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INITIATIVE TO END HUNGER IN AFRICA (IEHA) FINAL EVALUATION

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
FEED THE FUTURE

SEPTEMBER 2011

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DISCLAIMER

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ACRONYMS

APEP	Agricultural Productivity Enhancement Program
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
ASNAPP	Agribusiness in Sustainable National African Plant Products
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CILSS	Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (English Translation)
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DAP	Development Assistance Program
DCA	Development Credit Authority
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DSIP	Development Strategy and Investment Plan
EAC	East African Community
EAGC	Eastern Africa Grain Council
EARRNET	Eastern Africa Root Crops Research Network
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FACTS	Foreign Assistance Coordination and Tracking System
FASDEP	Food and Agricultural Sector Development Policy
FBO	Farmer-based organization
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FIPS	Farm Input Promotions
FFP	Food for Peace
FTF	Feed the Future
GFSR	Global Food Security Response Initiative
GTZ	German Development Service
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
ICT	Information and communication technology
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IEHA	President's Initiative to End Hunger in Africa
IFDC	International Center for Soil Fertilization and Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
INSAH	Institute of the Sahel
IP	Implementing Partner
IR	Intermediate Result
LEAD	Livelihoods and Enterprises for Agricultural Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MIS	Market Information System

MSI	Management Systems International
MYAP	Multi-Year Assistance Program
NAIP	National Agricultural Investment Plan
NARO	National Agricultural Resource Organization
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OU	Operating Unit
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PRODEPAM	Programme de Développement de la Production Agricole au Mali
PROFIT	Production, Finance and Improved Technologies Project - Zambia
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RATIN	Regional Agriculture Trade Intelligence Network
RCSA	Regional Center for Southern Africa
REC	Regional Economic Community
REDSO	Regional Economic Development Services Office
ReSAKSS	Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System
RH	reproductive health
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SI	Social Impact
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TIPCEE	Trade and Investment Program for a Competitive Export Economy
UNADA	Uganda National Agro-inputs Dealers Association
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government
VAC	Vulnerability Assessment Committee
WACIP	West Africa Cotton Improvement Program
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Launched in 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA) was dedicated to improving agriculture production, processing, marketing, and trade in order to expand economic growth, reduce poverty, and eliminate hunger. IEHA developed action plans in partnership with participant countries and the private sector as well as with other donors concentrated in seven countries and three regions. Between 2004 and 2010, it obligated \$450 million and targeted countries and goods and services with strong potential for development of markets, initially with a heavy focus on export markets and later shifting to a larger focus on commercial markets for local staple crops.

This evaluation will discuss its results and prospects for applying lessons from IEHA when implementing the additional directions foreseen in the Feed the Future (FTF) program, launched in 2009. FTF replaces IEHA as a similar umbrella program, but with additional focus on nutrition and helping the poorest of the poor.

Generally, IEHA has done an excellent job of raising the incomes of smallholder farmers in many production, policy, marketing and market information projects, some of which are mentioned in this report.

One size does not fit all. Development priorities and plans differ by country, as do United States Agency for International Development (USAID) country strategic plans. Country investment plans developed by host governments under the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) (in close cooperation with USAID and other donors) are supposed to take the lead in setting priorities for donors and programs. Some field personnel in USAID missions and among Implementing Partners (IPs) felt they should have been more involved in recommending economic and policy study topics and in helping in the CAADP country plan development, a process in which, in many cases, USAID/Washington was more active than field personnel. But, generally, there has been close discussion between USAID field personnel and host country ministries and other donors in program planning and implementation, regardless of whether it was called CAADP or not.

Major issues that need to be addressed as IEHA moves to FTF include:

- Definition of target groups (now broadened with increased emphasis on the very poor and on nutrition for mothers and children).
- Time frames for success.
- Project reporting of measurements of success—perhaps more difficult to estimate than the early IEHA programs that were heavily focused on easier-to-measure export programs.
- Cooperation to avoid duplication and achieve cross-program synergies with host governments, a wide group of donors, and the private sector.
- Sustainability after the end of the project.

CONCLUSIONS ON SOME OF THE MAIN TARGET AREAS OF IEHA

Agricultural Productivity and Producer Associations

There are many opportunities for improving productivity with improved seeds, applied research, etc. Traditional farmers used seeds without much need for inputs, with low yields but some tolerance to pests. Improved high-yielding seeds will need fertilizer, sometimes pesticides or other chemicals; and farmers will need advice on how to use these as well as credit to buy inputs. Applied research approved by national regulatory authorities and transmitted to farmers through extension activities will continue to be crucial. Livestock programs can also be useful in raising farmer income.

Markets and Trade

There have been many successful marketing and innovative programs, such as warehouse receipts, permitting farmers to delay marketing and borrow on their stored commodities, thereby enabling them to wait for market prices to rise. Mission and IP responders to a survey conducted by this evaluation team did not seem enthusiastic about export programs, which were toned down in favor of local marketing of cash crops in the middle of the IEHA program. Generally, any marketing program should start with the value chain concept—looking at demand, competition, all the players (input suppliers, buyers, processors, market demand, competitors)—and not just focus on one element of the value chain, such as production, storage or finance. Action may focus on a segment, but there should be understanding of the whole, with full consideration of advantages and disadvantages of options, such as where to store commodities, cost, market prices, and risk.

Although policy is not mentioned in the FTF framework, it is mentioned in the FTF Guide (May 2010) and is included to support production and marketing. The Guide suggests that enlisting local companies to help lobby for improvements in the policy environment could be an appropriate policy initiative. It would appear that policy initiatives with very long timeframes may not be appropriate under the FTF program, though this is not precisely specified in the Guide.

Market and Food Security Systems

Market information using cell phones and other systems have been widely applied in IEHA projects and are thought to be valuable tools for improving farmer returns. There are also systems such as USAID's Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) to provide early warning for crop failures. Agriculture is inherently unstable in production and markets, and there will always be good and bad years. But some projects may seek to help national authorities or others develop advance contingency planning to respond to a crisis, for example, storing or exporting excessive surpluses of basic staples, or facilitating rapid commercial imports by the public or private sector when very serious shortages occur.

Targeting the Vulnerable

While the vulnerable are not fully defined, they would appear to include small subsistence farmers who do not produce much of a marketable surplus. These barely commercial farmers can be included in farm marketing systems, but very small players (e.g., in credit systems) may add substantial administrative costs and make the whole marketing cooperative less competitive. Farmer organizations seeking to help with marketing

compete with private sector local traders and with imports of food products such as vegetable oil and rice, which are often cheaper than locally produced products, so marketing cost is crucial for competitiveness and sustainability. Other income-generating programs (e.g., providing poor farmers with one or more animals to raise and/or including them in milk marketing plans or other non-agricultural income-generating activities) could be very appropriate. Women are considered to be among the vulnerable groups and often form small cooperatives, e.g., to market vegetables. Such cooperatives are often successful in marketing and repaying loans and should be important players among FTF marketing projects.

The new direction of FTF—improving the nutrition and sanitary practices in food preparation, particularly for pregnant women and young children—diverges from IEHA’s main focus but is similar to some other American programs, such as Public Law 480 (PL 480) also known as the Food for Peace program. There may be many opportunities to work with clinics or village groups or schools to disseminate information to women on improving nutrition by using a mix of local foods and perhaps to provide them with some nutritious food for recently weaned infants. Feeding programs in schools could also improve nutrition, as well as help to keep children in school and address long-term poverty issues. USAID bilateral missions should arrange brainstorming sessions with various assistance programs targeted at health and clinics to seek ideas on how to best conduct educational campaigns on nutrition. Vitamin A fortification (e.g., added genetically in sweet potatoes or added at the manufacturing stage to vegetable oil) could also be a type of program suitable to improving health and nutrition.

Results Reporting

Measurement of success will be a challenge. USAID and the United States Government (USG) need reporting on the numbers of people helped and trained, the estimates of effect on income, etc., to be consistent. Targeted results, carefully monitored during a project, are essential in any USAID program. But there were complaints that there were too many indicators which were sometimes changed mid-project, creating problems, particularly when partner organizations were collecting and reporting the data. Evaluators propose that global indicators be limited to approximately ten and that an additional, more flexible system be used to evaluate program success, addressing special challenges and successes beyond the collection of a few summary numbers.

Many of the types of programs and methods in IEHA will be appropriate to FTF programs as well. Key elements for the future are:

- Host governments and other donors and projects with activities that are similar or that target the same population to avoid duplication and seek synergies should be consulted, already done in many cases. This effort should be part of the program results evaluations.
- There have been some very strong successes for regional programs in West Africa (cashews, shea butter, fruit juice and many non-agricultural products) and in East Africa (grains and coffee, regional trade work, etc.). USAID missions should seek to cooperate and find synergies across programs in their regions. Creating the mechanisms, incentives and rewards for doing this is a complex area of program management that USAID should pursue.
- The issue of sustainability and local buy-in should be a key factor in program proposals, mid-project reviews and adjustments, and final evaluations.

SUMMARY OF OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There are many opportunities for production and marketing activities by women's cooperatives; these should be one of several important targets in the program.
2. A variety of nutrition programs should be considered. The biggest challenge is how to target pregnant women and mothers of young children most effectively. This may vary by country and different targeted population groups within a country. USAID missions should arrange brainstorming sessions with other providers of health care programs through clinics or other programs to obtain ideas on how best to target and educate women and their families on the need for a varied diet (using locally available foods) and on sanitary practices relative to food. Other programs, such as Vitamin A fortification of industrially prepared food products (e.g. vegetable oil) should be considered as well. PL 480 programs and IPs probably have many good ideas and methodologies to share.
3. The USG is committed to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the CAADP process, whereby national governments set development priorities and donors follow, applying resources where there is mutual agreement of likely effectiveness. There should be interaction with relevant host country officials on USAID programs and discussion of possible synergies and actions needed by both sides.
4. At the proposal stage, there should be a strong effort to learn what other donor programs with similar activities or targeting similar groups are doing (also consistent with CAADP commitments). USAID missions should take the lead in pursuing these activities. Many missions and programs are already doing this, and it should be a requirement for all programs to explore synergies.
5. The West Africa Regional Mission has done a good job of cooperating with businesses in the region to promote exports, though with some exceptions (cashews, shea nuts), it has not concentrated on unprocessed farm products. Regional work in East Africa has also been effective with respect to a number of products. USAID country offices would benefit from considering regional strategies and cooperating with their colleagues in the region, particularly on regional integration efforts and efforts to harmonize policies. The mechanism and incentives for this cross-country coordination needs to be explored by USAID since it may not come naturally.
6. Basic indicators required by all projects should be reduced in number (to about 10) and standardized to avoid changes in reporting requirements mid-project. A supplemental reporting system should permit narratives as well as numbers and evaluation of the challenges and successes experienced in implementing projects.
7. Sustainability of development programs should be a key element of program proposals, mid-project reviews and final evaluations. In many cases, buy-in and resources from national governments and/or local private organizations will be essential to success and sustainability. USAID should be prepared to reduce funding in cases where that planned buy-in is not realized.

I. INTRODUCTION

DESCRIPTION OF IEHA

The Development Challenge: More than one billion people—one sixth of the world's population—suffer from chronic hunger. Each year, more than 3.5 million children die from malnutrition. One in three Africans is undernourished, accounting for one third of all undernourished people in the world. Addressing hunger is also an important part of USG strategic interests in Africa. Hunger and poverty are at the root of various development challenges afflicting the continent, such as famine, civil conflict, and population displacement. The global community has a stake in addressing hunger and malnutrition in Africa.

U.S. Presidential Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA): Although there are many contributing factors to Africa's poverty and hunger, IEHA was premised on the notion that poor performance of the agricultural sector lies at the heart of the problem. About eighty percent of all Africans depend on agriculture in one way or another for their livelihoods, and the sector accounts for seventy percent of full-time employment, one third of total gross domestic product, and forty percent of total export earnings. A stagnant agricultural sector inevitably leads to economic stagnation for most Africans and results in persistent threats of poverty and hunger.¹

The Bush Administration launched IEHA at the August 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. IEHA's approach concentrates on increasing smallholders' agricultural productivity and their access to trade and markets in countries where success in these will not only spur economic growth at the national level, but will have spill-over effects within the immediate region. IEHA operated in countries with committed leadership, targeted smallholder farmers, selected agricultural commodities grown by smallholders, and used alliances and partnerships to increase talent and resource bases. It recognized that a multi-sectoral approach is necessary to achieve hunger and poverty reduction goals.

To this end, IEHA's strategic objective over the period of 2002–2009 was to (1) increase agricultural growth and rural incomes rapidly in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to reduce both poverty and hunger by harnessing the power of new agricultural production and processing technologies; (2) improve the efficiency of agricultural trade and market systems; and (3) build the capacity of communities and producer-based organizations and integrate vulnerable groups and countries into the development process. The strategic objective, increasing incomes, is based on the knowledge that doing so will expand economic growth, reduce poverty, and eliminate hunger.

To achieve its strategic objective, IEHA created an innovative framework that would guide USG investment within the agricultural sector in all focus countries. The framework comprised six pillars or areas of investment deemed necessary to spur productivity and income generation for small farmers:

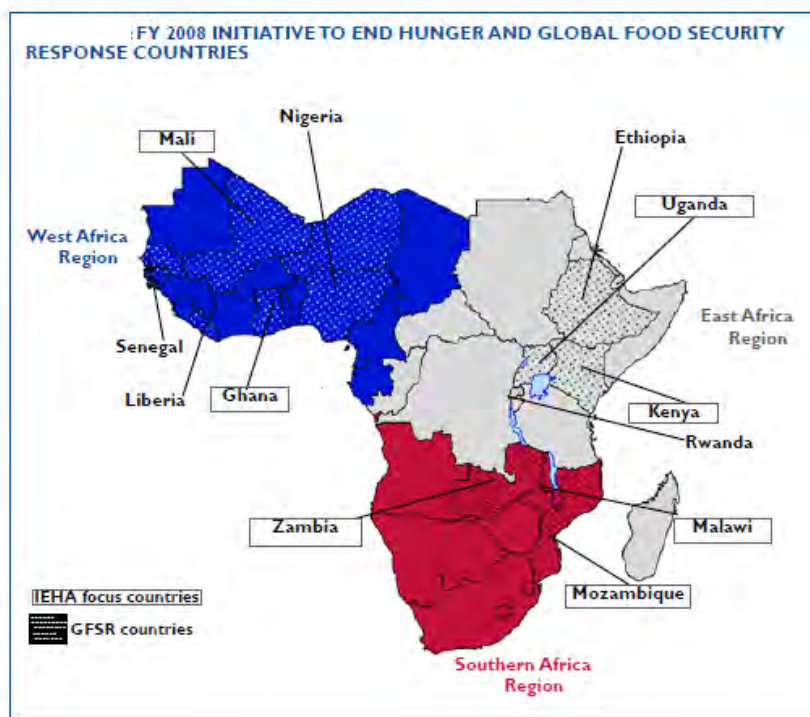
1. Science and technology development and transfer
2. Agricultural trade and market systems
3. Strong community-based and producer organizations
4. Capacity building

¹ Johnson, Michael and Peter Hazell. IFPRI, USAID. "Cutting Hunger in Africa Through Smallholder-led Agricultural Growth: A Technical Paper in Support of USAID's Agricultural Initiative to Cut Hunger in Africa. (AICHA)." 23 August 2002.

5. Transition of vulnerable groups from disaster to development
6. Environmental Management for Sustainable Agricultural and Economic Growth

The ultimate expected impact achieved through these results was increased rural incomes and reduced poverty and hunger in Africa (see IEHA framework Appendix E). Notably, IEHA emphasized strong **country-ownership** from participant countries and favored investments that enabled market forces, the private sector, and civil society—in partnership with governments and donors—to sustainably improve the condition of smallholder farmers. This was consistent with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, established and endorsed by the USG in 2005. The Paris Declaration says that each developing country should set their own development agenda and donor countries should follow those agendas and harmonize programs with other donors to avoid duplication.

FIGURE 1. GFSR AND IEHA COUNTRIES²



IEHA and CAADP: IEHA placed a high premium on **sub-regional collaboration**, such that spillover effects from one focus country would positively influence its neighbors and engender benefits in regional trade and information sharing. IEHA funding also supported **continent-wide initiatives**, such as the African Union/New Partnership for African Development's (NEPAD) CAADP, the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program, which was used as a platform from which IEHA could leverage partnerships with African private and government institutions.

IEHA within the Context of the Global Food Security Response Initiative (GFSR) and FTF: IEHA's framework, focus, and results provided the foundation for several food security initiatives that succeeded it, namely, USAID's GFSR and FTF. GFSR was the USG's response to the 2007–2008 global food crisis, when food prices increased an average of forty-three percent, according to the International Monetary Fund.

² Source: 2008 IEHA Annual Report

**TABLE 1. IEHA, GFSR AND FTF
RECIPIENT COUNTRIES**

COUNTRY/ REGION	IEHA	GFSR	FTF
Ghana	X	X	X
Kenya	X	X	X
Mali	X	X	X
Malawi	X	X	X
Mozambique	X	X	X
Uganda	X	X	X
Zambia	X	X	X
Nigeria	X	X	
Ethiopia		X	X
Liberia		X	X
Rwanda		X	X
Senegal		X	X
Tanzania			X
East Africa	X	X	X
West Africa	X	X	X
Southern Africa	X	X	X

In June 2008, the U.S. Congress provided \$770 million to USAID as part of GFSR for international disaster and development assistance to address the needs of food-insecure populations worldwide.³ GFSR ran parallel to IEHA as a mechanism to inject immediate investment into agricultural sectors worldwide. It complemented, reinforced and deepened the strategic objective of IEHA in that it retained an emphasis on agricultural productivity; emphasized commercial markets and private-public partnerships; took a regional perspective on food security challenges; and targeted support to those countries that make tangible investments and policy changes to support the Africa Union/NEPAD/CAADP agenda. Figure 1, on the previous page, summarizes the overlap between countries receiving GFSR and IEHA funding.

The FTF Initiative is the next wave of USG funding for agriculture and builds heavily on the lessons learned from IEHA. Like IEHA, FTF will prioritize and concentrate resources on core focus countries where achievements in agriculture can best be realized. It will support the implementation of country-owned plans, called Country Investment Plans, similar to the IEHA Action Plans, through investments that draw on research and innovation and private sector-led growth, and have been demonstrated to be key drivers of agricultural-led growth and improved nutrition.⁴ Nearly all countries receiving IEHA funding will continue to receive FTF funds and the overall number of countries expands in FTF.⁵

Given the overlap in focus countries, the importance of understanding the successes and challenges of the past ten years is all the more important. The body of this evaluation report will identify lessons learned and recommendations that can be transferred from IEHA to FTF.

IMPLEMENTATION OF IEHA

IEHA focused its agricultural investments on specific areas that had a likely chance of achieving success. Focus areas were defined in three realms:

- **Focus countries** display promising conditions and opportunities for achieving agricultural growth.
- **Focus sub-regional strategies and programs** are those that are likeliest to create the conditions for spillover of innovations and spread of benefits across countries.

3 Of the total, \$590 million represented funding for emergency humanitarian programming through USAID/OFDA and USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP), with remaining funding designated for development assistance through USAID's Bureau of Sub-Saharan Africa (USAID/AFR) and Bureau of Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade (USAID/EGAT).

4 FTF Guide. <http://www.feedthefuture.gov/ftf_guide.pdf>.

5 FTF Guide. <http://www.feedthefuture.gov/ftf_guide.pdf>.

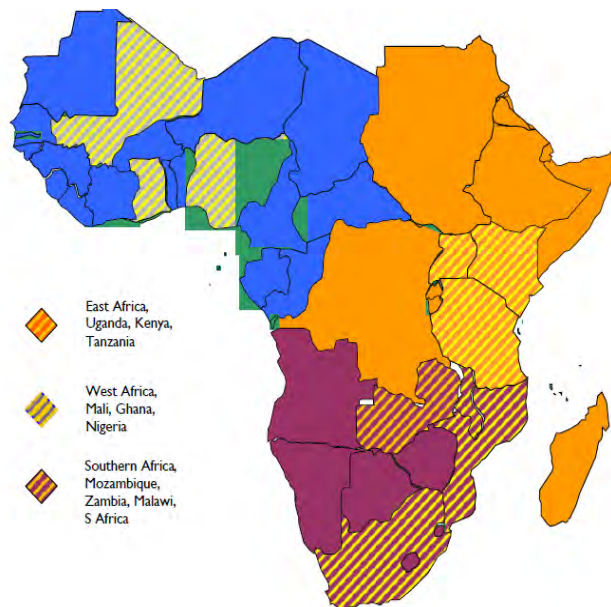
- **Focus goods and services** offer the greatest potential for raising rural incomes through agricultural production and off-farm enterprise development.

Weighted criteria were designed to select focus countries. Country groupings were identified initially, and then the countries within that sub-region were ranked according to the following criteria and weighting:⁶

- Agricultural and economic indicators (going in the right direction)—10%
- Enabling environment—25%
- Regional importance—45%
- Sustainable agricultural potential—10%
- USAID capacity (mission in country, ability to effectively manage additional resources and obtain results)—10%

Top-ranked countries were Tier 1 IEHA countries, identified on the map below (Figure 2). Tier 3 countries are those with high levels of vulnerability and high numbers of rural population *vis à vis* their sub-region. In these countries, it was envisioned that IEHA would “coordinate its efforts with ongoing humanitarian and food assistance programs primarily through regional programs to facilitate transfer of technology systems in food staples.”⁷ Tier 2 countries are countries that have a USAID mission but do not meet the criteria for either Tier 1 or Tier 3.

FIGURE 2. IEHA FOCUS COUNTRIES BETWEEN 2003 AND 2010



IEHA began implementation in 2003 with “Quick Start” investments in three countries and three regional missions: **Uganda** and the Regional Economic Development Services Office (REDSO) in East Africa; **Mozambique** and the **Regional Center for Southern Africa (RCSA)**; and **Mali** and the **West Africa Regional Mission** in Ghana. These countries were deemed “representative of the key economic and agricultural characteristics of their regions” with “the greatest potential for rapidly influencing regional agricultural productivity and economic growth through trade and technology diffusion.”⁸ By 2004, a second round

of countries was added, to include **Kenya, Ghana** and **Zambia**. As part of aligning with CAADP, IEHA extended its program to famine-prone countries—**Malawi** and **Niger**—in FY 2006. **Nigeria** was not a focus country, but did receive some IEHA funds under the Science and Technology pillar for biotechnology. A total of 10 country and regional USAID missions developed IEHA action plans for the period 2003 to 2010.

⁶ IEHA Mid-term Evaluation, Ltd. Strategies

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ “The U.S. Agricultural Initiative to End Hunger in Africa.” 2003

Once a focus country/regional mission was selected, the Operating Unit (OU) drafted an “IEHA Action Plan,” which identified which bilateral or regional interventions would be supported by IEHA funds. Most missions did not design brand new programs for IEHA, but rather used IEHA to subsidize ongoing activities that aligned with IEHA’s strategic framework. USAID employed local and international IPs to implement these activities. Appendix E summarizes the IPs that received IEHA funding.

IEHA funding levels: Between 2004 and 2010, more than \$450 million was obligated by IEHA.⁹ Nearly fifty percent of this funding had been distributed amongst three OUs: East Africa, West Africa, and Ghana. Nearly one-third of the money (\$63.4 million) obligated through these three was obligated in 2010, indicating a rapid increase in funding obligations as the program approached its end. In fact, amongst all ten¹⁰ IEHA OUs, forty percent of total funding obligated throughout the life of the activity was obligated in 2010.

TABLE 2. OBLIGATED IEHA FUNDING, BY OPERATING UNIT, 2004–2010

IEHA OPERATING UNIT	AMOUNT OBLIGATED (\$U.S. MILLIONS)	% OF TOTAL IEHA FUNDS
East Africa Regional	\$69.2	15%
Kenya	\$36.1	8%
Uganda	\$40.4	9%
West Africa Regional	\$64.9	14%
Ghana	\$73.6	16%
Mali	\$24.2	5%
Southern Africa Regional	\$33.2	7%
Malawi	\$24.2	5%
Mozambique	\$46.7	10%
Zambia	\$38.2	8%

Of the \$450 million, the largest amount—\$369 million—had been obligated to the Agricultural Sector Productivity element. Following the trend above, East Africa Regional, West Africa Regional and Ghana received the majority of this funding (fifteen, fourteen, and thirty-one percent, respectively) and Uganda (at zero percent) the least (see Appendix E for detailed budget information by OU). Within the Agricultural Enabling Environment element, East Africa received forty-two percent of all funding in Agricultural Market Standards and Regulations, while Ghana accounted for fifty-two percent of all Agricultural Resource Policy funding and forty-nine percent of all Food Policy funding.

⁹ According to data collected from USAID OUs via the Global Food Security Response Initiative (GFSR) Monitoring and Evaluation System on all OUs participating in IEHA

¹⁰ East Africa, Kenya, Uganda, West Africa, Ghana, Mali, Southern Africa, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia.

TABLE 3. TOTAL LIFE OF ACTIVITY OBLIGATED UNDER IEHA, YEARS 2004–2010 (IN MILLIONS USD)¹¹

IEHA Operating Unit	ALL IEHA OUs	S. Africa	Malawi	Mozambique	Zambia	W. Africa	Ghana	Mali	E. Africa	Kenya	Uganda
Total Amount (All Categories) millions	450.5	33.2	24.2	46.8	38.2	65	73.6	24	69	36.1	40.4
4.5.1 Agricultural Enabling Environment	81.4	8.7	2	2.75	2.9	13.3	25.5	4.3	15.7	6.2	0
4.5.1.1 Agricultural Resource Policy	33.6	4.3	0	2.75	1.5	2.4	17.3	1.6	0	3.5	0
4.5.1.2 Food Policy	8.2	0.6	0	0	0.6	1.4	4	0.6	0	1	0
4.5.1.3 Agricultural Market Standards & Regulations	24.9	3.8	0	0	0.36	7	0.6	1.7	10.3	1.1	0
4.5.1.4 Public Investment Policy	12.0	0	2	0	0.38	2.5	0.5	0.6	5.4	0.6	0
4.5.2 Agricultural Sector Productivity	369.4	24.5	22.2	44	35.3	51.7	48	19.8	53.5	30	40.4
4.5.2.1 Research & Technology Dissemination	83.8	14.3	0	17.2	7.3	6.5	5.8	9.4	7.2	8.6	7.5
4.5.2.2 Land & Water Management	17.9	0.95	3.2	0	0.2	1	3.7	1.6	1.6	1.9	3.7
4.5.2.3 Rural & Agricultural Finance	13.8	0	4.4	0	1.8	3.5	1.2	0.7	0	0.2	2
4.5.2.4 Agribusiness & Producer Organizations	96.6	3.9	5.4	12.3	4.6	21	9.7	4.1	17.6	11.2	6.8
4.5.2.5 Markets & Trade Capacity	100.3	5	4.3	14.5	4.6	18	11	2.7	26.6	7.6	6
4.5.2.6 Emerging Agricultural Threats	1.05	0	0	0	0.1	0.7	0	0.2	0.05	0	0
4.5.2.7 Agricultural Safety Nets & Livelihood Services	58.25	3.5	4.9	0	16.7	0.8	16	1.1	0.45	0.5	14.3

ORGANIZATION OF REPORT

This evaluation report is organized into two distinct sections. The first section looks back at the previous ten years of IEHA in order to identify the strengths and challenges of the overall IEHA strategy, framework and implementation. The second explores the evaluation team's findings on IEHA through the lens of the FTF Intermediate Results Framework, so that readers can easily identify which lessons and conclusions from the IEHA experiences could be directly applied to which FTF intermediate results. Of the eight FTF Intermediate Results (IRs), this report elaborates on the following three, which most closely align with IEHA's IRs and core objectives: (1) Improved Agricultural Productivity (FTF IR 1); (2) Expanding Markets and Trade (FTF IR 2); and (3) Resilience of Vulnerable Households and Communities (FTF IR 5). Appendix D provides a table of all the conclusions and recommendations found in this report.

¹¹ Data taken from IEHA Abt Database

II. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Social Impact (SI) and Management Systems International (MSI) jointly conducted the final evaluation of IEHA, covering the period from 2003 to 2010. Unlike a standard evaluation, this one was rapid—five weeks in January and February 2011—and emphasized the extraction of lessons learned for the overall IEHA program, rather than an in-depth review of specific projects or mission portfolios. To some extent, this complements the mid-term evaluation’s emphasis on budget allocations and staff capacity.

The evaluation team was composed of one team leader, Dr. Patricia Bonnard, and five team members. Three members were African nationals, two of whom are based in Africa. Each team member specialized in at least one area relevant to the IEHA focus areas, including Agricultural Development (Patricia Bonnard and Joseph Kariuki), Agricultural Policy (Andrew Lambert), Markets and Trade (Emily Miller), Agricultural Research (Oumar N’Diaye), and Food Aid (Ange Tingbo).

The evaluation employed a series of methods. The team conducted an extensive review of program documents, such as IEHA and FTF mission frameworks, IEHA Action Plans, Results Reports, mid-term and final evaluations reports, and special studies as well as macro statistics and vulnerability maps (see Appendix C for reference list). Performance data housed in the IEHA results reporting system were analyzed and summarized. A number of tables of performance data are included in the report and appendices. Interviews were conducted with IPs, government and other local stakeholders, and USAID staff in Washington, D.C. and at bilateral and regional missions. The team travelled to Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and South Africa, working in teams and individually for approximately four weeks from the second week of January through the third week of February. In addition, two Internet surveys were conducted with mission staff and IPs. Surveys, lists of key informants and other information related to the methods are included in the appendices of the report (Appendix J).

