

CARE INTERNATIONAL IN GHANA

2016 Pathways Semi Annual Report

Ghana



January to June 2016



2016 Pathways Semi-Annual Report Outline

Progress and Results by Objective:

- 1. Objective 1:** To increase the productive engagement of 52,000 poor women in sustainable agriculture, and contribute to their empowerment

a. Project Dashboard.

| <i>Impact and target groups, members and outreach</i> | | | | | <i>Total</i> |
|--|---------------|--------------|-------------|--|--------------|
| | Malawi | India | Mali | Ghana | |
| Number of villages | | | | 71 | |
| Number of groups by type | | | | | |
| • VSLA | | | | 341 | |
| Market Research Committees | | | | 196 | |
| • Self Help Groups | | | | | |
| • Solidarity groups | | | | | |
| • Co-operatives /Networks | | | | | |
| • Other | | | | | |
| Total number of poor women smallholder farmers (Impact Population) in collectives (Gates Foundation) | | | | 7,014 | |
| Total number of Impact Population (other donors) | | | | 3,215 | |
| % of women in leadership position | | | | 33.3 % (baseline) 49.1 % (end line) | |
| Total number of other target group | | | | | |
| • Men and Boys e. g. spouses, other | | | | 2,338 | |
| • Elites including traditional leaders | | | | 341 | |

b. Results by change lever

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

1.1. Results

To improve skills and knowledge of smallholder women farmers on Good Agronomic Practices (GAPs), a refresher training was organised for all 341 (male: 95 female: 246) CBEAs. The training was organised at the districts capitals in Lambussie and Garu-Temapne. Topics covered by the trainings included;

- Appropriate site selection for soya and groundnut.
- Selection of recommended seed varieties.
- Optimum plant spacing.
- Appropriate fertilizer application, weed management, pest/disease scouting and control.
- Safe handling and correct utilization of agrochemicals.
- Seasonal calendar development.
- Community and group level facilitations skills
- Record keeping.
- Advisories from participatory Scenario Planning Session.

These trained CBEAs are providing extension services to smallholder women farmers at the community level. Field monitoring reports revealed that CBEAs often share messages with smallholder women farmers weekly after their VSLAs contributions. Besides the weekly meetings, some CBEAs also interact with women on individual basis and share improved agricultural messages with them. The use of the CBEAs has been effective at contributing to bridging the huge access to extension gap. At baseline only 24.6% of female respondents reported having met with an agricultural extension worker. At end line, this increased to 79.1%. Nearly every woman respondent reported satisfaction with the service (96.6%).

Apart from the work of CBEAs, the Talking Book, which is being piloted in a total of 32 communities in the two districts (22 and 10 communities in Garu-Tempene and Lambussie-Karni Districts respectively), is improving the knowledge and skills of smallholder women farmers on GAPs, marketing and gender issues. Monitoring reports by the M&E team revealed that each group member has the opportunity to listen to the Talking Book at least once a week that is, during their VSLA meetings. In addition, each member can have access to the Talking

“The talking book was a very powerful gender tool. Many men would not participate in meetings, nor listen to their wives talk about gender and changing gender roles. Women would bring the talking book home, and play it. This allowed a 'non-person' to communicate to difficult-to-reach men, and the message was not coming from another man or from their wife. The talking book had a significant impact on hard to reach men in the village.” – Male Gender champion, Garu-Tempene district.

Source: Endline June 2016.

Book and can take it home to listen with her family at least once a month. Monitoring conducted by Literacy Bridge revealed that groups were listening to the messages and putting the behaviors and methods into practice. The end line identified the Talking book as one of the key activities that are influencing change.

The results of the FFBS demonstrations were disseminated in project communities in both districts. These dissemination sessions are organized annually to enable farmers reflect on results of demonstrations and plan about the adoption of practices for the season ensuing season. During sessions 70% of project participants participated.

The project has expanded the community seed production scheme and in this regard 10 (Male: 5 Female: 5) project participants including CBEAs were identified and trained on

seed production across the two districts. Issues discussed at the training were; ethics of seed production, quality assurance in seed production, certification process and cleaning. The training was conducted in collaboration with Heritage Seed Company. Heritage Seed Company has an out growers' scheme, the company will support monitor the seed producers, clean the produce, certify and provide market for the seed. The company intends to take over the seed producers next season on its out growers for the purpose of sustainability. Routine field monitoring by Field facilitators showed that all the trained farmers have identified an average of one (1) acre for seed production this season.

