

**CARE INTERNATIONAL IN GHANA**

**2015 Pathways Annual Report**

**Ghana**



**January to December 2015**



## Progress and Results by Objective

1. **Objective 1:** To increase the productive engagement of 7,000 poor women in sustainable agriculture, and contribute to their empowerment.

### A. Project Dashboard

<i>Impact and target groups, members and outreach</i>						<b>Total</b>
	India	Tanzania	Mali	Malawi	<b>Ghana</b>	
Number of villages					<b>71</b>	
Number of groups by type						
• VSLA					<b>341</b>	
• Market Research Committees					<b>196</b>	
Total number of poor women smallholder farmers (Impact Population) in collectives (Gates Foundation)					<b>4,317</b>	
Total number of Impact Population (other donors)					<b>3,100</b>	
% of women in leadership position in comparison to the Baseline					<b>33.7%</b> (29.8% baseline)	
Total number of other target group						
• Men and Boys e. g. spouses, other					<b>2,338</b>	
• Elites including traditional leaders					<b>341</b>	
• Male Gender champions					<b>71</b>	

The distribution of the Pathways impact group in the two districts is presented in figure 1 below. Presently, the Pathways project is reaching out directly to 8,082 (male: 1,068 and female 7,014) smallholder farmers in 71 communities with project interventions.

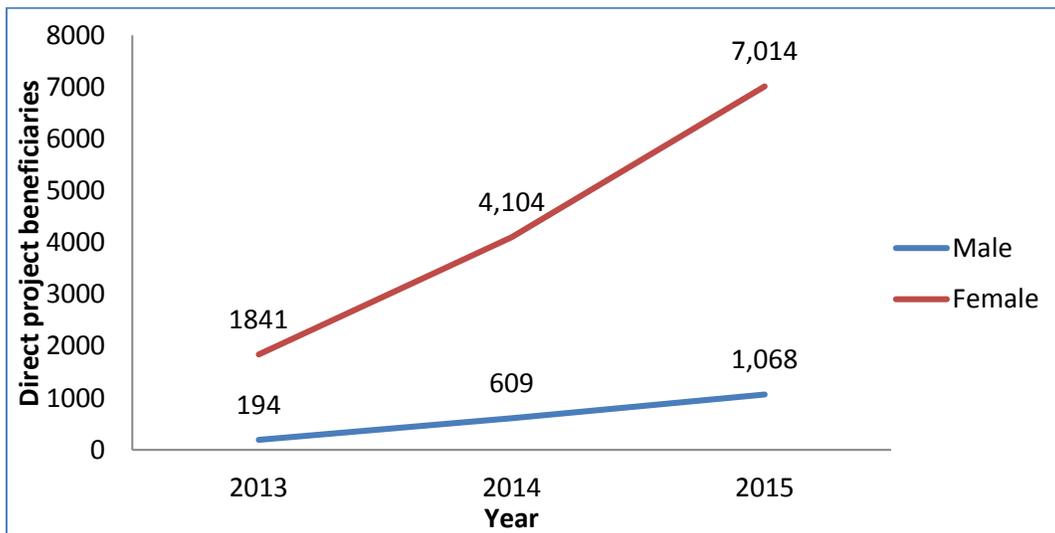


Figure1: Distribution of direct project beneficiaries.

## B. Results by change lever

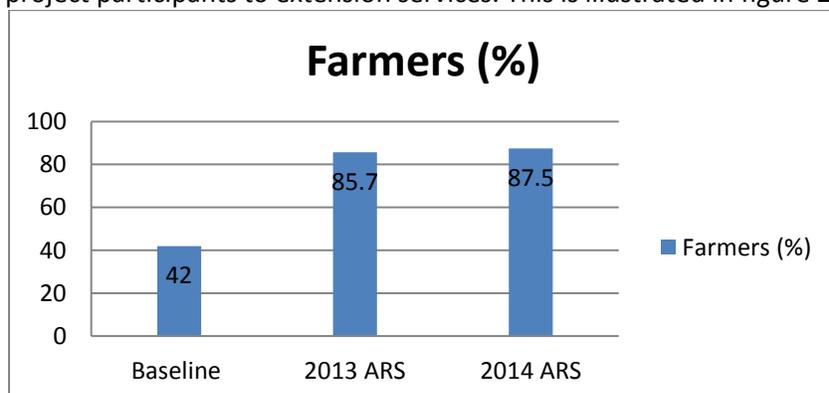
**B. 1. Change Lever 1 - Capacity:** Improved knowledge, skills, relationships, self-confidence, and conviction of women smallholder farmers.

### B. 1.1. Results

In 2015, an additional 3,369 smallholder farmers (Male: 459 Female: 2,910) were mobilized through community identification, selection and sensitization. This brings up the total number of beneficiaries to 8,082 smallholder farmers (Male: 1,068 Female: 7,014). All these smallholder farmers have been trained on Good Agronomic Practices (GAPs) specifically appropriate site selection for soybean and groundnut production, land preparation, seed selection, intercropping, crop rotation, timely planting, optimum planting population, harvest and post harvest management through the project/partner staff, District Department of Agriculture Staff, CBEAs and the FFBS demonstration plots. Besides, 2,750 (male: 357 female: 2,393) smallholder farmers from 21 new communities were trained on financial literacy and record keeping. Moreover, soybean utilization training was conducted in 10 new project communities and 1,150 (Male:50 and Female: 1,100) smallholder farmers benefited.

To enhance smallholder women farmers access to extension information, 202 (male: 56 female: 126) new CBEAs were identified and added to 139 (male: 19 and female: 120) old CBEAs. All these CBEAs (341) have been trained on Good Agronomic practices, extension delivery techniques and compost preparation. The CBEAs who are also members of the VSLAs provide regular extension services to smallholder farmers at the community level. Averagely, a CBEA reaches out to 26 smallholder farmers in the project communities per month. Additionally, an electronic audio device ("Talking Book") was introduced into project communities to help improve smallholder farmers' access to agricultural technologies, nutrition messages, market information and gender related issues. This device is being piloted in eight (8) communities in the Garu Tempene district and reaching out directly to over 1,400 smallholder farmers in 56 VSLAs. Initial monitoring reports from the communities indicate that the "talking book" greatly complements the work of the CBEAs, Gender Champions and Market committees. The beneficiaries are able to record their concerns on the device to enable the technical experts provide appropriate answers to their questions. Other advantages cited by beneficiaries include ability to listen to messages directly from technical experts, ability of group members to discuss messages after listening and their ability to listen to gender messages with their spouses at home.