MODIFICATIONS AND VALIDITY CONCERNS

Based on the request for task order proposal (RFTOP) and discussions with USAID staff in Washington and of the USAID missions involved in the evaluation, the work was slightly refocused. Given the additive and complementary nature of the funding, it would be extremely difficult to assign specific attributions of impacts and intermediate results to IEHA alone. Furthermore, IEHA, FTF and the missions expressed particular interest in extracting lessons learned and recommendations for future strategies, program designs and work practices. So, to the extent possible, observations, conclusions and recommendations are based on evidence, and the team looked into work processes in addition to program design and performance.

The short timeframe and considerable scope of the evaluation (seven countries and three regional programs and all of USAID’s agriculture-related programs) did not allow for a truly adequate review of work processes and implementation issues. The team gave priority to extracting lessons learned and identifying promising interventions: those that were successful and could be considered for scaling up and replication in other areas. The audience for this evaluation includes USAID/Washington, USAID missions who have received IEHA funding in the past, and those currently drafting their FTF strategies.

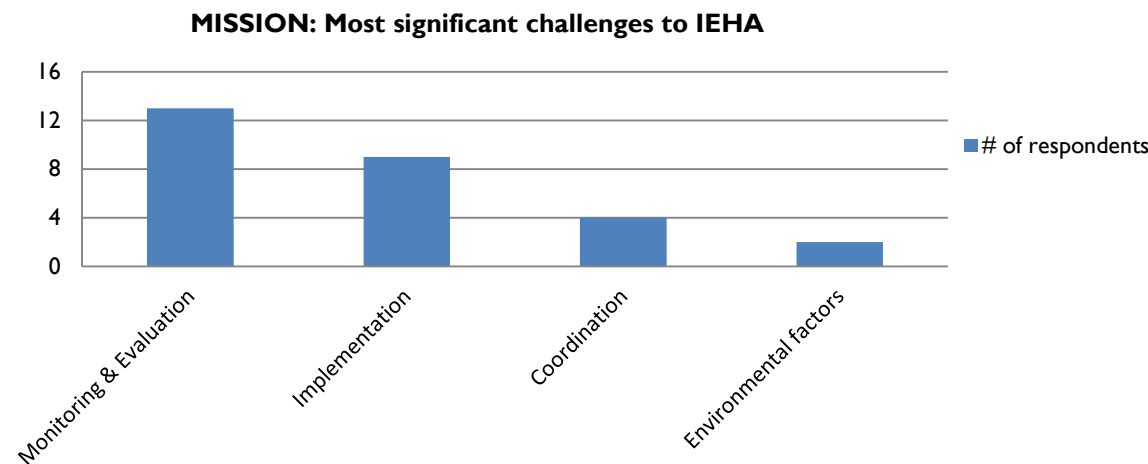
III. IEHA FRAMEWORK DESIGN AND STRATEGY

IEHA AND RELATED PROGRAMS DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Findings

IEHA Process: In early 2011, the evaluation team administered two Internet-based surveys, one to the mission staff involved with IEHA and the second to IEHA IPs. In total, twenty-nine IPs and eighteen mission staff responded to the survey (see Appendix J for survey questionnaires). Mission key informants and slightly more than half of the mission staff who answered the survey agreed that the process of implementing IEHA was participatory and involved adequate discussion. The other half of respondents were neutral, not in disagreement, toward the statement that the process was participatory. However, when asked about the greatest challenges in implementing IEHA, the second most common response was related to communication from Washington, D.C. and implementing the process given the timeframe, information and additional burdens on staff. The biggest challenge was results reporting (see Figure 3 below) although the Results Reporting section of this report goes into more detail and reveals that the system was greatly improved over time.¹² The question of the complexity of reporting (with data often collected by grantees or other IPs) remains as well as the dual purpose of the results—general enough to be summarized with Africa-wide program results versus the need to access whether a program was successful and sustainable.

FIGURE 3. RESPONSES FROM MISSION ON SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING IEHA¹³



12 M&E includes the lack of clarity regarding some indicators, difficult start-up and transition, frequent modifications, redundancy in reporting and difficulty in getting partners to accurately report on a system that changed nearly every year and regional reporting.

Implementation includes the short time frame available to reconfigure programs and frameworks; frequently, inconsistent and unclear orientation on how IEHA related to current programs in terms of content and process; change of funding streams that lead to the termination of some projects midstream; excessive burden on overloaded staff; difficulties in implementing the initiative on a regional level and questionable assumptions regarding commodity choice and target groups.

Coordination includes the diversity of partners and difficulties with integration of emergency partners into a coherent agenda.

Environmental Factors includes climate change as well as frequent droughts and floods.

13 Insufficient time and resources: especially in obtaining sustainable results in terms of farmer adoption, development of business acumen as well as other impacts, geographic coverage and large number of targeted beneficiaries.

Partner contributions: insufficient contributions from and capacity and focus of partners, agricultural research and other local institutions.

Poor enabling environment: including government interference and a slow and protracted process of policy reform.

There does continue to be some confusion or difference in interpretation regarding what IEHA encompasses. Most USAID staff included all agriculture projects and activities under IEHA, whether they directly received IEHA resources or not. However, some mission staff and virtually all of the IPs associated IEHA programming with specific resources. For example, IEHA Washington, DC staff considered Title II programs to be part of IEHA and required them to use the IEHA results reporting system, but the IPs and some mission staff saw these programs as separate. Local stakeholders were generally unfamiliar with IEHA, but they did associate IEHA with USAID. Although most stakeholders were aware they were being supported by USAID funding, there was little information on IEHA reaching most of the stakeholders, and IEHA remained relatively unknown. This not only brings up issues of branding, but also raises the question of whether partners were aware of the key objectives of the initiative. The political announcement of the \$200 million per year program level may have influenced the thinking of including the food aid programs in it.

In the experience of survey responders, the CAADP process was less participatory. CADDP was in the early stages of finalizing country compacts, priorities and investment plans, and while economic studies of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS) were involved in the process, most of the USAID program implementers in the field were not. There were several key informants (both USAID and other donor staff) who noted that the follow-on CAADP process remained largely at the headquarter level among donors, with limited engagement from the field. Lack of engagement has persisted with the advent of FTF. In speaking with the mission staff, the evaluation team found that most were unaware of the FTF website, the Guide, the framework or proposed indicators. Evaluators note that USAID field staff coordinating their activities with government ministries would have been discussing many of the same focus areas that were being discussed in government and with the public, e.g., CAADP reviewed Ghana's long-term agricultural plan, the Food and Agricultural Sector Development Policy (FASDEP) (Appendix K) and later Ghana signed a CAADP Compact and FASDEP was aligned with CAADP pillars, but FASDEP was not always identified as being a CAADP exercise. Nevertheless, the reported lack of knowledge about the FTF process is surprising given the fact that missions were required to construct FTF implementation plans and are now in the process of finalizing FTF strategies. Clearly, there is an opportunity to re-evaluate the implementation strategies and targets for success for programs to stress complementarity with other programs. Probably in many cases, CAADP centralized planning has not yet filtered throughout the system in host country governments and key interlocutors of USAID programs. Disaggregated programs at the local level may not easily or quickly buy into new national priorities, but many of the priorities are not new. Resource allocations may have to challenge entrenched interests. For instance, in Ghana, the national priority of shifting resources and action from the center to the regional offices (which have cross-ministerial staff) is applied more in theory than in practice (source: 2009 report for USAID by Wiedemann Associates, "A Modernized Agricultural Support Proposal for Ghana"). The CAADP country investment plans and priorities will influence programs and implementation procedures, but it will take time to involve all the key players in new priorities.

In the interest of effectiveness and sustainability, the full mix of programs being introduced by USAID, other U.S. donors, foreign bilateral donors and the mesh with host government programs should be considered during the planning stage of new programs. After many decades of agricultural development programs, it has become widely accepted (in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and elsewhere) that without local buy-in many agricultural development programs are neither effective nor sustainable. While private sector investment and action, including action of private farmers, is the key to development, government actions are also crucial—particularly with respect to programs on infrastructure, the regulation of health and safety, and the effects on the agribusiness-enabling environment; thus, the government is crucial to the success and sustainability of many of the individual programs that seek to improve marketing of agricultural products.

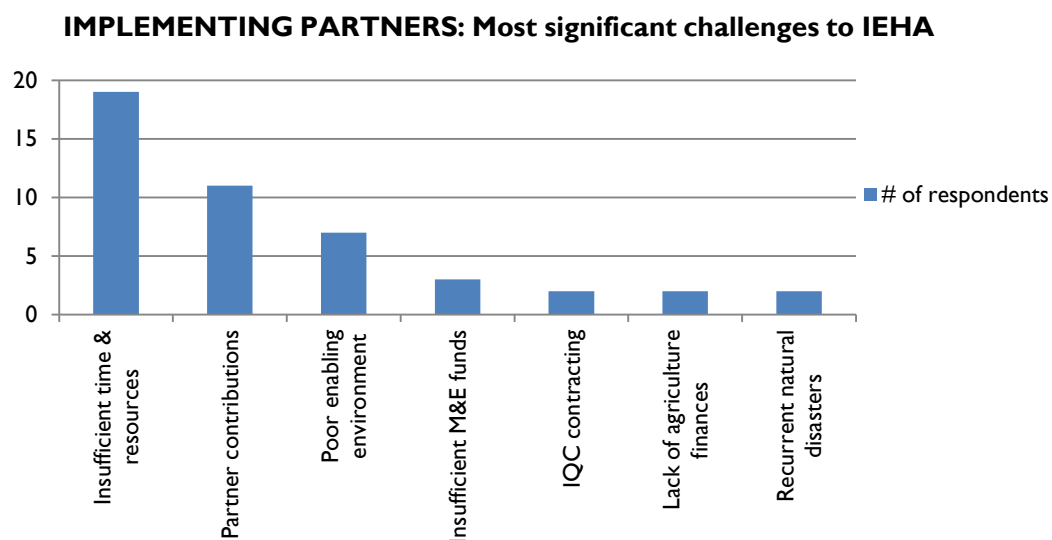
CAADP: In 2003, African heads of state launched the CAADP process, a process designed to help national governments work with donors to give national leadership and direction to agricultural programs. These countries pledged to apply ten percent of their budgets to agriculture (in many cases, doubling the previous allocations) and to provide a detailed investment plan to accomplish the goals. Details of the CAADP program, a list of countries that have developed compacts, and the broad outlines of the Ghanaian investment priorities are provided in Appendix K. IEHA, pledging \$200 million a year in USAID resources gave new direction to USAID programs and provided resources to support the CAADP concept of national buy-in and leadership in development priorities and programs.

The FTF initiative, resulting from the G8 summit at L'Aquila, Italy in July 2009, provided some new direction to programs, pledged \$3.5 billion over three years for U.S. agricultural and food security programs and modified the results framework of the IEHA program (see results frameworks of IEHA and FTF in Appendices E and H, respectively). The main changes in the FTF framework were:

- Reducing the emphasis on policy work (making it subordinate to production and marketing, i.e., perhaps with a shorter-term results horizon) ;
- Adding a focus to help all of the poor farmers (not just the more prosperous smallholders already selling a surplus from their farms and targeted under IEHA) ; and
- Adding a major focus to improve nutrition, particularly for women and children.

USAID projects are required to have clear and measurable plans for results within the time frame of the project (usually three to five years), so changes in the results framework focus can be very important. IPs and local stakeholders queried were familiar with the name “Feed the Future,” and many had read the “Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative” document, but most did not know what the FTF initiative specifically entailed or what the evolution and progress has been to date. Furthermore, there was much interest and anticipation, and some concern, regarding potential new requirements and adjustments to program design and results monitoring. One stakeholder who had been an important actor in the Uganda CAADP process felt that the FTF initiative was less than transparent because, despite repeated requests, he could not get current information on FTF initiatives. Draft documents were shared among some U.S.-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs), while NEPAD representatives and mission staff in Southern Africa were reportedly generally uninformed of the progress, process and website. It may be difficult for every local implementer targeting a specific group with a limited program to become heavily involved in national planning exercises, but at some level there needs to be coordination that will help avoid duplication, promote complementarity among U.S. programs, other donors and host governments as well as regional efforts, and promote the effectiveness and sustainability of the whole mix of national and donor programs.

FIGURE 4. RESPONSES OF IPS ON MOST SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES TO IEHA



IPs were asked to report the four most significant challenges of IEHA. The most common response was insufficient time and resources to obtain results (see Figure 4). When asked if the time frame (life of activity) was sufficiently long to observe significant improvements in rural incomes and hunger reduction, 58 percent replied “no.” In contrast, fifty-six percent felt the scope of the activity was sufficient, and thirty-five percent felt the scale was sufficiently large.

IEHA Successes

As noted in the 2008 annual IEHA report, the program had a tremendous impact.

Reaching more than 2.6 million households, 704,287 of which were vulnerable households, IEHA assistance improved food security in 2008 as it worked toward transforming Africa’s agricultural sector. In 2008, attendance at IEHA training totaled 2.5 million—1.77 million male and 0.74 million female. The work of IEHA helped 1.3 million farmers bring 546,487 hectares of land under new technology in 2008. More than \$40 million in credit was issued. Moreover, since 2005, IEHA has facilitated intraregional trade of more than \$225 million every year.

The Internet survey asked respondents to list the four most successful elements of the IEHA program. The results of the surveys are included below in Figures 5 and 6. Opinions were clustered. The monitoring and evaluation approach stands out as the most commonly cited success among mission respondents, followed by the expansion of market and trade. In contrast, more IPs stated that markets and trade, followed by enhancement of agricultural productivity, were successful. They did not mention results reporting at all.

The following are the key areas of success in the IEHA program, as indicated by mission and IP responders:

FIGURE 5. MISSION RESPONSES TO SUCCESS OF IEHA PROGRAM

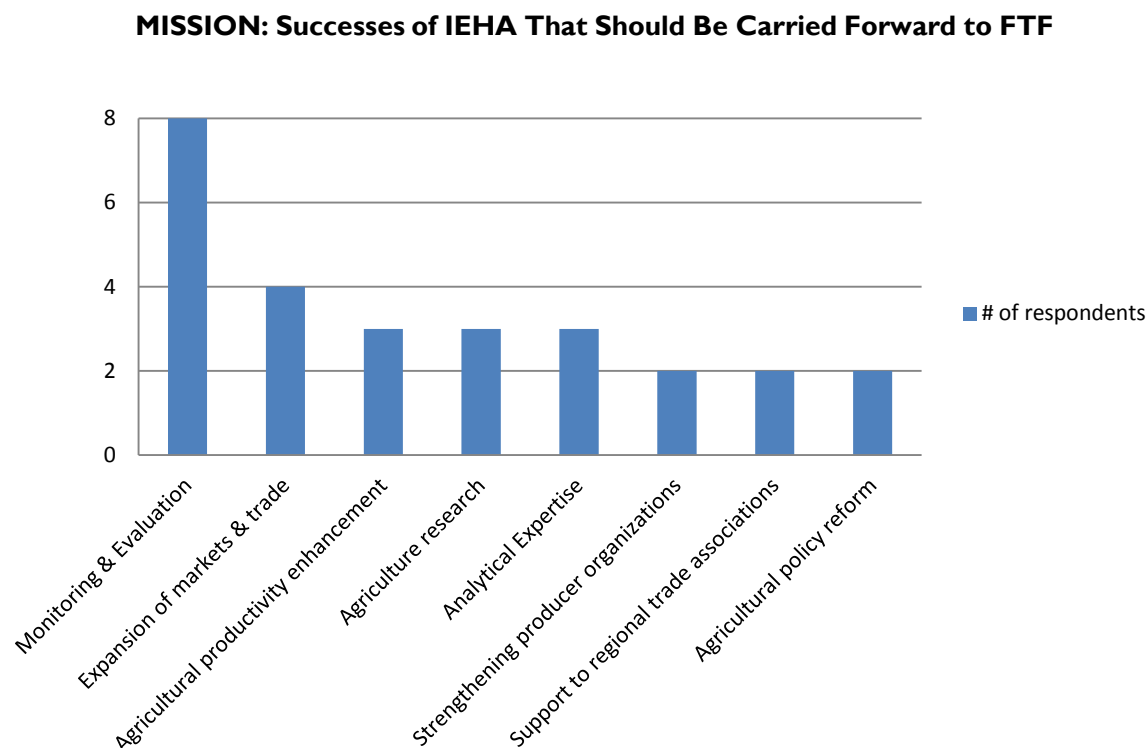
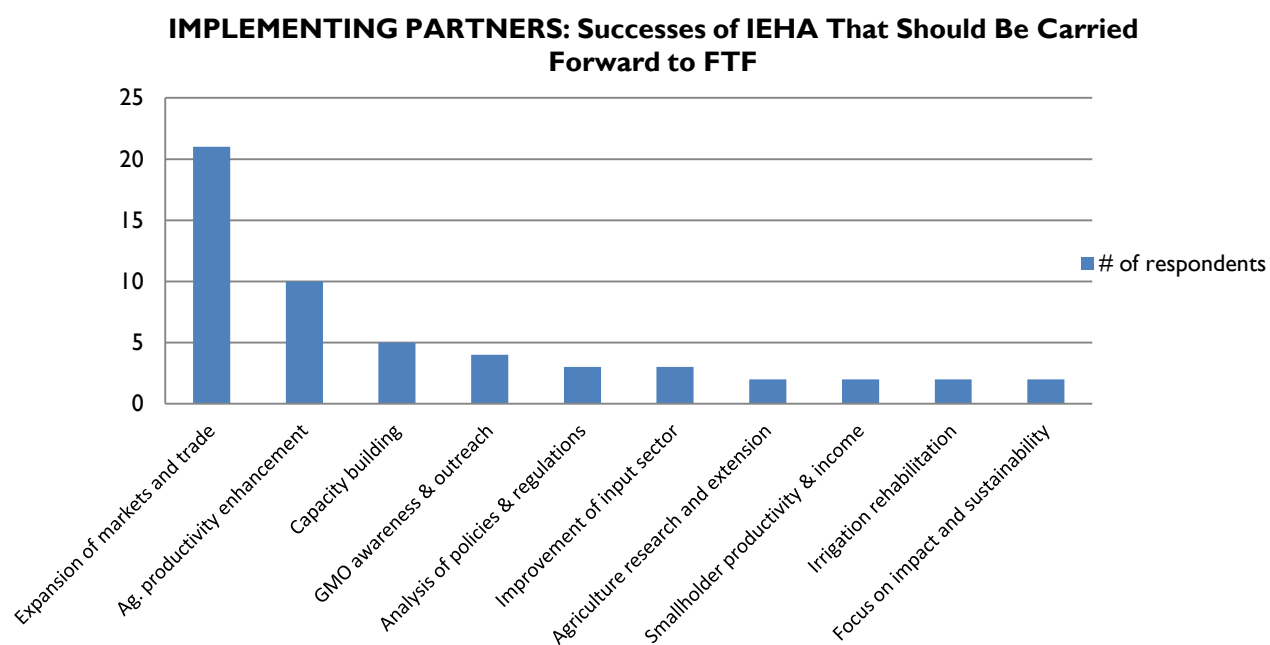


FIGURE 6. IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS RESPONSES TO SUCCESS OF IEHA PROGRAM



Conclusions on IEHA Process

- The IEHA process was participatory. However, more input from the field earlier on and throughout the process, clearer and more consistent communication from headquarters, and more time for implementation were required.
- Field personnel queried felt that the CAADP process was less participatory and remained largely at the headquarters level among donors, with limited engagement from the field.
- To the extent that CADDP represents realistic priorities for funding, as opposed to a basket of general wish lists without resources or real commitments, it will be necessary to interact with the process and with other donors seeking to implement similar programs affecting population segments or value chains targeted by USAID-supported programs.
- New initiatives under FTF will be better received and more effectively implemented if they take heed of the FTF concept and framework early on, finalize the FTF results framework with stakeholder input and review, develop mission FTF strategies, and then design mission results frameworks.

ACHIEVEMENT WITHIN IEHA FOCUS AREAS

Findings

IEHA has made notable contributions to African agriculture and, in particular, benefited the rural poor. In addition to enhancing productivity and revenues for smallholders, activities have worked to promote markets, establish regional staples food market development programs in East Africa, provided analytical support for investigating agricultural and food security issues and promoting policy reform, and established seed and fertilizer alliances across the continent. The key to success is the extent to which programs are effective (at increasing incomes of smallholders) and sustainable after the program ends. Sustainability and effectiveness depend in large part on buy-in by cooperating groups.

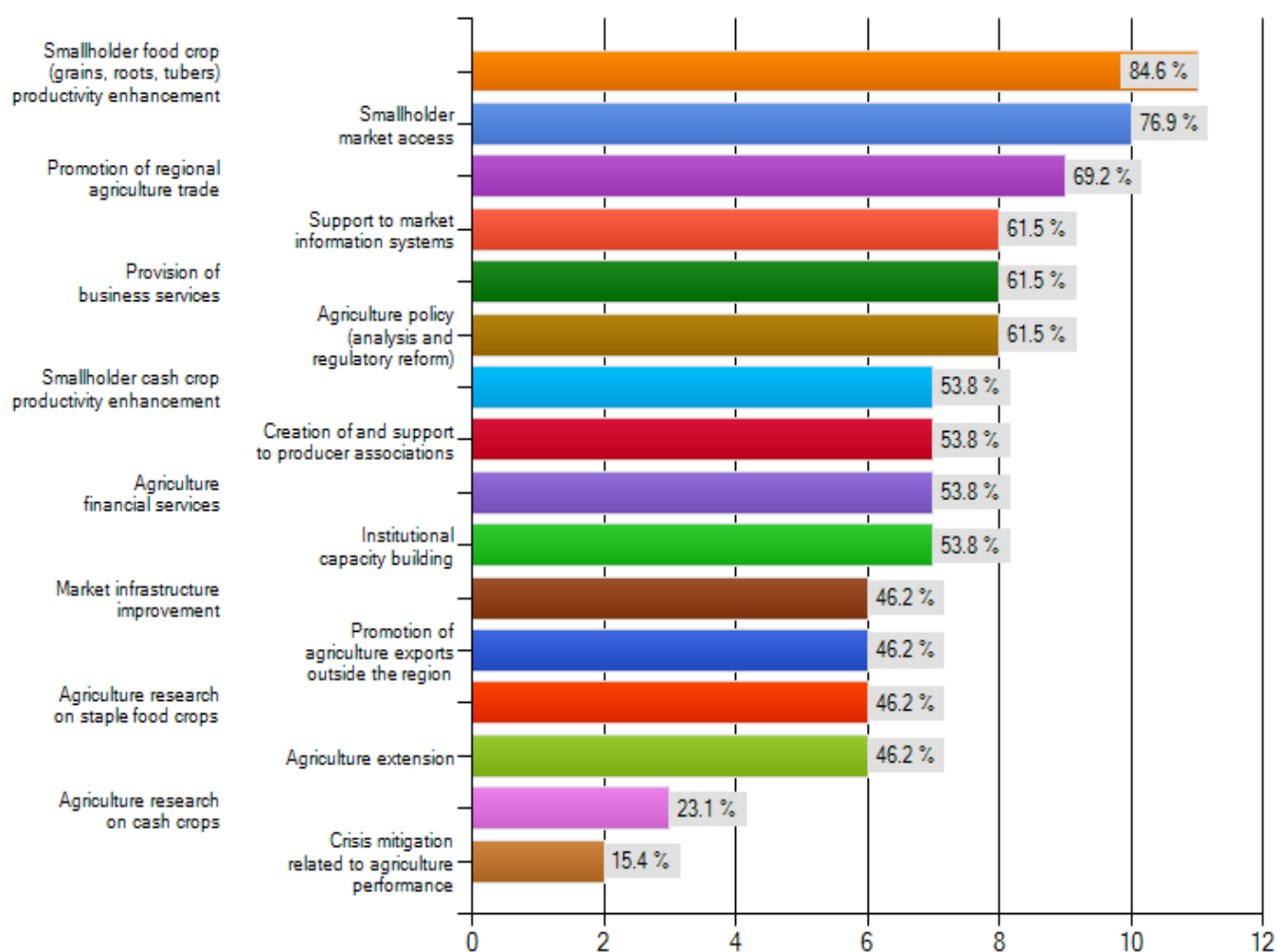
FTF will have to determine the extent to which it wants to target population groups in desperate straits (such as Somali refugees in Kenyan camps) with feeding, health and education, and promoting a few income-generating activities for very poor people (a bred heifer or a couple of goats, or training of some sort) versus working on value chains for particular products that richer smallholders (who produce a surplus beyond self-sufficiency) can access, taking the risk of buying inputs and producing for a cash market instead of for basic food needs.

The refugees (e.g., in Northern Uganda, Kenya and other countries next to conflict zones) may need local quality seeds if/when they go back to their farms. Later, when populations are more established, a much more complex program may be needed to ensure they get high-performing seeds that may require fertilizer, pesticides, extensive advice and possibly irrigation. As programs move from emergency assistance to development programs, the first consideration in a value chain should be evaluation of potential markets. Once a viable market is identified, programs can work on producing crops with high yields, low cost and good post-harvest handling to reach those markets, probably through farmers' organizations (requiring training to help with credit and with grouping farmers products for marketing), sometimes accessing markets directly (women's groups taking vegetables to the local market) or more commonly interacting with more sophisticated marketing organizations further up the value chain, such as brokers, processors and exporters.

Midway through the IEHA program, as world food and fertilizer prices skyrocketed in 2007–2008, agriculture programs within the focus countries were reconfigured to include a stronger orientation to smallholders, as evidenced by the results of the evaluation Internet survey. Mission respondents noted that their portfolios included programs on smallholder food crop productivity enhancement (eighty-six percent), smallholder cash crop productivity enhancement (fifty-four percent) and smallholder access to markets (eighty percent). Consistent with IEHA's newly increased focus on staple food trade, regional trade programs (sixty-nine percent) were more common than programs promoting trade outside the region (forty-six percent). More than half of missions had complementary programs addressing agriculture policy, agriculture financial services and business services—the latter not necessarily restricted to agricultural enterprises. Forty-six percent of the missions had agricultural research programs covering food or cash crops. However, only fifteen percent had programs that addressed crisis mitigation related to agriculture performance: programs that address risk and vulnerability to food insecurity and hunger (see Figure 7 below for a summary of mission responses).

FIGURE 7. SUMMARY OF MISSION RESPONSES

Type of Program IEHA Supports, as reported by Missions



There were some changes in thematic areas when respondents were asked about USAID's comparative advantage. Two thirds of respondents said that USAID had a comparative advantage regarding smallholder market access and food crop productivity. In contrast, the percentage for cash crops (sixty percent) was higher. Only eight percent of mission respondents said that USAID had a comparative advantage in promotion of agriculture exports outside the region. Less than seventeen percent answered business services, agriculture research on cash crops and extension.

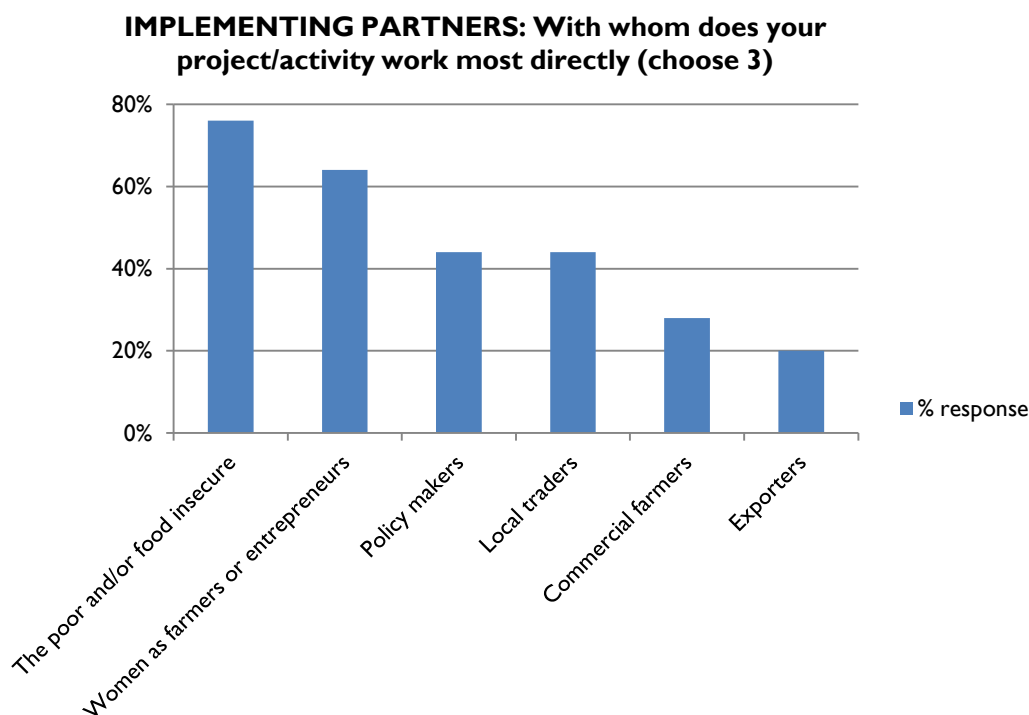
IPs had a similar perspective, but with some notable differences. Seventy percent of respondents said USAID has a comparative advantage in smallholder market access, twenty percent said promoting exports outside the region, and only five percent answered agricultural research on cash crops.

