



Ministry of Agriculture



Proceedings of the 2014 Annual Projects Review and Planning Working Session



Participants to the Working Session at the Jenoi Agricultural Rural Farmer Training Centre,
Lower River Region
21-22 November, 2014

Prepared by

The Ag-sector Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Working Group (METWG)

December 2014

The Agric-Sector Annual Sector Progress Review and Planning Workshop process and the production of this report was Coordinated by
the CPCU and funded under the World Bank funded GCAV project



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1.0 Introduction

The Gambia National Agricultural Investment Plan (GNAIP) is the medium-term strategic plan of The Gambia (2011-2015). It is a framework that outlines the sector strategic policy thrusts guiding project design, resource mobilization allocation and implementation, across the agriculture sector (Ag-sector). Agricultural Projects form an important part of agricultural expenditure consolidating government financing in the Agricultural Sector. These projects are funded mostly by the traditional funding partners in the agriculture sector which include the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Islamic Development Bank (IDB), World Bank (WB), European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) Agencies to name a few.

The projects are managed by different Project Management Units (PMU) specifically hired to implement projects. This arrangement presents the decentralization benefits and opportunities for increased focus of specific interventions based on a specific set of predicable resources and results in addition to the much needed sector partner coordination for efficient and effective delivery.

The mandate and role of the Central Projects Coordinating Unit (CPCU) for coordinating projects under the Ministry of Agriculture is clearly outlined in the Cabinet Paper that ushered in the institution of the CPCU. It is in line with the broader national Aid coordination policy that strives to improve coordination of donor funding and donor funded projects in all sectors. A crucial and strategic starting point for an effective coordination and oversight role is to regularize, synchronize and harmonize key process like planning, monitoring and evaluation, administration, financial procedures and standards. Coordinated planning, budgeting and progress review for Ag-sector projects is therefore necessary to come up with consolidated sector Annual Workplans and Budgets (AWP&B) and Annual Progress Reports.

The Ag-sector PM&E framework specifies the need for and the process of carrying out Ag-sector Annual Progress Review and Planning and the role of the CPCU and Planning Services Unit (PSU) M&E Officers in leading and coordinating such processes. It is against this backdrop that the MoA, through the CPCU, organized a maiden 2-days working session that aimed at bringing projects and MoA departments together, to reflect on the 2014 progress and initiate the development of a joint 2015 Ag-sector projects AWP&B and annual progress report.

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1.1 Purpose

The 2-days projects annual progress review and planning working session is meant to create a platform for discussing and sharing progress made by various projects in the year 2014 and plan for activities for the 2015 implementation period. This will lead to the development of the 2014 Ag-sector progress report and the 2015 Agricultural Sector Annual Projects Work plan and Budget. *It* will also have the additional benefit of assessing the sector's contribution to Vision 2016.

1.2 Objectives

The overall objective is to improve coordination of Ag-sector projects/interventions by reducing duplication of project activities and promoting cross-project learning that will lead to improved implementation efficiency.

The specific objectives of the Annual Agricultural Projects Progress Review and Planning (APPRP) working session are:

1. To harmonize the scheduling and processes for carrying out Annual Agricultural project progress review, reflection and annual work planning and budgeting
2. To develop the 2014 Annual Agricultural projects progress report
3. To develop a consolidated 2015 Annual Workplan and Budget for the Agricultural projects



2.0 Proceedings of the Working Session

2.1 Day 1: Opening Ceremony

2.1.1 Words from the Director General, Department of Agriculture

In his opening remarks, the Director General, Department of Agriculture welcomed all the participants and described the organization of the first ever Annual Agricultural Projects Progress Review and Planning Working Session as a crucial step taken by the Ministry of Agriculture and led by the CPCU. He explained that since the portfolio for the agricultural projects had increased tremendously it required more judicious use of resources informed by regular progress data generation, sharing and reflection as well as joint planning. He revealed that the working session will concentrate on;

- Project presentations of work plans, targets and achievements,
- Activities and indicators and their relevance to the GNAIP.

