FEED THE FUTURE

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

Photo: Donald Brown

SYNTHESIS OF EVALUATIONS RELATED TO THE FEED THE FUTURE LEARNING AGENDA

March 2016

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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ACRONYMS

ANH	Agriculture, nutrition and health
BCC	Behavior change communication
CBO	Community-based organization
DCA	Development Credit Authority
HDDS	Household Dietary Diversity Score
HICD	Human and Institutional Capacity Development
KDAD	Feed the Future Knowledge-Driven Agricultural Development project
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
NRM	Natural resource management
R&D	Research and development
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a result of the 2007/08 global food price spikes, President Obama called upon global leaders in 2009 at the G-8 L'Aquila Summit to unlock the potential of agricultural development as the key to reducing hunger, extreme poverty and malnutrition. This U.S. leadership helped mobilize billions of dollars in commitments from other donors, as well as new and expanded financial commitments in partner countries and established a new whole-of-government approach to combating hunger and malnutrition through the Feed the Future initiative.

Building on efforts begun under the Bush Administration and African leadership in food security, Feed the Future has pioneered a new way of doing business to help countries transform their agricultural systems—one that is achieving results. By supporting partner countries in developing their agriculture sectors to generate opportunities for economic growth and trade as well as better nutrition, Feed the Future is making progress toward its goals of reducing the prevalence of poverty and child stunting each by 20 percent in the areas where it works.

Feed the Future's focus on evidence, results and accountability has created a new standard for development. Understanding how it got to these results—what interventions are successful, in what contexts, and why—is also a priority for the initiative. Since Feed the Future started implementing programs in 2010 around the world, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Peace Corps and the Millennium Challenge Corporation have commissioned numerous performance evaluations and some impact evaluations as well of food security development programs.

The Feed the Future Knowledge-Driven Agricultural Development project recently compiled an inventory of nearly 200 of these evaluations. While useful as a standalone resource, these evaluations also hold valuable information to increase global understanding of what works best for boosting food security and nutrition.

To draw out what the initiative has learned so far, the Feed the Future Knowledge-Driven Agricultural Development project also synthesized the findings of these evaluations. To guide this exercise, reviewers used the Feed the Future Learning Agenda's six themes and corresponding questions in the areas of agricultural productivity; improved research and development; expanded markets, value chains and increased investment; improved nutrition and dietary quality; improved gender integration and women's empowerment; and improved resilience of vulnerable populations.

This report highlights the initial trends and patterns that emerged after analyzing 196 program evaluations using this framework.

The Feed the Future Learning Agenda, launched in 2011, contributes to the body of knowledge on food security that serves to improve the design and management of interventions in the agriculture and nutrition sectors. It lays out how the initiative will learn from its programs, systematically assess critical gaps in evidence, and measure the success of its activities in partner countries, particularly through impact evaluations. Measuring impact requires a long-term effort,

so in the interim this report examines what existing evaluations can tell us about these questions now.

This synthesis identifies and chronicles evidence from 11 impact evaluations and 185 performance evaluations conducted between 2010 and 2015 across 64 countries. Reviewers used a qualitative analysis coding methodology to overcome the fact that most evaluations were not designed specifically to answer Learning Agenda questions.

While this report highlights concentrations and gaps in evidence across areas of the Learning Agenda framework, it does not provide a comprehensive review of the quality of the evaluations being analyzed and synthesized. Rather, it takes an initial stock of the sources that can be further explored to generate more detailed findings under each Learning Agenda question. Moreover, the majority of the evaluations in this synthesis were performance evaluations rather than impact evaluations. Although performance evaluations cannot always determine causality, they provide substantive insight into the challenges that projects face in their attempts to achieve their intended outcomes.

This synthesis should not be read as a final analysis, an attempt to comprehensively answer the Learning Agenda questions, or guidance to promote specific development approaches. Rather, it is a review of information and findings in the pool of 196 evaluations as they relate to the Feed the Future Learning Agenda questions. It reveals trends and provides the reader with an opportunity to identify evaluations that addressed these questions. Readers can use the citation information throughout the document and access the full evaluation reports if they would like more information related to any particular finding. Additionally, the synthesis can be used as a tool to target further research and analysis on Learning Agenda questions.

Several themes emerged during the systematic review of the evaluations. First, **social capital,[a] in various forms, was essential to overcoming many constraints.** Under the "Improving Resilience of Vulnerable Populations" theme, for example, building social capital was among the most common intervention objectives linked with risk-reduction strategies. Programs that focused on recovery from shocks relied heavily on community participation and trust. Likewise, under "Expanded Markets, Value Chains and Increased Investment," community-based organizations (CBOs) were key to lifting vulnerable groups out of poverty. Organizing farmers into groups for bulking and joint marketing resulted in reduced transaction costs and greater efficiencies in product collection and delivery. For women's empowerment, the gender gap in access to finance, inputs, technology, other assets and markets was overcome through the collective capacity developed in women's groups, producer associations, and other grassroots women's organizations. Last, under "Improved Nutrition and Dietary Quality," implementers achieved results though community-based rehabilitation and behavior change interventions.

Another pattern that emerged was that projects[b] saw better results when beneficiaries were empowered with the agency to take ownership of their own advancement. For example, an

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[a] Social capital is formed on the basis of generalized trust and cooperation within a community.

[b] Note that the term "project" is used throughout the document as a general term to describe an intervention. Given that this synthesis references evaluations from several U.S. Government agencies, the more general term of

evaluation found that women had higher adoption rates of new technology with homestead gardens because they had command over that resource. Similarly, when a woman had ownership of her own chickens, she also had control over the income that she earned from them. Conversely, success with producer organizations was limited if they considered themselves "self-help" groups rather than business entities. Producer organizations needed to see themselves as a resource to provide business opportunities, not subsidies. Evaluations noted a shift from direct subsidization toward empowering communities as projects sought to reduce "donor-dependent" mentalities.

Methodological concerns related to answering Learning Agenda questions surfaced through this synthesis. Several evaluations identified attribution and measurement challenges that are important to understand in the context of the Learning Agenda. For example, under "Trade," the involvement of multiple donors in overlapping activities made it difficult to determine if increases in intra-regional trade could be attributed to Feed the Future and/or U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) programs.

One of the most common measurement challenges was the need to measure outcomes over time. The inventory included many mid-term performance evaluations, so longer-term outcomes were inconclusive because many require a sustained effort to systemically alter the enabling environment. The time needed to enact policy reforms and complete investment transactions that would yield lasting and meaningful change goes beyond the scope of the evaluations analyzed for this report, which may limit the scope of the conclusions that this synthesis can draw. For example, many research and development (R&D) programs require long-term effort before they achieve an impact on the policy environment. Similarly, fundamental policy change would have to be implemented before overall economic growth could generate improvements in the livelihoods of the poorest and most vulnerable populations. Three evaluations showed that it also takes time to measure the effect of food storage on price stabilization and impact during shocks. Likewise, enabling environments need to be systemically altered if programs are to attract private-sector investment. As one trade-related evaluation noted, "Development of business can take a long time and success is not assured. If it were, the commercial sector would handle it and foreign aid programs would be unnecessary."[1]

Across the Learning Agenda themes and questions, the synthesis illuminated areas where more evaluation research is needed. For example, in the "Improved Nutrition and Dietary Quality" theme, none of the evaluations specifically addressed the effects of the geographic co-location of unrelated interventions on dietary diversity and nutritional status. Also, for the "Expanded Markets, Value Chains and Increased Investment" theme, reviewers did not find evaluations that examined if trade-related programs reduced price fluctuations and local shortages. To address knowledge gaps—including those identified in this review—it may be necessary to design future evaluations to be responsive to specific Learning Agenda questions, in addition to the impact evaluations already planned around these questions.

"project" is used, although at times it may be referencing specific "activities," as defined by USAID-specific terminology.

FEED THE FUTURE LEARNING AGENDA QUESTIONS

The Feed the Future Learning Agenda questions listed below are designed to determine which interventions have the greatest impact in a given context, which interventions are most cost effective, and what combination of interventions have the greatest impact on the multiple objectives of improving agricultural growth, reducing poverty and reducing malnutrition.

Agricultural Productivity

1. What are characteristics of effective, efficient and sustainable vehicles for promoting adoption of innovation (technology, practices, behaviors) and diffusion of products and new technologies among the poor, women, and socially marginalized? What are the most binding constraints in promoting technology adoption and the most effective interventions for dealing with these constraints?
2. What are approaches that successfully address long-term natural resources management objectives while effectively increasing productivity and profitability?
3. To what extent do agricultural productivity interventions in the staple and non-staple crop value chains lead to the generation or improvement of on-farm and off-farm employment?
4. Which agricultural productivity interventions have had the greatest impact on resilience of households and individuals to recover from (regain consumption levels and rebuild assets) or withstand (maintain consumption levels and protect assets) common and extreme shocks?
5. Does including nutrition education (social and behavior change communication) in agriculture extension services lead to reductions or elimination of household hunger and improved dietary diversity?

Improved Research & Development

1. What partnership mechanisms are most productive, efficient, effective and sustainable for carrying out agricultural research to positively benefit resource poor farmers and food security?
2. Which R&D programs have had an impact on the policy or enabling environment?

Expanded Markets, Value Chains and Increased Investment

1. What types of investments in value chain market led development result in poverty reduction and improved nutrition among even the lower income quintiles in areas where value chain work is taking place?
2. What has been the impact of infrastructure interventions on poverty reduction? What is the impact when infrastructure investments are used in combination with more traditional value chain or productivity enhancing interventions?

3. Which kinds of investments and in which value chain functions have generated increases in income and opportunities? To what extent do different sources (domestic debt, FDI, guarantees, etc.) of investment in value chains lead to new income and employment opportunities for vulnerable populations?
4. Have interventions in agricultural value chain development led to development of local institutions and systemic behavior change? What are effective pathways for generating that change?
5. What types of interventions (policy and regulatory reform; institutional strengthening; market development; public-private partnerships, etc.) have attracted private sector investment in agriculture?
6. To what extent has the expansion of intra-regional trade in staples increased market access and regional availability and reduced price fluctuations and year-to-year local shortages?

Improved Nutrition and Dietary Quality

1. What have been the impacts of different approaches linking Agriculture, Nutrition and Health (ANH) on dietary diversity and nutritional status (i.e. geographic co-location of programs, integration of interventions, what combination of A, N, and H)?
2. Have programs to increase farmers' incomes resulted in improved nutrition when not coupled with nutrition programming?
3. What activities have enabled value chain investments to lead to improved consumption of diverse diets? Which Value Chain Investments have failed to achieve this?
4. Which agriculture technology interventions have improved diets and nutrition outcomes? Which Value Chain Investments have failed to achieve this?
5. What investments in human and institutional capacity development have effectively generated large scale nutrition outcomes? What were the enabling conditions and management approaches that have proven successful towards this end? Which HICD investments have failed to achieve this?

Improved Gender Integration and Women's Empowerment

1. Have agriculture productivity interventions reduced gender gaps in use of production inputs?
2. Have agriculture and nutrition projects or approaches effectively improved women's empowerment, specifically in terms of agricultural production, decision-making over and access to credit, control over income, leadership in the community, and time use?
3. Have capacity-building and increased leadership/management opportunities for women led to increased participation of women in leadership roles in the community?
4. Have interventions advancing commercialization in value chains affected access to paid employment or types of employment for men and women? Have they led to increases or decreases in unpaid work for men or women?
5. Have programs that emphasize gender equality and the empowerment of women led to reduced poverty and hunger? Does empowering women lead to reduced poverty and hunger?

Improving Resilience of Vulnerable Populations

1. What interventions improve the ability of vulnerable households to withstand (stable consumption and protected assets) common and extreme shocks affecting their economic activities? In what ways?
2. What interventions strengthen the ability of vulnerable households to recover (regain consumption levels and rebuild lost assets) from common and extreme shocks?
3. To what extent do different interventions to promote market access (such as promoting access to markets with lower risks and lower entry barriers) generate the participation of poorer households?
4. What interventions on both the "Push" (social protection) and "Pull" (value chain deepening) sides improve the participation of the poor in value chain activities?
5. Do safety net programs promote greater participation of poorer households in prudent risk-taking and more remunerative economic activities?
6. Have interventions changed risk-reduction strategies pursued by men and women to cope with shocks (health-related, agro-climatic, economic, socio-political)?
7. Have Feed the Future strategies to generate overall economic growth improved livelihoods of the poorest and most vulnerable populations? What are the most effective economic growth strategies for incorporating the poor and vulnerable?

I. PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW OF THE SYNTHESIS

The Feed the Future Knowledge-Driven Agricultural Development project prepared this synthesis of Feed the Future and U.S. Government food security program evaluations at the request of the USAID Bureau for Food Security's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning team. This synthesis report analyzes project evaluations in relation to the Feed the Future Learning Agenda framework. The goal was to identify where the initiative is building the evidence base for agricultural intervention and where it has gaps in evidence for which further data collection and evaluation could be useful. Reviewers compiled an inventory of 196 evaluations and developed a methodology to review them and apply findings to the relevant questions in the Learning Agenda. Because most Feed the Future projects and their evaluations were not designed to specifically answer Learning Agenda questions, reviewers developed a qualitative analysis coding methodology, explained in more detail below, that enabled the review team to match evaluation findings with appropriate Learning Agenda questions.

The purpose in compiling and documenting all Feed the Future related evaluations conducted to date was to assess what evidence and findings they have generated against the Learning Agenda. As such, this document does not comprehensively review each evaluation nor provide evidence of larger-scale impact. It does not review all issues that a project evaluation might address, only those items related to Learning Agenda questions. The synthesis does, however, provide a comprehensive review of which evaluations addressed Learning Agenda questions and whether they provided insight that can answer those questions. The strength of the synthesis is in the trends it identifies—such as patterns related to project constraints, elements of success and measurement challenges—and the insights it provides on emerging trends and where to target further research.

The report is part of a set of deliverables aimed at helping Feed the Future understand some of what it has learned around implementation across its entire portfolio. The other two deliverables in the set are an inventory with a short description of each evaluation (see Annex 6) and a database of references within the evaluations that touch on Feed the Future Learning Agenda themes and crosscutting issues. The database of references can be used to make further inquiries into specific topics and look at those topics across evaluations.

The main body of this report provides the synthesis and the trends and findings identified for each Feed the Future Learning Agenda question. Annex 1 lists the number of codes that the team assigned to each Learning Agenda question in the Dedoose software used to search through evaluation data. Annex 2 lists the number of codes reviewers assigned to Learning Agenda questions, sorted by the U.S. Government agencies that commissioned the evaluations (USAID, Millennium Challenge Corporation and Peace Corps). Annex 3 lists the codes sorted by evaluation type (performance or impact). Annex 4 lists the co-occurrence statistics between Learning Agenda questions and codes assigned in Dedoose. Annex 5 lists each evaluation reviewed along with a brief summary and a link to the full evaluation document. Lastly, this report provides detailed endnotes for readers' further research into the evaluations discussed.

2. METHODOLOGY

The review team reviewed all available Feed the Future evaluation reports and used a thematic coding method to categorize relevant text based on types of interventions (independent codes) and their related outcomes (dependent codes). For the analysis of the evaluations, reviewers used a systematic, yet flexible coding system to elicit and group the primary findings and pieces of data that support the Learning Agenda questions. The analysis included the steps detailed below.

A. Inventory of Data Sources

Nine months before publication of this report, the review team consulted with the USAID Bureau for Food Security's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning team to determine the best approach to compile and review a robust catalogue of evaluations in the context of the Learning Agenda. The first task was to compile an accurate inventory of completed evaluations of Feed the Future interventions. Working with USAID and interagency partners, reviewers compiled a broad list of evaluations conducted from 2010 to 2015 from the following sources:

- The USAID Performance Plan and Report Evaluation Registry, filtered for those categorized under food security
- Lists acquired from an Evaluation Utilization Study being conducted by the Feed the Future Knowledge-Driven Agricultural Development project
- Separate submissions from the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and Peace Corps

The original data pull had broad parameters to capture all potentially relevant evaluations with the intention of focusing on specific characteristics later. Compiling all MCC, Peace Corps, and USAID evaluations attributed to relevant program areas under the Foreign Assistance Framework Standardized Program Structure,[c] reviewers generated a list of 299 evaluations. Working from this list, reviewers and the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning team narrowed the inventory based on relevance to Feed the Future. The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning team also helped retrieve evaluations not yet available on the USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse. Reviewers further refined the inventory based on relevance determined through the coding process, which narrowed the list to 196 evaluations as the body of data for this synthesis. This final inventory included 11 impact evaluations and 185 performance evaluations across 64 countries.

B. Analysis Methodology

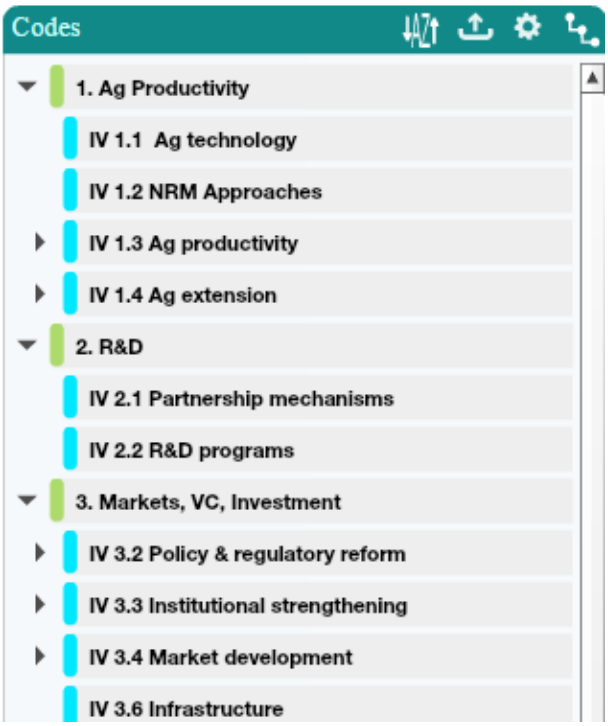
The team conducted a systematic review of this rich data set that was as faithful to the Learning Agenda questions as possible. The first challenge was to identify which evaluations addressed which Learning Agenda questions. Reviewers found that many of the evaluations discussed multiple Learning Agenda areas. Further, a meaningful assessment of the Learning Agenda would need to look specifically at the key questions under each Learning Agenda theme. Many

[c] The program areas included in the initial data pull were 4.5-4.8 and 3.1.9.

of the Learning Agenda key questions discussed how different interventions could achieve the same outcomes such as improved nutrition or increased income. To approach this, the team divided each portion of the Learning Agenda themes and key questions into independent codes representing types of interventions and dependent codes representing outcomes. For example, "What are approaches that successfully address long-term natural resources management (NRM) objectives while effectively increasing productivity and profitability?" is a key question around the Improved Agricultural Productivity theme. In this case, "NRM Approaches" became an independent code, and dependent codes included "Productivity," "Profitability" and "Environmental Sustainability." Reviewers applied codes to excerpts throughout each of the evaluations and later used these codes to determine which evaluations addressed each of the Learning Agenda key questions.

Reviewers fleshed out this entire coding structure to directly mirror the Learning Agenda using a three-tiered framework that mapped out "child codes" and "grandchild codes" that fit underneath a larger "parent" code. For example, Figure 1 illustrates the independent parent and child codes under the first three Learning Agenda themes. The grandchild codes (not displayed in Figure 1) provide the highest level of detail. They were developed based on themes described in the Learning Agenda literature reviews[d]as well as reoccurring themes identified throughout the coding process. In the example above, "NRM Approaches" would be a child code to the overall Learning Agenda theme of Improved Agricultural Productivity.

Figure 1: Independent Parent and Child Codes



The structure also included a list of management codes to capture larger implementation trends, as well as a list of common barriers. In all, the coding structure consisted of 114 codes, including 18 dependent child codes and 17 dependent grandchild codes. (See Annexes 1-3 for code application by agency, year and evaluation type.)

To ensure that coding was systematic, conducive to collaboration within the review team, and able to provide descriptive statistics, reviewers used the cloud-based software platform Dedoose to help determine which evaluations were relevant to each of the Learning Agenda questions. Dedoose allowed the team to apply the defined codes to excerpts throughout each of the evaluations.

[d] The literature reviews can be found on the following Web pages: Improved Agricultural Productivity; Improved Research and Development; Expanded Markets, Value Chains and Increased Investment; Improved Nutrition and Diet Quality; Women's empowerment; and Improved Resilience of Vulnerable Populations.

Reviewers applied a weighting scale to the dependent codes to sort excerpts based on whether they indicated positive outcomes and whether evidence supported the findings discussed. The scale consisted of values 1 through 3, where a 3 was a positive and evidenced-based finding, a 2 included mixed or positive findings with limited evidence, and a 1 represented findings that demonstrated negative externalities or no progress toward objectives. The vast majority of excerpts were coded as a 2 because most evaluations in the inventory were performance evaluations, which did not always draw conclusions by means of testing control groups, baseline comparisons, and/or evaluations of statistical significance. Although performance evaluations cannot always determine causality, they provide substantive insight into the challenges that projects face in achieving their intended outcomes.

Across 196 evaluations, reviewers identified 4,530 excerpts to which they applied 24,555 codes. One of the major benefits of Dedoose was that it enabled analysis through qualitative data visualization charts with "click-through" access to view excerpts in context. Reviewers relied most heavily on the code co-occurrence chart, which marked where independent and dependent codes were applied to the same excerpt. This meant that any excerpt that had a finding directly related to a Learning Agenda question, which was structured as both a dependent and independent code, was aggregated and could be exported and read systematically. Reviewers exported the co-occurrence data to Excel, where they sorted through the excerpts based on weighting and co-occurrence with third codes. Figure 2 below provides an illustration of the code co-occurrence chart, tying agricultural productivity interventions with their intended outcomes. Annex 4[e] illustrates how each Learning Agenda theme and its sub-question co-occurred throughout coding.

Figure 2: Code Co-occurrence for Agricultural Productivity

	Dependent Codes	DV 1.1 Uptake	Scaling	DV 1.2 Productivity and	Productivity	Profitability	DV 1.3 Environmental	DV 1.4 Employment/	youth	DV 1.5 Resilience	DV 1.5.1	DV 1.5.2 Recover	DV 1.6 Effect on Nutrition	Access to	Anthropometric	Attitude and	Dietary diversity	DV 2.1 Food security
1. Ag Productivity	119	430	38	362	166	55	222	176	7	65	32	5	105	4	8	17	46	141
IV 1.1 Ag technology	377	201	13	160	84	25	16	52		22	9	2	42		5	2	22	50
IV 1.2 NRM Approaches	335	96	15	55	24	17	184	38		21	12	4	5				2	23
IV 1.3 Ag productivity	373	106	13	163	75	27	9	74		20	14		52		2	7	27	67
Inputs	107	33	4	50	23	11	3	15		3	3		13				8	12
IV 1.4 Ag extension	487	200	6	153	69	15	38	76	7	30	11	2	58	4	7	12	23	60

[e] Please note that the co-occurrence statistics in Figure 2 do not reflect the number of evaluations that discussed each of these topics, but rather the number of "code applications," which indicates the number of times a code was applied to an excerpt.

3. EVALUATION SYNTHESIS BY LEARNING AGENDA THEME

A. Improved Agricultural Productivity

The agricultural productivity code was applied to 144 of the 196 evaluations in the Feed the Future evaluation inventory. This section reviews findings and conclusions from this pool of evaluations to provide insight into the Learning Agenda's key questions in the area of Improved Agricultural Productivity.

The synthesis suggests that, overall, the success of agricultural productivity interventions—in regard to the Learning Agenda—often hinged on access to market and inputs. Problems with market access pertained not only to the inability to obtain credit, capital or inputs; they also included the inability to reach markets due to distance, poor roads, limited market information or a lack of connections to other market players. Limited access to resources and markets was a constraint identified in 38 evaluations across the inventory.

A1. Agricultural Technology Interventions

Question: What are characteristics of effective, efficient and sustainable vehicles for promoting adoption of innovation (technology, practices, behaviors) and diffusion of products and new technologies among the poor, women and socially marginalized? What are the most binding constraints in promoting technology adoption and the most effective interventions for dealing with these constraints?

The inventory included 58 project evaluations that examined a relationship between technology introduction and farmer adoption. Of these, 21 evaluated interventions that targeted adoption of new technology among the poor and socially marginalized. These can be further broken down as follows: 10 examined interventions that targeted poor and marginalized populations in general; 16 examined interventions that targeted women; and 5 examined programs that targeted both generally marginalized and female populations. While the remaining 37 projects evaluated may have impacted marginalized populations, this was not their focus and is therefore not considered in the evaluation. Overall, the majority of evaluations found inconclusive or mixed results in terms of which approaches worked best to promote technology uptake among these populations.

Constraints to Technology Adoption

The most common constraint identified by evaluations of agriculture technology interventions was lack of access to inputs such as fertilizer and herbicides. For example, a program in Mozambique successfully increased maize yields due to use of conservation agriculture practices, with farmers reporting a doubling of yields. However, the full potential of maize seed yields did not come to fruition because farmers could not afford fertilizer. Farmers were also unable to get other inputs due to weak supply channels.[2] In another example, the Feed the Future Integrating Nutrition in Value Chains project promoted new practices such as using high-yielding seeds and adopting ridge spaces, weeding and crop rotation to boost yields. The evaluation found that both men and women adopted many of these practices, but often did not

attempt inter-cropping or use of herbicides—technologies also promoted by the project. (In the case of herbicides, the evaluators found that most farmers could not afford them.[3])

Women faced further issues related to access to inputs. In Liberia, a local custom prevented women from benefiting from a new agricultural practice. One study described a community in which most farmers were elderly and required hired labor to farm. It found that women had a particularly difficult time obtaining hired laborers. One woman explained that she had "only rehabilitated part of my old cocoa farm because I can't get labor. Farming in this community is by *kuu*,[f] and the men are not agreeing for women to join because they think we can't farm as fast as they do. I have only had the *kuu* once since last year, and the part that was underbrushed by the *kuu* is the only part I have been able to rehabilitate."[4]

Successful Technology Adoption

A few evaluations determined that interventions had successfully facilitated technology adoption among farmers. In USAID Kenya value chain activities, evaluators noted that smallholders benefited from the introduction of new technologies and improved market linkages. Program success was built on well-targeted and monitored efforts and did not rely on subsidies. Interviews revealed that farmers who participated in the project's capacity-building exercises had higher milk production than those who did not participate. Success was attributed to the introduction of the new technology, coupled with well-targeted interventions that included market linkages.[5]

In Nigeria, a performance evaluation documented successful technology adoption in the Feed the Future Maximizing Agriculture Revenue and Key Enterprises in Targeted Sites project. This project saw 100 percent adoption rates from a total of 28 improved technologies that were made available to farmers.[6] Also, in USAID Guatemala's Title II Food Security Program, results showed that 65.5 percent of farmers had adopted at least two good agricultural practices and 81.3 percent had adopted good livestock practices.[7] Furthermore, the evaluation in Guatemala also found a significant reduction in malnutrition rates among the population receiving aid from the program's agricultural and livestock components.[8]

"...farmers rely primarily on neighbors, family and friends—including neighboring lead farmers—for information about upgrading."
-Evaluation in India

A number of evaluations found that training local farmers to serve as extension agents was an effective means to assist technology adoption among marginalized populations. For example, the Peace Corps Master Farmer program found success in technology adoption by training local farmers to become permanent local sources of improved knowledge related to agriculture and agroforestry. Success from a similar approach was also found in India:

> "The assessment results confirm the efficacy of the lead farmer approach as a mechanism for widespread diffusion of upgrading information throughout a local area. While the qualitative interviews highlight interactions between lead

[f] *Kuu* refers to a cooperative method in which farmers work together to harvest, plant and do other work in each other's fields.

> farmers and extension workers, the survey results reveal that average farmers had limited direct contact with extension workers. Moreover, farmer participation in formal training courses was uncommon. Instead, the survey results indicate that farmers rely primarily on neighbors, family and friends—including neighboring lead farmers—for information about upgrading."[9]

The evaluation further explained that farmer-to-farmer spread of information was also made possible through demonstration farms, careful development of technical packages and effective training of extension personnel. Overall, the lead farmer approach was examined in eight evaluations and was generally praised as a sustainable and effective method to introducing technologies to marginalized farmers, with the caveat that lead farmers do not negate the need for well-qualified technical personnel to initiate the learning process. For example, an evaluation in Malawi[10] cautioned that for lead farmers to serve as real agents of change, they require project support and training.

A2. Natural Resource Management Approaches

Question: What are approaches that successfully address long-term natural resources management objectives while effectively increasing productivity and profitability?

Twenty-eight evaluations[11] examined natural resource management (NRM) interventions and their impact on farmer productivity and profitability. Of these, 10 projects also had explicit goals to increase environmental sustainability. Of the 28 evaluations, 9 found evidence of positive changes in farmer productivity and profitability, 2 found that farmers faced significant limitations or that the projects were unable to address farmer productivity and profitability, and 17 projects yielded mixed or inconclusive results. Most of the evaluations found inconclusive or mixed results with respect to environmental sustainability, as well.

Only a few projects evaluated were able to improve environmental sustainability while at the same time increasing farmer productivity and profitability. An example of success was found in Burundi, where USAID's Multi-Year Assistance Program applied a watershed development approach which both improved water use and increased productivity as well as profitability. The evaluation explained, "The watershed approach with an intensive integrated strategy can produce clear, visible results..." if it is compatible with the social context and implemented in concert with local governance. However, the evaluation also cautioned that where a watershed approach is applied, project implementers should ensure that local leaders and other power holders do not sway activities to their own personal benefit.[12] A second example of success came from various communities across Southern Africa, where the USAID-funded Land, Water and Livelihoods Restoration through Holistic Management project restored degraded landscapes. The project built water infrastructure to facilitate planned grazing, which would increase milk production by providing sufficient grass at the time when cows were pregnant and calves were to be born.[13] A third example of success came from India, where USAID's Partnerships for Innovation and Knowledge in Agriculture project assisted a private company in improving environmental sustainability as well as productivity by introducing a filtration system to improve the quality of recycled water used on fields.[14]

Limitations and Mixed Results

Market mechanisms are integral to NRM approaches because they frame the incentives, linkages and income streams that contribute to the costs of conservation practices.[15] However, no evaluations were found that demonstrated successful integration of market mechanisms into NRM approaches or an increase in income due to NRM approaches. Market access may affect the productivity and profitability of NRM projects, just as it affects technology interventions. This relationship is exemplified by a project that focused on agricultural and non-timber forest products, and encouraged organic agricultural practices and improved harvesting practices. Although largely adopted, there were few operative market linkages, limiting income generation.[16]

Many projects yielded mixed results because new practices, although successfully adopted, did not necessarily increase profitability. For example, in a worldwide study conducted by the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Aquaculture and Fisheries, extension services reached farmers to help them change their practices and preserve water resources. In Thailand, evaluators found that project research and interventions enabled farmers to alter shrimp farming to use less water and reduce environmental impacts. They also found that some African farmers were no longer draining ponds at the end of fish harvest season, which also preserved water.[17] However, for these and other interventions, an impact on profitability was not determined.

The USAID Développement Economique pour un Environnement Durable project in Haiti sought to mitigate the environmental effects of certain activities and to educate people about these practices. The project had great success in adoption of introduced techniques, including terracing, use of gully plugs and agroforestry: 84.5 percent of farmers were applying at least one promoted technique. Project impacts extended beyond the farmers who were trained directly, with other farmers reporting a change in activities after learning about new techniques from friends and family and visiting other farms. However, benefits to the environment or farmer profitability resulting from this adoption of new practices were not identified.[18] It is a little surprising that neither this study nor the Feed the Future Innovation Lab project were able to highlight benefits beyond successful adoption given that both were final reports. However, these evaluators were focusing on performance rather than impact, which could account for the lack of data.

In a final evaluation of USAID's Uvira project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, profitability was noted while environmental sustainability was not. Irrigated bottomlands with a feeder canal positively affected food security for farmers in the area. The water management technology allowed for a year-round water supply, granting farmers three crop harvests every year. This was found to significantly increase household food consumption and nutrition while providing more crops to be sold at market.[19] However, the evaluation team made no conclusions about the environmental impacts of this change in practice.

A3. Agricultural Productivity Interventions Impact on Employment

Question: Employment: To what extent do agricultural productivity interventions in the staple and non-staple crop value chains lead to the generation or improvement of on-farm and off-farm employment?

Overall, 65 evaluations in the inventory examined value chain interventions, 32 of which discussed the impact of value chains on employment and income; however, the focus of the interventions centered mostly on income. Increased employment, though possibly an outcome of many of these projects, was not a central focus of the interventions and was therefore not usually measured.

When looking at projects that focused on bolstering value chains specifically through agricultural productivity interventions, only three evaluations[20] were identified that examined the relationship between agricultural productivity interventions in value chains and employment. Of these, one evaluation found a positive impact on employment, another found a negative impact on employment and the third demonstrated mixed or no impact. All three interventions introduced a new technology; two utilized agricultural extension services. Intervention activities saw no significant differences in terms of employment outcomes between projects that simply introduced a new technology and projects that used both agricultural extension and new technology.

Looking beyond value chain interventions, there were 33 agriculture productivity interventions that influenced on- and off-farm employment. Of these, 18 percent of evaluations found a positive relationship between the agricultural productivity intervention and employment, 9 percent found significant barriers to improving employment and 73 percent found mixed or inconclusive results.

Access to Assets

The greatest challenge to improving employment stems from lack of access to markets and resources. Productivity interventions may not address systemic problems that marginalize populations and limit their activities. These include access to resources, a market for vegetable products and geographically isolated populations.

Evaluations in Nepal offered examples of project limitations. The evaluation team found that the design of a project itself limited the inclusion of marginal landholders and the landless populations—groups that could have benefited most from the intervention. This exclusion resulted from a selection criterion requiring farmers to contribute a minimum amount of land to the program from the start. In some cases, farmers were able to band together to contribute the minimum requirement; however, many were still excluded from the intervention. The evaluator also found that the program design had an erroneous embedded assumption that landless and marginal landholders would benefit from an increase in hired labor. In reality, this input—hired labor—was not necessary because the intervention did not foster such a large increase in production to merit it.[21]

Increased Incomes through Increased Productivity

Two examples from Kenya highlighted successful increases in income as a result of activities that increased productivity. First, an evaluation team examined multiple value chain activities within a project and found them all to be highly successful in increasing income opportunities. Value chains evaluated ranged from dairy and livestock to value-added products. The evaluation found that 16,500 smallholder dairy goat farmers benefited from project activities. As a result, they increased milk production by more than 250 percent, and cumulative sales of dairy goats and products amounted to 910 million Kenyan shillings (KShs).[22] A second project in Kenya reached almost two million households through Community Interest Groups and farmer field days. Through these interventions, which offered new technologies, farmers increased their production of crops, livestock and produce. The evaluation team found that some farmers increased their income by a factor of two to four within just two years. They also found benefits in nutrition, health and education standards for farmers and their families.[23]

A4. Agricultural Extension Services

Question: Does including nutrition education (social and behavior change communication) in agriculture extension services lead to reductions or elimination of household hunger and improved dietary diversity?

There were 101 evaluations on projects with agricultural extension components, 21 of which included nutrition outcomes. The Learning Agenda Literature Review on Improved Agricultural Productivity explains that "One of the primary ways that extension workers can support nutrition indirectly is by targeting women farmers..."[g] Indeed, many of these evaluations discussed projects that improved nutrition through training women on improved agricultural production practices. For example, a project in India trained 90,000 women's self-help group members in improved dairy and vegetable production practices, which increased variety and quality of vegetables for home consumption.[24] However, only seven of the evaluations coded with agricultural extension had a clear nutrition education component, five of which demonstrated clear success by targeting women as the caretakers of the household.

Four evaluations observed success where projects targeted women in nutrition education. First, the USAID Nepal Flood Recovery Program provided nutrition education to pregnant women and women with small children to replace non-iodized salt with iodized salt and encourage a higher intake of fresh vegetables. The evaluation explained, "The training and subsequent engagement in kitchen garden activities enabled women to positively influence the household hygiene and dietary practices of the entire family, including men and children."[25]

Second, USAID's Enhanced Homestead Food Production for Improved Food Security and Nutrition in Burkina Faso project made substantial progress toward its objective of improving the nutritional status of children and mothers by improving household nutritional practices and nutritional services in communities. One thousand women participated in nutrition education groups, and NGO partner and district health staff were trained as nutrition education masters

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[g] Feed the Future Learning Agenda Literature Review: Improved Agricultural Productivity, October 2013. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pa00jw44.pdf

while community health workers and grandmothers were trained in nutrition education. The evaluation found significant improvements in the intervention villages compared to the control villages in terms of gardening practices and consumption and nutrition knowledge. Further, the dietary diversity score was higher in beneficiary households than in control households.[26]

In Guatemala, USAID's Title II Food Security Program assisted community health workers in providing women with counseling on maternal health, children's health, nutrition and household hygiene. Although this project's final performance evaluation could not scientifically confirm causality from program interventions, the evaluation did observe a corresponding statistically significant reduction in childhood chronic and general malnutrition rates, including: A 7 percent reduction from the baseline in chronic malnutrition rates in children under 5, a 5.9 percent reduction from the baseline in general malnutrition rates in children under 5, and an 8.3 percent reduction in general malnutrition rates in children under 36 months.[27] The evaluation was also able to determine that populations with agricultural interventions had higher dietary diversity scores.

The fourth example of success came from Mozambique, where a Feed the Future Multi-Year Assistance Program created a strong link between increased agricultural productivity and increased consumption. The program enhanced nutrition through training and information on nutritious food and balanced diets, while at the same time improving household sanitation practices. According to the performance evaluation, farmers previously sold the greatest portion of their crops immediately after harvest, but after learning new recipes and food preparation techniques, they increased their own consumption of the new crops they were growing. The new recipes enabled household members, particularly women, to learn how to make new food products. Focus group discussions indicated that, as a result, beneficiaries had more nutritious and balanced diets in their households, while mothers reported improved health outcomes for their children.[28]

On the other hand, evaluations of projects in Ethiopia and Uganda noted challenges in attempts to integrate nutrition education into extension services. In Uganda, all mothers belonging to women's gardening groups were taught to grow a variety of vegetables and fruits in home gardens and received nutrition education with the expectation that they would promote nutrition at the household level and strengthen diet diversification. However, household diversity scores fell short of their targets for improvement beyond the baseline. The evaluation discussed several possible reasons for this. First, at the time of the baseline, half of all households resided in Internally Displaced Persons camps where their food needs were largely met through humanitarian assistance. Second, the project was working with newly resettled populations who may not have yet had the household capacity to grow sufficient foods at the time of the evaluation. Finally, market demand for cash crops encouraged farmers to choose to grow cotton instead. [29]

In Ethiopia, a project saw improvement in meeting the minimum dietary diversity in one region, but not in the other region. In the former, the project catalyzed significant community attitudinal change on a regional scale through radio broadcasting to promote orange-fleshed sweet potato. The region that did not see the same level of dietary diversity improvement rejected the orange-fleshed sweet potato due to its taste and a cultural preference for other varieties of potatoes. The

evaluation concluded: "Further intervention is needed on the Nutrition Behavior Change regarding orange-fleshed sweet potatoes."[30]

Finally, in Burundi, a project sought to reduce chronic and transitory food insecurity by training and equipping volunteer community-based health activists to promote optimal infant and child feeding practices, improved health-seeking behaviors, and appropriate hygiene and sanitation practices. While it proved impossible to clearly quantify program outcomes due to different questions asked in baseline and endline surveys, this evaluation's qualitative research determined key elements to successful behavior change communication activities, including: alignment with national strategies, adjusting strategies based on survey results, community participation in the selection of topics, building on an existing network of volunteer community-based health activists, and performance-based financing.[31]

A5. Resilience

Question: Which agricultural productivity interventions have had the greatest impact on resilience of households and individuals to recover from (regain consumption levels and rebuild assets) or withstand (maintain consumption levels and protect assets) common and extreme shocks?

USAID defines resilience as the ability of people, households, communities, countries and systems to mitigate, adapt to and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.[32] A review of the evaluation codes revealed 41 evaluations that discussed the extent to which agricultural productivity interventions impacted household and individual resilience. Further examination of these evaluations highlighted the importance of using multi-pronged agricultural productivity approaches to improve resilience through producing higher yields and minimizing downside risks. The following interventions recurred in the evaluations as contributing factors to better resilience: adopting improved farming techniques, using new or improved crop varieties, and access to reliable irrigation systems. The successful outcomes were closely tied to the quality of training integrated with these interventions, as well as market access. These interventions demonstrated that it is possible to alleviate constraints to uptake of more profitable crops and new farming technology and to provide essential market linkages to support supplemental income.

Improved Farming Techniques

Activities in Sierra Leone,[33] Senegal,[34] Kenya[35] and Zimbabwe[36] utilized either new or improved farming techniques/technology in combination with complementary agricultural productivity interventions to develop household resilience. Improvements in resilience were attributed to higher yields, which contributed to two key benefits. First, it enabled households to benefit from increased income associated with the sale of surplus production. Second, higher production improved household food security by increasing the amount of food available for home consumption during lean periods. These strategies prepared households to withstand shock by providing them with more money to purchase food during lean seasons.

A mid-term performance evaluation in Sierra Leone[37] highlighted how new farming techniques increased production and equipped households to better withstand shock. The beneficiaries of

new farming methodologies introduced by the project saw an increase in adequate household food provisions as a result of an increase in productivity.[38]

Another evaluation in Kenya[39] showed how better farm management and regulatory reform, coupled with using improved certified seeds, increased yields for potato farmers. Improvements in agriculture productivity were also attributed to an increase in casual labor employment, which had the added benefit of providing alternative income in areas where off-farm employment was low. The improvements in farming techniques also resulted in an increase in income for the potato farmers. Similarly, in Senegal,[40] smallholder farmers using new farming methods generated higher yields and increased income. The outcomes associated with the interventions in Senegal[41] underlined how transformation in the agriculture sector improved households' adaptive capacity, making the poor more resilient. Specifically, the evaluation noted that "higher horticultural yields have enabled smallholders to market much of their production and raise household revenue. Improved agricultural inputs and new farming methods have enabled farmers to raise yields, sell surplus production, and boost revenue. By selling 75 percent of their horticultural production, smallholders in the project areas have started to transition from subsistence agriculture to becoming an integral part of the local market economy."[42]

Using New or Improved Crop Varieties

The Feed the Future Learning Agenda Literature Review on Improved Agricultural Productivity states that breeding new crops and livestock that are tolerant to drought and other stresses has the potential to reduce downside risks and contribute to greater resilience.[h] This impact was seen in the evaluations of activities in Nepal,[43] Kenya,[44] Pakistan,[45] Ethiopia[46] and Sierra Leone.[47] These evaluations discussed the effective use of either drought-resistant crop varieties or improved seed varieties in providing higher yields and reducing downside risks. In the case of Pakistan,[48] utilizing improved seed varieties increased yields, which required additional labor for harvesting.

In successful projects, adopting new or improved crop varieties increased production and yields, in turn improving households' resilience to cope with stresses. This was the case for an intervention in Kenya, where introduction of new crop varieties improved food security through increase in income, diversification of economic activities, and improvements in accrued household savings.[49] Similarly, an impact evaluation in Afghanistan determined that using improved crop varieties resulted in increased months of adequate food provision as well as other outcomes, such as increased income and assets, which contributed to improvements in households' resilience.[50]

Finally, a performance evaluation of USAID's Hill Maize Research Project, Phase IV in Nepal,[51] explained how the project used a participatory variety selection approach to introduce new seed varieties, thereby increasing maize production for vulnerable populations, empowering women and disadvantaged groups, and "improv[ing] food security and nutritional status of its target group."[52] This evaluation drew its conclusion from a survey of 400 households and 20 focus groups in 10 Village Development Committees of five districts, but it lacked proper baseline data. Further research is required to determine the impact of the participatory variety selection approach on nutrition of vulnerable groups.

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[h] Feed the Future Learning Agenda Literature Review: Improved Agricultural Productivity. USAID (October 2013).

Irrigation Systems

Reviews of interventions in Tajikistan,[53] Kenya[54] and Nepal[55] underscored the importance of the availability of reliable irrigation water systems to enable improvements in crop yield. The irrigation activities were frequently combined with other agricultural productivity interventions such as introduction of new farming techniques and agricultural training.

In Tajikistan[56] for example, the reliable availability of irrigation water allowed farmers to diversify their crops to those of higher value. Similarly in Nepal, reliable irrigation systems allowed farmers to move from subsistence farming to commercial vegetable production: "The program has introduced or consolidated use of some beneficial technologies such as use of hybrid seeds in conjunction with better irrigation facilities, leading to higher level of production and income."[57]

Reasons for Successes and Shortcomings

Adoption of new technology and the resulting impact on resilience was aided significantly by training and market linkages. The effectiveness and quality of the training had an impact on uptake, while market linkages opened up new market opportunities for farmers.

Training. Agricultural productivity programs were frequently combined with training through agriculture extension activities to increase uptake, and successful projects also saw an increase in productivity. In Zimbabwe,[58] Guatemala,[59] Kenya,[60] Nepal,[61] Timor-Leste,[62] Afghanistan[63] and Armenia,[64] training focused on increasing uptake of new technology or farming methodology to improve agriculture productivity, thereby increasing income and improving household resilience. Training contributed to successful project outcomes in Guatemala,[65] Kenya,[66] Nepal,[67] Zimbabwe[68] and Timor-Leste.[69] Evaluators in Zimbabwe, for example, noted,

> "Significant increases were achieved in productivity and the volume and value of marketed surplus. Project stakeholders and beneficiaries corroborated project findings. Two factors played a decisive role in increasing productivity and production: the training/capacity building provided by all implementing partners for stakeholders at all levels of the value chain; and adoption of new ideas and technologies by farmers."[70]

In contrast, the projects in Armenia[71] and Afghanistan[72] did not see increases in adoption of new technologies, even after extensive training. There were several possible reasons for the lack of uptake, but evaluators cited the extension program's insufficient training to farmers on the new technology.

Marketing strategies. Increased productivity resulted partly from incorporating marketing strategies such as grain storage inventory credit, public–private partnerships and pro-business training. In Guatemala,[73] Zimbabwe[74] and India,[75] the development of farmers' organizations and market linkages and the adoption of recommended practices contributed to increased productivity and market access for farmers. In West Africa,[76] annual price fluctuations were controlled through storage of cereals. Market linkages in Guatemala[77] allowed farmers to use more of their land to increase yields. Prior to the project, "farmers typically cultivated no more

than three *cuerdas*[i] of their land, leaving seven *cuerdas* fallow because they had nowhere to sell excess production."

Conversely, in Nepal[78] and Ecuador,[79] the impact of the agriculture productivity strategies on income—which is linked to resilience—was weak due to limited market linkages or low productivity. In Ecuador,[80] income generation based on production of the targeted crops remained weak due to the small number of operative market linkages.[81]

A6. Synthesis Trends under Improved Agricultural Productivity

Several trends emerged in the evaluations of projects that implemented agricultural productivity activities:

1. Agricultural technology on its own does not necessarily lead to adoption and productivity increases among smallholder farmers. New technologies must be paired with access to inputs needed to improve production, and technologies must be adapted to the management capacity of the community. Capacity building of farmers is an ongoing activity that must continue after a technology is introduced. Finally, market linkages must be available to provide incentives to changes in management practices.
2. Farmer access to inputs is a complex problem in which cost, supply chain, input quality and access to finance are important features.
3. Master farmer and lead farmer programs were cited as examples of methods that facilitate introduction of technologies to marginalized farmers. Because farmers often have limited access to extension services and other formal training courses, they often rely on neighbors, family and friends. Training lead farmers will help ensure that technical support is available to smallholders in that community. Successful lead farmer mechanisms require qualified technical personnel to initiate the learning process as well as ongoing support and training.
4. On the question of natural resource management linked to increased productivity and income, results were mixed. Some evaluations measured farmer adoption of NRM activities but did not review the linkage with income and productivity. In other projects, ensuring both NRM and improving profitability was a challenge. One evaluation finds a link between NRM approaches and poor access to markets as a key factor limiting income generation. The review team speculates that projects working on NRM will face the same limitations as any technology introduction: There must be a link to markets and access to inputs, capital and finance. Local capacity building will also be needed.
5. Linkages between agricultural production and nutrition were found to be successful in multiple evaluations. Successful interventions introduced diet diversity and linked production and nutrition messages. Factors that were found to limit nutrition and diet diversity options were the presence of other cash crops that farmers grew instead of those recommended by the project; cultural and taste preferences that were averse to introduced varieties; and, in resilience programs, internally displaced populations may not have the land or resources to invest in a new crop.

[i] One *cureda* is equivalent to just under one acre.

B. Improved Research and Development

In the context of the Learning Agenda, research and development (R&D) focuses on ensuring that research is effectively used for international development, ideally for the smallholder farmer. The Feed the Future Learning Agenda Literature Review on R&D[j] cites evidence that scientific research can foster agricultural growth and environmental sustainability, reduce poverty, and enhance food security and nutrition. Although 61 evaluations had at least some component of R&D, only 16 addressed the interplay among R&D mechanisms and transfer to the poor or impact on policy. For performance evaluations, especially mid-term evaluations, it is difficult to observe large outcomes for resource-poor farmers or changes in the policy environment. Further research may assess whether these R&D projects were intentionally designed to achieve policy reform and/or improve outcomes for smallholder farmers. For example, though in some instances policy changes were reported, that does not necessarily imply that policy change was part of the project design. Nevertheless, excerpts that were analyzed reaffirmed some key assumptions about R&D.

B1. Research and Development Has Transformative Power

Question: What partnership mechanisms are most productive, efficient, effective and sustainable for carrying out agricultural research to positively benefit resource-poor farmers and food security?

Four evaluations discussed R&D projects that sought to impact enabling environments through civil society, ten evaluations discussed public–private partnerships in the context of R&D programs, and two evaluations discussed R&D projects that worked with government institutions. Partners from the public, private and third (civil society) sectors each had a different set of advantages and challenges. Civil society partners were passionate about development causes, but may have struggled with sustainability. On the other hand, private partners may have been indifferent about development outcomes, but they were sustainable as institutions. At the same time, while collaboration with national government institutions could assist in systemic change, progress tended to happen most at the community level. Regardless of which sector(s) projects developed partnerships with/among, this synthesis helped to determine a few common characteristics for effective partnership mechanisms in the context of R&D: implementation over a long timeframe, cogent communication strategies and partnerships that can enable dissemination.

Civil Society

The challenge of sustainability for civil society organizations can be overcome through a well-planned strategy. As explained in a mid-term evaluation of a project in Nicaragua: "It is indispensable to develop a funding or sustainability strategy from the very beginning, and immediately begin its implementation by one or more individuals dedicated full time to these tasks." The evaluation also stressed the importance of investing in institutional and professional competencies of personnel on an ongoing basis.[82]

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[j] Feed the Future Learning Agenda Literature Review: Improving Research and Development. USAID, September 2013.