We note that although USAID and NGOs may not have good contacts and abilities in marketing African farm products in Europe, some USAID programs interacted effectively with exporters of pineapples, coffee or other products who had or could develop good export contacts. USAID can and does improve value chains that create the quality, quantity and timely delivery and certifications that may be essential to exports by the private sector companies that do have those marketing contacts and long-term relationships and also have sustainability beyond the length of the project. Consistent with IEHA and FTF program objectives, USAID can facilitate out growers—small farmers supplying a capable private marketing organization such as a brewery in Uganda or a milk cooperative supplying a commercial dairy (various countries) or an exporter. The value-chain concept (farm-to-fork evaluation with all related players and regulators on inputs, credit, post-harvest handling, processing and marketing) generates an attractive graphic for reports, but more fundamentally, looking at the final market and all the relevant players, including competitors, should be used on planning and evaluation for any marketing program, whether destined for local, regional or export markets.

Overall, missions (ninety-nine percent) and IPs (ninety-six percent) felt that the IEHA priorities were consistent with local government objectives and priorities. Over ninety percent of mission respondents said that the IEHA process assisted Washington and the missions to effectively set their priorities in a manner consistent with CAADP. Fewer respondents, but still the majority, felt that IEHA was making a contribution to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): approximately seventy percent for each group. However, fifty percent of the implementing respondents said that IEHA was making a greater contribution to economic growth than poverty alleviation.

When IPs were asked with whom they work most directly, the majority responded that they worked most directly with the poor and/or food insecure (seventy-six percent) and women as farmers or entrepreneurs (64 percent). A surprising forty-four percent said they worked most closely with humanitarian responders despite the low percentage of respondents who said the mission had programs related to crisis prevention or mitigation (see Figure 8 for the full spectrum of responses).

FIGURE 8. WHO IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS WORK WITH MOST DIRECTLY¹⁴



From the responses in Figure 8, it is possible to see the shift from private sector development and competitiveness as focus areas of mission strategies. The relatively low percentage of IPs working with commercial farmers is consistent with the shift away from implementation through lead farmers and increased engagement of farmer groups and farmer field schools. If projects seek to help poor people, it may not be ideal to work with large commercial farms that buy up land and reduce labor of small farmers. But large farms or processing/packaging facilities without grower systems for smallholders can make a huge difference. In many value chains, large players will probably be crucial in establishing the quality control and marketing systems necessary for export programs. As an example, exports of fruits or vegetables sometimes face unfair rejection or downgrading by European regulatory authorities or by European customers. Companies with good contacts in the market can ensure that products arrive properly, and they can counter unfair treatment on arrival. They also can obtain preference on shipping space and fair and effective treatment on government certifications. (Source: Ghanaian and Senegalese exporters and shipping company contacts, in 2008 Pomeroy study on transport and other sanitary and phytosanitary issues for African exports, prepared for USDA [United States Department of Agriculture]).

¹⁴ Monitoring and evaluation: including consistent indicators, impact measurement and gender disaggregation.
Expansion of markets and trade: especially smallholder access and value-chain approach.
Agriculture productivity enhancement: especially maize, dairy, and horticulture noted.
Analytical expertise: especially linkages to centers of expertise, greater analytical expertise and planning based on analysis and evidence.
Support to regional trade associations: especially EAGC and ASARECA.

Farmer groups clearly are expected to play an increased role in the national dialogue, and they are crucial for organizing farmers into groups for credit, input and marketing activities. Large cooperatives must be price competitive with individual traders, who can send a cyclist to buy directly from farmers and a truck afterwards to pick up the products. There have been problems of mismanagement and fraud in many cooperatives as well as many problems with credit programs, unpaid loans, etc.—e.g., the 2007 problem of unpaid loans on seed potatoes in Mali—(source: 2007 Microfinance study by Jansen, et al). In Mali and other countries, some small women’s cooperatives for marketing vegetables have been particularly effective and often reliable at paying back credits. However, big government-run marketing organizations (common throughout Africa prior to the 1990s) do not have a very good record in terms of agricultural marketing. For instance, Malian rice production increased by a multiple of previous levels in the twenty years after the centralized Office du Niger abandoned control of input supplies and marketing of rice and concentrated on maintaining the irrigation system, leaving marketing to the farmers and their organizations (with help from donors and microfinance institutions). Simple processing machinery at the village level (e.g., rice decorticating machines from India and China) were often more cost effective than previous large rice mills, still in existence in Mali but little used. For storage and processing, considerations should include the high cost of micro-finance—often the only credit available to farmers and their organizations but with interest costs often two to three times the level paid by large commercial operations, their competitors.¹⁵ FTF programs can help boost production and improve marketing, and may very well improve concentration on national and regional markets—where there is much unrealized potential for trade.

Measurement of results will be difficult and often relies on partner reporting. Domestic and regional commerce is difficult to monitor and sometimes involves the smuggling of competing products (e.g., vegetable oil from Malaysia when high taxes or import bans are in place).¹⁶ A careful look at the value chain, the consumer market, and competitors legally (or sometimes illegally) escaping customs duties as in vegetable oil and rice, as well as an evaluation of sustainability should be pursued at the outset of any major marketing program.

A focus on marketable cash crops does not preclude programs for alternative income generation or health and nutrition programs, often targeting the same groups and working through the same or related farm or village organizations. Many programs on health, nutrition and improved production of crops and animals will be suitable for families of commercial farmers or even for very poor subsistence farmers without a significant marketable surplus. There may be problems in including very small farmers (e.g., grain farmers with less than 500 kg to sell) in a marketing program. A truck can hold seven to thirty tons. The administrative costs and training costs for very small farmers may not be favorable to the long-term competitiveness of the group. Groups of farmers guaranteeing each other’s input credits may find it difficult to include the very poor. A widow with a little grain or cocoa production may sell it through a neighbor, rather than being part of the administrative record keeping. This will vary by country, product and target group, but administrative costs will play a role in competitiveness and sustainability of marketing systems for smallholders, and the policy of full inclusiveness may not result in a competitive cost structure in every situation.

¹⁵ 1987 Mali Finance Value Chain Study, Jansen, et al

¹⁶ 2007 Mali Value Chain Finance Study, Jansen, et al; Abt Associates 1987 reports on the cottonseed crushing industries under the West African Cotton Improvement Program

Conclusions on Focus

- IEHA had an impact on the focus of mission portfolios and cash crops, and national USAID responders felt they were aligned with local government priorities.
- IEHA programs do work intensively and extensively with smallholders, the rural poor and women.

Applying the IEHA experience: Recommendations for FTF

1. FTF should continue the focus on enhancement of markets and smallholder access and reinforce efforts to build sustainability through creating strong links between market actors (e.g., lead farmers and smallholders, buyers and smallholders), capacity building of viable producer groups, linkage to entities with the resources and contacts to ensure reliable marketing, and measures to improve enabling environments, such as policy reform, commodity exchange mechanisms and rural infrastructure.
2. All marketing programs should consider the full value chain, all players, competitors, cost of finance, and other problems and opportunities to make farmers and their organizations more productive and fully competitive.
3. New programs on nutrition should use some of the same target groups as the marketing programs or could be separate programs all together.
4. FTF should acknowledge for more time to implement FTF objectives than was allotted for IEHA, as well as an orderly process to establish a more participatory approach with the missions, IPs in the field, other donors pursuing related activities, and local partners.
5. FTF projects should be designed within the framework and very broad priorities of FTF, and host country governments can and should play an important role in matters concerning regulation of public health (prevention of marketing or misapplication of dangerous chemicals), introduction of appropriate infrastructure, radio news on market prices, programs requiring certifications, and identification of preservation of goods required for European marketing, etc. In many commercial aspects of programs, FTF should seek local allies in government and business to try to limit or change some of the more negative aspects of government regulation or improper actions by authorities in order to facilitate commerce and to make investment more attractive and profitable.
6. While smallholders should remain the main focus, the methods of increasing incomes, particularly in programs involving marketing, should look carefully at market demand and the prospects of cooperating with players throughout the value chain, as opposed to ignoring other options and competitive cost considerations when considering storage and processing by farm-based cooperatives.
7. FTF planners and program implementers should share goals, objectives, vision and strategies of new initiatives or programs with all stakeholders, which will not only inform partners, but also provide an opportunity to draw on their experience and capacities and complementary cross-program efforts. This is true for higher-level initiatives such as IEHA and FTF as well as for specific implementing partner programs.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

According to the FTF Guide (May 2010), food security is defined by the availability, access, utilization (with good sanitation and adequate nutrition) and stability of food sources. It mentions the desirability of global research and innovation through supporting national research institutes and funding applied research as well as extension. It suggests creating an enabling policy environment for agribusiness growth, by helping the private sector engage with authorities, reducing government controls on commodity prices, and supporting reform in policy and regulations that promote private sector entrepreneurship, innovation and investment in competitive agriculture of all sizes. With respect to nutrition, the FTF Guide mentions nutrition education and increased income for women and micronutrient supplements. e.g., Vitamin A. Focus countries in Africa include Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, selected on the basis of need (hunger, underweight children under five and mortality of children under five) and opportunities for partnership on policies and for agricultural-led growth.

Beneficiaries: Many stakeholders interviewed by the evaluation team noted they were not clear on what is meant by ‘the poor,’ the primary beneficiaries of FTF. The poor applies to a broad range of people, and different types of programs are needed for different poor populations, depending on the local situation. Some require emergency relief and others require longer-term development programs, both appropriate under FTF. For instance, displaced persons in refugee camps need food, medical care and education for their children and, if possible, training and small investments to create income opportunities. That should be short-term emergency aid. When they move back to their farms, they may need some free seeds and other short-term help to get started, and would benefit from longer-term development programs. Measurement of the results of such programs is easier than it is for households with more diverse sources of income.

Conclusions on Strategic Framework

Unlike emergency programs, development programs should have a view of being sustainable after the end of a project. FTF should handle both, but should insist on a realistic plan for sustainability for development programs. Aid programs often expend extensive resources, buying vehicles and fuel, hiring people at salaries at several times what they could make elsewhere, paying people per diem to attend meetings and training programs, providing international travel for officials and business people. These resources can be very useful to obtain cooperation, to create or add to local efforts and to bring about change, but high participation in subsidized programs may not necessarily result in sustainability. Sustainability at the end of the project should always be a key issue to consider in program design, implementation and monitoring of results.

Risk: The issue of risk will depend on the type of program chosen. Agricultural marketing is inherently risky, and all risk cannot and should not be eliminated. The biggest farm product risks are from weather and competition from lower cost suppliers. Market demand should be allowed to send price signals that cause producers to expand or contract their efforts and permit supply and demand to balance. The poorest of the poor often cannot take the risk of buying inputs to produce marketable crops. They need free food, medical care, and education. But if they are given the inputs free beyond a brief emergency period, this can hinder the development of a private sector input industry and can negatively affect sustainability. In ideal programs, farmers or their producer organizations might have surpluses that would help to mitigate a bad year, and a bad year could mean either poor production or poor prices. But it is preferable to let market prices influence producer incentives, even if stabilization programs or temporary assistance may be useful to partially mitigate the harshest and most rapid price shifts. Commercial import competition from low-cost food (e.g., Asian rice

and vegetable oil) is a substantial risk, particularly since local producers have high costs compared to Asian and even American suppliers for transport, machinery, fertilizer, and other production costs other than daily wage rates. Importation of free food through aid programs helps consumers but can lower prices and hurt incentives for farmers.

Marketing Companies: Bellmon Amendment determinations are supposed to evaluate and reduce the possibility of negative impacts of food aid imports on local markets. Local purchases by the World Food Programme (WFP) have been proposed as a way to avoid damage to farmer incentives through food aid programs. Production of cash crops that require purchased inputs (often on credit) is somewhat more risky than subsistence agriculture. The poorest of farmers often cannot take the risk of producing and marketing a high-value crop. All farmers need cash income for school fees, medical expenses, etc. For the more prosperous farmers, doing nothing to improve production and marketing is the biggest long-term risk. Working with small farmers prosperous enough to produce and market a surplus will be a key element of future programs, coupled with other income-generating possibilities, such as raising animals or family members learning a variety of marketable skills. Emergency food aid assistance is available through USG programs but, ideally, should not be a continuing process for countries able to bring farmers and other rural people out of poverty and into the commercial market. They should obtain short-term help and training during the transition.

Recommendations for Strategic Framework

1. Country plans should highlight the importance of risk (vulnerability) reduction and crisis prevention and mitigation. This includes programs designed to address these issues; clear and transparent linkages to development-oriented components within mission strategies; and support to and use of food security and early warning monitoring, analysis and reporting systems.
2. The terms *risk* and *vulnerability* should be defined within the FTF framework. Appropriate interventions cannot be designed in the absence of a clear understanding of the hazards and additional underlying factors that contribute to food insecurity and hunger, especially transitory food insecurity and hunger, which is not addressed in the Guide or results framework.
3. Indicators appropriate for the evaluation of resilience need to be defined and should be consistent with those being defined by the corresponding CAADP pillars. Pillar III on “food supply and hunger” has made progress on indicator definitions, and its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan should be consulted.
4. The FTF Guide and results framework should be vetted by all missions and at least a sampling of IPs to generate advice on implementation procedures for country programs, in principle coordinated with country CAADP investment plans and falling within the broad guidelines of the FTF Guide and results framework.
5. Within the whole of government approach, FTF should establish clear linkages and complementarities with resource streams supporting agriculture research and policy reform, two areas critical to agriculture growth that are not explicitly stated in the FTF results framework but which are mentioned in the FTF Guide.
6. With host governments often more than doubling their budgetary commitment to agriculture under CAADP pledges, there should be opportunities for both public and private interlocutors to make significant contributions that will continue after the end of the project. Sustainability should be a key element of project approval and mid-term monitoring/adjustment.

CAADP

IEHA and CAADP: Overview

CAADP is a continent-wide program initiated by African heads of state in 2003 and supported by USAID and other donors to provide extensive analytical assistance to develop investment plans and priorities to guide both national budgets and activities of donors. CAADP's programming process emphasizes a commitment to provide 10 percent of national budgets to agriculture (more than doubling previous budgetary allocations for many countries) and to establish an investment plan to guide activities. CAADP plans will vary by country and region but envision a broad collaboration between the government and other key non-state stakeholders, including farmers, the private sector, non-profit organizations (including cooperatives and private sector organizations), and research institutes. CAADP is designed to help countries achieve the United Nation's Millennium Development Goal number one: to cut hunger in half by 2015.

The CAADP process includes development of a national compact, a document signed by the government and participating stakeholders, which outlines key agreements on the policy, strategies, and investment priorities that will be required to achieve increased agricultural productivity. The CAADP Compact is intended to be produced through a process of extensive consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders, including non-state actors. National compacts tend to be broad conceptual documents that identify a country's long-term food security vision and goals, and outline a commitment to pursue CAADP principles, including a commitment to follow an inclusive consultative process.

Once a national compact is signed, work begins to develop a CAADP National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP). The NAIP is a document that defines core investment programs and objectives, aligns the programs and objectives to national programs and budgets, identifies the role of stakeholders in program implementation, and begins to define financing needs and priorities. NAIPs tend to be three- to five-year strategy documents that provide a specific framework for achieving a country's food security vision and objectives. Once drafted, the NAIPs are reviewed through a peer review process that involves expert reviewers, most of whom are from outside the country. (See Appendix K for an example – Ghana's Investment Plan.)

The CAADP program has established four pillars:

Pillar 1: Land and Water Management

Pillar 2: Market Access

Pillar 3: Food Supply and Hunger

Pillar 4: Agricultural Research

Analysis for development of investment plans are coordinated by the Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

USAID has provided substantial support for the analytical work of CAADP and has interacted extensively from its Washington offices.

Alignment: IEHA, CAADP and the Priorities of African Governments

Consistent with the Principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (which stressed that host countries should set development program priorities and that donors should work with them within those priorities) and the Accra Agenda for Action, CAADP works towards harmonizing and aligning systems of donor and government programming, in this case, for agricultural programs. CAADP pursues this by developing country-led investment plans that can be directly supported by donors. The planning and interactions process should and does go in both directions—between donors and national governments.

Findings

Assistance to CAADP is perhaps IEHA's most significant policy activity. IEHA staff from Washington, D.C. have intensively engaged in the continent-wide discussions and processes, as has many mission staff. IEHA resources have sponsored African leaders and other stakeholder participation at meetings, financed the venues of numerous meetings and the production and distribution of many CAADP-related documents, and provided underlying policy research (e.g., ReSAKSS studies). There is near unanimous recognition of the contributions IEHA has made. However, over the course of the field evaluation, several respondents from government, USAID missions, other donor missions and stakeholder groups felt that the discussions on CAADP stayed at the headquarters level and didn't trickle down well, and that despite the significance of the process, they were not well informed or involved. Very likely the same is true for many agricultural officials in the host country governments. But in some cases, such as Ghana's FASDEP II program, the planning process has been widely discussed, even if it may not have always been described as a CAADP exercise.

The challenge that CAADP faces is in implementation, which depends on the capacity of local and regional institutions, particularly in the case of Southern Africa, where SADC is charged with coordinating the process. Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) is more active, but does not have the legal stature for implementation. ECOWAS is also attempting to guide the process, but the ECOWAS Trust Fund is not yet disbursing resources. Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) in southern Africa reportedly could benefit from better analytical resources. Most key informants in our evaluation did not perceive great value in ReSAKSS studies. While government agencies, farmers unions and other bodies hold a place on the regional node steering committees, some respondents felt that ReSAKSS work plans were not defined and driven by the broader stakeholder community. (Information on ReSAKSS efforts and reports on CAADP progress is shown in Appendix K.)

Overall, USAID missions (ninety-nine percent) and IPs (ninety-six percent) felt that the IEHA priorities were consistent with local government objectives and priorities. Over ninety percent of mission respondents said that the IEHA process assisted Washington and the missions to set their priorities effectively, in a manner consistent with CAADP.

A number of local government stakeholders noted that they were aware of and used ReSAKSS studies. ReSAKSS is relatively well linked to government policy makers engaged in CAADP, is the key monitoring and evaluation system used to monitor CAADP implementation, and was designed exclusively for this purpose.

Conclusions on Alignment

- IEHA successfully laid the foundation for USAID’s support for CAADP—both in principle and in structure. IEHA was instrumental in helping USAID to promote processes and principles that emphasized and enabled greater alignment between USAID mission agricultural programming and the programs and objectives of African governments. This was a precursor to FTF’s programming emphases, which are designed to directly support CAADP. This process is consistent with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and represents a fundamental departure for USAID’s traditional support of agricultural development in Africa.

Recommendations for Alignment

1. To maintain and further the progress USAID has made in aligning its programming with African government priorities and systems, USAID should review the proposed M&E plans for the different CAADP pillars most relevant to FTF (Pillars II and III)
2. Where possible, USAID should align FTF indicators with those included in pillar frameworks and discuss the details of planned programs with appropriate contacts in the host government and key private sector groups likely to be involved as well as with other donors with similar program focuses (focusing on the same population segment or similar types of programs). This will build consistency across programs throughout Sub-Saharan Africa and across initiatives (i.e., CAADP and FTF).

IEHA'S PROMOTION OF AN INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION PROCESS FOR AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMMING (IEHA AND CAADP)

One of the emphasized operating concepts of CAADP is that planning and implementation should be conducted through a process of inclusive participation. This means that CAADP plans are to be developed through extensive consultation with and participation by key private sector, university and civil society organization participants, that is, non-state actors.

Findings

Several key informants (both USAID and other donor staff) noted that donor support for the CAADP process remains largely at the headquarter level, with limited engagement from the field. This lack of engagement has persisted with the advent of FTF. The development of FTF/CAADP processes has been IEHA's most significant policy activity. IEHA staff from Washington have intensively engaged in continent-wide discussions and processes, as has many mission staff. IEHA resources have sponsored African leader and other stakeholder participation at meetings, financed venues of numerous meetings and the production and distribution of many CAADP-related documents, and provided underlying policy research (e.g., ReSAKSS studies). There is nearly unanimous recognition of the contributions IEHA has made. However, over the course of field work, several respondents from government, USAID missions, and other donors and stakeholder groups felt that discussions on CAADP have stayed at the headquarters level and not trickled down to enable meaningful participation from non-state actors—despite the significance of the CAADP process, non-state actors and local governments are not well informed or involved. IEHA supported the involvement of non-state actors in value-chain analysis workshops and planning exercises. Value-chain methodology training and analysis was sponsored by IEHA and has been adopted by CAADP as a key analytic tool for agricultural development planning. There has been extensive support in engaging a wide array of non-state actors and policy-makers in this process. In speaking with mission staff, most were unaware of the FTF website, the Guide, the framework or proposed indicators. This finding is surprising given the fact that missions were required to construct FTF implementation plans and are now in the processes of finalizing FTF strategies.

Conclusions on IEHA's Promotion of an Inclusive Participation Process

- IEHA's promotion of value-chain training, planning and analysis increased and enhanced the participation of stakeholders in national-level agricultural dialogue and planning, and this is a process that has been continued under CAADP.
- The CAADP process has remained largely at the headquarters level among donors, with limited engagement from local government and non-state actors. A useful start has been made to increase the inclusive participation of non-state actors, and the commitment to continue doing so is strong (as evidenced by FTF and CAADP principles), but substantial additional effort is required.

Recommendations for IEHA's Promotion of an Inclusive Participation Process

1. FTF should acknowledge that realizing its objective of substantial and meaningful participation by local government and non-state actors in agricultural planning and implementation will require additional time, effort, and resources.

POLICY

Policy reform can be crucial to reducing production and marketing costs and becoming more competitive. In general, there are ample examples of regional national synergies in IEHA policy work. This includes facilitation of grain trade in East and Southern Africa, harmonization of biosafety and seed policies and protocols, continued support to food security assessment and policy dialogue and prescription through the Institute of the Sahel (INSAH) and the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (French acronym –CILSS) in West Africa, and support to the CAADP process.

Policy Challenges: Transport Corridors in East and West Africa (A Bridge Too Far?)

Many of the markets of the target countries are quite small and regional trade is highly desirable—e.g., Ugandans selling excess corn to Kenya or Mali selling surplus rice throughout West Africa. USAID has helped to identify impediments and opportunities to reduce some of these costs and improve the enabling environment for trade and investment. However, sometimes it is very difficult and time consuming to bring real change, particularly if local authorities are not committed to help.

An example is the East Africa Transport corridor (see USAID press release excerpts in Appendix I). USAID began studies to encourage faster transit of the Kenya border in 1994 as a first step toward improving the transport system in the corridor from Mombasa, Kenya through Uganda, Rwanda and the port of Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania, beginning with speeding the transit across the Kenya-Uganda border. In 2011, proposals on this matter were proceeding, with a \$4 billion proposed investment project that needed approval of regional bodies and financial institutions—a very valuable effort if it ever is implemented, but waiting seventeen years or more for success in speeding freight traffic through the Kenya-Uganda border is difficult for a results-oriented assistance program.

Similarly, attempts were made in West Africa to reduce the police practice of stopping, delaying and extorting money from trucks at numerous points with a high cost in lost time and uncertainty as much as in the bribes paid. The Trade Hub set up an impressive system to monitor and report on the number of stops and the bribes paid. But local authorities thus far have not chosen to crack down on the extortion, which does great damage to business in terms of cost and predictability (e.g., the need to finance high inventories because of uncertainty and delays) and creates a substantial disincentive to investment. This bold Trade Hub program, addressing a key problem for high costs and investment disincentives throughout Africa, was not as quickly successful as hoped. But as it is so important, perhaps it should be continued, particularly if coupled with efforts to get one or more key local government officials to try to address the problem. The Trade Hub now has several years of extensive documentation of this extortion in several countries. USAID could ask local officials if they would like to take measures to address the problem and offer assistance in further monitoring if they are interested. If not, the exercise should be dropped due to lack of local support.

Governments are crucial in planning roads and other infrastructure projects, setting and enforcing health and safety standards, approving the use of new seeds and chemicals, helping with certifications for high-value products, and taking new crop varieties, testing them, approving them, multiplying them and making them available for farmers. Policies—whether on food safety, export certifications, fertilizer subsidies, approval of new crop varieties or new pesticides—are very important to the agricultural system. The local inefficiencies

and resulting high costs contribute to the fact that rice and palm oil imported into Africa from Asia is often cheaper than local products—even in inland countries such as Mali.¹⁷ The buy-in and willingness of local authorities to actively champion the goals of a program can be crucial to its success. Presumably, the CAADP process is designed to provide both the will and the resources for national governments to contribute some resources and efforts to achieving jointly agreed goals. If that willingness is not evident or proves to be lacking during implementation, the plug should be pulled.

Buy-in: As in the Millennium Challenge Program and consistent with IEHA targeting of countries with strong potential for improvements, countries willing to make reforms should benefit from assistance to their reform programs. Countries without that willingness might need emergency assistance in response to crises, but should not benefit from economic development programs that they decline to actively support. Lack of a receptive government should not preclude all local efforts to help the poor, but it does hamper major national efforts to reform marketing and regulatory systems. That does not necessarily mean that USAID must actively try to veto policies with which it disagrees, but it should reduce financial support for activities which do not have substantial local support and the likelihood of sustainability.

There have been impressive policy successes, such as the close cooperation the Trade and Investment Program for a Competitive Export Economy (TIPCEE) facilitated with regulatory authorities in Ghana on regulations and certifications for exported commodities. Cooperation with scientific regulatory authorities in approving new seeds and agro-chemicals, including regional harmonization, is also quite feasible in a multi-year timeframe if programs and linkages with businesses encourage government policy changes, particularly those not requiring legislation, as they did with TIPCEE and the export industries.

Regulatory changes linked to the food supply usually take a number of years in any country. Biotech seeds, with great potential to boost crop yields and reduce pesticide use, face substantial negative publicity from some international private voluntary organizations (PVOs). That did not prevent the adoption of biotech cotton in Burkina Faso, and other countries will follow—including Mali, first for cotton and then perhaps for the more politically sensitive issue of foodstuffs. It may take a number of years to get farmers, private organizations and government officials to adopt new methods, starting with multi-year work on a biosafety system. Probably, major policy efforts under IEHA or FTF need to have realistic expectations of positive results within some reasonable timeframe (e.g., less than ten years for major policy successes with substantial interim successes within the three- to five-year lives of projects).

Other regulatory changes, such as adopting contracting and arbitration procedures and changes in credit policies, can also be time consuming and may or may not be beyond the scope of FTF projects. Academic studies on some of these issues by IFPRI or others may have an influence on policy planning and priorities set at the CAADP level and may eventually filter down to implementing agencies within the host country governments. Naturally, there will be struggles within ministries and among ministries to obtain or keep resources, so coordination and implementation of plans in concert with national governments, various ministries and other donors will be challenging and may be facilitated by government contact by USAID officials or even ambassadors at crucial decision points.

Host country governments will not have completely unified support for championing CAADP priorities. For instance, a national directive to pass resources to the cross-ministerial experts placed at the district level

¹⁷ 1987 USAID Mali Finance and Value Chain Study, Jansen, et al

instead of the center (Ghana and Uganda) may not always be followed enthusiastically by ministry personnel at the center if they must cede resources to the regions. Some national priorities established in CAADP national investment plans will be followed enthusiastically; others will not. USAID can help to increase enthusiasm for useful national priorities by the targets of its program funding. Successful and sustainable programs will need to find energetic public and/or private sector interlocutors willing to actively support the process, partly with their own resources, to help implement the USAID program and provide sustainability once the USAID program ends.

Conclusions on Policy

Generally, to implement any major project in an African country, it is necessary to give some level of information to the national and local authorities and to make them feel involved—though sometimes it is most desirable to keep that official involvement mostly at a theoretical level—for instance, by having the minister open workshops to show others that the process has local support. While big government agencies have a tendency to be slow and inefficient in implementing programs, some of the individual researchers and extension agents may be eager to participate in donor-financed projects and may be quite helpful if allowed to participate. The biggest question is usually sustainability at the end of the project if subsidies are provided to farmers or to pay the costs of their technical advisers. A sustainable transition should be envisioned at the outset and reviewed at the end as a measure of the success of the program.

One important aspect of policy is the ability for producer organizations and business groups to influence government policy, particularly in commenting on changes. For instance, early in the TIPCEE project in Ghana, the government issued regulations on standards that were not business-friendly. TIPCEE helped the government consult with exporters and re-draft regulations that were more business friendly and effective. Some private sector advocacy will call for protection against imports or other special protection against competition that may not be fully in the national interest or consistent with USG preferences or World Trade Organization commitments. But in general, giving the private sector a voice that the government can hear is a very positive move that can improve the business-enabling environment for the marketing of farm products, priorities for infrastructure, and other essential products and services that the government can provide. This is the sort of business advocacy-linked policy reform mentioned in the FTF Guide.

