

FINAL TECHNICAL REPORT / RAPPORT TECHNIQUE FINAL STRENGTHENING EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY FOR AN AFRICAN GREEN REVOLUTION

Boaz Blackie Keizire;

Judith Bwire;

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By: *Boaz Blackie Keizire: Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)*

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1. Executive summary

This report discusses the progress realized on the investment towards achieving outputs and outcomes on the project entitled “*Strengthening evidence-based policy research and advocacy for an African Green Revolution*”. The project was implemented by the Policy and Advocacy Program at the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) from February 2011 to 11 January 2018. The project sought to strengthen policy analysis and advocacy capacity in Francophone West Africa through building human capacity for evidence-based policy analysis and advocacy and translation of policies into action to ensure agricultural growth and food security for smallholder farmers.

In 2012, AGRA with funds provided by IDRC and BMGF supported the implementation of two capacity building training programs; a PhD program in Applied Agricultural Economics and Policy at the University of Ghana and an MSc program in Applied Agriculture Economics at the University of Ouagadougou 2. The PhD program was entirely funded by IDRC to the tune of USD1, 289,880. The MSc program was co-funded by BMGF and IDRC in the proportions of USD 2,811,044.70 for BMGF and USD 312,338.30 for IDRC.

The objective of these 2 projects was to contribute significantly to the enhancement of evidence based policy making in sub-Saharan Africa. The need to understand agricultural development issues and the contexts in which these issues arise requires that locally relevant policy research and advocacy capacities are built through graduate level training. These projects trained a critical mass of researchers who have a great potential to become thought leaders and research leaders in Francophone West Africa. In addition to returning to their home institutions, they are expected to be able to participate in regional debates on agricultural policies in West Africa and enhance networking between Francophone and Anglophone countries.

The PhD Program in Applied Agricultural Economics and Policy was hosted at the University of Ghana. The program ran for five years (starting January 2013) and students under the grant were admitted in three (3) cohorts. The overall goal of the PhD Program was to build sub-Saharan Africa’s competencies in conducting policy relevant research on agriculture, food systems and the rural economy including such associated concerns as gender disparities, environment, and natural resource management. In total nineteen (19) candidates successfully went through the program. The first cohort of 7 students graduated in August 2017, while the rest (except one) have all successfully defended their theses and will graduate in July 2018 according to the University of Ghana’s annual graduation calendar.

So far the results generated by the project according to project’s objectives and planned activities are as follows:

- The first PhD cohort of 8 students was admitted in January 2013. Seven (7) Francophone PhD candidates from this first cohort intake graduated on Friday 21 July 2017 at the University of Ghana. They comprised of 3 candidates from Benin, 2 from Burkina Faso, 1 from Togo and 1 from Cameroon. 1 candidate from the first cohort had

to re-submit her thesis work for re-examination in September 2017 and she passed both the written and oral defence of her thesis work. She will graduate in July 2018.

- In August 2013, the second cohort of 2 Anglophone candidates (Ghanaian) was admitted. The candidates submitted their completed PhD Theses for external examination in July 2017 and successfully passed both their written and oral defence of their thesis work in December 2017. They will graduate in July 2018.
- In January 2014 the third cohort of 9 PhD students was admitted comprising of 8 Francophone and 1 Anglophone candidates. The candidates from cohort three successfully submitted their theses for examination in September 2017. The candidates successfully passed both the written and oral defence of their theses work in December 2017. They will graduate in July 2018.
- In August 2014, the fourth cohort comprising of 1 Anglophone (Ghanaian) student was admitted. He continues to meet his assigned supervisory committee members and is expected to submit his thesis for examination in July 2018.
- It is expected that in July 2018, eleven (11) PhD candidates sponsored by AGRA will formally be presented with their PhD certificates.
- Out of the 19 PhD candidates 15 are male and 4 are female.

The MSc in Applied Agricultural Economics and Policy is another sub component of this program. The program is co-funded between IDRC and BMGF. The project was designed to train 120 students from 18 Francophone countries plus Ghana and Nigeria.

- 1st cohort of 30 MSc students comprising of 4 women and 26 men graduated in 2014;
- 2nd cohort of 30 MSc students comprising of 12 women and 18 men graduated in 2015;
- 3rd cohort of 29 MSc students comprising of 12 women and 17 men graduated in 2016;
- 4th and last cohort of MSc 31 students comprising of 18 women and 13 men graduated in September 2017.

Out of the 120 Msc candidates, 46 are female and 74 male.

The project has contributed to strengthening the partnership between *Nouveau Programme de Troisième Cycle Interuniversitaire* NPTCI (Burkina Faso) and the University of Ghana by:

- Providing facilities for English teaching in an Anglophone setting to Francophone MSc students;
- Hosting specialization lectures for MSc students;
- Hosting the PhD program for Francophone students after a collaboration in the recruitment process;

- Associating Francophone lecturers in the supervision of PhD students. Individual agreements have been reached with the Université de Laval, Ohio State University and Kansas State University for teaching and supervision.

