PROGRAM SUMMARY

FEED THE FUTURE AFRICAN GREAT LAKES REGION COFFEE SUPPORT PROGRAM (AGLC)

UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID) ASSOCIATE AWARD UNDER THE GLOBAL HUNGER AND FOOD SECURITY RESEARCH STRATEGY; CLIMATE RESILIENCE, NUTRITION AND POLICY — FEED THE FUTURE INNOVATION LAB FOR FOOD SECURITY POLICY (FSP) AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY (MSU)

Overview

The Feed the Future Africa Great Lakes Region Coffee Support Program (AGLC) is a USAID-funded collaborative research, producer capacity building and policy engagement initiative in the Great Lakes Region of Africa that will control potato taste defect (PTD) and improve coffee productivity—two of the major challenges underscored in the 2014 Coffee Research Symposium[1] and subsequent policy dialogue with coffee value chain leaders in Rwanda and Burundi.

AGLC will meet these challenges through three main program components, identified as the following:

- *Applied policy, household, and agronomic (field-level) research* to serve as the basis for smallholder capacity building and policy engagement aimed at reducing potato taste defect and low coffee productivity and profitability in the Africa Great Lakes Region.
- *Capacity building/farmer training & outreach* with project partners in the Africa Great Lakes Region to train coffee producers and processors on potato taste/antestia control and other practices that will increase productivity and farmer incomes.
- *Policy engagement* to help Rwanda and Burundi to debate, formulate and adopt policies that will motivate producers and other actors in the coffee value chain to invest in ways that will increase smallholder farmer incomes.

The AGLC initiative will fill important gaps in our knowledge base on controlling PTD, improving coffee farm management practices and creating a policy environment that is fully supportive of farmer and other stakeholder investment in the sector (see Annex Figure 1).

Program Approach, Outcomes and Partners

Component 1: Applied Policy, Household, and Agronomic (field-level) Research. The primary objectives of the applied research component of the project is to objectively and empirically inform coffee sector stakeholders in Rwanda, Burundi and elsewhere in the region concerning the most effective practices for controlling antestia/PTD and for establishing a policy environment that will provide the necessary incentives for coffee producers to invest their labor, land and cash resources in these practices.

[1]Rwanda Collaboration Colloquium After-Action Report: Eliminating Potato Taste in East African Coffee, Global Knowledge Initiative, March 17-18, 2014, Kigali Rwanda.

The alliance partners will develop both demonstration and control plots and identify the efficacy of chemical and organic (pyrethrum-based) pesticides and integrated pest management (IPM) in controlling antestia/PTD. Similarly, fertilizer and manure/compost treatments will be tested for impact on yields, cyclicity of production, and interactions with antestia control regimes. The results will be developed into best-practices training materials and gender-sensitive media messages (radio/SMS). Additional outputs include the implementation of focus group discussions, a producer survey on PTD/antestia knowledge-attitudes-practices (KAP), and on incentives to invest in prevention/control and higher coffee yields.

These applied research efforts will provide the information needed to: 1) create a policy framework for incentives that will motivate farmers and washing stations to make the necessary investments in antestia control and higher productivity; 2) target capacity building in best practices for antestia/PTD control and improved productivity; and 3) take appropriate steps in raising awareness through extension/ dissemination in collaboration with private sector partners such as Starbucks in Rwanda and Webcor in Burundi.

Component 2: Policy Engagement. Development of a policy environment in support of farmer investments that will both improve productivity and address the effects of antestia/PTD is at a critical stage in both Rwanda and Burundi. A fundamental contradiction in the system is that coffee productivity in the region is among the lowest in the world, yet the international buyers consistently rate Rwanda and Burundi coffees among the very best in the world. AGLC will undertake carefully targeted, applied research that will help to inform the policy debate and serve as a platform for decision-making that will enable producers to "grow the pie" so that all stakeholders will benefit and longer-term sustainability can become a reality.

Based on the barriers to investment in coffee productivity and controlling PTD identified through the project's applied research activities, the in-country teams will engage coffee sector decision-makers in formulating effective, evidence-based policies and regulations to address critical issues such as setting cherry prices for optimal farmer investment, linking prices to quality, and the coffee cooperative pre-financing dilemma.

Component 3: Capacity Building/Farmer Training & Outreach. The primary objectives of the capacity building component of the project are to increase stakeholder awareness of antestia/PTD and the effects of low productivity on the entire coffee value chain. Demonstration plots, farmer training and media messages will provide farmers and CWS managers with the skills to address this suite of interrelated challenges. The teams also expect that the capacity building activities will start with the preparation of clear, user friendly training materials, broadcasts and messages that will be widely distributed and used.