Recommendations for Policy

1. FTF should continue certain types of policy reform work, particularly regulatory changes that do not need lengthy development of parliamentary legislation and can be achieved during the life of the projects.
2. FTF should seek to promote useful measures championed by local business to improve the commercial environment for targeted products.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND LEVERAGING RESOURCES

Stakeholder engagement and leveraging resources are covered together because many of the activities leverage time (human resources) and financial resources toward a common aim. The IEHA program is replete with examples of linkages, collaboration, constructive opportunistic arrangements and joint financing. Many of these arrangements are informal, but some are more formal and require Memorandums of Understanding or other forms of written commitments.

Findings

Stakeholder participation and contributions can be crucial to sustainability. From field interviews and a review of project reports, the team found most projects did involve stakeholders outside of USAID (in addition to beneficiaries). Value-chain development projects are particularly active in engaging other stakeholders, as they are, by definition, an important element to value-chain development. For example, the Livelihoods and Enterprises for Agricultural Development (LEAD) program in Uganda works with producer organizations, several rural banks, breweries, WFP, commodity warehouses, agro-input traders, the International Center for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development (IFDC), and several seed companies and their organization the Uganda National Agro-inputs Dealers Association (UNADA). This example of the complex web of partners is typical of IEHA programs throughout the focus countries. In the Kenya Dairy Development Program and the successor Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program, stakeholder organizations included the Dairy Task Force, Kenya Livestock Breeders Organization, Kenya Dairy Producers Organization, Kenya Livestock Producers Association, and Kenya Dairy Processors Association. In the Farm Input Promotions (FIPS) Africa program, ten different seed companies (domestic and international) donated varying quantities of seed in support of the project's promotions and demonstrations. The value of the donations ranged from Western Seed Co.'s US\$21,658 contribution to Faida Seed Co.'s US\$94,000 donation. The Production, Finance and Improved Technologies (PROFIT) project and Land O'Lakes in Zambia is another excellent example of links to input suppliers, traders, agricultural service providers, etc.

Strengthening the various stakeholder organizations was a major input in some of the projects. Producer organizations supported included the Kapchorua Commercial Farmers Association (KACOFA) in Uganda and the Cereal Growers Association (CGA) in Kenya. Research organizations strengthened through capacity building included the National Agricultural Resource Organisation (NARO) in Uganda and Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA) in the region. The Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) was another example of a regional body that was strengthened. In the Kenya Dairy Development Program and the successor Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program, capacity-building support was provided to stakeholder organizations such as the National Dairy Task Force and the Kenya Livestock Breeders Organization. Other stakeholder organizations that were consulted regularly included the Kenya Dairy Producers Organization, Kenya Livestock Producers Association, and Kenya Dairy Processors Association.

At the policy level, a good example is the preparation of the Uganda CAADP compact. It took three years of planning, during which all stakeholders were regularly consulted and considered an integral part of the process. Specifically, USAID was represented on the Steering Committee (according to the PMA Director). Concurrently, the Government of Uganda finalized its National Development Plan and agricultural development strategy and investment plan (DSIP). Uganda's DSIP will be implemented over five years (2010/11–2014/15) and aims to increase agricultural productivity and production, expand agro-processing,

facilitate increased private investment in agriculture, and improve the public institutions that manage the agricultural sector. In this way, it is hoped the plan will help increase the incomes of people in the agricultural sector and improve rural livelihoods, thereby contributing to overall economic growth, social transformation, and the poverty-reduction objectives of the government's National Development Plan. Uganda was the first country to tie the two processes together, creating a stronger, more detailed compact and further demonstrating its ongoing commitment to agricultural development (USG Feed the Future FY 2010 Implementation Plan).

In Kenya, a similar process involving stakeholders was undertaken to arrive at the CAADP Compact signing in July 2010, and USAID was represented in key steering committees. The Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program has involved stakeholders effectively through a National Dairy Task Force, which brings together representatives of milk producers, processors, government and other stakeholders, and by cascading the process down to the village. Experience showed that this kind of framework for engaging different stakeholders was critical in supporting desired changes in a sector such as dairy. Funding of such stakeholder consultative frameworks was also an important contribution made by USAID-funded projects.

Biotechnology work conducted in East Africa provides an example of effective involvement of stakeholders with considerable expertise on the subject but a considerable shortfall in terms of engagement of the broader community affected by biotech developments. The biotechnology outreach strategy employed a consortia and expert-based approach conducted through roundtable discussions, training seminars, hands-on workshops, public lectures, farmer vocational training programs, exhibitions, brochures, booklets, etc., to create public awareness among stakeholders. But the engagement came largely from within the biotech community. Civil society organizations and media representation were extremely limited at the outreach meetings. Policy regulators and national research institutes, while higher, only represented 4 percent collectively. These numbers are very low and need to be addressed in the next phase. As an information dissemination and access strategy to the general public, the highest delivery was newspapers compared to the other forms of mass media, followed by the Internet. Radio programs on agriculture, if offered each week in local languages, can be an important outreach tool to rural audiences.

After a multi-year development of a biosafety system, biotech cotton has been successfully introduced in Burkina Faso, covering most of the crop, and Mali is in the process of approving it as well. Biotech holds great promise for rapid gene transfer among plants and may shorten responses to new pests by years. But although Americans commonly consume biotech corn and soybean products (generally without awareness), USAID should be aware that some NGOs will campaign actively against biotech food crops, and false rumors will spread. If USAID focuses on this area, the most productive and noncontroversial way to begin is to stress the need for biosafety systems, preferably regionally harmonized if possible. (Source: Pomeroy evaluation on the West African Support Program for USAID, August 2010).

Conclusions on Stakeholders

- In general, IEHA has been successful at leveraging resources and creating constructive and opportunistic collaboration.
- Comprehensive support spanning on-the-ground productivity through market access and the policy environment at the national and regional level (e.g., support to the CAADP process) enhanced the participation of stakeholders in dialogue at appropriate points along the relevant value chains.
- One of the weakest areas in terms of stakeholder input is in the engagement of IPs, local stakeholders and mission staff in the development of CAADP frameworks.

- Stakeholders such as financial service providers have favored working with organized groups such as Producer Organizations (POs).
- There was a feeling among some stakeholders that projects were not well integrated with the activities of the Ministry of Agriculture (Uganda), leading to questions of possible duplication of activities, future sustainability of the interventions, etc. The provision of a forum for public and private sector groups is a common way that IEHA has contributed to higher-level objectives. This has led to greater involvement of the private sector in roles previously dominated by the public sector, e.g., seed certification.
- Addressing cross-border issues that cannot be addressed by individual countries (e.g., harmonization of seed policies) has been an extremely useful, and in many cases, fruitful endeavor.
- There is a need to strengthen the other forms of mass media, such as radio and television, so that the wider rural community can be reached and a greater variety of stakeholders can participate in project planning. Adequate resources should be applied to ensure that translations into local languages are accurate.

Recommendations

1. For effective linkage with government and policy processes, projects should have clear points of engagement with relevant government ministries/departments. USAID should actively participate in the initiation of these ministerial contacts.
2. FTF should seek input and vision at the initiation of a process rather than bringing in these well-informed people who will have to implement initiatives as reviewers and fact checkers.
3. FTF should continue to search for activities that can bridge the gap between the results of a particular project and a contribution to higher-level policy objectives. Stronger information dissemination plans and inclusive public forums with a variety of stakeholders can help contribute to a larger impact.
4. Greater information sharing among USAID missions within regions and across Africa should be encouraged.

IEHA RESULTS REPORTING¹⁸ –IEHA REPORTING SYSTEM AND INDICATORS

Findings

The IEHA results reporting system is an important innovation and is being considered as a potential model for FTF and other bureaus within USAID. Data on targets and actual achievements for all USAID-funded agriculture programs are included in the database, and standard tables and reports can be easily generated by the system. IPs directly enter data into a centralized market information system (MIS) established in 2007 which replaced electronic Excel software to a standard information database designed by Abt.

Associates. Missions can review this data and use them to generate their own reports. While the automated database improved the standardization and efficiency of data collection and analysis, some informants suggested that the switch from flexible Excel spreadsheets to a central format with required fields restricted the amount and type of information reported.

Mission staff involved in IEHA and FTF expressed the opinion that a results reporting system should not only track performance for reporting purposes, but also provide useful information on what is working and not working and why. It should provide an important input to the management of programs as well as to the development debate. Ideally, this is what any monitoring and evaluation system should do. Therefore, the evaluation team assessed IEHA results reporting in terms of both functions. Included under the results reporting section are the IEHA reporting system, indicators, evaluations and special studies conducted by the IFPRI and others as part of ReSAKSS.

Reported strengths: The IEHA mid-term evaluation noted that at the time it was conducted, there was no systematic process for reporting results in place, so the team recommended that such a system be developed. This was accomplished and, in general, system users appreciated the IEHA data collection and management system and noted that the reporting process had greatly improved. Approximately sixty percent of mission respondents and 100 percent of IP respondents said the system provided more opportunity to roll up and compare results.

TABLE 4: IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: HOW USEFUL WERE IEHA INDICATORS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING YOUR PROGRAMS' PERFORMANCE?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not helpful at all	0.0%	0
Not very helpful	14.3%	3
Neutral	33.3%	8
Helpful	47.6%	10
Very helpful	4.8%	1
Answered Question		22
Skipped Question		7

TABLE 5: MISSIONS: HOW USEFUL WERE IEHA INDICATORS FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING YOUR PROGRAMS' PERFORMANCE?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not helpful at all	0.0%	0
Not very helpful	0.0%	0
Neutral	16.7%	2
Helpful	58.3%	7
Very helpful	25.0%	3
Answered Question		12
Skipped Question		5

¹⁸ For a table showing IEHA result reporting progress since the mid-term evaluation please see Appendix F.

Regional mission key informants, however, noted that they continued to have problems rolling up or adding up information over country programs.

Approximately eighty-three percent of mission respondents found the IEHA indicators to be helpful or very helpful for monitoring program performance, and five of the eleven missions included in the survey indicated that the monitoring and evaluation system was one of the four most successful elements of the IEHA program. This compares to only fifty-two percent reported by IPs. While none of the mission respondents found the indicators unhelpful, 14.3 percent of IP respondents thought they were not very helpful in monitoring and evaluating performance. None of the IP respondents identified the results reporting system as one of the four most successful elements of the IEHA program. Key informants recognized that initiatives such as IEHA come with congressional reporting requirements and the obligation to report on outputs and numbers of beneficiaries to justify the resource allocation. It was noted that the narratives are an important addition as they provide a clearer and more tangible picture of how the programs fulfill the stated objectives of IEHA.

A number of key informants interviewed said that the gross margin indicator was useful, but continued to be problematic to measure and use for comparisons. For instance, failure to include home consumption of milk or other products could make the totals lower than they should be.

Below are the responses listing which indicators were most useful for program management and reporting results. There were areas where the missions and IPs agreed on which indicators were most important. For example, volume and value of smallholder sales was important on both lists. In other cases, missions and IPs had different priorities. For instance, mission staff considered trade sales (volume and value) to be important, whereas IPs valued income.

TABLE 6. LIST OF USEFUL INDICATORS AS REPORTED BY MISSIONS AND IPS

Mission responses – useful indicators	IP responses – useful indicators
• Number of beneficiaries (receiving support, training, inputs, etc.) • Number of technologies made available to farmers (likely related to agricultural research results) • Change in productivity • Value and volume of purchases from smallholders • Value and volume of exports (distinguishing within and outside region) • Policy reform measures • Private financing mobilized through development credit authority (DCA) • Partner Institutional Viability Assessment (PIVA) • Gross margins	• Income (although noted that current measures are inadequate or unavailable) • Productivity (crop and dairy) • Value and volume of smallholder production • Value and volume of production per hectare • Gross margins • Technology transfer (in terms of area in use) • Agriculture and natural resource trainings • Business development services • Performance measures

Reported weaknesses: While there has been much improvement, some of the users of the IEHA results reporting system said that it was still too cumbersome, required that data be disaggregated into too many commodity categories (e.g., Mozambique), did not provide enough flexibility in table or report production, and requests for data and narrative inputs varied, which increased the time required to comply. Four of the missions and two of the IPs identified results reporting requirements to be one of the four greatest challenges in implementing their programs. Only about half of the respondents from both groups agreed that the indicators were reasonably efficient to collect in a timely manner.

The most common complaint about the indicators was that they are output focused and do not measure outcomes or impacts. One implementing partner noted that there is too much “head counting” of beneficiaries and participants, and not enough attention to outcomes such as productivity changes, volume and values or crop production and sales. Another respondent noted a more conceptual concern: the strategic frameworks coupled with the current indicator selection suggested the implicit assumption that food self-sufficiency translates to a reduction in poverty, a conclusion that cannot be substantiated with the available data. Of IPs responding to the survey, sixty-four percent said that there was sufficient data and information to assess the project’s impact on rural incomes and reducing hunger, nine percent said the data and information was insufficient, and twenty-six percent were neutral—the latter suggesting that they were not sure.

Both mission and IPs complained that there were too many indicators and that the definitions and methods of measurement were not consistently understood and implemented across projects. Gross margins, productivity and adoption are some examples. Informants noted that some of the definitions have changed over time (even multiple times), new indicators have been added, and guidance and time to implement changes have been grossly inadequate. This results in confusion, inconsistencies and difficulties when making comparisons across projects or when rolling up results over projects and regional programs. Changes were particularly problematic for IPs who rely on their partners or beneficiaries (e.g., private sector lead firms) to collect some of the indicator data.

Comment on indicators: Clearly, it is necessary for the USG to have some summary data that can be gleaned from all programs on the number of people helped, amount of trade facilitated, and estimates of changes in incomes resulting from programs. Such data are an important complement to national figures on gross domestic product and estimates of income by population and allocated budgets by type of program. But it should be recognized that many of the results data are estimates provided by grantees and other IPs. A farmer who attends three training sessions in a program will be counted as three trainees, and his family may be counted three times as well. For the program implementer, the count is an accurate indication of their efforts. But the tedious counting and checking of numbers by a multiplicity of organizations to feed the process may not give a full indication of the challenges and successes of individual programs. For the more complex issue of income, it may be easy to estimate for refugees in a camp, but not so easy for farmers with multiple sources of income, some in the form of stored grain for family consumption.

Risks in marketing: Farm marketing programs often face extraneous events—witness the skyrocketing prices of crop inputs in 2008 and 2010, and in import prices in general, often reflected in import and consumer prices faster than in farm gate prices for local farmers. Some governments reacted to the 2008 crisis with fertilizer vouchers—seeking to target farmers in need (perhaps a good short-term effort to reduce disruption and to target the needy, but at risk over the longer term of creating a new form of currency, the vouchers). However, it is known that markets change. For example, in Ghana, the international market for pineapples changed in favor of a new, sweeter variety. The big Ghanaian companies adapted and planted the new variety, but much of the large network of small-scale out growers were not included and did not adapt

quickly. While USAID efforts to help export Ghanaian pineapples were very successful—changing government regulation to be more business friendly and implementing European certification systems—some of the small farmers who received training did not benefit as much as hoped, at least in the short term. Weather, disease, international competition, exchange rates, changes, or marketing problems can influence profitability of any crop. In Ghana, the Trade and Investment Program for a Competitive Export Economy (TIPCEE), working closely with the German Development Service (GTZ) and with companies and regulatory authorities, was very effective in promoting pineapple exports. It shifted effectively mid-project, focusing more on cash crops for the local and regional markets in keeping with its primary concern: helping small farmers improve their incomes and the marketing of their crops. A sensible reaction to change mid-project should be viewed as an important success.

Changes in indicators: Among responders in the surveys, an important concern stemmed from the requirement for all PL 480 Title II programs to participate in IEHA reporting and enter their results data into the system. Title II has two types of programs—emergency feeding for refugees and other people in extreme and urgent need and a program focused on the longer-term issue of sustainable development, implemented by private voluntary organizations (PVOs) based on their development proposals to USAID. (A summary of some recent Title II development programs can be found in Appendix I.) At the same time, many of the Title II NGOs were asked to add indicators, change the definition and method of measurement of indicators, and/or alter (expand) targets. In most cases, there were no additional resources provided. In essence, the Title II NGOs were requested to report against new objectives whereas their programs were designed according to an earlier results framework. A number of other on-going non-Title II projects faced a similar dilemma. This provides another reason to keep the global reporting system simple and perhaps supplement it with another type of evaluation system that includes success in engaging key value-chain players and sustainability when commodity marketing is a key objective.

Measurement difficulties: For IPs and missions with trade and market system interventions, there is a considerable problem of attribution of which assistance programs, if any, resulted in changes, especially volume and value of trade in the case of exports, perhaps assisted by more than one donor program. The current indicator definitions ask for information at the project level, which is not always possible since it is not easy to capture the exports from individual producer organizations or individual producers. It is probably even more difficult to accurately estimate the effects of productivity and marketing programs on income when producers increase production of a crop marketed in part but also stored for family consumption throughout the year (such as corn in Mali). They may have shifted land, efforts and inputs from another crop; they may have some input costs; and their total sources of sustenance may be very difficult to evaluate. Also, it is not uncommon for farmers who receive fertilizer theoretically destined for one crop (e.g., cotton) to production of another crop (e.g., corn). Shifting of cotton pesticides to tomatoes (e.g., in Mali) and untimely application shortly before harvest can also create a health risk (Source: 2007 Mali Finance Value Chain Study, Jansen et al.). Thus, even if productivity can be accurately estimated, the consumption of the final product, the value of the increase, and the costs of inputs may be quite difficult to verify. When trade in a crop is not an appropriate measure for changes in household income, a household random sample survey at the outset and the end by an independent economic research organization like Tegemo in Kenya may be the best way to estimate successes of some programs, particularly when program focus is not specific to one or two commodities whose input costs, yields and sales prices can be roughly estimated.

The fact that it is complicated should not discourage the collection of data, but it would be desirable to limit the complexity and breadth of the data requirements to a few variables, perhaps ten or so. Overly complex

monitoring requirements can divert time and attention from making projects successful, both by USAID staff and by IPs.

In the survey of IPs, those involved in agricultural research or policy generally had fewer complaints on monitoring/measurement issues than those implementing agriculture productivity and market access projects. Those tracking research and policy reform noted, however, that the timeframe for tracking results was too short. There should also be a way to account for the difficulties and timeframes to bring about changes in regulations often required in policy work. (Comment: Probably some of the longer-term policy work may not be appropriate in the new FTF results framework; this is discussed further under Policy). Several missions noted that the IEHA and Foreign Assistance Coordination and Tracking System (FACTS, a more complex reporting system introduced in 2006–2007) have different reporting schedules and similar, but not identical, indicators, which add considerable time to their overall reporting obligations with little or no added value. To facilitate the whole of government reporting process and USAID future monitoring systems, this type of redundancy and lack of synchronization should be addressed.

The IEHA and FTF strategies envision improved regional trade in food staples as outcomes critical to the reduction of rural poverty and hunger. Marketing cash crops is less risky when there are alternative marketing options (perhaps in neighboring countries such as Kenya to Uganda or Mali to Nigeria) as opposed to a single buyer. In addition, many national markets are too small to support large-scale processing within Africa or to generate adequate quantities to access huge markets that demand huge supplies and consistent quality, such as those in the United States. Partly because of regional barriers to trade, smuggling of products such as vegetable oil and rice is common (to escape import bans or customs duties), and this hidden commerce makes trade volumes and competitive issues more difficult to assess.

While IEHA includes indicators on trade volumes and values, there is no way currently to assess whether trade is flowing to deficit areas and areas with the poorest populations. Price increases certainly occur, including the huge increases in international crop input and food prices in 2007–2008 and 2010–2011. People with adequate incomes can purchase food almost anywhere, but often the crisis arises from weather or pest conditions that negatively affect agricultural production, a major source of cash income and food for some families. Some of the results of bad weather and pests on crops are documented by USAID’s FEWS NET (established in the 1980s for early warning on drought), and they are developing a new tool that will predict the effects of drought on household income to help national planning authorities. Local traders see price changes and can react much more quickly than governments can to regularize food supplies. However, that does not help people who lost their crop and income, who may need short-term help.

TABLE 7. RELEVANT CAADP PILLARS

PILLAR II – MARKET ACCESS: IMPROVE LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE SO THAT AFRICAN FARMERS HAVE BETTER CONNECTIONS TO MARKET, ADDRESSING ISSUES INCLUDING:	PILLAR III – FOOD SUPPLY AND HUNGER
• Transportation (road, rail, marine and air freight) • Storage, packaging and handling systems • Retail facilities • Information technology, and over supply chains	• Improve domestic production and marketing • Facilitate regional trade in food staples • Build household productivity and assets

For each pillar, there are Africa-wide working groups. Pillar III has made progress on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and has proposed six indicators, threshold levels and a progress tracking scale for food security. The set of indicators includes a measure of resilience.

TABLE 8. PROPOSED CAADP PILLAR III INDICATORS

ASPECT OF FOOD SECURITY	INDICATOR
Improving risk management and resilience	Resilience score (based on assets)
Increasing supply of affordable food	Proportion of expenditure spent on food
Increasing economic opportunities for vulnerable* households	Per capita income
Improving dietary diversity	Dietary diversity score
Main source of food	Food comes from own production or purchases
Malnutrition rates	Number of stunted children <5yrs Number of wasted children <5yrs

*Vulnerabilities related to food insecurity and defined as the inability to cope with shocks, stresses and threats that affect availability, access and/or utilization of food. Vulnerability to food insecurity implies a probability of necessary adjustments to consumption as households or individuals struggle to meet adequate consumption requirements (see <http://www.foodsec.org/tr/nut/guidelines.pdf>.)

Conclusions on Reporting System and Indicators

- The IEHA results reporting system constituted an improvement in the process of data submission as well as the quality and consistency of data submitted, though missions and IPs perceive the utility of indicators as measures of change and as management tools differently.
- However, there is room for improvement in the selection, definition and method of measurement of some of the indicators and an in-depth review and consultative process could help more specifically identify the problems and devise workable solutions. Such a process should include the participation of missions and IPs in the field. A broadly shared shortcoming of the system is that while it is now easier to measure and add up outputs and measure some outcomes and impacts, the system does not help explain what is leading to the observed results. The story behind the indicators' performance is considered to be an important missing element.
- While the database is truly an improvement over pre-midterm reporting, there are still many missing data. The evaluation team attempted to summarize the indicators for each thematic area (e.g., productivity, markets, policy) and found that a lot of data were missing such that basic summations and comparisons between targets and achievements could not be calculated. Such gaps inhibit an analysis of what interventions achieve results both in terms of final targets and consistent performance over the life of the project, the latter of which is of critical importance to the assessment of the performance of agricultural interventions (e.g., innovative technologies that aim to enhance yields) that tend vary in accordance with seasonal agro-climatic conditions. Addressing production variation is directly linked to risk reduction and the fourth pillar of food insecurity, stability.
- FACTS and IEHA reporting systems were redundant and unsynchronized, adding time and effort to reporting.

RESAKSS AND EVALUATION STUDIES AS OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRAM LEARNING

Analytical studies of long-term priorities and areas of action are very appropriate to the CAADP process of overall planning, including examination of controversial issues such as fertilizer subsidies and public investment/control of grain storage and marketing, and other questions, as well as tracking and publicizing the progress of CAADP investment plans. ReSAKSS supplies analytical and policy advice support to CAADP decision makers. This set of groups, with a public website summarizing their activities and including some of their studies, is an Africa-wide network of regional nodes. The network supports the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in collaboration with IFPRI and the Africa-based centers of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), to facilitate the implementation of the AU/NEPAD's CAADP and other regional agricultural initiatives.

ReSAKSS helps policy makers track progress, document success, and derive lessons for the implementation of the CAADP agenda. Its website lists 315 studies, summaries, issue briefs and similar documents covering individual country and regional CAADP plans and regional issues. ReSAKSS is jointly funded by USAID, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The nodes are implemented by the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), in collaboration with regional and national partners.

Actual policies and policy implementation is generally a mix of theoretical economic policy directions and practical political and resource concerns. IFPRI and ReSAKSS provide the theoretical element. Even if some studies are very theoretical, it is desirable for more USAID personnel in the field and IP's to read the studies pertinent to their planned activities prior to finalizing plans and implementing them.

Findings

ReSAKSS¹⁹ has provided important input to discussions on strategic planning, policy reform and agricultural development in general. Ample proof of its productivity is contained in the IEHA mid-term evaluation and other results reports. Several key informants in the field noted a number of positive contributions. In Uganda, one ReSAKSS study on IEHA targeting used a geographic overlay of IEHA programs and vulnerable areas and uncovered a problem with targeting, which prompted the geographic realignment of IEHA programs. ReSAKSS' contributions to the development of a set of indicators and monitoring tools lead to the creation of a global ranking system using national food security and hunger indices.

A number of local government stakeholders noted that they were aware of and used ReSAKSS studies. ReSAKSS, cooperating with IFPRI, is relatively well linked to government policy makers engaged in the CAADP process. The regional economic communities (RECs) comprise the respective ReSAKSS board. Of the Internet survey respondents, the primary users of ReSAKSS and other studies are mission staff: nearly three quarters of mission respondents used ReSAKSS and two thirds used Global Food Price Crisis studies

19 Initially referred to as SAKSS – Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System – the name changed when the regional nodes for East, Southern and West Africa were established.

for program design purposes. About fifty percent of mission respondents used the ReSAKSS studies for on-going management of programs, but only sixteen percent used ReSAKSS data. About one third of the IPs used the studies for design or program management purposes and only ten percent used the data. Following the mid-term evaluation and after the regional nodes were established, the use of ReSAKSS information was said to have increased. The establishment of a regional platform in Nairobi was noted to have increased its value and use. One such study, conducted by IFPRI and ASARECA, provided a good base of evidence for regional research. Michigan State University also made notable contributions to the development of CAADP Medium-Term Investment Plans.

The fact that ReSAKSS studies are not more broadly utilized may be partly due to the process of selecting research topics and developing scopes of work. Mission staff and IPs were asked regularly if they used the studies. They were also asked if they provided input into the selection and prioritization of research topics. None could recall being solicited for input. Many were not aware of the studies or even the role of ReSAKSS. Several key informants across regions (regional nodes) noted that the studies tended to be too long, too academic and not well suited for practical on-the-ground decision-making. In general, it appears that the studies are more relevant to those working in policy reform rather than farm production and marketing program design and implementation.

Evaluations: IEHA has supported research and special studies through its various agriculture policy support projects (e.g., Food Security II and III, ReSAKSS), but the use of the M&E systems to determine the return on mission or project investments,²⁰ extract lessons and contribute to development discussions has been limited. Numerous key informants complained that all of the M&E and results reporting seemed to be passed up to the head offices, summarized at the project level and sent on to USAID. There was little use of the data and information within the project or at the ground level. In the broader thematic area of M&E, there were plenty of examples of how M&E can be used for program management, learning and knowledge sharing.

While not a perfect system, Food for Peace (FFP) has been advancing a structured approach as well as fostering the capacity of Title II PVOs in the design, implementation and use of M&E systems and output. Some of the better practices found within the Title II community include standardization of indicators; incorporation of qualitative, informal and participatory methods; execution of a mid-term evaluation that involves the participation of field staff; inclusion of local extension agents in the project assessments and training; and formal and informal sharing of ideas across the PVO community. Title II program mid-term and final evaluations proved to be an excellent resource for this evaluation.

Conclusions on Using Evaluations and ReSAKSS Studies

- ReSAKSS has provided important input to discussions on strategic planning, policy reform and agricultural development in general.
- ReSAKSS is relatively well linked to government policy makers engaged in creating CAADP development and investment priorities and plans.
- In USAID field programs, primary users of ReSAKSS and other studies are mission staff. The data are not often used.

²⁰ The Kenya Maize Program annually calculates a return on investments.

- IPs may have been aware of ReSAKSS studies and, to a lesser extent, ReSAKSS data, but a few key informants across regions (regional nodes) noted that the studies tended to be too long, too academic and not well suited for practical on-the-ground decision making.

Recommendations for Results Reporting

1. Review the process used to define ReSAKSS' work plan and research priorities and incorporate mechanisms for soliciting input from a broader range of stakeholders. For instance, ReSAKSS could present country studies to groups of donors and implementing organizations in seminars organized by USAID field offices and receive and report on feedback and suggestions.
2. Consider hosting additional meetings and include a broader range of stakeholders. Allow those stakeholders to contribute to the format and agenda of the meeting. In order to reach a broader audience and expand its impact, ReSAKSS can create multiple outputs for multiple audiences, varying the content and format to suit the specific audience and those other than researchers.
3. Build on good practices that have evolved over the years within the Title II program for vulnerable populations. Results from annual reports, mid-terms and evaluations can provide valuable insight on impacts and benefits of program approaches (both quantitative using indicators and qualitative such as improvements in household structures and increased number of children going to school).
4. More consistently establish baselines against which performance can be measured and establish guidelines for evaluations and timing within the design of projects.
5. Review the proposed M&E plans for the different CAADP pillars most relevant to FTF (Pillars II and III) and, where possible, align FTF indicators with those included in pillar frameworks. This will build consistency across programs in Sub-Saharan Africa and initiatives (i.e., CAADP and FTF).
6. Identify or develop indicators to measure rural incomes and hunger. The indicators can be proxies (e.g., the income proxy of the Title II program of Mozambique). As impact indicators, they do not need to be monitored on an annual basis. In fact, missions could commission periodic surveys of income and hunger impact for the entire country program and relieve the IPs of the requirement. This would ensure more consistent measurement and allow missions to add flexible aspects of the survey scope to allow for collection of qualitative information and greater exploration into causation and attribution in general.
7. Use geo-referenced indicators, in some cases even data from local market information systems, to provide a useful indication of whether regional trade is destined to the desired locations and is addressing poverty and food insecurity.
8. Keep required indicators to a minimum and allow IPs to create their own additional methods of tracking results in the proposal process, which will serve both reporting AND program management.
9. Employ strategic evaluation methods that support overall program learning and exchange. This could include ad hoc thematic studies, complementary qualitative assessments and post-project evaluations. Results should be shared with all relevant stakeholders.
10. Include one results reporting system with consistent indicators, indicator definitions and reporting cycles, thereby eliminating redundancies.
11. Develop a variety of mechanisms (briefs, knowledge-sharing website and/or meetings) to promote discussion and knowledge sharing among IPs, local stakeholders, donor staff and beneficiaries.
12. Have the FTF M&E system include ad hoc formal or informal, quantitative or qualitative thematic studies that probe into the performance of a group of programs—such as technology adoption or effective use of ICTs in support of market and food security information systems—and also consider similar programs of other donors for comparison.
13. Use post-project close-out evaluations more regularly to assess sustainability.