Challenges and lessons learnt

One lesson learnt is that policy specialists can be trained in Africa with better context from the regions and therefore are able to address the policy problems in a more sustainable manner

Training all students in French and English language will enable the West African sub-region to network better.

Throughout the history of AGRA and African agriculture, building the capacity of Africans to manage and support agriculture policy and development has been at the center of Africa's agricultural transformation. This was the basis for this grant to raise the capacity of Africa stakeholders. Major lessons have been learnt and among these include;

- (i). Africa agricultural development and transformation has been dominated by scientists and specifically in the areas of breeding, agronomy and less economists to be at the centre of guiding sector development visions, strategy, planning and policy.
- (ii). The PhD and MSc program have contributed significantly to a pool of agricultural economists and policy makers especially judged from the current areas of work.
- (iii). Based on the recent assessment of the impact of the training, both PhD and MSc who graduated are taking high level policy and development leadership positions in the institutions they are working. This is largely as a result of the additional training they got from this program.

There has been a series of challenges though. Among these include;

- (i). The management of a huge program especially has been challenging mainly in identifying the right candidates and getting them the right curriculum that would meet the main objectives of the program.
- (ii). A number of students who enrolled in various cohorts did not finalise the course in time as originally scheduled. This created supervision as well as financial challenges. As a result, the management of the program requires a lot of students dedication to start and finalise the program in time.

One of the objectives of the grant was to strengthen the collaboration between AGRA and IDRC partners and their research networks to improve the uptake of research results in order to influence policies, practices and people. The grant supported the following engagements:

1. In October 2011, a grant was given to the Eduardo Mondlane University (EMU) to support the organisation of the 10th African Crop Science Society Conference held in Maputo from 10 – 13 October 2011. Five hundred (500) scientists and other agriculture stakeholders participated in the conference which facilitated the exchange of information on crop science research, technology innovation and policy.

2. In September 2012, the grant supported the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) which was held at the Ngurudoto Mountain Lodge, in Arusha Tanzania. The AGRF 2012 provided a stage for Africa's leaders to drive the initiative by promoting investments and policy support to increase agricultural productivity and income growth for African farmers. The AGRF attracted about 1000 participants in total, but the number that was supported through this sub-grant was about 40 persons, travelling from Mozambique, Mali and Tanzania.
3. In December 2012, a workshop was organized in Accra, Ghana from 10 – 14 December 2012 that brought together stakeholders involved in micro dose projects funded by the IDRC and AGRA in Africa to discuss how micro dosing can be widely promoted in the region. The grant supported the participation of 31 stakeholders at the workshop.
4. September 2013, a sub grant was made to African Association of Agricultural Economists (AAAE) to support the hosting of the association's 4th International conference in Hammamet, Tunisia. The conference was held from 22-25 September, 2013. The conference aim was to promote sharing of recent advances in agriculture policy development as well as be an interactive forum for academia, the private sector, policymakers, development specialists, students and other stakeholder farmers.
5. In 2017, AGRA sponsored 20 Fellows to participate in two AGRI-Business conferences, the African Agri-Investment Indaba in Capetown from 20 – 22 November 2017 and the East Africa Agribusiness Congress in Kampala from 28 – 30 November 2017. These conferences brought together academia, private sector, policy makers, development specialists, development partners, donors, students and other stakeholders. The aim was to connect the scholars with the Agriculture community in Africa, and provide them with learning opportunities on creating agriculture business and product matchmaking platform for the development and promotion of sustainable agriculture in Africa. They also had the opportunity to identify and connect with agricultural professionals from small farmers to commercial farming enterprises as well as investors and financiers. This enabled sharing of knowledge, access to the latest research, development and technological innovations that stimulate agriculture transformation and growth.

6. The research problem

In Africa and like in the rest of the world, the right policy and regulatory environment is central to agricultural growth and transformation. Yet there is a limited number of the right pool of experts both in the area policy and regulations that are centered on smallholder agriculture. An important cause of these inadequate policies is the lack of African capacity to conduct credible policy analysis and policy implementation. Africa's agricultural transformation challenges exemplified by recent food crisis in Southern Africa and recently in the horn of Africa demonstrates the urgent need for increased capacity to conduct sound policy analysis in a dynamic environment. Governments are often forced to decide on policies that directly impact food production and hunger without the benefit of timely and thoughtful analysis because of the lack of trained policy analysts to staff their ministries. In a similar manner, African agribusiness is hampered by their inability to hire staff with training in modern business strategies and who understand today's global agricultural markets.

Reversing this trend demands a vigorous program to build the policy analytical capacities of various governments on the continent. Thus, to support its ongoing activities and complement

the on-going work of IDRC in West Africa, AGRA received a grant from IDRC to implement the project: "Strengthening evidence-based policy research and advocacy for an African Green Revolution" with the objective to strengthening policy analysis and advocacy capacity in West Africa particularly in Francophone countries through building human capacity for evidence-based policy analysis and advocacy, and the capacity to translate policies into action to ensure agricultural growth and food security for smallholder farmers.