He made a plea that people should be critical but objective in order to achieve the objectives of the session.

2.1.2 Remarks from the Governor of Lower River Region

The Governor of Lower River Region said "a good convergence should be able to ensure synchronized efforts of all projects. If all projects come together in order to avoid duplication, there could be great impact on beneficiaries". He challenged the participants to work positively so that they could have a good footing come next year.

2.1.3 Remarks from the Special Adviser to the President on Agriculture

In his remarks, Professor Wale Adekunle called on the participants to seriously converge their thoughts during the, planning process as this would immensely contribute to a more efficient allocation of resources on rice production. He reiterated the call by the Head of State through the Vision 2016 and that everyone was being called to rally behind the call, work hard and contribute towards the realization of the vision. He also emphasised the role that rice plays in food and nutrition security in The Gambia hence all projects should take deliberate attempts to seek linkages that would ensure increased rice production and avoid duplication."



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2.1.4 Remarks from the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs

The Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs outlined the importance of Agriculture to the national economy noting the crucial role that the working session would enhance the coordination of projects by both MoFEA and MoA. Mr Camara reminded the participants of the importance and significant contribution of, Agriculture to the GDP (25% to GDP) and that any time there is crop failure in the country, it impacts negatively on the economy demonstrating that a 50% increase in the production of rice will cut down the import value of rice leading to significant forex savings, job creation etc.

2.1.5 Remarks from the Permanent Secretary II - Ministry of Agriculture

The Permanent Secretary II of the Ministry of Agriculture described the working session as a family discussion and that it will give the sector the opportunity to strengthen the implementation and sector deliver process. He said the diversity of Agricultural projects is as wide as the number of donors, hence the need to synchronize and avoid duplications. He emphasized the need for participants to take the workshop seriously and went on to outline the objectives of the working session. .

2.1.6 Remarks from the Coordinator, Central Projects Coordinating Unit

In his opening remarks, Mr Falalo Touray, the Coordinator of the, Central Project Coordinating Unit reiterated the importance of Agriculture in the economic development of the Gambia and went on to spell out that the core objective of the working session was to regularize, harmonize and synchronize project planning, monitoring and evaluation as well as some cross cutting administrative issues. He highlighted the importance of the session as a unique opportunity to integrate projects for greater impact hence the need to plan and have similar working sessions on an annual basis.



3.0 Presentation of Project Progress Reports

After the opening ceremony seven projects presented their progress reports. Presentations were made by the respective M&E Officers of the projects as shown in the Annex 2.

3.1 Emerging issues for the progress presentation and discussions

Upon the completion of each presentation participants took a chance to critically reflect on the issues coming from the presentation either for that particular project or related to other projects and the following issues emerged:

1. PROGEBE and RFP projects independently implemented the financial services components of their projects yet there was a good opportunity for the two projects to complement each other's work
2. Lack of complementarity between MDG1c and LHDP in vegetable garden schemes leading to possible duplications in e.g. Jappineh Village , LRR this led to the recommendation that the CPCU should take a lead role in project design to minimize/eliminate duplication and maximize complementarities
3. Possible duplication of functions between V-APEX and Microfinance Finance Promotion Centre (MFPC)
4. The need for designing new livestock focused projects given that PROGEBE was closing and no other livestock focused project was in the pipeline
5. Poor attribution of results leading to underestimation of or just lack of acknowledgement of, Government and other partners contribution (attribution)
6. The need to measure adoption within, outside the project and post project intervention
7. Baselines are being conducted too late e.g. FASDEP
8. There is the need to have one comprehensive harmonized baseline study for all Ag-sector priority indicators which all projects can tap from as opposed to the current practice where several individual projects were conducting individual project level baselines despite their common thematic thrusts.
9. Inadequate in-country capacity for land development and irrigation was leading to a diminished pace for all land development activities posing the likely challenge of not meeting the planned land development targets especially for rice.
10. Proposal to jointly fund the procurement of external land development services by projects