Public–Private Partnerships

A public–private partnership is a relationship with private enterprises or philanthropic partners that leverages resources and expertise as a means for addressing a development priority.[83] This arrangement can leverage the sustainable nature of the private sector to achieve development outcomes. However, private sector interests do not always align with development objectives. Therefore, not all of the R&D projects that sought to establish public–private partnerships were able to do so. For example, a West Africa Regional evaluation found private sector participation to be generally low despite the private sector's potential role in spearheading the process of mitigating food crises.[84]

Government Institutions

A mid-term performance evaluation of the Cereal Systems Initiative of South Asia (CSISA) found that the project was able to more effectively build partnerships at the local and state levels than at the national level. The evaluation explained, "Misperceptions by some interviewees of CSISA as a stand-alone project in Phase I ha[ve] been corrected at the state and local levels, but attention to awareness and joint ownership at the national levels still merits some attention in all three countries." [85] Likewise, a project that had two partners—one working with a government coordinating body and the other working separately with each ministry—found that the project worked best at the community level: "Overall, integration of services is occurring, and is strongest at the community level, with most progress attributable to work that…partners do with and through community mechanisms."[86]

Characteristics of Effective Partnership Mechanisms

Some common characteristics of effective partnership mechanisms emerged from a review of evaluations related to R&D. For example, evaluations found that projects that benefited from a longer timeframe demonstrated potential for widespread uptake. One example noted, "New bean varieties that yield up to 40 percent more…are being grown by millions of small farmers (most of them women) in the region."[87] This activity was a continuation of funding of a sub-regional nonprofit association of the National Agricultural Research Institutes in 10 countries in Eastern and Central Africa. Beginning funding in 2002, this activity sought to "catalyze and promote cross-border collaboration in agricultural research that leads to effective and efficient impact across the region."[88]

An evaluation in India found in 2013-2014 that "more than 500,000 farmers adopted components of the 'early' rice-wheat cropping system in Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh," where productivity reached $100 per hectare.[89] This activity began in 2009, the result of the previous year's work to cultivate "innovation hubs" where service providers demonstrated to farmers the clear advantages of zero tillage and early rice-wheat cropping. These were impressive, large-scale gains, but several evaluations in Brazil,[90] West Africa[91] and Kenya[92] discussed limited adoption rates despite generating high-quality research. For example, in Kenya an evaluation explained, "Across the board… research products [were] not consistently being taken up on the scale needed to significantly reduce the incidence of diseases or create the resistances for which they were designed. Farmer habits as well as their education levels and awareness of and access to new and better agricultural technologies may play an important role in adoption." [93]

Factors that can widen the gaps between research and widespread use of new technologies and practices included a lack of a cogent communication strategy, a lack of key partnerships in dissemination, and policy barriers. Regarding communications strategies, some evaluations recommended that R&D projects contain an explicit dissemination plan in the early design phase. Regarding partnerships for dissemination, projects in West Africa discussed potentially valuable research innovations without demonstrating substantive knowledge of how private-sector actors could be used as a vehicle for dissemination. Finally, policy barriers were also cited as a factor to underscore the importance of the enabling environment. One evaluation that contrasted two technology transfer interventions noted:

> "The Bt Cowpea project, in addition to undertaking the technical aspects of the project, needed to work behind the scenes to get relevant legislation and regulatory bodies to put in place the necessary frameworks in order for the project to take off. The Post-Harvest project made quick strides, because of the available infrastructure and partnership platforms at [National Agriculture Research Systems], and the willingness and availability of processing-based associations in all project countries." [94]

This activity was a two-component approach that provided institutional support funding to the Council of Central and West Africa Agriculture Research and Development and supplementary funding to six key biotechnology projects being undertaken by various National Agricultural Research Systems. All three of these factors—communications strategies, partners, and policy barriers—were linked and suggest that R&D projects with scaling outcomes require deliberate policy and dissemination strategies.

B2. Research and Development and Policy

Question: Which R&D programs have had an impact on the policy or enabling environment?

As mentioned above, policy interventions can help remove some of the barriers to transformative adoption of technologies by the resource-poor. This review found 13 evaluations that explicitly discussed R&D and policy, with 9 demonstrating positive policy outcomes (some of which were intentional but others not). The four evaluations that did not demonstrate positive findings did not necessarily represent failure in policy interventions: They were mid-term evaluations that reflected dialogue occurring across key actors. Even though policy outcomes had not yet been achieved, dialogue was identified as a necessary intervention for bringing about policy outcomes. The types of policies varied, from changes in recommending planting times to land tenure and regional trade regulations.

Across the evaluations, there was a split between R&D projects with a policy implementation piece and research projects explicitly geared toward policy research. The latter demonstrated notable gains more quickly—perhaps because they had easily internalized the need for advocacy and high-quality knowledge generation. In one evaluation of an activity focusing on land tenure reforms, success occurred in multiple countries because of savvy policy advocates and the realization that it was necessary to "take your time and do it right."[95] This activity consisted of

several components that involved training teams on policy advocacy around land tenure reform and conducting assessments that guided strategic policy interventions.

Being aware of the political landscape was one lesson learned regarding successful policy reform. In East Africa, for example, policy promotion gained little traction in just one country, but it improved when the approach broadened to include other countries in the region. Such expansion allowed for a far more impressive movement to adopt promoted policies.[96] An evaluation in Morocco found success in achieving policy reform by identifying policy windows and staying aware of the opportune moments. The evaluation explained, "[this] project was implemented at a time when the Government of Morocco was re-evaluating and revising its agricultural policy priorities, reorganizing government services, and seeking to launch many new Morocco IAA Evaluation 7 initiatives."[97]

B3. Synthesis Trends under Improved Research and Development

Though much of the evidence from performance evaluations was preliminary, it did lead to interesting observations in R&D program design.

1. Large-scale impact requires long-term effort. Many of the successful projects demonstrated a longer legacy of R&D and coordination among partners.
2. Projects need to recognize and complement work of area actors. While high-quality research was important, R&D activities that were also mindful of and integrated with National Agriculture Research Systems and development actors found the best avenues for dissemination and smallholder adoption. This extends to policy as well: R&D programs that were also proactive in the policy realm had a more explicit strategy for advocacy and were aware of the key actors to ensuring change.
3. Internal communications strategies are also necessary. Several activities focusing on initial high-quality on-farm trials did not consider how research would reach farmers. Dissemination cannot work as an afterthought: It requires explicit planning.

C. Expanded Markets, Value Chains and Increased Investment

Reviewers applied the "Expanded Markets, Value Chains and Increased Investment" code to 146 evaluations. Findings and conclusions from these evaluations resonated with patterns that repeated across every Learning Agenda theme, such as the role of collective capacity in lifting vulnerable communities out of poverty, that access to resources was a common constraint for farmers, and that attempts to achieve outcomes required a sustained effort to systemically alter the enabling environment.

C1. Markets and Poverty

Question: What types of investments in value chain market-led development result in poverty reduction and improved nutrition among even the lower income quintiles in areas where value chain work is taking place?

Achieving and Measuring Poverty Reduction

Although 40 evaluations discussed objectives to affect poverty[k] levels and 110 evaluations discussed market development, only 7 evaluations discussed the relationship between market development and poverty reduction. Of those, three noted that alternative livelihood models, village savings and loan associations (VSLAs), Common Interest Groups and an irrigation project were successful at poverty reduction. The most common themes were that infrastructure and community-based organizations were key to lifting vulnerable groups out of poverty, but evaluations and programs face challenges in measuring poverty reduction.

Models for measuring and achieving poverty reduction. In a mid-term impact evaluation of the Millennium Challenge Corporation's (MCC) Alatona Irrigation project in Mali, poverty reduction, measured as changes in asset holdings plus real consumption expenditures, was reduced by 18 percent from the baseline. However, these results should be cautiously interpreted. The declines were driven by increases in asset holdings and non-food consumption, which were directly attributable to "starter-kit" grants of livestock and equipment, agricultural inputs and cash grants, all intended to facilitate transitions to irrigated agriculture. A follow-up study will be required to determine whether these additional assets generated enough increased income to warrant their costs. The non-food consumption measures also reflected improved community infrastructure such as water wells and schools.[98] A second model for measuring poverty reduction also came from Mali in a program with millet farming cooperatives. The evaluation of this project observed success in improving key livelihood indicators, including levels of production, availability and consumption of vegetables, levels of income, expenses and overall economic prosperity. Although the project was unable to reduce the length of the hungry season, and although the evaluation criticized the project's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems,

[k] For the purposes of Feed the Future monitoring and evaluation and in the context of the poverty-related Millennium Development Goal, extreme poverty is defined as living on less than US$1.25 per day, as calculated by the World Bank in 2008 using 2005 purchasing power parity exchange rates. See the *Feed the Future Guide* for more information.

its measurement systems were adequately designed to allow the evaluation team to pinpoint the length of the hungry season as a key program challenge that would require attention.[99]

Another model for poverty reduction came from an evaluation of a project in Nicaragua, which explained that the anchor firm approach,[1] which connects small producers with large firms to draw on the latter's capacity and connections to service providers, helped small producers overcome obstacles to sustained growth, including physical isolation, inadequate knowledge of end-market requirements, difficulty in accessing finance and challenges attaining economies of scale. Programs using the anchor firm model can be adapted to also promote food security, for instance by supporting the value chain initiative with an accompanying initiative for mother and child health and/or helping produce nutritious food for home consumption, such as through vegetable gardens.[100]

Challenges in measuring poverty reduction. In many cases, detecting impacts on poverty was not possible simply because projects did not collect requisite data to measure this. For example, evaluations in Guatemala[101] and the Dominican Republic[102] concluded that baseline data and M&E systems needed to be designed to measure impacts on poverty. Two other evaluations determined through qualitative research that programs had achieved poverty reduction, but the programs themselves did not have adequate systems to measure impact on poverty.

First, a mid-term performance evaluation explained how the USAID West Africa Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene program (WASH) facilitated the establishment of 26 VSLA groups in the Upper West region in Ghana. The evaluation concluded that these groups, consisting of 195 males and 334 females, resulted in positive impacts on poverty reduction by mobilizing finances in the community and offering loans. The evaluation also concluded that the creation of an alternative livelihood model among women groups in Niger through the sale of Aquatabs tablets reduced poverty by increasing household income. However, because this evaluation did not use baseline studies nor examine the statistical significance of scientific measures of poverty, further research is needed to examine whether these examples of success can serve as a replicable model for poverty reduction.[103]

Second, in Kenya, a performance evaluation's qualitative research found that grassroots farmer organizations and Community Interest Groups facilitated community-level empowerment to set the stage for increased production, increased income and poverty reduction. By working together collectively, the Community Interest Groups were empowered to demand quality extension services for crops, fisheries, livestock and value-added activities. The groups were also able to mobilize funds and expertise for infrastructure such as sub-surface dams and water harvesting structures, rural access roads, and rural health centers. As a result of the infrastructure and demand-driven extension services, farmers increased their production and incomes. The evaluation's qualitative research determined that "Some members of Community Interest Groups have increased their income by a factor of two to four within two years, and have moved out of poverty and improved the nutritional, health and educational standards of their families."[104] However, the project itself did not appear to have M&E systems designed to adequately measure impact on poverty.

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[1] For more on the anchor firm approach, see *Field Brief No. 13: An Anchor Firm Approach to Strengthening Value Chain Competitiveness*.

Challenges to Achieving Poverty Reduction

Less successful attempts to reduce poverty levels were marked by the exclusion of food-insecure groups in program design and/or challenges related to infrastructure.

Exclusion of food-insecure groups in program design. A final performance evaluation for a program in Nepal[105] described how income from sales of vegetables helped to significantly increase participating farmers' household incomes, but the program design limited inclusion of the most food-insecure groups—marginal landholders and landless. The evaluation explained:

> "Household survey data show that 68% (225/332) of the program participants were medium (0.5-2 ha) to large (>2 ha) landholders … The assumption that landless and marginal landholders would be included in the program through hiring of external labor was found to be inadequately realized … mostly because the scale of commercial production (average of 0.2 ha per household) has not reached a magnitude that requires extensive hiring of external labor."[106]

Another example of mixed success was in Zimbabwe, where a project created 1,224 jobs at the time of evaluation. Although all of the beneficiaries were below the poverty line and 95 percent met the USAID Bureau for Food Security's definition of smallholder farmers, the evaluation found that "the types of employment created were predominantly in the informal labor market, are not full-time work and are often uncompensated."[107] In other words, the program created jobs for vulnerable groups, but the jobs created may not have been sufficient to lift those vulnerable groups out of poverty.

Lack of infrastructure delays ability to reach the poor. Evaluations of projects in Ecuador[108] and Guatemala[109] explained that structural barriers, such as underdeveloped infrastructure, increased the time it took to reach the poor. A final evaluation of the project in Guatemala explained, "Working in the more remote areas, without infrastructure and nearby markets, means that desired results are likely to take many more years, and more resources, to achieve."[110]

C2. Infrastructure and Poverty

Question: What has been the impact of infrastructure interventions on poverty reduction?

Of 42 evaluations that mentioned infrastructure interventions, 2 discussed the impact of infrastructure projects on income and employment. As mentioned in the previous section, an evaluation from Mali[111] cited "starter-kit" grants of housing, livestock and equipment that facilitated a transition to irrigated agriculture. Poverty reductions were driven by increased asset holdings and non-food consumption. In the Philippines,[112] infrastructure projects were a major factor in project success. Programs in Afghanistan[113] and Nicaragua[114] made infrastructure improvements, which contributed to apparent livelihood improvements, but this was not explicitly measured.

Far more projects (12) listed unresolved infrastructure and transport challenges such as market distance, poor roads and transport costs as major constraints to project success. For example, an evaluation in South Sudan[115] explained, "Road conditions limited access to markets for most of the [farm-based organizations] the team visited … Every stakeholder and project staff member interviewed identified poor feeder roads and transportation infrastructure as either a major or the most critical constraint to market access."

C3. Value Chains and Income

Question: Which kinds of investments and in which value chain functions have generated increases in income and opportunities for employment? To what extent do different sources of investment in value chains lead to new income and employment opportunities for vulnerable populations?

There were 65 evaluations that discussed value chain interventions, 101 that discussed impacts on income and/or employment,[m] and 32 that observed a relationship between value chain interventions and their impact on employment and/or income. Four types of interventions stood out as successfully generating income: developing the capacity of smallholder or community-based organizations; establishment of clear commercial linkages; organizational capacity building for marketing and organization management; and facilitating access to finance. The key seemed to be aligning these factors with anchor firms, financial institutions and other market actors.

Smallholder Access to Finance

Throughout the evaluation inventory, a common theme was that limited availability of working capital financing for producer associations and cooperatives had constrained value chains. In Kenya, dramatic increases in sales occurred when associations and organizations received funding.[116] In terms of constraints, evaluations highlighted that financial institutions often perceived agro-lending as risky and the need to align credit products with agricultural production cycles.[117] An evaluation in Haiti suggested that directed credit programs (e.g., rotating funds for value chain credit established through project grants and/or Development Credit Authority loan portfolio guarantee programs) could help collaborating financial institutions overcome this negative perception.[118] Experience in Haiti,[119] Zimbabwe[120] and Uganda[121] showed that value chain interventions could increase farmer income when accompanied by financing mechanisms or access to credit. In Nicaragua, the Funds for Local Development Nitlapán model, in which smallholder credit is linked to technical assistance, was cited as an effective approach for providing microfinance to small producers.[122]

Linkages between Farmers and Service Providers

In many contexts, supply channels were underdeveloped because they had initially been designed for family subsistence. The underdeveloped channels offered few options for farmers to obtain agricultural inputs and service.

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[m] "Jobs lasting less than one month are not counted in order to emphasize those jobs that provide more stability through length. Jobs should be converted to full-time equivalents." See the *Feed the Future Indicator Handbook*.

For example, in Zimbabwe,[123] the project and agro-dealers delayed inputs. Agro-dealers reported delays receiving inputs from their suppliers, possibly due to project inefficiencies or unnecessary steps the project took to pre-package seeds and fertilizers. Late inputs from the project led to low yields and lower prices. "We need to plant on time, so we're not left behind," one farmer explained. An evaluation in Mozambique found that "The best way to break this cycle is to support and encourage the creation of a network of small-scale suppliers of inputs and services who can serve the current needs of the different communities, and who can grow and expand with increasing demand."[124]

Evaluations in Nicaragua[125] and Haiti[126] cited the anchor firm model as an efficient and sustainable approach to linking producers with input suppliers. A second solution was evaluated in the Dominican Republic, where the cluster approach[n] was applied.[127] The cluster approach was also applied in the Philippines, where evaluators viewed it positively, though they explained, "Infrastructure that facilitates connectivity, such as farm-to-market roads, should be pursued to complement the cluster approach and maximize the benefits from spillovers."[128]

Storage and Post-Harvest Technologies

Programs in Albania,[129] Liberia[130] and Uganda[131] demonstrated success in increasing farmer income through improved post-harvest handling to reduce waste and store the products under appropriate conditions for better sales and maximum profit. An evaluation of the Integrated Agriculture for Women's Empowerment project in Liberia explained that before the project, "…farmers most often sold their produce at 'give away' prices in order to avoid the inconveniences of carrying produce to and from markets or to avoid perishable goods/produce from getting damaged." [132] Beneficiary farmers reported that with the help of the project, they were able to store their vegetables longer and sell their produce at better prices.

Marketing

In Kenya,[133] a value chain private partner approach boosted milk revenues for farmers through improved pricing resulting from collective marketing.[134] Other project components that contributed to increased farmer incomes included expanding access to formal and informal marketing channels, assisting dairy farmer business associations to become private companies, and training farmers and helping them adopt new technologies.[135]

In Morocco, a supermarket marketing program was introduced in the sheep value chain:

> "The program was effective in establishing win-win relations between the aggregator and farmers in a particular value chain. Farmers can get a better deal by accompanying their sheep to market instead of selling to intermediaries. The supermarket also benefits from increased sales. The program has continued and expanded to a number of other cities because it is in the interest of both the supermarket and the farmers."[136]

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[n] The cluster approach to economic development consists of "geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, with linkages to related organizations such as trade associations, government agencies, and research and educational institutions." See Technical Brief No. 7, *The Cluster Approach to Economic Development*.

Likewise, in Sri Lanka, farmer associations were viewed as a major contributor to projects' successes because they helped farmers negotiate. [137]

Business Skills Training

An evaluation in Afghanistan noted that "[e]ach post-harvesting activity has an associated cost, and farmers are not fully aware of them."[138] Business skills training is an essential element to value chain development. For example, a program in Uganda[139] saw its greatest success when it trained agro-input dealers on product knowledge and business skills,[140] and a program in Kenya increased farmer incomes through a Business Development Services approach. The latter's performance evaluation explained:

> "There are three main internal factors that contributed to meeting [project] goals: 1) the linkages created by the project between smallholder farmers and [small business organizations], and between farmers and their commercial service providers; 2) smallholder farmers' training facilitated by [the project], particularly demonstrations and observation visits; and 3) [project]-facilitated credit to smallholder farmers and their associated [small business organizations]. All three activities were carried out under Land O'Lakes' Business Development Services approach."[141]

Similarly, mid-term and final evaluations of a USAID project in Zimbabwe showed that training in business management and cooperative principles helped several Milk Collection Centers turn the corner from loss to profit.[142] This project also provided training in farm business management, dairying as a business, business planning, farm budgeting, recordkeeping, financial management and economic analysis. This training, combined with other project components such as provision of in-calf heifers, grants for Milk Collection Center renovations, training in livestock management practice and exchange visits resulted in a progress rate of 167 percent against set targets for job creation.[143]

Programs in Lebanon,[144] Georgia,[145] Nicaragua,[146] Timor-Leste,[147] Iraq,[148] Mozambique[149] and Sri Lanka[150] also conducted business skills training. In Mozambique, a final evaluation found that additional income of $85,000 from cash crops was possibly attributable to "training and mentoring to farmers in market analysis, negotiation, value addition or processing, and by strengthening linked businesses to ensure integral and strong value chains."[151] In Georgia, anecdotal evidence suggested that business skills training generated full-time off-farm employment and helped training recipients establish start-up agri-processing businesses.[152] In Nicaragua, targeted technical assistance and training designed to help small and medium enterprises improve entrepreneurial, management, marketing and information technology skills helped them increase production output and product quality to better meet their anchor firms' requirements.[153] An evaluation of a Peace Corps Master Farmer program also noted that business development skills were needed so farmers would begin to view their work as a business and think like entrepreneurs.[154]

C4. Institutional Development and Systemic Behavior Change

Questions: Have interventions in agricultural value chain development led to development of local institutions and systemic behavior change? What are effective pathways for generating that change?

In 69 evaluations, the code for "Development of Local Institutions" co-occurred with the "Expanded Markets, Value Chains and Increased Investment" parent code. Of those, only 17 related to value chain development—and they primarily discussed the development of CBOs. The "Systemic Behavior Change" code co-occurred with the "Expanded Markets, Value Chains and Increased Investment" parent code in 25 evaluations, but only 14 of those related specifically to value chain interventions. Within this set of evaluations, systemic behavior change ranged from addressing the root causes of behavior that led to biodiversity degradation and gender inequity, shifting from donor-dependency attitudes to market-driven approaches, and building trust among producer communities to allow collective marketing.

Development of Community-Based Organizations

Several evaluations found that successful producer organizations were vital to agricultural value chain development. Experience in Kenya, [155] Mozambique,[156] Malawi,[157] Nicaragua,[158] Sri Lanka[159] and Timor-Leste[160] showed that organizing farmers into groups for bulking and joint marketing resulted in reduced transaction costs and greater efficiencies in product collection and delivery. Collective marketing through farmer organizations was cited as a sustainable way to increase bargaining power.[161]

On the other hand, in Liberia,[162] Madagascar[163] and Uganda[164] some farmers' cooperatives were weak because they did not function well as business organizations. An evaluation in Malawi[165] explained that collective marketing was less successful in remote areas; one in Mozambique explained further, "Farmer organizations need a change in their mindset to consider themselves as for-profit businesses and not merely self-help groups. Most of the organizations see their primary role as obtaining subsidies and benefits for their members, instead of providing business opportunities."[166]

Evaluations in Angola,[167] Iraq[168] and Uganda[169] noted shortcomings that included building CBOs too late into the project to achieve sustainability, inadequate funding for CBOs to reach the "next plateau of sustainability," limited backstopping services after producer organization graduation, and poor communication within producer association management.

Systemic Behavior Change

Ten evaluations observed diverse approaches to systemic behavior change. In Kenya,[170] a project made systemic changes in farmers' linkages to other actors in the value chain. In Somalia,[171] an activity's market-driven approach fundamentally challenged the prevailing development practice. Previously, project farmers had received free or subsidized provision of goods and services, so they initially met the activity's new market-driven approach with a sense of

diminished cooperation and trust. As a technical assistance expert working on the agricultural sub-activity explained, "The idea is new. It's difficult for the farmers to accept the [activity] as it is, because they were expecting some monetary incentives." Although the activity initially received push-back, it eventually broke through to engage farmers in market activities by increasing awareness of the approach's benefits.[172] Similar efforts to overcome donor dependency attitudes stood out in evaluations of the agricultural portfolios in Zimbabwe[173] and Mozambique.[174] Lastly, an activity in Tanzania[175] used a radio program to implement behavior change communication that addressed the root causes of behavior leading to biodiversity degradation and gender inequity.

Evaluations also highlighted key barriers to systemic behavior change. In Georgia,[176] a project's targeted trainings improved agricultural practices, but the project did not alter prevailing business practices. An evaluation in Malawi[177] detailed constraints to the adoption of collective marketing approaches, including reduced yields due to weather constraints and a lack of trust among farmers who feared "theft at aggregation centers, price fluctuations and shrinkage losses."[178] In Liberia, [179] although beneficiaries were trained to calculate the production cost of their produce, it remained challenging to set the market price based on production costs.[180] In Serbia,[181] small farmers still often follow traditional patterns and use outdated technology; an evaluation noted that this can be overcome by training, advisory services, and the introduction of new production techniques. In Nigeria, an evaluation noted that after a project introduced formal credit to farmers, the farmers returned to banks on their own for more loans in subsequent years. This suggests a change in farmer attitudes to value formal bank credit, but this positive change was tempered by the fact that some banks became reluctant to offer agricultural credit because some farmers failed to repay their loans.[182]

C5. Private Sector Investment

Question: What types of interventions (policy and regulatory reform; institutional strengthening; market development; public–private partnerships, etc.) have attracted private sector investment in agriculture?

Many evaluations addressed public–private partnerships, improved enabling environments, and facilitated policy and regulatory reform, but very few found increased private sector investment. The time it takes to enact policy reforms and complete investment transactions may limit the scope of insights that this synthesis can offer because many of the evaluations were mid-term reviews.

Public–Private Partnerships

Twenty-four evaluations discussed the relationship between public–private partnerships and private sector engagement, but only four noted successes in attracting private sector investment: Afghanistan,[183] through matching contributions from Farm Service Center members; Haiti,[184] through grants and public–private alliances; Sri Lanka,[185] through incentives for private sector investment; and Uganda,[186] through a strategic activities fund designed to complement technical assistance activities and leverage private sector resources.

In Nicaragua, a performance evaluation of an MCC rural business development services activity explained, "Foreign businesses made real investments and created jobs with the support of MCC funding, but causation cannot be reliably established."[187]

Enabling Environment

Of 88 evaluations that considered activities aimed at improving enabling environments, only 7 discussed where such efforts have also seen corresponding effects in private sector engagement. Several cited improved capabilities to attract investment, but the increased investment had not come to fruition at the time of the evaluation. For example, a 2012 final evaluation on a program to improve the business climate in Morocco[188] explained that "several foreign companies had been investigating investment opportunities in the region [and made] tentative commitments." Only one evaluation, in Somalia, discussed how improvements in the enabling environment succeeded in increasing private-sector investment.[189]

Policy and Regulatory Reform

Of 49 evaluations that discussed activities to facilitate policy and regulatory reform, only 2 addressed where efforts to facilitate reform also saw corresponding effects in private sector engagement. In Nigeria, a 24-month pilot program that used a private sector-led value chain approach networked[o] 853,111 clients after affecting macroeconomic policies, but failed to address the microeconomic policy issues that directly affected the relevant value chains. The policy program also failed to use the process of policy dialogue to facilitate regulatory and legislative change.[190] In Morocco, a project affected policymaking through "in-depth studies of the five value chains and the worldwide market for the four export sectors." The project had not succeeded in land tenure reform at the time of the evaluation, but its activities resulted in adoption of a value chain approach in the Green Morocco Plan and cooperative law reforms on registration were in progress. The project reported that its work on the value chains resulted in new investments of $27 million and additional sales of $56 million. The evaluation did not clearly indicate the source of these investments.[191]

Institutional Strengthening

Ninety-three evaluations discussed activities to strengthen institutions. Of those, 18 discussed where such efforts had also seen corresponding effects in private sector engagement, albeit not necessarily private sector investment.

Development Credit Authority Guarantee

USAID's Development Credit Authority (DCA) is a model that uses risk-sharing agreements to mobilize local private capital to help small businesses access financing. Seven evaluations in the inventory discussed DCA guarantees, three of which provided examples where programs were able to mobilize private capital through DCA guarantees. In Senegal, the DCA program handled $8 million in loans in FY2011.[192] An evaluation noted that three financial institutions in Georgia developed DCA Credit Guarantees in spite of the costs involved and the time it takes to get approvals for the facility. Two of the three financial institutions had the ability to use their

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[o] "Networked" refers to clients (i.e., smallholders, micro-entrepreneurs, traders and others involved in the commodity chain in the selected/target states) assisted by the project either directly or linked by a single degree of separation. For example, "networked" clients include those trained directly or by a recipient of direct training.

guarantees to finance about 1,100 additional loans by securing additional funds to on-lend.[193] Finally, a Final Performance Evaluation of Trade-related Programs in West Africa documented mobilization of $200,000 through DCA guarantees against its target of $1 million.[194]

Two evaluations recommended DCA guarantees as a method to mobilize private capital. In Haiti, an evaluation team recommended DCA guarantees as a method to help management and staff in financial institutions overcome their negative perceptions of agro-lending.[195] In Kosovo, an evaluation recommended that a project continue DCA credit facilitation support, because lack of credit was determined as the main constraint in the agriculture sector.[196] An evaluation of a separate project in Kosovo praised DCA as an effective development tool that can facilitate the availability of credit in agriculture. The evaluation added, "The DCA is most effective as an agricultural development tool when it is linked to integrated value chain development… and to out-grower schemes. For the greatest development impact, DCA agro-lending should be reinforced by production technical assistance."[197]

Two evaluations did not see success through DCA guarantees. A mid-term performance evaluation of Feed the Future's West Africa Fertilizer Program (WAFP) examined the program's DCA strategy, which emphasizes coordination with bilateral Missions for smaller investments. The program had provided assistance to medium and small enterprises, but most did not take advantage of the DCA. The evaluation found that "The DCA mechanism appears to have some limitations to adequately cover large investments, particularly medium and long term investments. There is no clear strategy for WAFP to encourage large business enterprise financing."[198] The evaluation recommends that the program "develop a clear strategy on how best to use the limited resources under the DCA to fund farmers and enterprises."[199] Finally, a project in Uganda sought to mobilize private financing with a guarantee, but had not succeeded at the time of the mid-term evaluation.[200]

C6. Intra-regional Trade

Question: To what extent has the expansion of intra-regional trade in staples increased market access and regional availability and reduced price fluctuations and year-to-year local shortages?

The Feed the Future Learning Agenda Literature Review for Markets and Trade[p] emphasizes that intra-regional trade in staples is a key concern for policymakers to achieve food security, particularly in times of shortage. A more recent study by the World Bank reconfirmed the importance of intra-regional trade in food staples and added that, although trade is taking place in the Economic Community of West African States, it has considerable room for growth and formalization.[q]

The Feed the Future inventory includes nine external performance evaluations of trade-related programs spanning Afghanistan,[201, 202] Pakistan,[203] Serbia,[204] Uganda,[205] Georgia,[206] Sri

[p] Feed the Future Learning Agenda Literature Review: Expanded Markets, Value Chains, and Increased Investment. (July 2013).

[q] Maur Jean-Christophe and Shepherd, Ben. (2015) Connecting Food Staples and Input Markets in West Africa: A Regional Trade Agenda for ECOWAS Countries.

Lanka,[207] Uzbekistan[208] and the West Africa Region.[209] Although many of these evaluations found success in increased trade capacity in various commodities, they did not find that the expansion of intra-regional trade in staples reduced price fluctuations or year-to-year local shortages. Several programs did observe progress in improving trade capacity and market access, but external factors (e.g., the involvement of multiple donors in overlapping activities) made it difficult to discern if increases in intra-regional trade could be attributed to Feed the Future and/or USAID programs. Even where significant effects on high-level objectives were not clear, some trade-related program activities had the potential to improve trade capacity in the long run. As one evaluator explained, "Development of business can take a long time and success is not assured. If it were, the commercial sector would handle it and foreign aid programs would be unnecessary."[210]

C7. Synthesis Trends under Markets, Trade and Increased Investment

One key takeaway from this review is that community-based organizations often play a key role in poverty reduction efforts. CBOs in the evaluations included Village Savings and Loans groups, Common Interest Groups and farmer associations, but a trend that emerged is that connecting such organizations to anchor firms is particularly effective.

Increased income was related to four types of interventions across a range of activities. These included: 1) support for smallholder or community-based organizations; 2) establishment of clear commercial linkages; 3) organizational capacity building for marketing and management; and 4) access to finance. In all four intervention types, alignment with anchor firms, financial institutions and other market actors played an important role.

About 11 evaluations cited the importance of value chain development, local institutions and systemic behavior change. Nearly all noted the need to strengthen the capacity of farmer and community-based organizations and find ways for them to achieve sustainability. Failures were generally noted to result from either weak management or poor decisions by the organizations. Producer organizations are fragile, and strengthening institutional capacity to better manage the organization and make commercial linkages is important for successful outcomes. Behavior change was rarely cited as being a problem aside from the need to change attitudes with respect to new market channels and methods.

This review of evaluations found three shortcomings across interventions in relation to the Feed the Future Learning Agenda. First, relatively few evaluations reviewed the impact of infrastructure interventions. Some cited specific examples of successful interventions, but many more evaluations cited unresolved infrastructure challenges as a constraint to project success. Second, although a large number of evaluations reviewed public–private partnerships, enabling environment, and policy and regulatory reform, very few cited increased private sector investment as a result. This missing link should be examined further. Many of the evaluations reviewed are mid-term. Given the time needed to see real change resulting from policy reforms and investment transactions, it is possible that activities had not yet yielded results.
Third, the Feed the Future Learning Agenda focuses on intra-regional trade of staples and increased market access. Of the nine evaluations that addressed this issue, their focus was not on

trade in staples. This question remains a gap in information collected via performance evaluations.

D. Improved Nutrition and Dietary Quality

Nutrition interventions were evaluated in 70 of the 196 evaluations. As in other Learning Agenda themes, the role of social capital in facilitating positive outcomes was reaffirmed, as community-based behavior change interventions proved integral to realizing nutrition outcomes. Beneficiaries saw positive results from program activities when they took ownership of the behaviors (e.g., agricultural assets and personal and family health), provided the necessary resources were available.

The dependent code marking nutrition outcomes was also applied in 70 evaluations. There was a heavy co-occurrence of nutrition-related programs to programs involving agriculture, market development, human and institutional capacity development, and health and sanitation strategies. This made direct attribution to causality difficult to ascertain. Indicators measured under specific strategic objectives could not be isolated because of the synergistic contributions of shared interest activities. There were many examples of successes in nutrition outcomes, although some used proxy indicators. Additionally, some of the data presented may not be indicative of conclusive nutrition outcomes because the inventory included many mid-term evaluations. This is especially important to note when long-term results are desired, such as effects on stunting. More information is needed to pinpoint which types of interventions have greater impact on nutrition outcomes in country-specific contexts.

D1. Agriculture, Nutrition and Health

Question: What have been the impacts of different approaches linking Agriculture, Nutrition and Health (ANH) on dietary diversity and nutritional status?

Thirty-four evaluations discussed nutrition outcomes resulting from ANH programs. Most of the data came from evaluations of programs that included a combination of agricultural, nutritional and health approaches implemented autonomously, though a handful highlighted strategies that integrated activities across at least two of these approaches. The results presented, though, are overall program findings that are not tied to individual approaches. Additionally, no evaluations addressed the effects of the geographic co-location of unrelated interventions on dietary diversity and nutritional status. In other words, no data discussed which approaches implemented in the same location were more effective, or if combination strategies were more efficient than individual strategies.

Six evaluations reported an increase in dietary diversity among programs that included all three agriculture, nutrition and health components. In the Kitgum and Pader Districts of Uganda, children aged 6-23 months improved in terms of three infant and young child feeding practices, including age-appropriate dietary diversity. Increased birth weight was anecdotally reported, but there were no data on this across the program's population.[211] In Burundi, a performance

evaluation found that the Preventing Malnutrition in Children under 2 Approach that included improved preventive health services, a BCC strategy "to encourage the adoption of best practices in health, hygiene and nutrition," and a two-pronged food component with agriculture-related training and inputs, and distribution of corn soy blend rations, helped improve children's vegetable intake and diet quality.[212]

Four of six evaluations did not find that improved dietary diversity translated into beneficial results on nutritional status. A final evaluation of a project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo explained that project components, including agricultural and livestock development, implementation of the Care Group model, support for the Ministry of Health, and construction of water and sanitation structures, led to an increase in the mean and median number of food groups consumed the day before the survey. However, it also found a higher percentage of underweight children and suboptimal results in achieving lower stunting rates as targeted by the end of year two of the intervention. Evaluators stated that the duration of effective implementation at the time of the survey—just one and a half years—was too short to expect significant improvements. They also noted that recent climate change and poor harvests drove the observed nutritional deterioration, but feeding practices and increases in illness should not be discounted. [213]

In Ethiopia, a final performance evaluation of the Development Assistance Consortium explained that there were no significant changes to malnutrition rates among children. The evaluation cited a number of possible constraints, including limitations of health and nutrition outreach activities, behavioral practices such as poor birth spacing, insufficient reliable access to food, limited access to potable water, and sub-optimal hygiene practices.[214] A final performance evaluation of a project in Zambia explained that the Positive Deviance/Hearth model and community gardens helped increase dietary diversity in Zambia, but both severe and moderate stunting and underweight rates increased; evaluators, however, also reported serious limitations with data quality and suggested re-collection and analysis.[215]

A final performance evaluation of an ANH program in Guatemala found increased dietary diversity and adequate food provision. While this did not lead to lower rates of chronic and general malnutrition, acute malnutrition decreased.[216] Two other evaluations of ANH programs also have conflicting results. In Burundi, where the Positive Deviance /Hearth approach was used, there was a non-significant decrease in the prevalence of wasting and a significant reduction in underweight, but a non-significant increase in chronic malnutrition.[217] In Afghanistan, a final performance evaluation found minimal progress for adequate consumption of diversified crops under Strategic Objective 1 (livelihood), yet a decrease in stunting and underweight was reported under Strategic Objective 2 (health).[218] If these results were not influenced by each other, the improvement in nutritional status might have been caused by other pathways, such as the food aid given or other health-seeking behaviors not mentioned.

Three evaluations with all three ANH strategies did show a decrease in malnutrition rates. A program in Guatemala with an agriculture/livestock intervention and nutrition and health education from healthcare personnel and health promoters experienced an 8.6 percent decrease in chronic malnutrition rates and 3.7 percent decrease in malnutrition rates in children under five.[219] The organizing of improved household nutritional recovery and community support helped reduce the rate of malnutrition in Mali.[220] In Malawi, the community-based Care Group

implementation model, health demonstrations, and livestock and fish activities helped achieve improvements in chronic malnutrition, underweight and weight-for-age Z-score.[221]

In Ethiopia, a mid-term evaluation of a program focused on capacity development and health sector-based interventions, BCC strategy and agricultural production found little or no change in the mean number of food groups women of reproductive age consumed. Religious fasting practices were cited as a possible constraint.[222]

Two evaluations included data from programs with agriculture and nutrition strategies. In Guatemala, kitchen gardens helped participants achieve diet and health improvements.[223] In Burkina Faso, improved hemoglobin levels among children signified better iron status as a result of a BCC strategy, adoption of optimal infant and young child feeding practices, increased ownership of agricultural assets and small animals, and increased agricultural production by women participants. However, there was no significant impact on children's growth. [224]

Five evaluations looked at programs with nutrition and health components. Positive results in nutrition and child health were found in Nicaragua as a result of the Community Program for Health and Nutrition and the Community Integrated Management of Childhood Illness community-based strategies.[225] In Egypt, messages, nutrition counseling, monitoring, and education from USAID's Smart Choices for Healthy Living project resulted in positive child health outcomes and adoption of health-seeking behaviors. Higher stunting rates were reported at endline, but evaluators believed this could be "a function of improved surveillance techniques."[226]

A mid-term evaluation of a project in Guatemala with activities including food ration distribution, BCC strategy to provide nutrition and health education to mothers, and strengthening of community health services and staff presented mixed findings for nutritional status outcomes. Although Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) increased, there was no statistically significant difference for all three anthropometric measures (weight-for-age, height-for-age and weight-for-height) between children with little to no hunger and children with moderate to severe hunger.[227]

An evaluation of a program in Kenya reported a reduction in edema, a marker for acute malnutrition.[228] That program improved access to water and sanitation facilities, and implemented integrated management of acute malnutrition, capacity building of the Ministry of Medical Services/Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation and health workers, and nutrition and hygiene promotion education sessions. In Haiti, a final evaluation of the Preventing Malnutrition in Children under 2 Approach and different health extension models of Maternal–Child Health and Nutrition found no improvement in stunting since 2008, noting the cooperating sponsors "may not have fully capitalized on the synergy across assistance for agricultural activities, natural resources management and maternal/child health and nutrition."[229]

There were six examples of integrating interventions among agriculture, nutrition and health strategies. Five of these identified the integration of nutrition and agriculture in a shared interest activity. Household food production integrated with nutrition education led to an increase in Months of Adequate Household Food Provisioning in Sierra Leone,[230] dietary diversity in

Nigeria[231] and consumption of fresh vegetables in Nepal.[232] In the same program in Nepal, there were also "significant improvements in dietary diversity and in infant and young child feeding practices such as exclusive breastfeeding, adequate complementary feeding and feeding children Vitamin A-rich plant foods," as well as improvements in anemia and underweight in women and positive results for stunting and anemia in children. However, results varied by region, and all did not show improvements. Evaluators noted there were "other factors such as very low levels of sanitation and continued high levels of food insecurity which the project did not address that may play a larger role than dietary diversity and infant and young child feeding practices in the current high levels of stunting and anemia." [233]

At the time of an impact evaluation in Senegal, causality could not be determined for improved dietary diversity from project activities related to agriculture, nutrition and market development.[234] In a project in Uganda's Kitgum and Pader Districts, one of the key activities to incorporate nutrition and agriculture included training women's gardening groups on "vegetable crop production as well as food preservation and preparation techniques to maximize nutritional value of food intake."[235] However, both HDDS and Months of Adequate Household Food Provisioning fell below targets because participants faced instability in a newly resettled area with limited access to resources. [236]

In a final example from Nepal that integrated all three strategies, "2,259 individuals … in 112 nutrition action groups covering 75 hectares of Kitchen Garden were formed and provided with hygiene educational trainings, resulting in an increased intake of fresh vegetables, uptake of iodized salt utilization, consumption of vitamin A and iron, and changes in hygienic practices reported by participants."[237] These shared interest activities contributed to program results, but were not the only activities implemented for ANH approaches. For example, beneficiaries in Nepal also participated in commercial agricultural production, education on nutrition and hygiene and construction of household toilets.

There were no clear trends related to combinations of strategies and nutrition outcomes, nor could results be attributed to one strategy over another when multiple activities related to agriculture, nutrition and/or health were implemented concurrently.

D2. Income Growth and Nutrition

Question: Have programs to increase farmers' incomes resulted in improved nutrition when not coupled with nutrition programming?

Overall, 11 evaluations reported relationships between nutrition patterns and projects to increase farmer incomes without nutrition programming. Five evaluations reported a general improvement in the availability of more nutritious foods as a result of increased income (Guyana, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Haiti,[238] Timor-Leste,[239] Kenya,[240] Zimbabwe[241] and West Africa[242]), but they provided no further information on actual utilization of these foods or their impact on beneficiaries' nutritional status.

Three evaluations included more information about the connection between farmer income and improved nutrition. In Kenya, the production of different staple crops, kitchen gardens, and the

village-based advisor approach to rearing livestock provided sources of nutritious food for home consumption and income to buy food from harvest surplus.[243] Beneficiaries in Mali experienced economic prosperity and improved food security, including the availability and consumption of vegetables.[244] In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, agricultural technology and NRM helped increase yields for household consumption and sales to purchase protein sources.[245]

In Timor-Leste, surveyors redefined the meaning of food security to signify sufficient productivity for family needs, a change from the definition of the ability to buy other foods in the event of staple shortage.[246] With this new definition, they found mixed results due to the effects of local farming and climate variability on crop production. Participants in Ermera and Baucau could not grow sufficient food for the year, while farmers in Bobonaro and most from Covalima "indicated that they could be food self-sufficient from their land throughout the year." [247]

Two evaluations found no improvement in dietary pattern with income gains. In Guatemala, findings validated scientific studies[r] that showed "increased income from market-oriented value chains do not necessarily translate into better nutrition and living standards."[248] In Armenia, agricultural productivity training did not improve farmer income or dietary consumption.[249]

D3. Value Chain Investments

Question: What activities have enabled value chain investments to lead to improved consumption of diverse diets?

Evaluations highlighted that it was difficult to integrate nutrition into value chain projects due to the need to synchronize nutrition intervention timelines with cropping calendars and the need to facilitate coordination between nutrition institutions and market players.[250] Nevertheless, 10 evaluations that focused on value chain investments showed that activities resulted in improved consumption patterns through greater purchasing power and increased availability of food from greater agricultural yields related to administrative and planning activities, and agricultural inputs and practices increasing production.

In Guyana, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Haiti, "recordkeeping, organizational skills, management plans and M&E capacity" helped to more efficiently monitor progress and keep track of production. Furthermore, "universities have increased access to resources and information, and are better equipped to team up with cooperatives and disseminate best practices to communities."[251] The improved practices increased production rates, value and cost, giving individuals more purchasing power to buy nutritious food for their families. Evaluators noted that the collaboration and networking between Feed the Future and its partners, as well as continuing to "improve the M&E system and strengthen linkages across value chains," would help generate economic growth and allow for money from sales to go toward food. [252]

[r]Studies conducted by the Nutrition Institute for Central America and Panama and statistical findings from Guatemalan National Statistical Institute, the National Household Living Conditions survey on household expenditures and cost of living, and the National Maternal and Child Health Survey of maternal and child health and nutrition.

Agricultural inputs strengthened value chains to increase productivity of diversified crops. USAID's Agriculture and Livestock Value Chain Activities in Kenya expanded the production of farm-level food crops other than maize, including potato and orange-fleshed sweet potato. This focus on more nutritious staple crops—as well as processed end products of fortified flour blends of maize, wheat, millet and sorghum—has introduced a wider variety of nutrient sources to farmers' diets. [253] Similarly, beneficiaries of high-value cash crop farming in Zimbabwe experienced modest household income gains that improved food security during the hunger period, when there is no crop yield. Increased yields affected dietary intake through additional income from sales and surplus for home self-consumption. In Zimbabwe, increased milk production contributed to a better HDDS,[254] and in Nicaragua, assistance from infrastructure projects gave approximately 8,200 farmers and their families better access to higher-quality water for "domestic use, production and value added processes." [255]

Question: Which value chain investments have failed to achieve this (improved consumption of diverse diets)?

Unforeseen situations or occurrences can prevent successful nutrition outcomes of value chain investments. In the data collected, two constraints led to less-than-desirable results: geographical constraints and farmer exclusion due to program design.

Access to markets determined if production can be translated into income. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, local media broadcast market prices to beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries alike, but due to "market distance, poor roads and transport costs, it is not clear that project beneficiaries have the capacity to access markets to sell their crops or take advantage of higher crop prices based on market location."[256] Similarly, non-farm employment in horticultural activities and community-based tourism were encouraged in Guatemala, but location in remote rural communities without infrastructure and nearby markets limited the amount of non-farm goods and services produced and sold.[257] The landscape itself was another geographical constraint in Guatemala: Small producers were "dependent on hillside agriculture, and subject to climate change-induced periods of unpredictable drought and excessive rainfall which have eroded the soil and reduced yields." [258] Because they feared their cash crops would fail, farmers stuck to traditional production of corn and beans instead of more land-efficient, high-value crops, limiting the potential for increased yields.[259]

In Nepal, evaluators noted that the program design itself excluded the most food-insecure population. Farmers were required to contribute a minimum of 0.2 ha of land, which disqualified marginal landholders and the landless, the majority of whom belonged to "the Dalit occupational caste group and indigenous groups."[260]

When food-insecure farmers were included in groundnut and soybean value chains in Malawi, poor understanding and activity implementation inhibited success in the following ways:[261]

- Farmers received training but had limited understanding of the benefits of warehousing, and some were still shelling groundnuts before storage, risking aflatoxin.

- Farmers did not understand that the seed recovery program eventually benefited their associations. They diluted the seed stock with other varieties not intended for the program.
- Farmers approved of the seed varieties they received, but complained that distribution was not equal or sufficient.
- Farmers were trained in collective marketing, but some had not tried it for fear of theft at aggregation centers, price fluctuations and shrinkage losses.
- Lack of harvest of groundnut and soybean prevented a decrease of market prices for consumers.

Although these examples did not have successful value chain implementation, aspects of this project did highlight the missing link to nutrition outcomes. Evaluators in Malawi noted that health-specific nutrition behaviors (e.g., breastfeeding and antenatal care attendance) were promoted instead of "nutrition-sensitive agricultural behaviors … such as improved agricultural inputs, time- and labor-saving technologies and intercropping."[262]

D4. Agriculture Technology

Question: Which agriculture technology interventions have improved diets and nutrition outcomes?

Sixteen evaluations showed evidence for improved diets as a result of improved crop varieties, irrigation, and improved farming and storage methods. Total attribution of improved diets and nutrition outcomes could not be given to agriculture technology alone because agricultural extension and productivity could also contribute. This combination of support occurred in Mozambique, contributing to gains in Household Food Provisioning and overall HDDS.[263] Nevertheless, the following examples elucidate how technology in particular has helped improve diet.

Improved Crop Varieties for Commercial Sale and Consumption

Six evaluations found a relationship between improved crop varieties and improved diets or nutrition. In West Africa, increased yields of improved sorghum varieties led to improved food security, household nutrition and cash income used to pay for school and hospital fees. Women participants also felt that the improved variety was "easier to cook and also enhances breast milk production."[264] In Mozambique, the introduction of soya, groundnuts and sesame encouraged greater dietary diversity and income, leading to improved health and nutrition practices.[265]

The corn soy blend and oil rations that beneficiaries in Burundi received had a positive effect on food security, but not necessarily nutrition.[266] A program in Kenya supported the diversification of staple crops to more nutritious sweet potato and cassava, allowing farmers and their families to consume these foods instead of relying on "expensive and less nutritious food."[267] Gardens and wheat farms in Afghanistan were promoted for subsistence and as a source for income and food security, albeit not necessarily nutrition.[268] Last, an evaluation of the Feed the Future Integrated Pest Management Innovation Lab research stated that improved horticulture crops

indirectly enabled farmers to buy more food with profits, as well as provide access to "greater consumption of vegetables rich in vitamins, antioxidants and protein."[269]

Irrigation

Three evaluations found that irrigation technologies supported improved nutrition and diets. In Nepal, irrigation infrastructure increased commercial vegetable production by at least 25 percent, resulting in increased income and improved food security and household nutrition.[270] Irrigation to otherwise unproductive lands in the Democratic Republic of the Congo allowed for cash cropping of horticultural crops such as rice, sweet potato, onion and tomato. Three crop harvests per year enabled 100 farm families to buy more meat and fish and boost Months of Adequate Household Food Provisioning from seven to nine.[271] Previously, these families had only one harvest per year. Finally, the installation of hand and electric pumps, as well as pump replacement, helped expand vegetable production and improve household food security and income in Swaziland.[272]

Improved Farming and Storage Methods

Seven evaluations discussed a relationship between improved farming or storage methods and improved nutrition and diets. Evaluations in Kenya[273]and Zimbabwe[274] found that improved farming techniques helped increase yields and food security, but not necessarily nutrition. Organic manures, improved post-harvest practices, mulching and adoption of key-hole gardens helped provide "green vegetables to household meals" in Chad.[275] In Uganda, technology improved the ability to harvest more than one crop, which boosted dietary diversity.[276] An evaluation of technology introduced through the Master Farmer Program in Senegal reported greater availability of and access to improved varieties of cassava, hot pepper, jujube and grains, as well as a greater supply of vegetables at a cheaper price.[277] In India, anecdotal evidence from women's self-help group members showed that improved dairy and vegetable production practices "increased variety and quality of vegetables for home consumption" more than "increased income from the sale of vegetables."[278] In Mozambique, food storage technology helped "maintain product quality for much longer periods."[279] Hen mortality decreased after stronger monitoring systems were put in place in Burkina Faso, increasing animal production in village model farms and households, and "contributing to improved food security and quality."[280] Additionally, egg consumption increased among children.