The project has progressed well as key milestones were met on a timely basis despite the drop of the Fellowship component. The PhD training at the University of Ghana started with 20 PhD candidates, however, one candidate from Niger dropped out. The program so far has been successfully on course: all fellowship holders passed their comprehensive examinations and were successfully attached to reputable research organizations based in Ghana. Seven (7) PhD candidates graduated in July 2017 and it is expected that in July 2018, eleven (11) PhD candidates sponsored by AGRA will formally be presented with their PhD certificates. This will bring to a total of eighteen (18) PhD candidates completing their studies within the required 5-year AGRA Grant program. One student who was admitted on the fourth cohort continues to meet his assigned supervisory committee members and is expected to submit his thesis for examination in July 2018.

In addition to the supervisory teams based at the University of Ghana, all the Francophone PhD candidates were assigned respective home-country based supervisors (approved by the University of Ghana for such purposes) to enhance home country data collection and inclusiveness in the partnership in training PhD students:

The training of 120 MSc students by the NPTCI at the University of Ouagadougou 2/ Burkina Faso has progressed well; all the 120 students finished their course work and have graduated. The graduates comprise of 45 female students and 75 male which is 37.5 % of n female students which is a serious feat to accomplish in the region.

After fundamental courses at the University of Ouagadougou, students went to the University of Ghana for English specialty courses for 2-3 months and this arrangement was successful. All students passed their examinations and went on to train on dissertations writing and defense which took place every year in July. In addition to the Supervisory teams based at the University of Ouagadougou, supervisory Professors came from other countries to build students capacity.

The project has continued to contribute to generation of knowledge from a scientific, development and policy perspective based on several areas of policy research that was undertaken PhDs and MScs thesis and papers. Social scientists from the University of Ouagadougou and the University of Ghana have come to get to know each other, and work together despite language differences. It has come up that both sides will improve their French and English for better cooperation. In addition, agreements reached with research and policy institutions would greatly contribute to address emerging issues on agricultural economics and policy including cross cutting issues such as climate change, gender, youth, women and financial inclusion.

7. Progress towards milestones

The project progressed well and key milestones were met during the grant period.

Research proposals from Graduate students (PhDs and MSc). The program will have completed the training of 120 MSc and 20 PhD students over 78 months:

All the 120 targeted MSc students were able to complete their degrees in record time and 19 out of the 20 PhD students enrolled completed the course successfully. Besides, the students undertook their studies under good conditions and their average pass marks attest to the fact they indeed got quality education through the right methods.

- Seven (7) PhD students from the 1st cohort graduated in July 2017. The candidates from cohort two and three successfully submitted their theses for examination in July and September 2017 respectively. 11 candidates successfully passed both the written and oral defense of their theses work in December 2017. The last PhD cohort candidate is expected to submit his Thesis in July 2018.
- 120 MSc students graduated in four cohorts as follows: 1st cohort of 30 MSc students comprising of 4 women and 26 men graduated in 2014; 2nd cohort of 30 MSc students comprising of 12 women and 18 men graduated in 2015; 3rd cohort of 29 MSc students comprising of 12 women and 17 men graduated in 2016 and 4th and last cohort of MSc 31 students comprising of 18 women and 13 men graduated in September 2017.
- Employment prospects for these students are 100% certain in their home institutions, this will make significant impact on the transformation of agriculture in their respective countries.
- According to an impact evaluation of the capacity building program, about 20% of the MSc program beneficiaries have already or are planning to proceed for further studies. This move will further enhance the critical mass of agriculture policy experts in West Africa.

Continuing recruitment and enrolment of MScs and PhD candidates for CPTAAE in West Africa:

The process to select these students was very objective having advertised using almost all available fora in the countries concerned. Besides the objectivity and the rigor, all the hierarchical organs in the Universities participated in the recruitment process. This explains the high quality calibre of students that were recruited. The gender balance in the recruitment process was largely achieved for the MSc classes although for the PhD, this was not possible because of lack of the right candidates despite the effort.

All 120 MSc candidates enrolled on the program completed their course. The student composition is tabulated below.

Country	Women	Men	Total
Benin	8	11	19
Burkina	12	16	28

Burundi	2	1	3
Cameroun	3	3	6
Central Africa Republic	1	1	2
Côte D 'Ivoire	2	4	6
Guinea	0	3	3
Mali	0	17	17
Niger	3	10	13
Senegal	5	3	8
Democratic Republic of Congo	2	1	3
Rwanda	2	0	2
Chad	1	1	2
Togo	2	1	3
Congo (Brazzaville)	0	2	2
Gabon	2	0	2
Madagascar	1	0	1
TOTAL	46	74	120

Nineteen (19) out of the 20 PhD students completed their course, one candidate from Niger who dropped out. The student composition is as follows 15 candidates from four (4) Francophone countries (Burkina Faso, Benin, Cameroon and Togo); these 15 candidates comprise of two (2) female candidates and 13 male candidates. There are 4 candidates from two (2) Anglophone countries being Nigeria and Ghana. The 4 candidates comprise of two (2 female) and two (2 male) making a total of 4 females out of 19 students which is 20 % of female students.