11. Procurement bottlenecks were affecting timely projects implementation
12. Low uptake of the matching grant funds was affecting *Nema*, FASDEP and GCAV projects
- 13.
14. There is the need to match borehole capacity with garden size
15. The slow implementation rate for FASDEP needed an urgent fast track plan to make up for the lost time.
16. Some funds disbursements were made for activities that had not been implemented hence this could not be considered as an achievement until the activities had been implemented
17. The current data collection mechanism by most projects did not allow adequate measurement of progress based on the selected Ag-sector priority indicators as evidenced by common data gaps noticed even for some of the projects that are at closing stage.

3.1.1 Review of Emerging Issues From Presentations

The emerging issues in Day 1 were critically reflected upon as the first activity of Day 2. These issues are core to the implementation process. Effectively addressing them would result in improved implementation rate. The team prioritised the issues that needed urgent attention and corresponding recommendations were made for each leading to the development of some sort of action plan.



Table 2: Action plan for the emerging issues

| Issue | Recommendations | Responsibility | Timeline |
|---|--|--|------------------|
| Some projects received low GoTG contribution versus the planned contribution | The need for MoFEA and MoA to agree on a mechanism that will ensure that counterpart contribution is properly addressed since the current picture can create a negative perception from the development partners | MoFEA, MoA, CPCU | Jan – Dec 2015 |
| This forum is very important and it will be good to have more such forums | The need to have a regular budget line for annual review and planning workshop | All Projects MoA, CPCU | Nov. 2015 |
| There is limited coordination of project activities in the regions | Projects to pool together training resources (extension and farmer training on GAP for crops) for DoA's execution | All Projects, DoA, CPCU | March 2015 |
| With the end of PROGEBE, there will be no other livestock specific project in the sector | There is the need for designing new livestock focused project | MoA, MoFEA, CPCU, DLS | Jan – Dec 2015 |
| Inadequate in-country capacity for land development and irrigation | Proposal to jointly fund the procurement of external land development services by projects | All Projects, MoA CPCU, Donors | March 2015 |
| Procurement bottlenecks are affecting timely projects implementation | Procurement should be done on time. Well thought and realistic procurement plans are very important. Cross learning among project procurement staff should happen be intensified. | MoA, All Projects, Donors, CPCU | Jan – Dec 2015 |
| Duplication of project interventions | The CPCU should take a lead role in project design to minimize/ eliminate duplication and maximized complementarities | CPCU, all projects | Jan – Dec 2015 |
| The current data collection mechanism by most projects did not allow adequate measurement of progress based on the selected Ag-sector priority indicators | Strengthen data collection, processing and sharing. The Ag-sector PME System needs to be utilized effectively and urgently especially the recently designed data collection forms in order to collected relevant data. | CPCU/METWG | Jan – March 2015 |
| The slow implementation rate for FASDEP needed an urgent fast track plan to make up for the lost time. | CPCU to actively support FASDEP | CPCU, MoA and AfDB | Jan – Dec 2015 |
| Importance of the achievement of Vision 2016 | Ensuring that our 2015 annual consolidated work plan and budget clearly reflect the contribution of projects to the objectives and targets of vision 2016 | MoA, All Projects, CPCU, NARI, DoA | Jan – March 2015 |
| Harmonization of allowances | Need to harmonize all allowances across all projects to ensure uniformity of approach | CPCU | Jan 2015 |

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| | | | |
|---|---|-------------|-----------|
| Enhance coordination and information sharing within the Ministry of Agriculture | Develop Consolidated Work Plan and Progress Report | CPCU, METWG | Jan 2015 |
| | Organise bi-annual project progress review meetings | CPCU, METWG | June 2015 |

3.2 Presentation of Annual Work Plans and Budget

With the exception of the Phasing-out projects (PROGEBE, RFP and PIWAMP) five projects presented their proposed 2015 Annual Work Plan and Budgets. Discussions focused on thematic and geographic mapping of the planned activities trying to see where 2 or more projects are carrying out similar activities so as to identify possible linkages and ensuring rational use of extension staff. It also focused on checking if the planned work is realistic and how well it tries to address the targets of Vision 2016 for example. The following were agreed on after the presentations.