Question: Which agriculture technology interventions have failed to achieve this (diets and nutrition outcomes)?

Success was much more common than failure with agriculture technology. None of the evaluations found agricultural technology interventions that failed to improve nutrition outcomes due to a faulty hypothesized relationship between the intervention and the outcome. However, flawed project implementation prevented success in three cases.

A project in Guatemala lacked technical oversight over the installation and operation of drip irrigation systems for vegetable gardens, diminishing their effectiveness and sustainability.[281] Next, administrative and legal issues in West Africa delayed implementation of USAID's Bt Cowpea project, and unrealistic targets might have caused failure to achieve project objectives.[282] Last, in Ethiopia, "the Awassa 83 variety [of sweet potato] was widely accepted

due to its high yield [and] customary taste and adapted to moisture stress environment," but the "[orange-fleshed sweet potato] varieties such as Tulla and Kulfo were not drought-tolerant and [were] consequently destroyed." Moreover, many people did not accept some products because they did not care for how they tasted.[283]

D5. Human and Institutional Capacity Development

Question: What investments in human and institutional capacity development (HICD) have effectively generated large-scale nutrition outcomes?

Thirty-two evaluations discussed nutrition interventions related to HICD. Several overlapping themes in the data were either directly or indirectly linked to the beneficiaries' nutritional outcome through BCC and training of community leaders and volunteers. These outcomes included nutrition and health status, consumption pattern, health-seeking behaviors, and knowledge and skills of community health workers and healthcare staff. Community health workers and lead mothers confirmed the integral role of social capital in achieving program outcomes. In some cases, community members went beyond project requirements, sometimes on a volunteer basis.

Seven evaluations showed positive outcomes on nutrition and malnutrition in terms of anthropometric measures, nutritional status and disease prevalence. Evaluations in Uganda[284] and Malawi[285] reported improved birth weights as a result of improved feeding practices; programs in Malawi,[286] Bangladesh,[287] Afghanistan [288] and Guatemala [289] reported improvements in underweight and stunting. In Malawi, it was also shown that the likelihood of child stunting decreased the longer participants stayed active in Care Group activities.[290] Community members in Burundi[291] and participants in Uganda[292] claimed decreases in malnourishment. In Nepal, many indicators showed improvement in anemia prevalence and stunting. For example, "In Kailali District, there was a significant decrease in stunting from 28.9% to 18.4%. In Kailali, anemia prevalence among children decreased significantly from 57.7% to 48.8%."[293]

Many programs highlighted reduced illness as an indicator for improved health and nutrition, including in Uganda[294] and Malawi,[295] and specifically reduced incidence of diarrhea in Afghanistan,[296] Mali,[297] Uganda[298] and Mozambique.[299] In Mali, the significant decrease in diarrhea among children was attributed to the "emphasis being placed on hygiene/sanitation and food hygiene issues during group sessions and home visits."[300]

The anthropometric improvements and changes in nutrition status would be not have been possible without changes to consumption patterns. In Sierra Leone, beneficiaries acknowledged that availability of nutritious food was the same, but "because of the education provided, the people now know the importance of these foods and use them differently."[301] Four evaluations illustrated improvements in food groups consumed and dietary diversity. In Burundi[302] and the Democratic Republic of the Congo,[303] the number of food groups consumed increased among

children and people living with HIV/AIDS. The combined effect of BCC messages with food rations in Guatemala[304] and food security initiatives at homes in Nepal[305] contributed to increases in dietary diversity. However, because there were other initiatives in play, direct attribution to HICD was not warranted.

For BCC strategies to succeed, educators must prove they are knowledgeable about the subject matter. Twelve evaluations addressed the knowledge gained and skills used by community health workers and lead mothers to be able to play "a pivotal role in changing attitudes toward malnutrition, hygiene and sanitation, especially around the issues concerning child health."[306] Nurses and community health workers in Burundi were knowledgeable about breastfeeding initiation and exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life,[307] and there was a high awareness of childcare provision in Zambia.[308] Moreover, in Malawi, although evaluators complained about group session facilitation, they acknowledged that there "seemed to be minimal distortion of messages in this chain from facilitator to promoter to [care group volunteer] to household."[309]

Many interventions successfully transferred knowledge to beneficiaries. For example, the quality of local healthcare and BCC (e.g., counseling and village-based breastfeeding support groups) improved in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,[310] knowledge was transferred from lead mother groups to beneficiaries in Burundi,[311] and a multi-level response using the BEHAVE framework helped mothers in Guatemala[312] recognize the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of life and the transition to solids thereafter.

Similarly, beneficiaries were also aware of danger signs related to pregnancy, neonatal safety, and childhood illness and treatment as a result of community capacity building and BCC through the Care Group model in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,[313] Burundi[314] and Mozambique.[315] Community health workers in Egypt[316] conducted community health outreach and communication activities, nutrition education and rehabilitation classes, and home-based neonatal care. In Guatemala,[317] the same multi-level response was achieved using the BEHAVE framework.

Education and training on behaviors to improve the health of vulnerable populations was a first step in changing attitudes about nutrition, misinformed practices and health-seeking behaviors. Evidence of this was seen in Sierra Leone[318] and Mozambique.[319] Capacity training for health care staff is another facet of HICD that has demonstrated purpose: Enhanced quality of care increased utilization of services in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,[320] Afghanistan[321] and Burundi.[322,] Capacity training of professional community health care workers has especially been a focus to increase the frequency and quality of prenatal and postpartum care and continued monitoring of children, with evidence in Egypt,[323] Burundi,[324] the Democratic Republic of the Congo,[325] Uganda,[326] Zambia,[327] Sierra Leone[328] and Guatemala.[329]

Translating knowledge into behavior change is vital for producing tangible nutrition outcomes. Twenty evaluations included data related to health-seeking behaviors, mostly focused on improvements in infant and young child feeding practices and seeking medical attention. In general, gains were made on achieving improved breastfeeding practices in Egypt,[330] Mozambique,[331] the Democratic Republic of the Congo,[332] Guatemala,[333] Burundi[334] and

Malawi,[335] namely initiation of breastfeeding within 30 minutes and exclusive breastfeeding for six months.

Infants are at risk of malnutrition when they transition to solid foods, and appropriate introduction is absolutely necessary for optimal growth. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo[336] and Mozambique,[337] evaluations of complementary feeding practices at home indicate improvements in "age-appropriate dietary diversity—four or more food groups consumed; and age-appropriate frequency of feeding—feeding two or more times a day for children 6-8 months; and three or more times for children 9-23 months."[338]

Apart from improvements in nutrition due to access to nutritious foods themselves—as seen in Nepal,[339] Burundi,[340] Haiti[341] and Madagascar[342]—hygiene and sanitation is another valuable means of preventing disease and optimizing the utilization of nutrients. In Madagascar, progress was made in the percentage of caregivers using proper hygiene behaviors for personal care, food preparation, cooking and storage. In Haiti, more than 90 percent of mothers "indicated they properly washed [fruits and vegetables] before consumption; 78.5 percent of such beneficiaries indicated it was a change of habit following the fresh fruit and vegetable awareness promotion campaign of Kore Lavni Nou-2." [343]

Prevention of malaria, a disease which increases anemia prevalence in children, especially among populations that own livestock,[s] is a health-seeking behavior related to nutrition. The disease puts vulnerable populations at increased risk of further malnourishment, so prevention must remain part of the health discussion. Increased use of insecticide-treated mosquito nets and other prevention techniques were found in Burundi,[344] Tanzania[345] and Mozambique.[346]

Question: What were the enabling conditions and management approaches that have proven successful towards this end (generating large-scale nutrition outcomes)?

There were many successful cases of HICD investments on nutrition outcomes. Collaboration between implementers and local and national organizations (e.g., the community-based Neighborhood Health Committees in Zambia[347] and the Burundi Ministry of Health's policies and structures and systems[348]) helped ensure ease of transition and program sustainability.

Providing multiple platforms for learning was a common theme. A combination of interventions among related sectors, including behavioral and structural (i.e., infrastructure) in Burundi,[349] "ongoing support through the care group structure" in Malawi,[350] providing education at the health facility and community levels in Kenya,[351] and expanding domain into remote areas in Liberia[352] enabled implementers to reach more people in various locations.

Question: Which HICD investments have failed to achieve this?

Some HICD investments did not produce desired results due to three common constraints: poor design, poor implementation and lack of resources.

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[s] Agrilinks Webinar: "Understanding Agriculture to Nutrition Linkages: A Rapidly Moving Agenda." September 30, 2015.

Although beneficiaries might have gained knowledge, this did not always turn into behavior change. In Guatemala, "mothers with increased nutritional knowledge had no significant difference in the average dietary diversity of their children, compared to mothers with no increase in nutritional knowledge."[353] Also, information loss during dissemination should be expected because of the variance in learning styles, the amount of information given through various objectives[354, 355] and information retention rates.[356, 357]

Well thought-out program implementation is important to achieving success. Child growth monitoring services at local health centers in Guatemala[358] and Burundi[359] lacked logical work flow; as a result, mothers did not receive immediate feedback or individualized attention on their children's growth progress. In Mozambique, only 11 percent of beneficiary households received training in nutrition practices.[360] Training courses for 25-233 participants were implemented in Malawi, but research cited by the evaluation revealed that "skills acquisition declines sharply as group size increases above eight members."[361] Evaluators noted the mothers "were crowded into a small area, making it impossible for [them] to get close to participate in cooking or observe. Most of the actual food preparation in some sites was done by the [community group volunteers] with the mothers simply observing or waiting out of the way to feed their child. The whole concept of participatory hands-on learning was lost."[362]

Lack of resources was a major barrier to behavior change. Examples include insufficient immunization coverage; lack of "adequate and timely supply of therapeutic foods" or the closure of supplementary feeding centers in Burundi;[363, 364]and lack of financial resources to buy nutritious foods or obtain agricultural inputs (e.g., improved seed varieties) to put information learned from training into practice in Burundi[365] and Malawi.[366]

Poor M&E methods can adversely affect the ability to assess the success of a HICD intervention, though this is not evidence of an intervention's failure. In Burundi, errors in data collection, such as varying the time of year for collection and failure to correctly capture seasonal illnesses, skewed results.[367]

D6. Synthesis Trends under Improved Nutrition

While 34 evaluations reviewed the linkages among agriculture, nutrition and health programs, the mix of interventions and evaluation methods makes it is difficult to identify general trends or results that could be attributed to a particular strategy or intervention.

Furthermore, evaluations found mixed results for questions related to income growth and nutrition, value chain investments, and agriculture technology, making it difficult to discern clear trends. Increased production and food security were often cited, but without clear documentation of improved nutritional status.

Seven evaluations found an association between improved nutritional status and investments in local institutions, training and behavior change. With the data collected so far, six evaluations showed positive outcomes on stunting, anemia prevalence, and underweight, three showed a decrease in cases of diarrhea, and three showed improvement in dietary diversity and consumption of food groups. Evaluations documented successful behavior change in food and

personal sanitation, breastfeeding, complementary feeding and health-seeking behaviors. Knowledge and skills have been transmitted to beneficiary mothers, but sometimes long-held habits and limited income and resources inhibit the adoption of these new behaviors.

E. Improved Gender Integration and Women's Empowerment

The women's empowerment code was applied to 127 evaluations. This section reviews findings and conclusions from these evaluations to provide insight into the Feed the Future Learning Agenda's key questions in the area of gender integration and women's empowerment. It will also illustrate how social capital generated through CBOs has helped reduce the gender gap in access to assets to improve nutrition and reduce poverty. The evaluations confirmed that systemic change requires a sustained effort, and that projects see greater results when beneficiaries are given command over the resources that enable them to facilitate their own empowerment.

The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Baseline Report, published in May 2014, found that "too little credit, too much work, and a lack of membership in social and economic groups are the main constraints to women's empowerment in agriculture."[t] Our reviews confirmed this: Access to assets was universally cited as a constraint to women's empowerment in agriculture. An evaluation in Mozambique explained, "It is well understood that when women have more access to and control over agricultural assets and decision-making, family outcomes in terms of food security and health are improved."[368]

> ***"When women are given command of their own resources … they are more open to new ideas."***
>
> ***—Mid-term review for the PROSHAR project in Bangladesh***

E1. Gender Gaps and Agricultural Productivity

Question: Have agriculture productivity interventions reduced gender gaps in use of production inputs?

Numerous evaluations found inequalities in the distribution of agricultural assets between men and women and that women's limited access to agricultural assets is a hindrance to increasing agricultural productivity. This section will cover women's access to assets including inputs, agricultural technology, land and credit.

Access to Inputs

Seven evaluations spanning Afghanistan,[369] Liberia,[370] Nepal,[371] and Uganda[372] discussed women's access to inputs. The evaluation in Afghanistan, a mid-term performance evaluation, highlighted praise for the Farmer Service Center model as an avenue to increasing women's limited access to inputs:

> "The [model] is an excellent concept; much better than most donor sponsor projects that seldom have a real gender need sensitivity. Each province should have one Women Farmer Service Center. It is very difficult for women to access directly quality inputs; this is especially true for the divorcees, widows

[t] See the *Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Baseline Report*.

> and abandoned women in Afghanistan who are often heads of household supporting children and elders … A possible limitation facing [the model] is the giving away of free inputs by NGOs and donors."[373]

A final performance evaluation of a project in Liberia[374] that provided women with gardening tools found positive results on efforts to empower women in agriculture. The project "has made outstanding progress in accelerating women's roles from being passive to being active in household and community activities. Women now make joint decisions with their partners and have equal access to household assets."

In Nepal,[375] project support to community-based seed production and cooperatives played a role in the production of improved seed varieties that increased the production and productivity of maize, resulting in increased income for vulnerable populations, women and poor families. Women took part in project meetings, seed selection and other decision-making activities. They also received seed storage containers, proper storage bags, grading machines and shelling machines.

In Uganda,[376] a project provided seeds to vulnerable categories of women such as widows, caregivers and household heads, trained women farmers on animal traction, and provided ox ploughs to women. This project's mid-term evaluation found that this direct provision of free inputs addressed urgent needs following a period of war, but providing the inputs for free unintentionally generated dependency, as beneficiaries came to expect additional free inputs. Furthermore, the evaluation team observed some tension in producer organizations where some members did not receive free inputs. Expectations for free assistance hindered this program's efforts to strengthen producer organizations.

Another performance evaluation found that a global Feed the Future Innovation Lab placed heavy emphasis on gender equality in its program to ensure that both women and men were able to access high-quality seed. Though the evaluation found that most projects had successfully included women in their research, training and outreach strategies, it did not cite specific outcomes resulting from these inclusion efforts.[377]

Access to Agricultural Technology

Evaluations showed that women faced a gap in access to technology. Performance evaluations in Malawi,[378] Bangladesh,[379] the Democratic Republic of the Congo,[380] Haiti,[381] Uganda,[382] Burkina Faso[383] and Nepal[384] examined programs that supported women in learning new technologies and practices to increase productivity and income. In Uganda,[385] a mid-term evaluation showed moderate adoption rates of agricultural practices among women's gardening groups, producer groups and tillage beneficiaries. In Malawi,[386] a final evaluation noted women's potential as innovators and early adopters of legume technologies and practices because legumes were considered "women's crops." Furthermore, the evaluation explained, cultural distinctions in Malawi designated women as being patient and willing to wait for positive results, whereas men were assumed to want to see results prior to adoption.

An evaluation of a Feed the Future Integrated Pest Management Innovation Lab project found that women had considerable influence over outcomes and impacts of pest management projects:

"Women's important role in decision-making and allocation of household finances in many cultures alone warrants targeting them in [integrated pest management] research and training."[387] For example, women in Mali played a large role in creating a host-free period (i.e., refraining from production for two months before planting seeds) that caused virus pathogens to succumb, and a study in Indonesia, Cambodia and Bangladesh demonstrated that women were heavily involved in Trichoderma home production.[388]

A final evaluation in Burkina Faso[389] found that even non-beneficiary women adopted agricultural technologies:

> "Supervision visits and communication activities aroused keen interest among the rest of the population in the target communities, and as a result project records indicate that 1,211 non-beneficiary women received training and coaching from project staff and established gardens using their own resources. Of a sample of 836 non-beneficiary women surveyed, these gardens produced 52,383 kg of vegetables on an area of 17,120m²." [390]

However, adoption rates of promoted technologies in Bangladesh[391] were shown in a mid-term performance review to be significantly lower among women than men. The evaluation suggested the lower rate may be due to women being more risk-averse—but also to their limited access to resources, limited property rights and limited decision-making power. The project intended to address the lower adoption rate through a farmer field school approach. Significantly, the evaluation found that women had higher adoption rates of new technology with homestead gardens, reinforcing that "when women are given command of their own resources (as is the case with homestead gardens), they are more open to new ideas."[392]

Access to Land

Nine performance evaluations found that women's land tenure was a constraint, and each documented different approaches to increasing women's access to land. For example, an evaluation of a collaborative research program in West Africa explained that "women are often allocated poorer fields that are farther from villages, lowering the expected benefit–cost ratio of the technical package that the program is promoting."[393] A mid-term performance evaluation discussed how an activity in Guatemala[394] addressed land tenure constraints by training women about land rights in collaboration with the municipal women's office. In Kenya, USAID's Property Rights and Resource Governance Program's training courses improved beneficiaries' knowledge of property rights. This project in Kenya also assisted partner countries, including Rwanda,[395] where technical assistance was instrumental in helping ensure that the government's Land Tenure Reform Program recognized women's property rights, preventing the dispossession of widows. Finally, a mid-term performance evaluation explained that in Senegal,[396] women were trained how to restore biodegraded land. However, because this was a mid-term performance evaluation, a final evaluation should be reviewed to determine the impact of this approach.

Access to Credit

Five evaluations identified project strategies to increase women's access to credit, particularly through local foundations and cooperatives. Projects trained women on how to access finance

and trained foundations on how to provide women with credit. For example, when a program in Haiti[397] trained a local women's foundation how to track loan repayments, the foundation increased women's purchasing power and savings by providing credit to each of its 200 female members. Furthermore, interest from the rotating credit fund supported the foundation's operational costs, fostering sustainability. A program in Lebanon[398] working with microfinance institutions provided gender sensitivity training. The project's mid-term performance evaluation found that these microfinance institutions implemented a hiring preference for women to more easily reach potential beneficiaries.

In Nigeria,[399] when a project identified credit as a dominant constraint in all of the value chains, it responded by training women's groups on how to access finance. The evaluation found that all participants in subsequent women focus group discussions were highly satisfied with these training activities. Likewise, a project in Nicaragua[400] trained 368 women in how to access finance, supported 618 women-led small and medium enterprises, facilitated financing for 306 female producers and facilitated loans to 262 female entrepreneurs. Another lending program in northern Nicaragua[401] provided the majority of its three-year loans to female borrowers so they could purchase a dairy cow for milk production. The milk provided nutritious food for the borrower's family, and excess milk could be sold in local markets as an additional source of income. A technician helped the borrower select which animal to purchase, as well as oversee its health and productivity over the repayment period. Last, a project in Kenya[402] helped 42,814 farmers—37 percent of whom were women—access credit facilities through financial service associations, and savings and credit cooperatives providing front-office savings services to its members.

E2. Women's Empowerment and Nutrition

Question: Have agriculture and nutrition projects or approaches effectively improved women's empowerment, specifically in terms of agricultural production and time use?

As mothers, caregivers and agricultural producers, women are uniquely positioned to address malnutrition. Children's nutrition is inextricably linked to their mothers' overall well-being before and during pregnancy, as well as through the first critical 1,000 days[u] of a child's life. Yet, women and girls comprise an estimated 60 percent[v] of the world's chronically hungry people. Poor nutrition before conception and during pregnancy and lactation is a direct cause of stunted growth and development. An evaluation in Senegal explained, "High undernutrition rates among women, as well as women's role in determining the nutritional status of their young children, shows that gender considerations must be taken into account to improve the targeted population's nutritional status."[403] This is not to discount the role of men in household nutrition. In Sierra Leone,[404] an intervention increased men's interest in the nutritional status of their children. More generally, however, evaluations found success in nutrition outcomes where women were targeted.

Seven evaluations across Bangladesh,[405] Guatemala,[406] Malawi,[407] Tanzania,[408] Pakistan[409] and Senegal[410] discussed homestead gardening as a means to empower women to improve

[u] http://thousanddays.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Infographic-Power-of-1000-Days-FINAL.pdf.
[v] See the "Facts & Figures" on the UN Women website.

household nutrition by increasing availability of and access to nutritious food. In Bangladesh,[411] an activity that helped women produce fish and vegetables on small plots of land close to their households resulted in significant increases for both HDDS and Months of Adequate Household Food Provisioning. This activity also included interventions to train women in techniques to improve productivity; increase access to inputs through a voucher system; train input and service providers; and help women locate and access markets where they could sell the products they grew.[412] An evaluation of another activity in Bangladesh explained that home gardens "serve as an element of empowerment, as women feel better enabled to cater to aspects of the family food needs, particularly [those] that relate to their children."[413]

In Guatemala, beneficiaries experienced diet and health improvements from kitchen gardens, potable water and improved cook stoves.[414] In Pakistan,[415] training in homestead gardening was identified as the most extensive form of investment in women's empowerment due to its benefits for nutrition and income. In Malawi,[416] project lead mothers cited backyard gardening as the most important nutrition intervention they received. A project in Tanzania[417] also reported uptake among female-headed households in urban gardening, but the evaluation did not report if this resulted in positive nutrition outcomes. Likewise, in Senegal,[418] the evaluation of a project that trained women on nutrition and household gardening was not able to assess if activities contributed to improved food consumption or if improvements could be attributed to the project.

A second dimension to women's part in addressing malnutrition is in their role as community leaders. For example, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,[419] women led breastfeeding promotion groups to support exclusive breastfeeding and its practice among new mothers. In Egypt,[420] many women became "knowledge multipliers" who took the initiative to pass along nutrition and health information in their communities. In Malawi,[421] women played a key role in addressing community malnutrition as lead mothers who regularly met with project staff for training.

Time Poverty

Women have to spend time on drudgery work, which can push them into a position of helplessness and poverty. An evaluation in Nepal found that outmigration of youth, mainly male, caused labor shortages in rural areas, leaving women and the aged population to tend to the farming. This labor shortage—combined with the absence of mechanized equipment—may have had adverse consequences for women, who were already overburdened, and may ultimately have a negative effect on productivity levels.[422] One impact evaluation discussing a project in Pakistan[423] and four performance evaluations discussing projects in Ethiopia, [424] Madagascar,[425] and Uganda[426, 427] included interventions that helped to reduce women's time poverty.

In Madagascar,[428] VSLAs helped women gain independence and have more time for their own work. Evaluations found that two projects in Uganda reduced time poverty for women: One subsidized tractor ploughing services that decreased the time women spent in land preparation;[429] in the other, home vegetable gardens allowed quick, cheap access to healthy foods.[430] Water is another driver of time poverty: Women can lose up 12 hours of productive time if they have to fetch water—water that is often of inferior quality and may carry diseases. In Ethiopia and Pakistan, projects ameliorated time poverty through the provision of safe and close water sources. An evaluation in Ethiopia[431] found that a project provided safe water sources that helped

communities reduce the time it took to fetch water to a maximum of 10 minutes. In addition to improving health in these communities, project efforts created time for other productive and income-generating activities. Likewise, an impact evaluation in Pakistan[432] found that irrigation infrastructure reduced women's time poverty.

Conversely, a "real time" evaluation in Niger cautioned that cash-for-work programs should be more careful about providing appropriate work for women—work with equal pay for the time worked. "Women must work longer hours, usually when it is hotter. Because [the physical labor] takes women longer and there are limited tools for the work, men use the tools first and leave them for women to use later."[433] The evaluation noted that cash-for-work was not appropriate for pregnant and lactating women, the disabled and the elderly.

E3. Women's Leadership

Question: Have capacity building and increased leadership/management opportunities for women led to increased participation of women in leadership roles in the community?

Twenty-eight evaluations discussed women's leadership. An evaluation of a program in Afghanistan[434] provided an example of a charismatic female leader—the country's first female provincial governor—who added credibility to an environmental protection committee. However, although the promotion and visibility of elite educated women leaders can sensitize populations to women's potential as leaders, the eradication of global poverty requires the empowerment of women in less advantaged positions. The 28 evaluations that discussed the advancement of women found that gender-inclusive approaches that strengthen CBO development empowered women to take on leadership roles in local communities. Lessons learned across these evaluations included the following:

- Higher levels of women's leadership in CBOs can increase women's participation.
- Women's education levels can affect their ability to seize opportunities offered by interventions.
- Altering entrenched gender attitudes that make it difficult for women to assume leadership roles requires a sustained effort.
- Men's involvement in women's empowerment is essential.

Participation in Community-Based Organizations

In Nepal,[435] a high level of women's participation and leadership in producer associations resulted in increased incomes and food security for women. The performance evaluation explained, "Vast majorities of the project households reported positive change in women's life and economic status. The positive changes mainly refer to the increased confidence, voice and social status of women."[436]

In Kosovo,[437] project interventions empowered women in lead farmer positions through subcontracts. Likewise, in a project in Zimbabwe,[438] women made up 49 percent of lead farmers trained and deployed. In Kenya,[439] gender-inclusive approaches encouraged women's participation as managers, shareholders and training participants in Dairy Farmer Business Associations.

Success in women's participation and leadership also occurred in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,[440] where women served as active members and leaders in Community Development Committees. Although most committee presidents were men, the majority of members were usually women, and women were leaders of other associations. However, the evaluation found signs that women's high levels of participation might have been due to the cultural perception that "development work is women's work."[441] Another project fell slightly short of its target in women's participation in Community Development Committees, but the evaluation did not regard this as a failure because changing entrenched gender attitudes requires sustained effort. The evaluation explained, "45% women's participation is still respectable, given the time normally required to change deeply entrenched gender attitudes and practices and the relatively short period of project execution."[442]

A mid-term performance evaluation in Uganda[443] found that if more women held leadership positions in producer organizations, more women would participate. In this case, only 30 percent of producer organization chairpersons were women. When the chair, secretary, treasurer and nominated decision-makers were male, it affected women's accessibility to services. Reinforcing the finding that women's leadership increased participation from other women, a key informant interview in a process evaluation of a Peace Corps Master Farmer program also suggested that women should be selected as Master Farmers to encourage more women to learn improved technologies. This evaluation also suggested offering management and business skills training to empower women to take on higher roles in farmers' associations.[444]

In a West Africa[445] regional program, low numbers of female project coordinators limited women's participation in sanitary and phytosanitary projects, as did restrictions on their farm work stemming from religious and cultural beliefs in some communities, especially with crops perceived as "men's crops." The evaluation explained, "Future projects must be designed to include components of special interest to women." Similarly, women's project participation was inhibited because gender concerns were not integrated at the design stage in Mozambique[446] and Nicaragua.[447]

Experience in Guatemala and Nicaragua demonstrated the importance of women's education. In Guatemala, where women's literacy rates are very low, women's participation continued to be lacking despite efforts to increase it. The final performance evaluation explained that women were "becoming involved in producer association management, but their participation continues to be limited by cultural norms and language barriers."[448] The evaluation found that education would act as a bridge to cultural and language barriers. In Nicaragua,[449] a project lacked an institutionalized gender approach to producer organization development, but higher educational and organizational capacity among women enabled them to capitalize on opportunities from project interventions, such as cooperatives. The project was able to build on the women's prior skills with additional training and cooperative capacity.

Men's Involvement in Women's Empowerment

Men's buy-in to women's empowerment is essential. For example, in Nicaragua,[450] although women participated in family hygiene training events, evaluators witnessed a lack of male involvement, which the evaluation said "may limit program outcomes." Likewise, in

Bangladesh,[451] an evaluation team cited men's lack of involvement in homestead producer activities as a weakness: "Make sure that men's engagement remains constructive and supportive … [a]s women homestead producers become more successful and explore expanding their production, it will be essential that their efforts are not seen as a women's activity but become part of household income generation."[452]

In contrast, in Liberia,[453] a reduction in "gender-related problems" was noted where couples attended life-skills training to learn about joint decision-making, conflict resolution, mutual respect and gender-based violence prevention. Findings from this evaluation revealed that 33 percent of women interviewees occupied a leadership position in the community, and 88 percent stated that their husbands strongly supported the discharge of their duties. In Kosovo,[454] field interviews identified several husband/wife business teams, which contributed to raising farm family income. In Kenya,[455] training of men and women customary leaders and community members resulted in increased understanding and respect for women's rights within their communities. Consequently, "women reported increased confidence in the fairness and outcomes of local dispute resolution institutions, and greater access to land and control over assets at the household level. A number of women became elders, and one project staff member became a Member of Parliament." [456]

Another success occurred in Burundi,[457] where 150 people (88 men and 62 women) were certified as "positive deviants," defined as "men and women who have achieved significant change within their households toward more gender-balanced decision-making and shared household workload." These men and women, along with gender focal points, organized meetings and events to raise awareness on gender balance.

E4. Women's Empowerment and Value Chains

Questions: Have interventions advancing commercialization in value chains affected access to paid employment or types of employment for men and women? Have they led to increases or decreases in unpaid work for men or women?

Of 21 evaluations of value chain activities that discussed women's empowerment and participation, 9 found that increasing women's employment and income required the reduction of gender disparities in access to credit, resources, markets, assets and appropriate technology. Eight[w] discussed the power of collective capacity in overcoming these disparities through CBOs, such as women's groups, producer associations and grassroots organizations.

Eighteen evaluations[x] reported success in increasing income among women, four discussed potential increases unsupported by sufficient evidence and two reported failures to increase women's income. In projects that did increase income, successes were attributed to different types of interventions:

[w] In Afghanistan, Guatemala, Haiti, Kosovo, Nicaragua (2), Uganda and Zimbabwe.
[x] Across eight countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, three in Latin America and the Caribbean, one in the Levant, two in South Asia, and two regional programs.

- Job creation in Guatemala[458] through post-harvest activities and in Nicaragua[459] through the coffee and bean value chains
- Enhanced homestead food production in Burkina Faso,[460] Pakistan[461] and Uganda[462]
- Business and vocational training in Kenya[463] and Sierra Leone[464]
- Access to loans in Lebanon[465] and Mali[466]
- A women's association in Nigeria[467]
- Sustainable NRM and conservation in Haiti[468]

The remaining eight examples of increased incomes for women resulted from increases in productivity across the sorghum,[469] dairy,[470] maize,[471] groundnut and sugar bean[472] value chains. In Nepal, an evaluation found that women raising chickens provided by the project controlled income earned because they did not have to share ownership with the extended household. In controlling this income, women had more freedom to spend money on a wide range of utilitarian needs, such as soap and school supplies."[473]

An evaluation in Zimbabwe reported increased incomes for both men and women in the dairy value chains, but greater increases for men. The evaluation noted that this gender divide "can be explained by male-headed households' greater access to productive resources that include capital, land, labor, information and technical backstopping services."[474] Furthermore, an evaluation of another project in Zimbabwe found that women were fully involved in tea and coffee plantation crops, which used to be completely male-dominated; however, they continued to face barriers in accessing credit.[475] This evaluation also found that the project led to some unpaid work when men's and women's incomes increased in certain value chains, likely at the expense of women's empowerment for the sake of increasing overall family income.[476]

Nine evaluations across twelve countries in Latin America, South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa discussed market access as a barrier to women's participation in value chains. An evaluation of a farmer-to-farmer project in Guyana, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Haiti identified market access as the biggest challenge for greenhouse producers, including the transportation of produce to markets and knowing where to sell. Women also expressed that, although they had produced more, they had not realized the financial benefit they were expecting: "You lose the production if you don't have a way of getting it to market." One farmer-to-farmer volunteer helped producers devise strategies for marketing in tourist areas.[477]

A marked gender disparity in access to markets was also noted in a mid-term performance evaluation of a project in Bangladesh;[478] it was partially addressed through the formation of groups around the off-farm production of crafts. In Haiti[479] and Kosovo, [480] CBOs increased women's access to markets through collection centers. Overall, evaluations found that gender gaps in access to markets, assets and social capital must be overcome for women to garner increased income from value chain participation. Collective action was the most common means by which gender gaps were overcome.

E5. Women's Empowerment and Poverty Reduction

Question: Have programs that emphasize gender equality and the empowerment of women led to reduced poverty and hunger? Does empowering women lead to reduced poverty and hunger?

Increasing women's income is a priority because women are more likely than men to invest extra income in their family. For example, a survey in Timor-Leste showed that women placed a higher priority on increasing educational opportunities for their children: "71% of women and 59% of men indicat[ed] that if they could earn extra income, their first priority would be to use it to pay school fees for their children."[481] Furthermore, as noted under the third Learning Agenda theme, work with women's groups was one of the rare cases where value chain interventions were shown to result in poverty reduction outcomes, according to qualitative research findings.[482]

Additionally, discussions of the impact of women's empowerment on poverty stood out in five evaluations. In Burkina Faso,[483] Malawi[484] and a West Africa Regional program,[485] women were presumed to share additional derived income with the household. In Malawi, "women [focus group participants] confirmed that they were the family member most likely to grow legumes, try a new practice and share any derived income with the household." [486] However, the fourth evaluation, a final performance evaluation of project in Guatemala,[487] noted that due to insufficient project data, it was not possible to attribute poverty reduction to increased women's income: Baseline data were not available because this objective was not part of early project design. Finally, in Ghana,[488] it was noted that the establishment of 26 VSLA groups made up primarily of women resulted in positive impacts on poverty reduction.

E6. Synthesis Trends under Women's Empowerment

Value Chain Interventions

Twenty-one evaluations of value chain activities discussed women's empowerment. Of those:

- Nine discussed the importance of addressing gender disparities in access to credit, resources, markets, assets and appropriate technology.
- Six discussed the power of collective capacity in overcoming these disparities through community-based organizations, such as women's groups, producer associations, and/or grassroots organizations.
- One evaluation cautioned that where programs lead to increased family labor with in-kind payment, the programs may lead to financial gain for a household, but at the expense of women's empowerment because women may be the cheapest source of unpaid labor.

Poverty and Financial Autonomy

Discussions of the impact of women's empowerment on poverty stood out in four evaluations. In three of these four, women were assumed to share additional derived income with the household. The fourth evaluation, however, noted that attribution of increased women's income to poverty reduction would be unreliable given the lack of baseline data that would enable making this correlation.

The theme of income and women was discussed in five evaluations. Three related to women's improved general purchasing power due to their income generation, but only one pertained specifically to women's increased control over income decisions. One evaluation noted a positive relationship between decision-making and income expenditure but it did not explain if or how the intervention contributed to this.

Women's Leadership

The data set specifically for HICD and leadership participation among women was too small to see recurring patterns (seven evaluations note). However, some evaluations observed successful interventions in which women were holding both formal committee leadership roles and informal leadership positions as a result of training and knowledge gained from project activities. Women's leadership in general was mentioned in 28 evaluations. Success stories stood out in Nepal,[489] the Democratic Republic of Congo,[490] Zimbabwe,[491] and Kenya.[492]

Women's Empowerment in ANH Programs

It is difficult to elicit clear trends, but the following examples of intervention successes, challenges and data gaps may provide insight into what is needed to improve women's empowerment in ANH programs moving forward:

- One evaluation found that while women's ownership of agricultural assets increased, so did men's, partly due to spillover effects.
- Two evaluations found that women are actively involved in trainings; one of these attributed a change in men's attitudes in family life to their exposure to what the women learned.
- One evaluation found that beneficiary mothers increased sales and income, but there was no mention of who had decision-making control over this income.
- One evaluation reported better time use for women due to proximity of demo plots.
- No evaluations reported out data for decision-making over and access to credit
- Three evaluations noted the promotion of gender balance in administrative leadership roles.

F. Improved Resilience of Vulnerable Populations

USAID defines resilience as "the ability of people, households, communities, countries and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth."[y] As outlined in the Feed the Future Learning Agenda Literature Review for Improved Resilience of Vulnerable Populations, building resilience requires an approach that integrates multiple components such as community involvement, access to finance, market integration, and asset strategies, as well as a long-term commitment to improving the ability to minimize exposure to shocks and, where possible, to recover quickly when exposed. Building resilience also involves supporting individuals, households, and communities as they make proactive and informed choices about alternative livelihood strategies based on their conditions, and strengthening the enabling environment and systems in which household and communities are embedded.[z]

Building resilience in areas affected or likely to be affected by shocks and chronic stressors is a complex undertaking. Harnessing community knowledge and strong local engagement is crucial to sustainability of project efforts. However, activities targeting critical populations with voucher or food programs continue to struggle to create sustainable change. The review of the evaluation inventory highlighted common strategies designed to help vulnerable populations improve resilience, including asset strategies, safety nets, social capital and access to finance. Although few evaluations assessed the impact of interventions on resilience, strong CBOs that build trust and transparency was a common theme across successful interventions.

F1. Ability to Withstand Shocks & Changes in Risk-Reduction Strategies

Question: What interventions improve the ability of vulnerable households to withstand (stable consumption and protected assets) common and extreme shocks affecting their economic activities? In what ways?

Question: Have interventions changed risk-reduction strategies pursued by men and women to cope with shocks (health-related, agro-climatic, economic, socio-political)?

In the inventory of 196 evaluations, 26 discussed interventions to address households' ability to withstand shock. They highlighted complex resilience activities which employed approaches such as social capital development and asset strategies to achieve this goal. The evaluations found mixed outcomes, but interventions that coupled effective training with strong community participation were likely to have positive results. Of the 26 evaluations, 19 discussed the interplay of resilience interventions and changes in risk-reduction behavior. Further examination of these evaluations revealed that social capital and asset strategies were the most common interventions linked with changing risk-reduction strategies. More specifically, participating in VSLA activities, developing early warning systems, and utilizing food/grain storage were risk-reduction strategies undertaken at the household and community level to enhance their

[y] Feed the Future Learning Agenda Literature Review: Improving Resilience of Vulnerable Populations.
[z] Ibid.

absorptive capacity and withstand shock. However, many of the evaluations lacked sufficient data to assess the effectiveness and impact of the risk-reduction interventions. For example, six of the evaluations were mid-term, which was too early in the intervention to discern whether behavior change would be truly embraced. Even if they had been final evaluations, the five-year project life cycle would likely not have been sufficient duration to assess impact. However, the evaluators noted that enhancing collaborations at the community level and building on trust were integral to the success of these interventions. For example, a project in Indonesia[493] effectively organized communities to participate in group food storages which required building trust among community members. Now the food storages are a mechanism to withstand shock.

VSLAs to Withstand Shocks

Programs in Ethiopia,[494] Madagascar,[495] Mozambique,[496] Chad[497] and Malawi[aa] used the VSLA approach to increase community resilience to shock. When VSLA savings groups are applied effectively, they can smooth consumption and reduce vulnerability during lean periods. This is accomplished through increased savings, or income which allows participants to engage in prudent risk-taking such as investing in income-generating activities. In Madagascar[498] for example, a mid-term evaluation report found that VSLAs funded small income-generating activities such as opening up small shops, buying livestock and purchasing agricultural inputs that built on assets and provided income to withstand shocks.

Additionally, evaluations in Madagascar[499] and Burundi[500] showed instances where successfully implemented VSLAs reduced obligations to borrow cash from local lenders, which sometimes charged very high interest rates. The evaluations indicated that successes were correlated with high quality training, trust in the processes defined to participate in the VSLAs, and the level of transparency, which partly depended on how long the VSLAs had existed. Examples from Madagascar,[501] Malawi[502] and Chad[503] highlighted how programs were strengthened as more participants gained confidence in the system. In Madagascar, an evaluation found that "the number of members and the amounts contributed generally increase with each cycle, as members gain confidence in the system and in each other."[504] However, the evaluation of a program in Chad[505] noted that the savings program was not well-suited as an intervention within a short-term project, because it is necessary to monitor such programs until they become self-sufficient, which may take a long time.

Training was another factor that affected program success. High quality training in Madagascar[506] and Chad[507] led to an understanding of how VSLA programs work. In contrast, there was a low level of savings group formation in some areas of Ethiopia,[508] partly due to limited monitoring and capacity building during the initial training. Though VSLAs overall appear to be a promising strategy to mitigate shocks, evaluations in Malawi[509] and Mozambique[510] indicated that they might not be reaching the very poor, who were found to be unable to take full advantage of the program due to limited resources.

Early Warning Systems

Four evaluations touched on the establishment of early warning systems. This is a community-level risk-reduction strategy linking communities at the local level to the national level to address

[aa] See Volume I of the *Final Evaluation CRS Malawi WALA Program 2009-2014*.

shocks. In Madagascar,[511] Zambia,[512] Mali[513] and the Democratic Republic of the Congo,[514] community-based early warning systems were established to strengthen linkages and the existing capacities in drought/cyclone forecasting. These programs were often combined with others (e.g., programs to improve storage capabilities) to increase household capacity to withstand shock. The evaluations indicated that these systems were important for communities to be able to cope with shock. Communities' involvement in the systems, as well as their indigenous knowledge and awareness of drought signals, were harnessed to minimize the impact of shocks.

Food/Grain Storage

Three evaluations discussed using food/grain storage as a risk-reducing strategy to cope with shocks. Community storages were used to stabilize prices during peak harvest and provide food during lean times. In Mali,[515] improvements in food storage techniques decreased termite attacks. In Indonesia,[516] "saving food in the group's food barn is a new behavior. Usually people just keep it for [themselves]. The program has introduced a value to keep [food] in the group's storage. This practice is really [helpful to] people when harvesting fails or disaster strikes."[517] A review of these evaluations revealed limited measurement capacity for the outcome of food storage on price stabilization and impact during shocks.

Limitations

Evaluations in Malawi[518] and Mozambique[519] indicated that even though VSLAs engaged low-income households, the very poor were unable to take full advantage of the program due to limited resources.

F2. Recover from Shocks

Question: What interventions strengthen the ability of vulnerable households to recover (regain consumption levels and rebuild lost assets) from common and extreme shocks?

Evaluations revealed that safety nets were the main strategy that most programs used to help households recover from shocks. Seven evaluations discussed the use of voucher and cash-for-work programs to provide households' immediate needs and (in the case of cash-for-work) build community capacity through infrastructural work. There were two types of interventions: safety nets (cash-for-work and voucher programs) and asset strategies (VSLA programs). Food or voucher programs needed to include strategies for building strong community capacity to recover from shocks and to continue when programming stopped to ensure that recovery would be sustained. In Haiti, for example, a project giving free commodities and services created donor dependency among most rural Haitians. The project inadvertently disincentivized community members from taking "personal initiative"[520] to ensure their resiliency in the long term.

Voucher Programs

Programs in Haiti,[521] Afghanistan and Pakistan[522] used voucher programs to improve retention of net assets. Evaluations stressed that it was important for these programs to meet basic needs and stabilize consumption so households did not have to resort to negative coping mechanisms. However, there were some barriers, including in Haiti,[523] where the elderly and vulnerable were not selected if they did not have proper identification cards. As the evaluation noted, "In some

remote areas, some extremely poor elderly are living alone and are deprived of…even identification documents."[524]

Cash-for-Work/Voucher-for-Work

Cash-for-work and voucher-for-work activities in Ethiopia,[525] Pakistan,[526] Niger[527] and Chad[528] provided immediate assistance to households to recover from shocks while building infrastructure that further aided community recovery. Two evaluations stressed the importance of ensuring timely distribution of vouchers and cash because target populations relied on the programs.

VSLAs to Recover from Shocks

Although this paper has already discussed five evaluations that illustrate how VSLAs serve as a tool to withstand shocks, the same five evaluations also discussed using VSLAs as an asset strategy to smooth consumption and equip households to recover from shocks through providing access to financial services. VSLAs act to minimize the depletion of productive assets. In Ethiopia, for example, VSLAs were used to mitigate the impact of shocks and were also used as a coping mechanism once shocks occurred to lead to quick recovery of livelihoods for future well-being.[529] In Mozambique, a final performance evaluation found that:

> "Engagement with VSLAs has… provided an opportunity for at least 3,550 men and women to engage with financial services, albeit informal and likely for the first time. They have saved over $200,000 collectively, earned $44,500 on those savings through interest income, and provided much needed capital to local entrepreneurs and individuals. The formation of VSLAs was implemented in order to smooth consumption and reduce vulnerability during lean periods."[530]

The final performance evaluation cited above drew these conclusions through baseline comparisons and a mixed methodology consisting of qualitative research through focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and systematic observations at the household level with a multi-stage 30-cluster sampling design.

F3. Market Access & Value Chain Participation

Question: To what extent do different interventions to promote market access (such as promoting access to markets with lower risks and lower entry barriers) generate the participation of poorer households?

Question: What interventions on both the "Push" (social protection) and "Pull" (value chain deepening) sides improve the participation of the poor in value chain activities?

Evaluations highlighted that although value chains could be profoundly transformative for poor households, barriers to entry were quite pervasive. Six evaluations discussed the strategies for promoting the very poor into value chain participation and 17 discussed promoting market access. Three factors influenced whether the poorest households were able to participate in the value chain: access to finance, uptake of high-yielding crops, and participating in a vibrant and active CBO to introduce market practices that incentivized value chain participation.

Access to Finance

Providing easy access to finance is a common way to integrate poorer households into value chains. Interventions to this end encouraged households to participate in income generating activities. There were constraints, however. Evaluations stressed that financial institutions often perceived agro-lending as risky and highlighted the need to align credit products with agricultural production cycles.[531] An evaluation in Haiti recommended that directed credit programs (e.g., rotating funds for value chain credit established through project grants) and Development Credit Authority loan portfolio guarantee programs could help collaborating financial institutions overcome the negative perception of agro-lending.[532]

High-Yielding Crops

Evaluations of activities in Kenya,[533] Pakistan,[534] Ethiopia[535] and Sierra Leone[536] highlighted the use of improved high yielding crop varieties to increase production. These evaluations discussed the effective use of improved seed varieties in providing higher yields to enable farmer to participate in the market. In the case of Pakistan,[537] utilizing improved seed varieties increased yields associated with these new seeds requiring additional labor for harvesting.

Social Capital: Strong Community-Based Organizations

A program in Kenya[538] included farmers in value chains *and* engaged CBOs to increase employment. In this project, the formation of farmers groups into business organizations enabled poor dairy providers to increase their bargaining power. Through the CBO, "more than 1,000 jobs, [were created] 200 of them permanent."[539] In contrast, the evaluation of USAID's Food, Agribusiness and Rural Markets project in South Sudan[540] highlighted how low population density has limited the development of Farmer Business Organizations (FBOs), making it difficult for the project to build community capacity quickly.

Another challenge to building the social capital needed for effective farmer coalitions is the inherent dependence on trust and the associated need to overcome perceived risk. Collective marketing or storage was often required for smallholders to access the value chain, which many farmers found risky. In Malawi,[541] for example, the evaluation identified lack of trust among community members as a barrier to ensuring that poorer households participated in the value chain. The evaluation noted:

> "Farmers have been trained in collective marketing, but some have not had an opportunity to try it. Some farmers wanted to sell collectively last year, but weather conditions reduced their yields, leaving them without sufficient crop to market. Despite training, many farmers do not trust each other to aggregate. They fear theft at aggregation centers, price fluctuations and shrinkage losses."[542]

Although some evaluations discussed instances of theft, this particular evaluation did not explore whether the threat of theft was legitimate in the context of that project. Distrust among communities deteriorates the social capital that is integral to empowering communities through collective capacity. Regardless, as a result of these and possibly other barriers, less than 8

percent of farmers who grew food legumes used approaches recommended through the project.[543]

F4. Prudent Risk-Taking by Poor Households

Question: Do safety net programs promote greater participation of poorer households in prudent risk-taking and more remunerative economic activities?

According to the literature review on resilience, prudent risk-taking includes activities such as changing focus crops to include higher-value, higher-risk crops. Although several evaluations contained data that suggested safety nets benefited households' resilience, very few discussed the impact on households' prudent risk-taking behavior as described in the literature review.

Many of the evaluations discussing safety nets focused on the continuation of meeting basic needs through such interventions. In many cases, the priority spending of households was on food, education or other household items. Seven evaluations noted how safety net programs, which included food rations and voucher programs, allowed household savings to be used for paying children's school fees. For instance, in Afghanistan,[544] "providing commodities/food rations enabled some poor families to send their children to school as their household costs were relieved by food aid." However, evaluators also noted that the program lacked the capacity to address food insecurity through reducing vulnerability to risk, which was important for long-term success.[545] Similarly in Ethiopia, cash-for-work interventions ended up being one-off cash transfers which were short-lived in terms of impact.[546] The additional income earned was spent mainly on food and other household expenses such as health, education and clothing.

F5. Economic Growth

Questions: Have Feed the Future strategies to generate overall economic growth improved livelihoods of the poorest and most vulnerable populations? What are the most effective economic growth strategies for incorporating the poor and vulnerable?

Only five of the 194 evaluations discussed economic growth and poverty reduction, and a review of these evaluations did not reveal any major substantive themes to answer this Learning Agenda question. Nevertheless, these evaluations brought forth the limitations of measuring the impact of Feed the Future strategies on overall economic growth. The evaluations revealed that for overall economic growth to generate improvements in the livelihoods of the poorest and most vulnerable populations, fundamental policy change would be needed. This requires a long horizon, and the full impact of such interventions will not be captured by these evaluation reports. That being said, three evaluations highlighted how small enterprise development and youth employment interventions worked to alleviate poverty through facilitating economic growth.

Small Enterprise Development

Evaluations in Lebanon[547] and Nicaragua[548] highlighted interventions supporting micro and small enterprise development with microfinance tools. These interventions aimed to increase income generation and job creation partly through the development of small enterprises. However, both evaluations had limitations in tracking poor beneficiaries and measuring the

success of the project. In Nicaragua,[549] evaluators noted that using the anchor firm model in addition to microfinance was key in the success of the project. There were 2,737[550] jobs created, though it is not clear how many poor benefited.

Youth Employment

In Serbia,[551] a three-pronged approach was implemented through focusing on inter-municipal cooperation, public administration reform, and youth development and participation to contribute to economic growth through increased jobs and investment. The evaluators noted the difficulty in assessing if the economic growth targets were met, as this was a mid-term performance evaluation and indicators for improvements in economic performance are generally lagging in nature.[552]

F6. Synthesis Trends under Improved Resilience

Six evaluations discussed using VSLA programs as an asset strategy to promote behavioral change to withstand shock. Successful VSLA programs were partly dependent on the quality of training received (three evaluations) and the level of transparency established by the group (three evaluations). While the evaluations assessing VLSAs generally highlighted the positive contributions the programs have had on income for low-income families, two evaluations stressed the shortcomings of VSLAs in targeting the extreme poor, who lacked the resources to participate in them. Other evaluations highlighted the establishment of early warning systems to strengthen linkages and harness existing capacities in forecasting shock such as drought and cyclones.