IV. IEHA APPLIED TO FTF INTERMEDIATE RESULTS

The second part of this evaluation report will organize the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations by FTF intermediate results, with the intention of applying the lessons learned from IEHA directly to the relevant investments that will be made under FTF. There is considerable overlap between the IEHA and FTF results frameworks in the areas of improved agricultural productivity through research and technology transfer, improved markets and trade, and a focus on vulnerable populations.

While there is overlap between the IEHA and FTF results frameworks, there are some significant changes. (See Appendices E and H, respectively, for the results frameworks for IEHA and FTF). FTF places much greater emphasis on nutrition for women and children and other vulnerable populations, adding an additional first-level objective and four new second-level objectives on nutrition. On the other hand, the agriculture component of the FTF framework is truncated, and agriculture research and policy presumably would be indicators under programs to support agricultural sector growth and agricultural sector trade in the FTF results framework. The FTF results mentions the importance of supporting national research institutes for applied research and of supporting business advocacy for policy reform. The subordination of research and of policy work to higher-level results for agricultural production and agricultural trade improvements would suggest a shorter timetable than that which would be necessary for some types of long-term policy and research initiatives. Both policy and research are key to increased agriculture productivity and expansion of the food supply and trade. With respect to research, the change in position in the results framework may suggest that long-term research to develop new varieties would not be an appropriate target for programs under FTF, but that programs work with regulatory authorities and that researchers apply existing research results on new varieties developed elsewhere, tested locally and made available to farmers within the life of the project are appropriate.

There are some key terms yet to be defined in the FTF Guide (FTF, May, 2010).²¹ Although the poor and very poor are defined, hunger is not well defined nor is it clear how, in terms of metrics, hunger relates to poverty, food security and nutrition. Within the Guide and other related documents, hunger has been tied to poverty, insufficient food, or nutritional status of a population (e.g., children under 5) and, as suggested by the single FTF resilience indicator, perception.

Vulnerability and risk are also not defined. This is a critical gap in that both the FTF Guide and results framework refer to vulnerable populations, groups, communities and countries, and states that it is committed to increasing the “resilience of vulnerable communities and households” as one of its eight second-level objectives. FTF will need to be clear about whether it is addressing food security verses vulnerability to food insecurity. The areas and populations that fall under each category are not always the same. For example, the north, central and west of Zambia has the highest rates of malnutrition—an indicator of food insecurity—but these areas are not the most vulnerable to disasters.

The Guide makes many references to risk, much of which is related to natural disasters and climate change; yet, the agriculture portion of the framework does not include “key FTF project level objectives” related to the reduction or mitigation of risk and variability in production or income. Increased risk in moving from subsistence farming to cash cropping is discussed under the credit section of Appendix G. On the nutrition

21 When this evaluation took place in early 2011, the May 2010 FTF Guide was the most current resource available on the FTF Results Framework and Strategy.

side of the framework, HIV/AIDS—still a significant threat to food security in Africa—is not mentioned once in the Guide. While there are alternative programs such as the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) to address AIDS, there may be synergies with health programs where the FTF nutrition focus could provide useful collaboration.

The remainder of this section will explore FTF intermediate results related to three main areas of convergence between IEHA and FTF intermediate results:

1. Improved Agricultural Productivity –FTF IR1,
2. Expanded Markets/Trade – FTF IR2, and
3. Resilience of Vulnerable Households and Communities–FTF IR 5.

IMPROVED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY (FTF IR 1)

Under the FTF results framework, Improved Agricultural Productivity is an intermediate result towards the overall FTF goal of “inclusive agricultural sector growth.” FTF will invest in (1) increased access to affordable agricultural inputs and improved techniques and technology; and (2) supporting national research institutes, funding applied research, and building local research capacity, including training local researchers and technicians.²² IEHA had a similar intermediate result entitled “Enhance productivity of smallholder based agriculture” through investments in technology transfer and development to small-holders. The section on agricultural research includes examples of agricultural technologies that have benefited smallholders and vulnerable populations. The time and resources made available were too limited to allow for an assessment of institutional capacity-building efforts. Also, the evaluation team did not systematically analyze the contributions of local government and regional institutions to agricultural research.

Research and Science and Technology under IEHA

Findings

Agricultural research produces new, more productive crop varieties and is crucial to addressing new or more virulent pests and diseases. Much research is done by international crop institutes within Africa or by universities and other groups outside of Africa. But national authorities must test and approve the introduction of new varieties or new chemicals prior to general distribution. Testing and approval is a multi-year process, and regional harmonization could make the process faster and cheaper by recognizing results in neighboring countries with similar climatic and farming conditions. Researchers also may promote techniques such as use of crop residue for compost or use of dung to prevent soil degradation. In addition to approval for new seeds and chemicals, it is usually necessary to have extension experts—generally not closely linked to researchers in host country ministries—to explain new procedures to farmers and credit programs for farmers to buy the seeds, fertilizer and pesticides. USAID programs sometimes finance demonstration plots to show farmers the high yields possible. Some national researchers lack communications systems to learn about worldwide research and to obtain seed samples from international seed banks around the world.

With respect to research, it can be vital to obtain new seeds and new chemicals that address new pest problems. Often, pests eventually mutate and become resistant to chemicals, so new pesticides must be introduced after a number of years of testing. For pesticides, private companies in Europe may test new products, but, subsequently, they must be tested by government regulatory authorities in Africa before being approved for commercial sale. Research to develop new crop varieties may take a decade or more before implementation at the farm level. For a project with a short (three- to five-year) time frame, the more rapid prospect of a national authority approving and applying research results (testing seeds, chemicals and processes already successful elsewhere) may be preferable to investing in national-level long-term research.

For seeds, there are many different possibilities. Commercial companies may wish to sell hybrid seeds for corn or other crops that have very good yields but must be repurchased each year. International research centers have many open pollinated varieties that can be replanted by farmers for a number of years and may be free to government researchers for multiplication and distribution without paying royalties. Typically, new

²² Feed the Future Guide. May 2010. http://www.feedthefuture.gov/ftf_guide.pdf

varieties or new chemicals will be developed in international research institutes or in private companies outside of the country, and a development project can work with local regulators to introduce the new technology in a project, including smallholders. Organic products are another possibility; they are generally lower yielding than crops using chemical fertilizer and pesticides, but can be a valuable addition to income if there is a buyer willing to pay a big premium for organic products.

IEHA has made significant contributions to regional harmonization of policies, regulations and protocols as well as facilitated the exchange of ideas and technologies. USAID has provided support to the agricultural research in two primary areas: (1) fundamental research in order to make available more crop varieties tolerant to drought, extreme conditions and climate change and (2) applied research in order to test the behavior of the new crop varieties before their introduction and recommendation to the farmers. Support of fundamental research may be most effective in support of regional CGIAR research centers such as IITA. Work with national authorities would fit best in a three- to five-year time frame in projects relating to applied research. Appendix G provides details on a number of successful research efforts funded by USAID, including:

- Work on cassava and potatoes in Southern Africa.
- Work with ASARECA on research and on regional pest and disease control for crops and livestock in cooperation with many institutions in 10 countries of Eastern and Southern Africa. This has included programs to address major problems—such as popularizing orange sweet potatoes with Vitamin A—and introducing bananas and cassava varieties resistant to devastating diseases such as cassava mosaic and brown streak.
- Assisted by USAID programs, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda have drafted harmonized policies, regulations and protocols on varietal development and release of seed for 10 commodities with food security and economic development value for the region.

Shared packages of tolerant varieties, agronomic practices, and systems for tissue culture and seed contributed to the food security of hundreds of thousands of households in the region. Work in West Africa on similar programs of harmonization and applied research has also been pursued through the West Africa Seed Alliance. (See Appendix G for more details on these and other programs.)

USAID/Mozambique's significant investment in agricultural research and technology transfer has had an impact. For example, Michigan State University estimated that the adoption of brown streak disease-resistant cassava (a collaborative effort of IIAM, IITA and NGOs) provided tens of millions of dollars in benefits and enhanced food security.

Research and technology transfer of Vitamin A-rich orange flesh sweet potatoes has positively impacted income and nutrition.

Improved varieties and production practices of other crops (i.e., peanuts, soybeans, and sesame) have contributed to increased income and food security.

USAID's innovative competitive agricultural research grants program (COMPETE) engaged scientists from government and educational institutions in targeted research and technology transfer. The new USAID-supported IIAM Platform for Agricultural Research and Technology Innovation provides a structure for mobilizing and better coordinating government and donor support for priority research programs.

USAID-sponsored agricultural research activities in Mali cover important food security crops and livelihood strategies. The IEHA-supported activities included:

- INTSORMIL: Integrated Sorghum and Millet project to improve sorghum and millet production
- INTERCRSP: Collaborative Research Program
- IPM.CRSP: Integrated Pest Management
- Livestock Sector Project: Improving the nutrition condition of livestock
- SANREM: Sustainable Agricultural and Natural Resources Management - in charge of Silvo-pastoral resource management based on the management of conflicts
- MLPI: Mali Livestock Pastoralist Initiatives
- PARA: Projet d'Appui à la Recherche Agronomique or Support to the Agricultural Research Project
- DRPSR: Research on the Management of Natural Resources
- Introduction of new quality seed varieties, seed identification, testing of new priorities
- Wat-310: Early maturing rice variety, 110 days to mature with an average yield of 5000 kg per ha.

Conclusions of Research

- Agricultural research with support from IEHA has made significant contributions to regional harmonization of policies, regulations and protocols as well as facilitated the exchange of ideas and technologies. It is within research and the enabling environment that regional and country synergies have been substantial.
- The work of the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and Uganda's National Agricultural Research Organization (NARO) and other national agricultural research centers in the region on cassava mosaic appears to have been successful since farmers and facilitators all noted that the problem seemed to be resolved with the availability and planting of new resistant material.
- Seed research is an important aspect of agricultural development in Africa, but high-yielding seeds for crops such as corn require substantial extension advice and purchase of inputs, particularly chemical fertilizer needed in large quantities to supplement local sources of dung or compost.
- Milk collection systems, including cooling systems, can increase marketing potential and incomes for small farmers. Simple milking equipment for larger herds can reduce diseases such as mastitis.
- In the case of Mali, where IEHA evaluation field work was conducted if not already programmed, USAID Mali can provide support in removing the bottlenecks in improved seed multiplication, certification and diffusion. Presently, Mali has one seed certification laboratory that is overextended and is an impediment to private sector seed enterprise development and investment.
- In Mali, at the local level, there is a good exchange between local government agencies and the project, which may be essential for successful implementation and dissemination to farmers and for sustainability.

Producer Groups as Mechanisms for Technology Transfer

Findings

IEHA supports large numbers of producer organizations through project funding. Every focus country has numerous producer organizations. For example, the Agricultural Productivity Enhancement Program (APEP) reached some 3,800 organizations, and its successor project, LEAD, supports 1,552 organizations. Producer

KEY SUCCESS STORY: PRODUCER GROUPS IN KENYA

The Labkaiyet Farmer Group in the Keiyo District of the Rift Valley Province provides a good example of how producer groups provide benefits to smallholders. The Group was formed in February 2006 by 25 farmers for production of horticultural crops. Challenges included a lack of technical know-how on production and marketing strategies for various horticultural crops. The group applied to KHDP for technical assistance in March 2006 and has been able to raise their farming activities to a commercial level in less than a year. To supplement existing maize and beans production, KHDP manager Geoffrey Nyamota assisted the group in establishing a demonstration plot on one of the member's farms, where all the group members could share the cultivation costs and receive practical training on the growing of passion fruits. Average incomes have increased from \$833 (KSh. 62,475) in 2005 to a projected \$9,000 (KSh. 675,000) for 2006.

organizations come in many shapes and sizes: membership varies from less than twenty to more than 6,000; and there are organizations that are village groups while others are national (e.g., Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE), Kenya National Federation of Agricultural Producers (KENFAP)) or even regional organizations (e.g., East African Farmers Federation). Sustainability of groups is a major issue, especially where business research and planning skills are low. According to field observations, there is a tendency for groups to depend on project support for survival, an indication of inadequate planning for sustainability. It is

important for groups to build the capacity of their members to understand and put in place suitable interventions to promote sustainability.

Benefits Derived From Membership in a Producer Organization: Producer organizations provide a range of benefits to members, and in the case of most IEHA producer organizations, smallholders. These include (1) opportunities to bulk up production for larger sales volumes and better market opportunities; (2) improved access to inputs, services, information, etc.; (3) enhanced voice; (4) social support; (5) group savings/credit; and (6) access to improved practices such as planting in rows, seeding, timely planting and harvesting, input application, and post-harvest handling.

Challenges Related to Producer Organizations: One notable challenge with producer organizations is that farmers are sometimes brought into a scheme that has not had adequate feasibility analysis. Creating and maintaining an active and effective producer group is hard work and takes time and good leadership. Several IP key informants noted that there is too much push to create more and more groups and not enough appreciation for the need to build sustainable capacity. Insufficient and poor quality storage is a critical limitation to bulking, quality enhancement and capturing higher prices. Storage constraints were reported in all countries and also from those key informants who are further along the value chain. Producer organizations with limited technical, managerial or financial resources may find it difficult or impossible to manage or coordinate with other stakeholders. Sometimes, when a group is successful, politicians become interested and intervene. Likewise, many women's groups complain that men tend to take over successful groups to the detriment of women.

Conclusions on Producer Groups

- Organizations with larger membership (economies of scale) have better opportunities for leverage in the market place, as exemplified by the following organizations: (i) in the case of maize and barley, by KACOFA, Uganda, with a membership of 6,328; and (ii) in the case of milk, by dairy federations in Kenya with more than 1,000 members (supported by the Kenya Dairy Development Program/Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program). KACOFA has forward contracts for barley with Uganda breweries and supplies maize to WFP under the Purchase for Progress (P4P) program. Dairy federations in Kenya have been able to negotiate prices with milk processors for bulk deliveries that are as high as KSh.4 more per liter. (Source: Interviews with KAFOCA; Land O'Lakes).
- Smaller farmer groups have less bargaining power but may be very appropriate for some marketing programs and for group guarantees of repayment for individual farmer credits.
- In the absence of strong and well-organized and well-managed farmers' groups, there is a likelihood of market distortion by big buyers of farmers' produce, e.g., large processors in the case of milk (Land O'Lakes, Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program). Farm groups can often negotiate with large marketing groups to get a fair deal for farmers while reducing transaction costs by grouping farmers for input supply for credit, technical assistance, and delivery of outputs.
- Marketing is still a challenge for producer organizations. Some of the larger organizations engage the services of qualified marketing professionals. Lack of marketing services negatively affects the receptivity of farmers to training because they do not see the value in the effort, and their adoption of new technologies and practices (Land O'Lakes, Kenya Dairy Sector Competitiveness Program). Quality incentives, such as a refusal to buy substandard products or price premiums for high quality products, can often convince farmers and others to participate in training programs that improve production, post-harvest handling, or business management results.
- Experience to date suggests that there is a need for strong corporate linkages between producer organizations and major agribusinesses or commodity buyers.
- The quality of management of a producer organization is critical for it to operate as a successful business entity. Therefore, there is a need emphasized business management skills for the senior personnel of producer organizations. Without sufficient capacity building, exceptional management (such as KACOFA's) may not be easy to replicate.
- An important success factor is the awareness of group members about why they should form groups to realize benefits. It is not enough to merely form groups. Members need appropriate capacity building to form sustainable groups.

Recommendations for Agricultural Productivity under FTF

Research

1. Long-term research should be emphasized in FTF as a means of increasing productivity. Short timelines for IEHA and FTF project results may preclude financing for long-term research projects and tend to focus more on approval of new varieties and new pesticides by national authorities to get them to farmers and train the farmers—generally a process that could be done in under five years.
2. The dissemination of new technologies should be encouraged, including free traditional seeds with low input needs for refugees returning to farming, improved seeds for surplus-producing farmers coupled with advice and training on the mix of inputs needed, credit programs to permit purchase of inputs, post-harvest handling techniques, and marketing of products.

3. A wide range of technologies should be explored. For instance, flattening land for irrigated rice, use of nurseries for transplanting rice seedlings and planting in rows, use of nurseries for tomato plants for transplanting, the possibility of buying hand tillers to replace labor, use of backpack sprayers for pesticides, or, alternatively, use of crops that have built-in genetic resistance to some pests, and the use of high-yielding corn and sorghum varieties.
4. FTF project designs must ensure that any new technology being introduced is appropriate. Irrigation may not be a good option in many places if it reduces the water table or if soil is inadequate or if farmers are not willing to contribute their labor to maintain irrigation systems.
5. All marketing and production programs need to build in a coordination mechanism for interaction amongst all the relevant players in a value chain. Both production and marketing are essential and neither should be addressed in isolation. Farm organizations are likely to play a key role in grouping farmers for training, quality control and better post-harvest handling of products.
6. Realistic introduction of new technology requires a good understanding of local conditions. Farmers can broadcast traditional millet varieties in areas with poor rainfall and have a basic staple that won't produce high yields, but may be a reliable provider of part of the family's food needs without much investment or risk. But most of them need to produce cash crops or livestock products, and USAID programs can help link them to new technology.
7. Sustainability is important. Loans for equipment or animals can be provided, but the question of veterinary services, equipment maintenance, and extension work by public or private sector players should be included in any production and marketing system.
8. Both Southern Africa Root Crops Research Network (SARRNET) and Eastern Africa Root Crops Research Network (EARRNET) should conduct applied research and get the smallholder farmers (and, if possible, extension agents) involved in all aspects of the project.
9. Farmers should be advised against concentrating too many resources on monoculture cash crops such as maize. Crops like cassava and sweet potato with Vitamin A or other protein and vegetable crops should be considered as alternative cash crops and as capable of providing adequate nutrition for the family. Applied research programs would need three or more years to produce solid results.
10. Efforts can be made in the difficult process of getting farmers to change cultivation techniques to prevent soil degradation. This might include digging compost pits for crop residues and the use of such residues with or without animal dung to improve soil structure and prevent soil degradation.

EXPANDING MARKETS AND TRADE (FTF IR 2)

Expanding Markets and Trade is an intermediate result within the FTF Results Framework (see Appendix H). To achieve this result, FTF intends to expand market information for producers and enterprise owners, improve post-harvest infrastructure, improve access to financial services and create an enabling policy environment for agribusiness growth. Under IEHA, a similar IR entitled “Increased Agricultural Trade,” addressed trade. However, its focus was more on increasing the competitiveness of small-holder-based agriculture, as well as enhancing market infrastructure and institutional trade capacity. The lessons learned from IEHA’s efforts to tackle agricultural trade issues provide insight into how FTF might choose to address these topics moving forward. The numerous examples below indicate the diversity of issues in expanding markets and farm linkages with buyers through several mechanisms—their own group or a “lead” farmer buying from out growers, production for export markets, overcoming barriers to trade by developing grades and standards for exported products, etc.

Value-Chain Approach

Findings

Value-chain analysis at the start of planning takes account of the many players in farm production and marketing—from farm to fork—and includes crop varieties, input suppliers, credit suppliers, and technical assistance needs; and, most important, investigates the market opportunities for the product to be sold, including timing and quality issues. While the focus will be on helping small farmers, other groups may be important collaborators in the marketing system. Products must be price competitive against alternative suppliers of like or competitive products, so producing and marketing at low cost will be essential.

Many of the IEHA-funded projects utilized a value-chain development approach (e.g., PROFIT in Zambia, dairy projects in Kenya and Zambia, horticulture in Ghana)

and focused on carefully selected agricultural commodities where there is a competitive advantage and the commodities are critical to trade, food security and agricultural growth. Regional programs also used a value-chain approach, such as USAID’s Competitiveness and Trade Expansion Program (COMPETE). In all instances, the projects’ focus on markets was amplified. As IEHA progressed, the focus shifted emphasis from high-value international horticultural export crops to staple crops for domestic or regional markets. Likewise, there was more focus on and participation by smallholders. Many of the market-oriented projects had two components: (1) export business development (later broadened to agribusiness development) and (2)

KEY SUCCESS: FINDING UNFILLED AND UNIQUE MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

The USAID-funded Agribusiness in Sustainable Natural African Plant Products (ASNAPP) has market development as its number one service to smallholder farmers. In Livingston, Zambia, farmers, including orphans and widows, have generated \$1,000,000 in sales since 2006 from the ASNAPP vegetable production scheme. ASNAPP begins with identifying and “ground-truthing” unfilled and emerging market opportunities, like demand for fresh fruits and vegetables from Victoria Falls tourists, and then focuses on developing high quality products through agricultural best practices. All stakeholders—the farmers, NGOs, purchasing agents, etc. —are fully engaged. Those producer groups that are entrepreneurial—adaptable, motivated, innovative—are successful, like the group in Livingston, and these groups are self-selecting. Local lead farmers with the vision and commitment to relieving rural poverty are the links to the smallholders, the community and the markets. For ASNAPP, knowledge is power and is the pivotal point around which the organization functions. In seven years (2000–2007), ASNAPP assisted 1,028 enterprises and provided agribusiness training to 58,066 farmers, with resulting sales of \$19,070,007 across six African countries. (Sources: Field observations and ASNAPP website <http://www.asnapp.org>)

the industry-wide enabling environment. The components were defined at the mission level or recommended by USAID's Bureau for Africa, Office of Sustainable Development/Washington.

Integrating smallholder farmers into a value chain required vastly improved communication between a smallholder producer or farmer groups and buyers about the expected quality and quantity of a commodity. This was a gradual process of introducing new technologies, inputs and quality standards, often through the use of field schools, demonstration sites or lead farmers. Farmers saw higher yields, better quality and, usually, a higher price paid to them. They learned to respond to changing market needs and that sales and higher prices depend on cooperation and communications with buyers.

Farmer Access to Markets: Farmers across Africa were encouraged and given direction by IEHA IPs on how to identify a market before investing in improved practices or a new crop/variety. In Zambia, the Agribusiness in Sustainable National African Plant Products (ASNAPP) project identified opportunities where commercial buyers are interested in sourcing from smallholders or where a commercial farmer is buying from smallholders. The commodities produced and marketed range from vegetables, seedlings and fruits to natural products, medicinal plants and herbal teas. Farmer groups showed ingenuity in managing their proceeds. More than one group divided their profits into reinvestment, member income and contingency funds for either group or individual emergencies. Groups could identify alternative buyers should the current contracts and less formal deals fall through.

In Uganda, the IEHA-funded LEAD project—along with WFP, the Market Linkages Initiative and the EAGC supported by USAID/East Africa—has been working opportunistically and collaboratively to expose farmers to grain standards and grades and practices that will help farmers meet them. At the same time, they encourage buyers to pay premiums for quality grain (or discount poorer quality grain). In 1995, Agroways, operating under the Uganda Commodities Exchange regulations, established a warehouse receipt system largely to benefit smallholders and assist them in getting access to commercial buyers. WFP, the largest buyer, is strict about maize quality standards and its purchases. It tenders locally for corn with bids from a variety of competing suppliers (cooperatives and large local traders) and serves as an outlet for smallholder production as well as a stimulus in the spread of quality standards. The regional COMPETE program has been involved in connecting smallholder farmers to WFP under its Purchase for Progress (P4P) project. Similarly, the nascent agricultural commodity exchanges in Southern Africa, the Zambia Agricultural Commodities Exchange (ZAMACE) and the Malawi Agricultural Commodities Exchange (MACE) act to better guarantee maize quality. Both in Uganda and Zambia, WFP participates in these activities under its P4P program and is partially supported by IEHA.

The work to limit barriers to and facilitate regional trade within East Africa has relied on a whole range of national, regional and international institutions. These include COMESA, Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA), Regional Agricultural Trade Expansion Support Program (RATES), EAC, COMPETE, SIDA, Australia, Farm Concern International, WFP, and EAGC (both the regional office in Nairobi and the Uganda and Tanzania country offices). USAID has been involved directly and indirectly through a number of these stakeholders and projects. These efforts have resulted in reduced taxes, more open trade and an agreement on a set of grain standards for maize. COMESA members in East and Southern Africa have recognized these grain standards.

Farmers and producer groups have been sensitized, based on trainings and other technical support of IEHA IPs, on the new or growing markets and the factors that facilitate or hinder access to them. However, work is unfinished in ensuring that producer groups and small-scale farmers can sustain the markets once a project ends. This is an issue discussed in greater detail in the SCOFLES and Ghana Pineapple case studies.

In Mali, there were three distinct but interconnected projects under IEHA to increase farmers' incomes and access to markets: the Programme de Développement de la Production Agricole au Mali (PRODEPAM), Trade Mali and Mali Finance. It was only in the final year of the projects that there was a concerted plan to coordinate the three, and by that time, opportunities for synergies were lost (Sources: TIPCEE, PRODEPAM, Mali Finance and Trade Mali Final Reports, and field observation). In Mali, separating finance, production and trade into three different projects with different chiefs of party was not consistent with the value-chain approach, and cooperation among the three was less than ideal. Explicit coordination and cooperation occurred during the final year of the complementary PRODEPAM, Trade Mali and Mali Finance projects. Probably, these should have been three sets of complementary activities with one chief of party controlling activities relating to the entire value chains of several major commodities.

Market Performance: The market performance of the IEHA agribusiness development project portfolio ranged from excellent to poor. The variability emerged from changes in consumer preferences (e.g., switching to other products when the pineapple export market collapsed in Ghana) to unprecedented and unpredictable spikes in agricultural input prices, resulting in higher prices and shortages of local basic food stuffs such as rice and legumes across Africa. Changing weather patterns such as late or light rains also caused havoc in African agricultural markets. IEHA built up the small farmers' skill base, access to micro credit and ability to identify new market opportunities. It supported a number of projects where there was increased experimentation and usage of out grower schemes linking smallholder farmers to export markets via large mechanized commercial farms and processing plants.²³ If feeder roads from the smallholder farms are not passable during the harvest season without refurbishment or alternative transport modes, the product may end up rotting at the farm gate. There is an estimated loss of forty percent of produce on the way to market as well as increasing fuel costs.²⁴ The need for improving the agricultural infrastructure will continue into the foreseeable future as will the need for building the technical and market know-how of smallholder farmers.

In Ghana, the five-year, \$30 million IEHA agribusiness flagship project TIPCEE had generated impressive results from its support of Ghanaian agribusiness but not as it had initially expected. By the project's end in 2009, much of the targeted results for value and volume of sales for assisted agribusinesses came not from high-value pineapple as had been predicted but from a rebalanced portfolio from maize, tomato, orange, onion and soy commodity value chains for processing and domestic markets. Not only had TIPCEE refocused its resources towards staple crops midway through the project, but the pineapple industry unexpectedly collapsed when the European market shifted its preference from the Smooth Cayenne pineapple to the MD2 variety.

After this collapse, some export growers pursued a growth strategy for the preferred MD2 variety, but the small out growers mostly did not adapt quickly.²⁵ Annual Ghanaian pineapple exports dropped to 31,567 MT in 2009 or one-half of the previously exported volumes. TIPCEE's lessons are to (1) maintain a focus on markets; (2) listen to project stakeholders' issues and demonstrate practical solutions; and (3) stay flexible during implementation.

23 An example is the Emerging Farmers in Matanuska, Mozambique, where 60 smallholders with 15 Ha act as out growers to large scale arable farmers. Smallholders grow maize, sesame, mung bean, and soya. Inputs are supplied at bulk prices by social entrepreneurs Ikuru, who then buy products in bulk (maize and soya), which is sold on to poultry operators with feed mills like Novos Horizontes. Thus, contract farming with large commercial operations can give market access to smallholders.

24 The Economist, "A Recipe for Riots," May 28, 2011, p. 54.

25 Trade and Investment Program for a Competitive Export Economy Final Report, prepared for USAID by Chemonics International Inc, November 2009.

The shift from creating competitiveness in export markets to improving rural livelihoods through domestically consumed cash crops required a different staff mix and posed new challenges. For example, smallholders lacked basic knowledge about production and marketing while cutting edge technology was required for high-value crops. The TIPCEE project was replaced with the Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement (ADVANCE) project, similar to TIPCEE but without the export orientation, an essential part of the value chain with respect to export commodities, but not for staples for the domestic market.