There is evidence that the use of the different extension delivery approaches has improved access of project participants to extension services. This is illustrated in figure 2 below.



**Figure 2; percentage of farmers reporting access to extension services.**

During the 2015 cropping season, 47 FFBS demonstration plots with an average of 4 treatments (Compost only, inoculants and compost, inoculants only and actyva only) were established in 46 communities to serve as a platform for small holder farmers to observe and learn through field days that were linked to the major activities carried out on the field. Five (5) field days were organized in each of the FFBS demonstration plots involving 587 male and 5,473 female smallholder farmers during the various stages (land preparation, ploughing, planting, weeding and harvesting) of soybean and groundnut production. In each of the stages, farmers had the opportunity to engage with diverse stakeholders (SARI, MOFA and project/partner staff and farmers) to deliberate on what they are observing and learning from the fields. One outstanding inclusion in this year's FFBS demonstration treatments was the addition of compost treatment in 20 old communities while the new communities, there was a focus on demonstrating application of treatments that have been tested previously.

It is important to note that project participants are transferring the knowledge they acquire through the project interventions to their own farms and households. The early stage assessment that was conducted by SD Direct in July 2015 cited the following ***“Specifically, the uptake of practices and skills in terms of farming techniques are very high in relation to other countries: 2014 PPT data show the overall country average is close to 83% of recommended practices being adopted by groups, indicating a good level of improved skills and knowledge around agricultural techniques.”***

Again the report highlights that, *“Focus group discussions and interviews at the community level also emphasized participants’ belief that trainings on farming skills were among the most important activities carried out in Pathways (alongside access to savings and loans through VSLAs, and nutrition training), explicitly linking changes in productivity and nutrition outcomes to these trainings in all three villages visited during fieldwork.”*

To build self-confidence and conviction of smallholder women farmers, 16 women leaders from the various VSLAs and selected assemblywomen were identified and trained on advocacy and lobbying skills, leadership qualities, negotiation skills and effective networking. Through this training the capacity of was enhanced to enable them mobilize their colleagues in the communities to lead and advocate on issues that affect women. Also, the assemblywomen are expected to work in harmony with their colleagues' assembly members so that issues of women and the entire communities will be forwarded to District Assemblies.

The different trainings that women receive through the project and their involvement group leadership positions such as CBEAs or market committee members clearly contributes in building their confidence. In the 2015 National District Assembly elections, 18 Pathways female project participants contested and were elected as unit committee members of the district assembly.

The unit committee is the lowest unit of Ghana's decentralized governance structure which consists of 5 elected members, they perform functions such as enforcement of bye laws, revenue mobilization, monitoring of Assembly projects and community mobilization.

### **B. 1.2. Challenges**

The onset of rains for the season delayed the establishment of FFBS plots, which resulted in late scheduling of farmers training at the demonstration plots. The beneficiaries' farms were also affected by the late start of the season. The seasonal forecast from the Meteorological Services Department predicted the following rainfall onset days; Upper West, May 5 to May 15; and Upper East, May 20-May 30. The onset of the rains was however in June for both districts and the first rainfall was followed by a long dry spell.

Also, the Invasion of Crows on the groundnut demonstration plots in Garu-Tempene District affected the performance of various treatments under the ground nuts demonstration.

### **B. 1.3. Lessons learned and way forward**

The engagement of CBEAs in addition to establishment of FFBS plots has led to an improvement of smallholder women farmer's access to extension messages. In Ghana, the average formal extension agent to farmer ratio is 1: 1500 although this is the national average the situation is more dire in the districts that the Pathways project works in. For instance, the Garu-Tempene district has only 10 formal extension agents who are expected to provide extension services to over 80,000 farmers in the district.

Having recognized the critical role of CBEAs, the project will continue to build their capacity to become community seed producers and agro-input distributors as means of sustaining their interest in supporting their communities. This will also enhance the income of the CBEAs and make certified seeds and agro-inputs accessible to large number of the communities.

Another strategy for strengthening capacity of project participants will be the scale up of the use of the "Talking Book".

During the supplemental grant period, the project will promote the adoption of climate smart Agricultural Practices by producers. The FFBS demonstration fields will be used as platforms to test and learn about new practices by the producers.

There will also be a focus on ensuring group sustainability by strengthening institutional linkages with government agencies, research institutions and the value chain actors. Specific activities in this area will include organizing quarterly value chain actors meetings and engagement forums between producers and key government/research agencies.

## **B.2. Change Lever 2 - Access: Increased access to productive resources, assets, markets, and appropriate and reliable services and inputs for poor women farmers.**

### **B. 2.1. Results**

#### **Access to agricultural services and inputs**

As part of the project's strategy to increase the smallholder farmers' access to agricultural inputs, the project since 2013 in partnership with department of agriculture, input dealers (ANTIKA Company limited, 18<sup>th</sup> April Ltd, Basing Enterprise, Asong Kparib and Fara Naaya companies) in the regional and district capitals of the project locations organized input fairs at the district and community levels to introduce the women farmers to available input suppliers and also educate them on the correct and safe use of agrochemicals. Between 2014 and 2015 a total of 16 input fairs have been organized in Garu-Tempene and Lambussie –Karni Districts and over 6,000 smallholder farmers participated. The smallholder women farmers now have good appreciation of the need to apply improved agro inputs and willing to use them except that they sometimes have to travel long distances after the fair to acquire the needed inputs.