Three evaluations discussed using collective food storage as a way to improve resilience through price stabilization or to increase food availability during lean periods. This required new behavior and building both trust among beneficiaries and value for community food storage. While collective strategies built on trust have had positive outcomes, collective marketing can fail when yields are low despite training because there is a lack of trust to aggregate storage when there are shortages.

Seven evaluations highlighted the use of voucher/cash-for-work programs to meet immediate household needs for vulnerable populations, and five evaluations specifically indicated that participants allocated their savings or credit largely toward paying school fees and health-related expenses. These programs have harnessed community action to improve infrastructure and build community cohesion. Timely distribution of voucher/cash is important because target populations are reliant on these programs.

Due to limited evaluations focused on economic growth and its impact on poor and vulnerable populations, no substantive themes emerged to answer the Feed the Future Learning Agenda question, "*Have Feed the Future strategies to generate overall economic growth improved livelihoods of the poorest and most vulnerable populations? What are the most effective economic growth strategies for incorporating the poor and vulnerable?*"

4. CONCLUSION

> ***"You lose the production if you don't have a way of getting it to market."***
>
> ***—Focus group participant for Farmer to Farmer Evaluation***

Of the 196 evaluations reviewed, 92 cited constraints that inhibited project success. Constraints included bureaucracy (7), lack of infrastructure (12), political and economic instability (29), and "access" (38). Problems of access can refer not only to the inability to obtain credit, capital or inputs, but also to the inability to reach markets due to constraints such as distance, poor roads, limited market information and a lack of connections to other market players. Women focus group participants in a Farmer to Farmer program evaluation in Guyana, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Haiti explained that even when they increased production, they did not receive the financial benefit they were expecting because of limited market access. One focus group participant explained, "You lose the production if you don't have a way of getting it to market."[553]

Social capital, in various forms, was essential to overcoming many constraints. Under the "Improved Resilience of Vulnerable Populations" theme, for example, social capital was among the most common intervention objectives linked with changing risk-reduction strategies. Programs that focused on recovery from shocks relied heavily on community participation and trust. Likewise, under "Expanded Markets, Value Chains and Increased Investment," CBOs were key to lifting vulnerable groups out of poverty. Organizing farmers into groups for bulking and joint marketing resulted in reduced transaction costs and greater efficiencies in product collection and delivery. For women's empowerment, the gender gap in access to finance, inputs, technology, other assets and markets was overcome through the collective capacity developed in women's groups, producer associations and other grassroots women's organizations. Last, under "Improved Nutrition and Dietary Quality," implementers saw greater sustainability to their efforts when they collaborated with community-based Neighborhood Health Committees, and many realized positive outcomes though community-based rehabilitation and behavior change interventions.

Another pattern identified throughout the inventory was that **projects saw better results when beneficiaries were empowered to take ownership of their own advancement**. For example, an evaluation found that women had higher adoption rates of new technology with homestead gardens because they had command over that resource. Similarly, it was found that when a woman had ownership of her own chickens, she also had control over the income that she earned from them. Also, producer organizations were more successful if they perceived themselves as business entities rather than as "self-help" groups. Producer organizations needed to see themselves as a resource that provided provide business opportunities, not subsidies. There seemed to be a shift from direct subsidization toward empowering communities as projects sought to reduce "donor-dependent" mentalities.

This synthesis identified numerous attribution and measurement challenges. Under "Trade," for example, the involvement of multiple donors in overlapping activities made it difficult to determine if increases in intra-regional trade could be attributed to Feed the Future and/or USAID programs.

One of the most common measurement challenges was measuring outcomes over time. As noted, the inventory included many mid-term evaluations, so findings were inconclusive because many outcomes require a sustained effort to systemically alter the enabling environment. The time that is necessary to enact policy reforms and complete investment transactions may limit the scope of this synthesis. For example, many R&D programs require long-term effort before they achieve an impact on the policy environment. Similarly, fundamental policy change would be needed to catalyze economic growth that could generate improvements in the livelihoods of the poorest and most vulnerable populations. Three evaluations showed that it also takes time to measure the effect of food storage on price stabilization and impact during shocks. Likewise, enabling environments need to be systemically altered if programs are to attract private sector investment. As one trade-related evaluation explained, "Development of business can take a long time and success is not assured. If it were, the commercial sector would handle it and foreign aid programs would be unnecessary."[554]

This report mapped much of the currently available evidence on how Feed the Future projects and activities are working and the results they have achieved in the context of the Learning Agenda. Across the Learning Agenda themes and questions, the synthesis illuminated areas where evidence gaps still exist and more evaluation research is needed. For example, although many USAID and MCC projects target agriculture productivity, few evaluations directly address the Learning Agenda questions (e.g., NRM projects are usually evaluated by their environmental and resilience outcomes, with very few explicit linkages to productivity or profitability). Likewise, in the Improved Nutrition and Dietary Quality theme, none of the evaluations specifically addressed the effects of the geographic co-location of unrelated interventions on dietary diversity and nutritional status. Last, for the Expanded Markets, Value Chains and Increased Investment theme, reviewers did not find evaluations that examined if trade-related programs reduced price fluctuations and local shortages. To address knowledge gaps—including those identified in this review—it may be necessary for future evaluations to examine questions that relate specifically to the Learning Agenda's key questions.

Annex 1. Learning Agenda Code Application by Year

Code Application by Year						
	2010	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**
1. Agriculture Productivity	34	248	385	415	253	118
IV 1.1 Ag technology	5	73	113	97	94	31
IV 1.2 NRM approaches	11	32	41	204	59	47
IV 1.3 Ag productivity	17	77	154	83	96	32
Inputs	7	25	55	27	5	
IV 1.4 Ag extension	7	154	176	97	123	38
Demand driven		2	3	2	2	1
Direct project support	6	13	27	6		1
Farmer Field Schools		20	7	4		
Farmer-owned Service Centers				4		
Farmer to Farmer			6	1	2	
Government-provided training			1	2	5	
Information Communication Technologies		4	14	3	5	1
Lead farmers		2	5	2	3	
Private Sector Service Centers				3	3	
2. R&D	1	57	152	117	138	18
IV 2.1 Partnership mechanisms	1	22	59	35	59	3
IV 2.2 R&D programs		36	122	80	86	14
3. Markets, Value Chains, Investment	46	274	393	238	275	43
IV 3.2 Policy & regulatory reform	15	25	42	20	77	3
Land tenure		1		1	31	
IV 3.3 Institutional strengthening	20	109	136	95	90	13
Business Service Organizations		7	16	1	2	
Farmer Business Organizations	1	14	7	15	1	
Management Information Systems and mobile money	2	4	4	4	20	
Strengthen government institutions	1		8	9	6	1
Strengthening banks & private lenders		2	6	23		
Training	2	19	24	15	6	10

Code Application by Year						
	2010	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**
Access to finance training		2	2	1	1	1
Business skill training	2	8	6	4	2	
Training loan officers		3	3	5	2	
IV 3.4 Market development	20	144	254	141	**130**	34
IV 3.1 Value chain interventions	10	48	140	71	54	25
IV 3.5 Public-private partnerships (PPPs)	1	28	35	18	38	2
IV 3.7 Intra-regional trade	7	13	43	12	12	
IV 3.6 Infrastructure	2	23	29	10	14	
4. Nutrition	59	115	163	198	187	55
IV 4.1 Agriculture, health and nutrition programs	45	91	127	158	133	39
IV 4.2 Human and Institutional Capacity Development investments	16	28	68	91	40	27
IV 4.3 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene	18	13	19	19	40	9
5. Women's Empowerment	7	47	114	89	83	10
DV 5.1 Women's empowerment	6	44	106	74	75	10
WE: Income		1	12	11	8	2
WE: Leadership	5	2	14	8	11	2
WE: Production		3	5	10	2	2
WE: Resources		1	15	13	14	
WE: Time		2	3		4	
6. Resilience	8	95	205	79	151	8
IV 6.1 Asset strategies	4	42	83	31	50	1
IV 6.2 Safety nets	3	18	64	6	32	1
IV 6.3 Insurance			2	4	1	
IV 6.4 Social capital	2	24	18	15	11	
IV 6.5 Promote market access		6	32	8		5
IV 6.6 Economic growth		2	11	5	24	
IV 6.7 Climate smart intervention		14	10	18	31	1
BC 1.1 Constraints	9	23	88	55	33	15
Access	5	6	24	21	17	4
Bureaucracy	1		7	3		4

Code Application by Year						
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Corruption				1		
Infrastructure	1	5	9	3	2	1
Instability and unpredictability	1	10	14	11	6	3
Lack of land titles	1		3		1	
Informal markets			2	1		
Dependent Codes	98	544	862	680	642	109
DV 1.1 Uptake	7	107	132	136	100	44
Scaling	1	11	11	23	4	3
DV 1.2 Productivity and profitability	15	87	183	97	102	28
Productivity	6	27	83	33	49	11
Profitability	1	14	20	30	12	5
DV 1.3 Environmental sustainability	7	65	44	159	31	17
DV 1.4 Employment/Income	9	65	132	71	96	14
Youth employment		3	3	1	3	
DV 1.5 Resilience	3	37	59	46	47	2
DV 1.5.1 Withstand shocks	1	17	23	28	15	1
DV 1.5.2 Recover from shocks		3	27	1	5	
DV 1.6 Effect on nutrition	34	89	120	125	76	15
Access to healthcare	8	8	21	21	14	
Anthropometric and laboratory measures	2	16	13	15	8	
Attitude and behavior change/knowledge	24	24	45	56	19	9
Dietary diversity	4	27	15	32	20	5
DV 2.1 Food security	4	40	70	66	46	12
DV 2.2 Impact on policy	13	26	42	27	70	12
DV 2.3 Impact on enabling environment	6	44	85	71	101	12
Through civil society	1	6	5	25	25	1
DV 3.1 Development of local institutions	10	50	93	98	89	6
Local government institutions			2	3	10	
NGOs		10	1	8	3	
National gov't institutions		2	5	8	9	3
Private sector strengthening	2	10	25	20	18	

Code Application by Year						
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Research institutions			14	2	1	
DV 3.2 Systemic behavior change	5	20	23	18	18	13
DV 3.3 Private sector engagement	1	23	35	19	47	
Foreign Direct Investment					10	
DV 3.4 Effect on level of poverty	3	8	15	9	23	2
DV 3.5 Market opportunity	4	84	113	36	32	9
DV 3.6 Price fluctuations		1	9	1		2
DV 6.1 Value chain participation by poor	4	13	66	14	22	13
DV 6.2 Prudent risk-taking	1		4	3	3	4
DV 6.3 Risk reduction	2	11	17	22	21	10
Management	66	206	375	388	367	77
M10: Prioritization	1	13	25	29	15	9
Strategic plan		4	10	8	3	4
M11: Adaptive management	6	12	36	24	28	3
M1: Alignment and harmonization	6	18	64	60	43	14
M2: Accountability and transparency	3	8	22	16	23	
M3: Inclusiveness	2	19	43	29	34	6
M4: M&E	30	39	58	78	52	14
M5: Cost effectiveness	1	5	15	14	11	7
M6: Knowledge management	3	30	44	78	58	20
M7: Resources & support from headquarters	3	6	18	32	11	9
M8 Sustainability	15	58	103	101	101	16
M10: Capacity building of staff and partners	1	17	29	47	52	14
M9: Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency	13	44	41	65	71	13

Annex 2. Code Application by Agency

Code Application by Agency			
	MCC	USAID	Peace Corps
1. Agriculture Productivity	17	1436	9
IV 1.1 Ag technology	1	412	7
IV 1.2 NRM approaches	4	390	
IV 1.3 Ag productivity	12	447	2
Inputs		119	2
IV 1.4 Ag extension	3	592	7
Demand driven		10	
Direct project support	1	52	
Farmer Field Schools		31	
Farmer-owned Service Centers		4	
Farmer to farmer		9	
Government-provided training		8	
Information Communication Technologies		27	
Lead farmers		12	
Private Sector Service Centers		6	
2. R&D		483	
IV 2.1 Partnership mechanisms		179	
IV 2.2 R&D programs		338	
3. Markets, Value Chains, Investment	28	1235	3
IV 3.2 Policy & regulatory reform		182	
Land tenure		33	
IV 3.3 Institutional strengthening	11	448	2
Business Service Organizations		25	
Farmer Business Organizations		38	
Management Information Systems and mobile money		34	
Strengthen government institutions		25	
Strengthening banks & private lenders		31	
Training	10	63	3
Access to finance training	1	6	
Business skill training		21	2
Training loan officers		11	
IV 3.4 Market development	19	703	
IV 3.1 Value chain interventions	4	344	
IV 3.5 Public-private partnerships (PPPs)	15	107	
IV 3.7 Intra-regional trade		87	
IV 3.6 Infrastructure	1	77	1
4. Nutrition	1	776	
IV 4.1 Agriculture, nutrition and health programs		593	
IV 4.2 Human and Institutional Capacity Development Investments		270	

Code Application by Agency			
	MCC	USAID	Peace Corps
IV 4.3 Water, sanitation and hygiene		118	
5. Women's Empowerment	1	348	3
DV 5.1 Women's empowerment	1	313	3
WE: Income		33	
WE: Leadership		42	
WE: Production		22	
WE: Resources		43	
WE: Time		9	
6. Resilience	2	530	
IV 6.1 Asset strategies		205	
IV 6.2 Safety nets		124	
IV 6.3 Insurance		7	
IV 6.4 Social capital		70	
IV 6.5 Promote market access		51	
IV 6.6 Economic growth	2	31	
IV 6.7 Climate smart intervention		74	
BC 1.1 Constraints	2	218	2
Access	1	75	1
Bureaucracy		15	
Corruption		1	
Infrastructure	1	20	2
Instability and unpredictability		45	
Lack of land titles		5	
Informal markets		3	
Dependent Codes	39	2880	5
DV 1.1 Uptake	9	517	5
Scaling		53	1
DV 1.2 Productivity and profitability	13	499	1
Productivity	9	200	1
Profitability	4	78	
DV 1.3 Environmental sustainability	2	321	
DV 1.4 Employment/income	18	362	
Youth employment		10	
DV 1.5 Resilience		194	
DV 1.5.1 Withstand shocks		85	
DV 1.5.2 Recover from shocks		36	
DV 1.6 Effect on nutrition	2	457	
Access to healthcare		72	
Anthropometric and laboratory measures		54	
Attitude and behavior change/knowledge		177	
Dietary diversity	1	102	
DV 2.1 Food security	5	233	
DV 2.2 Impact on policy		190	

Code Application by Agency			
	MCC	**USAID**	**Peace Corps**
DV 2.3 Impact on enabling environment	1	317	
Through civil society		63	
DV 3.1 Development of local institutions	1	342	
Local government institutions		15	
NGOs		22	
National gov't institutions		27	
Private sector strengthening		72	
Research institutions		17	
DV 3.2 Systemic behavior change	1	96	
DV 3.3 Private sector engagement	14	111	
Foreign Direct Investment	10		
DV 3.4 Effect on level of poverty	2	52	
DV 3.5 Market opportunity	1	277	
DV 3.6 Price fluctuations		13	
DV 6.1 Value chain participation by poor		132	
DV 6.2 Prudent risk-taking		14	
DV 6.3 Risk reduction	1	82	
Management		**1474**	**3**
M10: Prioritization		92	
Strategic plan		29	
M11: Adaptive management	1	106	
M1: Alignment and harmonization		205	
M2: Accountability and transparency		72	
M3: Inclusiveness	1	132	
M4: M&E		268	
M5: Cost effectiveness		53	
M6: Knowledge management		233	1
M7: Resources & support from headquarters		79	1
M8 Sustainability		394	1
M10: Capacity building of staff and partners		160	1
M9: Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency		247	2

Annex 3. Code Application by Evaluation Type

Code Application by Evaluation Type		
	Impact	**Performance**
1. Agriculture Productivity	107	1342
IV 1.1 Ag technology	43	370
IV 1.2 NRM approaches	10	384
IV 1.3 Ag productivity	72	385
Inputs	2	115
IV 1.4 Ag extension	20	573
Demand driven		10
Direct project support	1	52
Farmer field schools		31
Farmer-owned Service Centers		4
Farmer to Farmer		9
Government-provided training		8
Information Communication Technology		27
Lead farmers		12
Private Sector Service Centers		6
2. R&D	44	439
IV 2.1 Partnership mechanisms	3	176
IV 2.2 R&D programs	42	296
3. Markets, Value Chains, Investment	60	1204
IV 3.2 Policy & regulatory reform	13	169
Land tenure		33
IV 3.3 Institutional strengthening	28	432
Business Service Organizations		26
Farmer Business Organizations		38
Management Information Systems and mobile money		34
Strengthen government institutions		25
Strengthening banks & private lenders		31
Training	10	66
Access to finance training	1	6
Business skill training		22
Training loan officers		13
IV 3.4 Market development	29	693
IV 3.1 Value Chain Interventions	16	332
IV 3.5 Public Private Partnerships (PPPs)		121
IV 3.7 Intra-regional trade	1	86
IV 3.6 Infrastructure	4	73
4. Nutrition	104	669
IV 4.1 Agriculture, nutrition and health programs	89	504
IV 4.2 Human and Institutional Capacity Development Investments	40	230

Code Application by Evaluation Type		
	Impact	**Performance**
IV 4.3 Water, sanitation and hygiene	15	102
5. Women's empowerment	14	327
DV 5.1 Women's empowerment	12	295
WE: Income	3	31
WE: Leadership	3	37
WE: Production	3	19
WE: Resources	2	35
WE: Time		9
6. Resilience	8	528
IV 6.1 Asset strategies	2	205
IV 6.2 Safety nets	1	120
IV 6.3 Insurance		6
IV 6.4 Social capital	1	66
IV 6.5 Promote market access	5	46
IV 6.6 Economic growth		42
IV 6.7 Climate smart intervention		74
BC 1.1 Constraints	20	194
Access	10	58
Bureaucracy		15
Corruption		1
Infrastructure	3	17
Instability and unpredictability	5	40
Lack of land titles		5
Informal markets		3
Dependent Codes	181	2736
DV 1.1 Uptake	45	480
Scaling	2	51
DV 1.2 Productivity and profitability	51	459
Productivity	17	192
Profitability	8	74
DV 1.3 Environmental sustainability	4	319
DV 1.4 Employment/Income	24	358
Youth employment	2	8
DV 1.5 Resilience	6	188
DV 1.5.1 Withstand shocks	2	83
DV 1.5.2 Recover from shocks		36
DV 1.6 Effect on nutrition	41	407
Access to healthcare	6	61
Anthropometric and laboratory measures	7	47
Attitude and behavior change/knowledge	15	161
Dietary diversity	13	88
DV 2.1 Food security	23	214
DV 2.2 Impact on policy	10	180
DV 2.3 Impact on enabling environment	21	297

Code Application by Evaluation Type		
	Impact	**Performance**
Through civil society		63
DV 3.1 Development of local institutions	16	325
Local government institutions	1	14
NGOs		22
National gov't institutions		25
Private sector strengthening		75
Research institutions		17
DV 3.2 Systemic behavior change	24	73
DV 3.3 Private sector engagement	1	124
Foreign Direct Investment		10
DV 3.4 Effect on level of poverty	7	50
DV 3.5 Market opportunity	8	270
DV 3.6 Price fluctuations	2	11
DV 6.1 Value chain participation by poor	19	113
DV 6.2 Prudent risk-taking	4	11
DV 6.3 Risk reduction	11	69
Management	69	1407
M10: Prioritization	6	86
Strategic plan	1	28
M11: Adaptive management	8	100
M1: Alignment and harmonization	5	200
M2: Accountability and transparency	3	69
M3: Inclusiveness	10	123
M4: M&E	19	251
M5: Cost effectiveness	3	50
M6: Knowledge management	9	224
M7: Resources & support from headquarters	4	75
M8 Sustainability	13	381
M10: Capacity building of staff and partners	7	153
M9: Relevance, effectiveness, efficiency	17	229

Annex 4. Learning Agenda Co-Occurrence Statistics

Learning Agenda Question	Independent & Dependent Codes	Co-Occurrence Frequency	Evaluation Frequency
I. AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY (1,453 excerpts from 144 evaluations)			
What are characteristics of effective, efficient and sustainable vehicles for promoting adoption of innovation (technology, practices, behaviors) and diffusion of products and new technologies among the poor, women, and socially marginalized? What are the most binding constraints in promoting technology adoption and the most effective interventions for dealing with these constraints?	IV 1.1 Agriculture technology interventions and DV 1.2 Uptake	425	94
	IV 1.1 Agriculture technology interventions and BC 1.1 Binding constraints	25	16
What are approaches that successfully address long-term natural resources management objectives while effectively increasing productivity and profitability?	IV 1.2 Natural Resource Management approaches and DV 1.3 Productivity	54	28
	IV 1.2 Natural Resource Management approaches and environmental sustainability	184	40
To what extent do agricultural productivity interventions in the staple and non-staple crop value chains lead to the generation or improvement of on-farm and off-farm employment?	IV 1.3 Agricultural productivity interventions and DV 1.5 Employment/income	73	33
Which agricultural productivity interventions have had the greatest impact on resilience of households and individuals to recover from (regain consumption levels and rebuild assets) or withstand (maintain consumption levels and protect assets) common and extreme shocks?	IV 1.3 Agricultural productivity interventions and DV 1.6 Resilience	20	16
Does including nutrition education (social and behavior change communication) in agriculture extension services lead to reductions or elimination of household hunger and improved dietary diversity?	IV 1.4 Agriculture extension services and DV 1.6 Nutrition outcome	57	21
	IV 4.1 Agriculture, nutrition and health programs and DV 1.6	291	34

Learning Agenda Question	Independent & Dependent Codes	Co-Occurrence Frequency	Evaluation Frequency
	Nutrition outcome		
II. IMPROVED R&D (483 excerpts from 60 evaluations)			
What partnership mechanisms are most productive, efficient, effective and sustainable for carrying out agricultural research to positively benefit resource-poor farmers and food security?	IV 2.1 Partnership mechanisms and DV 3.4 Poverty reduction	2	1
	IV 2.1 Partnership mechanisms and DV 2.1 Increased food security	4	3
Which R&D programs have had an impact on the policy or enabling environment?	IV 2.2 R&D programs and DV 2.2 impact on policy	44	14
	IV 2.2 R&D programs and DV 2.3 Impact on enabling environment	25	15
III. EXPANDED MARKETS, VALUE CHAINS AND INCREASED INVESTMENT (1,270 excerpts from 146 evaluations)			
What types of investments in value chain market-led development result in poverty reduction and improved nutrition among even the lower income quintiles in areas where value chain work is taking place? Which kinds of investments and in which value chain functions have generated increases in income and opportunities for employment among the poorest quintile, women, and other vulnerable groups?	IV 3.1 Value chain investments and DV 1.4 Employment/income	88	32
Have interventions in agricultural value chain development led to development of local institutions and systemic behavior change? What are effective pathways for generating that change?	IV 3.1 Value chain investments and DV 3.1 Development of local institutions	32	17
	IV 3.1 Value chain investments and DV 3.2 Systemic behavior change	25	14
What types of interventions (policy and regulatory reform; institutional strengthening; market development; public–private partnerships, etc.) have attracted private sector investment in agriculture?	IV 3.2 Policy and regulatory reform and DV 3.3 Private sector investment	4	4
	IV 3.3 Institutional strengthening and DV 3.3 Private sector investment	30	18
	IV 3.4 Market development and DV 3.3 Private sector investment	78	29
	IV 3.5 Public–private partnerships and DV 3.3 Private sector investment	63	24
To what extent do different sources (domestic debt, FDI, guarantees, etc.)	IV 3.1 Value chain investments and DV 1.4 Employment/income	88	32

Learning Agenda Question	Independent & Dependent Codes	Co-Occurrence Frequency	Evaluation Frequency
of investment in value chains lead to new income and employment opportunities for vulnerable populations?			
What has been the impact of infrastructure interventions on poverty reduction? What is the impact when infrastructure investments are used in combination with more traditional value chain or productivity-enhancing interventions?	IV 3.6 Infrastructure investments and DV 3.4 Effect on level of poverty	6	5
	IV 3.1 Value chain investments and DV 3.4 Effect on level of poverty	5	3
To what extent has the expansion of intra-regional trade in staples increased market access and regional availability and reduced price fluctuations and year-to-year local shortages?	IV 3.7 Expansion of intra-regional trade in staples and DV 3.5 Market opportunity	23	11
	IV 3.7 Expansion of intra-regional trade in staples and DV 3.6 Price fluctuations	0	0
IV. IMPROVED NUTRITION AND DIETARY QUALITY (560 excerpts from 100 evaluations)			
What have been the impacts of different approaches linking Agriculture, Nutrition and Health (ANH) on dietary diversity and nutritional status (i.e. geographic co-location of programs, integration of interventions, what combination of A, N, and H)?	IV 4.1 ANH programs and DV 1.6 Nutrition outcome	291	34
What activities have enabled value chain investments to lead to improved consumption of diverse diets?	IV 3.1 Value chain investments and DV 1.6 Nutrition outcomes	9	7
Which agriculture technology interventions have improved diets and nutrition outcomes?	IV 1.1 Agriculture technology interventions and DV 1.6 Nutrition outcomes	41	18
	IV 4.2 Human and institutional capacity development investments and DV 1.6 Nutrition outcomes	157	34
V. IMPROVED GENDER INTEGRATION AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT (351 excerpts from 127 evaluations)			
Have agriculture productivity interventions reduced gender gaps in use of production inputs?	IV 1.3 Agricultural productivity interventions and DV 5.1 Women's empowerment	99	49
Have agriculture and nutrition projects or approaches effectively improved women's empowerment, specifically in terms of agricultural production, decision-making over and access to credit, control over income, leadership in the community, and time use?	IV 4.1 ANH programs and DV 5.1 Women's empowerment	42	21

Learning Agenda Question	Independent & Dependent Codes	Co-Occurrence Frequency	Evaluation Frequency
Have capacity-building and increased leadership/management opportunities for women led to increased participation of women in leadership roles in the community?	IV 4.3 Human and institutional capacity development investments and DV 5.1 Women's empowerment	12	10
Have interventions advancing commercialization in value chains affected access to paid employment or types of employment for men and women? Have they led to increases or decreases in unpaid work for men or women?	IV 3.1 Value chain interventions and DV 5.1 Women's empowerment	30	19
Have programs that emphasize gender equality and the empowerment of women led to reduced poverty and hunger? Does empowering women lead to reduced poverty and hunger?	DV 5.1 Women's empowerment and DV 3.4 Poverty reduction	6	6
VI. IMPROVED RESILIENCE OF VULNERABLE POPULATIONS (560 excerpts from 100 evaluations)			
What interventions improve the ability of vulnerable households to withstand (stable consumption and protected assets) common and extreme shocks affecting their economic activities? In what ways?	IV 6.1 Asset strategies and DV 1.5 Increased resilience	34	15
	IV 6.2 Safety nets and DV 1.5 Increased resilience	44	18
	IV 6.3 Insurance and DV 1.5 Increased resilience	4	1
	IV 6.4 Social capital and DV 1.5 Increased resilience	31	12
	IV 6.1 Asset strategies and DV 1.5.1 Withstand shocks	16	10
	IV 6.2 Safety nets and DV 1.5.1 Withstand shocks	16	9
	IV 6.3 Insurance and DV 1.5.1 Withstand shocks	3	1
	IV 6.4 Social capital and DV 1.5.1 Withstand shocks	20	7
What interventions improve the ability of vulnerable households to recover from shocks?	IV 6.1 Asset strategies and DV 1.5.2 Recover from shocks	1	1
	IV 6.2 Safety nets and DV 1.5.2 Recover from shocks	16	5
	IV 6.3 Insurance and DV 1.5.2 Recover from shocks	1	1
	IV 6.4 Social capital and DV 1.5.2 Recover from shocks	3	2
To what extent do different interventions to promote market	IV 6.5 Promote market access and DV 6.1 Increased value chain	24	6

Learning Agenda Question	Independent & Dependent Codes	Co-Occurrence Frequency	Evaluation Frequency
access (such as promoting access to markets with lower risks and lower entry barriers) generate the participation of poorer households?	participation by poor		
What interventions on both the "Push" (social protection) and "Pull" (value chain deepening) sides improve the participation of the poor in value chain activities?	IV 6.1 Asset strategies and DV 6.1 Increased value chain participation by poor	10	7
	IV 6.2 Safety nets and DV 6.1 Increased value chain participation by poor	2	2
	IV 6.3 Insurance and DV 6.1 Increased value chain participation by poor	0	0
	IV 6.4 Social capital and DV 6.1 Increased value chain participation by poor	0	0
	IV 3.2 Value chain interventions and DV 6.1 Increased value chain participation by poor	65	21
Do safety net programs promote greater participation of poorer households in prudent risk-taking and more remunerative economic activities?	IV 6.2 Safety nets and 6.2 Prudent risk-taking	1	1
Have interventions changed risk-reduction strategies pursued by men and women to cope with shocks (health-related, agro-climatic, economic, socio-political)?	IV 6.1 Asset strategies and DV 6.3 Changes in risk-reduction strategies	13	7
	IV 6.2 Safety nets and DV 6.3 Changes in risk-reduction strategies	2	2
	IV 6.3 Insurance and DV 6.3 Changes in risk-reduction strategies	2	2
	IV 6.4 Social capital and DV 6.3 Changes in risk-reduction strategies	13	8
Have Feed the Future strategies to generate overall economic growth improved livelihoods of the poorest and most vulnerable populations? What are the most effective economic growth strategies for incorporating the poor and vulnerable?	IV 6.6 Economic growth and DV 3.4 Poverty reduction	11	5

Annex 5. Evaluation Summaries

This annex provides a summary of findings extracted verbatim and synthesized from each of the 196 evaluations discussed in this report. The evaluation summaries are listed in alphabetical order by country. Evaluations that are not specific to single a country are listed by the relevant global or regional program.

Afghanistan

USAID Title II Multi-year Assistance Program—Health and Livelihoods Initiative in Ghor: End of Project Evaluation Report, USAID Afghanistan (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This is the final evaluation of the Multi Year Assistance Program (MYAP) in Afghanistan. The program targeted Children under 5, and pregnant and lactating women (PLWs) with food availability, access and utilization interventions. MYAP combined direct food aid as temporary means to ensure food availability, with a variety of interventions to improve households' access to food (gardens, wheat fields, tree planting) and utilization The MYAP interventions were found to be appropriate to meet the desired objectives. The MYAP was designed to have a synergistic impact on a household (HH), to receive services from both Livelihood and Health components across target districts, however beneficiaries in four Districts did not receive this synergic effect, nor were linkages established between the two sectors. In overall impact, the livelihood capacities of the target population have been moderately enhanced compared to the Baseline. Human capabilities have been protected and enhanced compared to the Baseline and the LoA targets. The successes of the SO2 include Midwife outreach program, Home Based Life Saving Skills (HBLSS), Pilot Family Health Houses (FHH), benefiting all target Districts. Despite successes, however, the environmental, security, geography and other challenges were not duly assessed and thought through at the onset of the Program. Such complex programs and environments necessitate a feasibility study, to properly assess risks, set realistic LoA targets and ensure timely implementation.

Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA): Midterm Evaluation, USAID Afghanistan (2011). Performance Evaluation.

An agreement was signed by USAID with Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA) to work with Afghan partners to establish private firms to sell agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, seed, and other services to Afghan farmers so as to improve their profitability. In completion of that task, CNFA established seven Farm Service Centers in the provinces of Ghazni, Helmand, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunar, Laghman, and Zabul. The overall objective of this midterm evaluation was to review the progress of the program in achieving its goals and to determine the impact of Afghanistan Farm Service Alliance (AFSA) project on the agriculture sector with special focus on Farm Service Centers' (FSC) ability to encourage the growth in rural household income by providing agriculture inputs and services to farmers. Our evaluation shows that the individual Farm Service Center stores are being successful and are likely to continue as

viable businesses. However, the broader view of the Farm Service Center program that includes these stores providing unique services such as extension training for farmers, capacity building in local employees, partnership with like-minded local organizations, and rental of scare farm equipment is not likely to be sustainable unless there is a major improvement in the performance of the Farm Service Center Association for Afghanistan (FSCAA).

Accelerating sustainable agriculture program (ASAP): Final performance evaluation, USAID Afghanistan (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The Accelerating Sustainable Agriculture Program (ASAP) followed other USAID funded agriculture development programs with similar objectives. The intent was to continue moving agriculture along the spectrum from the farm gate to higher levels within the processing sector, with the end goal of increasing exports as an engine for development. Interest in an evaluation was two-fold: assess the performance and reach of the activities implemented under ASAP and pose lessons learned that might impact future program considerations along this farm gate to export continuum. ASAP achieved much success, pointing the way to better post-harvest quality products and moving traders and exporters to higher levels of performance. Strides were made in providing services and better technologies down to the farm gate.

Rural finance and cooperative development program (RUFCOD): Mid-term evaluation, USAID Afghanistan (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The network of Islamic Investment and Financial Cooperatives (IIFCs), under the USAID funded Agriculture, Rural Investment and Enterprise Strengthening project (ARIES), was successful in delivering credit to rural and small urban centers, primarily in the North. These member-owned and managed financial cooperatives offer Sharia-compliant credit services to rural farm households and rural/urban small businesses to support improvements in their economic livelihoods and encourage savings for future household and economic activities. The intent of the project was for the IIFC Network to be fully managed and governed by local Afghan staff (Afghanized) and to achieve levels of self-sufficiency that would see all IIFCs reach 50 to 100 percent sustainability by the end of the USAID funding. The IIFC Network as an institution is successfully providing credit to rural/urban client members. Growth has been encouraging, given the volatile environment, but the issues of security and repayment default rates impede the system's ability to achieve sustainability.

Commercial Horticulture and Agricultural Marketing Program (CHAMP): Midterm Evaluation, USAID Afghanistan (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The Commercial Horticulture and Agricultural Marketing Program (CHAMP), implemented by Roots of Peace (ROP), is a four-year, $30.4 million activity to assist Afghan farmers to shift to higher value perennial horticulture crops by providing orchard development, vineyard trellising, and marketing to link producers to merchants for both import substitution and exports. Key to all components of CHAMP is the fact that all beneficiaries provide cost-sharing payments, typically

25 percent of costs, to build long term ownership and buy-in of the farmers, women and traders. Credit for farmers and traders has been a long-lasting constraint for economic growth. CHAMP, Afghanistan Credit Enhancement (ACE) and Afghan Almond Industry Development Organization (AAIDO) have worked to develop a mechanism to provide 3 credit to farmers and traders. Communication internally and between CHAMP and its partners in 16 provinces and four RCs should be strengthened through the use of more online information, periodic newsletters and through the participation in joint training events whenever possible. The communication between CHAMP and the Regional Platforms / PRTs is good in some areas but can be improved in others.

Improving Livelihoods and Governance through Natural Resource Management Program (ILG-NRMP)—USAID Afghanistan (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The Improving Livelihoods and Governance through Natural Resource Management Project is implemented by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The project works in Band-e-Amir National Park and the Northern Plateau in Bamyan Province, and in the Wakhan Corridor and Little and Big Pamirs in Badakhshan Province. These areas are significant in terms of biodiversity conservation and watershed protection. The project also includes a national capacity building component. The project supports and reports results under USAID/Afghanistan's Assistance Objective AO 5: A Sustainable, Thriving Agricultural Economy, specifically Program Element 5.2: Improved Natural Resource Management as a Result of USG Assistance.

Land Reform in Afghanistan (LARA) Final Evaluation. USAID Afghanistan (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This report analyzes the findings of the final performance evaluation of USAID's Land Reform in Afghanistan Project (LARA). The purpose of this evaluation is to learn the extent to which the project achieved its objectives and goals, document the project's successes and weaknesses, and develop recommendations to inform USAID on the feasibility of supporting land reform initiatives across its Afghanistan programs. LARA was intended to support the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) in the implementation of the National Land Policy by developing a robust, enduring, Afghan- owned and -managed land market framework that encourages investment and growth, mitigates land-based conflict, and builds confidence in the government's legitimacy, thereby enhancing stability in Afghan society. LARA was designed to contribute to USAID's Assistance Objective (AO) 4 and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS), specifically two National Priority Programs: Agriculture and Rural Development, and Urban Management Support Program.

Africa Regional

Evaluation of USAID support to the Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG), USAID Africa Regional (AFR) (2015). Performance Evaluation.

The Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG) is a coalition of the major US-based international conservation organizations that operate field programs in Africa. ABCG was created to enable its members to identify and address high priority and emerging conservation issues, and also to combine resources and effort in order to achieve a greater impact on the ground than the members acting individually could.

The purpose of the evaluation is to: 1) Determine the extent to which the Cooperative Agreement achieved its intended original and amended objectives; 2) Assess the technical, program management, and financial performance of WWF-US/ABCG; 3) Provide recommendations on how ABCG might further its institutional objectives; 4) Increase understanding of USAID's role in furthering shared objectives; and 5) Highlight lessons for USAID in facilitating associations of implementing partners.

While ABCG is doing an excellent job of identifying and disseminating information on high priority and emerging conservation issues, there may be some opportunities for improvement. An issue that was raised by multiple constituencies within ABCG is that perhaps the collaborative could provide more attention to outreach and information dissemination in Africa.

ABCG has been highly effective in promoting the adoption of new conservation practices within its member organizations. Each organization has adopted new conservation practices as a result of ABCG. Beyond the seven ABCG member organizations, there is also substantial evidence that practices promoted by ABCG have been widely adopted.

As a direct result of ABCG's involvement, many alliances and partnerships have been formed, most of which would probably have never materialized without ABCG support. ABCG has been particularly effective at building partnerships between the conservation community and non-traditional conservation partners.

Africa South of Sahara Regional

A review of climate change adaptation initiatives within the Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group members. USAID Africa south of Sahara (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group (ABCG), which is comprised of seven international conservation NGOs, conducted a review of member organizations' principal climate change adaptation activities underway within the region. The evaluators found that climate change adaptation has become a central component in conservation activities being conducted by ABCG members in Africa. The survey reveals that project work largely follows adaptation-planning frameworks – if not always by design – but that most work falls short of implementation of on-the-ground actions to adapt conservation management to accommodate climate change. Project objectives vary considerably, but demonstrate a fairly universal embrace of crosscutting, interdisciplinary approaches consistent with the broadening of NGO work on conservation in Africa from species- to people-based initiatives. Funding support provided for the highlighted projects suggest that donor attention to adaptation in Africa is increasing, but with five of the ten

projects funded wholly or in part by a single donor, there is much need for other donors to step forward in Africa. The tools and methods utilized in ABCG member projects show extensive use of applied modeling developed from projections of future climatic conditions generated by the global Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) suite of models, but bring to light several key issues and challenges regarding its application. On policy and outreach to decision-making bodies, the ABCG members all have activities across a range of scales from local communities to international conventions, though these generally complement on-the-ground conservation efforts rather than serve as objectives themselves.

Albania

Albanian Agricultural Competitiveness Program, USAID Albania (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The Albanian Agricultural Competitiveness (AAC) project provides program services to more than 1,200 individual farmer-clients, farmer associations, traders, consolidators, wholesalers, and other stakeholders involved in the production and sale of high-value agricultural commodities.

The effectiveness of AAC implementation strategies and approaches is demonstrated by its positive results as measured by its program indicators; its contributions to the country's performance in the agricultural sector; its successful collaboration with government institutions, other USAID projects and donor-funded activities; and beneficiaries' positive assessment of the AAC program as reported to the evaluation team. Examination of AAC targets and actual achievements reveals that the project has met or exceeded its targets for all indicators since program inception. This result is worth highlighting because program targets were adjusted upward twice -- for FY 2011 and for the period covering program extension.

AAC's contributions to Albania's performance in the agricultural sector are substantial. AAC beneficiaries' total production of the targeted commodities increased by an average of nearly 20 percent in FY 2008-FY 2011. Yield increased by an average of over 20 percent during the same period, suggesting that the increase in production was due not to expansion in area cultivated but to improved farming techniques and more intensive cultivation practices.

AAC collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Consumer Protection and its agencies at the national, regional, and local levels has been outstanding. And so was its collaboration with other donor-funded initiatives. A high MOAFCP official stated that AAC was the best agricultural project that had ever been implemented in Albania and that its collaboration with MOAFCP was the best he had ever seen. Representatives from other donors were equally enthusiastic in their assessment of AAC collaboration with their own project activities.

Angola

ProAgro 2006-2012: Lessons Learned from Six Years of Cooperative Agriculture Development in Angola: Final Evaluation, USAID Angola (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The project was primarily funded by USAID and Chevron. Key partners in the implementation of the project were the National Coffee Institute (INCA), the Neumann Foundation/EDE Consulting, ICCO, and DPADR/IDA-Benguela. It has set the stage for increases in production and marketing for the future through its development of 25 cooperatives, 12 co-op service centers, CESACOOPA (a union of cooperatives in Kwanza Sul), and the proposed Cooperative Federation in Benguela. The primary recommendation of the report is that funds be made available to pay for a technical assistance team to work with CESACOOPA and its member cooperative service centers, and a second technical assistance team to work with the Federation of Cooperatives that is under development in Benguela.

Armenia

Irrigated Agriculture Project - Water to Market Activity. Millenium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Armenia 2015. Impact Evaluation.

The $177.7 million Armenia Compact consisted of two projects: the Irrigated Agriculture Project and the Rural Road Rehabilitation Project. The Irrigated Agriculture Project includes two major activities— the Irrigation Infrastructure Activity and the Water- to-Market Activity (WTM)— and is equivalent to 86 percent of the overall compact investment. The subject of the evaluations summarized here is the $32.2 million WTM Activity, which includes four components: (1) the On-Farm Water Management (OFWM) and High-Value Agriculture (HVA) Farmer Training Sub-Sub-Activity, (2) the Credit Sub-Sub-Activity, (3) the Post-Harvest, Processing and Marketing (PPM) Sub-Sub-Activity, and (4) the Institutional Strengthening of Irrigation Management Entities Sub-Activity (ISSA). The Water-to-Market Activity represents 21 percent of the overall Irrigated Agriculture Project investment and 18 percent of the total compact.

Bangladesh

Midterm Review for the PROSHAR Project in Bangladesh, USAID Bangladesh (2013). Performance Evaluation.

With its overall goal of"Reduced Food insecurity among Vulnerable Rural Populations in select Upazilas in Khulna Division", ACDI/VOCA, in partnership with Project Concern International (PCI), is implementing the Program for Strengthening Household Access to Resources (PROSHAR) funded through the USAID/FFP Title II development assistance program. The project has made impressive progress in beneficiary participation with a total beneficiary coverage of about 23,000 households against a target of just over 43,000 beneficiaries by end of LOA. There has been limited success in this component due to a combination of factors that emphasize the need for significantly more capacity building in understanding markets taking into consideration the resource endowments of the different groups. With the goal of improving the effectiveness of the health services, a substantial amount of training has been provided to Community Health Care Providers (CHCP) of all 59 Community Clinics together with other specialized staff at the local levels. A number of recommendations have been made regarding

process management covering commodity management, knowledge management, human resource management, and environmental compliance have also been made.

Save the Children Bangladesh mid-term review of nobo jibon multi-year assistance program. USAID Bangladesh (2013). Performance Evaluation.

Save the Children has been implementing the USAID-supported Title II PL480 Multi-Year Assistance Program in Bangladesh, "Nobo Jibon." The program is designed "to reduce food insecurity and vulnerability for 191,000 direct beneficiary households…in ten upazilas of Barisal Division over five years." It has three strategic objectives (SOs) in the areas of maternal and child health and nutrition (SO1), market-based production and income generation (SO2), and disaster risk reduction (SO3), as well as a cross-cutting gender component. Administrative and financial processes are implemented effectively, and commodity management and monetization are of a high standard. Program implementation is effectively supported by McAID. While data collection and management are generally good, information is not properly presented and used for strategic decision making. M&E needs to focus more strongly on qualitative indicators. Program management needs to formulate a continuation strategy for the remaining project period taking into account the MTR analysis, and develop an action plan that details how Nobo Jibon will address the concerns raised.

Bolivia

Integrated development and conservation in the Bolivian Amazon project: midterm evaluation. USAID Bolivia. (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is a midterm performance evaluation of the Integrated Development and Conservation in the Bolivian Amazon Project- a project that seeks to improve biodiversity conservation efforts by strengthening local governments and civil society, promoting economic growth and scaling up the project. The evaluation seeks to determine which planned results and outcomes have been achieved by the project, whether the project's integrated approach is working, to what extent the indicators are attributable to the project, and how effective it has been in strengthening local institutions. Originally the project aimed to work in three priority regions, but was obliged to discontinue activities in Pando shortly after beginning implementation, as a result of internal conflicts in this region. This reduction in geographical scope of the project was not made official by USAID.

In practice, project support to institutional strengthening of municipal governments and indigenous organizations has been extremely limited. Deforestation and forest degradation, resulting in biodiversity loss, continue at alarming levels in the country and in particular in the Guarayos area covered by the project. The project has strengthened the capacity of productive organizations more in technical issues than in administrative and management matters. Even so, little progress has been made in strengthening indigenous organizations due to the political and institutional crisis affecting the context in which the project is implemented. Furthermore, Significant problems were found in the definition of project indicators, the means of verification

and the form of interpretation of indicators. The evaluators conclude that Project implementation has been seriously affected by structural problems that stem from project design.

Burkina Faso

Enhanced homestead food production for improved food security and nutrition in Burkina Faso. USAID Burkina Faso (2013). Final performance evaluaton.

This report reviews the implementation of the activities of the project "Enhanced Homestead Food Production for Food Security and Nutrition in Burkina Faso" (E-HFP). The findings of the analysis of difference in differences showed that the EHFP program was successful in increasing women's agricultural production across a variety of crops, including the vitamin A-rich foods promoted by the program. However, the program did not show a significant impact on household food security indicators, as assessed by the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale. There was some evidence that women's ownership of agricultural assets as well as small animals increased in intervention villages compared to control villages over the two years of program implementation. Men's ownership of small animals and livestock also increased in intervention villages relative to control villages over the course of the program, suggesting spillovers to men, although they were not directly targeted with support. Beneficiary women were more knowledgeable about a number of optimal infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices and were more likely to report having adopted optimal IYCF practices such as initiating breastfeeding within the first year of hour, feeding children iron-rich foods and at least four out of seven types of foods, as recommended to meet the minimum requirements for a diverse diet as compared to those living in control villages, indicating that the behavior change communication (BCC) strategy was indeed successful. The program improved hemoglobin concentration among children living in the intervention villages where health committees were the BCC agents compared to those living in control villages. However, no significant impact of the program was detected on improving children's growth. Supervision visits and communication activities aroused keen interest among the rest of the population in the target communities, and as a result project records indicate that 1,211 non-beneficiary women received trained and coaching from project staff and established gardens using their own resources.

Burundi

Catholic Relief Services Burundi Multi-year Assistance Program (MYAP): Final Evaluation Report, USAID Burundi (2012). Performance Evaluation.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) commissioned a Final Evaluation of its Title II Multi-Year Assistance Program (MYAP) being implemented in partnership with the International Medical Corps (IMC), the Bureau d'Appui au Développement et à l'Entraide Communautaire (BADEC), and the Organization Diocésaine pour l'Entraide et le Développement Intégral de Muyinga (ODEDIM) in three provinces of northern Burundi. The program has three components, (1) a maternal and child health and nutrition component that is focused on pregnant and lactating women and children under the age of five years, (2) a livelihoods component focused on

agriculture and natural resource management using a watershed development approach, and (3) a community resilience component which builds local capacities for disaster risk reduction and promotes gender equitable decision-making at the household and community levels. The final evaluation found that significant impact has been achieved by the MYAP on around 15,000 households in the watershed collines and on at least 75,000 children and 60,250 caregivers across the three provinces through MCHN capacity building. Some impact, especially the impact achieved from SILC, the goat solidarity chains, and changing gender roles, is very likely to be sustained with not only economic impact, but also social impact.

Midterm Evaluation Report for the Tubaramure PM2A Program, Cooperative Agreement No: AID-FFP-09-00004-00, USAID Burundi (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This report covers the qualitative midterm evaluation of a five-year USAID-financed Multi-Year Assistance Program (MYAP) entitled Tubaramure ("Let's Help Them Grow" in Kirundi). The program is designed around the"Preventing Malnutrition in Children under Two Approach" (PM2A), an approach that was first identified by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) as more effective in reducing malnutrition than historically favored remedial methods. The overall goal is to prevent malnutrition in children under two. Overall, the evaluation team concluded that the program is well on its way toward meeting the majority of its objectives and targets and has already achieved visible results in terms of people trained, changes in behavior at the household and community level, improved services at health facilities, and better nutritional status among young children.

Central Africa| East Africa Regional

Evaluation of USAID/East Africa support to the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA): revised final report. USAID Central Africa|East Africa (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) was established in 1994 as a sub-regional nonprofit association of the National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) in 10 countries of Eastern and Central Africa, including: Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. USAID/East Africa has provided ASARECA a total of $20 million over the 10 years since 2002. USAID's 10 years of support to ASARECA governance and to strengthening management has proved critical. The loose association of 17 networks, programs, and projects—largely outsourced to Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) centers for day-to-day management until 2006— was consolidated with research already within the Secretariat, and other services were strengthened as well. The resultant seven new programs and five units managed by well-qualified scientists have increased coherence in ASARECA's research portfolio.

The institution has moved from a loose association of commodity networks managed separately by the CGIAR centers to consolidated regional mechanisms. This reorganization has broadened ownership of the organization and diverse partnerships beyond its traditional partners in research

institutions. These include those partners required by ASARECA in response to one of the major principles embedded in the Framework of African Agricultural Productivity (FAAP), namely plurality in the delivery of agricultural research, extension, and training services. They are the broad range of service providers with diverse skills and strength, namely universities, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the public and private sectors who contribute to publicly supported agriculture productivity programs. Broadened ownership has also expanded ASARECA's reach to fulfill its role as one of the CAADP Pillar IV partner institutions. This includes sensitizing NARIs to the CAADP process, reviewing national and regional investment plans, and support to research based on ASARECA member country priorities.

Central America Regional

Final Performance Evaluation of the Management of Aquatic Resources and Economic Alternatives (MAREA) Activity, USAID Central America Regional (2015). Performance Evaluation.

The objectives of the evaluation were to: "(i) analyze the quality of the Management of Aquatic Resources and Economic Alternatives (MAREA) program's initial design, especially the validity of its assumptions; (ii) identify and analyze challenges and results, including those related to gender considerations, at the local, national, and regional levels of implementation; and (iii) identify methodological considerations for future regional biodiversity project design."

MAREA implemented five categories of activities: (i) policies and laws; (ii) fishing; (iii) economic alternatives; (iv) species and ecosystems; and (v) communications. Interventions associated with alternative economic opportunities for coastal workers provided the least tangible results for marine biodiversity. Although the activities involving policies and laws were necessary and useful at one time, probably by now sufficient policies and laws have been drafted or approved, and they now need to be implemented effectively and consistently, a responsibility not of USAID but of national and local governments.

The categories of activities that showed the greatest, most sustainable and most beneficial results for the conservation of biodiversity were those that have or could lead to improved management of marine and coastal natural commercially valuable resources. The introduction and adoption of fishing gear that prevents the capture and death of under-size marine organisms and the establishment of exclusion zones where commercial marine organisms can reproduce successfully are examples of the type of improved management practices for that are required to achieve conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity.

