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USAID Titukulane Program FY20 Q1 Report

Awardee Name and Host Country	CARE Malawi
Award Number	72DFFPI9CA00004
Activity Start Date	09/20/2019
Activity End Date	09/29/2024
Submission Date	01/30/2020
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I. Program Overview Table

Geographic Focus: Titukulane will be implemented in 20 Traditional Authorities (TAs) in Mangochi and Zomba districts with direct impact on 723,111 people in 290,413 households
Project Goal: Sustainable, equitable and resilient food and nutrition security for ultra-poor and chronically vulnerable households and communities in Mangochi and Zomba Districts
Purpose 1: Increased diversified, sustainable, and equitable incomes for ultra-poor, chronically vulnerable households, women and youth Sub-Purpose 1.1: Diversified, stable and equitable incomes from on-farm livelihoods Sub-Purpose 1.2: Diversified, stable and equitable incomes from off-farm livelihoods
Purpose 2: Nutritional status among children under five years of age, adolescent girls and women of reproductive age improved Sub-Purpose 2.1: Infant and young child, maternal and adolescent diets, and maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health improved Sub-Purpose 2.2: Women, men, girls, and boys use safe water and sanitation at home Sub-Purpose 2.3: Increased utilization of quality reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health (RMNCAH) and nutrition services
Purpose 3: Increased institutional and local capacities to reduce risk and increase resilience among poor and very poor households in alignment with the NRS Sub-Purpose 3.1: Increased transformative capacities of systems and structures to respond to the needs of vulnerable populations Sub-Purpose 3.2: Increased adaptive capacities of structures and chronically vulnerable households and communities to changing environmental, climate and other risks

Sub-Purpose 3.3: Increased capacities of systems, communities and individuals to anticipate and absorb shocks and stress							
Target Beneficiaries (Disaggregated by Program Element and by Fiscal Year)							
Total Unique Direct Participant Households	Purpose 1 Only	Purpose 1&2	Purpose 1&3	Purpose 2 Only	Purpose 2&3	Purpose 3 Only	Purpose 1, 2 &3
290,413	28,983	54,479	21,884	57,377	43,599	49,251	35,839
Roles and Responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Partners: Provide technical leadership and advice including development of technical tools and guides, training, supervision, monitoring and quality control. • CARE Malawi is the consortium lead and has responsibility for overall leadership and technical quality, representation, integration of approaches across purposes, financial management, and compliance with grant accountability and donor standards. CARE headquarters will provide technical and operational support and oversight to all technical and operational areas and coordination with FFP. CARE will be the technical lead for Purposes 1 and 3. CARE will also provide leadership in ensuring that gender equity considerations and governance and social accountability are integrated into all aspects of the program. • Save the Children is responsible for overall technical quality for the social norm/behavioral change and health/nutrition services components of Titukulane (Purpose 2). SCI is also responsible for implementation in Zomba District. As the responsible partner for youth engagement, SCI will also monitor youth engagement and provide technical guidance on interventions related to expanding youth employability and life skills in Purpose 1. • WaterAid is responsible for providing technical leadership on water, sanitation and hygiene interventions in Titukulane. • Emmanuel International is responsible for the technical quality of natural resource and watershed management interventions in the NRM component. EI will also manage implementation in Mangochi District. • NASFAM will ensure technical quality with marketing interventions. • IFPRI is the strategic learning partner and will be responsible for implementing key research as described in the Activity Learning Plan. This will include coordinating studies, assessments, and pilots during the refinement year and ensuring that the findings are used to answer key questions and bring about improvements. IFPRI will also conduct periodic assessments at least every six months to monitor program effectiveness, follow up on emerging contextual changes, and obtain qualitative data to interpret quantitative findings from annual surveys. IFPRI will have responsibility for ensuring that Titukulane generates and disseminates useful information around the challenges, opportunities and policy needs arising in rolling out the NRS. 							

