USDA Food for Progress Evaluation Plan: Trade Expansion and Agricultural Market Development

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CoP	Community of Practice
EP	Evaluation Plan
FAD	Food Assistance Division
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFPr	Food for Progress
FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service
IE	Impact Evaluation
IRD	International Relief and Development
LA	Learning Agenda on Expanding Trade in Agricultural Markets
MES	Monitoring and Evaluation Staff
NCBA/CLUSA	National Cooperative Business Association/Cooperative League of the USA
OCBD	Office of Capacity Building and Development
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
RF	Results Framework
SI	Social Impact, Inc.
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WHO	World Health Organization

I. Background

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service's (USDA/FAS) Office of Capacity Building and Development (OCBD) commissioned Social Impact Inc. to develop the Food for Progress Learning Agenda on Expanding Trade in Agricultural Markets (LA) as a tool to identify relevant and timely research questions to inform evaluation and policy research in the area of expanding agricultural trade and markets. The key research and evaluation questions highlighted in the LA are intended to elicit information to fill some of the identified gaps in the knowledge base within the existing literature.

The most significant gaps have been extracted from the LA and form the basis of the five-year Evaluation Plan (EP) that this document comprises. By implementing the EP, USDA may achieve several key learning outcomes:

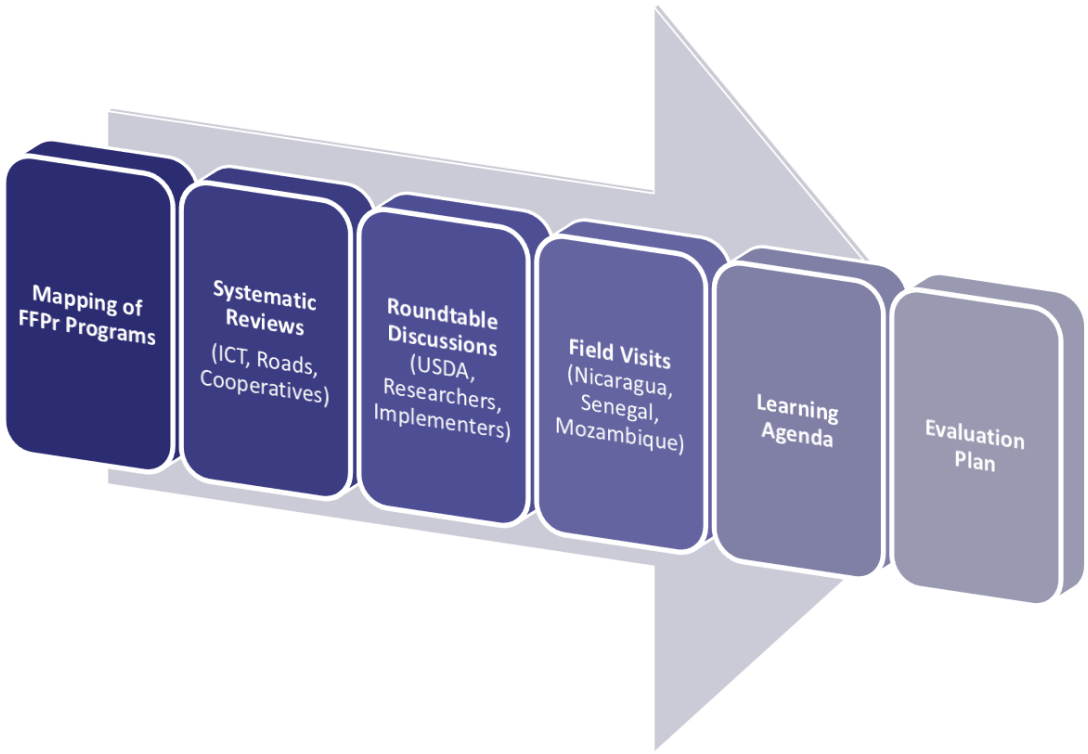
A) Contribute to the evidence base related to trade and agricultural markets;
B) Validate existing research findings by applying them in a new context;
C) Identify and clarify theories of change, including mediating and moderating variables and implementation modalities that may influence intervention success factors, such as quality, access, and coverage; and
D) Generate greater knowledge around efficiencies, effectiveness, and economics of implementation and their implication for the broader policy and strategic context.

By achieving these outcomes, USDA will not only contribute to a broader knowledge base, but also will stand to gain from the application of this learning towards its own internal strategy for more impactful programming.

The evaluation questions featured in this EP should be addressed as a matter of priority in order to inform and improve FFPr programming and policy, and to improve the design and implementation of agriculture interventions that ultimately lead to expansion of markets, increased trade, and overall improved outcomes for farmers. Therefore, the LA and EP are designed to inform the FFPr Results Framework (RF) on Expanded Trade of Agricultural Products, as well as the broader agricultural markets and trade theory of change.

The development of the LA and EP followed a systematic process that included compiling data from a thorough review of FFPr programming, rigorous research on topics related to agricultural trade and markets, collaborative roundtable discussions with USDA staff, researchers, and implementing partners, field visits to USDA project sites, and a series of workshops, discussions, and surveys among USDA staff members. The process is outlined in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Sequence of Activities



II. Overview of the Evaluation Plan

This five-year Evaluation Plan is a supplementary tool to the Learning Agenda and has been developed for the Office of Capacity Building and Development (OCBD), Food Assistance Division (FAD), with the overarching goal of improving evidence-based decision making. FFPr Analysts and Managers are the key users of this EP, while USDA/FAS Senior Managers and Monitoring and Evaluation (MES) Staff are secondary users.

The FFPr EP operationalizes the FAS Evaluation Policy and Learning Agenda and promotes evaluation use and Agency learning. The EP further articulates the priority assigned to particular questions, identified through the participatory and transparent engagement process with various stakeholders outlined in Figure 1. Ultimately, the EP requires organizational commitment, resources, and proactive planning to ensure that evaluations are conducted appropriately and in a timely fashion to inform strategic and programmatic decisions. As such, the following considerations and guidelines should be followed when maintaining and using the EP.

Living Document – The EP is a living document—which suggests constant reviews, clarification of evaluation questions, and changes (as necessary) to reflect shifting priorities and knowledge gaps. Maintaining a relevant EP is necessary for timely data collection and analysis and knowledge dissemination and application. Changes to the EP should be led by MES in collaboration with USDA program staff and other stakeholders, and should occur at least on an annual basis.

Dynamic Feedback – Reflecting on and updating the evaluation questions *immediately after* the annual reporting cycle, at a minimum, is a best practice. Programmatic data, which is often aggregated and analyzed at the reporting cycle stage, sheds light on further gaps in knowledge or implementation challenges that can provide valuable feedback for use in updating the EP. Other vital opportunities for revisiting the EP include strategic shifts in FFPr programs or strategies, changes to FFPr results frameworks, or changes in the learning environment (i.e., new knowledge generated outside of USDA). Constantly surveying the external environment (i.e., external evaluations, journals and scientific publications, and gray literature) for new knowledge is instrumental in eliminating redundancies in the EP.