An effective, targeted communication program permits successful management experiences to expand in scale to make a significant improvement in the conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity and increase understanding and support for the policies, laws and regulations the implementation of which are required to achieve such conservation.

Central Asia Regional

Impact Evaluation of the Business Environment Improvement (BEI) Project, USAID Central Asia Regional (2012). Impact Evaluation.

This is the final report on the evaluation of the Business Environment Improvement (BEI) project funded by USAID/Central Asian Republics (CAR) in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic (KR), and Tajikistan. While BEI was extended for a year in the first two countries, it ended on time in Tajikistan due to lack of funds. Therefore, this evaluation covers only Kazakhstan and the KR but not Tajikistan.

The evaluation team identified the ten most significant constraints, as perceived by enterprises, which were common across the Central Asia Region. In the KR and Kazakhstan, the most pressing concerns refer not only to imperfect regulations per se but also to the degree of the reform of implementation and the impact of broader systemic business and investment environment constraints on Small and Medium Enterprises. While the BEI fully performed all planned activities and achieved all expected outputs, the outcome level results, implemented regulatory changes"de facto" are missing. There is a need for a systemic approach to the improvement of the business environment and investment climate. However, BEI's approach to business environment improvement was limited to regulatory and legal aspects as the priority of the project was on improving each countries' World Bank Doing Business ranking. Regulatory changes introduced or facilitated by the BEI project have not necessarily been implemented and sustained at the national and sub-national levels, or have resulted in reduced regulatory burden de facto, as perceived by SMEs. Finally, the differences in men- and women-owned enterprises were not explicitly recognized or addressed in the project design.

Performance Evaluation of the Eurasia Foundation, USAID Central Asia Regional (2013). Performance Evaluation.

Following nearly 20 years of operation, the Eurasia Foundation finds itself at a crossroads. The prospect of additional USG core funding looks unlikely, and partner foundations face significant challenges to their future sustainability and are increasingly shifting from a foundation to a service provider model in search of new donor funding. The Eurasia Foundation's experience presents a unique evaluation opportunity to not only take stock of past performance and organizational capacity internally but also for the USG to assess the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the"foundation model" in achieving high-level foreign policy objectives externally.

In terms of general competencies, interview responses consistently indicated that the Partner Foundations' key strengths were in building both the organizational and technical capacity of its local partners; their emphasis on treating local entities as partners rather than solely as beneficiaries; and their extensive local knowledge and networks. As for country context, Partner Foundations in all regions noted that corruption and the degree of democracy had implications for both Civil Society and Public Administration efforts. The variation in local partner capacity and reputation was also another key factor influencing success. While US affiliation has in some

cases hindered their ability to work with national governments, this affiliation has also led to being widely recognized as having strong financial and program management and grant making capabilities due to their international background, making them appealing to donors and local partners. However, as the PFs broadened their donor base to focus on sustainability, staff at times lacked the required technical skills in new program areas.

Chad

Mid-term evaluation of OFDA eastern Chad horticulture program, March 13-20, 2011. USAID Chad. (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The mid-term evaluation of the Eastern Chad Horticultural Project assessed changes that have occurred in the food security situation of 749 producers (15% of the total 5,000) as a result of the project implementation. Through the project, refugee, returnee and local population have been supported with seeds, training and tools through a combination of seed fairs and direct seed and material distribution along with horticultural training. Under SECADEV and CRS/Chad guidance, participants have focused their agricultural efforts on the wadis (dry riverbeds). The evaluation highlighted a few important areas of improvement, such as increasing the amount of awareness raising among beneficiaries prior to seed fairs, providing pesticides at the same time as tool distribution, strengthening monitoring of producers after seeds are planted, as well as improving project communication materials so that illiterate populations can fully comprehend and participate.

Mitigating food security shock in eastern Chad phase II: final evaluation report. USAID Chad (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The USAID Food for Peace project Mitigating Food Security Shock in Eastern Chad (MFSS), implemented by CRS and SECADEV between March and November 2012, provided unconditional food vouchers to over 10,000 food insecure households in the departments of Dar Tama in Wadi Fira Region and Assoungha in Ouaddai Region. This provided emergency assistance at a time of severe hardship that helped ensure food security and protected household seed stocks and other assets. The target communities for both projects were identified in discussion with local authorities and partner staff to represent the most disadvantaged villages in the areas. A total of 57 villages were identified – 30 in Assoungha and 27 in Dar Tama – to participate. All the beneficiary households in these villages in first phase of the project were included in the second phase, a total of 4134 households. The vulnerability criteria used in 2012 to identify beneficiaries included widows with children, divorcees, child mothers, woman headed households, child headed households, the elderly and physically handicapped and included a preponderance of women.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Food for the Hungry, Multi-year Assistance Program 2008-2011, Katanga Province, Final Evaluation Report, USAID Congo, DR (2010). Performance Evaluation.

An external evaluation of the 2008-2011 MYAP was conducted from August 18 through September 10 in order to understand the program nature, objective, focus and requirements so as to assess progress made against stated objectives, identify lessons learned and to make recommendations for program enhancement that could be of value in future programming. The exercise was carried out by an international consultant with extensive experience in the programmatic areas of concern, in food aid management for development and in relevant humanitarian and development issues in the DRC. He was assisted by FH/DRC staff in Kalemie and Moba in the organization of data collection, data entry and first level tabulation, as well as in all logistical organization. The evaluation was conducted just as the main harvest of maize was concluding in Moba and had already concluded in Kalemie, whereas the baseline survey was conducted in January/February which represented the tail end of the"hungry season". As a result, crops were, for the most part out of the ground at the time of the evaluation, making a physical crop assessment impossible, and the availability of food from the harvest affected the comparability of anthropomorphic data.

Food Security for Goma Multi-year Assistance Program (MYAP), Goma and Nyiragongo Territory North Kivu Province, Final Evaluation, USAID Congo, DR (2010). Performance Evaluation.

In August 2008, Mercy Corps began the implementation of a Multi-Year Assistance Program (MYAP), titled"Food Security for Goma", funded by USAID's Food for Peace program, in North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. During the first two years of implementation, MYAP Mercy Corps has focused on: improving access to sanitation (through the construction of household and community latrines); raising hygiene levels (through community sensitization and education); and increasing access to water (through the construction of houses with gutters and tanks to catch rainwater). Currently, after extensive and detailed planning, the most crucial component of the program—the extension of the local water supply network—is poised to commence. The program's overall objective is to improve food security for 16.900 vulnerable households in 14 urban and peri-urban communities in North Kivu Province; and to reduce the incidence of water-borne diseases among children under 5 by 25% by increasing access to potable water and to hygiene and sanitation infrastructure. Mercy Corps' work on the ground, however, is clearly visible, from the construction of community latrines, private latrines for the vulnerable, gutters and plastic reservoirs, and from the communities' recognition of the sensitization campaigns in both Nyiragongo and Goma, as well as their desire for change. The communities are united in their expressed determination that their newly-acquired knowledge be implemented.

Kasai Child Survival Project, Catholic Relief Services, USCCB, USAID Congo, DR (2010), Performance Evaluation.

The Kasai Child Survival Project (KCSP) was implemented in Mwene-Ditu and Sankuru Districts in Kasai Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The goal of the KCSP is to contribute to reduced mortality and morbidity in children under-two and pregnant women in the six targeted health zones- SO1: The health of children 0 – 23 months is improved; SO2: The health of pregnant women is improved; and SO3: Household access to quality health services is improved. The evaluation found that the project contributed to: 1) the scale up of IMCI in the country and the Kasai Oriental Province by training 8 trainers in IMCI; 2) Reduced exposure to malaria due to increased (2% - 69%) used of ITNs by children U2; 3) Increased (18% - 78%) practice of exclusive breastfeeding of infants 0-6 months in all six health zones; 4) Reduced exposure to malaria due to increased (19% - 92%) Intermittent Presumptive Treatment (IPT) among pregnant women; 5) Improved quality of care for children U5 through the practice of IMCI at 100 health centers in 6 Health Zones; 6) Improved quality of care in 14 private facilities in Makota Health Zone; 7) Increased access to health care services through the creation and support of 56 Community Care sites; and 8) Increased access to information about healthy behaviors through the training and support of 4,348 community Health Workers.

ADRA DRC JENGA: JAMAA final evaluation -- Eastern DRC MYAP, USAID Congo, DR (2011), Performance Evaluation.

The following report is an evaluation of a Multi-Year Assistance Program (MYAP) carried out over a three-year period (June, 2008 – May, 2011) under the auspices of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) International is partnered with Africare under a cooperative agreement to reduce food insecurity among vulnerable populations in Fizi and Uvira territories in South Kivu province of the eastern Democratic Republic Congo (DRC). The project, JENGA ('to build' in Kiswahili), aims to improve the food security and resiliency of 92 vulnerable communities in the Fizi and Uvira territories, and focuses on repatriated individuals and female-headed households. ADRA is implementing activities in 60 communities in Fizi, while Africare is working in 32 communities in Uvira. The overarching goal of the project, to reduce food insecurity among vulnerable populations in Fizi and Uvira territories, is supported by one strategic objective (SO) and four intermediate results (IRs). The strategic objective is to increase crop productivity and improve access to markets by means of the following intermediate results: 1) IR 1: Resettlement support provided; 2) IR 2: Increased use of improved agricultural practices; 3) IR 3: Improved market linkages; and 4) IR 4: Improved soil fertility practices.

Evaluation of the Integrated Health Project (IHP) in the Democratic Republic of Congo, USAID Congo, DR (2013). Impact Evaluation.

International Business and Technical Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI) is pleased to present the performance evaluation report of the USAID/DRC Integrated Health Project (IHP) Cooperative Agreement #AID-OAA-A-10-00054, being implemented by Management Sciences for Health and its partners (MSH). This evaluation serves two purposes. First, it forms a baseline that will set up benchmarks against which achievements and effectiveness can be evaluated at the end of

IHP. Second, it identifies programmatic areas that need improvement; it then forms initial conclusions and provides recommendations. This evaluation will help USAID/DRC determine the project components and aspects that are working well, understand why they are successful, and identify constraints facing the project so that any modifications and midcourse corrections that are needed can be made. An endline evaluation is scheduled for 2015. The most common perception of IHP is that it is a good project that needs improvement. The project is valued in various ways, ranging from the drugs it has supplied to the leadership training it has provided.

Dominican Republic

USAID/DR Tri-project Economic Growth Program Evaluation: Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Project (DR-CAFTA IP). Performance Evaluation, USAID DR (2011). Performance Evaluation.

This evaluation applied a mixed-methods approach to assess how effectively the Dominican Republic and Central America Free Trade Agreement Implementation Project (DR-CAFTA IP) achieved its objectives of: a) building public sector capacity for enforcing DR-CAFTA treaty terms and conditions in the Dominican Republic; and, b) fostering public-private dialogue about the risks and benefits of DR-CAFTA participation.

The evaluation finds that at the end of three years of implementation, the Project is meeting or exceeding the activity or output targets set in its PMP. These output targets included the number of events, number and type (sex and industry sector) of event participants, trade-related studies, and number of operational and communications tools created. However, the achievement of outcome targets is more uneven. These outcome targets were set through results indicators 1 (institutional effectiveness) and 11 (trade readiness). The uneven achievement of these targets is due in large part to factors beyond Project control, namely assumptions related to constrained Government of the Dominican Republic (GODR) fiscal capacity to fully fund and staff DR-CAFTA implementing agencies as well as the effects of the depressed US economy on demand for Dominican products.

Four well-documented general findings related to the Project's institution-building and public-private dialogue objectives emerge from the evaluation. Specifically the Project has: Helped the GODR get its trade legislative and regulatory house in order; strengthened the Directorate of Foreign Trade as the 'go-to' GODR office for coordinating DR-CAFTA implementation; helped foster structural adjustments in the Dominican economy; and cultivated better private sector recognition of new rules for trade and investment.

USAID/Dominican Republic, Tri-Project Performance Evaluation Rural Economic Diversification (USAID/RED) Project, USAID DR (2011). Performance Evaluation.

This report presents the major findings from a mid-term evaluation of the Rural Economic Diversification (RED) project and recommendations to assist USAID and the implementing

partner in making mid-course adjustments as required. The project is one of three projects that together contribute to USAID's Strategic Objective: ―Increased sustainable economic opportunities for the poor.‖ The RED project is being implemented by Abt Associates under a cost reimbursable plus fixed fee task order under the RAISE Plus Indefinite Quantity (IQC) contracts. The USAID/RED project was designed to include two purposes under Strategic Objective No. 1: a) ameliorate the possible impacts of the DR-CAFTA on the value chains of certain ―sensitive‖ crops and livestock products; and b) help the rural sector of the Dominican Republic take advantage of the opportunities presented by the agreement to compete in the United States and Central American region.

Evaluation of the USAID/Dominican Republic biodiversity portfolio: final report, USAID DR|Caribbean (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This evaluation review a portfolio of 5 projects working toward biodiversity conservation in the Dominican Republic. The evaluation of each project aimed to answer five critical questions concerning the extent to which the biodiversity portfolio activities assisted the DR Mission in conserving its biodiversity- it examined the extent to which the portfolio fostered positive synergies within and among each project; achieved targeted out comes and results; used best practices and lessons learned; achieved sustainability and the adoption of conservation practices; and complied with USAID's biodiversity criteria.

The evaluators found that the USAID/DR biodiversity portfolio did not successfully create synergies among the five projects, between projects and Dominican public and private institutions, or with grassroots organizations. The anticipated outcome of co-management agreements for protected areas was achieved only to a small extent. Enforcement of conservation laws and regulation did not increase significantly. However, the portfolio did strengthen the link between tourism and conservation.

The portfolio's successes came from: (1) technical and leadership competence; (2) financial and land security benefits from participation in conservation practices; and(3) links between conservation and large financial interests driven by international competition. Its failures came from: (1) an overly centralized and politicized MoE; (2) insufficient awareness of the links between conservation and economic growth and stability; and (3) the projects' overemphasis on administrative needs and under-emphasis on technically sound field activities in collaboration with local people and institutions.

Ecuador

Midterm Evaluation of Sustainable Coasts and Forests Project, USAID Ecuador (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The USAID/Ecuador Sustainable Forests and Coasts Project (SFC) was a biodiversity conservation effort for the Ecuadorian Coast. SFC ran from 2009 to 2014. The strategic components, or Project Intermediate Results (PIRs) of this project are threefold: 1) to improve

biodiversity conservation in critical habitats by designing resource management strategies that address biodiversity threats and strengthening the capacity of stakeholders to implement natural resource management best practices in critical terrestrial and coastal marine areas (especially in habitats located in government protected areas (PAs)); 2) to improve local livelihoods by supporting priority activities that ensure sustainable use of the resource base for commodities in the value chain, 3) to nurture and develop partnerships formed for ongoing support to biodiversity conservation.

The evaluation process found that the project was on the way to achieving its intended results. The project had significant success in areas such as the building of coalitions, conservation agreements and concessions to ensure biodiversity conservation in critical areas, and Protected Area (PA) management. Overall success in the area of economic development activity designed to encourage better conservation practices was mixed. The evaluation team particularly highlighted the level of stakeholder engagement that the project received, at local, regional, and national levels. The evaluation also found that the initial expectations of what could be achieved were too ambitious considering the short timeframe for implementation and the initial circumstances and structural barriers found in communities to be engaged in project activities. The decision to support coastal and forestry issues simultaneously was regarded as innovative by many stakeholders and represented an interesting template for learning and advancing the conservation agenda in Ecuador.

Performance Evaluation of the Protecting Water Resources to Conserve Biodiversity Project, USAID Ecuador (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The Project's main strategy is to strengthen FONAG's ("Fondo Ambiental para la Protección de las Cuencas y Agua") work in the Quito area and to replicate the financial, conservation and watershed management methods that form the"FONAG model" in other regions.

The Project succeeded in formalizing financial and political commitments among large and medium-sized public and private water users to pursue initiatives for the protection of watersheds outside of FONAG's target area. As a consequence, three new water funds were created while two previously formed were consolidated, all of which assimilated most of the general FONAG model while conserving their own cultural and political particularities. The Project consolidated several innovative financial mechanisms for use in supporting integrated water resources management and management of protected areas which contributed to economic and financial sustainability in the management of the particular protected areas involved. Finally, the Project improved public awareness in key sectors about the need for sustainable use of water resources through integrated watershed management to ensure adequate present and future availability of these resources for both social and ecological needs. It demonstrated that democratic governance of water use and watershed protection is possible when authorities and public/private water users are involved in decision-making, and those decisions are grounded in sufficient scientific information.

Concerning conservation-friendly productive small projects (also considered alternative economic activities), it is difficult to determine the overall effectiveness of the Project's

approach to decrease the environmental impact of agriculture and livestock in most of the intervening watersheds by introducing alternative income sources from crafts, tourism, and small-animal husbandry. The individual performance varied, with some activities being fairly effective and others only average. From this standpoint, the efficiency of this approach to further conservation was high in one fund (FORAGUA), average in two (FONAPA and FONES), and average to low in another two (FONAG and PROCUENCAS).

Egypt

End of Project Performance Evaluation of Maternal and Child Health Integrated Program, USAID Egypt (2014). Performance Evaluation.

USAID's Egypt Mission contracted Social Impact to conduct a final evaluation of the Community-based Initiatives for a Better Life (SMART) Project which was implemented by consortium led by Save the Children, in partnership with Jhpiego, PATH, and JSI. The overarching objective of SMART was to implement effective health communication strategies across target areas through proven, life-saving community interventions. SMART was funded by USAID's Egypt Mission with $10,400,000.00 within the framework of the MCHIP; in order to address Egypt's critically under-performing nutrition and child health indicators. Building on community-based outreach activities implemented under previous USAID health and nutrition programs, SMART worked through and with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to complement and create demand for public sector health services, and increase adoption of key healthy practices. With a focus on stunting, SMART sought to build capacity to engage local organizations to target improve communities' abilities to utilize and sustain community-based strategies to improve maternal and child health, neonatal health, family planning and nutrition.

El Salvador

Evaluation of the improved management and conservation of critical watersheds project: final evaluation report (evaluation ex-post), USAID El Salvador (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The present document constitutes the Ex-post Evaluation of the "Improved Management and Conservation of Critical Watersheds Project (IMCCW)", which was implemented between November 2006 and March 2011 as part of a bilateral initiative between the Government of El Salvador and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID / El Salvador. The general objective of the IMCCW Project was to contribute to the effective management of areas with high biodiversity, promoting economic growth in a responsible manner in order to reach a target population of 57,185 families in six sub-watersheds of the Departments of Ahuachapán and Sonsonate, through its two main components, namely, biodiversity conservation and increased income generation derived from environmentally sustainable production systems and services. Among the lessons learned surged the confirmation that the donor must ensure that, from the design stage, projects must include a transfer strategy aimed at guaranteeing sustainability. Meanwhile, emphasizing the strengthening of local capacities is also

crucial to the continuity of the actions. The Evaluation Team recommends that the legalization of the remaining areas within Protected National Areas System, together with the elaboration of their management plans and their integration with local communal development processes, should be among the most important actions to be continued. It is also important to continue with marine turtle conservation efforts by means of an adequate strategy and an integral action plan. In order to attain a consolidated group of coffee farmers and fruit/vegetable growers, oriented to environmental sustainability and competitiveness, major credit facilities and technical innovation programs, strengthened and supported by national and local government, should be encouraged.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia Development Assistance Consortium (EDAC), Final Evaluation, USAID Ethiopia (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The present document constitutes the Ex-post Evaluation of the"Improved Management and Conservation of Critical Watersheds Project (IMCCW)", which was implemented between November 2006 and March 2011 as part of a bilateral initiative between the Government of El Salvador and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID / El Salvador), and whose execution was led by Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI) in partnership with six co-executing organizations: three organizations based in El Salvador (SalvaNATURA, FUNZEL and CLUSA—El Salvador) and three organizations from the United States of America (Academy for Educational Development, EplerWood and Social Impact). The general objective of the IMCCW Project was to contribute to the effective management of areas with high biodiversity, promoting economic growth in a responsible manner in order to reach a target population of 57,185 families in six sub-watersheds of the Departments of Ahuachapán and Sonsonate, through its two main components, namely, biodiversity conservation and increased income generation derived from environmentally sustainable production systems and services. The study identified three areas of action/global strategies that should be taken into account as recommendations for future USAID programs in the biodiversity sector: 1) the coordination of conservation activities in the identification, design, financing, implementation and evaluation stages; (2) permanent strengthening of MARN's capacities- both institutional and technical, as well as in terms of its ability to integrate and coordinate policies and actions with other ministries in terms of identifying, assessing, preventing and mitigating or compensating the potential negative effects on biodiversity and forestry; and (3) financing of priority conservation actions and ensuring that USAID programs are well designed and implemented effectively.

Revitalizing Agricultural/Pastoral Incomes and New Markets, Oromia and Somali Region, Ethiopia: Final Evaluation, USAID Ethiopia (2014). Performance Evaluation.

At first named RAIN (Revitalizing Agricultural/Pastoral Incomes and New Markets) and RAIN+ (Revitalizing Agricultural/Pastoral Incomes and New Markets for Enhanced Resilience and Recovery). this program's goal is to increase resiliency of households, communities and market systems to prepare for, cope with and recover from external shocks.

The relief-to-development program design aimed to promote early recovery and increase resilience to external shocks in selected areas of the Somali and Oromia regions. It addressed the immediate needs of drought affected populations while also providing communities with skills and opportunities to reduce the impact of future droughts and other external shocks. The RAIN and RAIN+ programs specifically looked to find more opportunities to reduce the acute vulnerability and to lay the foundation for longer-term development and for facilitating inclusive growth. The RAIN's experience has demonstrated that even when environmental, economic, political and social conditions are stressed; market systems are dynamic and continue to operate in the stressed state. In addition to this, it has shown that even in the most complex and strained environments, if market systems are supported to overcome key enablers, the private sector responds to opportunities and incentives to bring change to 6 markets that work for the poor. This experience also indicates that poorly designed or executed subsidized service provision activities have a distorting effect, undermining the viability of existing or emerging private sector investment. In order to prevent this, relief operations should be designed to work through the market to meet immediate needs while minimizing distortions, avoiding undermining long-term programming and contributing to positive market system change.

Water hygiene sanitation Transformation for Enhanced Resiliency (WaTER) Project. Final Performance Evaluation, USAID Ethiopia (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this evaluation was to gain an independent view of the performance of the Water Sanitation and Hygiene Transformation for Enhanced Resiliency (WaTER) Project to draw lessons for future USAID financed similar projects, share the lessons for other development partners, and learn more about the integration of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) with natural resources management in pastoral development. The project built or rehabilitated 41 systems and has benefited 221,504 people with a consumption of more than 15 liters of water per capita per day. The provision of safe water at closer distances has freed up time for other productive and income generating activities, primarily for women who are generally responsible for fetching water, or time to go to school, and reduced health expenses. On average people now spend a maximum of 10 minutes fetching water compared to up to 12 hours per day previously. There was a 25% increase in the number of caretakers that know the five critical times for hand-washing, and almost a 60% increase in the number of latrines that meet Sphere standards. Rangeland management around the water points and the subsequent protection of the wells and other structures was very effective due to its perceived importance by the pastoralist beneficiaries. Community elected water management committees (WMCs), and their relations with Woreda water, agriculture and health bureaus is the institutional basis for sustainability. The WMCs, one-third of which are female members, have been trained in scheme and financial management and on the benefit of clean water, and personal and environmental hygiene. The introduction of new technologies such as desalination and solar pumps, however, bring up sustainability concerns due to a lack of knowledge on operations and management of the plant, monitoring of flow and treatment and capacity for larger repairs.

Empowering New Generations to Improve Nutrition and Economic Opportunities (ENGINE) Project. Mid-term Performance evaluation. USAID Ethiopia (2014). Performance Evaluation.

This external mid-term performance evaluation of the USAID/Ethiopia-assisted Empowering New Generations to Improve Nutrition and Economic Opportunities (ENGINE) project is to examine what the ENGINE Project has achieved at the mid-way point in its implementation; how it is being implemented; how it is perceived and valued; whether expected results are occurring or are likely to occur before the end of the project; and to assess the management and operation of the project. ENGINE is performing well and is on track to achieve most of its performance targets by the end of the project. The project is having major impacts at the policy and institutional levels, and on strengthening national, zonal and woreda-level systems to scale up nutrition services across sectors. USAID Ethiopia Feed the Future projects have taken important strides to incorporate nutrition education and training into their programs and activities. But Feed the Future projects should strengthen and reorient their monitoring and evaluation efforts to measure explicitly the impact of their efforts on nutritional status and on food security with particular attention to dietary diversity. ENGINE needs to continue addressing the primary determinants of stunting in Ethiopia, prioritizing and reshaping activities around critical areas such as WASH, food security and dietary diversity, while also continuing to support multi-sectoral nutrition convergence across programs and actors. In key activity areas such as training, information dissemination, demonstration and livelihoods support, there is need for a clearer understanding of whether, and if so, how specific activities translate into nutrition and food security impacts among target groups, and how these activities can be scaled up. The current momentum around nutrition in Ethiopia now requires further intensified efforts by ENGINE, USAID and other donors to normalize nutrition-related activity within the government, with less reliance on external assistance. ENGINE is well-placed to work with GoE partners to integrate nutrition activities into government plans and budgets.

Better Potato for Better Life Project Performance Evaluation, USAID Ethiopia (2014). Performance Evaluation.

This report provides an independent assessment of Better Potato for Better Life (BPBL) project which was funded by USAID and implemented in Tigray and SNNPR by CIP and its partners: federal and regional research institutes, regional and woreda agriculture bureaus/offices, international and national NGOs, private sector potato and sweet potato seed multipliers and cooperatives or farmers' groups. The main goal of the project was to enhance the livelihoods of food insecure rural farmers in SNNP and Tigray regions through diversification of cropping systems, increasing potato and sweet potato productivity and strengthening potato and sweet potato value chains. The project activities are integrated and are synergized. Capacity building at all levels was relevant to conserve, multiply and maintain disease free potato seed. Demonstration of DLS helped to reduce loss and increase storage time for potato seed. As a result of the project, potato yield and consumption increased. Household food security has improved and dietary diversification at household level, for children and pregnant and lactating mothers improved. The household income also increased and the contribution of potato and SP was significant. The project has resulted in change in attitude towards potato seed supply system.

Yet some limitations on the design of basic seed multiplication and lack of decentralized basic seed multiplication (giving more responsibility to RARIs) and lack of well developed market and value chain may constrain the sustainability. System of scheduled replacement of aging potato seeds is not in place. CIP was key player in making the seed system to operate.

Famer to Farmer

Mid-term evaluation of the farmer-to-farmer program in Guyana, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Haiti, USAID Guyana, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Haiti (2011). Performance Evaluation.

A mid-term review of the Farmer-to-Farmer program, implemented by Partners of the Americas in Guyana, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Haiti, was carried out between December 2010 and March 2011 in order to provide feedback on progress and support program improvements for the remainder of the program life cycle. The Farmer-to-Farmer Program, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is a five year program aimed at generating rapid, sustained and broad-based economic growth in the agricultural sector, with a secondary goal of increasing the American public's understanding of international development issues, as well as enhancing the international understanding of US development programs. Most programs are on track with the primary activities described in their project strategies with some minor deviations in order to respect changing circumstances. All programs are designed to target various stages of respective value chains in alignment with USAID mission projects.

Feed the Future Innovation Labs

Report of the External Evaluation Team (EET) of Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (SANREM Innovation Lab), USAID Haiti, Cambodia, Ghana (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is an external review of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (SANREM Innovation Lab). The external evaluation team found that the SANREM Innovation Lab staff, the project scientists, and the host country partners have done a commendable job in identifying collaborators, choosing sites, and initiating experiments often under difficult situations (i.e.. Mali and Haiti), obtaining baseline data, conducting surveys, identifying interest groups, establishing cooperation with international organizations, and building institutional capacity. As a result, SANREM has demonstrated success at transferring Conservation Agriculture Production Systems (CAPS) to farmers in several regions where soil losses, poor soil health, and low soil fertility are enormous problems. Clearly, such efforts must continue because developing healthier soils is a long-term enterprise. In the future, linkages should also be made between sustainable intensification programs and human nutrition and health because the only sustainable ways of reducing malnutrition is through productive and sustainable agricultural enterprises focused not only on

increasing yields and improving the environment, but also on the nutritional health of the societies they serve.

Dry Grain Pulses Collaborative Research Support Program (CRSP) Technical and Administrative Performance Evaluation Report, USAID Global (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This is a technical and Administrative Performance Evaluation Report of the Dry Grain Pulses Collaborative Research Support Program (CRSP). An External Evaluation Team (EET) composed of five members was convened in April 2012 to assess the Pulse CRSP's overall performance and administrative management.

The EET found that management provided strong, effective, and proactive leadership in the development of the Pulse CRSP Technical Applications and Associate Awards to USAID and in Pulse CRSP. The EET commends the Pulse CRSP on their capacity building efforts, particularly graduate student training, which should be continued in the next phase, with emphasis on training women where feasible.

The Pulse CRSP has generated significant achievements in bean and cowpea research, outreach, dissemination, capacity building, and impact through a successful model of U.S. and Host Country collaborative research and development projects. The EET supports the two phase model for project management as it empowers management to make timely adjustments to project objectives and methodologies, and to end or redirect unproductive projects.

The EET recommends that the plant breeding and the development of improved bean and cowpea varieties continue as primary activities, and that greater effort be given to the development and deployment of molecular markers for priority traits in the breeding programs. In addition, the development of a reliable plant transformation system for beans should receive greater attention so that future advances in the deployment of useful gene technologies could be realized. The EET recommends that greater effort be given to understanding soil fertility and drought constraints in beans and cowpeas and the complex interactions with root architecture traits, root rots, native rhizobia, and other constraints. The nutritional impact of beans and cowpeas in the diet of women and children is an important area of research and dissemination. Value chain studies will help determine the primary constraint in bean/cowpea production and marketing, especially in Africa. The EET also recommends that socio-economic studies, with the potential collaboration of economists, social scientists and anthropologists, be incorporated into all projects with applied research components. This is especially important for projects involving technology dissemination.

A significant concern to the EET is how the Pulse CRSP will contend with and prepare for upcoming retirements. A number of senior bean/cowpea scientists in U.S. and Host Country institutions who have been the backbone of the Bean/Cowpea and Pulse CRSPs, will be retiring within the next program phase. The EET was encouraged to see some new, early and mid-career scientists participating as U.S. PIs and HC partners in a number of projects.

Integrated Pest Management—Innovation Laboratory Program Report of the External Evaluation Team: An Evaluation Report of Phase IV and Plan for Phase V of the IPM Innovation Lab Activities, USAID Global (2013). Performance Evaluation.

A three-person External Evaluation Team (EET) reviewed the management and technical performance of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Integrated Pest Management (IPM IL) March July 2013 at the end of the second ten-year cycle of the USAID funded project. As funding comes from Feed the Future, focusing on horticultural crops reflects the President's Initiative's goals of improved nutrition, increased income, and food security. One of the biggest impacts of the IPM IL has been institutionalizing the Participatory IPM (PIPM) method in partner countries, particularly with regard to research being conducted on-farm with farmers collaborating and providing feedback. However more partners should organize community advisory committees as recommended in the PIPM method. Using PIPM, IPM IL has been highly successful in developing pest control technologies that increase crop yields in a wide array of horticultural crops while reducing synthetic pesticide usage. The greatest immediate impact of IPM IL has stemmed from the deployment of crop specific IPM practices that address multiple pests of specific crops. An average of 90% reduction in pesticide usage has been documented with this adaptive research approach. Gender inclusion studies have been found highly useful and should continue in each new partner country added to the program. The EET noted that few peer reviewed publications were written on gender studies by IPM IL social scientists. The percentage of women scientists in the IPM IL in the U.S. and national partners has trended upwards over the years, but there is still much room for improvement. Successful IPM packages will have the greatest impact when the appropriate technology is successfully transferred to farmers. It does little good to develop new technologies without a mechanism to train farmers to adopt them. IPM IL should also encourage more NGOs, who can get their own funding, to transfer IPM results to farmers

External Evaluation of the Sorghum, Millet and Other Grains CRSP, USAID Bureau For Food Security (2012). Performance Evaluation.

Since 1979, Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Sorghum, Millet and Other Grains (formerly the Sorghum, Millet and Other Grains Collaborative Research Program) has assembled the leading US talent in basic and applied research on plant breeding/genetics, crop protection, food science and marketing of sorghum, millet and minor grains in developed and developing countries. In turn, these scientists have identified and brought the most promising young professionals from a range of countries in Central America and Africa at US land-grant universities, in accordance with Title XII. High-quality training, applied research conducted in a realistic world context, and mentoring have established valuable lasting relationships that contributed to further scientific advances. Thus, our major conclusion is that this Feed the Future Innnovation Lab has done an exceptional job on scientific research, training, and mentoring, on a very small budget. In fact, most of the investment has not been made by USAID but by US land-grant universities and scientists themselves—which means a high payoff to each dollar committed by USAID. We strongly endorse the continuation of this Feed the Future Innovation

Lab for the coming four years and recommend that the current Management Entity continue to lead the Feed the Future Innovation Lab during a transitional period of two years.

Final Report of the External Evaluation Team of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Horticulture, USAID Bureau for Food Security (2013). Performance Evaluation.

A three-member external evaluation team (EET) was commissioned in March 2013 to provide USAID and the ME with constructive feedback on the past research performance and management of the Feed the Future Horticulture Innovation Lab. This report constitutes the extensive efforts of the EET to obtain relevant information through an in-depth review of documents, surveys, personal contacts and site visits to evaluate the Feed the Future Horticulture Innovation Lab.

The EET commends the ME for their leadership in developing an open and transparent review process for selecting the projects and for efficiently managing them. Previous Director Dr. Ron Voss, current Director Dr. Elizabeth Mitcham and the Associate Director, Ms. Amanda Crump, are doing an excellent job in efficiently reviewing the projects, following work plans, evaluating research progress and attracting new partners to the program. The EET admires the Program Council in the past and currently the International Advisory Board, which were effective in providing guidance and advice to lead the ME in the right direction on programmatic and fiscal matters of the Feed the Future Horticulture Innovation Lab. Within the short span of three years the Feed the Future Horticulture Innovation Lab has made significant progress on many fronts.

External Evaluation of the Nutrition Innovation Lab in Africa and Asia, USAID Bureau for Food Security (BFS) (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The External Evaluation Team (EET) concludes that both Nutrition Innovation Labs have met, and, in some cases, when challenges faced are taken into account, exceeded what the EET considers would be reasonable expectations for projects of this scale at the four-year mark. The EET recommends that both Nutrition Innovation Labs should continue into a second 5-year funding phase. However, the EET finds that both Innovation Labs need to address issues in communication among partners and with policy makers and the broader scientific community. Sharing of ideas and methods among the projects, seeking additional expertise and partners as needed and timely implementation of data collection phases will enhance utility of the work. At this writing, the Feed the Future Nutrition Innovation Lab/Asia is running more smoothly than the Nutrition Innovation Lab/Africa, and has had more useful interactions with policy makers.

Overall management of both of the Labs is acceptable, but the management of the Feed the Future Nutrition Innovation Lab/Asia is more effective than the management of the Feed the Future Nutrition Innovation Lab/Africa. The global ME and the Program Directors (PDs) for both Nutrition Innovation Labs have strong collegial relationships with most of the partners, both U.S. based and host country based. The ME and the Feed the Future Nutrition Innovation Labs currently have good relationships with the host country USAID Missions and the implementation projects with which they partner. Early tensions due to misunderstandings of the Feed the Future

Nutrition Innovation Lab's objectives have been resolved in both countries (Nepal and Uganda). However, the EET concludes that the major sub-awardee for the research in Uganda, Harvard University, does not have a strong Feed the Future Nutrition Innovation Lab based presence in Uganda. This, along with changes in personnel and delayed roll-out of the Uganda Community Connector Project has resulted in delays in initiating the cohort study and carrying out the second data collection time-point of the panel study.

Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Adapting Livestock Systems to Climate Change. performance eval., USAID Bureau For Food Security (BFS) (2014). Performance Evaluation.

USAID commissioned this external performance evaluation in order to provide direct recommendations to both the management entity and USAID on any program implementation issues for the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Adapting Livestock Systems to Climate Change. The mandate of the Innovation Lab is to examine the role of climate change as an important determinant of animal, human, and environmental health and aid the resiliency and adaptation of vulnerable livestock-keeping communities in the Global South.

The evaluation team found significant issues with the management team for the Innovation Lab, with leadership disputes in the first year with and subsequent design and management of the program portfolio not addressing program goals in a consistent or coherent manner. Furthermore, a lack of institutional buy-in from the University of Colorado did not leverage the University's existing resources and knowledge. It was also determined that, while PIs were appropriately focused on achieving project goals, a lack of structure from leadership will not generate a coherent set of outputs and thereby impacts. This evaluation found a number of other problems with the Innovation Lab program. There was little evidence of increased investment in related research and capacity development, and efforts to develop strategic collaborations were mixed in results- often taking too much of leadership's time and effort. Finally, the ME leadership team's lack of sharply defined roles and responsibilities leaves some aspects of the project under-resourced.

One of the main lessons learned from this study is that ME staffing structures can affect the implementation of program activities in a variety of ways and must be intentionally linked to program goals and objectives in order to be successful.

Feed the Future Rural Advisory Services

An Evaluation of the Rural Advisory Services Program (RASP) and Related Activities Under Feed the Future, USAID Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Tajikistan, Uganda (2015). Performance Evaluation.

Field studies were undertaken to provide a better understanding of Extension and Advisory Services (EAS) field activities under the Feed the Future Initiative, both with and without Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services (MEAS) involvement. The nine countries

selected were Bangladesh, Tajikistan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda, Mozambique, Kenya, Nepal, and Cambodia. These were chosen in order to illustrate the gamut of EAS activities and MEAS engagement, from those where MEAS played a major role (e.g. Tajikistan, Bangladesh) to those where its involvement was minimal or insignificant (e.g. Cambodia, Ethiopia).

The study found that Feed the Future is making progress relative to its goals, which means that, ipso facto, extension messages are being communicated and applied, even though Missions may not be focusing explicitly on extension and advisory services. Innovative work is taking place among grantees and private sector contractors in collaboration with farmers' groups, buyers, input suppliers, research agencies, and ICT suppliers.

Country reports indicate that (1) Feed the Future emphasis on country-owned plans has succeeded in aligning external support with host country priorities and meeting the aid effectiveness objectives of the Rome Principles, and (2) that a pluralistic EAS System is emerging in many Feed the Future countries. However, the role played by each EAS provider varies with each national context, underscoring the need for thorough analysis and a supportive policy framework. As pluralistic systems expand, the need for coordination among EAS providers and donors increases.

Georgia

Final Evaluation of Support Added Value Enterprises—AgVANTAGE Project, USAID Georgia, (2010). Performance Evaluation.

The goal of the AgVANTAGE Project (formerly SAVE: Support Added-Value Enterprises) was to raise Georgia's rate of economic growth and lower the country's trade deficit through expanded production, sale and exports of added-value agricultural products. The approved strategy for the project involved establishing two private sector firms (a trading and brokerage enterprise and a leasing enterprise) and a pilot packing and processing facility, and contracting with a private agricultural services enterprise. This structure completely collapsed after USAID reversed its approval of private firms to be operated by the project; the pilot facility was dropped in favor of working directly with private agribusinesses within market chains; and the service enterprise exited the market. The project was reformulated to directly assist private-sector enterprises and associations, improve the financial environment of the agriculture/agribusiness system, and provide policy assistance and support to the Ministry of Agriculture.

Evaluation of The Georgia Land Market Development Program, USAID Georgia (2011). Performance Evaluation.

Between April 2001 and July 2005, USAID/Caucasus had a Cooperative Agreement (CA) with Terra Institute Ltd. to implement a Land Market Development Program (LMDP I) valued at $8,122,795.66. LMDP I was the successor of USAID's Urban/Rural Land Privatization project implemented between 1997-2001 by Booz-Allen & Hamilton (BAH) and subcontracted by BAH with the Association for the Protection of Landowners' Rights (APLR), a Georgian nonprofit

organization. The main objectives of LMDP I and II were to further growth and development of APLR and contribute to development of land and real estate markets in Georgia by facilitating turnover and increasing access to mortgage credit. Activities included completion of agricultural land privatization and contributing to the establishment of a clear, transparent, streamlined and user-friendly property rights registration system.

Final evaluation of the SME (small and medium sized enterprises) support project, USAID Georgia (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The SME Support Project was designed as a four year $10,330,133 project to address the needs and constraints of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) in Georgia and increase their overall production and sales. Overall 85 competitive and non-competitive grants valued at $2,545,190 were awarded to and/or supported tourism focused businesses and information centers, education and training institutions, business associations, business support organizations (BSOs), and Internally Displaced People (IDPs) in conflict areas. Grants were made for a large number of interventions with a broad array of separate purposes designed to foster the development of a supportive environment and business climate for SME development. Through background document analysis and research and interviews with key stakeholders and beneficiaries this evaluation assesses the SME Support Project's strategy, approaches, accomplishments, and impact of project assistance on the SME sector, including the number of new SMEs created, sustainability of SMEs supported by the project, the impact of project support on their sales/revenues, and private sector jobs created.

Performance Evaluation of the USAID/Georgia Access to Mechanization Project (AMP): Final Report, USAID Georgia (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is a report on the final performance evaluation of the Access to Mechanization Project (AMP) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission in Georgia. AMP was designed to address Georgia's severe shortage of agricultural machinery by using a commercially-sustainable, market-oriented methodology for the development of machinery service providers. The methodology employed to achieve project objectives involved providing matching grants and leveraging commercial finance, business, extension training and technical assistance via the Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) Volunteer program. The ultimate result of AMP's interventions would lead to specific indicator targets being met, including jobs created and additional net income for farmers.

Georgia Economic Prosperity Initiative (EPI): Midterm Performance Evaluation, USAID Georgia (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is a report on the midterm performance evaluation of the Georgia Economic Prosperity Initiative (EPI) project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission in Georgia. The project is implemented by Deloitte Consulting. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the contributions of the EPI toward achieving the

USAID/Caucasus' Development Objective -"Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth." Specifically, the goal was to measure the effectiveness of EPI's interventions in targeted sectors and value chains. The evaluation's main objective was to determine the progress of EPI in improving the overall competitiveness of the Georgian private sector through consideration of the project's design and implementation to date. Other objectives included: 1) assessing the contribution of EPI's activities toward achieving its high-level results (Productivity, Access to Finance/Domestic Investment, Exports, and Employment); and 2) advising on the practicality of measuring"the success of EPI as a whole" against such targets.

Georgian new economic opportunities (NEO) project: report on the baseline impact evaluation of NEO's component 2 and 3 activities, Impact evaluation, USAID Georgia (2014). Impact Evaluation.

This report presents the findings from baseline impact evaluation of the Georgia New Economic Opportunities (NEO) Component 2 (Rural Economic Development) and 3 (Assistance to Vulnerable Households) interventions. Funded by USAID at an estimated at $20.5 million, NEO is a four-year project based in Georgia with the objectives of improving rural incomes, reducing poverty levels, improving food security, addressing production constraints among small-scale agricultural producers, assisting internally displaced persons (IDP) to maintain their households, and aiding communities distressed by natural or other disasters. NEO supports approximately 70,000 households in 85 communities and 10 municipalities through community mobilization and local economic-development planning, livelihood assistance, and value-chain development. The project aims to increase household production by 15-25% and decrease vulnerability by 25% among targeted households and individuals.

Guatemala

Title II Food Security Program, SHARE, MYAP 2006-2011: Final Evaluation Report, USAID Guatemala (2011). Performance Evaluation.

Asociación SHARE Guatemala (SHARE) hired the consulting company of JMatute-CIENSA to carry out the final evaluation for the Title II Improved Food Security Program (IFSP). SHARE Guatemala is a Guatemalan organization whose mission is to promote participative and sustainable development opportunities, as well as provide emergency assistance, so that the most vulnerable populations are able to improve their quality of life. The findings of this evaluation show highly positive changes in chronic malnutrition rates in children under five. While this evaluation cannot demonstrate the program's causality, it can shed light on the effects it has had on participating communities.

Title II food security program, PROMASA, Save the Children, MYAP 2006-2011: endline report, USAID Guatemala (2011). Performance Evaluation.

Save the Children is a non-profit organization with no political or religious affiliations. One of the programs being executed by Save the Children in Guatemala is the Maya Food Security Program (PROMASA), which is a Title II PL 480 Multi-Year Assistance Program (MYAP) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This program responds to the objectives established by USAID's Food for Peace Office for Title II PL 480 programs, which is to reduce food insecurity in vulnerable populations and to respond to emergencies and natural disasters. Within this framework, PROMASA undertakes activities that promote good practices in health and nutrition, livelihoods, natural resources, and risk management, and whose goal is to reduce food insecurity and chronic malnutrition in boys and girls from 0 to 3 years old in 123 communities within 6 municipalities of the Department of Quiché (San Gaspar Chajul, Santa María Cunén, San Juan Cotzal, Santa María Nebaj, Sacapulas, and San Miguel Uspantán), benefitting more than 11,600 families.

USAID/Guatemala Final Performance Evaluations for Four Economic Growth Office Projects, USAID Guatemala (2012). Performance Evaluation.

End-of-Project performance evaluations were conducted on four projects, funded by USAID/Guatemala's Economic Growth Office, which ended in September 2012. The four projects included: (1) the Competitive Enterprises in Coffee project, (2) the Access to Dynamic Markets for Rural Small and Medium Enterprises project, (3) the Forestry Enterprises in Guatemala project, and (4) the Guatemala Community Tourism Alliance project.
Among the more salient of the findings and conclusions are the following:

- Mellor-type spill-over effects from agricultural value chain support activities, in terms of promoting non-farm employment and income, appeared to be more limited in remote rural communities.
- Working in the more remote areas, without infrastructure and nearby markets, means that desired results are likely to take many more years, and more resources, to achieve.
- Small producers are highly dependent on hillside agriculture, and subject to climate change-induced periods of unpredictable drought and excessive rainfall.
- The evaluation findings validate studies which have concluded that increased household income and employment derived from small farmer participation in value chains do not necessarily translate into better nutrition and living standards.
- Environmental and quality certifications add to the costs of production, which may be insurmountable for the smallest farmers.
- Adaptation to the effects of climate also is affecting the costs of production for small farmers in both the coffee and horticultural value chains.
- Both ANACAFE and AGEXPORT have institutional sustainability, and have increased their capacity to reach SME beneficiaries.
- The success of agricultural value chain activities is constrained by inadequate provision by the public sector support.
- Forestry concessions are a very sustainable institutional basis to build on the results achieved in forest protection in recent years in Guatemala, but there remain social pressures to break the concession model because a rising number of local community residents are not included as concession associates.

- Where there are linkages with national parks or protected areas with an interest in mobilizing community-based forest protection, the sustainability of community-based tourism efforts looks quite strong.
- Expanding community-based tourism to remoter areas, without such institutional linkages, has proven to be a challenge, but emphasizing exportable handicrafts products, is a strategy that appears to have worked.
- Both ANACAFE and AGEXPORT were slow to respond to the 2009 Gender Assessment recommendations, and the response has been incomplete.
- Women's employment has increased, but their participation continues to be limited by cultural norms and language barriers.

Two Economic Growth Office Projects: Midterm Performance Evaluations, USAID Guatemala (2012). Performance Evaluation.

Midterm performance evaluations were conducted on two projects funded by USAID/Guatemala's Economic Growth Office, the Inclusive Market Alliance for Rural Entrepreneurs (IMARE) project, and the TIERRAS/Land Conflict Resolution project, both implemented by Mercy Corps. The purpose of the midterm evaluations was to measure the performance-to-date of the two very different projects, analyze any implementation problems, and make recommendations as necessary for needed course corrections.

Both projects appear to be on track to meet or exceed the targets specified under their PMPs. There were several key findings related to Institutional Capacity Building: (1) The IMARE 1 project relied on large and formal buyers, like WalMart, for sustainability, but the shift in focus to Feed the Future departments under IMARE 2 has de-emphasized that model by also focusing on local and informal markets; (2) The current TIERRAS model for institution building is the creation and strengthening of the Municipal Agriculture Offices (OMAs) in each municipality. But after the last election, about half of the OMA staff people changed, and training must begin again and; (3) The biggest challenge facing the TIERRAS project is construction of an institutional structure for continuation of the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) process for land conflicts and maintenance of the cadastre.

The evaluations also found that the extent of women's participation in farming activities, producer association management, or both, appears to be limited by cultural norms, literacy and language barriers, especially in the altiplano. However, field staff and mediators for the TIERRAS project include both men and women, and every two months, Mercy Corps holds a training session for women from the municipality, in collaboration with the municipal women's office, about various aspects of land tenure and land conflict.

PROCOMIDA's Community Food Diversification Program for Mother and Child: External Midterm Evaluation Report, USAID Guatemala (2013). Performance Evaluation.

Programa Communitario Materno Infantil de Diversificación Alimentaria (Community Food Diversification Program for Mother and Child, or PROCOMIDA) is a six-year program that

started in July 2009 and ends June 2015, and seeks to improve the nutritional status of 266,000 people in 936 vulnerable communities in the department of Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. The goal is improved nutritional status and health of women and children vulnerable to food insecurity in northern Guatemala. Mercy Corps Guatemala is implementing PROCOMIDA, a multi-year assistance program, with funding from the United Sates Agency for International Development Bureau of Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance Office of Food for Peace. The overarching recommendation of this midterm evaluation is that PROCOMIDA needs to redirect programmatic efforts on translating improved knowledge and access to rations into improved practice and health seeking behavior.

Haiti

Catholic Relief Service: HAITI Title II MYAP Mid-Term Evaluation, Report #3, USAID Haiti (2010). Performance Evaluation.

CRS has worked in the South Department of Haiti for over 30 years, and has centered two FFP Development Assistance Programs (DAPs), as well as this MYAP, out of the Les Cayes region. Caritas, the major development branch of the Catholic Church in Haiti, is a significant partner in this MYAP, and has had a long presence in the region as well, centered out of Camp-Perrin. At the beginning of the MYAP, collaboration with the Haitian Ministries of Agriculture and Health encouraged CRS to center their activities out of the commune of Les Anglais with later expansion down the coast into the communes of Chardonnières, Tiburon, Port-a-Piment and Port Salut. MCHN activities have targeted the twelve communes of the South Department, two within the Nippes Department, and one in the GrandAnse Department. As can be seen from the map of MYAP program distribution within the Southern Department, CRS has focused what they have referred to as their "full package" of activities, which includes the principal components of MCHN, agriculture/livelihood, education, and "safety net" activities in the band of communes stretching from Tiburon down to St. Jean du Sud, including Ile a Vache.

Midterm Evaluation (MTE) for Haiti MYAP Program Haiti MYAP Overview, Methodological Approaches, with Major Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations MYAP Report #1, USAID Haiti, (2010). Performance Evaluation.