II. Overview & Context

CARE, together with its consortium partners,¹ is implementing a 5-year Titukulane project funded by USAID Food for Peace, starting from September 20, 2019 and running until September 29, 2024. The project will be implemented in Mangochi and Zomba districts with

¹ Consortium members include Emmanuel International, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the National Smallholders Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM), Save the Children (SC) and WaterAid.

direct impact on 723,111 people in 290,413 households. The overarching project goal is “sustainable, equitable, and resilient food and nutrition security for ultra-poor and chronically vulnerable households in Mangochi and Zomba Districts.” To achieve this, Titukulane will cover 9 out of the 13 Traditional Authorities (TAs) in Mangochi District and all 11 TAs Zomba District.² Titukulane will support the National Resilience Strategy (NRS) with interventions aligned with the strategy. The project Theory of Change (ToC) pathways correspond with relevant pillars and sub-pillars of the NRS. The program interventions support the three project purposes listed in the Program Overview Table above.

III. Performance updates from the Quarter

A. Technical activities

The USAID Titukulane program’s first quarter activities focused on staff recruitment, partner mobilization, preparing sub-agreements, establishing office space, purchasing office equipment and supplies, receiving vehicles and motorbikes from previous Food for Peace (FFP) / USAID funded projects, start-up and orientation workshops, and Refine and Implement Period planning.

Preparation and Start-Up Activities

Award approval and set up:

- CARE notified partners and government personnel of the award
- Start-up plan, recruitment schedule, and procurement plan developed by CARE
- Pre-Award Letters (PALs) and sub-agreements drafted
- Liaised with Save the Children on Zomba office and CRS and PCI on vehicle transfers
- Tax exemption waiver obtained from Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development
- CARE HQ attended post-award orientation with FFP on November 6, 2019

USAID Rules and Regulations meeting held on November 5, 2019 in Lilongwe:

- Attendees: FFP Washington staff (virtually), USAID Mission staff, and representatives from the consortium partners
- Objective: to familiarize the consortium partners with USAID rules and regulations
- The Titukulane team presented the project design, and the meeting gave an opportunity for the consortium partners to meet the USAID Malawi staff who would be involved with Titukulane
- Main takeaways: must ensure coordination with other USAID-funded projects, such as REFRESH and *Tiwarere*, which are being implemented in the same districts as Titukulane

Kick-off workshop held on November 12-13, 2019 in Blantyre:

- Attended by FFP Washington, USAID Mission, consortium partners, and Government of Malawi (GoM) staff from the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA)

² Mangochi has 4 senior TAs, 6 TAs, and 3 Sub-TAs, while Zomba has 7 TAs and 4 sub-TAs.

- Familiarized team with how Titukulane fits into USAID's broader work in Malawi and how it aligns with government objectives
- FFP and Mission staff presented award requirements, financial management, reporting requirements
- Takeaways: ensure that resilience is integrated as a central part of the design; focus on priority pathways for each objective; work with government staff at all levels in a meaningful way from the onset; and coordinate closely with other USAID-funded projects (and other large-scale projects) to avoid duplication (ex: USAID health activities)

Theory of Change (ToC) orientation workshop (2-3 Dec 2019):

- Attended by new Titukulane staff from all consortium members and DoDMA officials
- Orientation on the Titukulane ToC and the Refine and Implement (R&I) model
- FFP Malawi presented WALA's final evaluation
- Workshop output: action plan of all work to be completed in preparation for the Gender, Youth and Social Dynamics (GYSD) workshop and the Refine and Implement (R&I) workshop in January 2020

Activity Planning

Develop Initial Environmental Examination (IEE): Titukulane has engaged Sun Mountain International (SMTN) as a technical partner to ensure that environmental risks are identified, avoided, monitored and mitigated. It is intended that the project will implement an IEE and develop an Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (EMMP) and Climate Risk Management (CRM) Screening in the first year. The resulting output of the field work will be an IEE including a detailed EMMP, CRM screening pursuant to ADS 201mal, and an Institutional Arrangement Plan (IAP), as required by the FY19 FFP Request For Application (RFA)-level IEE for Malawi.