Budget and Timeframes – The EP requires adequate resourcing and commitment from USDA/FFPr. When planning for evaluations, careful consideration is needed regarding types of evaluations, methodologies, and timeframes for evaluation design, approval, and implementation. All of these factors inform the amount of time and budget required for a successfully executed evaluation. Proactive planning is essential, and during the annual review of the EP and questions, budgets and time frames should be revised accordingly. In particular, when considering an impact evaluation, it is absolutely essential that the planning begin at least 18 months in advance (as a best practice) to allow sufficient time for evaluation design and procurement. Other planning factors to consider may include availability of appropriate procurement mechanisms for sourcing the evaluation, evaluation team availability (local or international evaluators and expertise), and data collection feasibility factors that could delay or prolong the implementation of an evaluation.

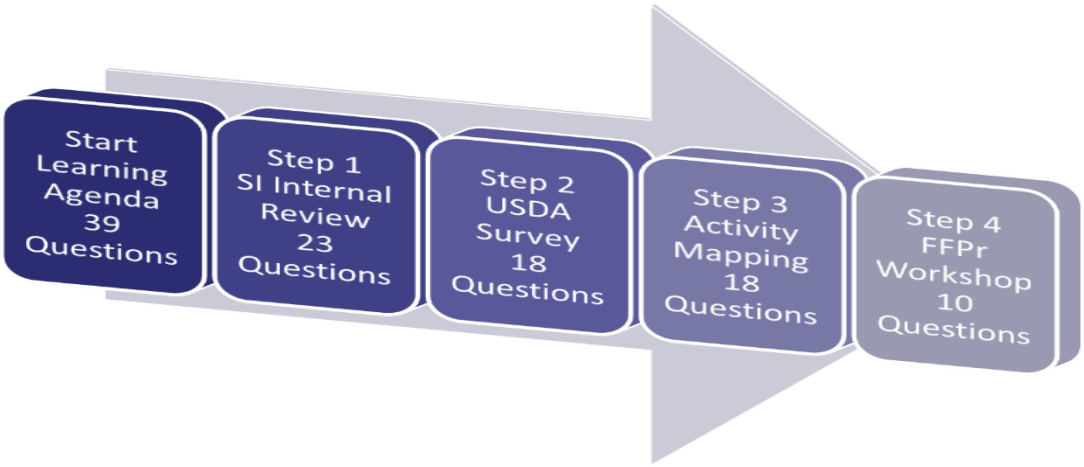
Clear Linkage to Program Design & Strategy – The priority evaluation questions should generate valuable knowledge that can be readily applied towards programs. Given constant shifts in learning and changes in strategies, it is essential that a business case be made for how knowledge generated from evaluations is still relevant for ongoing or planned programs and how it should be applied to further the aims of USDA strategy. As such, careful consideration should be given when linking priority questions to USDA/FFPr programs and activities. If evaluation questions become irrelevant with time or have been answered by external efforts, they should be reviewed in the context of USDA programs and either revised or eliminated. Furthermore, evaluation questions should be written in a way so as to assess a specific programmatic or strategic purpose and should articulate how the data collected from the evaluation will inform single or multiple USDA programs.

III. Evaluation Question Prioritization Process

The EP is based on a subset of evaluation questions from the Expanded Trade and Agricultural Market Development Learning Agenda. The Learning Agenda consists of a total of 39 questions that span four topic areas: (1) Value Creation, (2) Market Linkages, (3) Quality and Standards, and (4) Risk and Uncertainty. Many of the 39 LA questions pertain to policies, practices, and phenomena that would be best addressed by the wider agricultural community through various types of research and pilot programs. The EP, conversely, is based on a subset of 10 LA questions that can be answered by USDA through evaluating its own programming and activities.

The SI Team followed a four-step process to identify the 10 questions that form the basis of this EP. Figure 2 below highlights each of the steps, which are described in detail throughout this section.

Figure 2: Overview of Prioritization Process



Step 1: Internal Prioritization Exercise

To identify the list of 10 questions to include in the EP, the SI Team first conducted an internal prioritization exercise based on application of the following two criteria:

1. Evaluability
2. Existing Research

The criterion of "evaluability" was defined as whether FFPr programming exists that aligns with the question topics. This criterion is important because any evaluations conducted by FFPr must use existing or recently completed programs as their subject. Therefore, the questions should focus on thematic areas aligned with FFPr programming. The below question from the Learning Agenda did not meet this criterion and was eliminated from consideration for the EP. FFPr programming does not include the promotion of Regional Economic Communities. Thus, this is a question that may be better addressed by an academic institution or think-tank.

> *"What opportunities exist to capitalize on the role of binding regional platforms, such as Regional Economic Communities, to promote trade harmonization and the development of agricultural market systems within and across borders?"*

The criterion of "existing research" was defined as whether the question was identified by key stakeholders as an area in which extensive research already exists. Several questions in the Learning Agenda identified areas for which, while additional research would be useful, substantial research does already exist. The SI team categorized these questions as lower priority for additional research funding, and thus did not include them in the Evaluation Plan. The following example is a question that did not meet this criterion:

> *"Do cooperatives, associations, federations, and collectives impact producers' abilities to optimize sales to markets at the local, regional, or international level? What particular services provided by cooperatives lead to results?"*

Under this contract, SI conducted a Systematic Review of Agricultural Cooperatives and found that while research gaps remain, many studies exist that examine this question. Additionally, during one of the roundtables, researchers noted that research already exists on the role of cooperatives in improving the enabling environment for farmers.

Step 2: USDA Survey

After the SI Team reduced the number of questions through this initial prioritization process, a survey was sent to USDA staff to identify those that were of highest and lowest priority within the set of remaining questions. Staff from FFPr, MES, and Senior Management ranked five questions of the remaining 23 as "highest priority", and five questions as "lowest priority." The SI Team then sorted the responses into five categories based on responses. The definitions of the categories and the number of questions that fell into each are shown below in Table 1.

Table 1: Survey Categories and Results

Category	Definition	Number of Questions
Definite No	At least 3 respondents rated this question "lowest priority," none rated this question "highest priority"	4
Likely No	Negative spread of 3 or greater between number of "lowest priority" rankings and number of "highest priority" rankings for this question	1
Up for Debate	Spread of 2 of less between number of "highest priority" rankings and number of "lowest priority" rankings for this question	12
Likely Yes	Positive spread of 3 or greater between number of "highest priority" rankings and "lowest priority" rankings for this question	2
Definite Yes	At least 3 respondents rated this question "highest priority", none rated this question "lowest priority"	4

Questions that were categorized as "Likely No" or "Definite No" were winnowed out from the list of possible EP questions, which reduced the total number to 18. Those categorized as "Likely Yes" and "Definite Yes" were considered as final EP questions. Questions labeled as "Up for Debate" formed the basis for the Activity Mapping exercise and the prioritization workshop with FFPr analysts and MES Staff.