In a bid to improve farmers' access to agricultural inputs the project team has identified two (2) major input dealers ADAMA Company Ltd in Tamale and 18<sup>TH</sup> April in Wa . An input credit scheme is being established on terms geared to the smallholder farmers' activities and linked to VSLA groups/market committees. CBEAs and other targeted entrepreneurs have been encouraged through community level sensitization sessions and linked to input suppliers to become input distributors at the community level to sustain farmers' access to inputs. Nineteen (19) people comprising 12 males and 7 females have been identified in Garu-Tempene to serve as input dealers.

PRUDA, a local implementing partner in collaboration with International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) has provided 40 women farmers with planters at subsidized price of GHC 80.00 each instead of GHC 230.00 after 100 farmers (80F, 20M) in Lambussie –Karni District were trained on the use of these planters. Due to the difficulties in accessing tractor ploughing services in Lambussie-Karni District, PRUDA facilitated 300 out of the 4,642 farmers' access to tractor ploughing services by negotiating with 2 tractor service providers who ploughed a total of 200 acres for these 300 women. Others relied on the donkey ploughing and services from farm hands.

The 600kg soy seed that produced from the piloted community seed scheme in 2014 was used to establish 47 demonstration plots across the project communities. Besides, nine (9) smallholder farmers (4 in Garu and 5 in Lambussie) were identified for the production of certified soy seed at the community level. At the end of the 2015 cropping season, 30.5 tons of certified seed was produced and this will be enough to plant 203 acres in 2016 cropping season.

### **Access to market and market information**

The pathways baseline survey, 2012, revealed that 44% of women farmers in the project locations have no access to market information and also 99% of them individually sell their produce at the local/open market. Over the years from 2013 to 2014, the collective sales of soybean to recognized buyers by the VSLAs have improved from 45 tons in 2013 to 95.77 tons in 2014.

In 2015, the 71 communities were zoned/clustered into a total of 16 zones (12 zones in Lambussie-Karni and 4 in Garu-Tempene Districts) to provide the smallholder women farmers with a “stronger voice” in the value chain, facilitate easy aggregation of their produce and become a point of sale or produce aggregation for off-taking by buyers. The decision to form zones was taken in consultation with the farmers in both project districts on how they can be mobilized to effectively engage with other actors especially the input dealers and the buyers in the soybean and groundnut value chains. A total of 257 ( male: 54 female: 203) representatives of CBEAs, market research committee members, input dealers, executives of the VSLAs participated in the 11 focus group discussions held in both project districts ( 4 in Garu-Tempene and 6 in Lambussie-Karni Districts).

*“A zone comprises of 3 – 9 communities which are located in close proximity (maximum of 5km from the lead community). The lead community is a dynamic community which is part of the zone with good leadership, accessible roads to other cluster communities and most importantly the cluster communities are willing to work with”.*

Sixteen (16) zonal-level market research committees were formed in the project districts to lead all marketing activities at the zonal level including produce aggregation activities, recording production and sales of produce in each cluster community. Two members (chairperson and secretary) of each zonal MRC form the district level MRC in each project district. The district level MRCs are responsible for identifying marketing outlets for VSLAs, negotiating with identified buyer (s) for good prices and supporting aggregation of produce of members of the VSLAs for bulk sale to the recognized buyers.

A total of 196 market research committee members (142F, 54M) were trained at the zonal and district levels in price negotiation skills, price interpretation, finding and making use of market information, importance of marketing as a group. The objective was to equip the MRC members with the knowledge and skills to be able to carry out market survey to identify buyers, negotiate for good prices for their produce and support the VSLAs in the aggregation of their produce for bulk sales to recognized buyer(s). The project also facilitated a signing of purchase memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the smallholder women farmers represented by the district level MRC and Savanna Farmers Marketing Company, Tamale and Basa Enterprise, Wa produce buying companies during the reporting period. This

will encourage the farmers to adopt improved practices that will increase their production and productivity.

In December 2015, the MRCs supported members of the VSLAs in Garu to sell 14 tons of soybeans to Savanna Farmers Marketing Company, at GHC1.2/Kg the company also pays the MRCs a commission of GHC 3 per 55kg mini bag. This commission will be used to facilitate the activities of the MRCs.

Advantages mentioned by farmers for selling to the purchasing companies are;

- Farmers are paid at point of sale.
- Farmers are sure about the quantity being sold because of the use of the weighing scale.
- The companies supply the sacks and sewing machines.
- Farmers will not incur the cost of transporting the produce to the central market.

### **B. 2.2. Challenges**

Current market trends are highly not predictable due to undecided quantities of demand and supply by factories and off takers of the soybean, which is partly as a result of intermittent avain influenza infestations. The issue of aflatoxin in the case of groundnut continues to hinder the possibility of large supply of the commodity to factories.

There are virtually no input shops in most of the project communities especially in Lambussie Karni District and this therefore makes it challenging for the farmers to access inputs after the input fairs.

### **B. 2.3. Lessons learned and way forward**

The project realized that the coordination of the activities of the market committees from the communities will offer them a stronger bargaining power to engage with produce buying companies and minimize the practice of farmers selling their produce individually as well as selling to the open market. This facilitated the establishment of the Zonal and District level MRCs which bares the main responsibility to organize collective marketing for all the participants of the project in the two districts.

To increase the farmers' access and sustain their use of productive inputs, the project will facilitate the establishment of an input credit scheme with already identified companies such as 18<sup>th</sup> April and ADAMA company and other major input dealers located in Wa and Tamale respectively through sustainable community/zonal based agro-input distribution channels led by CBEAs.

The project will pilot the FFBS financing model which is currently being implemented in Malawi. As part of this model the producers will need to make weekly contributions which will be used for financing their marketing activities.

The project also plans to link with REP (Rural Enterprise Project), GRATIS and the USAID funded Agricultural Technology Transfer to facilitate farmers access to labour saving equipments /technologies (planters, threshers, shellers, donkey/bullock Ploughs).

**B.3. Change Lever 3 - Productivity:** Improvements in yield and income through adoption of sustainable and intensified agriculture and value addition.