Report with evidence of placement of Graduate Fellows in Policy Nodes available:

- All 19 PhD students successfully had their internships at the following institutions: African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) of Ghana, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Science and Technology Policy Research Institute (STEPRI), United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA). A 100% employment rate is forecasted for PhD students based on engagement received so far from the various universities.
- The majority of MSc students preferred looking for an internship only after completing their degree work as others were already in the professional life working with various institutions.
- Eight out of every ten beneficiaries who had been working have attested that their positions are better than before they undertook the training an indication that their employer had

appreciated their competencies acquired because of the good training that they underwent ensuring they were now in a position to influence policy in line with the project objectives.

- Ninety (90) beneficiaries of the grant also benefited from supplementary leadership trainings. The leadership trainings were a 6-day workshop on improving skills in research communication through skills enhancement. The training workshop was intended to develop and strengthen scientific writing skills of fellows, enlighten them on gender in agricultural research, leadership, mentorship and coaching. It was also imperative that they be trained on research proposal writing with the aim of perfecting their proposals in their respective research fields. The workshop was participatory and involved presentations, discussions and experience sharing as well as computer based practical work. Enhancing leadership skills and mentorship through coaching in research and exposing the research scientists to skills in report writing and targeting the reports to various audiences as well as writing of posters is critical in the agricultural policy development sector.

8. Synthesis of research results to date

In this section, the main research activities and results over project period are synthesized and the degree of achievement highlighted along the three specific project objectives. Finally, a table showing progress towards the achievement of the specific objectives over the project duration.

Objective 1: To support a Collaborative Postgraduate Training in Agricultural and Applied Economics for young researchers, scholars and professionals in West Africa;

- **Research proposals from Graduate students (PhDs and Masters) underway:**

All MSc students who have successfully conducted thesis research, defended their thesis and graduated.

Eighteen (18) out of 19 PhD candidates have defended their thesis. One candidates Thesis is ongoing.

- **Report with evidence of placement of Graduate Fellows in Policy Nodes available:** All PhD students have completed their internships in Policy nodes and hubs in their home countries.
- So far the programme has progressed successfully without much difficulties. Indeed the setting up of the program allowed two additional PhD programmes to be developed in the Department of Agricultural Economics (PhD Agribusiness and PhD Agricultural Administration) to run a year later in parallel with the AGRA sponsored program.

Objective 2: To enhance the capacity of country policy action nodes for evidence-based policy formulation and implementation through the policy fellowship program

- The fellowship program was dropped through agreement between AGRA and IDRC although there wasn't any alternative proposal to replace the internship program.

Objective 3: To strengthen the collaboration between AGRA and IDRC partners and their research networks to improve the uptake of research results in order to influence policies, practices and people.

All PhD students have completed their internship in various organizations as described before. The majority of MSc students preferred looking for an internship only after completing their MSc work as others were already in the professional life working with various institutions. About ten students chose to apply for internship that helped them to complete their thesis. NPTCI management has backed each student's application by providing an official letter including a brochure of the NPTCI. Students went on internship in various countries and agriculture institutions.

- All 5 events planned in the Memorandum of Grant Conditions (MGC) have been effected; summaries are in the table below.

The table below shows the degree of progress toward the achievement of each objective and outputs over the project duration.

Milestones	Achievement (in %)	Evidence/Indicator	Comment
MSc Program in Applied Agricultural Economics Policy, NPTCI, University of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso			
Detailed planning and program design (including curriculum and implementation) is available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. Planning and program design for Msc were done before the start of lectures • 100%. Curriculum and implementation strategy was designed before debut of courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPTCI Academic board meeting report; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. Planning and program design done by NPTCI academic board for the MSc; Lectures started in October 2012; • Completed. Curriculum and implementation strategy was developed for the MSc program; Curriculum was inspired by the AERC CMAAE curriculum; It has been revised, adapted, approved and endorsed