To enhance the knowledge of community members on good nutrition practices, 71 (Male:10 Female:61) CBEAs were trained on basic nutrition practices and use of nutrition counseling cards. These counseling cards contain a set of 13 messages on nutrition and these include;

The 3 food groups, how to prevent anemia, maternal nutrition among others. This initiative has enabled the project expand the scope of nutrition interventions beyond the cooking demonstrations.

1.2 Challenges

High illiteracy rate of CBEAs affects their ability to effectively take records of their activities to support in the project's M&E processes. To address this situation they have been encouraged to engage the services of other literate members of their households to help them keep simple records of their activities.

1.3 Lessons learned and way forward

Engaging with the private sector is a useful approach towards ensuring sustainability of the interventions of the project, the relationship that has been developed with Heritage Seeds Company has potential of ensuring a sustainable seed system in the project communities in the ensuing seasons.

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

2.1 Result

Agricultural inputs play a fundamental role in agricultural production and productivity as they constitute the basal segment of the agricultural value chain. This is particularly so when we talk of productivity enhancing technologies or inputs such as improved seeds, inoculants, agrochemicals (herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, fertilizers,), farm tools, implements and machinery.

The importance of agricultural inputs is premised on the fact that for any output there must be an input and when these inputs are accessible and properly used under good weather conditions and management high productivity is attainable.

At baseline, there were two (2) input dealers in Garu District located in the district capital and none in Lambussie; where the women had to walk long distance to purchase their agri-inputs. The number of input dealers have increased over the period to 11 (Male:10 Female:1) in Lambussie with few located in the operational communities due to the demand created through the FFBS and the input fairs organized by the project.

The project in collaboration with some major input dealers (18th April Ltd – Wa, BAS-F -Tamale, ADAMA Ltd- Tamale) have initiated an agri-input supply scheme which is a private sector agri-input dealer network that is providing quality, competitively-priced agro-inputs and technical information and services to the target farmers in the project communities.

The approach relies on cultivating a sustainable commercial relationship between the trained agri-input retailers at the community level and the VSLA groups. It involves improving the technical and business skills of identified existing/potential agri-input dealers, linking them to agri-input wholesalers and are better able to serve as skilled input retailers offering the kind of high-quality, market-oriented products and services that produce the best results for farmers in their communities. This will encourage customer loyalty, and result in business sustainability. Eighteen (18) (5F, 13M) out of the 24 (5F, 19M) input dealers trained were supplied with agri-inputs worth GHC 39,857.00 (\$ 10,461) by BAS-F and 18th April Co. Ltd based on an MOU developed between the wholesalers and the trained input dealers. Agri-inputs supplied included;

- 842 litres of pre-emergence weedicide (*stomp CS, activus*)
- and 180 litres of non-selective weedicides (*sunphosate, glyphader, oboafu etc*), 96 and 27 litres of selective weedicides for rice and maize respectively, 242kg of foliar fertilizer(*polyfeed/MAP*), 360g improved okro seeds, 230g improved pepper seeds, 125kg of improved soybean seeds (*jenguma*) and 17 knapsack sprayers (*Hartman, sunshine, jacto*). Two (2) trained agri-input dealers (Lambussie and Billaw zones) in Lambussie District were also linked to an agri-input dealer in Wa (G. Favour Agro) and were supplied with 950 bags (47.5 tons) of actyva fertilizer to be sold to the smallholder farmers.

The trained agri-Input dealers are also investing in new upstream and downstream market-based relationships that did not previously exist in the project communities. They have after the training visited farmers in their farms and also at their VSLA meetings to educate them on the various products and their correct use. So far, over 2,000 farmers have received extension from the trained input dealers, indicating that input dealers are recognizing the value of building customer loyalty by disseminating the knowledge necessary for farmers to realize the potential returns from the products they are offering.