Other countries experienced this shift in USAID focus as well. In Uganda, the focus moved from the lead farmer and private enterprise development approaches of the Investment in Developing Export Agricultural project (IDEA) and APEP projects to the producer organization market access to basic grains and staples markets.

The “Conclusions and Lessons Learned” section of the TIPCEE Final Report states that it underestimated the lack of trust within the private sector. “The difficulty in finding win-win situations among exporters and producers, and between producers and buyers was formidable and continues to hinder development of the sector.”²⁶ One lesson from this that could be applied to other types of programs is that market information systems alone may not be sufficient without other ancillary efforts to create reliable and enduring linkages between buyers and sellers.

ADVANCE, the follow-on project to TIPCEE, is working to strengthen a network of Lead Farmers and Lead Buyers. ADVANCE also intends to bring together a more complete range of value-chain players, such as equipment dealers, financiers and input suppliers, as well as the producer and end buyer. The ADVANCE Acting Chief of Party believes that there often is a lack of trust between the public and private sectors and between other value-chain players. ADVANCE wants to further investigate the value-chain system and its enabling environment, especially with regard to market incentives and market risks.²⁷ Stakeholder relations were a bottleneck to developing selected value chains to their potential. Provisions for contract enforcement through arbitration procedures included in contract language, such as programs pursued by EAGC in East Africa, can help build the requisite trust.

Factors Critical to Market Performance: Across agribusiness development projects and across IEHA countries, access to credit and quality inputs by smallholders and an understanding of product grades and standards are critical to achieving successful market performance.

Producer organizations have been a means of organizing farmers into legal entities that can help group farmers to buy seeds, fertilizer and pesticide, and organize credit and group production for storage, sale and transport. One clear advantage to the lender is help in the recovery of loans. In Uganda, barley farmers were organized through the KACOFA, which deducted the amount due to the Centenary Bank upon payment by the Association of Uganda Breweries. (Source: IEHA field observations, March 8, 2011). On the downside of credit linked to a producer group, defaulters pose a challenge. Often a group is jointly responsible for the debts of each individual; nonetheless, defaults are not uncommon.

Producer groups can usually obtain higher prices when they negotiate as a group and are able to supply in bulk. The Dairy Federations in Kenya, which is discussed under Producer Groups, demonstrated that farmers

²⁶ TIPCEE Final Report, November 2009, p. 55.

²⁷ Interviews in the field, Emily Miller, February 2011.

have greater price negotiating leverage as a group with bulk supplies. The total value of credit to beneficiaries across all countries from FY2005, the first year data are fully reported, through FY2010 is summarized below. Credit values increased from \$3.2 million in 2007 to almost \$180 million in FY2010.

TABLE 9. VALUE OF CREDIT TO BENEFICIARIES (MILLIONS OF U.S. DOLLARS)

	FY05		FY06		FY07		FY08		FY09		FY010	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Total Value	6.65	3.20	10.51	9.67	8.89	79.8	65.2	81.5	46.4	115.3	73.5	180.0

Source: Table 2.4 Levels for Intermediate Results and Achievements of Targets

Access to credit for inputs and adequate local storage for non-perishables permit the smallholder to scale up production volume, holding back some of the product to sell when prices are higher (e.g., during the “lean season”). In Mali, an innovative credit storage program, Credit Stockage Vivrier, was designed and piloted by CARE Mali and subsequently scaled up. The warehoused rice serves as a guarantee for a short-term loan from a micro-finance institution. The associations and financial institutions each receive a key to the warehouse to ensure a certain level of control and system transparency. The association can receive financing equivalent to seventy percent of the value of the stored rice at harvest prices. Rice stored at harvest time is sold several months later, when prices are higher. With an average profit margin of twenty percent, the rice credit storage program has proven to be a lucrative activity for all involved. (Source: TradeMali Final Project Report, September 2007). (See Appendix G for other examples of IEHA-funded projects that illustrate the importance of access to credit.)

In sum, the factors identified as critical contributors to market performance are:

1. Credit,
2. Quality and timely inputs,
3. Storage,
4. Bulk sales,
5. Transport,
6. Market Services,
7. Infrastructure, and
8. Stakeholder relations.

Grades and Standards: Grades and standards are new concepts to many African smallholder farmers, who, prior to IEHA, only sold to local markets, often at low prices. Sudanese traders in northern Uganda have recently bought improperly dried corn from farmers, with immediate payment, quite different from the procedures for selling corn to WFP; that corn is tested for quality, aflatoxin and other problems. (Source: Pomeroy discussions with cooperatives and traders and WFP in Uganda, June 2009). For export crops, adherence to Global Gap standards and procedures can be mandatory. Any industrial process can benefit from Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) and can identify problems and increase the reliability of quality. IEHA set targets and collected data on the number of firms achieving international standards (e.g., GLOBAL GAP, EurepGAP, and HACCP). The results are shown below:

TABLE 10. NUMBER OF FIRMS²⁸ ACHIEVING INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS/CERTIFICATION

	FY05		FY06		FY07		FY08		FY09		FY010	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
# of firms	28	55	67	65	85	127	2	53	6	50	37	9

Source: Table 2.4 Levels for Intermediate Results and Achievements of Targets

FY2007 was the peak year for international certifications, with 127 firms. It is unclear if the “firm” definition includes producer groups, associations and other farm-based organizations. It is also unclear why only two firms were targeted for FY2008 in comparison to a target of eighty-five firms in FY2007. From FY2005 through FY2010, 359 firms or groups were certified. What would be interesting to note is how many organizations are getting recertified using their own resources after a supporting project has ended.

TIPCEE in Ghana and TradeMali both made significant efforts in developing grades and standards, particularly for high-value export market crops such as pineapples. TIPCEE trained more than 100,000 farmers in Good Agricultural Practices designed for their particular crops and markets. Practices spanned the entire production cycle from seed selection to transportation and storage. TIPCEE created illustrated norms and standards posters for several key crops, including pineapple and mangos, thereby helping smallholders and pack house employees assess quality. TIPCEE developed templates for new Good Life Posters. Although simple in concept, the posters have been very successful in disseminating good agricultural practices in rural areas where literacy may be low and could easily be replicated in other countries and by other IPs.

Certification for Farm-based Organizations: TIPCEE set up partnerships with the Ghana Ministry of Food and Agriculture, GTZ, the trade association Sea Freight Pineapple Exporters of Ghana and Global Gap, the certification organization, to develop an option for certifying groups of smallholder farmers. This became Option 2 and a total of thirty-four farmer based organizations (FBOs) were Global Gap certified by the end of the TIPCEE project. The legacy of TIPCEE support is that today pineapple is the most sophisticated and state of the art value chain in Ghana and is used by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture as its Export Markets Quality Awareness Program platform for establishing quality and inspection standards for mango, papaya and international vegetable exports and for intra-regional trade.

A good case study in the issues related to certification and sustainability is the Malian mango farmers. A Senegalese consultant with experience in EurepGAP certification for the fruit and vegetable sector in West Africa provided support to Malian exporter groups from the beginning of the TradeMali project. Mr. Diao noted:

The achievements of mango exporter groups in Mali are quite remarkable. I assisted in the first EurepGAP certification in Senegal in 2002; since then another six firms received certification – during a period of five years. In Mali, we have seen an exciting accelerated

28 IEHA's definition of “achieving international standards” is certification on the following conventions and others like them: • EurepGAP (Euro-Retailer Produce Working Group-Good Agricultural Practices which evolved into GlobalGAP) • HACCP • ISO 9000, ISO 14000 (International Organization for Standardization) • WRAP (Worldwide Responsible Apparel Production). The numbers do not include annual certifications for the same standard by the same firm. There is no definition of “firm” in the IEHA evaluation; certifications for international standards were by producer association, farmer-based organizations and trade associations. It is unclear if they are defined as a firm as reported here.

snowball effect whereby seven groups received certification in a period of only two years! This success will likely stimulate others who are serious and ready to invest to become certified in the years to come. However, we should not forget that re-certification is needed every year and requirements are likely to become more stringent, putting once again more pressure on producers, pisteurs and exporters to reinvest in their activities in order to remain a player in international market export opportunities.

The West Africa IEHA evaluation team visited a mango traders association, “SCOFLES,” which received certification support from TradeMali, and learned that the association is only targeting domestic and regional markets (Senegal and Mauritania) due to the perceived stringency, cost and complexities of EuropeGAP certifications. This outcome echoes the situation of a group of over 100 Ghana mango growers who likewise abandoned GlobalGAP certifications once the IEHA projects terminated due to its costs. The spokesperson said that the buyers that TIPCEE had introduced them to three years before were not buying from them this year. Buyers arrived in 2010 to purchase mangos, but, because of inadequate amounts due to a poor harvest, the processors sourced from other mango growers and may have entered into an agreement for the upcoming season. This example illustrates the fragility of donor-facilitated buyer-seller relationships due to external, unexpected circumstances or (even) commercially unsustainable early successes. (Source: field visit by Emily Miller and James Oehmke, February 2011.) (For other case studies of Certification of farm-based organizations, see Appendix G.)

The mango program offers some useful conclusions:

- FBO cost-sharing certification with a project or the buyer increases mutual commitment and trust.
- To increase the sustainability of certification once a project ends, communications and strategies are needed about the importance of developing a track record as a reliable supplier and the resulting positive return on investment of recertification (Source: TradeMali Final Report 2007, page 10 and field visits by Emily Miller).
- The issues of risk and incentives should be further explored with growers and traders to determine the viability and sustainability of export certifications by FBOs without the push and financial subsidy from a donor project. Can smaller producer groups or associations afford to pay for certification on their own?
- IICEM, the follow-on project to TradeMali, is designing entrepreneurship trainings to *reinforce and stimulate the search for new market* leads and opportunities by the producer groups it was working with. Sustainability of markets is a concern.

TABLE 11. TRADEMALI MANGO SECTOR IMPACTS

MANGO SECTOR RESULTS	Year 1 (2004)	Year 2 (2005)	Year 3 (2006)	Year 4 (2007)
Number of beneficiaries	148 (48 men/ 100 women)	2,665 (2,565 men/ 100 women)	1,096 (982 men/ 114 women)	2,977 (2,520 men/ 457 women)
Number of organizations assisted	19	33	11	14
Volume marketed (tons)	2,748	2,845	3,870	5,492
Estimated value of mangos sold (billion FCFA)	n/a	n/a	1.8 (US\$3.6 million)	3.7 (US\$7.9 million)
Number of certifications obtained by agro-entrepreneurs	–	–	1	6

Agro-Processing as Opportunities: In contrast to the activities reviewed in Malawi, Mozambique presents various examples of adding value through agro-processing and of integrated value chains, mainly in the Nampula region through AgriFuturo:

- Other important USAID agricultural processing projects, including a variety of programs in Mozambique
- Cashew processing in Mozambique, providing 700 jobs plus a market for thousands of cashew producers
- Broiler out growers
- Banana production for export
- Soy production and milling (financed by USAID and by the Dutch)

See more details on these activities and successes in Appendix G.

Seed Value Chains and Access: Seed provision has been supported by regional as well as country-specific IEHA initiatives and is the foundation of higher yields, quality and adaptation to changing climatic conditions. TIPCEE used demonstration sites and Lead Farmers to introduce new varieties of fruit and vegetable seeds that were in demand by European buyers or were simply higher yielding and more disease resistant. In one case, TIPCEE worked with another USAID project, ASNAPP to train farmers in the sustainable collection of the seeds and bark of the native Voacanga Africana tree, which is an ingredient in memory enhancement and which has generated more than one million dollars in export sales.

The Seed Project funded out of the USAID West Africa Mission focuses on development of the private sector. Its focus has been on seed policy harmonization and value-chain strengthening in eight West African countries. The ECOWAS regulation on seed law harmonization was adopted by all 15 member states in May 2009 and should facilitate regional trade in seeds and planting materials by establishing a regional catalogue of

varieties. This harmonization has the potential to open up the market and increase the need for quality seed production.²⁹ Constraints to seed production and dissemination include:

- Lack of seed demand forecasting,
- Seed certification bottlenecks in some countries,
- Restrictive seed import policies in some countries, and
- Limited production of seed in key staple crops like sorghum, millet and cowpeas.
- (See other information on initiatives on onions and tomatoes in Appendix G)

IEHA has supported activities to harmonize policies, regulations and protocols regarding seed development, release and distribution in East Africa as well. Supported by IEHA, ICRISAT worked with ASCERCA members on a protracted but important process to harmonize seed policies for 10 crops significant in terms of food security and agricultural production. Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda made good progress, and the intra-regional sale of quality seed (volume and value) has increased among these countries. Now, ICRISAT is working on a similar effort within Southern Africa with 15 countries and SADC, a relatively weak regional organization for a partner.

Conclusions on Value-Chain Approach

- Maintaining a focus on markets and starting with demand and demand preferences have proven to be effective in gaining access to markets, obtaining higher returns, and contributing to smallholder productivity and household welfare.
- Timing can be the main determining factor in price setting and may enable a grower to fill a niche before or after the normal tomato harvest. In this case, small-scale irrigation is the enabling technology. Such opportunities should be investigated and exploited.³⁰
- Entrepreneurship thrives and is self-selecting; when unmet market opportunities are identified, there is full engagement by producers and buyers, and the opportunity is supported by technical and business development tools and training.³¹
- Lead farmers and buyers can be an important linkage for producer groups seeking to access markets.
- Adequate storage for non-perishable crops is crucial for generating higher prices and sales volumes. Appropriate storage prevents deterioration in the quality of produce. Storage also reinforces the link between market timing and price setting to producers. Location of storage depends on cost, drying and fumigation facilities and other factors.
- Group Certification allows smallholders to compete in new markets. Producer groups can mobilize and achieve certification (usually for export markets) within a relatively short timeframe if the market rewards growers for the additional costs and time for certification. In the case of TIPCEE, early buy-in by all of the major stakeholders such as the Ghana Ministry of Agriculture (which changed its marketing regulations and inspection practices to assist the export program) was necessary to a successful public-private certification process. This reflects the need among public-private partnerships and initiatives for joint planning and design from the ground up.

29 Seed Project 2010 Annual Report, page 9.

30 Dixon Amoxa is a tomato farmer and Lead Farmer in the Dormaa Ahenkro-Brong Ahafo region of Ghana. He credits TIPCEE with providing him the technical and technology support to grow tomatoes under irrigation during the shoulder season when tomatoes are less plentiful at the local markets.

31 In Livingston, Zambia, farmers, including orphans and widows, have generated \$1,000,000 in sales since 2006 from the ASNAPP vegetable production scheme that focused on self-selecting entrepreneurs and unfilled niche markets for tourist demand for fresh fruits and vegetables.

- In cases where large commercial farmers with good market access want to establish out grower systems with smaller farmers, this would be a very appropriate segment of the value chain for USAID to provide training on production inputs, post-harvest handling and other short-term assistance to enable small farmers to integrate into a reliable marketing system.
- Progress on the creation of grain standards and grades has provided an opportunity for farmers and other actors along the value chain to reap higher returns with the provision of better quality produce.
- Bulk sales have provided smallholders and lead farmers with new market outlets (e.g., WFP, regional exporters, and breweries) and better leverage when negotiating prices. Group operations have been able to support group savings and, in some instances, secure bank loans.
- The performance of input markets is poor, yet these markets are critical to stimulating agriculture growth. Farmers need and want access to quality inputs, and they are willing to pay for them. However, there is significant risk associated with purchasing inputs when markets are highly concentrated and unable to deliver timely quality inputs. Many farmers complained of input adulteration. Several governments continue to supply smallholders with inputs and regulate markets, crowding out the development of a private input supply system.
- Rural credit continues to be woefully inadequate.
- Under the IEHA-funded agribusiness development projects, farmers and farm-based organizations were connected to processors, exporters and other buyers for the domestic marketplace.
- Building trust among value-chain stakeholders is critical and problematic. Trust building is needed between buyers and producers, between borrowers and lenders, and between the public and private sector on issues of a business-enabling environment through sound policy, including import duties and export controls. Distrust runs deeper than IPs anticipate, and the time it takes to develop trust is often beyond a project timeframe. There is no one tried-and-true method to build trust, but adding it as a component to future workshops and training, which should include why trust is so important to business relations and life, is suggested. There are team-building workshops that include activities to build trust that could be a starting point. Long-term trading relationships are the best way to build trust and amicably resolve minor problems (without courts or formal arbitration). New entrants (such as a farmers' cooperative) may find it useful to link up with a large private buyer with good contacts and relationships with the final buyers.
- Coordination among projects increases sustainability of efforts and achievements.
- Dry and rodent-resistant storage facilities for non-perishable commodities like rice and maize, combined with a credit scheme like the Credit Stockage Vivrier scaled up in Mali, contribute significantly through the creation of group savings and as collateral for input credit. Storage and delayed sale can result in higher prices and year-round sales, and create new markets for FBOs. Some management is required, such as fumigation every two months or so—easier with bulk commodities—so farmers may loosely identify preservation for their grain—another program involving trust and good management.
- There are numerous examples—for example, Malian mango and Ghana pineapple growers—for producer organizations and commercial-scale farmers that were trained to meet the stringent protocols and standards for GlobalGAP and EurepGAP certifications. Once the process was understood and technical assistance provided by IPs or buyers, certifications were achieved within one or two growing seasons. TIPCEE, in particular, developed an innovative tool kit, including Good Life posters and a farmer's passport of quality requirements and skill building.

- Seed provision—availability of certified high-quality and appropriate varieties—to rural smallholders is a constraint to food security and increased trade. Seed certification by national laboratories is a bottleneck. Policy harmonization across regions with regard to the movement of seed is an ongoing issue. Seed is the foundation of a productive agricultural sector in Africa, and additional resources are needed from USAID, other donors and national and regional agricultural research and policy institutions.
- Activities supporting smallholder production and access to local markets merit ongoing support based on IEHA-funded accomplishments. For instance, significant improvements in smallholder purchases were demonstrated under IEHA. The value of purchases was \$150.7 million in FY2007 as compared to \$71.5 million in FY2005—more than a doubling of income to smallholders and their families.
- Access to credit and quality inputs by smallholders and an understanding of product grades and standards are critical to achieving successful market performance. Notable IEHA-funded projects that have addressed these critical elements of credit and inputs and standards are presented and, based on the project reports, have had a favorable impact when there is a holistic market approach.
- Producer groups can usually obtain higher prices when they negotiate as a group and are able to make bulk supplies. The Dairy Federations in Kenya, which is discussed under Producer Groups, demonstrated that farmers have greater price negotiating leverage as a group with bulk supplies.
- Partnerships with governments, donors, private sector firms, and certification organizations can target certification training towards groups of small-holder farmers. In turn, more small holders will be able to enter into higher levels of the value chain. This was evidenced through the successful TIPCEE project in Ghana towards certifying small holders in pineapple standards.
- There is potential for commercial-scale agricultural development given proper investment for inputs and production technology. This speaks to the importance of cultivating relationships between market stakeholders. The Matanuska banana plantation in Mozambique illustrates the success of a plantation growing staple foods and export crops as result of this relationship.

Regional and Global Trade

Findings

IEHA supported efforts that exploit the power of markets, especially regional markets, to create regional growth and stimulate private sector agribusiness investments. Programs that target smallholder-based agricultural growth give the hungry access to food by both raising their incomes and reducing the price of food. Trade is measured under Intermediate Result 3: Increased Agricultural Trade where international and intraregional are reported separately. The 2008 IEHA final report states that the value of intra-regional trade reached \$250 million from targeted agricultural products. Maize exports within East Africa were the major contributor, reporting \$189 million of the total.³² This compares to between \$225 and \$250 million in value of intra-regional trade between FY2006-2008 and approximately \$350 million in reported in FY2005. Cotton, seed, dairy and horticultural products were the other significant contributing commodities. According to the report, IEHA has facilitated more than \$225 million annually since 2005 and a doubling of staple foods in comparison to FY2005, a reflection of the strategic shift away from high-value export crops. Intra-regional trade under IEHA has increased incomes and a doubling of staple food crops, partly in response to very favorable growing conditions throughout the region. Maize exports within East Africa were the major catalyst. Cotton, seed, dairy and horticultural products from east Africa were other major drivers.

TABLE 12. VALUE OF INT'L, INTRA-REGIONAL AND SMALLHOLDER (PURCHASES FROM) TRADE (MILLIONS \$)

	FY05		FY06		FY07		FY08		FY09		FY010	
	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
Inter-Trade	437.5	256.1	265.8	312.7	440.3	419.6	170.7	520.6	445.3	398.6	510.6	116.1
Intra-trade	14.6	12.9	13.8	20.0	22.4	49.8	170.1	172.6	80.8	231.6	112.7	508.8
Small-holders	26.3	69.8	37.3	114.9	77.1	134.4	97.3	133.3	86.0	152.0	101.2	134.0

Source: Table 2.4 Levels for Intermediate Results and Achievements of Targets

Without supporting narrative, it is difficult to explain major changes like the actual value of international trade in FY2010 (at its lowest level during the reporting period). Changes in Ghanaian pineapple export production and marketing systems probably provide part of the explanation. Intra-regional trade is reported to have risen from \$12.9 million in FY2005 to \$508 million in FY2010 while the value of purchases from smallholders shows a fairly steady increase: from \$69 million in FY2005 to \$134 million in FY2010. In every year, targets in the value of smallholder purchases were exceeded.

³² FY 2008 IEHA Final Report.

KEY SUCCESS: A REGIONAL APPROACH TO AGRIBUSINESS AND TRADE PROMOTION

The IEHA-funded Agribusiness and Trade Promotion (ATP) Project received \$12 million from the West Africa Mission based on the potential for regional trade approaching \$20 billion a year, 50 times current official figures, according to estimates from the International Food Policy Research Institute (ATP brochure undated). ATP facilitates direct buying and selling transactions, for example, Burkina Faso and Nigeria livestock transactions. It operates in collaboration with regional partners and organizations such as ECOWAS, UEMOA, and CILSS and has strategic components of reducing physical and policy-related barriers to agricultural commodities, promoting initiatives that improve efficiency of regional value chains, building capacity for private sector advocacy, and creating linkages through support to regional associations. Outcomes of interventions are described as “significant reduction,” “enhanced linkages,” “more effective advocacy,” and “improved efficiency”—all of which are to create increased value and volume of intra-regional trade in West Africa, which ATP and regional organizations attempt to measure. Regional trade in West Africa may benefit from ATP’s work in identifying strategic road corridors in collaboration with the West Africa Trade Hub in order to monitor and mitigate road transport constraints.

Kenya and Ghana account for most international trade, while Kenya, Uganda and Mali account for the bulk of intra-regional trade. In FY2006, Kenya shipped 5.6 million tons of avocados within the region. Smallholder sales were primarily from Kenya (maize and vegetables) and Uganda (bananas and cotton). These data provide a measure of scale, trends, and the leading countries and their commodities. (Source: IEHA database).

In FY2008, five of the seven IEHA bi-lateral missions reported on 16 commodities traded within the region. Four of the bilateral missions did not report on the international trade targets. This seems to suggest the difficulty of tracking trade performance across national borders inside and outside of Africa although the final report states that the value of international trade in targeted agricultural

products was \$1.2 billion in FY2008. According to the West Africa Mission staff, IEHA indicators and interventions are very difficult to extrapolate to global trade. USAID-funded projects like the West Africa Trade Hub can track volume and value of sales by client firms or customs services, but internal trade can be more difficult to track. Even developing a sound baseline data set from which to measure change across countries is problematic.

TABLE 13. HIGH-VALUE EXPORTABLE COMMODITIES IN IEHA-FUNDED COUNTRIES³³

COMMODITY	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Vegetables	23,161,945	29,662,679	25,411,432
Cotton	9,065,000	28,297,526	39,713,813
Rice	829,700	12,039,000	13,707,416
Maize	8,660,638	1,541,553	11,088,275
Cashew	284,709	3,803,232	10,833,512
Coffee	1,122,000	5,355,961	9,120,193
Bananas	3,250,000	8,961,900	—
All other commodities	25,134,173	61,125,450	31,881,127
Total	71,508,165	150,787,301	141,755,768

³³ IEHA 2007 Annual Report.

The 2007 IEHA Annual Report provides a more complete look at the impact IEHA has had on smallholder farmers and families in the following table, which provides the value of purchases of crops. These aggregated data show impressive gains in cotton, rice, cashew, bananas and coffee—all high-value exportable commodities. The timeframe does not reflect the shift from high-value cash crops towards staple crops in late 2007 but does demonstrate that the original IEHA strategic initiatives to stimulate agricultural productivity and sales had a strong impact.

Conclusions on Regional and Global Trade

- Capacity building of regional trade promotion institutions cannot easily be accomplished nor can the outcomes of activities be easily measured. The regional missions of USAID, which are charged with this capacity building, expressed frustration about the vast distances between stakeholders and the difficulty of creating change with one or two embedded staff at a lagging institution, with monitoring and guidance made more difficult by understaffing at their own headquarters. Agreed-upon support to bi-lateral missions and their direct interventions within the marketplace and in trade promotion may be a better option.
- Regional institutions were noted as the weak link in developing an agricultural marketing information system such as MISTOWA. One strategy is for USAID regional missions to focus on a fewer number of the more innovative and regional institutions through a self-selection process for greater impact and change.
- There are formal (trade policy) and informal barriers to trade that may be difficult for USAID programs to address without major efforts such as that of EAGC in grain trade in East Africa. But easier regional trade could have a major impact on farm incomes and market stability. At present, much of the regional trade is pursued informally, so it is difficult to track. Linking buyers and sellers could lead them to find ways to overcome obstacles to crossing borders.
- Regional organizations such as ECOWAS and COMESA have liberal rules on regional trade, but sometimes national governments take restrictive action (e.g., Nigeria banning exports to Niger during a shortage); thus, it is difficult to implement the policies supported in theory.
- In spite of all the problems, regional trade can provide more food security to domestic producers if trade barriers are reduced. In a year of high production and low prices, commodities can be shipped to other markets—such as Ugandan corn to Kenya and Sudan and Ghanaian corn and Malian rice to Nigeria. Barriers to trade can be both official (trade bans or high customs duties) and unofficial (extortion by police and customs authorities, low price competition from Asian imports of rice and vegetable oil on which import duties are not paid because of bribery and which enter markets at lower prices than local products). Such barriers create a particular problem for investment. Regional trade efforts for corn and a few other products seem to have had some success in East Africa and could be expanded in light of the recent expansion of the East African Union. The first step would be market information and the second linking potential buyers and sellers and then addressing other obstacles.

Market and Food Security Information Systems

Findings

Market and food security information serve a wide range of functions in support of economic development and humanitarian response. Market information is critical for farmers, traders and industry to make informed decisions. Accessible market information facilitates price discovery and trade, tapers market power disparities, and enhances market coordination and efficiency. Numerous key informants noted the important role information plays in providing smallholders with improved earnings and market access and in promoting trade. One RESAKSS study notes that livestock trade in West Africa is significantly hampered by the lack of market information in addition to credit constraints, high transport costs and formal and informal taxes (Johnson, et al, November 2008). CAADP Pillar II identifies information and communication technology (ICT) as an important contributor to the objective of increasing smallholder access to markets. Access to prices in distant markets by farmers' organization through weekly radio broadcasts or by computer or cell phone systems can alert sellers to market opportunities and assist them in price negotiations with buyers. For many of them, once they begin selling on a regular basis, a cell phone call to several buyers about to make firm offers (and perhaps send a truck to pick up the goods) may replace the more general market price discovery mechanism. The general market price indicators may remain useful for assessing general price trends and, particularly, as valuable background for those negotiating prices with an individual buyer.

Other uses could be obtaining competitive bids on renting a truck/driver to transport a commodity. Trucks returning empty may seek a backhaul cargo, and the pricing for such may be attractive. Finding competitive rates on transport could increase the prospects for a farmer marketing organization to reach out to distant markets and/or to find attractively priced storage in urban locations. Mobile phones have become widespread throughout Africa, even among the poor, and provide not only a means of tracking market information but also of transferring funds to rural areas where banking facilities often do not provide this function. This new technology will have many implications, including people from cities and abroad helping relatives in the country with school fees and medical costs, and rapid and reliable payments in commercial transactions

Market information such as production, prices and stocks are also important inputs to policy formulation and market regulation. Consistent, objective price data are crucial inputs to effective policy analysis. For food security analysis, producer prices and other market information are critical to the measurement of rural incomes, food availability and food access. Monitoring data and time series data underlie the assessment of stable food security. Market prices are a primary input to scenario development as well and thus underpin contingency and response planning.

KEY SUCCESS: PRIVATE MARKET INFORMATION

A private internet and software company, BusyLab, founded in Ghana over 10 years ago by Mark Davies, linked up with MISTOWA to design and implement SMS and web-based market information to farmers and traders of West Africa. "TradeNet" evolved from the collaborative efforts of BusyLab and MISTOWA and allows traders and producers from anywhere in the world to find each other online or via mobile phones to find price information and to connect to do business. TradeNet has re-branded itself Esoko, which loosely means "trading" in Swahili, and the innovative mobile platform has recently attracted investor support from the Soros Foundation and the International Monetary Fund. The IEHA-supported Agribusiness and Trade Promotion (ATP) Project under USAID West Africa Mission uses the services of Esoko in reaching producers, buyers and input suppliers. Esoko says the subscription-based mobile phone platform can be used by individuals, businesses and projects to push and pull market information in a quick and affordable way. The company's business model is based on the concept of "Market Networks" or any group that wants to exchange market information. Today, Esoko uses its own enumerators to collect real time prices on over 60 commodities in 500 markets across Africa. Davies states, "We see the health sector as another natural application for the Esoko platform."