**B.3.1. Results**

During the period under review, the project team organized community level dissemination meetings involving 4,500 (male: 675 female:3825) smallholder farmers in both districts to share the results of 2014 FFBS demonstration plots at the community level. This was meant to enable them decide on the practices to adopt based on performance of the treatments based on yields and economic benefits. Based on the results the inoculants only treatment was generally preferred by small holder farmers.

Before the beginning of the farming season, the project team and partner staff undertook physical inspection of the women’s plots to ensure that they are suitable soils for the cultivation of soybean and groundnut. Pre-seasons trainings on Good Agronomic Practices were also conducted to build the capacity of CBEAs to be able to reach out to farmers with improved agricultural technologies. Besides, inputs fairs were conducted to link farmers to sources of certified seeds and other recommended agrochemicals.

The result of 2014 PPT revealed an improvement in terms of adoption of Good Agronomic Practices. For instance, the number of farmers who adopted input and land techniques, appropriate plant spacing and post harvest management under groundnut production increased by 1% from 2013 to 2014. For soybean production, the number of farmers who adopted input and land management increased by 5%. As a result, the yields of individual farmers have also improved over the period. Whilst the average yield of an acre of soybean increased by 17.8% in Garu-Tempane district , that of Lambussie-Karni increased by 11.9% from 2013 to 2014 as shown in figure 2 below.

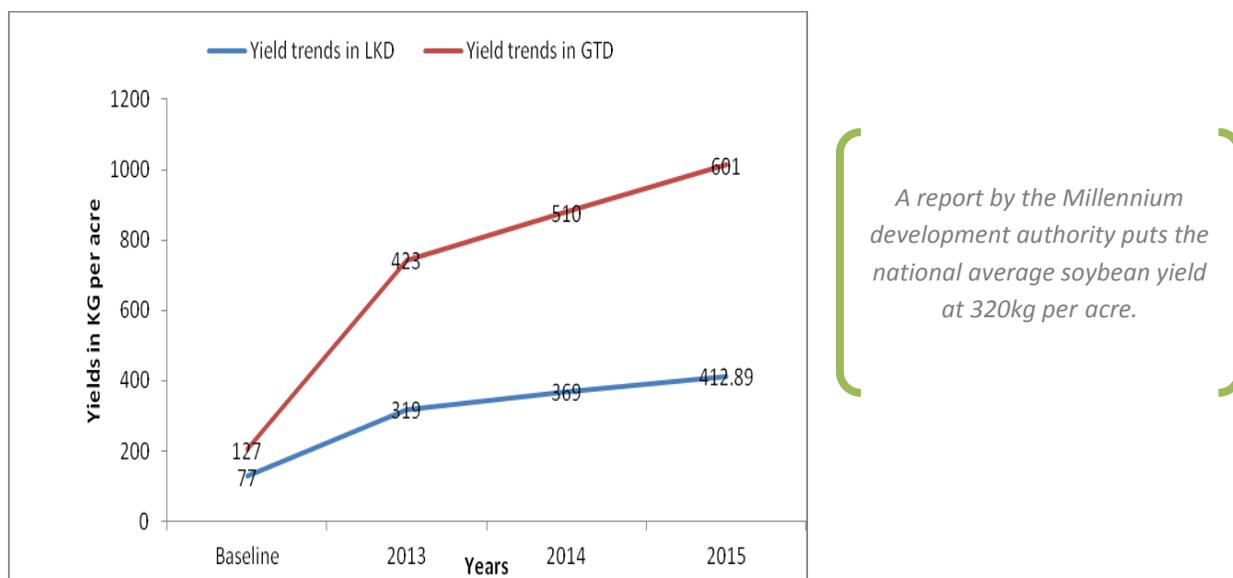


Figure 2: Average yield of soybean for smallholder farmer in the project districts.

*Source: 2012 and 2013 Baseline Studies and production estimates from women farmers’ fields*

The yields of groundnut which was 111.3kg/acre during the baseline study in Lambussie district, increased by 66.3% in 2013 and then 57.7% and 89.2% in 2014 and 2015 respectively as shown in the figure 3. prior to the beginning of the project, it was indicated that the soils in Garu district are not

suitable for groundnut production and so the farmers in Garu-Tempene were not into groundnut production. Based on the initial trial of groundnut in collaboration with SARI in 2014, six farmers (male: 1 female:5) cultivated groundnut during the 2015 cropping season. During the 2015 cropping season, the project established 22 groundnut FFBS plots in 21 communities in the Garu-Tempene district for farmers to observe and learn good agronomic practices for groundnut production.