A total of 16 zonal agri-input fairs were organized in Garu-Tempane (4 zones) and Lambussie Districts (12 zones) to facilitate farmers access to quality agri-inputs. A wide range of quality agri-inputs were displayed to farmers including; total and selective weedicide, insecticides, quality certified seeds, fertilizers, knapsack sprayers and Personal Protection Equipment (PPEs). The smallholder women farmers were guided and advised on the correct and safe use of pesticides, their harmful effects on the human body and environment, correct use of PPEs. Trained input dealers for the various zones were also introduced to the farmers so that they can link up with them to acquire their desired inputs after the fair. Over 4,000 farmers and staffs of MoFA participated in the fairs in the 2 districts. Agri-inputs worth GH¢27,486.00 (\$7,214.20) were purchased by the smallholder farmers during the fairs;

- 374 litres non-selective weedicides (*eg zoomer, sunphosate, boafu, tackle etc*), 96 litres and 48 litres selective post-emergence weedicide for rice (propadiz, propa Gold, orizo plus) and maize (arrow, atrazine, nicogan) respectively, 819 litres selective pre-emergence for soybean, groundnut, maize (Stomp CS, activus, butaplus, alligator), 38 knapsack sprayers (Hartman, sunshine, jacto), improved certified seeds – 28kg maize (obatampa), 6kg soybean (jenguma), 360g okro (Maha and basanti), 230g pepper (demon, nickel), 7 wellington boots.

Due to the difficulties in accessing tractor ploughing services in Lambussie District resulting in less than 10% of the 4,642 smallholder farmers able to access tractor ploughing services during the 2015 cropping season, the project has facilitated the formation of ploughing service providers association. It has a membership of 32 with 37 tractors and undertook 12 zonal level sensitization sessions of the farmers on the existence of the association and the modalities for accessing their services for the 2016 cropping season. Seven thousand, eight hundred and ninety-nine (7,899) acres of farm land have been registered by the association in collaboration with PRUDA and the MRC to be ploughed for the smallholder women farmers in 2016. With the start of the season in June, a total of 412.5 acres have so far been ploughed by the association.

Building on the series of market related activities carried out in 2015 in all pathways project communities, the members of the MRC who are to spearhead marketing activities of the farmers including scouting and identifying buyers of their produce, negotiating on supply terms undertook a two (2) day visit to some soy processing industries in Techiman (Ghana Nuts Company Ltd, Sunyani (Yedent Agro Group of Companies) and Kumasi (Vestor Oil Mills). This was to expose the farmers to market practices and outlets, quality standards of the industries, and also ensure that they interact directly with the industries so that they can better appreciate and build good buying relationships with them. The industries expressed interest to do business

with the MRC and purchase/supply MoU have been initiated.

Two (2) pre-season value chain meetings were organized at the district level in the 2 districts to provide the platform for the various actors in the production of soybean and groundnut to interact and develop/strengthen the link among them. It also enabled them to inter relate during the production season and facilitated demand/supply of services. The value chain meeting provided the opportunity for the MRC and producers to identify the various value chain actors in their district and the services they offer and also enhanced their understanding of quality demands and other requirements in the soybean to be supplied to obtain premium prices. A road map was developed on service demand by the producers from the various actors in order to engage in effective cultivation of soybeans and groundnut.

The project since its inception in 2012 has been working to help women farmers to get access to their own land for farming. During the period under review, a training session on human and land rights was conducted for 146 community women leaders, assembly members, chiefs and traditional leaders. As a result, some community leaders have given out permanent farm land to eight (8) women in Garu and Lambussie District.

2.1. Challenges

The issue of aflatoxin in the case of groundnut continues to hinder the possibility of large supply of the commodity to factories. Also MRC members are unable to visit markets to check prices due transport challenges.

2.2. Lessons learned and way forward

Linking MRC members to a mobile based platform to enable them access market information will improve their access to market information and also minimize the need for members of the committee to physically visit market centers for price information.

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

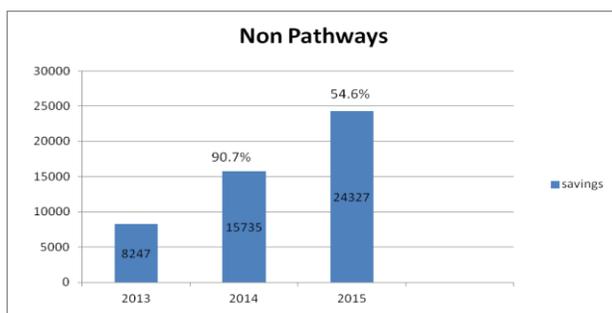
3.1. Results

During the period under review, the project team together with the partner staff undertook physical inspection of the women's plots to ensure that they are suitable soils for the cultivation of their crops. The inspection was however preceded by sensitization sessions for producer groups on land selection and preparation. This year's exercise was unique as it involved the inspection of 57 FFBS demonstration plots in the communities in the two districts. In some communities the old demonstration site were changed due to land rotation principles and in cases where the site was not suitable.