- The writing team should come up with templates for the consolidated Annual Work Plan and Budget, Indicator Based Progress Report, and Activity-Based Progress Report.
- The writing team should come up with consolidated report of the 2011-2015 Annual Work Plan and Budget, Indicator Based Progress Report, and 2014 Activity-Based Progress Report.
- All projects submit their detailed 2015 staff and farmer training plan so that the writing team can develop a calendar that enable joint training or at least synchronization of trainings to reduce duplication by different projects.

3.3 Closing Remarks by the Director of Administration, Department of Agriculture

The closing ceremony was done by the Director of Administration, Department of Agriculture. In his closing remarks he hailed the CPCU for sponsoring and organizing a very fruitful working session. He also thank the participants for their active involvement during the session and expresses confidence that the points, problems and solutions identified form the session will help to ensure a unified program and improved project implementation.

**Annex 1: List of Facilitators and Writing Team**

| Name | Organization | Designation | Function / Role |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Mr Ousman Jammeh | Dep. of Agric | Director General | Chairperson |
| Mr Bho Mudyahoto | CPCU | M&E Technical Assistant | Facilitator |
| Mr Raymond Jatta | CPCU | M&E Officer | Facilitator |
| Mr Bakary O. Camara | NARI | M&E FP | Rapporteur |
| Mr Ebrima N. Ceesay | DOA | M&E Officer | Rapporteur |
| Mrs Isatou Savage Bah | DLS | M&E FP | Rapporteur |

Annex 2: List of projects and their respective presenters

| Name of Project | Presenter |
|---|-----------------------|
| Livestock and Horticulture Development Project (LHDP) – IFAD/AfDB/GoTG | Mr Abdoulie Touray |
| Food and Agricultural Development Project (FASDEP) – GAFSP/AfDB/GoTG | Mr Hassan Sillah |
| Participatory Integrated Water Management Project (PIWAMP) IFAD/AfDB/GoTG | Mr Jiuru Manneh |
| MDG 1c Project EU/FAO/GoTG | Mr Buba Joof |
| PROGEBE AfDB/GoTG | Mr Modou Sowe |
| National Agricultural Land and Water Management Project (<i>Nema</i>)IFAD/AfDB/GoTG | Mr Ensa Colley |
| Rural Finance Project (RFP) IFAD/GoTG | Mrs Ramatoulie Hydara |
| The Gambia Commercialization and Agricultural Value Chain Management Project (GCAV)-WB/GoTG | Mr Raymand Jatta |



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Annex 3: Attendance List

Name of Institution providing support for the event- **GCAV**

Event Dates: From **21 November** To **22 November** (number of days - 2)

ATTENDANCE REGISTER FOR STAFF

Category of activity (tick the applicable): TRAINING WORKSHOP MEETING

PLANNING WORKSHOP REVIEW WORKSHOP WORKING SESSION

Name of Activity: **Annual Sector Review and Planning Working Session**

***INSTRUCTIONS:** This form is used to capture attendance for all VCA group capacity building activities. The form will be filled by the staff member convening the event/facilitate these activities. In cases where participants are from different regions, record them on separate sheets, by region.*

| FULL NAME | Gender M/F | National Identity Number (NIN) for Gambia national | Designation | PARTICIPANT'S INSTITUTION (indicate region where application | Phone Number | Email Address |
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| FULL NAME | Gender M/F | National Identity Number (NIN) for Gambia national | Designation | PARTICIPANT'S INSTITUTION (indicate region where application | Phone Number | Email Address |
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| FULL NAME | Gender M/F | National Identity Number (NIN) for Gambia national | Designation | PARTICIPANT'S INSTITUTION (indicate region where application | Phone Number | Email Address |
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