While prices have always been a primary component of market information, more and more systems provide farmers with information on quality standards, links to buyers and sellers, and important extension messages. The advent and rapid proliferation of new information and communication technologies has greatly facilitated the collection, management and dissemination of information. Cell phone ownership and use by smallholders and the rural poor was seen to blossom when mobile banking services were introduced and this seemed to rapidly spawn numerous additional applications. It is no wonder so many IEHA-supported projects engaged in some form of market information analysis and reporting. The IEHA evaluation Internet survey revealed that sixty percent of mission and IP programs included a component to improve market information systems. In addition, sixty-three percent of the missions and seventy-six percent of the IP respondents said that there was also a complementary program supporting market information systems. With respect to food security information systems, USAID supports food security and early warning information systems in all IEHA focus countries except Ghana.

Market Information Systems: IEHA programs include MIS support through a wide range of interventions such as:

- Capacity building in analysis, reporting and management of systems
- Introduction of short message service (SMS) devices and mobile phones to collect data and disseminate information to users
- Installation of notification blackboards
- Production of radio programs and publication of printed bulletins

Systems cover a diverse group of commodities ranging from basic food crops to horticulture, cash crops, and export crops. In Ghana, the TIPCEE project included an activity to improve trade data and market information systems in support of its objective of integrating smallholders into the export supply chain. For a period of time (ending in 2007), IFDC implemented a regional West Africa market information system, conducted training for government institutions and the private sector, and promoted information sharing. It also collaborated with the APEP³⁴ on an MIS in Uganda. Under the Food Security III program, Michigan State University (MSU) provided considerable technical assistance and training to MIS in Mali, Zambia and Mozambique. In East Africa, the Livestock Information Network and Knowledge System used information technologies now adopted by the Kenyan national system. Also in East Africa, an IEHA-funded RATES³⁵ project had been monitoring and reporting on a number of food and cash crops with the Regional Agriculture Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN), which has now been handed over to EAGC. EAGC is also working on the monitoring of informal trade. IEHA also funded two cross-border informal commodity trade monitoring systems: one in Southern Africa and the other, more recent, system in East Africa. WFP and FEWS NET initiated both systems, the latter through the Market Analysis Sub-group of the Food Security and Nutrition Working Group.

RATIN is an example of a system based on facilitating transactions and trade that continues to evolve. It is a trade intelligence structure, hosted as a web portal (www.ratin.net), which promotes structured grain trading in East Africa. RATIN gathers data from producers, traders, and processors and other market information sources, after which it analyzes the data and relays the information to users. Data relayed through RATIN include thorough analysis of orientation, identification of new opportunities for trade and production,

³⁴ Agricultural Productivity Enhancement Program.

³⁵ Regional Agricultural Trade Expansion Support.

support of early warning mechanisms for grain trading, assistance in analysis to minimize investors' risks, improvement of trade interactions among its members and users, and enhancement of more efficient and cost-effective intra-regional trade within the Eastern Africa region.

To assist grain industry stakeholders who cannot access commodity prices through the Internet, EAGC initiated an SMS facility (Bei-Sokoni), which has been tested and is now operational. SMS codes for Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda were set up and tested by CELLNET-Kenya Ltd. RATIN SMS is a low-cost, highly implementable cell phone-based platform that seeks to redress lack of market information. To receive an SMS, you pay far less compared to making a phone call or accessing the web. The benefits of SMS also center on convenience and flexibility since the SMS facility connects farmers, traders and processors to the market. Currently, most users of RATIN SMS are farmers who cannot access prices through the web.

EAGC/ACTESA (through food balance sheets) and Regional Enhanced Livelihoods in Pastoral Areas (RELPA) (through early warning for preservation of livelihoods) are two additional examples of IEHA-funded food security information systems.

In the countries visited, there were a number of additional MIS activities that were not funded by IEHA. The Zambian National Farmers' Union retrieves price information from buyers and makes it available via their website and mobile phone for a small fee per SMS. The system covers maize, sorghum, rice, wheat, cassava, beans, soybeans, groundnuts, sunflower, honey, beef, sheep, pigs and goats. While cell phone service is spotty in some parts of Zambia, the evaluation team found smallholders regularly using the system. In Uganda, cell phone coverage is nearly everywhere. There are two NGOs collecting and disseminating market information. In addition, NARO (research) and the Grameen Bank are collaborating on a system of Community Knowledge Workers, who are given cell phones with a platform that allows farmers to receive immediate commodity price quotes and information on weather and planting times, appropriate seed varieties, input suppliers and commodity buyers as well as advice on a range of plant diseases and conditions. Questions that cannot be immediately resolved are passed on to NARDS specialists and scientists at NARO. The phones can also be used for surveys and for tracking pest outbreaks and other disasters.

A number of key informants discussed the need to harmonize and integrate market information systems as well as incorporate other market monitoring activities, such as localized NGOs' price collection. The Uganda Office of the EAGC would like to establish a Memorandum of Understanding with Farm Grain Africa, the group who managed FoodNet, whereby Farm Grain Africa would manage market data and produce regular bulletins on a website and in hard copy format and EAGC would provide advice on the type of analysis desired by its membership. In an effort to assess the impact of regional staple food trade on rural poverty, ReSAKSS commissioned the East Africa ReSAKSS node to review trade data within the region, analyze the factors contributing to identified changes, and develop a consistent method to estimate trade volumes and values within the region. The results of this work could prove to be valuable in the boarder discussions on how to harmonize, store and readily access trade data for the region (Gbegbelegbe, et al, 2010 and Gelau, et al., 2010).

Opportunities to establish monitoring or reporting systems that use mobile phones are rapidly expanding and evolving in accordance with network access, ICT availability and project innovation (e.g., KACOFA in Kapchorwa, Uganda). Applications and pilots are proliferating across the continent. There is a need to facilitate the sharing of experiences among innovators and to validate the claimed benefits of the systems (e.g., "Are cell phone diagnostics and extension advice accurate and effective as a means for promotion of improved agricultural practices? Has the availability of market prices actually helped smallholders negotiate more favorable prices?").

Food Security Information Systems: IEHA funds the FEWS NET in all IEHA focus countries except Ghana. In each country, FEWS NET is an integral part of a government-led, multi-agency group tasked with food security and vulnerability assessment, monitoring, analysis and reporting. Participants of these groups, along with other relief agencies, engage in crisis prevention, mitigation and response. These local networks are key to understanding and monitoring global climate change and household resilience—two central themes of CAADP and FTF. IEHA also supports a number of relevant partners such as CILSS in West Africa and the national and vulnerability assessment committees (VACs) in Southern Africa.

In Zambia, the VAC noted that IEHA resources were used to enhance their analysis. It allowed them to develop methods to analyze rural livelihoods and look at food security holistically and not just from a production perspective. This improved their ability to more accurately target and estimate needs and humanitarian requirements. The VAC also mentioned that USAID is an active member of their donor forums. The USAID Southern Africa regional mission and Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) have supported both the regional VAC and national VACs through the regional FEWS NET office in Pretoria. The regional mission provided the funds to initiate the Southern Africa informal trade monitoring system. Data on cross-border flows are now routinely integrated into the Malawi national food balance sheet calculations, helping to more accurately measure shortfalls in basic staples and food aid needs. IEHA resources have been used to mentor and strengthen the several national VACs, monitor and report on a broader range of countries within the region (especially Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho), build capacity to create food security scenarios, and develop analysis tools (e.g., livelihood zone maps and profiles).

Early warning systems logically concentrate their focus and energies on disasters and response, and on supporting local governments, relief organizations and FFP. However, few systems provide tailored and actionable information to those institutions and stakeholders who work in economic development. Few key informants from the development side noted that they used information from the early warning systems to assist in the design and implementation of programs that address rural poverty and risks. Agro-climatic information was most often cited and could be considered an exception. IEHA Action Plans did not explicitly note their support to, or use of, these systems. FTF Implementation Plans, however, do include many more references to support for and linkages to vulnerability to shocks, climate change and early warning. Historic and current data and information from these systems could be used more effectively in strategy and program design as could consultations with OFDA and FFP. This absolutely is critical where the objectives are to reduce vulnerabilities and address the very poor as opposed to the viable poor. Government ministries will also be keenly interested in early analysis of new crises related to weather.

An example of the importance of bridging the emergencies and development comes from Kenya. Ordinarily, food security interventions (emergency food relief) take place only after a crisis has been established, and by that time it is sometimes too late; as a consequence, people and animals die. The most recent experience just occurred in 2010 and early 2011. The government had indicated that there was adequate food within the country, but poor distribution logistics to the famine-stricken areas meant that many people suffered. Part of the problem is poverty—the affected communities have been so impoverished by drought (even repeated droughts) that they simply cannot afford the food in the markets. The problem is not just high prices or a drought, but poverty and repeated shocks that prohibit full recovery. What is required is better anticipation of crises, more complete recovery, more means of protection from future shocks, and greater integration with distribution networks and economic development.

Conclusions on Market Information Systems

- Market information systems are widely felt to be important drivers to improved market coordination and performance, smallholder market access and, thus, expansion of markets and trade within and outside the region.
- FEWS NET and the national early warning systems have essentially focused on short-term emergencies and responses. They are introducing a new tool that estimates income losses to affected populations as a means of advising policy makers on urgent needs. The FEWS NET program, begun in the 1980s, is designed to provide quick information on impending crises. Its information can also be used to track ecological problems such as desertification. Other programs (e.g., economic analysis of IFPRI) could consider influencing informed decisions on sustained and longer-term investments to reduce poverty and vulnerabilities to shocks.
- When relevant market information is available, farmers and the poor are willing to regularly access and pay for it.
- Support to food security monitoring, assessment and reporting systems have increased the amount and quality of available data, improved estimates of needs and targeting, and contributed to better designs and implementation of contingency and response planning.
- Decision makers and political leaders in countries should take advantage of regional trade to enhance their food security (EAGC; Tegemeo; FEWSNET).

Recommendations for FTF Expanding Markets

Value-Chain Approach

1. The value-chain consideration of all players from farm to fork should generally be used in planning any marketing program, even if only a segment of the value chain is targeted for activities.
2. Seed research and development will require significant resources in the coming years. USAID support should continue in regional policy reform, seed production and seed distribution to lead farmers or agro input suppliers at the village level. Substantial support (fertilizer, advice, etc.) is needed to realize the benefits of high-yielding seeds, which require more attention and investment than traditional low-yielding seeds, which are often resistant to local pests.
3. The IEHA focus on markets and market access as a means to increase food production and rural household incomes should be continued.
4. More attention should be placed on input suppliers and options for developing viable private sector supply chains with reliable seeds and agrichemicals (fake or adulterated products are currently a problem).
5. FTF market development projects should be timed to lessen the gap between an old and new project.
6. If high-value export crops are to remain as an income-generating subcomponent of FTF, then sustainability incentives for annual certification programs need to be revisited. Although indefinite subsidies are not desirable, more transitional support may be needed to sustain smallholder participation as suppliers of certified export products.
7. New agribusiness development projects should consider continuing support to high-performing farmer-based organizations that will benefit from ongoing production and market support. This will allow greater attention to be placed on quality of service and impact as opposed to producer groups and uneven impact.

8. Regional seed certification should be pursued, perhaps through a US university project. The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) regulatory scientists in Senegal and South Africa (and Egypt) have close contacts with African regulatory scientists and can help with making and sustaining some of the official contacts throughout the continent, though another group should be relied on for implementation of a detailed program.
9. IPs of IEHA agribusiness development projects such as TIPCEE and TradeMali must first identify commodities with market opportunities and for which there exists competitive advantages, such as soil and climatic conditions, access to critical transportation hubs, available labor, and distance from larger markets.

Regional and Global Trade

1. Both global and regional trade provide substantial opportunities for high profits (exports trade) and more stability of markets (regional trade). Even if USAID contacts do not think USAID has expertise in developing export markets, the Agency can help create the smallholder supplier networks to provide products to experienced exporters who can effectively access the export markets.
2. Support to self-selecting bi-lateral missions with their direct interventions to market players and trade promotion may be a better option for regional missions, especially in providing direct support to enterprises. One notable exception is the West Africa Trade Hub, which receives funding from the West Africa Mission but provides direct support to producers and developing linkages with buyers. This organization has been a successful regional initiative, with contract extensions beyond its original scope and timeframe.
3. Commodity-based regional projects should be encouraged, and buyer contacts and identification of obstacles to trade that can be addressed by host country governments or others should be explored.

Market Information Systems

1. Support to market and food security information systems should be included in national and regional mission strategies, particularly working with the various stakeholders to harmonize key indicators, measurement, data collection methods and efforts to integrate systems as well as share data and information.
2. Fora should be convened to share innovations in the application of ICTs to agriculture, market and food security information collection and dissemination.
3. Methods to make ICTs more effectively and widely used in crisis monitoring, prevention, mitigation and response should be explored.
4. FTF teams should regularly consult with agencies and individuals who work in food security and early warning networks to benefit from their extensive experience and access to broader network expertise.
5. Bilateral and regional missions can create and strengthen information sharing and explicit programmatic linkages across emergency and development components of their strategies to adequately address the different sources of vulnerability to food insecurity. The West Africa Regional Mission has done a good job of cooperating with businesses in the region to promote exports, though with some exceptions (cashews, shea nuts), this has not concentrated on farm products. Regional work in East Africa has also been effective for a number of products. USAID country offices would benefit from considering regional strategies and cooperating with their colleagues in

the region, particularly in regional integration policy harmonization efforts. The mechanism for this cross-country coordination needs to be explored by USAID since it may not come naturally.

6. Host governments could be given assistance in developing strategies for crises affecting basic staples. Training of market analysts in ministries of agriculture and industry could help. The strategies might include contingency plans to contract with private sector purchase and storage for unusual surpluses (with government contributing to costs) or, better still, programs to export surpluses, even at a loss, to achieve market stability. For shortages of imports, suspension of custom duties or other ways to encourage private sector imports could be a quick and effective reaction to a temporary crisis. Planning should be well underway before a crisis starts. Advice and training to governments in advance of a crisis may forestall ill-conceived actions. Consultation with other countries (e.g., shipping excess corn to South Africa to use as livestock feed or to another country that has a shortage) could help to mitigate a problem.
7. USAID should explore ways to facilitate the sharing of experiences among innovators and to validate the claimed benefits of the systems.

RESILIENCE OF VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES AND HOUSEHOLDS (FTF IR 5)

A mid-term evaluation conducted in 2006³⁶ indicated that IEHA had generated significant impacts and changes in behavior at the household, community, and country level, and was successful in making strategically important contributions to economic growth and poverty reduction. IEHA-supported programs were also found to serve as significant examples for how agriculture can and does improve the wealth and well-being of African rural households. This section looks at how IEHA affected the resilience of vulnerable communities and households throughout the life of the initiative and the lessons learned for FTF as this is an objective reflected within its current results framework.

Targeting and Reaching the Vulnerable

Findings

Defining Beneficiaries and Vulnerable Groups

Vulnerability to poverty remains an important issue in many Sub-Saharan African countries because large fractions of the population are either transitory or chronically poor. Agriculture plays an important role in reducing poverty, but there are some key factors that need to be considered: the location of the vulnerable, the identification and level of their vulnerability, the source of their livelihoods, and the links of agriculture with other sectors.

The international community has developed a two-pronged approach to reduce hunger in vulnerable African households in the absence of permanent external assistance:

1. Provide the vulnerable with the improved means and ability to access the food that they require to feed themselves. USAID's Food for Peace efforts in support of IEHA³⁷ improve the means and ability of vulnerable households to produce more food, feed their households better, reduce their food insecurity, and earn more income.
2. Improve the food-related institutional and societal structures and systems upon which vulnerable individuals, households, and groups rely for feeding their households. Improving food-related market structures to benefit vulnerable buyers is especially important given the evidence that more than 80 percent of farm households in three IEHA countries (Mozambique, Zambia, and Malawi) are either producers or net buyers of maize, the main staple food of their diet.

Commercial shipments of food can quickly respond to prices and provide food supplies to people who can afford to buy it. Unlike food aid systems, which require long advance programming, commercial food imports can be arranged quickly in response to price increases—perhaps a grain shipment from the U.S. might take two months, including three weeks of ocean transport. WFP has also sometimes been able to react quickly to a crisis, e.g., changing the destination of a food aid boat in transit in response to a crisis.

Hunger is often linked to producers' crops failing, resulting in a lack of adequate income rather than an absence of food. Some governments (e.g., Nigeria, concerned about Nigerian price rises caused by exports to

³⁶ Lit. USAID Mid-term Evaluation of IEHA, 2006.

³⁷ FFP is supporting efforts in all MYAPs in Malawi, Zambia, Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique. This includes improved seed and cultural practices, greater use of inputs, links to markets, bulk sales to secure markets and higher prices, improved quality of output, improved management of dairy operations, horticultural production.

neighboring Niger) have sometimes sought to ban exports to prevent informal commercial flows of products to deficit areas. However, it is difficult for governments to prevent informal commercial trade flows when significant price differences exist across regions. Customs duties are regularly ignored in West Africa (Abidjan, Cotonou) and elsewhere while private traders and poorly paid customs officials permit imports (source: Pomeroy, October 2007, cottonseed industry study report to the USAID West Africa Cotton Improvement Program-WACIP). Similar trade is carried on across regional land borders. Cheap gasoline in Nigeria is widely sold in bottles on roadsides to smugglers and vendors in neighboring countries. Cross-border traders in many countries often evade customs duties, though they have to pay bribes to corrupt police at numerous checkpoints (e.g., bribes have been documented by the West African Trade Hub in quarterly reports for the last several years). Ideally, there should be reduced or eliminated barriers to trade. USAID can help to identify proposals for change, but would have to rely on national and regional authorities to push for implementation.

Who Are the Vulnerable?

IEHA did not establish a definition of vulnerability nor what specific households are vulnerable to (e.g., shocks, food insecurity). Missions have used various indicators for vulnerability, including food insecurity, small-size land owners, women-headed households, HIV/AIDS-affected households, households in remote areas, and incidence of hunger and malnutrition. Overall, IEHA works with smallholders, many of whom are poor and vulnerable to shocks and food insecurity. The main vehicle for engaging vulnerable populations is the Title II program although there are many examples of effective programming with vulnerable groups found throughout the IEHA portfolio. (See more discussion under the Results Reporting section.)

It may be difficult to integrate very poor people into a marketing system with crops that require substantial purchased inputs. Nevertheless, there are farm programs that could help the very poor, possibly including poultry, ovine, caprine, or bovine animals, or fishponds or other non-agricultural options for training in income-generating activities. Vegetable farming can be profitable in small plots, but grain farming would probably require a substantial surplus (say a minimum of least 500 kg to sell) to make it viable to integrate into a marketing system. To fill one truck with sacks of grain requires seven to thirty MT of product. Tracking tiny producers for credit programs or getting their produce transported to central locations and monitored could raise the administrative costs of programs substantially and make products of a producers' group less competitive against competition such as private traders.

This categorization of the beneficiaries in the vulnerable groups has led to many interpretations, according to the countries and the sectors in which IEHA activities are implemented. As an example, USAID East Africa, working with USAID/Malawi, designed the *Market Linkages Initiative* to support field-level activities in selected target areas to make markets work for *chronically food insecure smallholder farmers*. IEHA has been primarily a mechanism for implementing a growth strategy and focusing investments where they will have the most impact on productivity. However, FFP requires that the Development Assistance Program (DAP) and Multi-Year Assistance Programs (MYAPs) demonstrate integration with broader IEHA strategic objectives in country.

For the purposes of clarity in this section, *vulnerable* is defined as food-insecure individuals, households, and groups that are unable to meet their basic food needs and are likely to experience continuing or increased difficulty in meeting these needs.³⁸ Most of the time, they live where food availability, food access (both in physical and economic terms) and food diversification are very problematic. At times, their conditions are worsened by natural and/or man-made disasters such as cyclones, floods and conflict. From an agricultural perspective, chronic food insecurity requires solutions that will improve and protect the production and market structures, and systems that will, in turn, improve their ability to acquire more income and food for feeding themselves.

IEHA's Intended Primary Beneficiaries

Overall, IEHA is helping both smallholders with limited assets (the viable poor) and those who are highly vulnerable due to food shortages, civil conflict, and illness by increasing their productivity and linking them to markets—although exceptions are noted, such as Title II beneficiaries and the producer groups comprised of the once destitute, handicapped and blind in Livingstone, Zambia.

The action plans of the IEHA-funded programs and the Title II DAP's or MYAP projects all emphasize increasing agricultural productivity, marketing and trade. The USAID missions visited during this evaluation—Malawi, Mozambique, Ghana, Mali, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia—have specifically targeted vulnerable populations, often using Title II programs. Vulnerable households assisted by Title II programs benefited from agricultural interventions aimed at increasing and diversifying crop production, enhancing marketing opportunities, and improving food security. As an example, in Ghana, the needs assessment results for DAP 2 implemented by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) (2002–2006, close-out in 2007) have the following characteristics, which illustrate the category of the beneficiaries:

- Lack of credit for farm inputs
- Limited access to tractors/bullocks for land preparation
- Lack of storage/processing facilities
- Lack of irrigation facilities for dry-season farming
- Limited access to tree seedlings for forestation projects
- Poor farm-to-market access roads
- Limited access to marketing agencies
- Lack of water/sanitation facilities
- Poor nutritional status among children

Thus, the primary target group is smallholder farmers; while this group is usually poor, it is not always the most vulnerable to risks and food insecurity. In contrast, Title II programs are required to justify their target areas and groups based on food security criteria, and OFDA focuses within its mandate of risk reduction and disaster prevention and mitigation. Appendix I has a summary of the PL 480 development programs for target countries. Overall, the youth seem to be left out as a specific target. Neither in Title II nor IEHA interventions, in general, do activities specifically target youth between the ages of fifteen and twenty.

³⁸ This definition is in the Malawi MYAP and is endorsed by FANTA.

Country-level Targeting

As of 2009, IEHA had been implemented in seven countries (Ghana, Mali, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, and Zambia) and three sub-regions (East Africa, Southern Africa, and West Africa). These countries were chosen because of their progress in policy reform, public investments in agriculture, and government commitment to agricultural growth and poverty reduction. They are also representative of key economic and agricultural characteristics of their regions and have the greatest potential for rapidly influencing regional agricultural productivity and economic growth through trade and technology diffusion. It is worth noting that the level of vulnerability of some of these countries is not critical, but there are pockets of severe food insecurity.

Malawi, Mali, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Uganda, and Zambia (the countries visited during this evaluation) meet the global criteria of vulnerability at various degrees. They are among the poorest countries in the world and continue to struggle with high levels of vulnerability to insufficient food availability, access and utilization. Some regions of the countries show some of the poorest statistics on nutrition and morbidity. In Malawi, chronic malnutrition rates are among the highest in the world; the 2000 Malawi Demographic Health Survey (DHS) estimate of chronic malnutrition prevalence or stunting is forty-nine percent, and almost one half of those children (twenty-four percent of the total) are severely stunted. Mozambique has high levels of poverty (54.1 percent in 2008) and child (zero to fifty-nine months) malnutrition (46.2 percent). In Uganda, death before the age of five years occurred in 140 of every 1,000 births.

Geographic Targeting

In general, IEHA did focus on areas with considerable vulnerability (especially Title II and OFDA programs), but these tended to be within the areas with some agricultural potential as well. A more localized situational analysis reveals other common characteristics:

- A weak rural household asset base that provides scant resilience to shocks and stresses;
- Limited access to land that varies by location and cultural tradition, with women facing the greatest barriers
- Families with virtually no savings and relying on informal lending from relatives, neighbors and high interest loans from local lenders when they need cash

As in the Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement program in Malawi, food security activities focus on regions where the majority of the poorest districts and the most vulnerable are located. While, initially, IEHA's idea was to move farmers from subsistence farming towards commercial agricultural production, it has been observed that the focus has shifted in some areas to improving farming households' nutritional and health practices in order to complement their improved food security status as well as to strengthening the communities' institutional capacity. Program designers anticipate that this focus will foster good governance practices, which will ensure the sustainability of development efforts. However, it is worth mentioning that while food insecurity is one sign of vulnerability, shocks resulting from natural or man-made calamities also characterize another type of vulnerability (discussed further in the global climate change section below).

Reaching the Vulnerable Within the Agricultural Sector

For a number of mission programs, there was a major shift in 2007–2008, where food crops such as sorghum, millet, and cassava became a major focus. Food replaced the niche market export approach to agricultural development. For example, TIPCEE in Ghana had to redesign its programs to reflect this shift. In all the countries visited, agricultural projects had previously focused on cash crops—e.g., maize, sesame and coffee to some extent (income generation and marketability) and had largely put less emphasis on food crops such as cassava, banana and sweet potato.³⁹

In Uganda, the choice of cash crop (e.g., coffee, maize) is reasonable, and farmers are benefiting from improved technologies for such crops, but other areas have small or limited markets that may not prosper from a sole focus on cash crops. For example, the LEAD project is restricted to working with smallholders on maize and coffee, which is a good selection of crops for an objective of expanding market opportunities and incomes. However, when interviewed, these same smallholders repeatedly noted that they would like assistance for cassava and *matooke* (cooking bananas), both basic food crops and both suffering from diseases. Some facilitators and the Mission noted that the NARO does have a strong cassava research program, which includes work on brown streak, and that other projects and even LEAD in other regions work on cassava. Cassava is not one of the focus crops in this region, yet given farmers expressed interests, there is a need to link to farmers. Nutritionally, cassava is largely starch—less nutritious than grains—but it can be highly productive in poor soil with low input needs and can provide food security by being stored in the ground and harvested as needed over a period of several months. Mixed with a green vegetable and a source of proteins in a sauce (soy, cowpeas, etc.), it could be a valuable source of nutrition.

The PVO consortium covers a very large number of communities in all countries the evaluation team visited. A key concern was the ability of the PVO extension services to effectively achieve cultural practices among the poorest farmers given their constraints in terms of access to land, working capital, inputs and markets, as well as cultural and educational constraints. The apparent inexistence of systematic linkages with state extension services does not provide a basis for an exit strategy, nor does it leverage resources for both parties. Where there are MYAPs, the PVOs are doing their best to cover the entire spectrum of program services, including improved seeds, farming, nutrition/health, and marketing. Unfortunately, in some cases, there are no clear strategies for involving government extension agents in sustainability. National platforms have a role

KEY SUCCESS: REACHING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

When Nathan Mzumara of Leteta on the outskirts of Lusaka was asked to describe the changes in his life as a result of the dairy program, his answer was “Smile on my face.” According to him, before 2006 (the year of the start-up), things were gloomy and there were no smiles on anybody’s face in the village. But now, he can take care of his family’s basic needs. In addition to his three cows and a heifer, he owns twelve animals (beef) that he uses as draught animals. He adds that it is not only the participating farmers who are happy, but that even the small business owners in the neighborhood benefit from the improved living conditions of the farmers; the latter can afford to buy more things from their shops.

The same testimony was heard over and over again in Choma, Maniandali and Massopo. In Massopo, a participating woman added another social dimension as a benefit from the dairy activity: “with this dairy program, there is peace in the family and more love between couples.” Overall, the proxy indicators to illustrate the poverty reduction and the impact of the dairy activities are relatively the same: bicycles, payment of hospital and school fees, even boarding school fees, household basic needs, house improvement or new buildings altogether, radio, etc.

³⁹ The trend in the last two decades was to have farmers grow cash crops and then buy food crops with the proceeds generated. As a result, food crop availability became an issue.

to play in coordinating, raising awareness and disseminating relevant information. However, experience shows that sector development programs have largely been spearheaded by public institutions with little involvement of the private sector. That lack of private sector involvement will likely persist for the most vulnerable population programs, but private sector for-profit companies can play an important role in cash crops for either domestic, regional or export markets.

Vulnerable Populations Conclusions

- IEHA addresses the needs of some of the vulnerable populations, but has tended not to focus on the poorest of the poor, those unable to produce a marketable surplus to sell. In FTF, much more needs to be done in terms of reaching the chronically vulnerable households, providing them with food, medicine, education and also income-generating activities.
- Among the youth in many IEHA focus countries, most are landless and lack formal education. In addition to being food insecure, they are extremely susceptible to being drawn into conflict or other violent situations.
- The phasing out of Title II in many countries will leave a critical gap in the ability of USAID and IEHA to reach many of the vulnerable populations, and safety net programs for highly vulnerable populations are not established as yet. While these Title II programs have been shown to decrease vulnerability, as measured by numbers of months of self-provisioning (of food) and increasing resiliency, sustainability of results for the most vulnerable households is not assured.
- IEHA projects have unnecessarily and unwisely overstressed cash crops and ignored food crops that have small or limited markets.
- IEHA and Title II/USDA programs have many commonalities that can be leveraged to a greater degree when addressing the varying issues faced by the most vulnerable populations.
- For the sustainability of the extension services, it is essential that increased effort is made to engage commitment of the private sector in order to develop both the demand and supply sides of value chains.