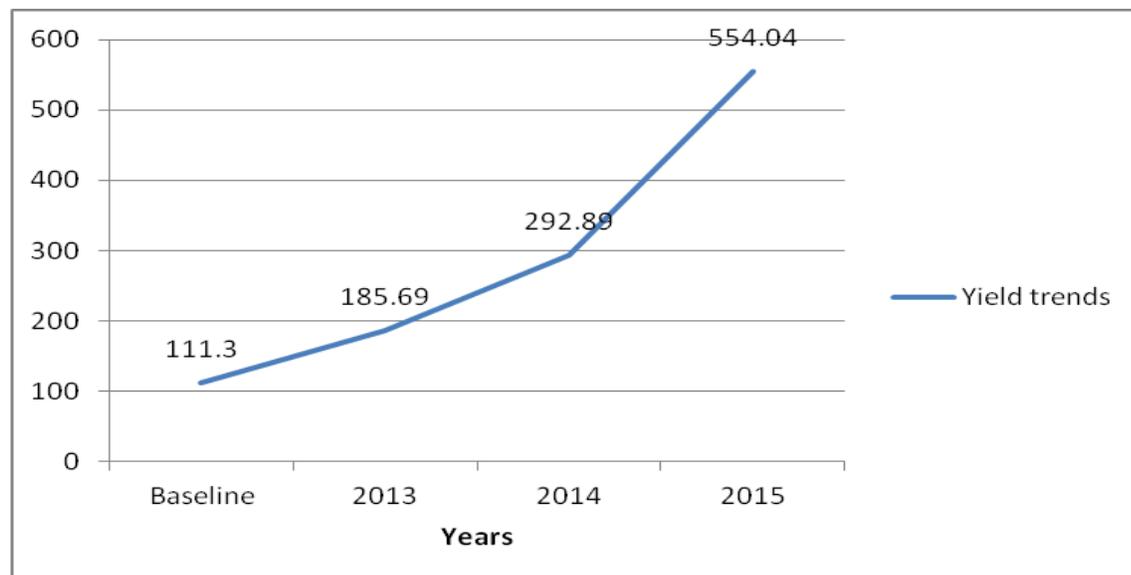


Figure 3: Average yield of groundnut for smallholder farmers in Lambussie-Karni

For the third year of the project implementation, the average income of a farmer who cultivated an acre of soybean and groundnut in 2013 and 2015 has improved as presented in the table below.

Table 1: Average cost of production and average income of soybean for 2013 and 2015

Year	Average cost of production/acre		Average yield/acre	Price per 50kg		Average income/acre			
				Nov.-Dec	April-May	Nov.-Dec.		April-May	
	GH¢	USD(\$)	Kg	GH¢	GH¢	GH¢	USD(\$)	GH¢	USD (\$)
2013	150.00	50	428	45.00	60.00	385.20	128.4	513.6	171.2
2014	200	66.7	438.50	80.00	106.40	701.7	233.8	733	244.3
2015	342	90.0	506.95	66.00	110	669.20	176.11	1,115.29	293.50

The price of soybean during the harvest period in November and December was lower in 2015 due an outbreak of bird flu (avian influenza) in Ghana which affected the poultry industry, the major consumer of soy produce in the country. In view of the pricing trend in 2014, pricing calendars for soybean was developed during the project's YIPOCOMA training to enable farmers appreciate the price changes and to be able to take the best decision about when to sell to optimize profit.

Project participants report improvements in income due to improved yields. The increase in income is linked to their ability to support to the upkeep of their households, investing in other small scale ventures, increased self confidence and respect from their spouses. Project participants cite the income they make from soybean and groundnut production as the main reason for the increase in the share value of their VSLAs. Averagely the share value for VSLAs has increased by 75% between 2013 and 2015.

During the reporting period, project and partner staff were trained on nutrition education. In addition to this, nutrition-counseling cards were developed to facilitate nutrition education at the VSLA and community.

Between 2013 to 2014, the number of smallholder farmers who stored soybean produce for consumption increased from 37.1% to 45.10% ( ARS,2014). From the MTR 2014, it was reported that participants' ability to process soybean into household meals have contributed to food and nutrition security in their households. All household members consume soybeans incorporated into household meals, but infants consume majority of it because soybean is the main ingredient for preparation of winnemix porridge meant for infants. Besides the household consumption, Soybean cheese, "dawadawa" (local spice) , "koosi", winnemix, some of the recipes being promoted by Pathways' project have become an additional income source of income for 50 women in the project communities. These women process soybean into cheese, dawadawa, koosi and winnemix for sale at the communities' levels.

### **B.3.2. Challenges**

Due to the late onset of the rains this cropping season some farmers who initially planned to cultivate soybean and groundnuts and opted for short duration crops such as maize and cowpea to cope with the changing climatic conditions.

Introduction of low shattering soybean variety ( jenguma) has contributed to reduction in production losses however monitoring reports indicates that it is very difficult to thresh.

### **B.3.3. Lessons learned and way forward**

Realizing the number of rainy days and pattern of rainfalls are becoming fairly unpredictable, the pathway project during the supplemental grant period, will work closely with SARI and certified input dealers to introduce short duration and draught resistant soybean and groundnut varieties to the smallholder women farmers.

The Pathways project will also work closely with other developmental organizations to introduce labour saving technologies such multi crop threshers and simple planters to the smallholder women farmers to help reduce the drudgery that they go through in the production of soybean and groundnut.

The project also plans to train selected female entrepreneurs on improved processing and packaging of soybean and groundnuts to enable them earn more income.

**B.4. Change Lever 4 - Household Influence:** Increased poor women farmers' contributions to and influence over household income and decision making.

#### B.4.1. Results

The project continued to build capacity and sensitize women on their contributions and influence over household income and decision making. Having trained and developed the capacities of women on advocacy and lobbying skills, women have engaged duty bearers/land owners for productive lands. It is also observed that the perception of women is gradually changing in respect to gender related issues. The Annual Review Survey (ARS) indicated that; whilst 67.5% of the respondents agree that "A woman must tolerate violence in order to maintain stability in the family" in 2013, the figure dropped to 40% in 2014. Also in 2013, 20% of women believed that sometimes a woman deserves to be hit whilst 15% express the same believe in 2014. Women believe strongly in the complementarities of workload such that 87.5% (2013) of women believe that: *if a woman works outside the home, her husband should help with child care and 90% share the same view in 2014*. The study also brought to bear an increase in consultation among males and females from 10.3% in 2013 to 30% in 2014.

In the early stage assessment it is reported that, ***"A number of women spoke of "changes in themselves", which were largely linked to women's ability to make more decisions in the household, and thus to make investments in things like children's school uniforms, goats or other livestock, rented land, or 'something she wants for herself'. These changes can be linked to an increased self-confidence and conviction of women farmers, but also ties in closely with improvements in income and household decision-making."***

The project undertook a gender dialogues to ensure that women have the freedom, power and knowledge to make decisions affecting their own lives and those of their families and communities. The dialogues sensitized community members on women's land rights/Assets, land negotiation, ownership and household decision making. The twenty four hour profile/clock, culture, myths and taboos of the people were other topics discussed during the sessions.

#### **Relevant Quote**

*"When women are poor, their rights are not protected, they face discrimination and humiliation. They have no dignity. Community gender dialogues have enlightened me and my people. Henceforth, women will be given productive lands for cultivation"* chief of Naabaala.