Groundnut production has proven to be profitable especially in Garu Tempene where the crop is no longer widely cultivated but still attracts high demand. The Project set up groundnut demonstration sites in the district in a bid to reintroduce groundnut production. As at the time of preparing this report, 45 (26f, 19m) farmers have cultivated groundnuts in the project communities.

In 2015, the average yield of an acre of ground nuts in the project communities grew by 397.7% (554.04kg) compared to the 2012 baseline figure of 111.3kg. The average income per farmer per acre at harvest in September 2015 was GHC 2.00 per kilogram of groundnut has appreciated to GHC 4.00 per kilogram. Considering the fact that farmers did not use fertilizer, the average cost of producing an acre of groundnut at GHC304.00, the average return over cost is GHC 804.00 at harvest, but currently (June) the returns will be GHC 1,912.00. The price of soybean has remained the same at GHC 1.20 for the same period. Farmers are therefore very confident about the profitability of the cultivation of soybean and groundnuts. The income that has been earned by the women has been very useful in helping them contribute to the upkeep of their homes and to make their weekly savings in their VSLA groups.

The figures below shows sampled 10 Pathways and 10 Non Pathways VSLAs in the Lambussie/karni district from 2013 to 2015. Savings for Pathways group increased by 232% between 2013 and 2015, while for non-Pathways group increased by 194.98%. This is with the assumption that, increase income from their farming activities results in the increased savings of the project VSLA members.



Source: PRUDA MIS data. Figure 1

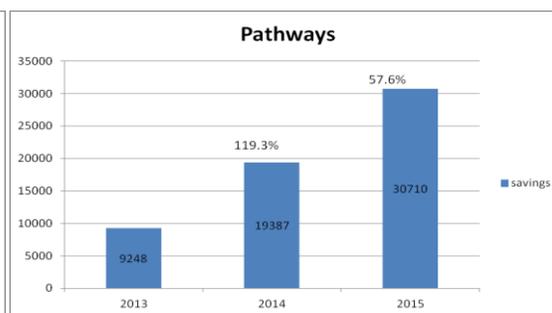


Figure 2

3.2. Challenges

3.3. Lessons learned and way forward

Due to the unpredictable nature of the weather situation in the country, the project is promoting the adoption of short duration varieties of soybean (afayak, sungpuu) and groundnut (yenyawoso) in the communities. In addition, climate smart agricultural practices such as mixed cropping have been included in this year's FFBS treatments.

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

4.1. Results

The project continued to conduct community gender dialogues in its operational areas. Currently an additional 17 community gender dialogues have been conducted and 342 males and 1,080 females participated bringing to a total of 30 dialogues (565 male, 1,725 female) so far. The dialogues focused on the five categories of the progress makers that indicated low performance during first round monitoring.

Women had low and nil scores in categories one , two and three of the progress markers as indicated below;

Category two - Intra-household negotiation, communication and decision making

Indicator 1 – women share new knowledge on proper food preparation and utilization with their households had a medium score of 30.

Most of the families in the project communities are nuclear so they did not know who to share the messages with except their household members. However, in polygamous homes, women easily share their knowledge with co-wives.

Indicator 4– women participate in household decision on how to use family income, medium score 40.

Though women participate in household decision making they do not have the final authority as to how the household resources should be utilized.

Category three – Control of income and productive assets/resources

Indicator 5 – women own and control their own farmlands nil score 90.

Most of farmlands are owned by men. This is because farmlands are inherited patrilineally.

Category four – self-confidence, autonomy and leadership

Indicator 2 – women have fair knowledge on reproductive health and able to negotiate for safe sex practices low score 70.

Traditionally, women are not supposed to negotiate for sex. In addition, women believe that they are not expected to be sexually active during their menopause stage. Also, women whose first-born gives birth are also not interested in sexual activities.

Indicator 3 – women have fair knowledge on land rights and are able to negotiate with land owners for productive lands for farming nil score 60.