Step 3: Activity Mapping Exercise

To ensure that the final selection of questions for the EP included as many thematic areas of FFPr programming as possible, the SI Team returned to the Activity Mapping deliverable, produced for USDA at the beginning of the contract period and cataloged all FFPr agreements awarded from 2009-2013. The SI Team developed a summary of each award, capturing details such as country and length of operation, project objectives, sector and type of activities, target clients, and monetization value. The team developed categories for classifying the contracts; the categories are based on the activities highlighted in the FFPr Results Framework on Expanding Trade of Agricultural Markets, as well as interventions typically discussed in the literature to develop and improve agricultural value chains. Table 2 shows the 11 categories, along

with the number of awards aligned with each category. Some awards covered a broad range of activities, and thus were placed into multiple categories.

Table 2: Activity Mapping Categories

Activity Mapping Category	Total CCC-Awards 2009-2013
A. Working with output traders	24
B. Improving/building transportation infrastructure	7
C. Improving & developing post-harvest facilities	19
D. Establishing/improving standardization & regulations for phyto-sanitation	5
E. Building/improving market spaces/facilities	4
F. Fostering linkages with supermarkets, export markets	25
G. Facilitating marketing of products	18
H. Improving & expanding access to finance	13
I. Facilitating/developing market information systems	13
J. Funding & conducting research	17
K. Trade programs that included women as a target group	5

To identify the 10 Learning Agenda questions for inclusion in the EP, the SI Team overlaid the remaining 18 Learning Agenda questions with these 11 categories to produce a relative measure of the volume of FFPr programming in each category. One example of the overlay process is shown below.

*Table 3: **Activity Mapping Category B:** Improving/building transportation infrastructure (feeder roads, main roads, collection hubs)*

Number of Commodity Credit Corporation Awards Issued for B					
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
3	1	1	2	0	7

> **Learning Agenda Question:** *"How can improved transportation and post-harvest facilities such as cold storage, roads, etc., help in value creation to expand trade and markets?"*

As both the LA question and Activity Mapping category relate to improving transportation infrastructure, the 7 projects from this category were considered to be FFPr programming related to this particular question. This process was repeated for each of the remaining 18 LA questions, and the results were presented to the FFPr Analysts and MES for consideration during the prioritization workshop.

Step 4: FFPr Prioritization Workshop

The final step in the prioritization process was a workshop in which FFPr Analysts and MES staff prioritized the remaining 18 Learning Agenda questions. The following criteria were employed for this prioritization exercise: (1) funding for activities related to each question (the Activity Mapping overlay served as a proxy

indicator for this criteria) and (2) priority within the EP timeline (is answering the question a short, medium, or long-term priority?). USDA staff reviewed each question and ranked whether it was a short (1-2 years), medium (3-5 years), or long-term (5-7 years) priority, and whether, given the number of projects that FFPr had funded on each question's topic (using the activity mapping data), they wished to recommend it for inclusion in the EP. Of the 18 questions, the 12 questions categorized as "Up for Debate" through the survey responses (Step 3) formed the main foci of this exercise. Workshop participants split into three groups for this exercise, each of which discussed the questions and submitted to the SI Team a single set of recommendations.

After the workshop, the SI Team tabulated the results and included in the EP the questions recommended by at least two of the three workshop groups. Additionally, there were two questions under consideration that all groups noted were highly similar. The SI Team included the question that all groups agreed was better-worded. This final prioritization exercise resulted in a list of 10 EP questions. The allocation of these questions among LA topics is illustrated below in Table 4.

Table 4: Evaluation Plan Question Category Breakdown

Category	Number of Question in Evaluation Plan
Value Creation	2
Quality and Standards	2
Risk and Uncertainty	3
Market Linkages	3

IV. Informing the Remaining Learning Agenda Questions

The USDA/FFPr LA is composed of 39 questions, which were distilled down to 10 critical questions through the process described in Section III to fill significant knowledge gaps and inform USDA policies and FFPr programs. The remaining 29 priority learning questions, though not deemed areas of critical focus for FFPr, require further attention from actors working in the agricultural trade and market sectors. One possibility for carrying forward the momentum of and investment in the LA could entail establishment of a Community of Practice (CoP) around learning. Structured learning environments such as CoPs are important vehicles for generating knowledge, actively engaging stakeholders, building partnerships, and providing thought leadership and action to resolve complex challenges. USDA FFPr leadership, with support from MES, could facilitate the establishment of such a structure, which would provide a way to solicit non-USDA support for resources to fund and further prioritize the 29 remaining LA questions.

Furthermore, key stakeholders who participated in the formulation of the LA (i.e., academics, thought leaders, implementing partner staff members) could be contacted directly and made aware of the pressing nature of these questions and the need to pursue meta-analysis or systematic reviews of global evidence. The consolidation of learning and exploration of theory development are critical in filling the gaps in knowledge and informing future programmatic implementation. Piloting of novel approaches and building

cases for innovative models of implementation could provide valuable opportunities for knowledge generation and possible funding from non-USDA actors.

Alternatively, conducting data mining and additional analyses on available data from existing or completed USDA-funded projects could be a plausible option for answering some of the remaining LA questions. While not as robust as highly rigorous evaluations and impact evaluations, these retrospective and data mining techniques can be powerful vehicles for explaining key factors in a program or intervention's success or failure with reasonable levels of confidence. More specifically, this would involve MES or other partners reviewing existing USDA evaluations and knowledge databases to identify proxy indicators and measures that could shed light on some of these learning questions. This may not yield perfect or comprehensive results, but could be a vehicle to use existing data to answer unknown questions.

Combing through current performance monitoring data and customizing it to capture more outcome-level impact can be an additional avenue for understanding activities in a more dynamic and adaptive fashion. This method provides a more "real-time" and iterative approach to answering challenging development questions and requires a shift away from output-level data to outcome indicators that provide a higher level of attribution and information toward understanding programmatic success.

Finally, looking forward, USDA could use new programs and solicitations as opportunities for answering LA questions. As a key step, these questions could be shared alongside future procurements to ensure that prospective implementing partners are considering these at the forefront of their proposals and solution designs. Furthermore, new procurements could be more strategically designed to capture knowledge towards gaps in the LA, including the design of intentional built-in operational research, internal assessments, and evaluations. Given the macro-level nature of the remaining LA questions, the traditional limitations that programs have in answering more defined and micro-level elements of a cause-effect relationship may pose certain limitations. As such, MES could break down each LA question into "sub-questions" that are treated as parts of a whole. If planned carefully, these parts can be strategically staggered (and researched and evaluated by new procurements) across time to provide a fuller picture of the "whole" LA question. Having more carefully defined indicators, logic frameworks, and robust analytics that focus on attribution or macro-level effects in future procurements and program designs would also provide adaptive and appropriate avenues for answering the remaining LA questions.

V. Dissemination, Utilization, and Learning

Consistent with the USDA/FAS Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (2013), evaluations are tools for not only accountability, but also for learning.