			by the NPTCI Academic Board meeting in Dakar, Senegal on 14 and 15 September 2012.
Consultations with Canadian Universities lead to an appropriate level and format for their involvement in the training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. Individual agreements with the University of Laval/ Canada reached • 100%. Other agreements with research institutions and policy making institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture notes from the lecturer of the University of Laval; • Lecture notes from the lecturer of Kansas State University; • Agreement letters and MOU from partner organizations and institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual agreement reached with a lecturer from the University of Laval to teach agricultural policies • MoU between PTCI and Kansas State University/ USA signed; • Agreements reached with FAO, Authority of Development Integrated by the Region of Liptako-Gourma, DGPER, BCEAO and INERA to receive interns; • Agreements with CILSS, WFP, UNDP and AfricaRice reached.
The selection process of the first cohort of Msc students (including calls for application) is completed and names of fellows announced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. Selection of the first cohort of Master students done during the Academic Board meeting in Dakar on September 14 and 15, 2012. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPTCI academic board meeting reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. 30 students were recruited including 26 male and 4 women; • Completed. 30 students recruited from 10 countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, CAR, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea Conakry, Mali, Niger, and Senegal.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 students were recruited. 		
Research proposals from MScs Graduate students underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. Dissertation research and defense completed; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on seminars; • Theses of first and second cohorts; • Report on dissertation seminars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 students of first cohort graduated in November 2014; • 30 students of the second cohort graduated in September 2015; • 3rd cohort of 29 MSc students comprising of 12 women and 17 men graduated in 2016. • 4th and last cohort of MSc 31 students comprising of 18 women and 13 men embarked on training in November 2015 and graduated in September 2017.
Continuing recruitment and enrollment of MScs candidates for CPTAAE in West Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% of Master students recruited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on recruitment of 2nd cohort effected on 13-16 November 2013; • Report on recruitment of 3rd cohort effected in November 2014. • Report on recruitment of 4th cohort finalized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed cohort 1, 30 MSc students comprising of 4 women and 26 men • Completed. 30 students 12 female and 18 male composed this 2nd cohort; • Completed. 29 comprising of 12 female and 17 male composed this 3rd cohort; • Completed. 31 students from 11 countries. 18 female and 12 men composed this 4th cohort.

		in November 2015.	
Report with evidence of placement of Graduate Fellows in Policy Nodes available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. Some MSc students are on internships and some have been employed or returned to their home institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report from internship; • List of students placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st cohort: 12 are regularly employed; that is 6 in various institutions in their home countries and 6 pursuing PhD studies in the USA, Canada, Japan and various African universities as per the last census; • 2nd cohort: 14 employed: 11 employed and 3 are heading to PhD studies; • 3rd cohort: 16 mid-career professionals returned to their home institutions.
Twelve theses completed from MSc graduates from CPTAAE West Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. 30 students of first cohort completed their thesis; • 30 students from second cohort have completed their thesis; • 29 students from third completed their thesis; • 31 students comprising of 18 women and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theses of first and second cohort students; • Report on work progress of third cohort students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 students (includes IDRC+ BMGF) of first cohort graduated in November 2014; • 30 students (includes IDRC+ BMGF) of second cohort graduated in September 2015; • 29 students (includes IDRC+ BMGF) of third cohort graduated in September 2016. • 31 students comprising of 18 women and 13 men defended their dissertation from 15th to 31st July 2017 and

	13 men defended their dissertation from 15 th to 31 st July 2017		graduated in September 2017
PhD program in Agricultural Economics Policy, Department of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness, University of Ghana			
Detailed planning and program design (including curriculum and implementation) is available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. Planning and program design for PhD were done before the start of lectures • 100%. Curriculum and implementation strategy was designed before debut of courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on program planning and design from the Executive Committee of the University of Ghana; • Curriculum and syllabus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. Planning and program design done by the Executive Committee of the University of Ghana for the PhD; • Lectures started in March 2013 for PhD students; • Completed. Curriculum and implementation strategy was developed by the Executive Committee of the University of Ghana; • Curriculum was reviewed and adopted by the Graduate Committee of the Department of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness.
Consultations with Canadian Universities lead to an appropriate level and format for their involvement in the training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. Negotiations started with North American Universities; • 100%. Linkage between academic training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft MOU with Ohio State University; • Agreements with research institutions; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtained approval from Ohio State University to partner programme for 3 years. Platform established for engaging with Northern Universities; • Obtained informal approval from Kansas

	<p>institutions and practitioners in policy making in government departments and private agencies facilitated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internships reports from students. 	<p>State University to partner on seminars delivery;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Platform established for engaging with policy practitioners; • ACET, ISSER, FAO, IWMI, MOFA, IFPRI, STEPRI, UNU-INRA received all 20 students for internship.
<p>The selection process of the first cohort of PhD students (including calls for application) is completed and names of fellows announced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. Selection of the first cohort of PhD students done in January 2013. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on students' selection 	<p>Completed. 10 students including one female were selected from Ghana, Burkina Faso, Benin, Cameroon and Togo.</p>
<p>Research proposals from PhDs Graduate students underway</p>	<p>All the PhD students finalized their dissertations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminars reports from 1st cohort students; • Field work report from 2nd cohort students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of dissertation topics for the first and second and third cohorts successfully accomplished
<p>Continuing recruitment and enrollment of PhD candidates for CPTAAE in West Africa</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%, Recruitment of the second cohort of PhD students was effected on 7 January 2014. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on recruitment of students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. 10 students including 2 female were recruited; only three Francophone countries were represented (Benin, Burkina Faso, and Niger);