Great number of women in the project communities do not have knowledge on land rights and so they are not able to negotiate for productive lands. They consider the release of land by men as a favor.

Indicator 4 – women participate jointly with men in community meetings and speak confidently and take decisions on matters that affects them low score 50.

Most of the women lack exposure and feel intimidated when they are with the men. Hence, they expect men to speak and take decisions on their behalf.

Indicator 5– women take-up community leadership positions nil score 70.

Women shy away from community leadership roles because of deep-rooted cultural practices.

Category 5 – intimacy and harmony in the relationship

Indicator 1 – women are openly and firmly communicating with their husbands in households matters nil score 40

Men feel threatened that if women are given the opportunity to engage with on equal basis they will lose the positions as family heads.

To address the above challenges identified during the monitoring exercise, the project carried out specific activities focused on addressing the underlying causes.

1. Land Rights and Human Rights for Assembly members, Traditional Authority and Women Leaders. The objective of this session was to introduce the leaders to basic human rights and women's access and control over traditional family lands.
2. Advocacy, Lobbying and Leadership skills to twenty (20) women leaders in Lambussie district to enhance their participation in the district assembly processes as well as community meetings.
3. Gender dialogues focused on addressing the underlying issues identified during progress marker monitoring.

There is a growing awareness of women engaging in sex after age 50. This is to demystify the notion that women are not supposed to engage in sex after a particular age (45 and above). This change is important because reproductive health issues were identified as a major cause of conflict between couples which can sometimes result in violence.

Reports from the monitoring and evaluation team revealed that relationship between men and women within households has improved significantly, for instance, men now take decisions together with their wives concerning their farming activities, household income, education and health needs of their children. Men also see the need to assist their wives on their farms as well as their household chores. In Nabaala community men said *"it is common to find men in this community caring for the children whilst their wives doing other household chores"*. These positive changes were largely attributed to gender dialogues and the messages from Talking Books. In Tankpasi, Barachima Awini, *indicated her husband was not considering her opinion on household issues especially farming but now they take decisions together because of the messages they have listened to from the Talking Books.* Also, In Suke, Adjoa Gongon said; *"At first as a Dagaaba woman, I could not stand in front of a man and ask for a piece of land to farm, but now she has more than an acre of fertile land that she uses for her own farming. This is possible because of Pathways' interventions especially the community gender dialogues."*

Spouses now share or contribute to household expenses, which hitherto was the responsibility of the women. According to Mussah Moro; *"I could not afford to buy fertilizer for my farm, so when my wife realized it she supported me with three bags of fertilizer. I applied the fertilizer on my farm and had good yields which I shared with my wife"*.

The end line evaluation for the project also discovered that; the overall percentage of women who have gained in sole or joint decision-making has improved in several areas). Women show gains in decision-making over agricultural income and expenditures, and control of assets (both household and agricultural). For women in male-headed households the increase in control over assets (household and agricultural) nearly doubled from 28.0% to 43.7% for household assets, and more than doubled from 20.4% to 42.5% for agricultural assets.

4.2. Challenges

Some of the men are afraid that when women are given the opportunity to develop themselves there would be a shift in roles and women would be ahead. Thus the resistance by some men.

4.3. Lessons learned and way forward

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

5.1. Results

In furtherance of the strategies to create the opportunity for women to access productive lands and take part in decision making at both the community and district levels, the project conducted a land rights training that brought together the Traditional leaders that is the Chiefs and Tindanas (Land owners), Queen mothers, community members and the district assembly

members to discuss the possible ways of making women have access, control and use of productive resources especially land. In addition, the project organized training for assembly members in a quest to enhancing women's participation in assembly issues. This is to ensure women are central to all committees in the assembly set-up as well as at the community levels.

Community gender dialogues have served as a platform for analyzing gender differences. Community members have embraced this tool and feel comfortable to discuss community issues and find amicable solutions to them. The dialogues which involved all community members including Chiefs, queen mothers, Elders, Tindanas, women leaders, youth, men and women discuss issues of human rights, women rights, child rights and land rights. Also sex negotiations, household decision making as well as access and control of household productive resources were discussed.