> *"Organizational learning is a key focus of evaluations in FAS with the primary audience including USDA, program participants, other key stakeholders and national and local governments where the programs are implemented". (USDA/FAS M&E Policy, 2013)*

Besides meeting its regular reporting and accountability requirements, USDA/FFPr should consider appropriate dissemination, utilization, and application of evaluation results to further learning and adaptation and exercise influence in its environment.

Dissemination

For effective dissemination, evaluators will need to submit detailed evaluation reports with sufficient clarity around findings and practical recommendations for actions that can be readily scaled up or applied towards

future programmatic implementation, policy, strategy, or other decision making. Furthermore, according to the USDA Open Government Initiative[1], all evaluations should be posted on the FAS website for maximum accessibility.

Beyond these required steps, and in the spirit of a participatory process, USDA/FFPr could consider sectoral or geographically-focused dissemination events (both physical and virtual) for internal USDA program staff and leadership, key stakeholders, program participants, and government counterparts to share lessons learned. Action-focused events should harness local expertise, broaden stakeholder involvement, and generate commitment to action steps to promote successful application of learning.

Finally, presenting and publishing findings from evaluations in academic fora, applied conferences, and summits is essential for broader utilization of evaluation findings.

Utilization & Learning

Accountability: Given that the 10 priority questions hold strategic value to FFPr, and to ensure compliance with the Agency's M&E Policy[2], it is important that USDA engage collaboratively with project staff to discuss proposed actions to address evaluation findings and recommendations. An Evaluation Recommendations Tracker tool can be developed to track the application of evaluation findings to current programs, new program designs, policies, and strategies, and to outline roles and responsibilities for actions. This form of documentation holds program staff and decision makers accountable for investments made in evaluations and provides a crucial link in ensuring utility and application of findings. It is important to note that while this could be an internal document, it could also be applied to external stakeholders to capture and inform application of evaluation findings in other countries.

Strategic Application: Learning occurs when individuals change their behaviors and organizations make micro or macro adjustments. Beyond informing programs, evaluation results and strategic learning should inform the current 2014-2018 USDA Strategy[3]. In particular, in the next two years, MES should collate all current evaluation learning, conduct reflection sessions and portfolio/project reviews, and use that knowledge to inform USDA FFPr leadership's understanding of accomplishments, strategic decision making, and involvement in strategy reviews. USDA staff should pay explicit attention to how evaluation results inform increased productivity and expansion of trade in agricultural products. MES should continue the collation of data and reports collected on the priority questions. Subsequently, they could assist FFPr staff in applying these reflections towards the next generation of the USDA Strategy and FFPr Results Framework.

Community of Practice: Finally, as aforementioned, engaging in a CoP around the LA would be tremendously beneficial for both utility and learning. It is important to note that through the dialogues with multiple stakeholders in the formulation of the LA and EP, USDA/FFPr has already demonstrated significant leadership and has exercised political capital, which could be used to establish a CoP and further engage stakeholders in enhancing learning and knowledge sharing.

[1] http://www.usda.gov/documents/usda-open-gov-plan-v3.0.pdf
[2] http://www.fas.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2014-03/evalpol.pdf
[3] http://www.usda.gov/documents/usda-strategic-plan-fy-2014-2018.pdf

VI. Impact Evaluation Best Practices

Impact evaluations (IE) provide more definitive results than performance evaluations and assessments, but also tend to be costlier and more intensive in both time and resources.

- Ideally, IEs should include data collection at three points in time: baseline (prior to program implementation), midline (at midpoint in program implementation) and endline (at the end of or shortly after program completion).
- The length of evaluation varies based on the nature of the intervention and how quickly results are expected, but typically IEs take place over a period of three to six years. In some cases, a longer timeframe may be appropriate, especially when investigating sustainability of impact outcomes.
- An IE should be conducted in conjunction with a project so that the implementer and evaluator can work together to conduct the project in a way that both upholds the integrity of the evaluation and aligns with the implementer's priorities.
- Ideally, an IE should be conducted by one qualified, experienced, independent third party that manages the evaluation from design to data collection, analysis and reporting in order to maintain objectivity and rigor. Unless well-coordinated, use of different parties for design, data collection, analysis and reporting could result in inconsistent comparisons and invalid findings. SI therefore recommends that USDA or its implementers issue contracts for the IE as a whole, rather than issuing contracts to various parties for individual baseline or midline studies.
- Since IEs seek attribution of outcomes to a project, it is crucial to have a valid counterfactual that is as similar as possible to the treatment group except for the intervention or activity that is being tested. Counterfactuals could be formed using natural, experimental, or quasi-experimental designs. Mixed methods designs using both quantitative and qualitative data are most effective to understand the extent of impacts and reasons behind the results.
- Experimental designs such as randomized control trials (RCTs): Counterfactuals are inherently embedded in the design of RCTs. When designed and conducted well, RCTs yield high internal validity, but external validity could be limited unless repeated in many contexts using a similar approach. As assignments to treatment and control groups are randomized in these studies, they can be harder to conduct and must be carefully implemented in conjunction with the project. Examples demonstrating how to conduct RCTs on USDA projects are detailed in the section on Evaluation Plan questions.
- Quasi-experimental designs: Depending on the nature of the project, treatment may be identified at the household level. For example, in testing use of improved seeds, the counterfactual may include households that did not use improved seeds. However, if there are other differences between the groups – for example, if poorer households could not afford improved seeds—this would not serve as a valid counterfactual because there are other major differences between the groups. In that case, an evaluator might examine villages in which improved seeds are available and villages in which they are not, assuming that these villages are similar in other ways. If the intervention is likely to have spillovers, however, then a better approach would be to test at the level of the village or the region. For example, ICTs are known to have spillover effects, so many studies of ICTs examine rollout of phone access by geographical region.
- IEs may also make use of the timing of the intervention in order to examine impacts. The evaluator can compare trends from before the intervention to trends at the time of the

program and after the program. This requires that the evaluator collect data well in advance of the implementation of the project.

- In all IEs, it is important to verify that there are no major confounding factors such as simultaneous rollout of two programs. For example, if the evaluation is testing the impact of loans, but the group receiving the loans also received improved seeds at the same time, then it becomes impossible to identify which program was responsible for any resulting impacts. As much as possible, it is important to verify that there were no simultaneous programs or actions – under USDA or other donors – that would confound findings of the impact evaluation. In such cases, efforts should be taken to identify them, effectively incorporate them in the design and data collection activities, and control for them in data analysis.
- Costs for agriculture sector-related IEs vary from $0.75 million to $3 million depending on the evaluation locations, number of evaluation questions, length of the evaluation and frequency and extent of data collection. Ideally, questions should be limited to not more than five. Conducting IEs in multiple locations at the same time may help reduce costs.
- More information on impact evaluations can be found in USAID's Technical Note on Impact Evaluations, found at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/IE_Technical_Note_2013_0903_Final.pdf
- For detailed information about designing and conducting impact evaluations, the World Bank's 2010 Handbook on Impact Evaluations: Quantitative Methods and Practices is an excellent resource. It can be accessed at https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/2693/520990PUB0EPI1101Official0Use0Only1.pdf?sequence=1

USDA's support of IEs of individual projects could address many of the questions included in this Evaluation Plan. In addition, the IEs could expand the literature available for use in meta-evaluations and systematic reviews with meta-analysis, and could inform large-scale macroeconomic studies that are better-suited to be carried out by academic research institutions.