Approaches to Addressing Vulnerable and Food-Insecure Households

Findings

Adopting New Agricultural Technologies

The adoption by farmers of new farming technologies (e.g., spacing, lining), coupled with the use of improved seeds and fertilizer (subsidized or not), has indeed resulted in a tremendous increase in maize production in Malawi, Kenya, Mozambique and Zambia. However, since marketing is an issue, farmers find themselves with a huge amount of grains that they are unable to sell on the market to receive income for their basic needs or reimburse some associated costs. In the worst-case scenario, some farmers would like to sell their crop but are unable to do so as the local market is so saturated or there are external pressures hindering these efforts. In Malawi, the government that heavily subsidized the maize production made the following declaration, quoted in the 2011 QTR 1 Report of *Market Linkages*: “In November, the President of Malawi made statements in a press conference that the government would ‘revitalize ADMARC’—Agricultural

REACHING PASTORALISTS

The Enhanced Livelihoods in the Mendera Triangle (ELMT/ELSE) Program was part of USAID's broader Regional Enhanced Livelihoods in Pastoral Areas (RELPA) Program, which aimed to support a more effective move from emergency relief dependency to resiliency and sustainable actions that promote long-term economic development in pastoral areas. At the heart of this two-year program (September 2007 to August 2009) was a commitment on the part of donors, regional governments and the affected populations to change how emergency and development challenges in arid and semi-arid areas are addressed and to support new and innovative adaptive strategies. The ELMT Program was the primary field-based component of RELPA and was implemented by a consortium of six: CARE Somalia together with CARE Kenya, CARE Ethiopia, Save the Children/US (SC/US), Save the Children/UK (SC/UK) and Veterinaires Sans Frontières - Suisse (VSF-S). This consortium worked with more than twenty-five local partner organizations and international resource agencies.

Development and Marketing Corporation—and buy all products from farmers and find markets for them, adding that farmers should not sell to private traders.” If farmers are instructed not to sell to private traders, it implies that the state intends to take over agricultural marketing, a throwback to the failed programs across Africa of a couple of decades ago for various commodities. A sovereign country can make decisions concerning national marketing rules, but if the decisions are highly questionable, USAID could seek to advise a change, both through economic analysis by ReSAKSS or IFPRI and by declining to provide financial support for programs that seem to be unwise.

The Private Sector and Linking to Vulnerable Populations

Dairy activities in Zambia evidence how smallholder farmers can change their livelihoods in less than five years. An added benefit to dairy development is the constant stream of income a household can earn, unlike annual staple crops. When milk is regularly delivered to the processing center, a household is regularly paid.

LIVESTOCK SERVICE CENTERS AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Zambia's smallholder farmers own the majority of the cattle and are mainly concentrated in the Southern province. As of 2008, the cattle population in this province was estimated at 825,740, 70 percent of which belong to smallholders. The productivity of cattle is constrained by many factors, including diseases, inadequate availability of veterinary drugs, poor extension and inadequate market access. The disease burden has made cattle production in Zambia very challenging. Poor parasite control (hit-and-miss practices) has led to high levels of animal mortality. As a result, IEHA-funded PROFIT developed a cost-effective spray that is easily transported from site to site. Now, over 20,000 animals are being sprayed per month, reducing drastically the animal mortality. The control of external parasites is a large part of the production cost for both beef and dairy cattle owners. PROFIT's innovations team took the well-proven spray methodology and modified it as a way of helping to combat livestock diseases in a cost-effective manner. **The cost-effective spray site under construction north of Lusaka is a good illustration of collaboration between a PVO, the host country and the community.** The construction is being done in partnership with the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, with the active participation of the community. The foreman is a locally hired contractor, and the unskilled labor is provided by the community members free of charge because they understand that infrastructure is needed to reduce the high morbidity of their cattle.

2008 dairy survey measured average annual income by a dairy household at \$1,880, an increase of \$526 (thirty-nine percent) from the 2006 survey. With assistance from USAID IPs, by September 2008, a commercial milk processor linked with smallholder dairy farmers had received and processed 250,000 gallons of milk (achieving quality standards set by the Malawi Milk Act). The processor also has accepted responsibility for deducting smallholder loan repayments from milk checks, thereby increasing access to micro-credit by members of the milk-bulking groups. The processor now provides loans to selected smallholders, which is expected to further strengthen milk production and supply capacity. In addition, a commercial insurance provider has offered a new product: dairy cattle insurance. To date, 158 smallholders have taken out policies.

This is an example of a partnership between small farmers and a processor who can provide them with training and other assistance, supported by a USAID-financed program.

Food for Work and Vulnerable Populations

Due to the complex and varied nature of vulnerability, a wide range of interventions is required that include increasing food; improving nutrition, health and sanitation; providing education and skills; and increasing access to services by improving road or other transport systems. The Food for Work strategy in the Mchinji community in Malawi rehabilitated a path into a feeder road that is being used by

The Title II consortium of Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Land O'Lakes, World Vision, and CARE is implementing the program.

In Malawi and Zambia, support for the dairy value chain has resulted in significant increases in local milk production and processing, in the sale and availability of dairy animals, and in the creation of more than 3,200 new jobs, while reducing the need for expensive imports. A regional dairy association supports 2,300 members in 22 milk-bulking groups. The October

VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOANS AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Village Savings and Loans (VSL) groups consist of rural women, particularly female-headed households, as well as chronically ill-affected households, who increase their access to financial services and non-agricultural income-generating opportunities. VSL groups establish self-generated capital funds without the need for external financial support for loans to meet consumption needs, invest in small economic activities or use as collateral for micro-finance institutions. Each group institutes its own rules and regulations, interest rates, loan repayment periods, and contribution modalities. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) simply facilitated the process in Mchinji and did not establish any seed capital. Almost two years after the end of the I-LIFE program, the VSL is still operating. In some areas, a microfinance system with seed capital would have been introduced, but this program seems to have worked well without it.

visitors and residents alike. OFDA also implements Food for Work programs, typically in complex emergency settings to help the populations return to their communities and rebuild their agricultural systems. The evaluation team did not visit any OFDA programs, but they are located in most IEHA countries and also work with IPs and government organizations.⁴⁰

Gender, Health and Nutrition

In the IEHA design, gender and health are cross-cutting themes while health and nutrition are a full sector in Title II interventions. The implementation of home gardens and the introduction of orange-flesh sweet potato aim to improve nutrition; health and sanitation are addressed, as well.

In the communities visited, while there was a focus on agricultural and livestock activities, there was also a wide display of local nutritious recipes by women's groups. There is also a Growth Monitoring Promotion program that involves government extension agents and the insertion of the strategy in the host government health policy, i.e., use of the national growth card for weighing, issuance of birth certificates when deliveries are done by recognized traditional birth attendants, reference to government health services for acute malnutrition, and joint visits with local authorities.

Mothers and Child Care Behaviors

Studies and field observations indicate that strong determinants of child malnutrition in the IEHA and MYAP countries are undiversified diets (majority of caloric intake from cereals), poor Infant and Young Child Feeding practices, and high burden of infectious disease, low maternal education, unequal intra-household food distribution, and poor hygiene and sanitation behaviors. Adult malnutrition is also significant. Overall, the major barriers to accessing care include inadequate knowledge about key behaviors, long distances to healthcare facilities, the cost for services, and women's lack of power in household decisions.

In Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, the Care Group Model helps mothers learn how to have healthy children and adopt new behaviors through group sessions and home visits. Care Groups spend their educational session teaching how to build latrines, "Tippy Taps" or hand-washing stations, construct dish-drying racks, etc. Mothers are educated on other health topics, such as hygiene, sanitation and breastfeeding practices. The recipes include highly nutritious, locally available foods. This promotion of local foods is feasible through the agriculture program due to the integrated nature of the food security concept. Even the milk producer associations in Zambia donate 7 to 10 liters of milk to the government health services in their neighborhood every week for the malnourished children's recuperation activity. This is a good nascent safety net initiative, which comes from the community. PVOs such as Africare, SAVE, Feed the Hungry, and World Vision are doing a good job promoting locally available and environmentally friendly hygiene and sanitation strategies. Activities focus on growth and development of the child from conception through age two. Children under five showing signs of faltering receive appropriate nutritional support. For sustainability, the growth monitoring activities are in line with the host country's national plan in the sector but rely on the volunteers. In Malawi, Ghana, Mozambique and Zambia, the interventions in this sector contribute to the

40 For a map of food security and global humanitarian assistance programs please visit:
<http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/humanitarian_assistance/disaster_assistance/countries/global_food_crisis/template/maps/food_insecurity_program05222009.pdf>

prevention of malnutrition to reduce the prevalence of stunting and underweight. Programs should stress the need for including other, more nutritious foods such as vegetables and high protein foods with the basic grain or root crop diet, particularly for children.

The “package” suggests a common pattern for the execution of nutrition programs. Health/Nutrition activities in Title II funded-programs are implemented in accordance with the following norms:

- Monthly growth monitoring sessions (including vaccination) for children under 3 or 5
- Identification and rehabilitation of malnourished children
- Weighing children
- Information, Education and Communication (IEC) for mothers or caregivers, e.g., breastfeeding, hygiene, sanitation, market gardening
- Cooking demonstrations to educate on the importance of a balanced diet and the nutritional composition of different foods

The high prevalence of HIV in the targeted areas exerts a profound negative impact on nutritional status, especially among children and pregnant and lactating women, and increases vulnerability to food insecurity at the household level. For this reason, HIV-related interventions should liaise with AIDS prevention programs and address the nutritional needs of those affected with HIV or with full-blown AIDS. FTF nutritional information can be included and distributed through some of the more substantial PEPFAR or health clinics.

Global Climate Change as an Emerging Theme

The African Union, NEPAD, African governments and USAID are all embracing the need to address global climate change. CAADP documents and country investment plans make frequent reference to global climate change. Conservation farming is now commonly cited among African-defined priority innovations for improved natural resource management and as project innovations within USAID FTF Implementation Plans, e.g., East and Southern Africa bilateral and regional missions. The focus on conservation of resources and risk reduction has for some time been a part of West Africa mission strategies, although taking different forms and garnering different levels of resources over time. In fact, the new interest in global climate change and the accompanying strategies and interventions actually now address a problem that has long since contributed to rural poverty and food insecurity: variable growing conditions, limited economic reserves and a reinforcing cycle of economic and environmental degradation. Use of organic material for fertilizer (animal waste and compost material), though sometimes a hard sell for farmers not used to the practice, can reduce the risk of soil degradation. Community involvement in management of publicly owned protected areas and income for local communities within or adjacent to those areas are other areas worthy of investigation.

The Vulnerable - Conclusions

Vulnerability

- Farmers should be encouraged not to place too much reliance on a single cash crop to reduce risk for the family.

Adopting New Technologies

- Farmers may be reluctant to adopt new crops unless there is a very clear market opportunity. Unfortunately, research centers usually only have 2-year funding (renewable at times). While waiting for the hypothetical renewal, some technical staff are released for lack of funds. Very often, researchers or PVOs do not have the multi-year longevity necessary to introduce new crops and methods in traditional societies.
- It is difficult to change traditional dietary preferences, but mothers can be educated on what sorts of mixes of local products can help keep their children healthy.

Global Climate Change

- Discussions with WFP, FEWS NET and OFDA staff reveal a more nuanced and accurate picture of poverty and populations vulnerable to food insecurity on a chronic or transitory basis. Adequately addressing the problem of risk will require the disaggregation of vulnerable populations and program designs that account for the differences among these groups.
- IEHA essentially treated all vulnerable populations the same and concentrated on pulling the upper tier of the poor, those that could produce a surplus for sale, into the main stream of markets and economic development.
- While representing a large group of the rural poor, the approach overlooks a large and growing number of households that are prone to disasters and repeatedly in need of humanitarian assistance and/or education and other assistance that will permit them to generate enough income to support them.
- Differentiating between short-term emergency situations requiring food aid versus longer-term problems that require more complex solutions will require a clear framework, accompanying strategies and explicit attention to these populations, many of whom can graduate to the level of the viable poor with appropriate support. Subsidized school feeding programs—possibly using local products such as milk, vegetables and high-protein sauces to complement the nutritional value of grain—will be one aspect of addressing the long-term issue of poverty.

Gender, Health and Nutrition

- Gender and health are cross-cutting themes that take a back seat to the agricultural components of most IEHA programs. But while there are social norms that may prevent women from taking the lead in some activities, in others, such as women's groups involved in vegetable production and marketing, have been commonly financed by IEHA programs. Women's cooperatives are often exceptionally good credit risks. Health programs might combine with government efforts to target pregnant and nursing mothers and young children with respect to health and nutrition. Food donations at clinics coupled with advice can be a way to effectively reach many mothers.
- HIV/AIDS has a profound effect on the most vulnerable populations and IEHA's cross-cutting themes of health and nutrition. IEHA did not directly address this issue, and FTF did not have an HIV/AIDS component at the time of this writing though there are major U.S. programs to address AIDS under PEPFAR. The issue of appropriate nutrition for those with HIV or full-blown AIDS could be a useful focus of future programs.

CAADP Principles and Targeting Vulnerable Beneficiaries

Findings

Appendix I shows the similarity between the beneficiaries targeted by IEHA, DAP and MYAP-funded programs. The parallel between the target groups of the MDGs is also striking. This indicates that the IEHA's targeting of its beneficiaries fits well in the major development goals of the African continent and the international community.

TABLE 14. CAADP PRINCIPLES AND TARGETING

Principle 1	Protect the right to food for all citizens of Africa
Principle 2	Focus on the chronically hungry and malnourished, particularly women and children, in order to address short-term crises and in the long term integrate them into broad agricultural development
Principle 3	Ensure that all parties and players automatically seek to understand and address hunger and malnutrition
Principle 4	Mainstream considerations of human diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB
Principle 5	Ensure that emergency responses promote growth and reduce chronic hunger (i.e., do no harm to the overall CAADP Agenda)
Principle 6	Protect and promote the resilience of the livelihoods of the vulnerable
Principle 7	Ensure that gender dimensions of hunger and malnutrition are addressed
Principle 8	Promote intra-regional trade, particularly in food staples, to raise food supply and food quality and moderate price volatility
Principle 9	Integrate regular review and broad-based dialogue to ensure successful implementation of this pillar
Principle 10	Be in coherence with the MDGs, especially MDG1, to cut extreme poverty and hunger
Principle 11	Integrate lessons from success stories in cutting hunger and malnutrition

CAADP Pillar III focuses on the chronically food-insecure and on populations who are vulnerable to and affected by various crises and emergencies. This focus is to ensure that the CAADP agenda simultaneously achieves the agricultural growth agenda and Millennium Development Goal targets for addressing poverty and hunger (MDG 1 aims to cut extreme poverty and hunger in half by 2015). CAADP Pillar III's focus draws together the central elements of the CAADP vision to ensure that growing agricultural productivity, well-integrated markets and expanded purchasing power of vulnerable groups combine to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and poverty. The pillar's focus necessarily intersects with the other three CAADP pillars.

FTF will be operating in an environment of greater African leadership and, hopefully, more extensive inter-donor collaboration. A number of other donors (the U.S. Millennium Challenge Programs (Appendix I) and most of the European donors) have moved to a system of providing funds to the host governments for programming, working with them on program design and implementation. USAID has generally preferred to retain control of its programs and, in some cases, has been able to act more quickly than other donors in responding to new problems and opportunities, e.g., shifting a Title II food shipment on the water to a different destination to meet an urgent need or adjusting IEHA program objectives and funding mid-project (a flexibility with both positive and negative results). In the area of agriculture, FTF will operate within the CAADP framework and needs to be responsive to the priorities laid out in local CAADP investment plans and to interact with other players pursuing similar programs.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned—CAADP Targets of the Vulnerable

- FTF clearly will not profoundly address all problems of the poor. Adding nutrition programs is a diversion from production/marketing programs for agriculture, but FTF could benefit from some of the village or producer structures in the production/marketing programs to also reach vulnerable women with education programs.
- Women's groups are among the most reliable groups in credit programs, and there are many that are joined in agricultural programs and handicraft programs. The West Africa Trade Hub has a number of programs with substantial participation by women.
- Targeting pregnant women and children under 5 can be done in villages or through clinics or radio programs. Giving a mother and child (past weaning age) a supplementary food could be helpful.
- The FTF Guide mentions micronutrients. Responders mentioned Vitamin A in sweet potatoes; another program that has been used is Vitamin A-fortified cottonseed oil, required in the West African production of cottonseed oil and subsidized by the Helen Keller Foundation and other PVOs.
- USAID country missions may wish to invite PVOs who have been involved in health programs and clinics to an interactive session to brainstorm on how nutrition and sanitation programs can reach pregnant women and mothers of newborns.
- There may be many innovative ideas (school children putting on plays to dramatize the issue of health and nutrition for presentation in villages, etc.). Clinics and churches could play a major role in reaching the target audience. There could even be short sessions in agricultural training programs.
- Mothers and fathers who realize that their children could have stunted growth or die if the pregnant mothers and their weaned children do not eat a varied diet of locally available foods may be willing to change their habits.
- Information on boiling water for mixing with powdered milk or proper cooking of unpasteurized milk could also be useful.
- There are many health hazards in food, including aflatoxin (which can cause liver cancer) in poorly stored peanuts and corn. WFP tests corn for aflatoxin, but schools buying corn locally might not.
- There are many opportunities for programs of food safety and nutrition. Exploration of the possibilities will involve brainstorming by knowledgeable people, perhaps including web-based multi-country fora to discuss ideas and successes.
- Once a program is developed, it can be implemented partly with the help of nurses and other health sector professionals likely to benefit in the long term from the increased awareness that they can continue to impart to those they serve.

Recommendations for FTF

Targeting and Reaching the Vulnerable

1. The terms *risk*, *vulnerable* and *vulnerability* should be defined.
2. Contingency action plans could be developed in concert with national, regional and local officials for action in the event of a crisis. Projects should consider strengthening the organizational capacity of the community while implementing IEHA or MYAP activities. If the communities are not organized to respond to shocks like drought, floods and eruptions, all value-chain principles could be washed away in hours, putting the communities at risk.
3. FTF program designs should have a focus on sustainable income generation. All climate fluctuations and crop production fluctuations cannot be prevented, and people need to recognize that there can be good years and bad years (so they should find some manner of saving, even if it is keeping an animal instead of money as a source of savings).
4. For Title II, provisions should be added to the budgets (particularly cash resources) to enhance capacity building and define exit strategies at the onset of programs.
5. Programs need to be designed for specific vulnerable populations where they constitute a significant population group. These different groups could include viable poor smallholders, risk-prone farmers, chronically food-insecure households, female entrepreneurs and farmers, HIV/AIDS-affected populations, youth, the urban poor, etc.
6. New approaches on alternatives to credit (such CRS' VSL program) and other innovative techniques to convince farmers to save (instead of borrowing at high interest rates) should be explored on a small scale. Farmers should be convinced to save money in some fashion, e.g., by buying a voucher at harvest time for the next season's inputs. Some savings programs exist—subsistence farmers save seed for the next planting season, farmers save and store grain to feed the family through the year, and people raise animals they could sell if necessary. There are traditional small savings societies all over Africa. It would be nice to convince farmers to save from the harvest to buy next years' fertilizer, but this would be a big jump in cultural habits. The commodity exchange warehouse receipts (delaying sale of grain until market prices increase) are a form of saving. Cooperatives could hold back a share of the profits from marketing crops.

Technology

1. FTF should make use of national platforms to assist in coordinating, raising awareness of and disseminating relevant information.
2. USAID should recognize private investors as an important vehicle for technology adoption—including input supply companies linked to foreign suppliers, companies linked to foreign markets, and abilities to undertake substantial investments, some of them involving credit programs and smallholders.
3. USAID should also invest in farmers' cooperatives for marketing infrastructure, such as storage, dryers, rice decortications machinery, grain grinding machinery, and milk-cooling equipment.

Climate Change

1. Global climate change will rightly have a focus that extends beyond poverty alleviation and encompasses the whole social, economic and environmental context of a country and inter-related countries. It will be difficult if not impossible to weave both objectives together effectively in all

cases, so USAID will need to incorporate different streams of resources with different, but complementary, objectives.

2. Environmental regulations can be complex and hard to understand. USAID should provide an expert able to visit projects and advise at the outset what special requirements affect a project (e.g., involving forestry, fishing, irrigation, or agricultural chemicals).

Private Sector and Linking to Vulnerable Populations

1. The agricultural development models of Land O'Lakes and PROFIT have successfully involved and linked the private sector, rural communities, smallholders and vulnerable populations. In addition, the dairy model has built in sound complementary agricultural and nutrition elements to their program. These projects can and should be considered for replication and scale-up under FTF.
2. The ASNAPP project in the Lusaka and Livingstone area has been successful at building both production and market acumen as well as at linking smallholders and vulnerable populations (including destitute, handicapped and blind populations) to numerous buyers and lead farmers. Producer groups exhibited capacity to independently identify and assess market demand and specific buyers—a rare exception among many similar programs. Their design principles should be shared and emulated under FTF.
3. If it is not possible to focus on cash crops and food crops, then recommendations regarding appropriate crop husbandry and alternative food security crops should be given to farmers, or at least assistance in accessing this information through another organization.
4. It is important to complement both MYAPs and commercial agricultural development programs with cross-cutting support to the entire value chain in the agricultural sector. This can be achieved through strengthening the agricultural marketing systems. Markets need greater capacity to provide concrete solutions to smallholders, who are often unable to access higher-priced bulk markets due to their small volumes and lack of market information. There needs to be a vehicle for the design of such a program, which would no doubt involve complementing current initiatives, such as Ikuru in Mozambique, with more far-reaching interventions at the policy level, institutions and investment, both public and private. This represents a major opportunity for USAID, with its worldwide expertise in market strengthening and adding value to use its influence and resources (both through FTF and its agricultural program generally) to bring market strengthening to countries (like Malawi) that have a major food security policy bias into the mainstream of the country's policy agenda. The reinforcement of the market focus would aptly complement other CAADP-compliant initiatives in the areas of farmer organization, research, public spending on agriculture, and rural infrastructure, including irrigation.

Health/Nutrition

1. Review the Health/Nutrition component. Train volunteers (in association with the health staff in the area) to conduct monthly information, education and communication (IEC) recuperation sessions for under 5-year-olds. In addition, include and systematize joint visits and training with government extension agents. This is a capacity-building and sustainability strategy.
2. Encourage crop diversification and a combination of agriculture with fishery and animal raising, e.g., farm fish ponds or heifer-international type programs providing an animal to a poor family.

3. Educate mothers on using a mix of foods (such as cassava mixed with soybeans or cowpeas and green vegetables) to provide healthier nutrition for their children and provide mothers-to-be with information on the importance of having clean (or boiled) water for their children.
4. Revisit and strengthen the overall M&E system: within the NGOs and with the communities, the extension agent and the local authorities.
5. Since no food security program or initiative to end hunger or poverty can succeed if HIV/AIDS prevalence is overlooked, such a program should have a main objective of which is educating on how to handle Mother-to-Child Transmission.
6. Develop special educational programs for AIDS orphans, perhaps paying their boarding school fees and/or establishing an apprenticeship program with an industrial company that will take (by competitive exam) the best and brightest HIV-free children as interns, and help to guide school curricula to include the types of training likely to increase job prospects for students when their schooling is complete.
7. Consider any special nutritional advice for AIDS victims.
8. Coordinate with AIDS programs (under PEPFAR and local health programs going beyond the nutrition focus of FTF but with implications for the productivity of the farming sector) to cooperate with targeted populations and advise them as to where they can obtain condoms, avoid risky sexual behavior, or obtain treatment.

V. OVERARCHING CONCLUSIONS

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS FROM PREVIOUS SECTIONS

The key elements for consideration when moving forward with FTF are:

- Define the groups and activities of focus, the time frames for success, and the measurement of results
- Harmonization and cooperation with a wide group of donors, private sector and government actors
- Sustainability
- Health and nutrition have been added as first-level results in the FTF program—a change from IEHA, which focused mostly on improvement of farming productivity and linkages for sales in commercial markets, initially focusing on export markets and then shifting to staple foods for domestic and regional sale. Thus, there are three types of beneficiaries:
 - Those with no resources who need free food, medical care, education and perhaps training in some modest income-generating activities. FTF covers nutrition, which is closely associated with some but not all medical issues
 - Those in transition who need a helping hand
 - Farmers with well-established markets who need help in making production and marketing more efficient and finding new markets at home or abroad
- Among farmers, there is a big difference between the more prosperous small farmer who can produce a significant surplus for sale and extremely poor farmers who do not currently produce a surplus for sale or have been uprooted and are in refugee camps. The lower-income tier of small farmers will need emergency help—food, medicine, schooling in the short term or while they are refugees. But in the longer term, it is desirable to promote commercial farming, a private seed industry, and sustainable, cost-competitive production and marketing.
- So far, many Mission staff and IPs do not feel they are involved in the CAADP process in setting priorities and plans, though there was agreement that USAID programs under IEHA are consistent with the general objectives of CAADP.
- ReSAKSS has provided important input to discussions on strategic planning, policy reform and agricultural development in general. It is relatively well linked to government policy makers engaged in creating CAADP development and investment priorities and plans.
- There have been some excellent successes in a wide range of programs involving farmer production, giving poor people new sources of income (such as improving dairy collection systems), making available a wide range of programs that made producers more aware of market opportunities, and giving them seeds and information to help them expand their production and sales.
- Some of the most successful programs in Uganda, Ghana and elsewhere used value-chain analysis—considering the market for products and all the different players (input suppliers, government researchers and extension agents, credit providers, etc.)
- While the new IEHA results reporting system developed by Abt Associates is an improvement over previous systems, there was concern that the required reporting indicators were too numerous and variable among programs so that sometimes midway through a program IP's had to obtain new types of data through their local partners. There was also concern that the focus on numbers trained, etc., might not present a full picture of challenges and successes that should be used to evaluate programs.
- Some of the data on incomes and commerce are quite difficult to obtain and not fully reliable, particularly for domestically sold commodities.

- Among the most important considerations in planning and evaluating programs is sustainability. That consideration requires buy-in and real contributions from participants. Prospects for sustainability should receive adequate attention at the outset of project planning, in mid-term reviews and adjustments, and in final evaluations of the success of projects.
- Another important aspect consistent with the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness is complementarity with other programs of the USG, the host country and other donors. IPs should be expected to cooperate with other programs where appropriate and to know what programs with similar goals or the same target audience are doing. Their effectiveness should be rated in part on the degree to which useful cooperation with other groups is promoted and implemented.

LESSONS LEARNED AND KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- There is substantial opportunity to improve production and marketing of agricultural products and incomes of smallholders through a wide range of products.
- Sometimes changing rules, practices, regulations and laws is necessary, and this can be accomplished, particularly with industry support and receptive government authorities—but it is difficult and time consuming.
- Projects of three to five years must undertake activities that will show results within that timeframe. Inclusion of some long-term policy programs may not be possible under FTF.
- USAID has substantial expertise pertinent to helping small farmers improve their production and marketing.
- USAID does not have strong expertise in promoting African exports but can work effectively with private sector players who have or can develop the requisite contacts and export abilities.
- Coordination is common but can be improved. Following the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the USG is committed to the process of national government plans leading donor activities, and there is a strong need for coordination among donors as well. This coordination should be built into project planning and evaluation.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There are many opportunities for production and marketing activities by women's cooperatives; these should be one of several important targets in the program.
2. A variety of nutrition programs can be considered. The biggest challenge is how to target pregnant women and mothers of young children most effectively. This may vary by country and different targeted population groups within a country. USAID missions should arrange brainstorming sessions with other providers of health care programs through clinics or other programs to garner ideas on how best to target and educate women and their families on the need for a varied diet (using locally available foods) and on sanitary practices relative to food. Other programs, such as Vitamin A fortification of industrially prepared food products (e.g., vegetable oil) can be considered as well. PL 480 programs and implementing partners probably have many good ideas and methodologies.
3. The USG is committed to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the CAADP process, whereby national governments set development priorities and donors follow, applying resources when there is mutual agreement of likely effectiveness. There should be interaction with relevant host

country officials on USAID programs and discussion of possible synergies and actions needed by both sides.

4. At the proposal stage, there should be a strong effort to learn what other donor programs are doing with similar activities or to target similar groups (also consistent with CAADP commitments). USAID bilateral missions should take the lead in pursuing these activities. Many missions and programs are already doing this, and it should be a requirement for all programs to explore synergies.
5. The West Africa Regional Mission has done a good job cooperating with businesses in the region to promote exports; though with some exceptions (cashews, shea nuts), this has not concentrated on unprocessed farm products. Regional work in East Africa has also been effective with respect to a number of products. USAID country offices would benefit from considering regional strategies and cooperating with their colleagues in the region, particularly in regional integration efforts and efforts to harmonize policies. The mechanism for this cross-country coordination needs to be explored by USAID, since it may not come naturally.
6. Basic indicators required by all projects should be reduced in number (to about ten) and standardized to avoid changes in reporting requirements in mid-project. A supplementary reporting system should permit narratives as well as numbers and permit evaluation of the challenges and successes experienced in implementing projects.
7. Sustainability of development programs should be a key element of program proposals, mid-project reviews, and final evaluation. In many cases, buy-in and resources from national governments and/or local private organizations will be essential to success and sustainability. USAID should be prepared to reduce funding in cases where that planned buy-in is not realized.