The Mid-Term Review in 2014 revealed a number of progress makers, which were put into 5 categories of male and female respectively. The validation exercise was carried out in consultation with traditional authorities, VSLA members, non VSLA members, men VSLA and non men VSLA members. The findings led to the development of a tool for monitoring the impact of the project on the lives of the community members. The focus group discussions carried out during the progress markers monitoring revealed that; community gender dialogues and other activities carried out by trained gender champions were factors that stimulated the achievement of some of the progress makers.

In 2015, the progress markers monitoring revealed the following: under category 1; Almost all the women respondents (100%) indicated participating in planting, weeding and harvesting of men's crops such as maize, millet and sorghum whilst all (100%) the men provide labour on women farms. These are culturally influenced roles which are expected of all married women, and highly non-negotiable. Also in

category 2; More than half of the women respondent (44%) reported deciding together with their husbands about site selection, crop varieties, and plant spacing on their family farms and more than half (56%) of the men accept agriculture/nutrition information from their wives. Furthermore, More than half (44%) of the women participate on discussions on how to use family income. However, in category 3; whilst almost all the women (89%) assist in providing basic household needs and health care none of the women (100%) own and control their farmlands. Under category 4: whilst almost all women (56%) negotiate for better prices for farm produce through increased financial knowledge, almost all deny (68%) having the knowledge on land right and able to negotiate with lands owners for productive lands for farming. Also, whilst half of the respondents (56%) reported participating jointly with men in community meetings and speak confidently and take decisions on matters that affect them. Finally, in category 5; all the men (100%) indicated that they do not beat their wives.

#### **B.4.2. Challenges**

Traditional/cultural/Religious barriers prevent women from owning lands. Further interrogations to determine the reason for the low percentage of women who negotiate for land themselves revealed that the women will usually need to do that through a male relative. This is because, women who negotiate for lands without a middle man are seen as being promiscuous. Men who also deal directly with women are suspected of having extra marital relationships with them. These factors are being addressed through gender dialogues.

Stigmatization of men by community members, i.e men who perform household chores are tagged with feminine names.

Women lack confidence and exposure in accepting community leadership roles.

#### **B.4.3. Lessons learned and way forward**

The monitoring of the gender progress markers has revealed that the project's interventions in the area of land have focused more on encouraging men to release lands to women. There is therefore the need to focus on the rights aspects too. The project therefore intends to intensify community dialogues, enhance capacity of both men and women on women's land rights, build capacities of men and women on women reproductive health and active involvement of men and traditional leaders in project activity delivery.

**B.5 Change lever 5 - Enabling Environment:** More positive and enabling attitudes, behaviors, social norms, policies, and institutions.

#### B.5.1. Results

Due to the expansion of the project to 21 new communities in both districts, the project team organised gender sensitisation sessions in all the new communities. These sessions were attended by project participants, spouses, landowners and traditional leaders in total 3, 550 (male:1,014 female:2,536,) participated in the sessions. Issues discussed during these sessions focused on addressing challenges such as women's access to productive land, involvement of women in decision-making at both the household and community level and support from spouses for domestic and farming activities. The project's engagement with traditional leaders has moved beyond specific community chiefs to include the paramount and divisional chiefs. For instance, a gender advocacy meeting that was organised in Lambussie during the period witnessed the active involvement of the Paramount chief of the area who encouraged the sub chiefs to facilitate women's access to land and promote other gender responsive behaviours. The paramount chiefs' control spans the whole Lambussie traditional area and there are 38 sub chiefs under him, in total there are 74 communities under his jurisdiction. During the period, the number of communities that have bye-laws on women's access to land increased from four (4) in December 2014 to eight (8) in June 2015 over the period, these by-laws have been expanded to include issues such as domestic violence and girls education rights.

In a bid to harness stakeholder support for addressing gender issues at the district level, the gender advisor for the project carried out a gender gaps assessment for all relevant stakeholder institutions. Based on the identified gaps training programmes have been designed in collaboration with the Districts assemblies to enhance their capacity to effectively undertake gender responsive planning and budgeting and to also strengthen their capacity to monitor gender issues at the community level.

Consultative meetings were held with key staff of the two district assemblies the project works with, issues discussed focused on;

- Design a framework and map out strategies that will enhance the activities of women farmers along the value chain commodities of Soya and Groundnuts.
- Lobby for an increase in the number of females appointees to District Assemblies.

As a result of the meeting the project was able to successfully lobby for the appointment of four (4) female assembly persons to the assembly. This therefore increased the number of women from one (1) to five (5) out of a total of 44 assembly persons. In Lambussie there are 36 assembly persons and four (4) of these are women. In a bid to strengthen the capacity of the female assembly persons to clearly articulate and advocate for the concerns of women, a leadership training was organized in November 2015 for 16 female assembly persons and women leaders from the Garu Tempene District. Based on the training they developed action plans spelling out how they will engage the District Assemblies and community leaders to address the challenges faced by women.

#### B.5.3. Lessons learned and way forward

The project will work with communities to scale up the current initiative that has been taken by some communities to develop bye-laws on women's land rights and other community norms regarding gender. The work with the district assemblies will focus on ensuring that they adopt gender responsive planning and budgeting practices and ensure their full implementation as well as support and monitor the enforcement of bye-laws by communities. This bridge period will offer us the opportunity to initiate

relationships with women’s rights networks such as NetRight to address issues such as women’s land rights, property rights and other gender issues especially in the agricultural sector.

- 2. Objective 2: To enhance the scale of high quality women responsive agriculture programming and Objective 3: To contribute to the global discourse that surrounds women and agriculture by influencing debates and policy dialog on women and agriculture at local, national and global levels.**

Name of Projects/ Programs	Year (from – till)	External/Internal (if external, name the organization in parenthesis who are implementing the project)	Project value (in USD)	# of individuals (approx.)	# of HHs (approx.)	# of communities (approx.)	Adoption Level (Full/Partial)	If partial, mention the adopted element/s
MACF	2014-2015	Internal	742,462.32	3000	500	25	full	
HESP		Internal	453,075 (£)	3000	500	25	full	
PROMISE		Internal	1383198 (CAD)	4600	500	20	Partial	FFBS, Community dialogues, CBEAs model

- 3. Challenges and Risks:** Are you aware of any significant risks or concerns that have not previously been identified, and that may affect your ability to achieve the agreed-on results? If so, indicate how you are addressing those risks and challenges? Note: This is the opportunity to raise awareness of any internal or external threats that have emerged recently (which was not reported before and has happened in the last 12 months) to your ability to execute the project. This could include anything from political turmoil to bad weather.