VII. Evaluation Questions

Value Creation

1. How can improved transportation and post-harvest facilities such as cold storage, roads, etc., help in value creation to expand trade and markets?
2. What are the impacts of interventions related to cash crops on improving nutrition security and altering producers' tendency to grow subsistence crops? What actions can be taken to combine market goals with nutrition goals in order to ensure nutritional security while expanding and improving markets? Given that nutritional decisions are frequently made within the household, what role do gender and family structure play in improving nutrition?

Quality and Standards

3. In what context is it profitable for agricultural actors, particularly producers and processors, to adopt higher product quality standards for sales in higher-value markets, including international markets?

4. What types and applications of technology can support linkages between producers, traders, and consumers in meeting required quality standards in a collaborative and mutually beneficial manner?

Risk and Uncertainty

5. What is each agricultural actor's greatest vulnerability to climate risks? What are the best models for agricultural actors to protect their livelihoods against these risks?
6. How can risk be reduced to encourage agricultural actors to increase the adoption of innovative methods, practices, technologies and climate-smart agriculture?
7. What are the most effective tools and technologies to disseminate reliable, timely information about pertinent risks and uncertainty to farmers, suppliers, processors, and traders to reduce incomplete and asymmetric information?

Market Linkages

8. What value do intermediaries bring in expanding markets? How can donors, investors, and other actors engage intermediaries to effectively expand markets through the services and trade they provide?
9. What are the best linkage models to help small- and medium-sized producers, traders and post-harvest market actors, who frequently lack collateral, registration and credit history, to access loans or other financial instruments to effectively expand their businesses?
10. What types of market linkages best enable multinationals to collaborate with emerging agricultural markets to increase efficiency and effectiveness along the value chain in a mutually beneficial manner?

Value Creation: Barriers to expanding agricultural markets and trade exist at every level of the value chain, ranging from inputs and production to marketing and sales. Value creation is concerned with producing solutions to overcome these challenges and advance increasingly complex market systems. [4]

Evaluation Plan Question 1	How can improved transportation and post-harvest facilities such as cold storage, roads, etc., help in value creation to expand trade and markets? (Learning Agenda Question 4)
Illustrative Evaluation Questions	1. Which post-harvest facilities have the greatest effect on expansion of trade and access to markets? 2. What kinds of changes did activities experience in terms of the value of their products due to improvements in transportation? 3. Which transportation improvements had the greatest effect on product values? 4. What kinds of changes did activities experience in terms of the value of their products due to improvements in post-harvest facilities? 5. Did activities experience changes in access to markets and trade?

[4] Social Impact Inc. USDA FFPr Trade Expansion and Agricultural Market Development Learning Agenda, 2016.

Type of Evaluation	• **IE**: Question 1 could be addressed through impact evaluation. Outcomes to measure might include prices and volumes of products sold. Data for inferring impacts should ideally be collected on a frequent basis (e.g. monthly) in order to gather accurate longitudinal data that accounts for crop cycles. Interventions to evaluate might include building or providing access to various post-harvest facilities such as cold storage, cleaning or packing facilities. • **PE:** For the remaining questions, a multi-country, before and after, mixed-methods performance evaluation is recommended for informing this question. The evaluation would likely span several years, in line with the timeframe of FFPr agreements.
Timeline priority	• **IE:** 3 to 6 years • **PE:** For the remaining questions, the majority of FFPr and MES members indicated that this evaluation should take place in the next 1-2 years.
Topic Areas	• Improving/building transportation infrastructure • Improving & developing post-harvest facilities • Fostering linkages with supermarkets, export markets • Improving and expanding access to finance • Funding and conducting research
Types of FFPr Activities to Be Evaluated	• Senegal Rural Roads, awarded in 2009, implemented by Shelter for Life: The project aimed to improve rural roads in the southern region of Senegal to provide greater access to markets for producers and increased transaction efficiency. • Soybeans for Agricultural Renewal in Afghanistan Initiative, awarded in 2010, implemented by American Soybean Association: The project aimed to establish livelihood opportunities through promotion of the soy value chain, achieved through a variety of activities including road and irrigation system rehabilitation. • Cashew Value Chain Enhancement, awarded in 2012, implemented by International Relief and Development: The project introduced improved processing equipment to cashew producers in Senegal and the Gambia.
Possible Evaluation Methods	• **IE:** A quantitative baseline assessment of key indicators, a mid-term survey, an endline survey, and qualitative data collection through key informant interviews and focus group discussion to supplement the quantitative survey will be effective. It is possible to conduct this evaluation as an RCT – for example, by randomly assigning some producers access, through coupons for subsidies, to use the post-harvest facilities. It is also possible to use a quasi-experimental design by making use of the timing of the intervention using a regression discontinuity design, or by comparing regions that had access with those that did not using a difference in difference model. • **PE:** A quantitative survey should be the primary method of data collection for this design. The survey should be designed in conjunction with the implementing partners and conducted with the project participants before project implementation and immediately following project close-out. A variety of qualitative methods should complement the quantitative data to answer "why" and "how" questions for increased understanding of the quantitative data.

Suggested Budget Guidance	• **IE:** $1-1.5M per country per question[5] • **PE:** $700-900k

Evaluation Plan Question 2	What are the impacts of interventions related to cash crops on improving nutrition security and altering producers' tendency to grow subsistence crops? What actions can be taken to combine market goals with nutrition goals in order to ensure nutritional security while expanding and improving markets? Given that nutritional decisions are frequently made within the household, what role do gender and family structure play in improving nutrition? (Learning Agenda Question 7)
Illustrative Evaluation Questions	1. What is the impact of an intervention encouraging cash crops on improving household nutritional security for producers? Because of the income effect, are households eating more nutritious or more diversified diets? 2. What is the impact of an intervention encouraging cash crops on the food security and nutritional security of producers who traditionally grow subsistence crops? 3. Do nutrition training programs lead to better nutrition practices? Do they lead to increased sales of nutritious foods? 4. What actions can be taken to combine market goals with nutrition goals in order to ensure nutritional security while expanding and improving markets? (Qualitative Question) 5. Given that nutritional decisions are frequently made within the household, what role do gender and family structure play in improving nutrition? (Qualitative Question)
Type of Evaluation	• **IE:** Questions 1, 2, and 3 could be addressed through impact evaluation, ideally in a mixed-method evaluation with additional qualitative components to verify impact pathways and validate findings. Sustainability of the impacts could also be addressed through the evaluation by extending the length of the evaluation through follow-up studies conducted after project completion. • **Qualitative:** Questions 4 and 5 may be answered designing a mixed-methods IE with qualitative components. Methods for addressing these questions may include key informant interviews and focus groups.
Timeline Priority	The majority of FFPr and MES members indicated that this evaluation should take place in the next 5-7 years.
Topic Areas	• Fostering linkages with supermarkets, export markets • Facilitating/developing market information systems • Trade programs that included women as a target group
Types of FFPr Activities to Be Evaluated	• Rural Enterprise for Alleviating of Poverty II, awarded in 2013, implemented by Winrock International: The project targeted marginal and small farmers in Bangladesh in the horticulture, aquaculture, and livestock sectors to improve productivity, increase access to markets, and increase dietary diversity. This project had a special focus on women. • Mali Food for Progress III, awarded in 2012, implemented by Aga Khan Foundation: The project centered on developing new and rehabilitating existing rice and garden plots, as well as training producers in improved agricultural techniques.