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 student vanished and the current number is 19.
Report with evidence of placement of Graduate Fellows in Policy Nodes available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 19 PhD students have completed internships at various institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internship reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19 PhD students have completed their internship at ACET, ISSER, FAO, IWMI, MOFA, IFPRI, STEPRI, UNU-INRA
Twenty PhD theses underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% completed for cohort one, two and three 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly seminars for first cohort students; Field work report from second cohort students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All PhD students of first cohort had weekly presentations of their theses and papers for publication.
AGRA Policy Advocacy Fellowship program			
Detailed planning and program design of the AGRA policy advocacy fellowships is available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50%. AGRA policy advocacy fellowship designed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TORs for recruitment of fellows; Newspaper= Adverts for recruitment of fellows; Report on recruitment of fellows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed. Fellowships program was designed; TORs written and recruitment effected; 3 Fellows recruited in January 2013: 1 senior and 2 junior all from Ghana. The Mali recruitment was put on hold owing to the then political turmoil; 2 fellows did not deliver as per their work plan and their contracts were subsequently terminated. 1 fellow resigned on November 2013 to pursue other challenges;

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Termination and resignation are mainly due to University administrative procedures that are required. • Fellows were recruited as consultants and AGRA wanted them to work full time but no such provision existed in the contract; • Irregular payment patterns of Fellows compounded the difficulties.
Research project for policy fellows are underway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. Fellows have embarked on research project since January 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project research questionnaires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research projects stopped as two fellows contracts were terminated and one resigned
Five technical reports completed and three publications by Policy Fellows accepted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. Previous reports were sent along the 3rd narrative report; • None after a decision to stop recruiting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellows work and publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decision to stop recruiting was reached during a meeting with IDRC on April 17, 2014
Joint AGRA – IDRC events			
The first collaborative event (African Crop Science Society Conference) is held building relationships	100%. 10th African Crop Science Society Conference held in Maputo, Mozambique from the 10 th – 13 th of October 2011.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. • Grant was given to organizers to support the participation of invited speakers, participation of IDRC and AGRA partners in the region, and general organizational costs

<p>between IDRC and AGRA funded researchers.</p>			<p>including publication and distribution of conference proceedings;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 500 scientists and other agriculture stakeholders participated in the conference, which facilitated an active exchange of information on crop science research, technology innovation and policies. • Report was attached along the 3rd narrative report covering period 12 February 2013 – 11 February 2014.
<p>Report of the 2nd African Green Revolution Forum special events is published.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in Arusha, Tanzania from 26 – 28 September, 2012 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGRF 2 Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. • The Forum, which was successfully organized, attracted over 1,500 delegates; • The Forum focused on the theme “<i>Scaling Investment and Innovation for Sustainable Agricultural Growth and Food Security</i>”. Relevant stakeholders shared experiences and knowledge on public-private partnerships, agricultural finance, making markets work and building foundations for

			<p>rapid growth in agricultural production.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Forum set the stage for Africa's leaders to promote investments and policy support to increase agricultural productivity and income growth for African farmers. • The report was attached to the 3rd narrative report covering period 12 February 2013 – 11 February 2014.
<p>Report of the 3rd African Green Revolution Forum special events is published</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. The 3rd AGRF 2013 was held in Maputo, Mozambique from 4-6 September 2013, and was attended by over 150 stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGRF3 publication and articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. • The 3rd AGRF 2013 held in Maputo, Mozambique from 4-6 September 2013. The Forum focused on <i>'Scaling up and financing inclusive agribusiness through transformative public-private partnerships'</i>. The forum discussed and reached consensus on scaling up and financing inclusive agribusiness through transformative farmer-public-private partnerships
<p>4th African Association of Agricultural Economists (AAAE)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100%. 4th AAAE conference held in Tunisia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4th AAAE report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed. • The conference theme was <i>"Commercializing Agriculture in Africa: Social, Economic and</i>

	September 22-25, 2013.		<p><i>Environmental Impacts</i>". Participants discussed strategies to reduce poverty through development of relevant policies and better access to information and knowledge on agricultural development in Africa.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report was attached to the 3rd narrative report covering period 12 February 2013 – 11 February 2014.
Report of the 4 th African Green Revolution Forum special events is published	100%. 4 th AGRF September 1-4, 2014 in Addis Ababa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGRF4 report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The theme was: "<i>Beyond the Tipping Point: A New Vision and Strategies for Inclusive and Sustainable Transformation</i>". The Policy Dialogue which was part of the AGRF 2014 was co-sponsored by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). At that sideline event, IDRC President emphasized the need for being nimble and ready to seize opportunities when research produces promising results in addressing food security across the continent. Draft report was attached to 3rd narrative report.