The project continued its efforts to developing a more sustainable and effective networks by working closely with NETWRIGHT, WILDAF and Grass Root Sisterhood Foundation (a local NGO based in Tamale that works in areas such as secured land tenure and land rights for vulnerable people) to adopt suitable strategies in addressing gender related issues such as domestic violence and Child marriage.

Results

Three communities in Garu – Tempene have started negotiations with the survey department to demarcate lands for women in Atamidabood, Gbelginvuus and Kpatua 1. So far, three women from Atamidabood have been allocated with an acre of land each. In Tankpasi for instance the Traditional leaders appealed to land owners not to take rent from women who seek lands for productive purposes. The Chief of Chum has allocated fifty (50) acres of land for any landless woman in the community who is interested in cultivating soy and groundnuts. Women are yet to register the accessed the land. The project is negotiating to find the possibility of leasing the land for a period of 10 years renewable without a fee.

The Garu district assembly have revised most of its programmes to make them gender sensitive for example the sub-committees at the Assembly have women representatives. Also established community groups such as water and sanitation have equal representation of men and women and women given sensitive roles to play thereby ensuring their active and effective participation.

5.2. Challenges

Deep rooted cultural issues among Traditional African worshipers affect women’s access to some productive resources. Women are not allowed to access some productive farm implements such as using the big hoe due to the belief that when women use it their gods will not accept their prayers which could result in poor harvest.

5.3. Lessons learned and way forward

It is advisable to conduct gender dialogues immediately after community entry, our concentration on land issues should be focused on ownership and not access. Equally we could have be facilitating communities to demand and claim their rights.

2. Objective 2: To enhance the scale of high quality women responsive agriculture programming.

A. *In this section, include information on how Pathways is influencing other CARE programs, operations and strategies. Provide information for this reporting period only.*

| Focus areas | Describe giving bulleted examples |
|---|---|
| <p>How have you shared Pathways results, tools or lessons with colleagues and CARE partners beyond the Pathways team?</p> | <p><i>Describe any internal mechanisms, presentations on Pathways you have done within CARE and the results of this sharing. How many people attended? What were some of the outcomes from these presentations?</i></p> <p>The Project team made presentations to the Sub Office team during two bi-monthly programme level meetings. These meetings provide opportunity for project teams to review their plans, share upcoming plans, lessons and best practices. The project has therefore used these meetings to share best practices for adoption by other projects. The staff meetings are attended by all 25 programme staff in the sub office.</p> <p>A presentation on the Pathways was made at a Programme Leadership Team Meeting for the country Office. The presentation focused on how Pathways aligns with the new country programme strategy. At the meetings participants discussed how some of the best practices such as use of Community Based Extension Agents can be up scaled. The meeting was attended by 14 participants including the Country Director and the Head of Programmes.</p> <p>A partnership meeting was held with all CARE Ghana national NGO partners and at this meeting a presentation was shared on the Pathways Project. The meeting was attended by 42 CARE and Partner Staff.</p> <p>A presentation was made on Pathways approach and strategies</p> |

| Focus areas | Describe giving bulleted examples |
|---|---|
| | for addressing gender issues at Mondelez Cocoa Life Project platform meeting. The meeting was attended by 32 participants from 8 organizations. The presentation was well received and the team has requested for support to mainstream the Pathways gender approaches into the Cocoa Life Project. |
| Is Pathways an anchor project for your long-term program? Please describe how Pathways is informing your broader country strategy and progress made in the <u>past 6 months</u> . Refer to latest CPR and other processes in the CO | <p><i>Has Pathways influenced strategic programming in the country? Describe how and give some examples.</i></p> <p>The Pathways approach is highly commended as having a holistic approach towards value chains programming especially due to the focus on addressing underlying gender issues and the attention to nutrition and resilience issues. The CO currently has two thematic programming areas; i) Food and Nutrition Security and ii) Social and Economic Empowerment. Both programmes focus on working with women and youth. Pathways Project is recognized as one of the initiatives that clearly aligns with the new programme strategy and provides best practice for future programming.</p> <p>The project's work on gender has received wide commendation across the country office and the Country Director has requested for all sub office programme staff to be trained on the project's gender approach to facilitate integration into other initiatives in the CO.</p> |
| Other | <i>Include other ways in which Pathways has influenced CARE programming / strategies in the past 6 months</i> |

B. Project/Program influenced by Pathways model - Have Pathways tools or lessons been adapted/used in any new proposals in the past 6 months?