Rather than undertake midterm reviews of the HAITI MYAPs separately, a decision was made by USAID/Haiti and the Cooperating Sponsors to undertake this as one exercise. This would permit comparison of overall program approaches, accomplishments, lessons learned and to possibly consider programmatic course corrections that could impact all three MYAPs. Over the past 2 ½ years of program implementation, all three HAITI MYAPS (World Vision Haiti, CRS, ACDI/VOCA) have directly benefited many hundreds of thousands of rural Haitians through MCHN and agricultural activities—working through sometimes almost unbelievably difficult field circumstances and conditions. Had these organizations not been present in their respective regions of responsibility, prepositioned with personnel, food and medical supplies, the negative impacts of the three 2008 hurricanes and the devastating January 12, 2010 earthquake would have been much greater. The need to operationally move from a development assistance mode of

implementation to emergency and famine relief and back again has placed challenges upon all three organizations, though they have done so quite effectively, in spite of understandable delays to planned program targeting.

USAID/Haiti Mission-Wide Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP), USAID Haiti (2010). Performance Evaluation.

This Haiti USAID Mission-Wide PERSUAP is designed to serve as an umbrella reference and field document related to the USAID's ongoing and future food security, agricultural technical assistance and development programs. The PERSUAP is an environmental assessment aimed at evaluating impacts of agro-chemical control methods that are either, directly promoted by USAID implementers or used by beneficiary farmers. This PERSUAP recommends the lowest human- and environmental-risk products available for control of only the most economically damaging pests reported during field work in Haitian project regions, for which non-chemical controls are insufficient. For each USAID partner included in this assessment there are some unique variables specific to each of their respective project regions.

ACDI/VOCA Haiti Title II MYAP Mid-Term Evaluation, Report #4, USAID Haiti (2010). Performance Evaluation.

Unlike World Vision and CRS who both have been present in Haiti for over 30 years and have long-established links within their regions of operation, ACDI/VOCA was new to Haiti; they had not been involved in previous Haiti FFP Development Assistance Programs (DAPs) – this was their first FFP Title II activity in Haiti. What they brought to the MYAP program was an excellent track record in other developing countries for their strategic approach to increasing agricultural productivity and livelihood opportunities among resource poor farmers, an approach that focused on commodity value chains linking producers with market driven strategies.

World Vision HAITI Title II MYAP. Mid-Term Evaluation, Report #2, USAID Haiti (2010). Performance Evaluation.

World Vision has been operational in Haiti for more than 30 years and currently has 705 staff members working through some 33 special projects and 21 micro-regional development initiatives in its Area Development Programs (ADPs) in five regions of the country. This World Vision Haiti MYAP has its focus in six communes of the Upper Central Plateau, 8 communes in the Lower Central Plateau and the Artibonite valley, and the two communes on the Island of La Gônave – intended to reach some 540,369 beneficiaries or about 108,000 households, believed to represent about 57% of the population in these areas. The goal of this FFP MYAP is "to reduce food insecurity and increase resiliency of vulnerable and extremely vulnerable rural households in four regions of Haiti…by targeting its most vulnerable members: women, children, youth, and the communes they live in"

Haiti Integrated Finance for Value Chains and Enterprises (HIFIVE) Final Performance Evaluation, USAID Haiti (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This is a report on the Summative Evaluation of the Haiti Integrated Financing for Value Chains and Enterprises (HIFIVE) program funded by USAID/Haiti. HIFIVE is a financial sector service program designed to expand financial inclusion by increasing the availability of financial products and services to individual entrepreneurs and to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in targeted value chains in semi-urban and rural areas of Haiti.

The evaluation report drew the following conclusions:

- Directed credit programs are needed to increase agro-lending by banks, MFIs, and CECs.
- Anchor firms linked to small-scale producers that serve as contract growers for the anchor firm, supported by HIFIVE grants that facilitate production credit for the small producers, is an excellent model for agricultural value chain development.
- HIFIVE credit facilitation and business development services (BDS) should incorporate additional support for production technical assistance to the loan recipients.
- The greatest impact that HIFIVE can have on the sustainability of the mobile money initiative in Haiti would be to help create a clear, well-defined, transparent, and supportive legal and regulatory framework.
- A second important impact by HIFIVE would result from project support for mobile money use to value chain operators, as well as to HIFIVE-supported financial institutions and their members and clients.
- The HIFIVE staff has worked diligently for the past three years to develop a strong network of financial institutions that are reliable partners. This network is a valuable resource for project implementation during the extension period.

Développement Economique pour un Environnement Durable (DEED) Final Performance Evaluation, USAID Haiti (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is a performance evaluation for the DEED (Développement Economique pour un Environnement Durable) project implemented in the Montrouis (January 2008-January 2011) and Limbé (January 2008-November 2012) watersheds. The evaluation is directed at addressing DEED effectiveness and providing recommendations that can guide informed decisions in terms of designing and implementing environmental and agricultural projects in Haiti. DEED was initiated within the USAID's 2007 strategy plan for Haiti that had three main strategic objectives (1) more employment and sustainable livelihoods, (2) increased access to quality social services, and (3) improved rule of law and responsive governance. The DEED project has a satisfactory performance regarding the key target performance indicators. DEED took a participatory approach to involve multi-stakeholders from the inception of the project and in the course of its implementation. The main outputs of DEED are 5 sub-WMCs created, 15000 people trained, and 50000 ha under NRM. DEED project promoted a series of crop value chains directed at generating income to PGs and protecting the watershed in which they reside. The most dominant crops supported by DEED were: cocoa, yam and rice.

Final evaluation of the project Kore L'Avni Nou food voucher programme implemented by CARE in the Department of Grande-Anse, USAID Haiti (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This report presents the final evaluation findings on the "Food Voucher Programme - Kore L'Avni Nou" implemented by CARE in nine (9) communes of the "Grande d'Anse" department in Haiti. The main goal of this evaluation was to assess project impact on beneficiaries (target families as well as participating shops) and the effectiveness and relevance of the electronic food voucher as implemented by CARE. Evaluation findings revealed improvement of merchant businesses and overall local economy.

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT The Haiti Title II Multi Year Assistance Programs (MYAP) Final Evaluation Report, USAID Haiti (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this evaluation is to conduct a final performance evaluation of the Haiti MYAP. The evaluation examines the overall performance of the program by investigating three major questions: (1) the extent to which the food security status of the targeted population has changed; (2) the extent to which the MYAP programs have contributed to the resilience of the targeted communities; and (3) the extent to which the various mothers' clubs models implemented by the Title II cooperating sponsors are cost-effective. The evaluation is expected to help guide and optimize the effectiveness of future Food for Peace programming in Haiti, and compile the best practices and lessons learned.

Haiti Title II Multi Year Assistance Programs (MYAP): World Vision. Final Evaluation Report, USAID Haiti (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The strategic objectives of the most recent Multi Year Assistance Programs (MYAPs) in Haiti, as stated by USAID in 2007, are: Improved Nutritional and Health Status of Targeted Vulnerable Groups, and Improved Productive and Profitable Livelihoods for Vulnerable Groups. The purpose of this evaluation is to conduct a final performance evaluation of the Haiti MYAP. The evaluation examines the overall performance of the program by investigating three major questions: (1) the extent to which the food security status of the targeted population has changed; (2) the extent to which the MYAP programs have contributed to the resilience of the targeted communities; and (3) the extent to which the various mothers' clubs models implemented by the Title II cooperating sponsors are cost-effective. Many of World Vision's agricultural, natural resources management and livelihoods activities are likely to have lasting effects. However, ensuring continued supply of agricultural inputs and services after the end of the program would have strengthened program sustainability.

Final Evaluation of the Food Voucher Program "Kore Lavni Nou-2" Implemented in North-West and Upper Artibonite Departments, USAID Haiti (2014). Performance Evaluation.

This document reports findings from the final evaluation of Kore Lavni Nou—2, a food voucher emergency relief project implemented by CARE in three communes of the Upper Artibonite and North-West Departments of Haiti. This intervention aimed at providing food to the vulnerable households affected by the extensive drought and recurring food insecurity to offset harmful coping strategies of the beneficiaries and support them in recovering assets. CARE and its partner pursued the following objectives: · providing food vouchers as a short-term safety net for 8,000 food insecure and extremely poor families to fill gaps exacerbated by the disasters and to reinforce local markets in Gonaives, Mole Saint Nicholas, and Terre Neuve and, · piloting healthy diet promotion with fresh fruit and vegetable paper vouchers approach in Terre Neuve commune to reach 1,000 food insecure and extremely poor families.

Honduras

Rural Development Project: Farmer Training and Development Activity, MCC Honduras (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The Rural Development Project included four activities: (i) farmer training and development, (ii) farmer access to credit, (iii) farm to market roads, and (iv) agricultural public goods grant facility. The Rural Development Project sought to improve the business skills, productivity, market access, and risk management practices of producers who operate small- and medium-size farms. This aimed to result in higher incomes for the targeted farmers, their employees and their communities and strengthen the capacity of those enterprises servicing horticultural production and trade. FTDA included on-going training and technical assistance, including financial support and extension services in commercial horticulture production and marketing. The independent evaluation was designed to answer the following questions: 1) Did the FTDA intervention increase cultivation of horticultural crops?; 2) Did the FTDA intervention increase household income?; and 3) Did the FTDA intervention increase employment on farms? This evaluation used an econometric model to measure impact. One key assumption is that the causal models are correct and the variables remained constant between the two survey rounds. The evaluation found that the model-based approach estimated net income change from horticultural crops is on average $600 higher for program participants than for nonparticipants. However, the program did not appear to have had a positive effect on the proportion of farmers growing horticultural crops. Even though there was an increase in income from horticultural crops, the evaluator did not find a corresponding statistically significant increase in net household income or household expenditures/consumption, as might have been expected.

India

Linking Small-Scale Vegetable Farmers to Supermarkets: Effectiveness Assessment of the GMED India Project, USAID India (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The fresh vegetable component of the India Growth-Oriented Microenterprise Development Program (GMED) project is representative of many similar programs that seek to link small-scale farmers to competitive value chains. To integrate small-scale farmers into competitive

value chains, GMED followed a two-pronged approach that included, first, technical assistance to facilitate farmer upgrading and, second, the establishment of mutually beneficial vertical relationships linking small-scale farmers to corporate buyers, in this case domestic supermarket chains.

The value chain experienced dynamic change over the course of the four-year study. In the beginning, during 2006, contract farming in some regions was just becoming possible due to changes in the APMC. During 2007 and early 2008, the demand for quality fresh produce in domestic supermarkets was strong and retailers were planning rapid expansion of their operations. Then, in late 2008, corporate expansion plans were placed on hold as the Indian economy responded to global recession. By the time the final data were collected in 2009, some of the existing retail outlets had been closed and contact had ended between farmers and corporate buyers in some areas.

This study's mixed-method approach provides insights that reach beyond measuring the magnitude of change to reveal features of the dynamic contexts in which private sector development programs operate. The results of the quantitative component, analyzed as a 2X4 factorial arrangement of treatments, provide information on changes in outcome and impact variables over time. The qualitative component provides insights on the causal links connecting project activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. It also illuminates the statistical findings from the perspectives of program beneficiaries and partners. The process evaluation helps researchers and practitioners understand how program activities and outputs were delivered over time and how the implementation path could affect project effectiveness. The assessment results confirm the efficacy of the farmer-to-farmer approach as a mechanism for widespread diffusion of upgrading information throughout a local area.

Partnerships for Innovation and Knowledge in Agriculture: Final Evaluation, Main Report, USAID India (2011). Performance Evaluation.

USAID/India's Partnership for Innovation and Knowledge in Agriculture (PIKA) program aims to increase small-farmer incomes by leveraging public-private partnerships (PPP) to develop and disseminate technologies and practices that will increase productivity and foster more effective market linkages for Indian agricultural producers and processors. PIKA consists of four sub-projects implemented under three cooperative agreements and one contract. The evaluation found that, at least in the environment in India, the PPP approach has been an effective and efficient mechanism to leverage USAID resources to extend benefits to a large number of farmers. Government extension services and university researchers in India are failing to provide relevant, tailored advice to small farmers. Each of the PIKA projects, in its own way, contributed to filling this gap by facilitating the transfer of appropriate, productivity-enhancing technologies and practices to small farmers. One of the most significant challenges to further improving the economic status of small farmers in India is finding the means to fill this significant gap in research and extension services. The fact that PIKA-promoted technologies and practices almost uniformly increased yields and productivity implies that the interventions were relevant to achieving project objectives. There is insufficient information, however, to estimate the magnitude of changes in productivity or income or to determine whether the promoted practices

are the"best" practices in the current environment or the most applicable for the targeted beneficiaries. PIKA partners have generally adapted their activities to the changing environment or to the realities of their work environments. Most of the private sector activities (with the exception of Tasty Bite) show substantial potential for scaling up. In each case, partners have targeted large and relatively untapped markets, and the evolving markets for agricultural inputs and products will drive expansion of economically viable projects. All of the PIKA projects, with the exception of World Vision, contributed either to existing programs or to ongoing initiatives of partners by effectively filling technology, knowledge, or expertise gaps.

Final evaluation of the agricultural innovation partnership project: final performance evaluation, USAID India (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The objective of this review is to conduct a final performance evaluation of the Agriculture Innovation Partnership (AIP) project, a Feed the Future project implemented through partnerships between United States (US) land grant and Indian universities. The specific purpose of the evaluation is to gain an independent assessment of the AIP project's performance to provide lessons learned and help guide the Mission on future project design under the Feed the Future program.

- The evaluation team found that there is demonstrated success for e-learning, Technology Dissemination and Income Improvement Activities (TDIIA) trainings, mobile tablets, and certificate courses. The partnership between universities and Krishi Vigyan Kendras teams to provide post-training follow-up and assistance from the TDIIA trainings appears to have been valuable to training participants, and such a model could be a positive lesson learned to consider for strategy and scale-up. Though the fixed cost of mobile solutions may be high, the accelerated information sharing feature that it brings may contribute to an increase in productivity on the part of farmers.
- AIP has addressed many of the agricultural and labor skill issues that have been raised through the baseline surveys and from general research on the technical agriculture needs in India.
- Women expressed great interest in commercializing their farm enterprises, as related during interview discussions with women in various trainings. Women belong to cooperatives and self-help groups for entrepreneurial reasons, which could serve as venues for taking training to the villages. Though the project did see participation from women, this participation was not necessarily intentional, and there were not project activities cited that were explicitly geared toward reducing the gaps between males and females in the agricultural sector.
- The support of the partner universities to the AIP efforts at introducing innovations into the learning process has been instrumental in uptake. AIP funding played a decisive role in initiating activities in the absence of university budgets. Food product development and commercialization testing, approval, and authorization processes curtail progress and uptake.

Indonesia

Indonesia Marine and Climate Support (IMACS) Midterm Evaluation, USAID Indonesia (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of the performance evaluation was to provide USAID/Indonesia (USAID) and the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) with an independent review of progress to date of assistance provided by USAID to MMAF under the Marine Resources Program (MRP) and to guide the development of innovations and adaptation of USAID's assistance in a dynamic environment. MRP is designed to support Government of Indonesia's commitment to the CTI-CFF to manage and conserve critical marine resources. Of the five CTI-CFF goals, USAID priorities are aligned to support the goals of (a) an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, (b) marine protected areas (c) climate change adaptation.

Evaluation of the USAID-MMAF Marine Resources Program (MRP), Indonesia, USAID Indonesia (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of the performance evaluation was to provide USAID/Indonesia (USAID) and the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) with an independent review of progress to date of assistance provided by USAID to MMAF under the Marine Resources Program (MRP) and to guide the development of innovations and adaptation of USAID's assistance in a dynamic environment. MRP is designed to support Government of Indonesia's commitment to the CTI-CFF to manage and conserve critical marine resources. Of the five CTI-CFF goals, USAID priorities are aligned to support the goals of (a) an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, (b) marine protected areas (c) climate change adaptation.

Seeing the Forest for the Trees: An Evaluation of USAID/Indonesia's Forest Resource Sustainability Program (FOREST): Final Report, USAID Indonesia (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Government of Indonesia (GOI) with an unbiased and transparent review of progress to date of assistance provided to Indonesia under the Forest Resource Sustainability Program (FOREST). This is to include a performance evaluation of the USAID/Indonesia Forest and Climate Support (IFACS) implementing mechanism and a strategic assessment of the FOREST Program's approach to the forest sector in Indonesia. USAID and GOI will use this evaluation in the short term to modify ongoing assistance, and in the longer term to inform strategic planning and the design of future assistance.

Adapting to Climate Change in Eastern Indonesia Final Evaluation, USAID Indonesia (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The final evaluation of the World Neighbors (WN)'s program "Adapting to Climate Change in Eastern Indonesia" World Neighbors (MW) was conducted for 24 days from August 12 – September 9, 2013, with field visits to 17 villages or 22% of the total 78 villages in the five Islands (Flores, Timor, Sumba, Lombok and Sumbawa) where the program is implemented. The review methodology included a desk review of documentation provided by WN, a briefing

session with WN in Bali followed by field visits. Some cross-cutting issues were notified. Like poverty reduction, governance, gender, partnership, capacity development and food security. In the lessons-learned section, any best practices, behavior changes and innovations are identified. The report then closed with some recommendations for World Neighbors, partners, government and other stakeholders, and the USAID.

Iraq

Tijara Provincial Economic Growth Program Midterm Evaluation: Final Report, USAID Iraq (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The USAID Provincial Economic Growth program,"Tijara," began in January 2008 and will end in January 2013, with current life-of-project funding of more than $174 million. Tijara supports the setup of Small Business Development Centers and assists the Iraqi Ministry of Trade's accession to the World Trade Organization. It focuses on expansion of commercial lending through microfinance institutions and small and medium enterprise lending with private banks. It also implements the Iraqi Youth Initiative program, focused on employment opportunities for the youth of Iraq.

Final Performance Evaluation of USAID/Iraq Tijara Provincial Economic Growth Program, USAID Iraq (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This performance evaluation is a cumulative assessment of the microfinance component of the USAID/Iraq-Tijara Provincial Economic Growth Project (USAID-Tijara). The evaluation's purpose is to assess whether a sustainable microfinance industry has been established in Iraq, and if so, whether Tijara contributed substantially to that establishment. The evaluation also aims to determine the extent to which the project's microfinance component objectives have been achieved.

Taking into account the program's specifics, the evaluation team developed the following lessons learned:

- A project exit strategy needs to be formally developed and considered at an early stage of a project. This should be considered by both USAID and the project implementing partner.
- Political support and local ownership should be secured at an early stage of a project to create a more stable microfinance ecosystem. This lesson is crucial and needs to be considered by both USAID and the project implementing partner.
- Intensive communication with and engagement of diverse state agencies is needed, complemented by frequent discussions with local stakeholders on microfinance issues.
- The Iraqi Microfinance Network should have been created and become fully functional at an early stage of the program.
- Information-sharing and catch-up strategies should have been developed for those state officials who did not attend the training sessions but were in need of advancing their

knowledge of microfinance issues and the enabling environment necessary to support microfinance.
- Increased focus on maintaining consistency between bilingual web sites is required

Jordan

Mid-term evaluation of the water reuse and environmental conservation (WREC) project, USAID Jordan (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is an independent external evaluation report of the Water Reuse and Environmental Conservation (WREC) project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission in Jordan. The WREC project started on August 1, 2010 and will end on July 30, 2015. The project is being implemented by AECOM. The main objective of the evaluation was to assess the performance of WREC, identify its successes and weaknesses, and make recommendations on successful project implementation strategies and approaches that could be replicated/utilized by USAID/Jordan in future programs, especially as related to the water sector.

Kenya

Kenya maize development programme II: performance evaluation, USAID Kenya (2012). Performance Evaluation.

ACDI/VOCA implemented KMDP II programme in consortium with three grantees; the Cereal Growers Association (CGA), Farm Input Promotions (FIPS)-Africa, and the Kenya Agricultural Commodity Exchange (KACE). The program's objectives contributed towards USAID/Kenya's Strategic Objective 7: Increased Rural Household Incomes through sustained economic growth through improved production and marketing efficiency in maize and other selected alternative staple crops among small holder producers towards the US Government's Feed the Future Initiative. ACDI/VOCA and its partners implemented the Kenya Maize Development Program (KMDP II) since January 2011 with the program's end date being September 30, 2012. Part of the key project deliverables required on all USAID funded projects is to carry out a rigorous performance evaluation at the end of the project period. A performance evaluation was therefore carried out between August and September 2012.

Emergency Nutrition and WASH Program for Garissa County (March 14, 2011-March 15, 2012): End-of-Program Evaluation, USAID Kenya (2012). Performance Evaluation.

Mercy-USA, initiated an emergency response on the ground supporting both facility and community- based interventions to enable a holistic approach in curative and preventive nutrition rehabilitation interventions for the targeted beneficiaries and improve access to water and sanitation facilities for school going children. The program proposed to expand existing coverage and outreach activities to enable the delivery of services to a wider population currently in need

of nutrition support within this County. As a result of strengthening the health system (a key objective of the program), the overall child morbidity declined and deworming coverage improved the same period of between April 2011 and March 2012.

Arid and Marginal Lands Recovery Consortium (ARC) Program. Final Evaluation, USAID Kenya (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The Arid and Marginal Lands Recovery Consortium (ARC) Program in Kenya was a three-year program that ran from 2009-2012, in response to the drought of 2008/9 and the resulting food crisis in Kenya. The goal of the project was to sustain access to food in vulnerable rural communities through enhanced resilience to shocks. The specific objectives of the program were to increase agricultural productivity, to protect and diversify Household (HH) asset bases, and to strengthen livelihood options to increase HH purchasing power. The program benefited 663,778 individuals, of a total population of 1,994,555, in targeted areas. The evaluation team determined that the program was particularly effective in obtaining community support and buy-in for ARC program activities. Prominent program successes included improvement of livestock quality and quantity through health improvements; more consistent supply in the quantity and quality of water; and better fodder production. The program was also successful in developing new farmlands for sustainable long-term food production by utilizing specialized technologies, such as irrigation and terracing. The program's most noticeable success was the development of alternative income generation opportunities, specifically Arabica gum and resin enterprises, tilapia production, bee keeping, irrigated and terraced agriculture, and milk and meat processing. These alternatives provided new income and employment opportunities across all the ARC areas.

Multi-stakeholder evaluation of agriculture and livestock value chain activities in Kenya: compendium report, USAID Kenya (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this evaluation is to articulate a common frame of reference and approaches for donors to use in designing and implementing agriculture and livestock value chain development activities in support of Kenya's Medium Term Investment Plan (MTIP) and the Kenya Agricultural Sector Development Strategy (ASDS), and to help align Feed the Future agricultural development and poverty reduction efforts with those of other donors. The evaluation focused on three agriculture and livestock value chains of particular interest to USAID/Kenya and the Kenya Development Partners: staple foods/basic grains, horticulture, and dairy. The projects and programs were selected based on donor recommendations of activities that were generally recognized as effective and successful in achieving objectives and generating positive impacts for beneficiaries and the rural economy. Four of 10 programs evaluated by the team demonstrated the benefit of developing project designs based on the successful practices of earlier interventions and intensive research conducted at the beginning of the programs. Key informants indicated that programs with more flexible designs adapt faster to the changes in the environment which often leads to the success of the program itself. The evaluation also found that region-wide programs can reduce costs due to the economy of scale. If such a program is implemented by several partners, it also benefits from cross fertilization and knowledge sharing between the partners who are working as a team. Each of the five dairy programs varied in their

design and implementation. One of the common drawbacks in all of the projects was the focus on the formal market even though the informal market accounts for 80% of total milk production capacity in Kenya. Finally, The biggest strength of NALEP has been the formation and capacity building of grass-root farmer organizations in the form of CIGs.

Natural Resources Management Activities Mid-Term Evaluation, USAID Kenya (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This report presents the results of a mid-term evaluation of eight ongoing projects in the USAID/Kenya Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM) portfolio. The primary purpose of this evaluation was to determine what is working and why (best practices), to recommend course corrections, and to generate a forward-looking vision to advise the Agriculture, Business, and Environment Office (ABEO) on future strategic directions for its ENRM portfolio. Across all ENRM projects, create locally vested interests in preserving habitats and natural resources to further conservation goals. Increased collaboration should be sought with the private sector in promoting conservation and in instilling good business practices in the development of conservation enterprises.

Laikipia Natural Resource Management and Biodiversity Conservation Program. Final Performance Evaluation, USAID Kenya (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This final performance evaluation examines the Laikipia Natural Resource Management and Biodiversity Conservation Program, implemented by Laikipia Wildlife Forum (LWF). The program aims to build the capacity of the people of Laikipia to manage their natural resources such as rangelands, water, and forests. LWF's strength is its role in coordinating natural resource management (NRM) activities in Laikipia County, and in this regard it is recognized and appreciated as such. It provides a platform for all of its members from community groups to research organizations and private landowners. This is a great strength that can be used for stabilizing and improving the ecosystem in Laikipia. In coordinating its activities, LWF does not compete with government agencies, NGOs, or any other entities; instead, it uses them to accomplish its goals and create greater cooperation.

Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program: USAID Support to Kenya's Dairy Industry for a Five-Year Period from May 2008 until April 2013. Final Performance Evaluation, USAID Kenya (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is an independent, final evaluation of the Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program (KDSCP), which was implemented by Land O'Lakes International Development. Management Systems International carried out the evaluation between April and June 2013, under the Kenya Program Support Project. Its purpose was to a) document the degree to which project interventions achieved their planned results; b) determine the extent to which the project strengthened the dairy sector; c) identify best practices, lessons learned, and areas of improvement for future programs; and d) make recommendations for future USAID programs

under the Feed the Future Initiative with particular emphasis on its Kenya Agriculture Value Chain Enterprises Support (KAVES) project. The project helped increase household income by increasing productivity and reducing production costs.

USAID-KARI partnership for increased rural household incomes (2004-2013), USAID Kenya (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This performance evaluation of the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) found that KARI research products are not consistently being taken up on the scale needed to significantly reduce the incidence of diseases or create the resistances for which they were designed. Farmer habits as well as their education levels and awareness of and access to new and better agricultural technologies may play an important role in adoption.

Many of the problems that impede the up-take of KARI research solutions lie downstream in distribution channels and farmer awareness. It is not, however, in KARI's interest to simply observe these impediments. KARI knows this and is actively involved in a range of efforts aimed at expanding knowledge about research products and their effectiveness. KARI and partner organizations are also working to develop pathways for the commercial production and distribution of as large a portion of its products as possible, compensating with other approaches only where no commercial mechanism is found. What is missing from this picture, the evaluation revealed, is enough evidence to sort out what
will spark action along the production distribution chain and ignite farm level uptake, and how to trigger the adoption of better farming products and practices faster and on a much larger scale.

Property rights and resource governance program (PRRG): performance evaluation final report, USAID Kenya (2014). Performance Evaluation.

This evaluation of USAID's PRRG program was conducted for the Office of Land Tenure and Property Rights Division. PRRG operated as a mini Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC), with a core budget and opportunities for buy-ins from missions and operating units. Over its six-year lifespan, PRRG opened the conversation on property rights to larger and larger audiences by promoting a common language and providing them with fundamental information through profiles, issue briefs, and training. PRRG gave practitioners the opportunity to test ideas on property rights in dynamic environments and created new spaces for them to collect and share those experiences. Where PRRG's results fell short of possibilities, most were opportunities that emerged with program's unanticipated popularity or resulted from the program's quick pace and willingness to take chances. Only one major lesson from the experience leading up to PRRG—the need to encourage the design of programs for gender equity—appears to be a significant opportunity missed.

Yes Youth Can! Youth Program Final Impact Evaluation, USAID Kenya (2014). Impact Evaluation.

Yes Youth Can! (YYC) is a 3-year, $55m program funded by USAID to promote youth empowerment in Kenya. The goal of YYC is to address the underlying social, economic, and political factors that drive youth marginalization in Kenya. In so doing, YYC seeks to affect a range of outcomes related to these factors, as well as to prevent a recurrence of the violence that followed the 2007 elections in Kenya, in which youth played a significant role. The evaluation should not be interpreted as discounting the possibility that YYC played an instrumental role in preventing post-election violence in 2013, which is seen as a major accomplishment of the program by the YYC Technical Team. Because we cannot evaluate this hypothesis rigorously, however, we do not emphasize it as a major finding.

Kosovo

Midterm Performance Evaluation of the USAID/Kosovo Loan Portfolio Guarantee (LPG) Project with Raiffeisen Bank Kosovo JSC, USAID Kosovo (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This is a report on the midterm evaluation of the USAID/Kosovo Loan Portfolio Guarantee (LPG) project with Raiffeisen Bank Kosovo JSC (RBK). The main objective of the evaluation was to analyze the LPG project in terms of its effectiveness, impact, relevance, and the sustainability of its agricultural and agribusiness lending program. The LPG project has achieved its purpose. The project has been an effective mechanism that facilitated the expansion of RBK's loan portfolio into agriculture and agribusiness. . The evaluation team strongly recommends that USAID continue to use DCA loan guarantees as a tool for Kosovo's economic development, particularly in agriculture.

New Opportunity Funds for Agriculture (NOA) USAID Kosovo (2014). Performance Evaluation.

This is a report on the Mid-Term Performance Evaluation of the New Opportunities for Agriculture (NOA) project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission in Kosovo. The purpose of the evaluation was to conduct an objective external assessment of the management and performance of NOA's activities from January 2011 to present in order to provide USAID with: a) an assessment of NOA's impact to date in relation to the project purpose and expected results; b) recommendations for possible ways, if any, in which the project might increase the impact and performance of its services; and c) lessons learned that can be used to guide future programming in the agriculture sector. NOA had a significant impact in the increase of domestic sales of supported crops. The project exceeded the target of $8M by $33.9M. NOA supports a number of publicly financed institutes that serve an important scientific role by providing quality control testing and administrative import quality control functions; however, they are in need of funds and cannot adequately provide their intended services without additional trained staff and upgraded facilities. Barring unforeseen obstacles, all major NOA objectives and targets will be met by the project close-out date of February 2015. Many farmers continue to fund their business operations through savings or profits, borrowing from friends or family members, or receiving in-kind funding from donor projects. This result is consistent with

the responses indicating that lack of credit (high interest rates) is one of the main constraints to increasing business profits.

Laos

Mid-term evaluation of the USAID/RDMA maximizing agricultural revenue through knowledge, enterprise development, and trade (MARKET) project, USAID Laos (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The Maximizing Agricultural Revenue through Knowledge, Enterprise Development, and Trade (MARKET) project is a 3.5-year, $8 million initiative with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to strengthen food security for the organization's citizens and contribute to ASEAN integration. This mid-term performance evaluation of MARKET assesses the performance of the project against its goal and objectives. A key part of MARKET's design is to promote more direct involvement of the private sector and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in ASEAN's deliberations that had previously tended to be among governments only. In the last 20 months MARKET has generated momentum; it has formed alliances; it has provided demonstrations of the value to ASEAN of including the private sector and CSO in ASEAN discussions; and MARKET staff has gained valuable experience. The first half of the project has been a process of exploration and creation. The second half should be one of single-minded concentration on implementation and achievement of projected results.

Lebanon

Agricultural Product Quality Control and Certification (QCC) Program: Final External Evaluation Report, USAID Lebanon (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The QCC project was designed to support the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (CCIA) food labs in Saida, Zahle and Tripoli. The objective was to assist the labs to become recognized leading facilities for testing in Lebanon. The project sought to assist the labs with equipment and capacity building so that each lab would achieve ISO 17025 and ISO 9001 accreditation. ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is the internationally recognized body established to ensure that products and services are safe, reliable and of good quality. The CCIA labs in Tripoli and Zahle and Saida achieved ISO 17025 accreditation that is inclusive of ISO 9001 accreditation. A majority of clients of the three facilities reported satisfaction with the services provided in terms of efficiency, reliability of results and proximity of the facilities. None of the clients faced difficulty in export following testing their products in Lebanon and none had their goods returned which is evidence that the testing services provided are reliable and trustworthy.

Lebanon Investment in Microfinance Midterm Performance Evaluation, USAID Lebanon (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA) Lebanon Investment in Microfinance (LIM) Program is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the International Executive Service Corps (IESC). Since its inception up until March 2013, the LIM program has partnered with eight Microfinance Institutions (MFI), to maximize access of finance to microenterprises and small businesses, operating in the Agribusiness, Tourism and Information and Communication (ICT) value chains. LIM has enhanced the microfinance sector in Lebanon. Perhaps LIM's most significant achievement, the successful development of a professional Microfinance Association, presents a significant opportunity for Lebanon's microfinance sector to mature and grow.

Liberia

Evaluation of the Liberia sustainable tree crops program (STCP) USAID Liberia (2011). Performance Evaluation.

Tree crops have long been an integral part of Liberia's economy. The primary cash crops in this sector have included cocoa, coffee, oil palm and rubber. Since the end of Liberian Civil Wars, USAID has been assisting with the rebuilding of the post-conflict agriculture sector. One component of this broad effort was the introduction into Liberia of the Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP), a public-private alliance launched in May 2000 to facilitate the improvement of smallholder agricultural systems based on tree crops in West and Central Africa. The goal of STCP is to improve the economic and social well being of smallholders and the environmental sustainability of tree crop farms. The primary findings of the evaluation team were the following: Liberia STCP management is weak at the national level but strong in the field. STCP is supporting the Central Agricultural Research Institute's (CARI) work in developing a seed garden to produce improved hybrid cocoa seeds for farmers. No such seed garden is being established for the production of improved hybrid oil palm seeds. IITA supported the Government of Liberia in developing a master plan for rubber. The development of master plans for cocoa and oil palm are incomplete.

Final evaluation: integrated agriculture for women's empowerment (INAWE), Foya and Kolahun Districts, Lofa County, Liberia, USAID Liberia (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The final evaluation (FE) of the Integrated Agriculture for Women's Empowerment (INAWE) project was conducted by the African Development Associates (ADEAS), and was commissioned by Samaritan's Purse Liberia (SPL). The project was implemented under two key objectives: 1. To increase women's asset control and leadership capacities, and 2. To increase income of rural small-holder households through agribusiness. Findings from the final evaluation revealed that, compared to the past where men made all HH decisions, women now either make decisions on their own or jointly with their partners. The Integrated Agriculture for Women's Empowerment project has made outstanding progress in accelerating women's roles from being passive to being active in household and community activities. Women now make joint decisions with their partners and have equal access to HH assets. One critical issue to note is that although garden tools were given to women for their personal use, the FE shows that besides the watering

can, which women have more access to, both women and men have equal access to both of the tools.

Midterm Evaluation for Health, Agriculture, and Nutrition Development for Sustainability, November-December 2012, USAID Liberia (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The Health, Agriculture, and Nutrition Development for Sustainability (HANDS) program commenced in June 2010. HANDS operates in seven districts in Grand Gedeh County and ten districts in River Gee County, both situated in the southeastern part of Liberia. The MTE team held extensive interviews with stakeholders at all levels using a range of tools including in-depth interviews with 859 beneficiary households. Overall, the midterm evaluation demonstrated considerable progress on the components of agriculture, micro-enterprise development, nutrition, and health. In particular, findings revealed that micro-enterprise components or activities improved the effectiveness of interventions by generating a lot of attention and interest among community members. Micro-enterprise components that provide nutritional benefits were especially successful.

Macedonia

Investment Development and Export Advancement Support Performance Evaluation, USAID Macedonia (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This report contains the summary of findings and recommendations of the external Midterm Performance Evaluation of USAID/Macedonia's Investment Development and Export Advancement Support (IDEAS) Project, conducted by Optimal Solutions Group, LLC (Optimal) in October and November of 2012. The purpose of this Midterm evaluation is to provide USAID with an external assessment that will be used to enhance the effectiveness of the project during the remainder of its performance period, and to inform the future USAID Economic Growth Strategy. In this light, the assessment team was tasked to 1) analyze the progress and effectiveness of the program components of the interventions to date; and 2) recommend potential modifications for improvement. The assessment team determines that there are cross-cutting and general recommendations that can be applied either throughout the project or can be applied to the future USAID's Economic Growth Strategy. The team believes that several of the IDEAS's component and activities can be continued by GoM agencies upon the project's conclusion in 2014. The assessment team offers the following recommendations: M&E Framework Implementation to be taken on by MoE—Investment Aftercare to be taken on by TIDZ—Export Promotion to be taken on by Invest Macedonia if the GoM financial support is provided to Invest Macedonia—Export Readiness activities to be taken on by MoE—NECC and CoC to sustain themselves respectively—The implementation of RIA to be sustained by MISA.

Madagascar

SALOHI MYAP midterm evaluation report, USAID Madagascar (2012). Performance Evaluation.

Catholic Relief Services – United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (CRS), the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), CARE and the International Development Division of Land O'Lakes formed a consortium in 2008, to implement a five year food security program entitled the Strengthening and Accessing Livelihood Opportunities for Household Incomes (SALOHI) Program. The goal of the program is to reduce food insecurity and vulnerability in 21 districts in eastern and southern Madagascar by 2014. The program has three Strategic Objectives (SOs): 1. Improving the health and nutritional status of children under five, 2. Improving household livelihoods, and 3. Strengthening community resilience and capacity to withstand shocks. In general, SALOHI HQ staff, field staff, program beneficiaries and local stakeholders believe the SALOHI program is having important and tangible impacts on people's lives. Many beneficiaries and stakeholders asked that the program be expanded to new zones, or continued beyond the five year life span. According to focus group discussions and field staff, program activities are pertinent, and the program is generally well designed. However, implementation quality is uneven, and needs to be improved over the next two years to ensure sustainable impacts.

Malawi

Malawi Sustainable Landscapes Assessment, USAID Malawi (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The objective of this assessment is to provide USAID/Malawi with an analysis of opportunities and challenges related to REDD+ in order to make strategic programming decisions for incoming Sustainable Landscapes funding. The assessment examined national level priorities, capacity, and the role other donors are taking related to REDD+ readiness. Malawi is best positioned to pursue REDD+ under the UNFCC REDD program; it is not a priority nation for World Bank REDD. There are many actors discussing REDD+ and carbon without understanding of the constraints on the available funding streams. There is general confusion over what REDD+ is about, what REDD Readiness requires of the GoM, or how to pursue becoming REDD Ready. The key recommendations for USAID-Malawi to assist the GoM to become ready to participate in REDD+ include instituting the coordination and transparency structures to move forward and develop a National REDD+ Strategy. Specifically, developing a National REDD+ Secretariat with participation across the forestry sector (but not limited to the Department of Forestry, DF); providing technical assistance by providing an embedded REDD+ advisor; and build technical capacity across Ministries for landscape-level land use planning that balances multiple uses.

Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement (WALA): Midterm Evaluation Report, USAID Malawi (2012). Performance Evaluation.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) commissioned a Midterm Evaluation of the Title II Multi-Year Assistance Program (MYAP) entitled Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement (WALA) being implemented by a consortium of seven implementing partners under the leadership of CRS in eight districts of southern Malawi. The program has three components, (1) a maternal and child health and nutrition component that is focused on pregnant and lactating women and children under the age of five years, (2) an agriculture and natural resource management component targeting smallholder farmers with landholdings less than one hectare and (3) a disaster risk reduction component building capacities for preparing for and mitigating natural disasters while also strengthening household coping capacities through food distributions. In some cases, evaluations may even find activities that should be discontinued because they are not likely to have impact due to contextual changes or other reasons. In the WALA Program, the evaluation found that the program logic is rational. The planned activities and outputs are likely to result in the assumed outcomes which will ultimately produce the intended impact on the food security of targeted impact groups. The evaluation also found that no parts of the strategy appeared to be irrelevant at this point. The WALA Program is implementing many activities that were already inducing behavioral change, and the evaluation found relatively fewer activities that needed to be improved. All in all, the WALA Program has established itself as a sound program, with the potential to become a great program, if it can make some adjustments and meet the challenges effectively.

Malawi Dairy Development Alliance, Land O'Lakes Malawi: Final Report, Final Evaluation, USAID Malawi (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This document is the report of the final evaluation for the Land O'Lakes Malawi Dairy Development Alliance (MDDA) Extension conducted by Kadale Consultants in January 2012. It focuses primarily on the 15-month extension period from January 2011 to March 2012, adding to the evaluation of the first four years of the MDDA conducted in 2010. There were 3,464 farmers, 1,730 (49.9%) women and 1,734 (50.1%) men across all supported MBGs. The number of members with cows was 1,822; a higher proportion of women members had cows (57.5%) than men (42.5%). The number of pure and high-cross breeds has increased by 4.2% over the MDDA extension, despite major problems with Artificial Insemination (AI) services. For most of its indicators, the MDDA extension met or exceeded its targets, some by very considerable margins. This has been the case in a difficult operating environment, including the recent problems over fuel. There were some shortfalls on targets, notably around production. In mitigation, the dairy sector faced considerable problems that undermined AI services. These services were key to MDDA and the effects have been seen in reduced access to AI, falling pregnancy rates and falling production. After a period of falling production, the measures taken appear to have halted and reversed the situation. It is important that future programs address these critical issues and act to ensure the overall sustainability of the sector going forward. Success in dairy is highly contingent on a range of inter-related factors and the breakdown in any one can derail overall progress.

Malawi Biodiversity Projects Evaluation, USAID Malawi (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This report presents the findings of an evaluation of USAID/Malawi's two biodiversity projects, Kulera and MOBILISE. Kulera is being implemented by a consortium led by Total Land Care and works in the border zones of five protected areas in the Central and Northern regions of Malawi. Future USAID programs could support improved and decentralized governance of biodiverse lands and natural resources at several levels. The hypothesis that active and functional Village Natural Resource Management Committees lead to improved forest condition, for which we found some evidence in this evaluation, could form a component of a future biodiversity and NRM program. USAID could support the development of self-financing systems for the communitybased sustainable production of wood fuels (firewood and charcoal) from forests on customary village lands. Revenue generation from the production of wood fuels in the border zones of protected areas, through co-management and revenue sharing between the protected areas and border communities, is also a potential opportunity.

Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement (WALA) Final Evaluation, USAID Malawi (2014). Performance Evaluation.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Malawi began implementation of the Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement (WALA) program in July 2009, with an ending date of June 2014. This five-year USAID-funded PL480 Title II program is through Food for Peace (FFP) and implemented in the eight most food insecure districts in the south of Malawi. WALA is implemented by a consortium of nine Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) led by CRS Malawi as the grant holder. The objective of the final evaluation is to assess the impact of WALA program strategies and interventions implemented since June 2009 in achieving its three SOs and related intermediate results (IRs) in eight districts in southern Malawi. The goal of WALA is to improve the food security of 214,974 chronically food insecure households in 39 Traditional Authorities (TAs) in eight districts in southern Malawi by 2014 through strategic objectives in maternal and child health and nutrition (SO1); agriculture, natural resource management, irrigation, and economic activity (SO2); and disaster risk reduction (SO3). Work with FFW communities on formulating infrastructure maintenance plans that have an organized approach to maintenance, articulating roles, responsibilities, and a timetable, especially with regard to roads.

Support for Service Delivery—Integration Activity Performance Evaluation, USAID Malawi (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this performance evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of the Support for Service Delivery—Integration (SSD-I) approach to increase availability and utilization of quality integrated Essential Healthcare Package (EHP) services and its performance in strengthening Malawi's health system. The specific objectives of this performance evaluation are to measure, document and determine the extent to which SSD-I activities have contributed to: Increased availability and utilization of EHP services (Sector 1); Improved health promotion and adoption of normative health behaviors (Sector 2); and, Improved functionality of the health system to support delivery of integrated health services (Sector 3). Key recommendations: 1. The follow-on project should: a. Be one Cooperative Agreement that houses the three components of service

delivery, systems strengthening and SBCC. b. Focus on priority, high-impact interventions building on achievements and lessons learned from all three SSD-I activities. c. Within the mandate and technical focus of USAID and SSD-I, embrace a holistic, bottom-up and decentralized approach that is responsive to individualized district needs.

Integrating Nutrition in Value Chains (INVC), USAID Malawi, (2015). Performance Evaluation.

The Feed the Future Integrating Nutrition in Value Chains (INVC) project is a flagship Feed the Future initiative being implemented in seven districts in Central and Southern Malawi from April 2012 to October 2016. The goal of INVC is to sustainably reduce rural poverty and improve nutrition through the integration of agriculture and nutrition interventions. This performance evaluation assesses INVC's primary components: value chain competitiveness, agricultural productivity, nutrition, and local capacity development (LCD). NASFAM- and CADECOM-supported farmers offered free groundnut and soybean seeds via a seed recovery system (see"Seed and Inoculum Distribution System" below) were not required to plant them. They deliberately chose to grow these crops despite other options. Notwithstanding the land and labor constraints they face, farmers clearly believe that the potential benefits of growing these crops outweigh choosing other crops in their limited crop portfolio, where a misinformed choice can have severe consequences for food security and livelihood. Assess legume cultivation in the ZOI. USAID should follow up on the ongoing University of North Carolina impact evaluation of INVC to assess groundnut and soybean cultivation in the ZOI. Farmers who did not grow these crops prior to INVC should be surveyed to assess their ongoing cultivation to determine if they grew these crops only during INVC implementation or if they permanently adopted them in their portfolio.

Malawi|East Africa|Africa south of Sahara

Market linkages initiative evaluation report, USAID Malawi|East Africa|Africa south of Sahara (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The Market Linkages Initiative (MLI) is a two-year project funded by USAID's Famine Prevention Fund, with activities in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zambia. Its primary emphasis is on the development of the capacity of traders (SMEs, large businesses and Cooperatives) in such a way as to enhance linkages with farmers and reduce transaction costs, thereby increasing food security. The MLI project has from inception, contained two objectives, one to increase smallholder access to markets and the other to establish institutional sharing of lessons learned.

The evaluation found that given the importance of market access to food security, it was appropriate for the MLI to be financed from the Famine Fund, although that fund's restricted duration of 24 months had limited the interventions to short-term activities and placed considerable pressure upon the various implementation agencies to perform in a timely manner. Moreover, it was not possible to make an

accurate assessment of the impacts of interventions that were only just being completed. It was noted that the validity of this evaluation was limited and that only in 2-3 years would it be possible to draw conclusions on the effectiveness of the interventions in terms of integrating smallholders into markets and strengthening food security.

Mali

Mid-term evaluation of the Timbuktu food security initiative, USAID Mali (2011). Performance Evaluation.

In its "Timbuktu Food Security Initiative" (TFSI), Africare, acting primarily in the role of a local development agent, is extending itself beyond current levels of involvement in Mali in order to enable the Malian people to achieve food security. The project's goal is, "to contribute to the reduction of food insecurity among vulnerable populations" of the beneficiary communities." The vulnerability of communities as regards shocks, and the ability of these communities to manage risk will be strengthened. Household access to food is improved. Nutrition and health of households will be improved. The importance of the TFSI project results is undeniable. First, it has, demonstrated that community management of food insecurity and famine emergency (through training, local information and regular monitoring) is possible. Second, TFSI has provided evidence that it is difficult to conduct and pass three simultaneous revolutions in a short time and with inadequate resources: (i) the revolution of community empowerment in reducing food insecurity and risk management as well as cases of vulnerability (ii) the revolution of cultural practices and habits to produce more as well as health/nutrition wise to ensure proper socioeconomic growth and development of productive and vulnerable strata ; (iii) Finally, the revolution of attitudes which consists in transforming the "small producers" into agroentrepreneurs.

Integrated Initiatives for Economic Growth in Mali (IICEM) Performance Evaluation (May-29-August 21, 2013), USAID Mali (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this evaluation of the last four years of Integrated Initiatives for Economic Growth in Mali (IICEM) program activities at the farmer group and agri-business levels is to provide USAID/Mali with an objective, third-party assessment of the program so that similar and future economic growth programs in the sector will be able to draw on the results of this value chain approach to development.

The major findings and conclusions included:

- Families in all of the cropping systems attended by IICEM concluded that their families improved, compared with before the program, on 12 of 14 livelihood indicators. Scattered among the 60 groups sampled were some groups who did not experience improvements. It is important to point out the fact that IICEM selected customers likely to succeed; the project was not designed to support the lowest end (i.e. poorest) of the farmers. No poorest/neglected farmers benefited from the project.

- There were multiple findings indicating that the impact of IICEM's effort to develop the basic food grains value chain has been substantial.
- The most important and overarching finding was that the integrated facilitation approach for interventions among all businesses along the chains, not just the weakest links, was key to building relationships and strengthening the value chains.
- Although a specific monetary value could not be assigned, such as changes in gross margins, there is ample evidence that infrastructure improvements created added value.
- The instability of 2012 impacted stakeholders in ways relative to their geographic location. Nationally, disrupted credit was a bottle neck for obtaining timely inputs; the international boycott reduced the timely supply of inputs, however briefly. Most of that year was a time of uncertainty, i.e., increased perceived risk. Among the groups most impacted were the irrigating farmers using pumps, because fuel was expensive or not available.

Alatona Irrigation Project, MCC Mali (2014). Impact Evaluation.

The objective of this assessment is to provide USAID/Malawi with an analysis of opportunities and challenges related to REDD+ in order to make strategic programming decisions for incoming Sustainable Landscapes funding. The assessment examined national level priorities, capacity, and the role other donors are taking related to REDD+ readiness. The key recommendations for USAID-Malawi to assist the GoM to become ready to participate in REDD+ include instituting the coordination and transparency structures to move forward and develop a National REDD+ Strategy. Specifically, developing a National REDD+ Secretariat with participation across the forestry sector (but not limited to the Department of Forestry, DF); providing technical assistance by providing an embedded REDD+ advisor; and build technical capacity across Ministries for landscape-level land use planning that balances multiple uses. The necessary baseline forest/carbon inventory is being developed within the DF with funding and technical support from other donors but there is a role for USAID to leverage this across other agencies with activity and to ensure the long-term sustainability of this capacity to provide periodic carbon inventory updates. An on-going national inventory system is a critical element of a Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) plan. USAID-Malawi could take the lead in providing assistance to the national REDD+ Secretariat to develop and implement the MRV program. The final element of potential USAID-Malawi support is to immediately develop Pilot REDD+ projects. Pilot projects should be dispersed geographically and encapsulate different forest ownership types, intact as well as degraded forests, and designed to identify the types of government/civil society/market interactions that work well to affect how communities use and manage local forest resources.

Middle East

External review: water and livelihoods initiative implemented by ICARDA, USAID Middle East (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The Water and Livelihood Initiative (WLI) aims to boost the livelihoods of communities where water scarcity and quality deterioration are prevalent. The review team recommends that the WLI Project Manager be delegated budget authority for the regional effort and uses this budget to encourage National Coordinators to tighten their scientific methodologies, data collection and publication. Emphasis for this higher quality work could be given by USAID by requiring a refocusing of the objectives in each country to address a problem of collecting the monitoring and evaluation data in that is too general to be useful. We recommend that Phase I and II should focus on superior science and creating a better out-scaling scenario to encourage agricultural production. It is clear that much of the success of the WLI is based on efforts of the local research institutions, but they require training to communicate this with the broad scientific community. ICARDA, ARS and Land Grant University partners are an available resource to utilize for document review while national research institutions strive to publish their data. Lastly, this review aims to give perspective on how to better fulfill WLI's existing goals while enhancing its ability to create lasting, diplomatic partnerships within the Middle East.