9. Synthesis towards AFS themes

The training programs have not yet had a direct impact on the Agricultural and Food Security (AFS) themes but are expected to impact these themes in the mid and long run either directly or indirectly. The sections below highlight some of the expected impact.

Informing policy: The project was designed to address the policy analysis capacity constraints facing West African governments through the training of MSc and PhD students in agricultural and applied economics, focusing on policy analysis and advocacy. In order to address the above challenges, it was important to undertake capacity building efforts that seek to improve the capacity of policy analysts, researchers and advisers in Africa to develop agricultural policies that are appropriate for their countries and regions, and strengthen the capacity of line ministries in policy formulation. Therefore, prior to the mounting of the two programs, there was no work in the realm of applied agricultural economics policy neither in Ghana nor in West Africa. The aim of the intervention was to fill this void while building regional integration. This confirms the view that the training was appropriate based on the need at hand. The project was designed to instill in the graduates knowledge of agricultural economics and policy concepts and analytical tools and skills necessary to function effectively in a wide range of assignments in the public and private sectors. It is therefore expected that the project will inform policy analysis, policy making processes, and good agricultural policies and practices. Policy making processes will be informed whenever graduates employed at various research and policy making institutions produce policy briefs and reports, and engage in advocacy activities aiming at promoting best agricultural practices.

- The program trained policy analysts and imparted knowledge and skills needed to champion the transformation of agro-food sectors and the rural economies through evidence-based policy making in departments of Agricultural and Applied Economics in the Universities and in relevant government Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria and also the rest of Africa. An added purpose of the programme was to build competencies in conducting policy relevant research on agriculture, food systems and the rural economy including such associated concerns as gender disparities, environment, and natural resource management.
- The graduates have been equipped with the knowledge and skills that will help them to identify policy needs and supported with credible evidence; a participatory formulation and implementation process; articulate the issues and policy options and continuous monitor and analyse the implementation of policy reforms to achieve desired results.
- The program largely targeted civil servants who would have an impact on policy upon completion of the course. The program also targeted those who were working already so that they could later easily influence policy in government; it also targeted women given their role especially in rural agriculture and economy.
- Equipping the Francophone students with English through the intensive course in the language and enabling them to live in an English speaking milieu was very empowering as it allows versatility within both Anglophone and Francophone countries. This was buttressed by the use of English as a medium of learning which is a crucial move to enhance collaboration between

Anglophone and Francophone countries whose challenges are similar to the extent that they need sharing to resolve the challenges.

- Prof. Daniel Sarpong the Program Manager in charge of the PhD Program at University of Ghana, pointed out that because this program has been a response to the problem of policy, as such the platforms availed to PhD students to engage with policy makers, politicians and policy implementers, and staff involved in the preparation of policy briefs as an input to the policy platform in place were very useful. This has helped to develop links between academic training and field experience, including interactions between students and faculty on one hand, and policy analysts, experts and private businesses on the other. Ultimately, this has helped acquainting students with policy issues and drawing their attention to the methodological skills necessary to address those issues.

10. Project implementation and management

- **Workplan:** This is the final report which covers the period from inception of the grant to the end of the grant. All the priority milestones for the grant have been achieved and explanations provided where there were challenges.
- **Research proposals from Graduate students (PhDs and MSc) underway:** All MSc Program students completed their research proposals and had graduated by September 2017. Research proposals for 18 PhD students are completed for cohort one to three and only one student's thesis research is underway;
- **Twelve theses completed from MSc graduates from CPTAAE West Africa and twenty PhD theses underway:**

All the MSc program activities are completed as per the objectives of the grant

The budget for the MSc program was USD 3,123,383; this program is co-funded by BMGF and IDRC in the proportions of USD 312,338.30 for IDRC and USD 2,811,044.70 for BMGF. Disbursement to the implementing institution, the *Nouveau Programme de Troisième Cycle Interuniversitaire* (NPTCI), University of Ouagadougou² was done by installments of USD 780,845 per cohort. The full amount of the grant has been disbursed to the sub grantee totaling to 3,123,383.

The PhD program implemented by the University of Ghana is entirely funded by IDRC to the tune of USD1, 289,880. The full amount of \$1,289,880.00 has been disbursed to the grantee.

- **Financial and administration challenges:** At the MSc level, the withdrawal of Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) led us to establish partnership with the BMGF, whose valuable contribution supported the salaries of key officers (the Director, the Finance manager, and the M&E officer of the NPTCI). This situation did not affect the

project which delivered within allocated time and budget. At the PhD level, there was no major issue. The program was finalized within the allocated time and budget

- **Research partnerships:** The project has continued to build partnerships with both policy making institutions and research institutions. The NPTCI has finalized agreements with the Central Bank of West African States (BCEAO), the FAO office in Burkina Faso, AfricaRice, the World Food Program, and the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). These institutions contribute in providing internships to students and provide insight into the design of curriculum; The NPTCI has also signed an MoU with Kansas State University/ USA. It also looks forward to capitalizing on its participation at the 2014 American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA) meeting held in Minneapolis to build partnerships with North American agricultural research institutions. On an individual basis, two lecturers, one from the University of Laval was contracted to teach Agricultural policies, and one from Oklahoma State University was contracted to teach Production economics.