Before the beginning of the cropping season, the Meteorological Services Department predicted the following rainfall onset days; Upper West, May 5 to May 15; and Upper East, May 20-May 30. The onset of the rains was however in June for both districts and the first rainfall was followed by a long dry spell.

The government fertilizer subsidy programme for this year was on limited supply as a result most of the project beneficiaries could not access it and hence did not use fertilizer on their farms.

- 4. Partnerships:** Describe all internal and external partnerships and linkages you have established over the past 12 months.

Partner	Names of institutions, overall purpose of partnership, key lessons and challenges. Reflect upon these as well.
Implementing partners- other NGOs CSOs	<i>PRUDA:</i> It is the local implementing partner for the Pathways Project in the Lambussie Karni district. They are responsible for direct field implementation of project activities in the district with technical support from the project team. Results from our partnership with PRUDA has shown

<b>Partner</b>	Names of institutions, overall purpose of partnership, key lessons and challenges. Reflect upon these as well.
	that because of the existing relationship and the trust that exists between them and the communities, the VSLA groups and community leaders have been very supportive of project activities.
Strategic partners- Govt/private extension	Department of Agriculture (DoA): It is a government agency at the district level responsible for the implementation and coordination of Agricultural activities. DoA provides technical support for the implementation of project activities and the services includes; advise for producers, collaborate in training of CBEAs, provide technical advice for soybean processing demonstrations, help in setup and monitoring of FFBS fields.
Academic & research, other technical backstopping	<i>Savanna Agriculture Research Institute(SARI)</i> : CARE Pathways' partnership with SARI has focused on the provision of technical support for the implementation of Farmer Field and Business Schools (FFBS) demonstration fields. The project signed contracts with two staff of SARI from the two regions who provided services including; design of FFBS treatments, set up of FFBS fields, training of partner staff, CBEAs on data collection and design of data collection sheets, monitoring FFBS fields, analysis of data from the fields, recommendation for subsequent FFBS and training of seed growers.
Savanna Farmers Marketing Company, Tamale and Basa Enterprise, Wa.	These are produce buying companies located in Tamale and Wa. The pathways' project has signed an MOU with Savanna Farmers Marketing company and they have since purchased 14 tons of soybean from the project beneficiaries in the Garu-Tempene district.

## 5. Pathways Collective Learning Agenda:

### Pathway's learning questions related to collectives

Question	Reflection - describe giving as much detail as possible. Draw data from the recent ARS, PPT, MTR, MIS for supporting your claim
<b>Inclusiveness:</b> Which types of collectives and which types of interventions are best suited to enable impact group (IG) members to actively participate and achieve the program objectives?	In the context of Ghana, the best collectives suited for active participation in programs and achievement of objectives is VSLA. The VSLA serves as a platform for collectives engagement and it mainly consists of women who are self-selected. The approach of allowing the VSLAs to self-select their CBEAs and marketing committee members promotes ownership and acceptance of the services that they provide. Interventions that mobilize and engage all members of the collectives to learn and share among themselves such as FFBS field demonstrations, community gender dialogues, cooking demonstrations have ensured that the synergy among the groups is maintained. Education and demonstrations are effective channels for promoting GAPs and strengthening value chain linkages. For instance, the

	MTR report revealed that both men and women have attributed their improved knowledge levels in GAPs to the trainings that they have received from the Pathways' project.
<p><b>Inter Group Synergies and Dynamics:</b> How do relations between and within different types of groups work to create greater coordination and effectiveness? What are the factors that lead to success and how can we avoid traditional failures?</p>	<p>In Ghana the VSLAs is the main group that the project is working with. However, other groups such as CBEAs and Market committees emerge from the various VSLAs. Thus, the VSLAs still serve as a pivot to these emerging groups. In each of the VSLAs, CBEAs together with other members meet regularly to plan their production processes, draw schedules on how to disseminate extension messages. In addition, the market committees work on behalf of the VSLAs in terms of searching for potential buyers, negotiating and bargaining for better prices for their produce.</p>
<p><b>Improved Productivity:</b> Are women that are engaged in collectives more productive in the agricultural sector than women who are not? Are those women better able to access extension services, improve farming practices and gain more benefit from agriculture? Why or why not?</p>	<p>Based on the current evidence, women who are in collectives have better access to extension information, other relevant training programs designed to improve their yields, and members of the groups are able to provide peer support to each other. From the 2013 ARS, it was revealed that 91% of the Impact Group has adopted practices promoted by the project.</p> <p>Stakeholders such as input dealers, tractor operators and produce buying companies are more willing to work with women when they know they are organized in groups and can easily be reached. For example in Lambussie Karni district, women in the collectives have been provided with agric inputs on credit. Besides, Women in the collectives also have access to credit from their own VSLAs contributions. Also, women who are in collectives have acquired some level capacity through the FFBS demonstration and the work of CBEAs.</p>
<p><b>Market and Other Linkages with the Ecosystem:</b> How do groups serve as a platform for establishing links with key stakeholders, service providers, private sector market actors and other institutions? What role can collectives play in facilitating member access to inputs and markets more reliably and gainfully? What works, what doesn't and why?</p>	<p>The groups are easily mobilized for trainings and information sharing at the community level. Thus, VSLA groups served as a platforms through which development organizations reach out to large number of people with interventions within a shorter period.</p> <p>The existence of a well functioning group serves as a form of collateral for its members to be able to either access credit in-kind or cash from services providers. For instance, in 2014 PRUDA was able to link tractor service provider to plough 117 acres to 230 women in VSLAs at a subsidized price of GHC 50 (13 USD) instead of 70GH (18USD) that was being charged to individual farmers in the open market. Also, 1.075 tons of certified soy seed, 46 cartons of weedicide, 30 knapsack sprayers and 36 liters of green ok foliar fertilizer were provided on credit to women belonging to VSLAs by</p>