Morocco

Evaluation of the integrated agriculture and agribusiness project, USAID Morocco (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The Morocco Integrated Agriculture and Agribusiness (IAA) Project was implemented between 2005 and 2009. It provided equipment, information technology, marketing tools, outreach, and strategy training for the Ministry of Agriculture and the Autonomous Export Promotion Authority. The project conducted multiple studies, provided guidance on irrigation and drought control, and worked in five value chains (sheep, olives, aromatic and medicinal plants, capers, berries) mostly in three regions of the country. The purpose of this evaluation was to evaluate the effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of IAA; to discuss lessons learned; and to provide recommendations for future programming. The evaluation gleaned the following lessons from this project:

- The timing of the project implementation was ideal to link with activities of the national agenda. The IAA was implemented at a time when government of Morocco was ready to introduce a variety of changes in its programs for the agricultural sector, which contributed to the achievement of the results by the project.
- Government and industry buy-in is also an important contributor to the success of projects. The IAA project influenced the development of the 2008 2020 Green Morocco Plan by the government, and its field activities were very consistent with Pillars I and II of this plan.
- One of the most important impacts for USAID programs is to make government-business interaction more effective.
- Resolving marketing problems by involving larger market players rather than concentrating on cooperatives could have led to more lasting results
- In future work with government institutions, it is important to incorporate a focus on value chains since it can improve incomes, value added, and competitiveness in individual product sectors.

- The sheep production and marketing value chain is an attractive area for future work because there are many poor farmers involved and many opportunities for improvement of their incomes.
- In value chain work, the best way to achieve success is to find what the Green Morocco Plan calls an ―aggregator‖ – a processor or trader willing and able to help add value at the producer level and share the value added while working with producers to improve quality, timeliness, quantity or other important conditions of production and delivery.
- Future projects can seek to promote more private sector activity within the framework of government objectives. In such activities, USAID should try to discourage excessive government controls that add unnecessary time or cost and damage competitiveness.
- Programs that target the poorest farmers should concentrate on working with cooperatives, which seem to be the best way to reach this population group and are consistent with the Green Morocco Plan. Activities should focus on improved linkages to other marketing players in the value chain.

Improving Business Climate in Morocco (IBCM) Evaluation, USAID Morocco (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This report is a review and analysis of the USAID-funded Improving the Business Climate in Morocco (IBCM) Program, implemented between July 25, 2005 and September 30th, 2009. The primary focus of the evaluation is to determine the extent to which IBCM accomplished the terms and objectives of the Program in line with the Mission's Strategic Objectives.

On the subject of competitiveness, it is worth commenting upon Morocco's free zone areas and future plans for integrated industrial parks (P2Is) aimed at providing state-of-the-art accommodation facilities for investors. Morocco already has several free zones situated around the country, providing a platform for foreign enterprises to manufacture under favorable trading (tax-free) conditions. To date, these zones accommodate the automotive, aeronautics and space, electronics, textiles, and leather, for the most part.

However, the agriculture and food sector (approximately 35% of the industrial GDP) does not have similar facilities specifically for its needs. Today, the sector remains underdeveloped with few real export opportunities for its products. In its National Pact document of 2009, the GoM focused on this dilemma with grand plans for the construction of six Agropoles 43 to underpin the agreed action plans for the sector. At the moment, these plans remain long term and thus not relevant to those involved in agriculture and especially the SMEs.

The Tanger Free Zone has 530 companies and provides employment for 70.000 people. Everything produced in the zone is for export only, with emphasis on the automotive, aeronautics, electronics and textile industries. In ten years, the zone has grown from just a handful of companies to its present position. The benefits and competitive advantages for investors are clear—various tax and duty exemptions, special customs procedures, availability of inexpensive and well-trained labor force and fully serviced facilities and workspaces.

Mozambique

Biodiversity Performance Evaluation, USAID Mozambique (2013). Performance Evaluation.

Khulisa Management Services was commissioned to conduct an independent external evaluation of the USAID/Mozambique biodiversity conservation and tourism portfolio, focusing on the Intermediate Result (IR) of the Assistance Objective"Natural Resource-Based Tourism Strengthened." The objective of the evaluation was to assess the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of these activities, and inform the design of follow-on biodiversity and tourism projects and activities. Ecotourism has been more successful in rural areas of Niassa province (mostly the Lake Niassa Reserve) and in Gorongosa (the core park) than in Northern urban areas, although the three beautiful hotels/lodges there are currently not economically profitable. · The Strategic Plan for the Development of Tourism in Mozambique, 2004-2013 was correct in asserting that tourism cannot be separated from conservation, but failed to recognize that the need for conservation applies to urban areas and transportation infrastructure as well as to rural and protected areas, and that participatory management is needed throughout. Inasmuch as it shared this limited viewpoint, the Northern Mozambique Tourism Project was unable to produce most of its expected results, particularly in the more urban Cabo Delgado and Nampula provinces. · The community-related expected results were the least met numerically, compared to the environmental and tourism-related expected results.

Performance evaluation of the USAID/Mozambique agricultural portfolio: final report, USAID Mozambique (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is a report on an independent, external evaluation of the agricultural program funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission in Mozambique, Office of Agriculture, Trade and Business (ATB). The purpose was to assess the effectiveness, impact, sustainability, and the degree of coordination and synergy of seven projects within the ATB project portfolio. Conservation agriculture is a highly promising method to improve small farmer yields and food security, but commercial production requires advanced delivery mechanisms for input supplies, demand-driven markets, market linkages, and the availability of finance. The MYAP program has brought about positive behavior change in terms of agricultural technology adoption and improved health and nutrition practices. Although local governments desire better coordination with NGOs and donor projects, their present level of coordination is largely ineffective. In general, local governments have neither the resources nor the skills for effective coordination.

Food for the Hungry - Mozambique: P.L. 480 Title II multi-year assistance program final evaluation, USAID Mozambique (2013). Performance Evaluation.

To address these challenges Food for Hungry (FH) in Mozambique has implemented a five- year Multi Year Assistance Program (MYAP) with funding support from USAID's Office of Food for Peace. The MYAP was initially proposed for a three-year period and was subsequently extended

to five years through no cost extensions. Through the MYAP FH sought to: (1) improve the health and nutritional status of children 0-5 years of!age; (2) to increase agricultural productivity and strengthen agricultural value chains; and (3) to increase community resiliency to shocks for 31,577 households (HH) across the districts of Nangade, Mocimboa da Praia, and Palma. The combination of increased productivity and increased incomes derived from FH agricultural support has contributed to statistically significant gains in both Household Food Provisioning and overall Dietary Diversity Scores, key measures of HH food access. In the remainder of the program FH might validate these conclusions through both the program's final Annua Agriculture Survey in 2013 and by compiling full marketing income and VSLA data. The program's emphasis on community engagement has provided strong mechanisms for knowledge transfer and behavior change and a solid foundation for continued community development. During the remainder of the program FH should prioritize transition and sustainability planning as well as refresher training on some of the project's key messages (such as the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of childhood illness; HH latrine use and maintenance; infrastructure maintenance) to help ensure that the program's benefits can be sustained as long as possible.

USAID/Mozambique Support Program for Economic and Enterprise Development (SPEED), Performance Evaluation, USAID Mozambique (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission in Mozambique contracted a third-party firm to conduct a performance evaluation of its Support Program for Economic and Enterprise Development (SPEED). It works primarily to influence governmental policy advocacy, reform, and implementation. SPEED has a national scope and is designed to increase export diversification, support job creation, and contribute significantly to income generation. The purpose of the performance evaluation was four-fold. First, the evaluation team was asked to determine whether the current approaches and strategies are working well or not. Second, they were to capture important information on lessons learned and best practices from the implementation of SPEED activities. Third, they were to offer recommendations on any necessary, immediate modifications that would re-focus and strengthen the activity for the remaining life of SPEED. Fourth, they were to offer recommendations and findings that would inform the design of future USAID / Mozambique policy advocacy support activities. Under the qualitative data section, the evaluation team recommends that SPEED's annual and quarterly reports delineate between demand driven and task order / results based activities to better enable the SPEED team, USAID, and other stakeholders to better measure the balance between the two.

Performance Evaluation of the USAID/Mozambique Strengthening Communities through Integrated Programming (SCIP), USAID Mozambique (2014). Performance Evaluation.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Mozambique currently funds two consortia to implement Strengthening Communities through Integrated Programming (SCIP) activities that focus on integrating health, HIV/AIDS, agriculture, nutrition, water and sanitation service delivery to communities in Zambézia and Nampula. The objectives of this midterm evaluation were two-fold: 1. Assess the effectiveness of integration as a model for service delivery by SCIP; and 2. Assess processes and midterm progress toward results in selected areas

and determine whether interventions designed are contributing toward the desired result, with the objective of informing future programming decisions (e.g., scale-up, modification, and enhancement) during the second half of SCIP's implementation. Overall, integration of services is occurring, and is strongest at the community level, with most progress attributable to work that both SCIP partners do with and through community mechanisms. However, in both provinces, SCIP activities experience government of Mozambique (GOM) and donor-related limitations to full integration. In conclusion, both consortia are actively integrating activities with multiple ministries and partnering with other USG-funded partners (MYAP, PEPFAR, PMI) to increase relevance and impact. Efforts to integrate nutrition, health and WASH activities are achieving the intended result of improving access and quality of services. SCIP is showing early signs of integrating services between CLCs with GOM health facilities, however, work remains to facilitate open dialogue and equality between the two.

Nepal

Nepal Flood Recovery Project Final Evaluation, USAID Nepal (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The Nepal Flood Recovery Program (NFRP) is an USAID/Nepal initiative to respond to substantial damage caused by heavy flooding of 2007 and 2008 in a number of Terai districts of Nepal. Phase I and II, sought to provide recovery and rehabilitation assistance to flood affected vulnerable communities and covered areas affected and prone to floods. In the final Phase III of 18 months, this objective was revisited to provide support to communities of the mainly non flood areas in the three districts of Kailali, Kanchanpur and Dandeldura with the aim of promoting rural economic growth and improve regional food security. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of USAID/NFRP Phase III.

Findings from the evaluation include: 1) USAID/NFRP model has been effective in raising incomes of targeted farmers. However, with very limited benefits extended to non-participants, the overarching priority of rural economic growth and regional food security has not been adequately realized. 2) Committed and quality agricultural extension services, training and irrigation support to rural communities have significantly contributed to motivate and engage subsistence farmers in commercial vegetable production. 3) Marketing support was ineffective mainly due to low level of support and interventions not tailored to meet specific needs of the NFRP farmers. 4) The productive infrastructure component (surface irrigation systems and market sheds) has made significant contribution to the promotion of commercial vegetable farming. 5) There is high level of ownership of the infrastructures by the local communities. 6) Program activities have provided a diverse and affordable supply of micronutrient-rich food throughout the year leading to healthier children and adults. 7) There are noticeable changes in hygienic practices observed among the participating households.

Integrated Agriculture and Nutrition, USAID Nepal (2013). Impact Evaluation.

This is a final evaluation of the Action Against Malnutrition through Agriculture (AAMA) project that targeted child malnutrition and related mortality in three districts in Far West Nepal: Kailali, Baitadi and Bajura. The AAMA project achieved excellent outcomes in changing essential nutrition actions and maternal health behaviors and adoption of homestead food production practices for raising vegetables. These outcome improvements were equally impressive in the Operations Research district where there was a much higher ratio of staff and volunteers per beneficiary as in the scaling-up district where the ratio was lower, particularly during the first half of the project. The project did not achieve expected improvements in anthropometric outcomes for children in Baitadi and Bajura. There are other factors such as very low levels of sanitation and continued high levels of food insecurity, which the project did not address, that may play a larger role than dietary diversity and infant and young child feeding practices in the current high levels of stunting and anemia. With regard to the poultry component of the project, family flocks did not increase significantly and egg consumption remained very low overall. The official registration of Expanded Household Food Production groups as agriculture groups with the District Agricultural Development Office, with the requirement for their becoming a savings group, has greatly enhanced potential for sustainability. The governance component was very successful in promoting citizen participation in influencing budget allocations, and in bringing together cross-sectoral working groups to plan, to coordinate, and to influence Village Development Committee and District-level funding. The success of the governance component is evident in the official designation of Village Model Farmers as Local Resource Persons and in replication of some AAMA activities to many other wards and to marginalized populations.

The Hill Maize Research Project, Phase IV, External Evaluation, USAID Nepal (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The Hill Maize Research Project, Phase IV (HMRP or the project), jointly funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), was designed to respond to food insecurity and income constraints of farm households in the hills of Nepal, especially focusing on poor and disadvantaged groups.

This evaluation found that The HMRP has positively contributed to maize technology development and dissemination. The new varieties developed with HMRP assistance have shown high and stable yield performance, are tolerant to major insects pests, and are widely adopted by farmers, irrespective of gender and social groups and land holding size. Nonproject households have also adopted the new varieties, but the level of adoption varies across districts. The project has also introduced maize-based technologies and practices that improve soil fertility and contribute to biological control of insects.

All the respondents agreed that the project had empowered women and disadvantaged groups, and increased maize productivity and production, resulting in increased income and food security of the beneficiaries.

The key lessons learned are that the Community-based Seed Production Model (CBSP) is an effective strategy to promote inclusion, partnership with local bodies, decentralized source seed

production and seed marketing. Other lessons learned are those that provide insights into how the project benefits can be maximized and sustained. The issues that need to be addressed include sustainability, targeting, inadequate monitoring database, labor shortage, weak role of private sector in seed marketing, low seed productivity and retention rate, weak cross-project linkage and synergy, unclear links with local bodies, and possible side effects of technologies.

Nicaragua

The Alliance to Create Opportunities for Rural Development through Agro-Enterprise Relationships (ACORDAR): Ex post Performance Evaluation Report, USAID Nicaragua (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The Alliance to Create Opportunities for Rural Development through Agro-Enterprise Relationships (ACORDAR) was initially designed in early 2007 f or a period of 30 months and it was extended up to 5 y ears, closing operations in October 2012. The objective of the program was to contribute, in the first phase, to an increase in net income of 75% o f the participating families by 20% over the baseline figure. The program endeavored to ensure permanent employment, and strengthen the commercial capacity of 5,400 poor rural families in 44 Municipalities in the first phase, which expanded up to 7,000 in 50 municipalities, in the second phase, in alliance with the municipal governments and the private sector. The program also hoped to train 6,328 farmers on different topics related to value chains, and produce 9,094 hectares of crops with improved management practice technologies. The Evaluation Team concludes that: The ACORDAR TOC`s complementary inclusive value chain development strategies were based on the accumulated knowledge and experience of relevant interventions and practitioners (CIAT, CATIE and CRS), though two strategic components were not t aken into consideration until th e second implementation phase. Core consortium members and their partners demonstrated having learning and knowledge management capacity for improving program implementation.

Famisalud Mid-Term Evaluation, USAID Nicaragua (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The objective of this consultancy is to evaluate the performance and results of the project, in Phase I (2006-2008) and Phase II (2009-2011), by seeking answers to eight questions taken as specific objectives, and using gender approach in the aspects required by the SOW Order. Conclusions: a) the opportunity is being seized to implement community strategies with FamiSalud, within a favorable framework of public health policies, b) the main strength of the project has been the adaptation of the first phase strategies and the immediate integration with the creation of MOSAFC, starting in 2007, c) the main weakness is the still fragile link between the network of community volunteers and the MINSA, which constitute a risk to long-term sustainability and d) the main threat is that progress may not be sustained at this pace, due to the limitations of funding of the public health sector.

Mid-term Evaluation for Enterprise and Employment, USAID Nicaragua (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The USAID/Nicaragua Enterprise and Employment (E&E) activity is an economic growth activity funded by USAID/Nicaragua through the mechanism of the Global Business Trade and Investment (GBTI II) Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC). The purpose of the evaluation was to: 1) inform USAID/Nicaragua of E&E's contribution to enterprise development, trade capacity building and business climate, and business leadership development in Nicaragua; and 2) provide USAID with an informed basis on which to consider options for future economic growth assistance that would sponsor continued support for trade, investment, and employment. Furthermore, the evaluation's findings, recommendations, and conclusions were to provide USAID with an analytical foundation for the design of a follow-on activity that captures the lessons learned and documents the accomplishments of E&E. The E&E project model for SME and value chain development through anchor firms is highly effective. Labor force development, especially for mid-level technical skills, as well as SME entrepreneurship and management are key to Nicaragua's growth. Both these areas are neglected by the public sector; therefore the support provided by E&E project should be maintained. The USAID Mission in Nicaragua has shown high flexibility and responsiveness to implementation changes requested by the contractor as project implementation has progressed.

Promotion of Economic and Social Development in Nicaragua (FUNIDES) Midterm Evaluation, USAID Nicaragua (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this Midterm Project Performance Evaluation is to verify the efficacy and impact of activities undertaken by the Foundation for Economic and Social Development (FUNIDES).

This program has three components: Component 1: Institutional Strengthening, which seeks to improve the foundation's administrative and financial sustainability over the long term, improve its strategic planning capacity and strengthen its financial and personnel management and its internal institutional controls; Component 2: Definition and implementation of the foundation's policy research agenda, aimed at improving its research program; and Component 3: Communication and outreach, finalizing the drafting and approval of the foundation's medium- and long-term communication strategy and implementing it as well as strengthening the dialogue with universities to improve the population's knowledge and influence Nicaragua's policy definition.

As demonstrated by FUNIDES' monthly monitoring of its appearances in the media, FUNIDES has created greater awareness of socioeconomic policy issues in the population and influenced policy decision-makers through its optimal communications and outreach strategy, which promotes a policy research agenda, has developed a series of conferences to disseminate its results and has enhanced journalists' capacities on its issues and provided information exchange programs for them.

Rural Development Project: Improve Farming and Forestry Activity, MCC Nicaragua (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The Rural Development Project Farming and Forestry Activity was developed in response to the identification of low-value rural business and farm activities as a major constraint to economic growth in Nicaragua. The general objective of the Forestry Activity was to increase the value-added of forestry-related farms and businesses in Leon-Chinandega by linking producers, suppliers, service providers, processors, marketing agents, and investors. Additionally, the Project expected to address the region's persistent deforestation and water supply constraints to farming and other productive activities, especially the poor communities in the northern highlands. The evaluators found that the scope of the project's Forestry Activity was too broad and unspecific. This resulted in complicated logistics and concomitant low survival rates of trees. MCC did not substantially achieve its objective to increase the value-added of forestry-related farms and businesses. This activity did not address the region's persistent deforestation and water supply constraints to farming and other productive activities. Even with the cancellation of the planned watershed activities, the implementer was logistically challenged with concurrent activities. The evaluation did not find any evidence of supply orders or sales with wood harvested from this activity, and the associated value chains remain fledgling in the target region. The final 27% reforestation rate cannot be considered a cost effective investment.

Rural Development Project: Rural Business Development Services Activity, Pro-Nicaragua Sub-Activity, MCC Nicaragua (2014). Performance Evaluation.

Within the Rural Business Development Project, this Activity (referred to as the ProNicaragua Activity) was expected to generate economic growth and job creation in the northwest region of Nicaragua by attracting high-quality foreign direct investment through the provision of support services to qualified investors seeking investment opportunities in Nicaragua. The investment promotion component of the Rural Business Development Project began in August 2006. Three consecutive agreements were signed with ProNicaragua, a specialized Nicaraguan public---private agency, to promote northwest Nicaragua for new investment. The Rural Business Development Project included eight activities for a total of $8.5 million expended. MCC expended $1.3 million of this amount on the ProNicaragua Activity. The evaluation team found that, during the three years of the ProNicaragua Activity, foreign businesses made real investments and created jobs with the support of MCC finding bus causation cannot be reliably established. Several worthwhile components of this activity have apparently continued in NW Nicaragua since MCC funding ended, with increased Government of Nicaragua funding, new Swiss funding, and interest by several multilateral donors to replicate the regional investment promotion model that MCC used. Finding reporting errors by the implementer and locating two distinct versions of the final report during the evaluation creates uncertainty as to the numbers and serves to confirm that the self-reported data needs stronger verification.

Niger

Real time evaluation: EARLI CRS-Niger, USAID Niger (2012). Performance Evaluation.

CRS-Niger and partner SOS Sahel International are currently intervening in Tillabery and Ouallam departments of Tillabery Region via Project EARLI (Emergency Agriculture Recovery and Livelihoods Interventions in Niger) to provide assistance to households in the form of cash for work and improved seeds through seed fairs. This Real Time Evaluation examines the relevance, appropriateness, effectiveness, management, sustainability and scope of the response in an effort to provide information quickly that will benefit the remaining months of the project. EARLI provides a relevant response to 2600 households in Tillabery and Ouallam for both immediate and intermediate needs. Certain measures are needed however to provide more appropriate activities to households whose members cannot perform the work without certain health risks. EARLI's coordination with project stakeholders has been excellent to date so the delay in paying the extension service to validate CFW results should be quickly resolved. Solidarity systems within communities mean that EARLI is benefiting more than 2600 households but it is not clear how much the ration sizes are being divided to benefit additional households. The M&E system should be improved to be able to capture more information on this as well as the targeting methods used in other communities, how households are spending their money and who is making the decisions on what to purchase.

Maximizing the Value of Cash-for-Work: Lessons from a Niger Land Recuperation Project: CRS EARLI (Emergency Agricultural Recovery of Livelihoods Initiative), USAID Niger (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The following good practices were distilled from a recent Real Time Evaluation (RTE)1 of an emergency project in Niger that is using cash for work and seed fairs to address food insecurity in the departments of Ouallam and TIllabery. This is part of a larger effort to respond to the Sahel Crisis in which below-average rainfall and crop production shortages in 2011 have resulted in reduced food and livestock fodder availability and increasing environmental degradation. Conclusions: As resources are limited, systems of solidarity should be encouraged. Protect and support primary production mechanisms. The disaster-affected population's safe access to market goods and services as producers, consumers and traders is protected and promoted. Link to long-term development initiatives. Where income generation and employment are feasible livelihood strategies, women and men have equal access to appropriate income earning opportunities. For those for whom the work is too strenuous, provide a cash transfer. Alternative tasks should be available that are reasonable and appropriate for the capacity of both men and women, including those with limited physical capacity.

Nigeria

The Evaluation Report for Maximizing Agriculture Revenue and Key Enterprises in Targeted Sites (MARKETS), USAID Nigeria (2012). Performance Evaluation.

USAID/Nigeria's Maximizing Agricultural Revenue and Key Enterprises in Targeted Sites (MARKETS) was a multi-faceted six and a half-year pilot program designed to strengthen agricultural competitiveness and food security in Nigeria. The evaluation found that while most

MARKETS interventions and/or aspects thereof were implemented as planned, some were not. Implementation sometimes differed from one commodity chain to another and from one location to another. In general, the value chain approach had a positive impact on the farm level and with agro processors. Production and quality increased two- and three-fold. The value chain approach of this pilot demonstrated notable success stories in linking farmers to formal credit and guaranteed markets. There is still a vast ongoing need for access to credit, consistent output and meeting quality standards of the marketplace. A constraint is that Nigeria small holder farms are still very labor intensive and inefficient. The good news is that the introduction of new technologies was well received and the new production technology adoption rate of was 100 percent. Beneficiary satisfaction is one of the main achievements of the MARKETS pilot program. Satisfaction was very high with increases in yields and related incomes. The beneficiaries expressed their strong interest in ongoing knowledge through trainings and demonstrations as well as improved and certified inputs like seeds, agrochemicals and fertilizer.

Pakistan

United States assistance to Balochistan border areas evaluation report, USAID Pakistan (2012). Performance Evaluation.

Implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN), the United States Assistance to Balochistan Border Areas (US ABBA) project is working in five districts of Balochistan, namely, Killa Saifullah, Loralai, Mastung, Quetta, and Zhob. US ABBA aims to mobilize small farmers, promote agricultural development, and address rural poverty. The project portfolio spans social and human capital formation, community infrastructure development, the demonstration and diffusion of agricultural technology, and linkages between producers and markets. All the activities initiated by this project are replicable, at a cost similar to or less than that incurred by the project. Indeed, all the activities, with the exception mainly of value chain analyses and training in marketing, are already in vogue among similar projects in the country. The government of Balochistan, as well as the broader development community, understands the value of the project's activities. The first recommendation is to intensify coverage and consolidate the menu by means such as the following: (a) Organize the households that have been left out of COs in communities reached by the project. (b) Similarly, increase women's mobilization and the resources allocated to relevant activities. (c) Drop inappropriate and low-payoff activities.

United States assistance to Balochistan border areas evaluation report: annex A - impact assessment, USAID Pakistan (2012). Impact Evaluation.

The project is a direct follow-up to the "Food Security/Poverty Alleviation in Arid Agriculture Balochistan - Pilot Project Phase", which began activities in 2004 and was completed by December 2008. . It aims at directly contributing to the Government of Pakistan's (GoP) Poverty Reduction Strategy by reducing poverty in the border areas and contributing directly to the GoP's ongoing National Food Security Program. At a more general level, it supports the ongoing government efforts to foster economic growth and stability in the border areas. The overall

development objective of the project is to increase the incomes of poor rural men and women in the 5 districts in the border areas of Balochistan. The evaluation's conclusion that the project-supported livestock maundis produced few (Rs. 55,000) monetary returns on a turnover of about $8 million per year seems off. The costs that are particular to operating in Balochistan's security environment (e.g., armored vehicles) should be removed from the cost benefit analysis so as to provide a valid comparison with projects that operate in areas without these requirements. In fact, all costs associated with meeting USAID requirements that do not directly relate to project development activities should be removed from the analysis since these are not costs associated with actually accomplishing project objectives. Removing such costs would produce a cost benefit comparison that accurately reflected the true return to actual development activities.

Verification and Validation of the World Food Program's Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO) in KPK, USAID Pakistan (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The USAID Office of Food for Peace (FFP) is supporting the World Food Program's (WFP) ongoing Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) for conflict-affected populations in northwestern Pakistan. The program started in January 20 I and plans to continue for two years. The goal of the PRRO operations for 2011/ 12 is:"to address life saving relief food needs vis a vis promoting spontaneous recovery initiatives to enable communities to rehabilitate infrastructure, resume livelihoods activities, restore access to education and improve nutritional status of women and children." The findings show that despite the hubs working under difficult security constraints, by and large the food distribution process ran smoothly and complied with the WFP guidelines. RECOMMENDATIONS: Increase awareness on the importance of WFP ration cards. Utilize pictorial manuals or signs that describe the food collection process as well as how beneficiaries can lodge complaints. Refurbish hubs (brick structures) that have weak structures. Ensure an open communication channel between WFP and the IPs on distribution dates and supply chain.

Midterm Performance Evaluation of TRADE Project, USAID Pakistan (2014). Performance Evaluation.

In June 2009 the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) awarded the four-year, USD 22.12 million Pakistan Trade Project (PTP) to Deloitte Consulting, LLP. The project supports United States–Pakistan regional priorities, particularly trade with Afghanistan and India. The project design includes three components, described in project documents as"Improved Pakistan Trade Environment" (Component 1),"Increased Trade at Pakistani Borders" (Component 2), and"Support to Reconstruction Opportunity Zones" (Component 3). Component 3 remained inactive and USAID re-aligned program activities away from this component in Project Year 3. The purpose of this evaluation is twofold: a) to present the results of a midterm performance evaluation of PTP and b) to inform USAID's decision about whether to procure a follow-on trade project and, if so, how to design it. USAID should ensure that PTP continues to make all efforts possible to institutionalize a sustainable and workable trade portal within an indigenous Pakistani public or private sector entity such as TDAP or an appropriate alternative. USAID should ask PTP to consult with the Ministry of Commerce to redesign or

refocus the research studies on Pakistan–India trade to respond more directly and more comprehensively to the Ministry's interest and needs. The WIT Portal is challenging and requires greater attention. Specifically, USAID should ensure that the WIT Portal and the trade body that is expected to host it are prioritized, so that the portal can be established and sustainably managed as planned.

FATA institutional strengthening project: mid-term performance evaluation, USAID Pakistan (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) Institutional Strengthening Project (FISP) is a $17.96 million USAID-funded project to support three FATA institutions responsible for governance and development, namely, the FATA Secretariat (FS), the FATA Development Authority (FDA) and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor's Secretariat. The FS is responsible for public services in FATA, including but not limited to security, basic utilities, and infrastructure. The FDA executes specific development projects assigned by the government. There is persuasive evidence in this evaluation that FISP's demand-driven orientation has thus far turned out to be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, FISP's responsiveness to demands from key stakeholders has elicited the highest level of government ownership and decisive action for introducing new systems and commissioning reports aimed at changing how government works in FATA. On the other hand, relying on its demand-driven orientation has kept FISP at a distance from the operating environment that will ultimately determine the success or failure of systems introduced by FISP, as well as from engaging proactively to support women's participation and gender initiatives in FATA institutions. In terms of course corrections, USAID/Pakistan should take the necessary steps (including consultations with FATA institutions) to enable FISP to adopt a more proactive posture for the remainder of the program and consider implementing a change management initiative to deal with the broader operating environment that affects systems implementation and utilization and gender issues.

Peru

Final Evaluation: From the Highlands to the Coast: Developing awareness and resilience to address global climate change in Ancash and Piura watersheds, Peru, USAID Peru (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The objective of this evaluation is to examine and verify the achievement of the objectives of the project "From the Highlands to the Coast: Building Climate Change Awareness and Resilience in the Ancash and Piura Watersheds of Northern Peru- a project that sought to increase the capacity of communities and community-based organizations to manage high mountain ecosystems as an adaptation strategy to climate change, and to establish public policies for climate change adaptation. The authors found that although there was some delay in the first year of implementation (2010), this gap was recovered during the second year of the project (2011) and was fully consolidated during the concluding eight months. The most significant accomplishment of the project at the municipal level was the establishment of the Three Watersheds Municipal Commonwealth. The various partnerships established or strengthened

during the project have clearly been important factors in this project's success, and have great potential as a platform for future work. The incorporation of a gender focus in the project was carried out through specific strategies: at the municipal level, primarily through the Network of Alderwomen of Ancash and Piura, and at the community level through small productive projects. In its work in two distinct and geographically separate regions, the Institute has however reached some institutional limits. In particular, there were some imbalances in the operational and financial components favoring Ancash, and this is reflected by the different level of results achieved in the two regions.

Final Evaluation: Ancash and Huancavelica Sub-studies: "Partnership for Child Nutrition" Project," USAID Peru (2013). Performance Evaluation.

In May 2010, the PRISMA Benevolent Association submitted to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the proposal for the Partnership for Child Nutrition project, which sought to capitalize on a number of strategic circumstances produced in the national political scenario that made it more likely to prioritize the fight for child malnutrition. It was approved in May 2011. The results show the marked heterogeneity of the local governments in their technical capacity, size, organizational and institutional capacity. They are also affected by policy fragmentation or consolidation, and the distance to urban economic centers. In this highly complex scenario, an effort has been made to improve the skills of local management teams, especially in areas related to greater understanding and subsequent better implementation of budget transfers intended to combat chronic child malnutrition. The close-out study confirmed an improvement of abilities in attracting financial resources for local governments through different mechanisms, but the involvement of citizens in the moderation of these processes is still in its infancy.

Performance Evaluation of Promoting Long-Term Sustainability of Parque Nacional Cordillera Azul Project, USAID Peru (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The main purpose of this evaluation is to assess the results of the Promoting Long-Term Sustainability of Parque Nacional Coordillera Azul project. In addition, USAID/Peru is interested in learning from this experience, as some lessons may be useful to similar Parks or projects. CIMA should periodically update, every three years at most, the Park's map of risks and threats. CIMA and SERNANP should closely follow the legal proceedings against the Suarez brothers. CIMA and SERNANP should closely follow the plans to build the Ferrovía Interoceanica Peru-Brazil, a railway and road that cut through the"neck" of the Park. CIMA should continue applying for grants, a source of funding that has proved to be more effective than searching for donors. The FMC, CIMA, and SERNANP should implement in full the communication strategy they designed to inform local stakeholders of the sale of credits in the REDD+ market and the distribution of this revenue.

Philippines

External evaluation report on the aquaculture & fisheries collaborative research support program (cooperative agreement no. EPP-A-00-06-00012-00), USAID Philippines (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The mission of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Collaborative Research on Aquaculture and Fisheries (formerly the AquaFish CRSP) is to enrich livelihoods and promote health by cultivating international multidisciplinary partnerships that advance science, research, education, and outreach in aquatic resources. AquaFish's areas of study represent many critical and contemporary issues in global aquaculture development with increasing integration of social science supply and value chain studies for multidisciplinary solution to development constraints.

AquaFish's areas of research are contributing to public goods evidenced by field testing, on-farm demonstrations and direct outreach and uptake by farmers and small businesses. The linkage of science to policy can have significant implications for country-level transformations in AquaFish global themes and USAID priorities. Several projects are directly impacting new enabling policies including: new shellfish management protocols in Nicaragua and Mexico; renewed farming of native snakehead in Cambodia; and ban on introduced non-native species in reservoirs in China. In Kenya the AquaFish has developed a foundation of science-based best management practices and ongoing human capacity.

The depth of research appears to be adequate based on numerous research breakthroughs, significant targeted development outcomes, and completion of project objectives that leverage US and host country principal investigator resources. Rigor and integrity are stressed by the management entity and external peer-reviews help validate the quality of proposed research work plans. Numerous publications of project results in scientifically peer-reviewed literature indicate sound experimental methods. AquaFish takes the extra step of synthesis and translation of research findings in the form of fact sheets, often including local language versions, and summary articles in Aquanews that is disseminated among the global network of more than 300 individuals.

Growth with Equality in Mindanao (GEM-3) Performance Evaluation, USAID Philippines (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this performance evaluation is to identify strengths and weaknesses in the "Growth with Equity in Mindanao III" (GEM-3). The objective is to assess key issues of impact, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, gender, sustainability, and lessons that can be learned from the program. The evaluation findings are intended to help inform decisions by USAID/Philippines regarding future programs in Mindanao.

The Evaluation found that Barangay Infrastructure Projects (BIP)s are cost-effective and efficient in reaching more rural barangay populations and have economic and social influence on the lives of local people. BIPs also serve as a clear daily reminder of governmental service delivery. The most effective and efficient types of BIPs are box culverts and bridges,

footbridges, boat landings, grain warehouses, and solar dryers. GEM sought to involve women's views on issues and infrastructure needs only at initial meetings, prior to BIP implementation.

The Revenue Enhancement and Progress project improved the capacity of Local Government Units (LGUs) to address key administrative and management problems in internal revenue generation and local tax code enforcement and increased the revenues collected in the first year of implementation. However, in subsequent years the revenue collection decreased and there is no indication if the LGUs will sustain this effort.

Through strengthening knowledge transfer and market linkages, the Business Growth stimuli assisted in sales improvements in exports and domestic out-shipments of targeted commodities in Mindanao. It expanded agriculture and agribusiness sectors with bearing on supply chain linkages to other industries and on the induced effect of increased household spending on the economy.

The potential for economic spillovers exist, with 65% of business-growth target sites in leading areas and 35% in isolated areas, but unresolved issues of connectivity, such as farm-to-market roads, limit the benefits derived from spillovers.

Microenterprise Access to Banking Services Program IV (MABS 4) Evaluation, USAID Philippines (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The U.S. Agency for International Development / Philippines (USAID), in partnership with the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines / Rural Bankers Research and Development Foundation Inc. (RBAP/RBRDFI), supported the Government of the Philippines (GPH) in its effort to promote a more inclusive financial system through the development of microfinance services under the Micro-enterprise Access to Banking Services (MABS) Program. The program focused on increasing microenterprise access to financial services provided by the formal financial sector, the Rural Banks (RB), through technical assistance and training activity with no provision of loan funds or guarantees. Based on the review of documents and interviews conducted, the team saw that banks were successfully capacitated to deliver microfinance services. This is very evident in the mindset of the key bank officers, especially the owners, that they see a need for their bank to continue providing microfinance loans. However, the owners admitted that it is getting difficult to increase their microfinance portfolio due to the presence of many competitors in their area of operations.

Scaling-up Innovations in Mobile Money (SIMM) Activity: Internal Evaluation, USAID Philippines (2014). Performance Evaluation.

Recognizing the potential to boost access to financial services through innovative technologies, USAID pioneered the use of mobile technology to deliver microfinance services through an earlier Activity called the"Microenterprise Access to Banking Services" (MABS). MABS 4 worked with the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines (RBAP) to help obtain regulatory approval and support from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipines (BSP) for mobile money-enabled banking services, and to develop appropriate operations and procedures manual for rural banks.

Building on the initial success in pioneering mobile phone banking in MABS-4 and realizing opportunities for greater development impact, USAID decided to increase and expand its efforts in supporting the development of mobile money (m-money). The Scaling Innovations in Mobile Money (SIMM) Activity commenced in April 16, 2012, and originally had a completion date of April 24, 2014 and a budget of $1.9 million. SIMM was subsequently granted two time extensions, which allowed for implementation to conclude in January 16, 2015 and for its budget to likewise increase to $3.243 million. This resulted in an increase of 8.5 months and $1.34 million in their funding.

Senegal

Economic growth project, task order 5: mid-term evaluation, USAID Senegal (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this mid-term evaluation of Economic Growth Project Task Order 5 (PCE TO5) is to assess progress to date and identify areas for improvement and actions that will facilitate attainment of project objectives. The purpose of PCE TO5 is to increase food security and reduce poverty through a set of interrelated activities, and thus contribute to the overarching goal of Feed the Future.

The project's value chain approach is sound; overall, it has done very well in its value chain activities. The formal contract farming scheme has become its signature instrument, recognized as such by all actors. The significance for USAID Feed the Future is that the project is demonstrating that a formal contract farming scheme can be implemented not only for fruit and vegetable production for export markets and for local processing, but also with smallholders producing staple grains for the domestic market.

The project, however, faces challenges. One major challenge is for the project to regain its momentum in maize value chain work after the disastrous 2011/2012 season that saw many producers go off-contracts, and/or fall back on their credit reimbursement. This was caused by the pre-harvest contract price that turned out to be much lower than market prices at harvest and worsened by poor rainfall. The project needs to give its full attention to this challenge. Another concern is the lack of political will on the part of the government, which has hampered the project's policy reform activities. Finally, budget cuts have forced the project to delay or abandon certain initiatives. These delays and curtailment of activities have been noticed by beneficiaries. However, the project has worked hard to explain the situation and regain the confidence of its partners and stakeholders.

Process Evaluation of the Peace Corps/Senegal Master Farmer Program, Peace Corps/USAID Senegal (2014). Performance Evaluation.

From late 2013 to early 2014, Peace Corps/Senegal and Peace Corps/Washington collaborated on a process evaluation of the Master Farmer Program, which is supported through a partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to support Feed the Future in Senegal. The program goal is to improve the lives of farmers and their families in the

communities where Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) work by improving food security through the adoption of improved agriculture and agroforestry technologies. More than half of the Program Participants interviewed reported having applied a new technology as a result of the Master Farmer Program. The most commonly reported technologies include composting, mulching, integrated pest management (IPM) in the garden, double digging, tree nursery establishment, and use of soil amendments. Reasons for applying the new methods were that they observed success from the Master Farms, they expected beneficial outcomes, and Master Farmers assisted with the implementation.

USAID/Senegal's Education and Research in Agriculture Project (USAID/ERA), Midterm Evaluation, USAID Senegal (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this midterm evaluation is to assess progress to date and identify improvements that will achieve the planned results of USAID's Education and Research in Agriculture (ERA) Project. Specifically, the evaluation team reviewed and assessed the adequacy of project components in the context of the Senegal Feed the Future strategy, soundness of the project's approaches, quality of ERA's management, adequacy and efficiency of Virginia Tech's assistance delivery, beneficiary coverage and response, and overall potential of sustaining the project results beyond September 2015.

Through equipment provision and training, the project has improved AET institutions' capacity for management, but that capacity has not been widely applied. The evaluation team also found that ERA's efforts to establish research activities have brought institutions together to work in a coordinated manner. Unfortunately, this coordination is informal and ad hoc. The evaluation team found no R&D programs contributing to policy change or enabling environment. Few legal and regulatory barriers exist to reform management and administration systems, but there is a possibility of administrative barriers based on the status quo and vested interests.

Beyond introducing the new FOG funding mechanism, which could serve as an important partnership tool, the project has facilitated limited formal partnership mechanisms for agricultural research. Through interviews, the evaluation team found willingness among research institutions to establish partnerships with the project and other institutions, provided that these partnerships are active, mutual, and respectful of Senegalese protocols and institutions.

The evaluation team thinks that the ERA Project has significant potential to achieve meaningful results in agriculture education and research in Senegal; however, problems with communication and administrative management have prevented the project from reaching its full potential. ERA will need to improve administrative management and communication with partners to achieve meaningful results.

Yaajeende Agriculture and Nutrition Project, USAID Senegal (2014). Impact Evaluation.

USAID|Yaajeende is a five-year Feed the Future project designed to reduce malnutrition in the Matam and Kédougou regions as well as the Department of Bakel—an area representing the

northeastern one-third of Senegal. The project's goal is to accelerate the participation of the very poor in rural economic growth and to improve the population's nutritional status. The development hypothesis of USAID|Yaajeende, one of USAID's first Feed the Future projects, is that an integrated approach to agriculture, economic growth, and nutrition can lower the rate of undernutrition much more rapidly than by focusing on agriculture or economic growth alone. Mid-way through its project cycle, USAID|Yaajeende has been highly successful in reaching its target groups and beneficiaries: the poor and the vulnerable, especially women. USAID|Yaajeende's achievements are universally recognized by government officials at the central, regional, and local levels in Senegal, as well as by the private sector, civil-society organizations, and beneficiary households. USAID|Yaajeende's success is evidenced by communities' and beneficiaries' acceptance of project activities—there is consensus among the 40 key interviewees and 264 focus-group participants that project activities are highly relevant to the development issues that beneficiary communities face. USAID|Yaajeende's contributions to USAID/Senegal's economic growth objective goals are considerable, and so is its relevance to the Senegalese government's national strategy for economic and social development. However, USAID|Yaajeende did not elevate sustainability to the results-framework level, nor did it develop a comprehensive and clearly articulated sustainability plan.

Serbia

The Mid-term Performance Evaluation of USAID/Serbia Business Enabling Environment. USAID Serbia (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is a report on the mid-term performance evaluation of the Business Enabling Project (BEP) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission in Serbia. The purpose of the evaluation was to provide USAID with: 1) a measurement of change in development outcomes attributable to the defined interventions of BEP, based on models of a broad range of qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods; and 2) a rigorous, evidence-based analysis of BEP's mid-term performance.

The Evaluation Team's findings confirm that BEP has tackled the most burning issues in Serbia's business climate, although some key impediments such as corruption or public administration inefficiency require time and resources that are beyond the project's scope. There is wide agreement among stakeholders, confirmed by available data, that this is an excellently managed project, even exemplary in providing not just highly appreciated know-how and expertise in improving operational processes, but also sincere dedication to achieve effective and sustainable results. In particular, stakeholders value the demonstrated flexibility of the BEP team in responding to the needs of beneficiaries and partner organizations. Several interviewed stakeholders further remarked that they were especially impressed by the support provided by the entire USAID team and the US Embassy in Belgrade, including the Ambassador's role in encouraging the reform process. However, while acknowledging this, stakeholders and surveyed businesses found that, with some exceptions, relatively little improvement has been produced in the past two years of the project's operations in the key policy areas. This implies that select activities with higher prospects of success would need to be completed with greater support during the implementation phase, and this would mean dropping or carefully limiting those activities that are less promising in order to increase the project's effectiveness.

Serbia agribusiness project (SAP) evaluation: final report, USAID Serbia (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The report is a review and analysis of the USAID-funded Serbia Agribusiness Project (SAP), started in September 2007 and due to end in September 2012. The main focus of the evaluation is to determine the extent to which SAP, implemented by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI), has been accomplishing the terms and objectives of the project in line with the Mission's Strategic Objective 1.32, "Enterprise Growth Increased in High Potential Sectors and Municipalities" to date. SAP was specifically designed to increase the efficiency and competitiveness of Serbian agribusiness enterprises all along the value chain in targeted sub-sectors complemented by efforts to improve the overall enabling environment for agribusiness. According to the project's website "this 5-year, $25.8 million economic development project, provides assistance to Serbian agriculture and agribusinesses with the aim of increasing agricultural sales and exports by Serbian firms and creating new employment in the six selected agricultural subsectors." The Evaluation Team found that SAP has, to date, made a meaningful and valuable contribution towards meeting its two main objectives: 1) Increasing the efficiency and competitiveness of Serbian agribusiness; and 2) Improving the enabling environment in which it operates.

The Mid-term Performance Evaluation of USAID/Serbia Sustainable Local Development Project, USAID Serbia (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is a report on the mid-term evaluation of the Sustainable Local Development Project (SLDP). The purpose of the evaluation was to provide USAID with a rigorous, evidence-based analysis of SLDP's mid-term performance. Specifically, the evaluation was intended to: 1. Examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, emerging impact, and sustainability of SLDP's activities implemented to date 2. Determine whether SLDP has achieved planned results 3. Identify gaps in SLDP's performance against targets 4. Provide recommendations on closing these gaps in the final years of the project. Inefficiencies in project implementation, combined with multiple changes of SLDP's focus and volatility in project implementation, had an adverse effect on the project's performance. The IMC activities implemented by SLDP to date (and based on the original formulation of IMC principles) have been effective and are likely to have a high impact on local economic development. The interviewed members of existing IMC clusters value working together with other municipalities and intend to continue this work in the future. While one can argue that youth participation has been increased by the mere participation of youth in capacity development and networking activities, no tangible results attest to the effectiveness or projected impact of these activities.

Sierra Leone

Sustainable Nutrition Agriculture Program (SNAP) Midterm Review, USAID Sierra Leone (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This report details the results of the Midterm Evaluation (MTE) of the Sustainable Nutrition and Agriculture Promotion (SNAP) program in Sierra Leone. The overall goal of SNAP is to reduce food insecurity and increase resiliency among the most food insecure and vulnerable rural populations. The program targeted just over 400,000 people. The purpose of the MTE was to assess progress towards targets and to provide evidence-based recommendations. Overall, the program has made good progress in nearly all of its proposed activities. In line with the Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT), and the 2013 Pipeline and Resource Estimate Proposal (PREP) to USAID FFP, the cumulative targets of Year 1 and Year 2 have been met and in some cases been exceeded. Although ACDI/VOCA has developed and deployed a comprehensive set of strategies to realize IR 2.2 as a special case, it has been difficult to assess the quality and success because no activities following the training have taken place. Other activities, such as the Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) are behind schedule. There are a number of issues affecting SO1, including the lack of funds resulting from poor monetization proceeds. SNAP staff have developed an adequate plan in the 2013 PREP to address these issues.

Somalia

Partnership for Economic Growth Midterm Performance Evaluation, USAID Somalia (2014). Performance Evaluation.

This report presents the midterm performance evaluation of the Partnership for Economic Growth (PEG) program operating in Somaliland and Puntland State in Somalia. PEG applied an iterative development approach in order to respond to instability and the changing environment in the areas where the program works. This flexible implementation strategy allowed PEG to adapt to circumstances that it encountered in the field, which enabled it to improve its outcomes and create a more collegial and collaborative relationship with its subcontractors.
The evaluators were not able to directly answer the question as to whether PEG's interventions produced 'inclusive economic growth.' Given the relatively small scale of program interventions, it is doubtful that they contributed to any broader-based 'economic growth', although evaluators did find evidence that interventions contributed to improved performance results for the groups and individuals directly benefitting from program activities. PEG's development hypothesis accurately assumed that Private Sector Development interventions can successfully be implemented in the Somali context and that they contribute to improved outcomes, particularly improved practice and performance outcomes. Taking this conclusion further, PEG also demonstrated that a Private Sector Development approach of working through diverse private, public, NGO and Civil Society actors is not only possible in the existing Somali context, but also contributes to successful program implementation. None of the research suggests that a Private Sector Development approach cannot work in Somalia.

One cannot, however, conclude that a Private Sector Development approach is an effective means of improving stability within Somalia, as evaluators were unable to verify whether PEG's Private Sector Development interventions contributed to improved stability. Overall, to apply the lessons learned from PEG's experience, the evaluation team recommends that USAID/EA/Somalia should adopt a"Making Markets Work for the Poor (M4P)" approach to its Private Sector Development programming.

South America Regional

Midterm Evaluation of the ICAA II Program, USAID South America Regional (2010). Performance Evaluation.

The Assessment Team was impressed by the commitment and hard work of USAID and implementer staff in the US and South America. Some significant progress has been made on the ground and in learning more about how a regional program can succeed. However, flaws in the design of ICAA have constrained progress. At present, ICAA is a centrally-managed regional program trying to juggle a great number of national activities that have been packaged as regional programs in order to meet the requirements of the original program design. Simply put, ICAA would do better as a regional program—including Brazil—that supports and coordinates bilateral conservation projects that are strategically designed to have a geographically-focused regional impact working in partnership with indigenous communities. The program should take advantage of USAID's unique Mission infrastructure to enable the Missions to do the ground work. ICAA managers would be utilized to help the Missions to agree upon—and adhere to—coherent regional strategies as well as provide key technical assistance, pilot testing, research support and information sharing efforts among USAID-funded implementers in the region.

South Asia Regional

Cereal Systems Initiative of South Asia (CSISA) mid-term performance Evaluation, USAID South Asia (2015). Performance Evaluation.

This evaluation assesses the main accomplishments and constraints of the Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA),which is an initiative that builds on the work carried out by the Rice-Wheat Consortium for the Indo-Gangetic Plains under the leadership of National Agricultural Research (NARs) members in Nepal, India, and Bangladesh.

The CSISA Initiative is complex. It is composed of different management across countries and a diversity of innovation and adoption processes, involving many diverse international and national stakeholders. This complexity made it challenging for the Evaluation Team to capture all aspects evenly, in all places. On the other hand, this complexity also makes CSISA a powerful, holistic research and development model that can, and does, bring about changes in sustainable intensification and strategic farm-level diversification.

CSISA's major success story is the rapid uptake of early planted wheat, facilitated by shorter-duration rice varieties and hybrids, the use of zero-tillage seed drills and full-duration, and high-yielding wheat varieties in east India. In 2013–14, more than 500,000 farmers adopted components of the 'early' rice-wheat cropping system in Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh, where CSISA has worked since 2009. The area planted, by a CSISA-supported network of 1,700 service providers, in wheat and under-zero tillage increased by 42 percent between 2012–13 and 2013–14, reaching more than 50,000 farmers. The value of area planted by CSISA's service providers in the 'early' rice-wheat cropping system was equivalent to $4.4 million in 2013–14.