The PhD program has close links with the following research institutions which provided internships and research assistance to PhD students; African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Water Management Institute (IWMI), Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) of Ghana, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Science and Technology Policy Research Institute (STEPRI), United Nations University Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA).

- **Governance:** The project provides opportunities to promote good governance. In effect, the training of students through various exposure, teaching in a Francophone and Anglophone setting, teaching from lecturers of different origins, lectures in a diversified classroom, internships in various policy making and research institutions will contribute to enhance their work ethics and finally their good governance abilities. It is expected that graduates in the professional life will be able to provide information in a relevant, accessible, timely and accurate manner and be answerable for whatever action and information they provide. The project also trained a critical mass of researchers who have a great potential to become thought leaders and research leaders in their fields thereby enabling them to provide analysis and make recommendations that will incorporate issues related to youth, women and children with the view to tackle poverty at its roots.
- **Research ethics:** the project did not collect any corporate or personal information.

11. Challenges encountered / action taken

Negotiations between the NPTCI (the host institution for the MSc program) and ACBF (African Capacity Building Foundation) the major donor for the NPTCI collapsed over the recruitment of the NPTCI's Director. This resulted in the layoff of most of the personnel of the NPTCI; as a result, an arrangement was brokered with BMGF to cater for the salaries of key officers to keep

the project running; these are the Director, the Finance manager, and the M&E officer. There has been no further major challenge ever since.

The AGRA Program Officer, Professor Ndri Konan left AGRA effective January 2017. This was because of reorganization of AGRA as an institution in line with its new strategy. AGRA's next five years will focus more on scaling up the models that have been developed and will do less of building new capacities such as PhD and MSc programs. At the same time, both the PhD and MSc programs under this grant were almost coming to an end therefore, AGRA's Head of Policy and Advocacy Mr Boaz Blackie Keizire took the responsibility of the Project and with support from the Program Coordinator Judith Bwire supported the project to its successful completion.

12. Other discussions

The fellowship component of the program was dropped due to internal AGRA administrative challenges and IDRC was notified. The funds earmarked for the fellowship component were deviated to other supplementary activities for the AGRA sponsored graduates. AGRA presented a concept note and budget to repurpose these funds and the following sub-activities were carried out.

- a. Commissioned an assessment study on the emerging impact of the training and how the graduates are being absorbed in the field. The overall purpose of the final evaluation was to assess the achievements made by the program in fulfilling its agreed objectives through the planned activities and its relevance to the community; and to assess the efficiency and effectiveness with which resources have been used to generate results and achieve project objectives. The evaluation studied signs of potential impact of project activities on the beneficiaries as well as the sustainability of results. More generally, the evaluation also aimed to identify and document lessons learned and make recommendations to help the project partners and stakeholders improve the design and implementation of related future programs. The evaluation aimed at carrying out a tracer study of the beneficiaries of the program and their human capital contribution to research and development, innovation and demonstrating the short term benefits and anticipated long-term benefits that the capacity building program has built beyond the completion of the project.

Out of the 139 beneficiaries of the grant, 100 responded to the survey. Two thirds (65%) of the respondents were male with 35% being female. These findings are in consonance with project objectives where they had targeted that at least 30% of all the beneficiaries are females. The finding on the tracer study showed that about one quarter (24%) of the beneficiaries of the program were still unemployed, 22% were pursuing further studies, 15% were independent researchers, 11% were lecturing at University and 10% were civil servants, 5% are working as research assistants and the remaining 13% are interns, assistants and social workers.

The fact that 11% of the respondents were lecturing and that 22% were pursuing further studies is an indicator of some good level of training imparted in these students. On the

other hand, the fact that 24% of the respondents are not engaged in any occupation is attributed to the fact that they are new graduates who had not received their transcripts to enable them look for jobs.

- b. The PhD graduates have all worked on an abridged version of their Thesis. These will be compiled into a book and printed by the University of Ghana. The University has shared a proforma costing for the printing and this has already been paid in advance as we await the copies of the combined abridged Thesis.

Conclusion

Finally, the success of the project could not have been achieved without the valuable support of IDRC and BMGF. IDRC particularly enabled the success of this project in three ways; first there was regular communication with AGRA leadership of the project regarding progress of the project. Second the IDRC designate Officers provided technical backstopping in creating an overall vision of the project was delivering the planned outputs, outcomes and impacts and therefore achieving its objectives. Thirdly, IDRC also enabled the success of the project through periodic meetings and e-mail communication to discuss the project and visits to the project sites where the work was conducted.