Consortium partner's meetings and activities during the reporting period:

- Emmanuel International (EI): developing terms of reference for key staff, including Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Coordinator & Officers, Natural Resources Management (NRM) Coordinator, Administration Officer, Deputy Program Manager, Program Integration Officers, Field Facilitators, and Community Mobilisers.
- Save the Children (SCI), along with the other consortium partners, participated in the kickoff meeting in November 2019 and the ToC orientation in December 2019.
- WaterAid, along with other consortium partners, participated in meetings organized by CARE and was represented by Head of Programs and Head of Resource Mobilization and Grants.

Thematic meetings held by Titukulane team during the reporting period:

- *Social Accountability for the Malawi National Social Support Program (MNSSP) Survey Validation Workshop:* reviewed and discussed survey commissioned by the Poverty Reduction and Social Protection Division of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development

to assess the status quo of social accountability for the MNSSP to inform the development of a comprehensive social accountability framework for social protection programs in Malawi.

- *Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Technical Committee meeting*: the main objective was to provide updates and presentation of annual workplans for actors working on climate change and disaster risk management.

Monitoring Evaluation Adaptation and Learning (MEAL) activities and planning:

- CARE, IFPRI, and Save the Children have internally discussed issues relating to using Randomized Control Trials (RCTs) as part of the impact evaluation, particularly around randomization and identifying control groups
- Randomization will be finalized in the next quarter between CARE's technical expert and FFP's consultant from IPA

B. Program Management

Staffing

- Majority of senior Titukulane consortium positions recruited and hired this quarter, except for the Gender, Youth, and Social Dynamics Lead and the Social Behavior Change Lead, who joined in January 2020
- Recruitment for all program management positions completed, with start dates in January 2020, except for the Disaster Risk Reduction/Resilience Manager, who will begin April 2020
- Recruitment for operations staff (finance, logistics, administration) completed
- Remaining on-going recruitment: WaterAid's WASH Manager and Technical Specialist (interviews completed, and candidate shortlist created)

Office Set Up

Zomba Office	Mangochi Office
One-month delay in opening due to the need to identify office space that can host CARE, SCI, and other partners	Led by EI, office space has been identified, and all rooms are expected to be completed by March 2020; internet installation complete
SCI's current Zomba office was determined to be inadequate (size and security)	
Procurement of furniture in progress; procurement (but not delivery) of computers complete	

- The Zomba office was not opened on December 31, 2019 due to logistic challenges. The office was opened and operational by January 7, 2020

C. Partnerships, Collaboration and Linkages

- PALs for all partner organizations were signed, and sub-agreements were drafted and are under review
- CARE held an orientation meeting for partners on November 5-6, which covered key USAID regulations pertaining to sub-awards; a follow-up compliance workshop was scheduled for February 2020

- EI: district meetings and program workshops were conducted to introduce Titukulane to critical stakeholders in Mangochi
- IFPRI, SCI: participated in meetings and workshops with consortium partners
- WaterAid: met with USAID to discuss how WASH is structured within Titukulane and some of the key contextual issues that have informed our design

IV. Challenges and Lessons Learned

A. Challenges during this quarter

- The delay in the set-up of the Zomba office, as discussed above, due to the inability to use SCI's previous Zomba office
 - Response: Alternative office selected and is expected to be operational in January 2020
- While EI's M&E and NRM Coordinator are set to start in March 2020, according to the budget, their services are required urgently
- **Staffing and Recruitment**