Primary capacity building and policy development partners will be CEPAR, Starbucks and NAEB in Rwanda, and InterCafé, Webcor, and ARFIC in Burundi. Cupping services for evaluation of PTD incidence in coffee samples will be provided by Starbucks and NAEB in Rwanda and by ARFIC in Burundi. Provision of insecticides (synthetic and organic) to the coffee producers will be CEPAR in Rwanda and InterCafe in Burundi. Farmer training will occur in tandem with the distribution of inputs to help ensure that these products will be properly/safely applied and managed and to minimize the diversion of inputs to other crops (and resale to traders).

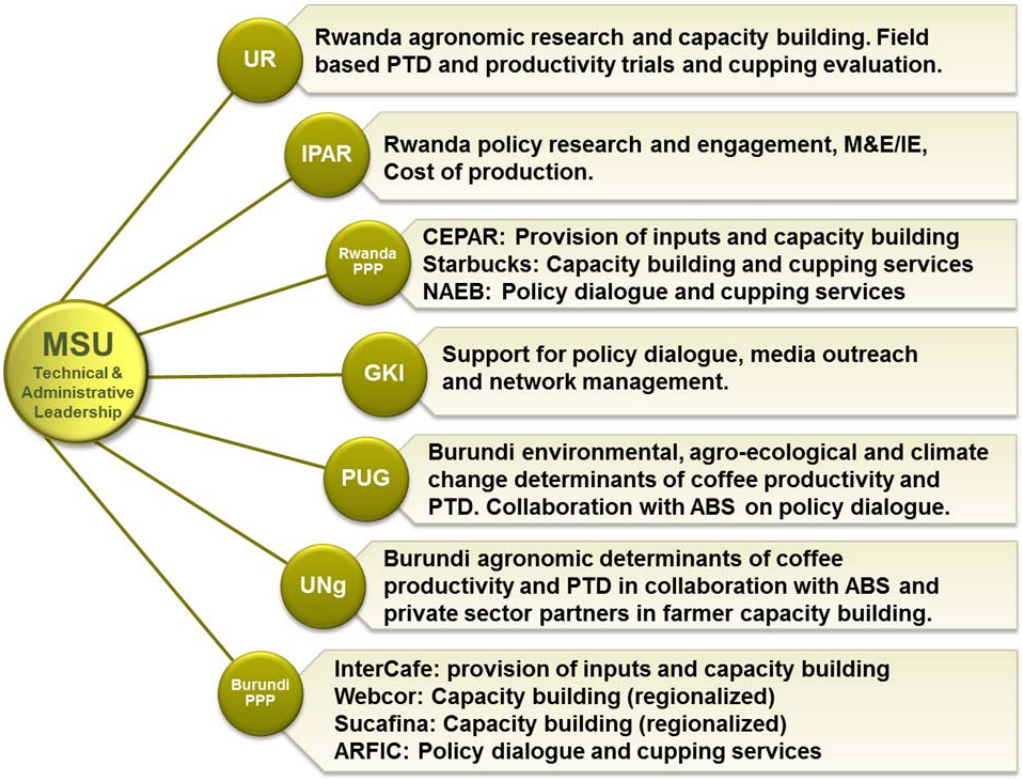
Program Implementation Schedule. The program will be implemented over a three-year period starting in July 2015, as illustrated in Annex Table 1. In Year 1, after a short start-up phase, the teams will focus

on the field research, demonstration plots and capacity building activities. Rwanda and Burundi project teams will engage policy makers during this period around project goals, farmer investments in coffee, and access to inputs. As research results emerge, farmer training programs will be adapted and insecticide/input regimes updated and disseminated throughout the region. In Year 2, an intensive media program led by the Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI) will target coffee producers and will scale up the results of the research and capacity building. Improving the policy environment through evidence-based advocacy and engagement with decision makers will be pursued as major goals of Years 2 and 3.

Program Partners. The alliance will forge enduring ties between the public, private, and university sectors, all of which are necessary for building sustainable regional capacity in research, extension/outreach, and policy analysis and formulation. As depicted in the Partner Roles and Responsibilities figure below, Michigan State University will provide overall administrative and technical leadership and will take a team approach to realizing the program's vision through its primary implementing partners in Rwanda (UR and IPAR) and Burundi (PUG and UNg), together with the technical support of the Global Knowledge Initiative (GKI) focusing on media outreach, network management, and advancing the policy dialogue in support of improved coffee productivity and improved antestia/PTD management.

A crucial aspect of this research and policy-based initiative are the public and private sector participation and contributions from CEPAR, NAEB, Starbucks and Agropharm in Rwanda and InterCafé, Webcor and ARFIC in Burundi. Through the involvement of these partners, particularly in farmer and washing station capacity building, the proposed program will broadly strengthen their abilities to reach smallholder farmers with the agricultural inputs and practices necessary to improve coffee productivity and combat the devastating effects of PTD.