| List of Projects/Programs (project period in Yr) | External/Internal | Project value (in USD) | # of communities (approximate) | # of HHs (approximate) | # of individuals (approximate) |
|--|-------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| WaSA | Internal | 113, 172 | 20 | 600 | 4,000 |
| | | | | | |

3. 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.:

| Focus Area | Describe giving as much detail as possible |
|--|---|
| <p>Have you shared Pathways experiences, tools or lessons in external forums or events in the <u>last 6 months</u>? Please describe the events, the participants and the strategic value.</p> | <p><i>Describe meeting, venue, organizers and other relevant details of meetings where Pathways has been presented or where Pathways approaches, experiences, and tools have been presented/discussed.</i></p> <p>A network of Agricultural Sector stakeholders has been established in the three northern regions of Ghana. The Pathways Project was invited to the regional meetings in Upper East and West who the project Operates. The projects strategies, lessons and plans for May to July. The meetings in the two regions were attended by 72 participants from Government, NGO and private sector.</p> <p>The Project team met with the International Fertilizer Development Cooperation (IFDC) . During the meeting a brief presentation on Pathways was shared with a focus on our approaches, lessons and results. In the meeting both organizations discussed potential areas of collaboration between Pathways and the USAID funded Agriculture Technology Transfer Project. Areas of collaboration that were discussed were exchange visits to technology demonstration sites and linking Pathways Producers to agriculture equipment grants.</p> <p>The Pathways Gender Advisor Participated in the CARE International gender conference in Dubai in April 2016. At the meeting a presentation was made on the Gender Dialogues being conducted by the project, the presentation was well received by participants.</p> |
| <p>Have any external stakeholders – donors, partners, etc – come to see CARE’s Pathways work in the field or come to meet with Pathways staff to learn more in the <u>last 6 months</u>? Please describe these visits.</p> | <p><i>Describe visits by external stakeholders where Pathways has been discussed. Describe who, from where, aspects of Pathways discussed and any known results or use of the information by the external visitors after the visit.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PACE Academy: The Pathways Project hosted 6 students and 2 teachers from PACE Academy in Atlanta. The visit focused on showcasing the different approaches being used by the project and how they contribute towards food and income security for women and their households. • Sarah intern: The Project is hosting an intern from the Emory University in Atlanta. She is doing an internship on documenting the effect of the use of the Talking Book by the project. The results will be used for dissemination across the Pathways Programme and CARE. • CARE USA Water Team: Stephanie Ogden, a staff of the CUSA water team visited the Pathways project sites as part of preparation for the WaSA inception meeting. Her visit focused on observing and interacting with staff on the sustainable Agriculture Component of the |

| Focus Area | Describe giving as much detail as possible |
|--|---|
| | <p>Project. Observations and insights from the visit fed into the WaSA meeting and planning process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agromite Company Limited: The Project team had a meeting with a private company that specializes in the marketing of agricultural equipment. As part of the meeting, the team shared about its sustainable agriculture work approaches being used to engage with women. As an outcome of the meeting, Agromite is partnering with the Project to conduct demonstrations on Pathways farmer's fields on the use of women friendly equipment such as zero till planters. • New York University/WAGNER: Students from NYU/WAGNER met with CARE sub office staff for a presentation on CARE's work on addressing food security in Northern Ghana. The Pathways project's strategies were shared during the meeting. |
| <p>Does your team have a regular external communications system (newsletter, etc), have you shared any reports externally or hosted an external event featuring Pathways in the <u>last 6 months</u>? If so, please describe this/these.</p> | <p><i>Describe any Pathways publications that you have produced that have been disseminated. Include details on the content of the publication, number of people to who these have been disseminated, any feedback on the publication, etc if available</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project brief; The project team has prepared a brief on the project and this is used for dissemination by both the project team and the country office communications team. • WARMU Brief; The communications team of the West Africa Regional Management Unit worked with the Pathways Ghana team to prepare a brief on the project for dissemination across the region. • Pathways newsletter. The Pathways Ghana team contributed two stories to the Global Pathways Newsletter During the past 6 months. |
| <p>Other</p> | |

4. Challenges and Risks:

During the annual Participatory Scenario Planning session with the Ghana Meteorological Department, the farmers were made to understand that the onset of rains for this year was first and second weeks of May, 2016 but the onset of the rains rather came in the third week of June. This has resulted in late start of the season for farmers in the two regions. Also this year we are likely to experience early cessation of the rains due to the predictions of the GMet. According to Gmet, the cessation will come in the third week of October, 2016 and this affect most long duration varieties of both soybean and ground nut.