[5] Expenses can sometimes be consolidated for a lower total cost when combining multiple countries or multiple questions into one comprehensive study.

Possible Evaluation Methods	When planning and carrying out an IE, it is ideal to collaborate with the implementing partners of the project during the project design phase and prior to implementation. Basic IE methods would include a quantitative baseline assessment of key indicators, a mid-term survey, and an endline survey. Qualitative data collection through key informant interviews and focus group discussion should supplement the quantitative survey.
Suggested Budget Guidance	$1.0 -1.5 million per country per question. Some of these questions, particularly a mix of quantitative and qualitative questions, may be combined for a lower total cost.

Quality and Standards: Standards for agricultural products vary widely by country, market, and product, but international markets follow standards that are often the most stringent in protecting consumer health and promoting fair practices in food trade. Most of these standards are led by the Codex Alimentarius, the international food standards-setting body established in 1963 by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and World Health Organization (WHO).[6]

Evaluation Plan Question 3	In what context is it profitable for agricultural actors, particularly producers and processors, to adopt higher product quality standards for sales in higher-value markets, including international markets? (Learning Agenda Question 21)
Illustrative Evaluation Questions	1. In what context is it profitable for agricultural actors, particularly producers and processors, to adopt higher product quality standards for increasing sales in higher-value markets, including international markets? 2. What is the effect of processors'/producers' adoption of new/higher quality standards on product sales? 3. Are producers/processors able to transition their products to higher-value markets? 4. What are the contextual elements that affect profitability with regard to adoption of higher quality standards? 5. Among the activities evaluated, which context shows the most favorable support for profitability? Which contextual elements show the least favorable support for profitability? 6. Which products, if any, are able to transition to sale on international markets?
Type of Evaluation	• **IE:** Question 1 could be addressed through impact evaluation. It could also be addressed using a meta-evaluation if there are a number of programs in different countries or regions to understand whether and to what extent profits are realized by producers and processors when they adopt higher product quality standards for increasing sales in higher-value markets, including international markets. Results from various programs could be compared using qualitative analysis to provide more insight on how context shapes impacts. • **PE:** Remaining questions may be addressed using a multi-country, mixed-methods performance evaluation.
Timeline priority	The majority of FFPr and MES members indicated that these evaluations should take place in the next 3-5 years.
Topic Areas	• Working with output traders • Improving & developing post-harvest facilities • Establishing/improving standardization and regulations for phyto-sanitation

[6] Social Impact Inc. USDA FFPr Trade Expansion and Agricultural Market Development Learning Agenda, 2016.

	• Fostering linkages with supermarkets, export markets • Facilitating marketing of products • Facilitating/developing market information systems
Types of FFPr Activities to Be Evaluated	• Kenya Semi-Arid Livestock Enhancement Support Project, awarded in 2013, implemented by Land O'Lakes: The project aimed to create a more inclusive, competitive, and efficient livestock sector by improving the quality of locally produced animals through capacity-building and support services. • Program for Rural Enterprise Management, Health, and the Environment, awarded in 2014, implemented by Catholic Relief Services: The project worked to strengthen bean, fruit, vegetable, meat and dairy value chains in Nicaragua through promoting good agriculture and livestock practices and environmentally-friendly techniques to enable farmers to comply with the sanitary and phytosanitary measures of the most profitable markets. • Livestock Enterprise Project, awarded in 2013, implemented by TechnoServe: The project aimed to increase access to market information flow and technical recommendations among producers for higher-quality livestock products.
Possible Evaluation Methods	• **IE:** The IE may be conducted using quasi-experimental methods to test the impact of adhering to quality standards on sales price and volume for producers or processors. The test may also be conducted in various contexts for comparison. • **PE:** Key informant interviews, market assessments/studies, or evaluative case study could be conducted. More information on evaluative case studies can be found in USAID's Technical Note on Evaluative Case Studies found at http://usaidprojectstarter.org/sites/default/files/resources/pdfs/Case-Studies-Technical-Note-2013.pdf
Suggested Budget Guidance	• **IE:** $1-1.5M per country for Question 1 • **PE:** $500-700k for remaining questions

Evaluation Plan Question 4	What types and applications of technology can support linkages between producers, traders, and consumers in meeting required quality standards in a collaborative and mutually beneficial manner? (Leaning Agenda Question 24)
Illustrative Evaluation Questions	1. Do ICTs improve compliance to quality standards in a value chain? If so, how? What are the impacts of adhering to quality standards for producers and processors in terms of expanding their market and profitability? 2. In what context is it profitable for agricultural actors, particularly producers and processors, to adopt higher product quality standards for sales in higher-value markets, including international markets? 3. What types of technology are being applied in X programs/activities? 4. How does X technology link producers, traders, and consumers? 5. Has X technology helped to build collaboration between these actors?
Type of Evaluation	• **IE:** Question 1 could be addressed through impact evaluation. Outcomes to be measured may include compliance rates for a particular standard, attainment of new certifications, sale prices, and export rates. Question 2 could also be addressed through a meta-evaluation or, if there is sufficient existing literature on the matter, a systematic review with meta-analysis. Outcomes for measure