Partner Roles and Responsibilities



ANNEX

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework for Burundi and Rwanda Coffee Productivity, Cyclicity and Potato Taste Defect

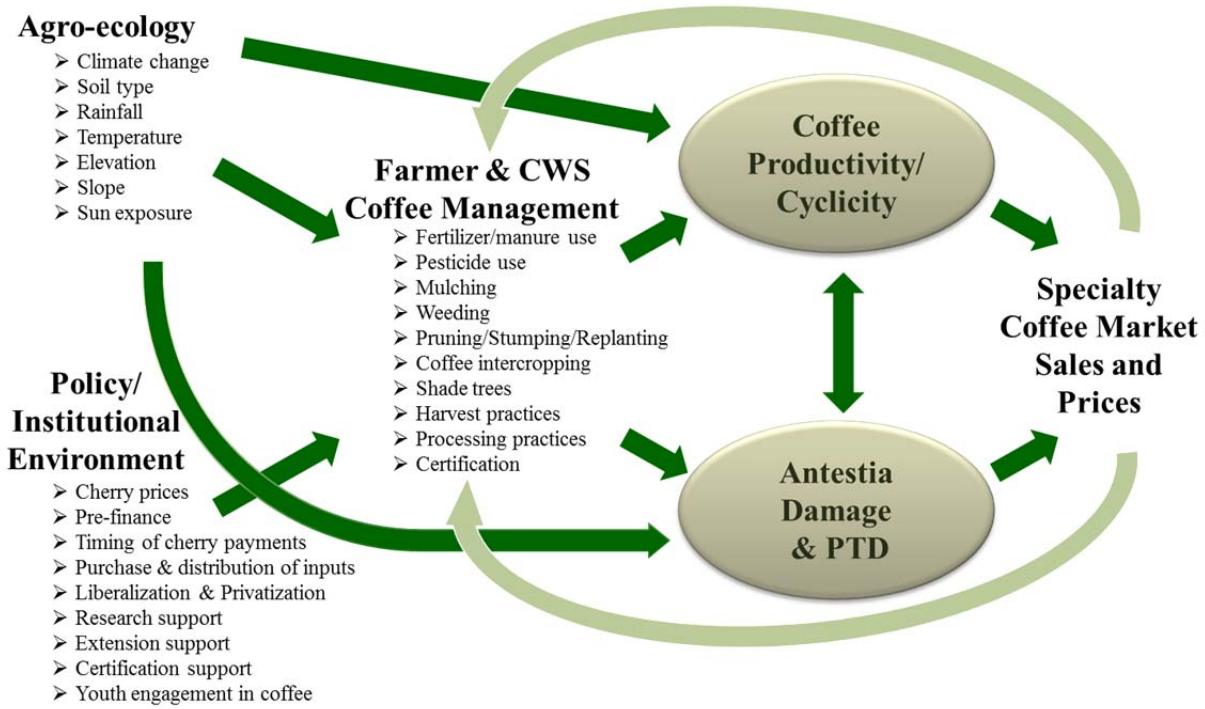


Table 1

Three-Year Timetable of Activities by Quarter

Year →	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
Activity Quarter →	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1. Project start-up												
▪ Contract partners and hire local project personnel	■											
▪ Project kick-off conference with stakeholders	■											
▪ Draft Year 1 work plan	■											
▪ Establish M&E program	■											
▪ Field M&E baseline surveys	■	■	■									
2. Applied household and field level research												
▪ Research design and sampling producer hhs/plots/CWSs	■											
▪ Pretesting instruments	■	■										
▪ Data collection hhs/plots/CWSs		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
▪ Analysis and write up of results			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
▪ Data validation through stakeholder workshops				■			■			■		
3. Policy Engagement												
▪ Identify and engage key policy actors in coffee sector	■											
▪ Conduct policy analysis to identify primary constraints	■	■										
▪ Engage policy makers in data collection and analysis	■	■	■	■	■	■	■					
▪ Draft and present policy syntheses and data					■	■	■	■				
▪ Advocate for policy change					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
▪ Assist with policy formulation and implementation							■	■	■	■	■	■
▪ Workshops: Research results and policy debate				■				■				■
4. Capacity Building												
▪ Develop research based training materials	■			■			■			■		
▪ Establish and track leader-farmer demonstration plots		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
▪ Conduct farmer and CWS awareness training programs		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
▪ Conduct farmer and CWS best practices training programs			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
▪ Develop and disseminate radio/media messages			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
▪ Deliver most effective pesticides and other inputs				■				■				■