Area of Focus	Challenge	Lessons Learned
Recruitment Process	The process was long and took a lot of time (from time of RFA to start up)	
	Finding suitable candidates – The jobs were advertised on the open market. Unfortunately for some key positions, none of the candidates that applied for the positions met the job requirements. CARE headhunted candidates who were interviewed for the positions. Some staff who were pre-identifies for key positions turned down the offers after the award.	CARE will use both methods from the start of the process. This will reduce the time it takes to finalize the recruitment process. CARE will have enough people on standby in case the preferred candidates turn down offers
	Overwhelming response from the job market. This was not a big challenge as CARE outsourced initial screening services. The main challenge was that this was not included in the initial recruitment budget	CARE to continue with this strategy, which expedited the selection process. CARE to ensure that this is included in the recruitment budget
Remuneration	Most externally hired candidates demanded more than what CARE indicated in the budget. This created pay equity challenges with existing staff and other staff for the project	CARE to review its salary scale to remain competitive.
Notice Period	Some externally hired staff required longer notice periods with their current employers. This somehow affected project startup	CARE will start the recruitment process much earlier. CARE also will have a budget provision to cover recruitment costs under such circumstances
Work Permits	Approval of Work Permits for International staff took longer to be approved than planned	CARE has very little control over this. Suggestion is to engage the Department of Immigration prior

		to the award of the contract to prepare them for any possible work permit applications.
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B. Lessons Learned

- Sharing the results of the WALA impact evaluation showed that WALA spread resources too thinly to enact transformational change. Titukulane will use the R&I period to identify the most meaningful pathways of change and conduct a robust sustainability analysis of each of the proposed interventions to foster greater sustainability in the design from the onset.
- Finalizing the sub-award agreements took longer than anticipated, in part due to delays in resolving partner queries. The lesson is to respond more quickly and have senior staff oversight.
- Headhunting for mid-level and senior positions should be combined with open recruitment from the start. The project initially focused on open recruitment (e.g. newspaper/online adverts) but failed in some cases to find suitable candidates. Next, CARE approached organizations and individuals within the team's networks and was able to find strong candidates.
- From EI: Final Evaluations of recently ended programs in Mangochi can provide Titukulane with insights into successes and failures of particular interventions.

V. Plans for Next Quarter

- *The Gender, Youth and Social Dynamics (GYSD) and Refine & Implement (R&I) Inception workshops:* These meetings aim to review the ToC and logical framework, to discuss the knowledge gaps and review remaining plans for the refinement year. In addition, the R&I meeting will identify and prioritize a set of research questions that will address the most important evidence and knowledge gaps in the DFSA's ToC. This will inform the learning agenda and research activities to be done in the refinement year and beyond.
- *MEAL planning:* incorporate the modification from GYSD and R&I Inception workshops in the ToC, work with IPA and FFP on the RCTs, and prepare for the M&E workshop that is scheduled for the last week of March 2020.
- *SMTN:* submission of the IEE with EMMP, CRM, and IAP annexes on February 4, 2020.
- In the next quarter, CARE plans to submit the Titukulane Work Plan, Scope of Work for RCT, Household Census, and the following research studies: gender; youth; market analysis; cost-benefit analysis; local capacity needs; Gender Vulnerability Capacity Assessment; Political Economy Analysis; Stakeholder Analysis; SBC formative research; and WASH feasibility study

VI. Annex I – List of Acronyms

CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere	MEO	Missions Environmental Officer
CC	Climate Change	M-CLIMES	Modernized Climate Information and EWS
CRM	Climate Risk Management	MNSSP	Malawi National Social Support Programme
CRS	Catholic Relief Services	NASFAM	National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi
COP	Chief of Party	NRM	Natural Resources Management
DRM	Disaster Risk Management	NRS	National Resilience Strategy
DFAP	Development Food Assistance Program	PCI	Project Concern International
DFSA	Development Food Security Assistance	RCT	Randomized Control Trials
DoDMA	Department of Disaster Management Affairs	R&I	Refine and Implement
EI	Emmanuel International	RMNCAH	Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health
EMMP	Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan	SCI	Save the Children International
EWS	Early Warning System	SMNT	Sun Mountain International
FFP	Food for Peace	TC	Technical Committee
GYSD	Gender, Youth and Social Dynamics	ToC	Theory of Change
IAP	Institutional Arrangement Plan	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination	WALA	Wellness and Agriculture for Life Advancement
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute		