USAID C4 COTTON PARTNERSHIP

BENIN ■ BURKINA FASO ■ CHAD ■ MALI

OVERVIEW
Cotton offers a special opportunity for increasing agricultural productivity, incomes and well-being for millions of farmers across West and Central Africa. The crop is grown in the region’s most favorable agro-ecological zones, providing an important economic foundation for an estimated 10 to 15 million West African smallholders. To help address the unique food production needs of cotton-producing households in the primary four cotton-producing countries (or “C-4”) in the region (Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali), the U.S. government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), awarded a Cooperative Agreement to the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC). Project implementation by IFDC is assisted by two partner organizations: Cultural Practice (CP) and the International Centre for development oriented Research in Agriculture (ICRA). The project is working to forge partnerships with a wide array of regional and national actors and stakeholders in the value chains for cotton and its rotational crops in the C-4, to leverage resources and scale-up the dissemination of technical packages produced by the project.

BACKGROUND
The USAID C4CP project capitalizes on previous investments made in the West African cotton sector from 2006-2013 through the West Africa Cotton Improvement Program (USAID WACIP), which was also implemented by IFDC. In 2014 USAID approved a new project to be implemented in the same C-4 countries addressing increased agricultural productivity, strengthening partnerships and increasing economic and social benefits for women. The USAID C4CP project assists smallholder farmers by: (1) strengthening regional platforms and stakeholder dialogue to support national processes and where possible, foster legal and administrative policies for national and regional fertilizer, seed and bio-safety regulations; (2) providing technical content for partners to develop and manage critical farmer-level teaching tools that reach both men and women; (3) developing and disseminating new technologies; (4) building the technical capacity of national agricultural research and extension services (NARES) to develop and deliver quality training; and (5) linking NARES to private sector farmer-based organizations for cotton and rotational crops.

PROJECT GOAL AND OBJECTIVES
USAID C4CP is a $14.8 million, four-year (2014-2018) project with the goal of improving food security in targeted zones of the C-4 countries. The strategic objective of the project is to increase the revenue of men and women producers, as well as cotton processors in targeted zones. The USAID C4CP project focuses on cotton and rotational crops including cereals and legumes. Given the essentially national context for cotton production and the regional context for food crops, the USAID C4CP project is strengthening capacity and building strategic partnerships to assist regional and national institutions in achieving their organizational objectives. Another important aspect of the project is to increase the economic and social benefits to women by conducting gender value chain analyses, developing gender responsive training materials, and delivering curricula for extension. This approach facilitates the effective dissemination of
protocols, thus insuring that messages will reach women farmers. The project has three objectives or intermediate results (IR) to facilitate the achievement of its strategic objective:

- **IR 1** – Support for increased agricultural productivity promoted through regional and national actors and stakeholders.
- **IR 2** – Partnerships supporting cotton sector development strengthened.
- **IR 3** – Social and economic empowerment of women producers and processors is enabled.

IR 1 is to be achieved through activities promoting the use of sustainable agricultural productivity technologies including post-harvest handling and improved ginning; IR 2 focuses on creating strategic regional partnerships and improving coordination of activities related to the cotton sector; while IR 3 focuses on enabling the effective participation of women in the cotton sector through training, sensitization and advocacy.

**LOCATIONS**
The project is being implemented in the cotton belt of the C-4 countries, which includes the southern portions of Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali as well as the northern and central portions of Benin. The project is managed from the IFDC office in Burkina Faso and is represented in each of the intervention countries by a National Coordinator. By working with regional partners, the project also expects to disseminate extension modules and other technical packages to additional cotton-producing countries in the region including Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana and Togo.

**KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS**
The project is being executed in collaboration with approximately 20 regional, national and sub-national implementing partners. The key project stakeholders include actors at every step in the cotton value chain from the regional to the national and local levels. The project is establishing and reinforcing linkages between each of these various levels throughout the value chain, which includes inputs suppliers, cotton producer and farmer associations, public and private extension and advisory service providers, research institutions, cotton companies, Ministries of Agriculture, ginners, inter-professional associations and cotton lint exporters. In FY16 the project will focus on working with regional partners, including the West African Economic and Monetary Union, the West and Central Africa Council for Agricultural Research and Development, the Network of Farmers’ and Agricultural Producers’ Organization of West Africa and the Permanent Interstates Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel.

**HIGHLIGHT OF ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

- **IR 1: Sustainable Agricultural Productivity**
  - Developed 7 gender-sensitive training modules on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and post-harvest technology; also organized and delivered two fora on GAP and PH technology.
  - Awarded small grants to 18 activity implementing partners in the C-4 countries to disseminate modules.
  - Designed and facilitated a regional training workshop on NUTMON soil testing software.
  - Organized two workshops for sub-grantees with a total of 50 participants.

- **IR 2: Strengthening of Partnerships Supporting Cotton Sector Development**
  - Creation and meetings of four project National Advisory Committees (one in each C-4 country).
  - Organized first meeting of the Regional Consultative Committee with 200 representatives in attendance.
  - Organized and delivered a regional workshop on soil fertility to 30 soil scientists.

- **IR 3: Economic and Social Benefits for Women**
  - Developed project gender strategy, gender-sensitive training guide and gender-sensitive training modules.
  - Conducted study on gender roles in the cotton value chain in each of the C-4 countries.
  - Inventoried women entrepreneurs in the C-4 countries.
  - Delivered training-of-trainers for 79 senior trainers (including 15 women) from the four project countries.
  - Established 22 women-only (or women dominated) demonstration farms in the C-4 countries.