South Sudan

Gender equity through education (GEE): end of project performance evaluation report, USAID South Sudan (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The Gender Equity through Education (GEE) Program was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by Winrock International in close partnership with the Republic of South Sudan Ministry of General Education & Instruction (RSS/MoGEI). USAID established GEE on March 23, 2007 to "continue, accelerate, and expand accomplishments achieved under the Gender Equity Support Program (GESP)," which ran from July 2002 to September 2007. The GEE project objectives were to increase the number of girls and women attending secondary school, and Teacher Training Institutes (TTIs) by reducing financial and infrastructure, social, and institutional barriers. The evaluators conclude that the GEE project is a good project embedded in a very weak system; a system that makes much of the GEE components either unsustainable or their benefits short-lived. While some important aspects of the project remained unimplemented until the latter years of the project, it generally came to be well executed. By the last years of the project, disbursement of stipends to over 5,300 beneficiaries over five years became well implemented and well monitored. GEE staff relationships and collaboration with national and state ministry officials appeared to be excellent and deeply appreciated.

Food, Agriculture and Rural Markets (FARM) Project Midterm Evaluation Report, USAID South Sudan (2012). Performance Evaluation.

USAID launched the Food, Agriculture and Rural Markets (FARM) project in mid-February, 2010. The Mission designed the project to deliver rapid economic benefits to smallholder farmers by increasing production, improving access to markets as surpluses increased and improving the capacities of the private and public sectors to support market-led agriculture. Programmatic recommendations focus on: (1) adjustments to the FARM Project that would strengthen its engagement in, or find other ways to address,"weak-link" value chain components that have the potential to limit project results and (2) finding ways to enhance results within the current project scope. Based on the project's most recent (November, 2011) reporting on performance management plan (PMP) indicator values, the project had met its targets for disseminating improved technologies and management practices to FBOs, had made little progress increasing smallholders' access to market services or, with the exception of training, improving business, management, and service provision skills of the private sector. Although the evaluation team could not fully assess the contractor's adherence to USAID direction pertaining to cost-effective implementation of the project and development of comprehensive coordination and communication plans, the team found that FARM has been largely responsive to documented direction from USAID regarding project focus and direction.

Sri Lanka

Midterm review: Connecting Regional Economies (CORE) Project in Sri Lanka, USAID/Sri Lanka (2010). Performance Evaluation.

CORE was designed to contribute to USAID/Sri Lanka's Assistance Objective of"Increased private sector led growth in former conflict areas," and its corollary Intermediate Results of"Private sector investment in former conflict areas increased" and"Private sector productivity enhanced in former conflict areas." Specifically, CORE seeks to address the disparity in economic development between the conflict-affected Eastern Province and the bordering provinces of North Central and Uva, on the one hand, and the rest of Sri Lanka, on the other hand. Overall progress in meeting project objectives and indicators appears to have been good. Progress in meeting specific project indicators has been uneven, with the delay in project implementation causing some problems and differing results from different partners causing others. The process for the establishment of targets for project indicators has not always been transparent and consultative. A number of the value chains appear to be achieving positive results, considering that this is largely a project focusing on agricultural production by farmers and a year and a half is short time period for such projects to achieve lasting results. Due to the demand driven nature of the project and based on private sector demand/requirements the project has many value chain projects and partners scattered across a wide geographical area in Sri Lanka.1 Project reporting appears to be overly laborious and includes extraneous data for which the team could see no obvious need. It is not clear how much of this is due to USAID requirements and how much was due to decisions by the contractor.

Final report on mid-term review of USAID public private alliances: Dairy enhancement in the eastern province (DEEP) and Sustainable agriculture through commercialization (SAC), USAID Sri Lanka (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Sri Lanka has taken a lead role in engaging the private sector in economic recovery and development, particularly in the conflict-affected areas of the Eastern and Northern Provinces. Through Public Private Alliances (PPAs), USAID collaborates with Sri Lankan companies to create jobs, increase economic opportunities, and foster stability in these disadvantaged areas. There are a few key factors that have made the DEEP project an example of a successful PPA. Both men and women farmers report that the training, technical inputs, and matching grants provided through the product have helped them to improve on-farm management and upgrade their herds and infrastructure. Out of 250 households selected from the beneficiary list (260 gherkin farmers, 30 seed paddy farmers, and 4 maize farmers), 46% could not be found. The survey was administered to 135 households of which 119 were gherkin farmers and 16 were seed paddy farmers. According to the respondents, the main benefits of participating in the project are the provision of quality inputs and technical advice at the beginning of the season. Without a representative sample, it is not possible to determine whether the SAC PPA has benefited the majority of farmers that have participated. The impacts on wellbeing cannot be determined.

Final Performance Evaluation of the Connecting Regional Economies (CORE) Project, USAID Sri Lanka (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This is the report on the Final Performance Evaluation of the Connecting Regional Economies (CORE) project. CORE was designed to contribute to USAID/Sri Lanka's Development Objective, "Increased private sector led growth in former conflict areas," and its corollary Intermediate Results, "Private sector investment in former conflict areas increased" and "Private sector productivity enhanced in former conflict areas." Specifically, CORE sought to address economic development disparity between the conflict-affected Eastern Province and the rest of Sri Lanka. The project utilized a flexible public-private alliance (PPA) approach to encourage private businesses in Western and Southern Sri Lanka to invest in the development of Eastern Sri Lanka and to promote investment by local small businesses as well. The project appears to have been successful in addressing gender issues, particularly on the value chain development related activities. Workforce development training was successful in terms of relative numbers of women trained, but less successful in regards to the longer term employment of women in jobs related to that training. The project was more successful in viii increasing the numbers of Tamil and Muslim beneficiaries in activities in the Eastern Province than in the North Central and Uva Provinces.

Midterm Performance Evaluation: USAID/Sri Lanka Integrated Aquaculture Project (IAP), USAID Sri Lanka (2012). Performance Evaluation.

Within its Public Private Alliance (PPA) program, USAID/Sri Lanka (USAID/SL) has collaborated with Aqua N Green (Pvt) Ltd, (ANG), a Sri Lankan firm, to establish the Integrated Aquaculture Project (IAP). IAP aims to boost incomes in the Northern and Eastern provinces, where long coastlines and brackish lagoons make aquaculture a promising opportunity. The three-year IAP initiative--with an anticipated one year, no cost extension--aims to help 1,300 households establish out-grower aquaculture enterprise, hiking beneficiary incomes as much as 300 percent. 1) IAP has strong potential for positive impact on livelihoods, but confronts vulnerabilities that could limit that impact. 2) If 'crop' insurance can be secured, micro-credit remains available, feed costs stabilize, ANG attains adequate working capital and profitable export outlets can be sustained, IAP can provide several hundred full or supplemental livelihoods for well-trained, well-monitored out-growers or employee operators. 3) To date, technical training has given out-growers inadequate knowledge and experience for optimal aquaculture operations. 4) The current low buy-back price creates risk of credit breaches. 5) In hindsight, building the processing plant was a suboptimal resource use and building a feed mill would also be a suboptimal resource use. 6) Micro-credit arrangements have achieved mixed success and remain vulnerable in the absence of 'crop' insurance and alignment of buy-back and market prices. 7) IAP has not to date ensured adequate out-grower record-keeping.

East Asia and Pacific Regional

Evaluation of EAP Support for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), USAID East Asia and Pacific Regional (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the performance and effectiveness of the USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA) Environmental Cooperation-Asia Clean Development and Climate Program (ECO-Asia CDCP) against its goals, objectives, and performance targets. ECO-Asia CDCP's purpose is to"implement a program to promote policy and market transformation in Asia that leads to reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to address climate change, reduced air pollution, and improved use of energy resources." The Evaluation Team concluded that this hypothesis remains broadly valid. PFAN Asia: ECO-Asia CDCP has developed a successful model to bridge the gap between clean energy project development entrepreneurs and financial investors. By giving project developers and potential investors the right tools to communicate and work together, the program has pioneered a new model for the delivery of development assistance to address clean energy priorities.

Swaziland

Reduction of drought vulnerability in southern Swaziland: end of project evaluation, USAID Swaziland (2012). Performance Evaluation.

Much of Southern Africa is caught in cycles of extreme weather conditions: severe droughts and flooding. Swaziland has not been spared. The citizens of Swaziland often have to depend on food aid. Between 2009 and 2012, International Relief and Development (IRD) engaged in various activities which sought to mitigate the effects of droughts in twelve constituencies in the Lubombo and Shiselweni regions. The project's aim was to enhance food security by building capacity of farmers through training and minimum input support. Provision of water supply, promotion of sanitation and hygiene in schools and communities, as well as improving community based management of services were important components of the program.

Important Findings from the Evaluation: The first objective of the project was to improve agricultural practices under drought conditions. This objective was a major focus of the IRD program. Achievements included:

- Conservation Agriculture (CA) was introduced by IRD at a very critical time and its yield advantages were noted and appreciated by the subsistence farmers. However, there was spatial variability in the uptake of conservation agriculture activities in the various Tinkhundla.
- The earnings from the vegetable sales are helping to increase disposable income which is helping farmers to cover for other household needs such as school fees and other food needs.
- The numbers of livestock benefiting from project activities increased over the course of 3 years and the benefits were appreciated by the farmers. However, the project achieved below set targets in terms of cattle sales. This was attributed to farmers being caught up in a culture prestige syndrome of keeping large numbers of cattle.
- The rainwater harvesting and water supply activities were another resounding success. They helped to attract and retain good teachers in the schools and reduced costs of

acquiring water providing relief to school budgets so that savings could be directed to other school needs.

Swaziland|Lesotho|Seychelles|Southern Africa

Development grants program performance evaluation, USAID Swaziland|Lesotho|Seychelles|Southern Africa (2014). Performance Evaluation.

At a programmatic level the USAID/Southern Africa Development Grants Program (DGP) has worked well. The implementation modality through local NGOs has been successful and efficient and the technical and institutional capacity of the partner NGOs has been significantly enhanced (interviews, pers.com & project reports). All of the available evidence suggests that USAID's focus on building the capacity of its local partners has resulted in local NGO partners with enhanced capacity and an ability to operate as successful project implementation partners for USAID in the future.

A key element in the success of the program has been the choice of NGO partners. The institutions selected had an established track record and a history of experience that preceded the program and will continue long after the DGP. This enhances the likelihood of sustainability. In Swaziland, the initial local NGO partner, Action Four Africa, did not have 'deep' institutional roots and was reported to consist largely of one well-qualified and experienced person. The relationship with Palms for Life did not work well. This had an adverse impact on the success and sustainability of the project.

The gender of participants and beneficiaries was tracked by the projects and it is noteworthy that gender issues were not a major challenge for the projects. Women were particularly well represented in all structures and played a leading role in most of the projects. They were also major beneficiaries of the project processes.

Tajikistan

Family Farming Project: Water Users Association, USAID Tajikistan (2010). Impact Evaluation.

USAID"s Water User Association Support Program (WUASP) has been successful in Tajikistan. It has met its objectives to help farmers establish water user associations (WUAs), support them to clean and rehabilitate irrigation infrastructure, and improve their productivity through training in business, water management, and good governance and democratic principles. Thanks to this training, WUAs are, in general, institutionally and financially sustainable organizations that are responsive to their constituencies, and can resolve water management issues. By overcoming the limiting factor of irrigation water, farmers have opened up more land, grown more crops and diversified their on-farm activities. In many ways, the role and responsibilities of WUAs are expanding. Given the lack of a functioning extension service in Tajikistan, the WUAs are

becoming more like farm associations that look at the entire farm management cycle and tackle the problems that hinder agricultural growth.

Many challenges remain. For example, farmers are under-capitalized, interest rates on loans are high, relations with district water departments can be strained due to water user fee issues, equipment for operating and maintaining irrigation infrastructure is expensive to rent or is in dire need of repair, and legislation on agriculture and water management still needs full improvement. Nevertheless, WUA members have a sense of purpose and unity, and are confident that they can solve their problems. Importantly, WUA members have taken their newly gained knowledge and skills out of the confines of agriculture into the larger arena of their communities, where farmers have applied democratic principles, business knowledge and agricultural skills to other aspects of their life.

Tanzania

Financial Crisis Initiative Evaluation, USAID Tanzania (2012). Performance Evaluation.

In response to the financial crisis of 2008, the United States Government (USG) provided a stimulus package, known as the Financial Crisis Initiative (FCI), to complement actions by the Government of Tanzania (GoT) to stimulate the Tanzanian economy, increase food production, and provide social protection and safety nets to vulnerable groups. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) contributed a total of $52.7 million over two phases to the FCI, intended as a rapid response to assist the rural poor affected by the financial crisis.
The FCI programs were carried out in vulnerable communities, although individual participation was not always equal in terms of gender or villages due to selection processes and work involved. Clear guidelines and the presence of implementing agencies during the selection of activities and participants in some instances helped to ensure equal participation and transparency. The short-term benefits of supplemental food or income allowed families to mitigate the damage that loss of income or crops brings to vulnerable families and allowed households to continue working on local economic activities. The Cash for Work, Food for Asset projects and school feeding program may improve the long-term resilience of the communities to future shocks by addressing infrastructure problems, improving health and education of children, and increasing tourism.

There are many lessons that can be drawn from the implementation of USAID's Financial Crisis Initiative, which can contribute towards improving future safety net programming. It is also important to note that the conditions under which the implementing agencies operated were quite challenging, and their experiences, both positive and negative, have much value to add. Some of these challenges include time constraints, seasonal challenges, difficulties of operating in remote locations, and budget limitations.

Sustainability requires community involvement. All three components should increase efforts at awareness raising campaigns. For future programs, agreements with local partners (be it national, district, or village governments) on local contributions should be identified to cost share in terms of labor and resources, as well as improve the feeling of community ownership.

PWANI Project end of project evaluation, USAID Tanzania (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The four-year PWANI Project is an ecosystem-based management initiative that targets the northern coastal area on the Tanzanian mainland, including Saadani National Park (SANAPA) and the Wami River estuary, in Pangani and Bagamoyo districts. PWANI works to strengthen capacity at the local level to implement policy, advocate for policy adjustments (good governance) and integrate poverty concerns into conservation strategies.

The integrated coastal biodiversity conservation approach has been very effective in achieving intended project outcomes in the three key programming areas of Nature, Wealth and Power. For sound natural resources management and biodiversity conservation (Nature), improvements in biophysical conditions are largely on target as are the associated livelihoods improvements intended to reduce pressure on the environment and natural resources. For strengthened resilience and assets (Wealth), savings and credit schemes, for example have allowed for diversified and supplemental livelihoods and women's empowerment. Communities have been supported by the project to develop climate change adaptation plans for increased resilience. For improved governance (Power), capacity building has been a major focus. The project has also helped establish many policies, strategies, plans, agreements and regulations addressing climate change mitigation or adaptation and biodiversity conservation. A primary strength of the project approach has been its strategic selection of project partners with extensive experience of community engagement, and this has meant that each partner has been able to work successfully with communities from the outset. Another strength of the project approach is that it has addressed gender by explicitly focusing on gender inequities and increasing women's access to credit and entrepreneurship opportunities. Women's involvement has improved project results significantly since women are critical to family livelihoods, education and health. Additional strengths of using an integrated approach to project interventions included a focus on addressing root causes of behavior leading to biodiversity degradation and gender inequity. The project operated at a scale where it was able to achieve impact at both the community and local government authority.

Wildlife Management Areas Evaluation, USAID Tanzania (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this evaluation is thus to determine the effectiveness and impact of the Wildlife Management Area (WMA) approach and its policy framework. A key underlying theme is the validity of the hypothesis that WMAs effectively provide incentives for communities to protect the wildlife on village lands and that they can realize significant economic benefits from so doing.

WMAs represent a new approach to wildlife management in Tanzania that has its roots in the late 1980s. This new approach emerged from the perceived failure of past, traditionally centralized wildlife management policies and practices in Tanzania. The crisis facing wildlife at that time provoked changes in government thinking about wildlife policy and management, and also paved the way for USAID to initiate what became more than 20 years of support to the

wildlife sector. By this time government officials in Tanzania were already sounding the call to promote these new community-based approaches and WMAs emerged during the reform process in the 1990s as the framework for communities to manage and benefit from wildlife.

While this report focuses primarily on the challenges facing WMAs and the ways to improve their viability, it is important to recognize that the establishment of WMAs and the fundamental shift in philosophy and perspective that this represented in Tanzania is a significant achievement in itself. The WMAs represent the best hope for conserving wildlife outside of Tanzanian protected areas while enhancing rural economic development. The achievements thus far have set the stage for the next phase of WMA evolution.

Midterm Performance Evaluation of the USAID/Tanzania Pamoja Tuwalee Project, USAID Tanzania (2014). Performance Evaluation.

Consistent with the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) II OVC Guidelines and Government of Tanzania (GoT) policies, USAID Tanzania signed consultative agreements with four implementing partners (FHI360, Africare, Pact and World Education Inc.) to implement a program titled Pamoja Tuwalee (PT). The partners use a zonal approach to provide support and services to most vulnerable children (MVC). The program supports families, communities and local government agencies to strengthen their capacity to sustainably care for their own MVC. The goal of the program is"improving the well-being of most vulnerable children and their caretakers using a sustainable approach." The overall target is to serve 318,107 MVC and 159,000 households in 21 regions of Tanzania by 2015.

Evidence from consultations and program data demonstrates that objectives are highly likely to be achieved. The program has ensured high levels of coverage for services to the most vulnerable children (MVC). Coverage has reportedly improved MVC identification, referrals and access to nutrition, health, education, psychosocial support and protection. Africare has the highest district coverage (100 percent), as it reaches all the 18 districts and 339 out of 501 wards (68 percent) in the Central zone. World Education Inc. (WEI) has the lowest district coverage (45 percent), while Pact has the lowest ward coverage (27 percent).

Tanzania Vector Control Scale-up Project: Midterm Performance Evaluation, USAID Tanzania (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The Tanzania Vector Control Scale-up Project (TVCSP) goal is to contribute to the reduction of the burden of malaria by interrupting malaria transmission through Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) and the prevention of adverse effects of malaria epidemics through blanket and focal spraying activities .

A major achievement of TVCSP (building on the earlier IRS project implemented by RTI) is that IRS is acknowledged by malaria stakeholders, notably including community members, to have contributed to the overall reduction in malaria transmission and morbidity on Mainland and in Zanzibar. While community members might not be aware that a project named TVCSP has made such a contribution, all such evaluation respondents were united in their appreciation of the

reduction in malaria transmission and morbidity that they have observed. These views were echoed by National and Zanzibar Malaria Control Programme and other regional and district malaria stakeholders.

Timor-Leste

An evaluation of the development communities through intensive agriculture (DOCIA)/dezenvolve agricultura comunitaria (DAC) project, USAID Timor-Leste (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The evaluation team carried out this mid-term evaluation of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI); Development Communities through Intensive Agriculture Project/Dezenvolve Agricultura Comunitária (hereafter simply "DOCIA/DAC") in Timor-Leste, May 8 – June 1, 2012, using the scope of work prepared by the U SAID/Timor-Leste Economic Growth Office.

DOCIA/DAC has been actively pursuing the activities and based on discussion and reviews the evaluation team believes the project is on track to meet targets for 2012 by project year end of 2012. The project has progressed to the point where it has established Special Horticultural Areas 1 (SHA)s in all locations intended under the original contract. But, the contract has been extended and it calls for five additional SHAs to be established between now and project end in 2014 and, these SHAs still need to be established.

The DOCIA/DAC project accomplished or exceeded, according to reported project performance indicators its targets in 2011 (see Figure 1). In its second year DOCIA/DAC is working against the revised and approved 2012 work plan. The plan calls for the implementation of three major activities and thirteen sub-activities (see Table 2). The project has been actively pursuing the activities and management indicates they are on track to meet targets by project year end. It is the opinion of the evaluation team that this will most likely happen.

Performance evaluation of the USAID/Timor-Leste consolidating cooperative and agribusiness recovery (COCAR) project: final report, USAID Timor-Leste (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is a report on the mid-term evaluation of the Consolidating Cooperative and Agribusiness Recovery (COCAR) project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission in Timor-Leste.

As of January 2013, more than 21,500 members sell coffee and other farm products to CCT. CCT administrative records show an increasing farm income trend from coffee sales between 2002 and 2012 despite poor yields due to adverse weather conditions in 2007, 2009, and 2011. Overall, a declining trend in coffee yields over the period was identified. Despite the reduction in average yields, average income per coffee farm from sales to CCT increased from $139 to $224 over the period as farm gate coffee prices increased from 22-23 cents per kg from 2002 to 2006 to 27 cents in 2007, reaching a peak of 50 cents in 2011 and dropping back to 40 cents in 2012.

Individual survey data reveals relatively large households with an average of about 7 members per household. Data showed that over half of the household members above 45 years of age reported having had no formal education; however, the educational profile of the remaining population is consistent with slowly improving educational opportunities up through high school levels.

Uganda

Healthy Practices, Strong Communities: Midterm Evaluation Report, USAID Uganda (2011). Performance Evaluation.

Mercy Corps conducted an extensive midterm assessment of the five-year Healthy Practices, Strong Communities (HPSC) program, found herein. This assessment is not an impact evaluation that examines causality, but guidance for readjustment and realignment of program activities. Accordingly, the midterm evaluation is comprised of a mixture of qualitative inquiry and a smaller household survey. It is unlikely that the program achieved measurable change in population-based indicators at this point. Correspondingly, the midterm evaluation aimed to examine more exploratory items and uncover why or why not approaches may be working rather than just if they are or are not working.

One of the main purposes of the HPSC program is to support internally displaced persons as they transition from camps and resettle to permanent locations. At the start of the program, nearly half of the Kitgum and Pader inhabitants lived in camps. At the time of the midterm, all camps had closed. The program did conduct activities to motivate and to support this transition—supplying seeds and tools, rehabilitating access roads, building WASH facilities closer to homes, for example. However, it is difficult to attribute resettlement or ease of resettlement to HPSC program incentives alone.

Livelihoods and Enterprises for Ag Development (LEAD), USAID Uganda (2011). Performance Evaluation.

The midterm evaluation was commissioned by USAID/Uganda Mission and was aimed at documenting evidence on progress made thus far not only toward LEAD project objectives, but also to assess the effectiveness of strategies used in its implementation, the likelihood of attaining project results by the end of the project, and lessons learned.

The MTE team's assessment was that the SAF component had been effective in leveraging private sector resources to reach more farmers and business entities with a view of strengthening the VCs. The SAF was also effective in facilitating various services to the value chains, including support for dialogue sessions, provision of skills and equipment to improve business capacity, and competitiveness. Finally, the evaluation team's opinion of the SAF governance procedures is that they are well within the approved LEAD framework. However, in view of the sentiments that have been raised by some stakeholders, measures to improve transparency of the

entire process as suggested above would go a long way in presenting a fair framework for SAF management and implementation.

Ukraine

Local Investment and National Competitiveness Project Evaluation, USAID Ukraine (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of the Local Investment and National Competitiveness (LINC) final performance evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of selected LINC activities intended to improve the business and investment environment in Ukraine. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will use evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations to reassess its role in improving the business and investment environment in Ukraine. There are no significant differences in opinion on whether different aspects of the investment climate had improved, declined, or remained the same among LINC- assisted and comparison-group private-sector respondents. Respondents in both the public and private sectors stated that the Local Investment and National Competitiveness (LINC) Program did lead to improvements in the investment climate and business development, though the extent and long-term effects of the impact on those improvements varied. More than half of key informant interview (KII) respondents in both public and private sectors noted that LINC contributed to a gain in knowledge or skills. There were notable differences between the public and private sectors in how LINC activities led to improvements. Public sector respondents cited the cooperation between municipalities and raions, while private-sector respondents were more likely to cite improvements in business or further investments they had made in their business. Specifically for regional planning, public-sector respondents saw an advantage to cooperation between municipalities and raions, and some private-sector respondents saw this inter-municipality cooperation as beneficial for their business. LINC activities brought people together and organized individuals and organizations around a common investment/business-related objective. Business owners invested more in their businesses after interacting with LINC. However, increased investment was not a prominent improvement cited by respondents.

When asked directly to rate the extent to which significant improvements could be attributable to LINC activities, respondents replied that LINC had a significant effect on, but was not solely responsible for, the recognized improvements.

USAID Economic Growth, Education and Environment

Evaluation of Three NRM/LRM Mechanisms: TransLinks, USAID Economic Growth, Education and Environment (2014). Performance Evaluation.

This is a final assessment of"Promoting Transformation: Linking Natural Resources, Economic Growth and Governance (TransLinks)." The TransLinks evaluation framework addressed how the program achieved its objectives through seven evaluation questions that were used to examine results pertaining to performance outcomes, project design and management, and

broader program dissemination. The evaluation found that e, TransLinks enabled members of the consortium to significantly strengthen their capabilities in payments for environmental services (PES), particularly for forest carbon. Their programs reflect a stronger understanding of what it takes to make PES operational, an understanding which they are sharing with partners in government and civil society. A substantial body of new NRM knowledge was developed around the issue of land tenure and property rights in PES schemes. TransLinks had the greatest impact where its knowledge generation, project development, and advocacy work came together to support the formation and implementation of policy in a single country. In Brazil, for example, TransLinks helped demonstrate that theoretical models of REDD+ can be made operational for the sale of carbon credits from sub-national significantly sites in voluntary markets. In at least one case, it has been possible to use progress in one country to show policy makers and practitioners from another country how they might proceed. TransLinks' work on PES played a similar role. The focus has not been on innovation so much as it has been on showing how PES can be implemented in practice. A very important contribution has been to ensure that the critical question of tenure and property rights does not get overlooked in implementation.

USFS Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA), USAID Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3) (2014). Performance Evaluation.

This study examines the implementation and effectiveness of the United States Forest Service (USFS) Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA), with respect to how well USAID's use of the PAPA- and the PAPA structure overall- serves to meet project and interagency objectives.

The author's found that the grand majority of funds used through the PAPA went to biodiversity programs, followed by climate change projects and natural resource management. Direct implementation and training programs received the most financial support. Technical assistance offered through the program was found to be effective and of a high standard. This positive feedback was attributed to proper selection and training of PAPA points of contact, and in placing USFS staff in mission countries. It was also suggested that the USFS' emphasis on multiple use natural resource management makes it well suited as a partner for USAID.

There were concerns, however, that monitoring and evaluation data may need to be broadened beyond the scope of current standard USAID indicators. Reporting and dissemination of reports was deemed the weakest area of USFS performance. The authors also stressed a problem with low levels of demonstrated positive outcomes for women in all PAPA-supported projects. Recommendations from the evaluation team include improvements on timing and content of program reports, ensuring compliance with the audit provisions of the PAPA, increasing awareness of USFS personnel about the environmental compliance requirements of the PAPA, and ensuring that grantees are fully informed about branding of communications products financed with USAID funds.

USAID Regional Development Mission-Asia

Midterm Evaluation for Climate Change Adaptation Project Preparation Facility for Asia and the Pacific (ADAPT Asia-Pacific), USAID Regional Development Mission-Asia (RDM/A) (2014). Performance Evaluation.

In the project's third year of operation, Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA) awarded a contract to ICF International (ICF) to conduct a mid-term performance evaluation of USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific. This draft report presents the results of the mid-term evaluation. The primary purpose of the mid-term performance evaluation is to understand what has worked well, what has worked less well, and to learn and incorporate lessons to enhance performance for the second half of the project. The evaluation has four main objectives:

- Determine the extent to which the Project is on track to meeting the overall requirements of the contract;
- Identify factors that help or hinder the Project's achievement of expected outcomes;
- Recommend corrective actions needed and/or areas for improvement to achieve the expected results during the duration of the Project; and
- Recommend specific opportunities to enhance programmatic effectiveness and impact at the regional level and further strengthen the regional cohesive approach of the Project.

In selecting the Asia-Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN), USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific has chosen the best—or at least most visible and recognized—online knowledge platform. However, the project has not fully leveraged the capacity of APAN. APAN has limitations, including limited reach in the Pacific and weak navigability and library indexing, which could constrain USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific's ability to make its materials fully and easily available to the public. USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific's engagement has not fully addressed these limitations but there are ongoing efforts to sustain, consolidate, and improve the platform.

Uzbekistan

Performance Evaluation of the Agricultural Linkages (Aglinks) Project, USAID Uzbekistan (2013). Performance Evaluation.

This is an independent, external evaluation report of the Agricultural Linkages (AgLinks) project, which ended on January 31, 2012 and was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Central Asian Republics' Regional Mission (CAR), Uzbekistan Country Office (UCO).

The history of private farming in Uzbekistan is very new; it has been only seven years since the production cooperative farm organizations (shirkats) were disbanded and all farm production responsibilities transferred to private farmers. USAID and the AgLinks and AgLinks Plus projects have been at the cutting edge of providing these new private farmers with a strong production-based set of technology transfer training activities, demonstration projects,

communication linkage relationships, and selected farm input support activities that have had a significant positive impact on improving farm-level productivity.

Focus group survey results indicated that disease and pest control, pruning, and improved soil management practices were the most important technology innovations AgLinks introduced. AgLinks also installed a total of five drip irrigation demo plots in Namangan, Fergana, and Samarkand, but no farmer interviewed had adopted this technology as none experienced water shortages using traditional irrigation techniques.

Women registered farmers were more likely than men to hold formal post-secondary degrees, but male registered farmers far outnumber female registered farmers, because traditional Uzbek institutions and legal practices militate against female legal farm ownership.

The Uzbek Scientific Plant Protection Institute (PPI) is the only specialized plant protection organization in the Central Asian region. Specialist staff has cooperated with AgLinks in preparing manuals and regularly provide field-level expert farmer training. The PPI implements a comprehensive Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program for cotton, and has the technical capacity to introduce a similar program for orchard and vineyard crops to further support improvement of Uzbek fresh produce to international standards. To date, AgLinks has not provided laboratory equipment to the PPI but discussions to do so are in progress.

AgLinks provided high-performance liquid chromatography equipment to support efforts to harmonize Uzbekistan's SPS procedures with prevailing international standards. A recent Asian Development Bank (ADB) report indicated that Uzbekistan has the best overall SPS practices in the Central Asian region.

West Africa Regional

John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer to Farmer Program Evaluation, USAID West Africa Regional (2012). Performance Evaluation.

The Farmer-to-Farmer Program Agreement Officer's Technical Representative (AOTR), Gary Alex and Albert Yeboah, provided encouragement, expertise and guidance as we prepared this report. Weidemann Associates Inc., especially Shayan Pal and Brenna Ranzen, provided the team with logistical support for the evaluation, however the team worked and drew up its findings and recommendations independently.

The team's overall assessment is that the F2F Program is an effective means of delivering short-term technical assistance while providing quality people-to-people exchanges. We suggest the program continue generally as it is. However, we believe the program could broaden participation by US institutions and highly-qualified individuals, and possibly even grow in size and scope, if there is higher- level analysis of piloted programmatic innovations, a special effort to better communicate the impact of the F2F Program to the American people, Congress, and USAID; and attention is given to overcome inefficiencies in the F2F monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system.

Final Performance Evaluation of Trade related Programs, USAID West Africa Regional (2012). Performance Evaluation.

This report presents the results of an evaluation of the performance of the West Africa Trade Hub (the Trade Hub), which focuses on export-ready companies, and two regional trade projects the Agribusiness and Trade Promotion Project (ATP) and the Extended-ATP (E-ATP), which focus on promoting regional trade within West Africa for value chains including grains, cattle, poultry, and onions.

The Trade Hub, under the current evaluation period (2007-2011) achieved a number of successes, directly facilitating $178 million of private sector exports by small companies for non-traditional exports to America and Europe. E/ATP launched in 2009, specifically dealt with very small producers and their production and marketing organizations achieving success in expanding marketing information and contacts, introducing technological improvements, and building capacity in key producer and trader organizations, in a short time frame. Regional trade registered in these commodities by the trade monitoring system that E/ATP set up reached $392 million in 2009/10 including cattle ($293 million), onions ($44 million), maize ($15 million), sorghum ($13.4 million), millet ($12.9 million), parboiled rice ($7.7 million), and poultry day-old chicks ($6.8 million).

Mid-term Performance Evaluation of the Gambia-Senegal Sustainable Fisheries Project, USAID West Africa Regional (2013). Performance Evaluation.

Ba Nafaa is USAID/West Africa's five-year flagship project in the fisheries sector. The project aims to develop new models for effective governance in the artisanal fishing sector in The Gambia and Senegal, as well as to influence such efforts elsewhere in the West Africa region. Per the requirements of USAID, this evaluation report covers The Gambia, where the majority of the on-the-ground activities occur, but not Senegal.

The key finding of the evaluation team is that, given the challenging environment for fisheries sector reform in The Gambia, Ba Nafaa has achieved significant results towards the goal of supporting the Government of The Gambia in reforming the artisanal fisheries sector in the country.

Additionally: 1) Ba Nafaa has generated greater levels of ecosystem awareness among all stakeholders; 2) Due to Ba Nafaa's efforts, there is now a strong foundation for ecosystem-based management through management plans and the establishment of associated committees at the ecosystem scale; 3) Ba Nafaa is creating a healthy environment for gender equality; 4) Ba Nafaa has been successful in educating and training stakeholders about the benefits of sustainable mangrove ecosystem management; 5) Through Ba Nafaa's activities, the National Sole Co-management Committe and Community Based Sole Committees have established local stakeholder participation and continue to build the foundation for a sustainable governance process; 6) Ba Nafaa has the ability to be a sustainable program if there is a change in strategy to better integrate DoFish and the national government; 7) To date, Ba Nafaa is on track for the creation of fisheries co-management plans for The Gambia sole complex, and oyster and cockle fisheries co-management plans for the Tanbi Special Management Area. However, as these plans

must still be promulgated, they are not yet declared and enforced by authorities. This delay has hampered co-management progress; 8) The primary institutional gaps of Ba Nafaa are the need to integrate reliable data at the regional level and to improve coordination with regional management bodies.

Midterm Performance Evaluation of the Sustainable and Thriving Environments for West Africa Regional Development (STEWARD III) Project, USAID West Africa Regional (2014). Performance Evaluation.

This midterm evaluation has three objectives:

- To review the progress made in achieving the STEWARD III objectives
- To identify critical mid-course program changes necessary to ensure sustainability of the program
- To the extent possible within the constraints of time and budget, identify lessons for consideration in future programming

STEWARD III is a complex transboundary natural resources management project. It operates at a landscape scale in two landscapes involving four countries through six implementing partners. The US Forest Service International Program (USFS-IP) implements STEWARD III under a Participating Agency Partnership Agreement. The USFS-IP in turn has a contractor responsible for direct implementation. Activities within these landscapes address biodiversity, climate mitigation, climate adaptation, and water, sanitation and health objectives. STEWARD III recalls the Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDPs) implemented by USAID in the 1980s, in that it focuses on threat abatement and community resilience through sustainable livelihoods. The underlying assumption of USAID's ICDP approach was that rural poverty drives environmental degradation, and that raising living standards would reduce community dependency upon consumptive uses of natural resources (USAID, 2008). STEWARD III is based upon similar assumptions. It has successfully demonstrated approaches that show promise of improving livelihoods and linked to improved management of community forests. However, STEWARD III is not on track to meet all project objectives.

Its approach could be more effectively structured. The sub-agreements with the Implementing Partners, based upon concept notes submitted in response to a Request for Applications, do not fully address all objectives, leaving significant gaps, especially in scaling lessons from the field for national and regional implementation. It should be noted that USAID explicitly prescribed the approach that has been employed, involving the use of a Strategic Activities Fund from which concept notes would be solicited from prospective partners.

Evaluation of the USAID-Funded Institutional Support and Food Security Program at CORAF/WECARD and NARS in West Africa Participating in Staple Crops and Biotechnology Projects (2009-2014), USAID West Africa Regional (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The Institutional Support and Food Security Program (IFSP), implemented within the Global Food Security Response Initiative (GFSRI), covered two components: a five year Institutional Support (IS) for CORAF/WECARD Executive Secretariat and member country research institutions in the West Africa region, and a two-year Supplementary Program Support (SPS) to enable the implementation of six staple food, and agricultural crop-based biotechnology projects by selected institutions in National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) in 11 countries in West Africa. Both components ended in mid 2014. USAID/West Africa launched a joint final evaluation of the two components of the IFSP in June 2014. USAID/WA intends to use the outcome of the performance evaluation to make an informed decision on a follow on for the IFPS project.

Overall, the general consensus among beneficiaries and partners is that the USAID-funded IFSP was relevant and contributed to institutional strengthening at both CORAF and the NARS. The scientific, coordinating and advocacy roles played by the Program Managers contributed to leveraging other agricultural and related research and/or development projects in the West Africa region funded by other donors. At the country level, the project achieved most of its training targets. The overhead charges of 2.5% paid to participating NARS was considered too small by most NARS Directors and some institutions felt that it had a negative impact on project implementation. End user-based Institutions like associations, organizations and NGOs acknowledged how much participation in the SPS projects strengthened their capacity.

For the Supplementary program support (SPS), the evaluation team gathered significant evidence showing the progress made in most achieving targets, although some targets were not realistically set and hence not met during the implementation period. These achievements include the large number and area of agro-ecological zones covered by project activities, the demonstrated technologies, and the number of training courses delivered and persons trained.

Mid-Term Performance Evaluation of The USAID West Africa Water Supply, Sanitation And Hygiene Program, USAID West Africa Regional (2015). Performance Evaluation.

The Mid-Term Performance Evaluation of the USAID West Africa Water Supply, Sanitation And Hygiene Program (WA-WASH) was conducted after three years of project implementation (August 2011 to September 2014) to assess the performance of the USAID WA-WASH program to date, identify constraints associated with the program, and make recommendations for its improvement to achieve expected outcomes and target results (indicator based) within the four-year timeframe. In all the countries visited by the evaluation team, we obtained positive responses from respondents concerning their access to improved water sources. Most respondents informed the team that their access to improved water source has increased remarkably as a result of WA-WASH interventions.

Overall, 47,504 people in the program intervention areas have access to an improved drinking water source as against 59,700 people targeted, representing 80% of LOP target (IN.02). Also, 4,844 households (HH) have increased availability of water for other productive uses (or multiple uses) as against 5,326 households targeted, representing 91% of LOP target (IN.48). Information from the PITT indicated that 32,383 people from Burkina Faso, 2,751 from Ghana and 12,370 from Niger have gained access to improved water supply services for household use

as a result of USAID WA-WASH intervention as of September 2014. However, respondents from the FGDs indicated that although these water facilities have been provided, they were still inadequate to meet the water needs of a number of communities. As a result, women who are the primary users of these water facilities indicated that they have to queue for between 15 and 30 minutes to fetch water (mostly at the peak of dry season).

In the Sahel Region of Burkina Faso, the program through IRC supports the communities to prepare annual action plans for the operation and maintenance (O & M) of the community water supply services. This has significantly improved management of water services for the benefit of the communities which has considerably reduced the frequency of pump breakdowns.

Mid-Term Performance Evaluation of the West Africa Fertilizer Program (WAFP), USAID West Africa Regional (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The West African Fertilizer Program (WAFP) is an integral part of USAID West Africa's strategy to achieve the U.S. Feed the Future goals to increase regional availability of appropriate and affordable fertilizer, which would in turn increase crop and livestock yields and ultimately improve the social and economic wellbeing of West Africans. This mid-term evaluation was conducted to help the Mission better understand the program's progress to date and determine whether the interventions and team are properly oriented to achieve the program's goal. The evaluation team conducted fieldwork in Ghana, Nigeria, Mali and Senegal.

The evaluation team found that the lead implementer, International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) had not achieved WAFP objectives as expected at the time of evaluation. IFDC has failed to build a well-structured regional program with a clear vision and mission and to put in place a strategy and tactical approaches to address the challenges facing them. The WAFP program had faced changes in staff that negatively influenced the consistency in the program's progress. The West Africa Fertilizer Regulatory Policy is progressing towards adoption at country level but is not yet adopted by all Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), countries.

Despite some efforts at the field level, WAFP activities have neither increased the supply of fertilizer regionally nor increased use of quality fertilizers. There was no evidence of increase in efficiency of fertilizer use, in spite of the slight improvement in the enabling environment fostered through the marginal improvement in infrastructure, and private sector involvement. Private sector engagement was low and investment funds leveraged were less than anticipated. There has not been establishment of a credit program through the Development Credit Authority (DCA) strategy.

Yemen

Community Livelihoods Project (CLP) Midterm Performance Evaluation, USAID Yemen (2012). Performance Evaluation.

Through USAID/Yemen's Yemen Monitoring and Evaluation Project (YMEP) implemented by International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI), a midterm evaluation was requested by the Mission. The field work for this report was carried out in January and February 2012 and the evaluation review period covers July 1, 2010 through December 31, 2011.

Although there were significant mitigating circumstances that impacted CLP implementation, including: the protracted"Arab Spring" uprisings and subsequent instability, forced evacuations, changes in Mission and CLP personnel, among others, these factors do not provide sufficient basis for CLP's failure from July 2010 through December 2011 to assign corporate priority to CLP in two areas that significantly affected the entire program: assignment of sufficient personnel and developing systems (grants management and grant making) that would drive the program toward success.

All three CLP Health sector activities in place at the time of the evaluation—health and supplies for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Support for Mobile Medical Teams and the development of the Private Provider Midwives—were well targeted and appropriate for this type of program. Moreover, the expansion of the health initiatives is well within the budget of the CLP health sector and the managerial capacity of both CLP and the implementing partners. From the perspective of the Ministry of Health, and also the private provider midwife approach that combines health service with the development of economic opportunities, it is a successful sector, but could be more successful by scaling it up, expanding the type of interventions and moving into new governorates.

Zambia

Final report for the end of program evaluation of the C-FAARM program, USAID Zambia (2011). Performance Evaluation.

Program literature review, secondary and first hand qualitative and quantitative data collected during the evaluation were used to draw the findings, recommendations, lessons learned and conclusions for the C-FAARM final evaluation. The data collection was performed consistent with the baseline. The advice and logistical support of the program staff from all consortium members was valuable and largely used during the evaluation. Their technical input ensured that the questionnaires were relevant and targeted to the correct groups of beneficiaries. As a result of the activities implemented within the frames of the SO1, Households, especially in the vulnerable group diversified and increased their livelihoods considerably. Analysis of the collected data shows that more than twice as many households are able to afford food for longer than three to six months from own production, and four times more households have access to food at least one to three months of the year. The overall analysis of the data shows that the overall income for the targeted beneficiaries has doubled over the course of the program. Also, at the end of the program more households had two or more non-farm sources of income since income was earned through casual agricultural labor, livestock sales, vegetable sales and milk sales. The average number of crops grown per household increased from 1.65 at baseline to 2.16 at endline, and there is evidence from secondary data that C-FAARM slowed down the decline in the production of crop diversity in the targeted areas. Households, especially female headed

households also recorded increases in the ownership of cattle. The quantitative data showed increases in the use of the all key promoted agricultural practices. At the end of the program the beneficiaries were able to produce more harvest using less land for certain crops. While cause-effect relationship cannot be established, the Internal Qualitative Analysis of the program suggests a correlation between the two.

Zimbabwe

Mid term evaluation of the rebuilding livelihoods and resiliency in Zimbabwe project - 674-A-00-10-00002-00 (January 17, 2010-November 30, 2013), USAID Zimbabwe (2013). Performance Evaluation.

In the Zimbabwean context, the challenge of reducing food insecurity for vulnerable people and helping them recover from economic meltdown most usually means helping communities to cope better with the risk of drought and diversify of their livelihoods. Less than 20% of the country's total estimated irrigation capacity is currently being utilized and the most frequent cause of food deprivation is the failure of rain-fed crops on smallholder farms (AGRITEX, 2011). Moreover, because virtually all Zimbabwean farmers grow maize as their staple food, variability in rainfall is particularly dangerous and exposes a great many households to food insecurity. Other causes of food insecurity in Zimbabwe relate to the high unemployment rates following the hyperinflation period, migration of young people x overseas and other generally adverse economic conditions that are mirrored in the high rural and urban poverty rates.

The design of the project was relevant to the needs of the target population. However, the time frame of the project suits more to a short-term relief than a long-term development project. Farmers require much longer time to build a sustainable dairy herd and therefore if the project is allowed to operate for less than five years, it may not be technically feasible to quantify and justify the impacts. The project also made much progress in empowering the producer/farmer level. Whilst this may go a long way in enhancing the performance of the sector, there may also be need to provide mentoring and capacity building to other value chain actors such as input producers, agro dealers, secondary milk producers and processors such as DZL and Nestle Zimbabwe. If farmers' capacities are increased without looking at other value chain actors, the benefits of such growth may be short-lived.

Performance Evaluation: USAID/Zimbabwe Promoting Recovery in Zimbabwe (PRIZE) Project, USAID Zimbabwe (2013). Performance Evaluation.

The final performance evaluation assessed progress made towards reducing food insecurity for vulnerable households in Beitbridge, Bulilima, Gwanda, Mangwe, Matobo, Mberengwa, Mudzi, and Rushinga, the eight districts targeted by the Promoting Recovery in Zimbabwe (PRIZE) Project. PRIZE began as a two year emergency food assistance project, extended in the middle of its second year for a third year. The nature of emergency assistance in the longer timeframe was important in framing the evaluation questions and the overall context of food security. The evaluation used the Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (FANTA) guidance (1999) that

defines food security as"When all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs for a productive and healthy life".

PRIZE provided emergency food assistance to transitorily food insecure individuals in the eight project districts. The project was also responsive to emerging local needs, especially as initial estimates of individuals requiring emergency food assistance derived from the ZimVac (2010) had underestimated actual need. PRIZE consultations with the UN World Food Programme (WFP), Rural District Councils (RDCs), and other community stakeholders concurred that ZimVac estimates had been conservative and the number of individuals in need of emergency food was higher. The actual number of transitorily food insecure individuals was 202,483 as opposed to 151,280 as initially estimated. PRIZE used 3,600 MT of food approved as contingency resources and reached 202,239 individuals with emergency food assistance. This represents 99.9 percent of individuals who required emergency food.

Evaluation findings demonstrated that, despite challenges like the most recent drought, PRIZE contributed towards increased food production. Farmers and PRIZE project staff concurred that there was potential for further improvements in food production when all productive assets are completed3 . Productive assets were created/rehabilitated, beneficiaries were beginning to utilize assets, and beneficiaries were adopting PRIZE-promoted sustainable agriculture technologies. The project repaired and created new productive water, agriculture, and livestock assets to facilitate improved production capacity among community farmers.

Final Evaluation Report: Rebuilding Livelihoods and Resiliency in Zimbabwe (ZDL) Project Implemented by Land O'Lakes and Funded by USAID, USAID Zimbabwe (2014). Performance Evaluation.

The purpose of this end-of-project evaluation was to carry out the final evaluation of the ZDL project in order to track program progress towards set targets; assess the appropriateness of project design; review constraints and how Rebuilding Livelihoods and Resiliency in Zimbabwe (ZDL) addressed them; and document the impacts, key lessons and best practices that will inform implementation of other USAID, Land O' Lakes or local stakeholder development programmes.

The ZDL project has been a major success, and in the process managed to set a foundation for smallholder dairying in Zimbabwe. The project achieved an overall physical progress rate of 97.2% against set targets, with the majority of the project's indicators surpassing expectations and the set targets. A notable achievement under Component 1 (dairy production, collection and processing) has been the total volume of milk produced per household each month which increased by 1,124% from 50 litres at the baseline to 562 litres in 2013. This was also a 187% achievement given a project target of 300 litres. Notable achievements under Component 2 (preventive animal health and rangeland/fodder flow management) have been the number of community based volunteers receiving short-term agricultural sector productivity training as Community Livestock Auxiliaries (100%), the number of farmers and others who have applied new technologies or management practices (103.8%), and the number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices (97.8%). However, the achievement rates under

Component 3 (donkey traction and transportation pilot programme) has been subdued due to lower uptake, with rates of 67.8% for the gross margin per donkey in traction business, and 77.5% for the number of households contracted with trained service providers for land clearing, ploughing and/or transportation.

Zimbabwe agricultural portfolio evaluation: final report, USAID Zimbabwe (2014). Performance Evaluation.

This report presents the findings of the evaluation of the Agricultural Portfolio for USAID/Zimbabwe's Economic Growth Office (EG). The purpose of the evaluation was to review the entire portfolio of agricultural activities, rather than conduct project evaluations of implementing partners.

The Mission-level agricultural strategy and program design were well aligned to meet agriculture growth and food security objectives. The strategy and approaches used in Phases I and II remain appropriate. The Transitional CDCS and DO2 PAD used past experiences and lessons learned and are well aligned with the Agency's Feed the Future Initiative strategies and goals of reducing hunger and improving nutrition. All key issues of agriculture and food security are being addressed in these documents. USAID effectively identified areas of intervention for the portfolio considering the country context at the time. Project designs are appropriate to achieve DO2 objectives. Phase I activities were appropriate for country conditions in 2009-2011; Phase II carried successful programs forward. The mix of portfolio activities was appropriate to address the two major challenges the agriculture sector faced—creating an enabling environment and improving productivity. Beneficiaries said they were very satisfied with the appropriateness of the design. The question "Did critical program assumptions hold?" was addressed for three assumptions and the answers follow. (1) The national elections would result in a change of leadership and allow for changes in the project design. Given the results of the elections, short term national planning in agriculture is expected to continue on the same course. (2) The inability to work directly with the GOZ would introduce constraints. The tense political environment and lack of trust among key stakeholders caused project start-up delays. As implementation progressed, stakeholder engagement increased and has contributed significantly to achieving results. (3) Funding for the EG Programs would remain constant or increase. Funding was reduced by 45% in FY 2013. Therefore, programs are not likely to be fully funded which has implications for focusing activities.

Zimbabwe| Southern Africa| Africa south of Sahara

Land, water & livelihoods restoration through holistic management, agreement # DFD-G-00-10-00084-00: final four year independent evaluation report (2010 through 2013), USAID Zimbabwe|Southern Africa|Africa south of Sahara (2013). Performance Evaluation.

In 2010 the Africa Centre for Holistic Management was awarded funding from USAID for a three year term. The 3 year term was extended by one year. The development agenda of this project is by nature medium term and addresses the root cause of manmade droughts in the project sites. This evaluation is the final evaluation of this four year project period. Impacts in

the communal lands over the last four years are reported to include, and were confirmed by field observation: decreased bare ground, improved water cycle, a fourfold increase in forage production on areas under planned grazing versus areas where animals are still left to wander, and at least a doubling of crop yields through holistic land and livestock management (HLLM) interventions. In some catchments rivers are flowing for longer and this requires further investigation to determine whether this is due to improved HLLM management. Other reported and observed benefits from the HLLM practices are improved animal condition, improved calving rates, reduced losses due to theft, predation and disease. Social benefits include reduced conflicts due to less livestock entering crop fields, better communication between village members and a sense of community returning.

The improved operational environment has allowed exposure trips to be conducted within the Hwange Communal Lands (HCL), to Namibia and Botswana and training and facilitation skills of staff have been greatly enhanced. The impact in the HCL is tangible with improvements seen in community mobilization, community ownership, practice and adoption of methodologies. In the meetings attended in the HCL there was a sense of excitement related to the project initiatives as well as a deep desire to succeed. Although the expected number of beneficiaries and of anticipated target communities for this period was not achieved by year four, due to some communities not adopting the approach, the overall 4 year target may be achieved if the four new communities are mobilized before year end.

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