5. Partnerships: Describe all internal and external partnerships and linkages you have established during this reporting period.

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| Partner | Names of institutions, overall purpose of partnership, key lessons and challenges. Reflect upon these partnerships in light of how these partnerships show potential for scale and sustainability of Pathways. |
| 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 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. |
| Others | 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. The project has also gone into partnership with 18 th April Agro Chemical Company and BASF to run an agro dealer input scheme at the community level. |

6. Program Management, Monitoring and Evaluation: What are the significant program management, monitoring and evaluation activities that have occurred in the past 6 months?
A suggested table format for responses is included below.

| Monitoring and Evaluation | |
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| Monitoring and evaluation activities carried out in the <u>past 6 months</u> giving details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project team collected PPT data for the 2015 crop cycle from 223 VSLAs in both the districts. The team also conducted editing of the data. The Annual Review Survey was carried out involving 40 project participants to track the |

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| | <p>changes in the beneficiaries' lives arising as a result of project interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2015 FFBS results were disseminated to smallholder women farmers to help inform their decisions on selection the most appropriate treatments to enhance their productivity. • End of project evaluation report was shared with the team during the period. The team reviewed and shared feedback for finalization of the report. |
| M&E lessons and challenges, and modifications/way forward | There has been a significant delay in the submission of the PPT data for 2015. The team is currently working on filling the gaps that were identified in the data that has been collected. |
| Program Management | |
| Describe any changes in staffing in the <u>past 6 months</u> and impacts on program, and efforts to bridge these | The time of the M&E officer for the project was shared with the PROMISE Project which ended in May 2016. In view of this the staff is full time on the project. |
| Other | |

7. Learning questions on collectives learning agenda

| Question | Reflection - describe giving as much detail as possible. Draw data from ARS, PPT, Gender Indicator Monitoring for supporting your claim |
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| Inclusiveness: 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 Ghana the VSLAs is the main group that the project is working with. However, other groups such as CBEAs and Market Research 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. |
| Inter Group Synergies and Dynamics: How do relations between and within different types of groups work to create greater coordination and effectiveness? What are the | In Ghana the VSLAs is the main group that the project is working with. However, other groups such as CBEAs and Market Research Committees, trained input dealers emerge from the various VSLAs. The VSLAS still serve as a pivot to these emerging groups. In each of the VSLAs, CBEAs together with other members meet regularly to |

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| <p>factors that lead to success and how can we avoid traditional failures?</p> | <p>plan their production processes, draw schedules on how to disseminate extension messages, discuss marketing issues within without difficulty. In addition, the Market Research Committees work on behalf of the VSLAs in terms of searching for potential buyers, negotiating and bargaining for better prices for their produce. The factors that leads to the success are; 1. Understanding the role each group is expected to play in the group. 2. Going by the constitution of each VSLA as a mechanism for conflict resolution.</p> |
| <p>Improved Productivity: 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. The increase in yield of collective members has also translated into increase in their VSLA savings as shown in the figures 1 and 2 above.</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.</p> <p>Also, women who are in collectives have acquired some level capacity through the FFBS demonstration and the work of CBEAs.</p> |
| <p>Market and Other Linkages with the Ecosystem: 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 platform through which development organizations reach out to large number of people with interventions within a shorter period.</p> <p>The members of these groups were able to receive trainings on good agronomic practices, training on safe and correct use of pesticides from department of agriculture and Environmental Protection Agency. During the period under review, the tractor owners association in Lambussie District was linked to plough a total of 412.5 acres for 141 farmers.</p> |

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| | <p>Working with groups is more effective and reliable compared with working with individual farmers. It gives them stronger voice to negotiate and bargain for better services by the tractor owners association.</p> |
| <p>Improved Gender Roles and Relations: 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>Intervention Sequencing and Timing: 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, financial institutions, input and output market) for sustainability.</p> |

8. Appendices to be included in the report:

- (i) Key activities planned for the next 6 months (pull these from the bridge grant period workplan);
- (ii) Case Studies or other reports to share.