	<p>input dealers in 2014. Moreover, in 2015 1.88 tons of certified soy seed, 64 cartons of weedicide, 45 Knapsacks sprayers, 40 tons of fertilizer were provided to VSLAs members on credit in the project communities.</p> <p>Working with women in groups is more effective and reliable compared with working with individual women. The group serves as collateral for accessing services and inputs and also give them stronger voice to negotiate and bargain for better services.</p>
<p><b>Improved Gender Roles and Relations:</b> How does women’s participation in different groups lead to change in gender relations and increased voice and power within households, communities and markets? Are they able to better influence and/or control decisions related to agriculture within their households? Why or why not?</p>	<p>The VSLAs groups serve as an important platform for building confidence and nurturing leadership skills for women. Because most of the VSLA groups are composed of women, the leadership roles are taken up by the women themselves. By practicing these roles at the group level, it improves women's confident level and builds their communication skills. Women are then able to transfer these skills to their household levels. Women now decide with their husbands on appropriate site selection, choice of seed etc ., which have led to increase in yields. During the progress markers monitoring in 2015, about 44% of women confirmed this while 56% of men affirmed this too. Interaction with CBEAs, Gender champions and participation in community gender dialogues have enhanced women knowledge on gender relations and increased voice and power within their households and the community level at large. Progress marker category two revealed that 78% of women control and sell their farm produces in markets of their choices at their own time. Women now have the necessary skills to negotiate with buyers for better prices. During the Pathways MTR in 2014, the improvement in the economic status of a women was reported as one of the most important drivers for increasing the influence of women in decision making in their households. Through community gender dialogues, women are able to advocate issues that affect them and seek redress from the appropriate quarters.</p>
<p><b>Intervention Sequencing and Timing:</b> What is the best sequence of interventions and how does this vary by sub-IG? How we develop and strengthen the capacities of the collectives as sustainable community institutions, before we exit?</p>	<p>As a project that seeks to improve the lives of women the best sequence of activities is to map the various stakeholders, identify communities, sensitize stakeholders on project objectives, identify groups, conduct community level dialogues, conduct gender dialogues and educate women on good agronomic practices. Engagement of both men and women to address the gender barriers affecting women's participation and benefit from agricultural activities. Strengthen the internal mechanisms of the groups and facilitate strong relationships with key private and public sector stakeholders. Link groups to existing government and private institutions (MoFA, D/As, Rural Enterprise Project,</p>

	financial institutions, input and output market) for sustainability.
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**6. Program Management, Monitoring and Evaluation:** What are the significant program management, monitoring and evaluation activities that have occurred in the past 12 months? A suggested table format for responses is included below.

<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	
Monitoring and evaluation activities carried out in the last 12 months giving details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project team collected 2014 PPT data from 109 VSLAs in both districts and submitted during the period under review.</li> <li>• The 2014 Annual Review Survey was carried out involving 40 women and 17 men to track the changes in the beneficiaries' lives arising as a result of project interventions.</li> <li>• The project also conducted editing and review of the 2014 PPT analysis, which was submitted by the Core team.</li> <li>• The 2014 FFBS results were disseminated to smallholder women farmers to help inform their decisions on selection the most appropriate treatments to enhance their productivity.</li> <li>• To keep track of progress in project implementation, activity reporting templates were developed to help document relevant data. In addition, quarterly monitoring templates were developed to keep track of project performance. Also, a monitoring tool was developed to help track the progress made in terms of shift in socio-cultural norms and gender related issues.</li> <li>• A total 46 CBEAs and some members of the VSLAs were identified and trained on how to collect the PPT data. Currently the 2015 PPT data collection is ongoing at the community levels in the two districts.</li> <li>• SD direct conducted initial assessment of the Pathways project during the year to consolidate learning regarding the progress of the program and provide evidence to inform decision on future funding and the potential scale-up of the program.</li> <li>• The Gender Advisor and M&amp;E officer validated the gender progress markers with men, women and traditional leaders in the project communities to confirm the issues that were reported during the MTR in 2014.</li> <li>• The Gender Advisor and M&amp;E officer carried out quarterly monitoring of gender progress markers to track the progress made in terms of shift in socio-cultural norms and other gender related issues among men and women.</li> <li>• End of project evaluation was conducted to assess the</li> </ul>

	project performance as against the targets that were set in the proposal.
M&E lessons and challenges, and modifications/way forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the PPT data collection, it was revealed that most of the farmers intercropped their soy and groundnut with other crops. This therefore makes the yields data collected from farmers to be lower than expected. The way forward is to create a column in the PPT that will capture data on intercropped fields.</li> <li>• The project team has identified the need to put in place a system that facilitates effective monitoring of the performance of the project's targets. The project intends to adopt the PROMISE Project Implementation and Outcome Monitoring Sheets (PIMS and POMS).</li> <li>• As a result of the increase in project coverage, the mode of collecting the PPT data by indicating "yes or No" for each project participant is becoming cumbersome. Going forward, the team recommends the use of a number to indicate the number of persons who respond yes to a particular indicator.</li> </ul>
<b>Program Management</b>	
Describe any changes in staffing in the last 12 months and impacts on program, and efforts to bridge these	During the reporting period, the project has recruited a gender advisor and a project officer responsible for market linkages. The inclusion of the new staff has enhanced the team's work in the area of gender and market linkages.

**7. Appendices to be included in the report:**

- (i) Key activities planned for the Supplemental grant period (or till end of the project period);
- (ii) Group Training Activity Tracker (see template attached);
- (iii) Milestone tracker with key milestone status;
- (iv) Case Studies or other reports to share.