conduct training for all new users	ES/ICT	Training completed															
5.3	Climate smart and water management																	
	Work closely with the APO team to determine climate smart alternatives to a highly mechanized farm system dependent on expensive imported inputs.	ES/TLP	Climate smart program started in 2015															
	Instigate a study on check dams and determine an appropriate course of action	ES	Check dam program decided															
5.4	General environmental compliance with Regulation 216.																	
	Update ADVANCE staff on environmental and mitigation and monitoring plan	ES	Staff updated															

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

6.0 Program Support - Public Relations and Communication

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

7.0 Support Program - Grants

7.1	The \$2.5 million I-3 is a flexible financing mechanism		\$500,000																
	It is expected that numerous NF, aggregators and FBOs will procure small equipment using the small equipment grant (SEG) scheme where	GM	200 grants																

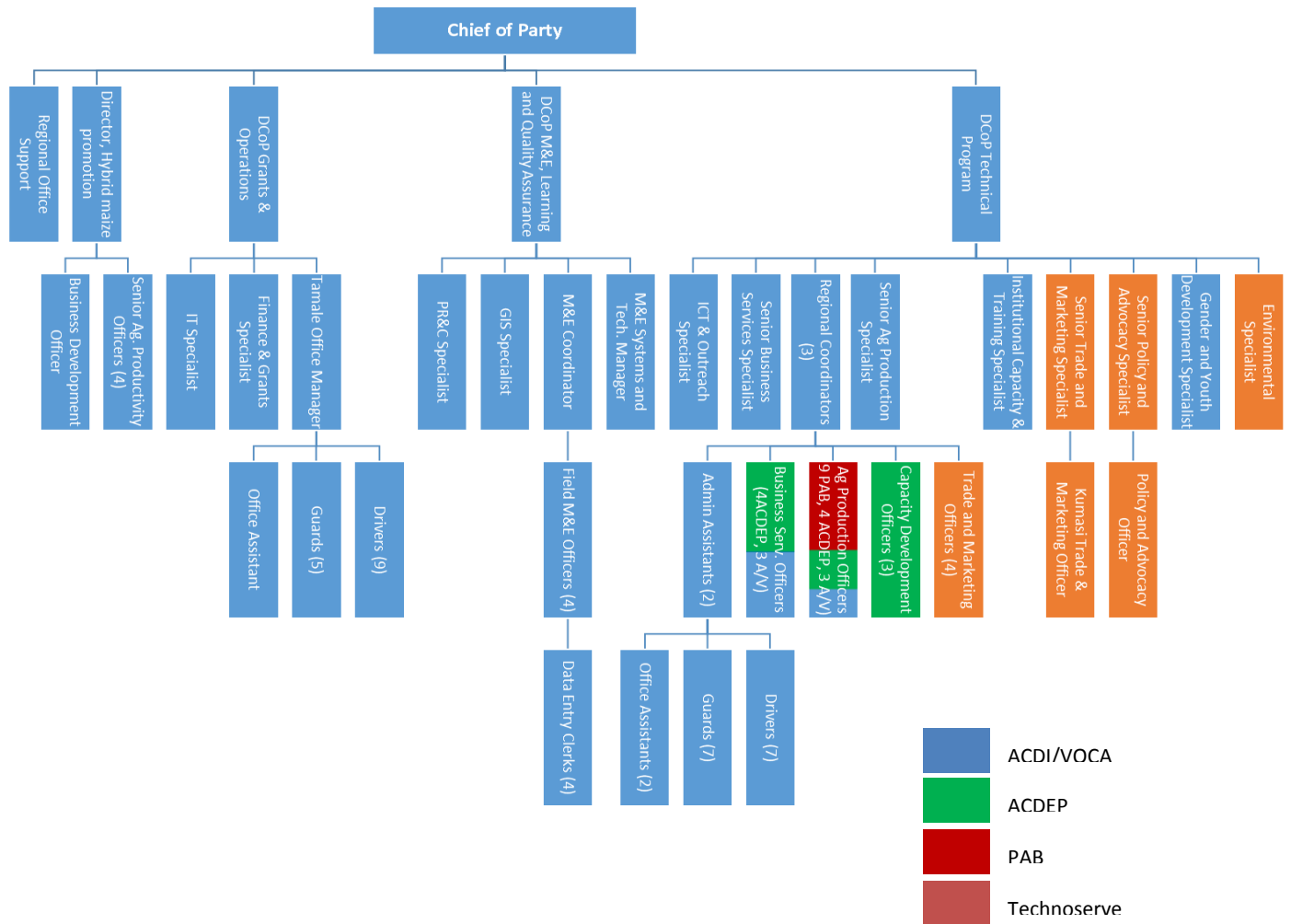
Activity/Tasks		Lead	Targets	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Tamale	Bolga	Wa	Kumasi
	equipment is valued at less than \$6,000.																		
	The grants team will also monitor all equipment use	GM	M&E Ongoing																
7.2	The \$2.5 million Local Partnership Grant Fund		\$500,000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

8.0 Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

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

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

Annex 2: Organisational Chart



- ACDI/VOCA
- ACDEP
- PAB
- Technoserve