	are similar to those for Question 1. The study may explore differential impacts by region, income status, or other contextual factors. • **PE:** Remaining questions may be addressed using a multi-country, mixed-methods, performance evaluation.
Timeline Priority	The majority of FFPr and MES members indicated that this evaluation should take place in the next 3-5 years.
Topic Areas	• Working with output traders • Improving & developing post-harvest facilities • Establishing/improving standardization & regulations for phyto-sanitation • Fostering linkages with supermarkets, export markets • Facilitating/developing market information systems • Trade programs that included women as a target group
Types of FFPr Activities to Be Evaluated	• Afghanistan Agricultural Sanitary and Phytosanitary Program, awarded in 2011, implemented by Purdue University: The project supported the Government of Afghanistan's Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock in building sanitary and phytosanitary capacity through regulatory systems, laboratory diagnostic capabilities, and improved risk management capabilities of ministry staff for plant and animal health and food safety. • The Gambia River Basin Cashew Value Chain Enhancement Project, awarded in 2012, implemented by International Relief and Development: The project's activities included development of a market information system, which utilized farmers' associations to disseminate information on quality standards.
Possible Evaluation Methods	• **IE:** One way to address Question 1 using an RCT is to provide a sample of producers and/or processors with basic information or training on meeting quality standards, and then randomly assign a portion of that sample additional ICT support. These two groups can then be compared to identify the impact of ICT support. The evaluator could then test the impacts of adherence to quality standards, conditional on use of ICT, on sales and profitability. • **Meta-Evaluation:** Question 2 may be addressed with a meta-evaluation including mixed-methods in multiple countries or regions with rigorous and qualitative components. • **PE:** Mini-surveys, key informant interviews, direct observation. More information on mini surveys can be found in USAID's Program Design and Evaluation Methodology Report found at http://usaidprojectstarter.org/sites/default/files/resources/pdfs/PNADG566.pdf. More information on direct observation can be found in USAID's TIPS on Using Direct Observation Techniques found at http://usaidprojectstarter.org/sites/default/files/resources/pdfs/pnadw104.pdf
Suggested Budget Guidance	• **IE:** $1-1.5M • **Meta-Evaluation:** $600k-1.5M • **PE:** $400-600k

Risk and Uncertainty: Agricultural risk and uncertainty remove safeguards, reduce individuals' resilience to shocks and disturbances, and pose formidable challenges to the agricultural sector, especially when adequate safety nets and mitigation tools are limited or absent. Therefore, several

governments, donors and agricultural development program implementers seek to improve risk management and coping abilities of agricultural actors, especially small and medium actors. [7]

Evaluation Plan Question 5	What is each agricultural actor's greatest vulnerability to climate risks? What are the best models for agricultural actors to protect their livelihoods against these risks? (Learning Agenda Question 39)
Illustrative Evaluation Questions	1. What are the most effective models for agricultural actors to make their livelihoods resilient against climate risks? Do such resiliency models expand trade? If so, how? 2. What negative effects from climate change have agricultural actors experienced? 3. What additional effects do they anticipate will affect their livelihoods? 4. What do actors identify as their greatest vulnerability to climate change? 5. What steps have actors taken to mitigate these risks? 6. Have these steps been successful? 7. In what ways has the activity helped actors to mitigate risks? 8. What additional steps that have not yet been taken would be helpful to further mitigate risks?
Type of Evaluation	• **IE:** Question 1 could be addressed through impact evaluation if various models could be examined to assess their impact on resiliency, sales prices, sales volume and export volume as outcomes. Examples of programs may include crop and livestock insurance, or provision of inputs such as improved irrigation equipment and drought resistant seeds in order to improve resiliency. If evaluations are carried out in different geographic locations, a meta-evaluation and meta-analysis could be used to synthesize results. • **PE:** Multi-country performance evaluation.
Timeline Priority	The majority of FFPr and MES members indicated that this evaluation should take place in the next 1-2 years.
Topic Areas	• Working with output traders • Improving & developing post-harvest facilities • Fostering linkages with supermarkets, export markets • Trade programs that included women as a target group
Types of FFPr Activities to Be Evaluated	• Mongolia Resilient Communities Project, awarded in 2012, implemented by Mercy Corps: The project worked to develop business practices for pastoralists in Mongolia in order to increase resilience. • Soya ni Pesa Project, awarded in 2012, implemented by Catholic Relief Services: The project aimed to increase productivity and expand trade in the soybean value chain through use of demonstration plots, higher quality seeds, fertilizer, and post-harvest storage facilities.
Possible Evaluation Methods	• **IE:** The IE may be conducted as an RCT by, for example, randomly assigning some producers to receive resilient products such as drought resistant higher-quality seeds, or by encouraging a randomized set of producers to take up resilient practices. • **PE:** Most Significant Change.

[7] Social Impact Inc. USDA FFPr Trade Expansion and Agricultural Market Development Learning Agenda, 2016.

	More information on Most Significant Change methods can be found in the Most Significant Change Guide found at http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf
Suggested Budget Guidance	$600-800k

Evaluation Plan Question 6	How can risk be reduced to encourage agricultural actors to increase the adoption of innovative methods, practices, technologies and climate-smart agriculture? (Learning Agenda Question 32)
Illustrative Evaluation Questions	1. What is the impact of adopting new technologies on expanding markets and increasing access to finance? 2. To what extent do risk reduction tools such as crop and livestock insurance increase agricultural actors' likelihood of adopting new technologies? How does the adoption lead to expansion of trade? 3. What do actors see as the biggest risk to adoption? 4. What are the barriers to actors' adoption? 5. What would incentivize actors to increase adoption? 6. What do other organizations and agencies consider to be best practices in climate-smart agriculture?
Type of Evaluation	• **IE:** Questions 1 and 2 can be addressed using impact evaluations. The evaluation can examine both intermediate outcomes in the form of risk reduction or technology adoption and final outcomes in the form of market expansion, as measured through increase in sales and profits and increased access and use of finance. • **PE:** Multi-country performance evaluation.
Timeline Priority	FFPr and MES members did not reach a consensus as to the timeline priority of this question. There was an even divide between classifying it as a short, medium, and long term priority.
Topic Areas	• Improving and developing post-harvest facilities • Establishing/improving standardization & regulations for phyto-sanitation • Fostering linkages with supermarkets, export markets • Improving and expanding access to finance
Types of FFPr Activities to Be Evaluated	• El Salvador Coffee Rehabilitation and Agricultural Diversification Project, awarded in 2015, implemented by NCBA/CLUSA: The project worked to rehabilitate the coffee sector after the rust fungus crisis to increase food security in El Salvador by improving access to financing and technical knowledge. • Expansion of Agricultural and Rural Microfinance Services in Honduras, awarded in 2012, implemented by Finca International: The project launched an agricultural loan product to finance productive assets for farmers. • Program for Rural Enterprise Management, Health, and the Environment, awarded in 2014, implemented by Catholic Relief Services: The project facilitated public-private partnership development among smallholder farmers and local ministries and organizations, and facilitated trade relationships through meetings and fair participation measures.
Possible Evaluation Methods	• **IE:** Questions 1 and 2 could be addressed using an RCT by distributing new technologies to a randomly selected subset of a sample, or by randomly assigning risk reduction methods to be encouraged among a subset of a sample. • **PE:** Key informant interviews, evaluative case studies, direct observation

Suggested Budget Guidance	• **IE:** $1-1.5M per country per question • **PE:** $600-800k

Evaluation Plan Question 7	What are the most effective tools and technologies to disseminate reliable, timely information about pertinent risks and uncertainty to farmers, suppliers, processors, and traders to reduce incomplete and asymmetric information? (Learning Agenda Question 37)
Illustrative Evaluation Questions	1. To what extent do technology tools increase farmers', suppliers', processors', and/or traders' access to information? Does this access to information help to expand markets and increase trade? 2. What tools and technologies were implemented by the activity? 3. How did these tools and technologies change farmers', suppliers', processors', and traders' access to information? 4. What were the strengths and weaknesses of these tools and technologies?
Type of Evaluation	• **IE:** Question 1 can be addressed using an IE. The evaluation can measure intermediate outcomes in the form of access to information, and final outcomes in the form of market expansion. • **PE:** Remaining questions may be addressed using a multi-country performance evaluation.
Timeline Priority	The majority of FFPr and MES members indicated that this evaluation should take place in the next 1-2 years.
Topic Area	• Working with output traders • Improving/building transportation infrastructure • Fostering linkages with supermarkets, export markets • Facilitating/developing market information systems • Trade programs that included women as a target group
Types of FFPr Activities to Be Evaluated	• Livestock Enterprise Project, awarded in 2013, implemented by TechnoServe: The project aimed to increase access to market information flow and technical recommendations among producers. • Revitalizing Agricultural Incomes and New Markets Program, awarded in 2011, implemented by Mercy Corps: This program trained extension workers and built market linkages to improve producer access to information.
Possible Evaluation Methods	• **IE:** To conduct this study as an RCT, subsets of a sample can be randomly assigned various technology tools for the purpose of increasing access to information. Since information dissemination has spillover effects, this randomization should ideally occur at the level of the village or region. Alternatively, if different technologies will be made available in different regions, the IE could be conducted using a quasi-experimental design comparing outcomes in the different regions. • **PE:** Mini-surveys, key informant interviews, focus group discussions.
Suggested Budget Guidance	• **IE:** $1-1.5M per country per question • **PE:** $600-800k

Market Linkages: Market linkages refer to the relationships – including formal and informal partnerships and contracts – between various agricultural actors in a market system. Market linkages are vital to obtain access to markets and to develop viable and efficient market systems.[8]

Evaluation Plan Question 8	What value do intermediaries bring in expanding markets? How can donors, investors, and other actors engage intermediaries to effectively expand markets through the services and trade they provide? (Learning Agenda Question 12)
Illustrative Evaluation Questions	• What methods did the activity employ in engaging with intermediaries? • To what extent were intermediaries able to expand market access? • What were the costs and benefits of engaging the intermediaries? • How could the activity be designed to more effectively engage intermediaries?
Type of Evaluation	Multi-country performance evaluation
Timeline Priority	The majority of FFPr and MES members indicated that this evaluation should take place in the next 3-5 years.
Topic Area	• Working with output traders • Fostering linkages with supermarkets, export markets • Facilitating marketing of products • Improving and expanding access to finance • Facilitating/developing market information systems
Types of FFPr Activities to Be Evaluated	• Pineapple Processing for Export, awarded in 2015, implemented by Partners for Development: This project works to expand agricultural trade by building the marketing capacity of processors, connecting processors with marketing opportunities, and supporting innovation and collaboration across the Beninese pineapple value chain. • Uganda Conservation Farming Initiative, awarded in 2011, implemented by NCBA/CLUSA: The project works to improve maize, pulse, and soybean marketing by linking smallholders with markets through producer organizations.
Possible Evaluation Methods	Mini-survey with intermediaries, key informant interviews, market assessments.
Suggested Budget Guidance	$700-900k

Evaluation Plan Question 9	What are the best linkage models to help small and medium sized producers, traders and post-harvest market actors, who frequently lack collateral, registration and credit history, to access loans or other financial instruments to effectively expand their businesses? (Learning Agenda Question 14)
Illustrative Evaluation Questions	1. What models successfully help small-scale agricultural actors who lack collateral, registration and credit history to access loans? Does this access to credit effectively serve to expand businesses? 2. Were participants able to maintain access to credit and financing following the conclusion of the activity?
Type of Evaluation	• **IE:** Question 1 can be addressed with an impact evaluation. Outcomes may include intermediate outcomes in the form of increased credit access as well as

[8] Social Impact Inc. USDA FFPr Trade Expansion and Agricultural Market Development Learning Agenda, 2016.

	final outcomes in the form of business expansion, which can be measured using profits or sales volume. • **PE:** Question 2 may be addressed using a multi-country, post-project sustainability evaluation.
Timeline Priority	The majority of FFPr and MES members indicated that this evaluation should take place in the next 1-2 years (at least 2 years after the conclusion of the activities).
Topic Areas	• Fostering linkages with supermarkets, export markets • Improving & expanding access to finance • Funding and conducting research • Trade programs that included women as a target group
Types of FFPr Activities to Be Evaluated	• Expansion of Agricultural and Rural Microfinance Services in Honduras, awarded in 2012, implemented by Finca International: The project expanded microfinance to agriculture-related micro-entrepreneurs and launched an agricultural loan product to finance productive assets for farmers. • Mali Food for Progress III, awarded in 2012, implemented by Aga Khan Foundation: The project established revolving credit systems for seed distribution and implemented a marketing initiative grant fund. • Pineapple Processing for Export, awarded in 2015, implemented by Partners for Development: This project aims to improve agricultural processing by connecting processors with access to finance, equipment, and certifications.
Possible Evaluation Methods	• **IE:** The IE may use a quasi-experimental design to examine projects like the Uganda Conservation Farming Initiative. Data must be collected regularly before, during, and after implementation of the market linkage initiative in order to identify the precise impact of the initiative. In order to accurately attribute outcomes to the program, confounding factors and similar and parallel initiatives should be monitored carefully and frequently incorporated into the analysis in order to attribute benefits to the particular initiative. • **PE:** Evaluative case studies, mini-surveys.
Suggested Budget Guidance	• **IE:** $1-1.5M per country, per question • **PE:** $700-900k

Evaluation Plan Question 10	What types of market linkages best enable multinationals to collaborate with emerging agricultural markets to increase efficiency and effectiveness along the value chain in a mutually beneficial manner? (Learning Agenda Question 16)
Illustrative Evaluation Questions	• Which linkages were most effective for multinationals? For emerging agricultural markets? • Are there similarities or differences in the types of linkages employed across country and market contexts? • What are the factors that determine efficiency and effectiveness of linkages? • What are the necessary inputs to establishing effective linkages?
Type of Evaluation	Multi-country, mixed-method, performance evaluation.
Timeline Priority	The majority of FFPr and MES members indicated that this evaluation should take place in the next 3-5 years.
Topic Areas	• Working with output traders • Improving/building transportation infrastructure • Fostering linkages with supermarkets, export markets

	• Facilitating marketing of products • Improving and expanding access to finance • Funding and conducting research
Types of FFPr Activities to Be Evaluated	• Malawi Food for Progress, awarded in 2011, implemented by Land O'Lakes: The project worked to strengthen the sustainability and effectiveness of government and private sector support service providers in the rice, cassava, and livestock value chains. • Program for Rural Enterprise Management, Health and the Environment, awarded in 2014, implemented by CRS: The project facilitated development of public private partnerships involving smallholder farmers, and facilitated trade relationships through meetings and fair participation measures in Nicaragua.
Possible Evaluation Methods	Market assessments, focus group discussions with key stakeholders from multi-nationals, key informant interviews with emerging market stakeholders.
Suggested Budget Guidance	$600-800k