

DIME-GAFSP First Quarterly Progress Report

February 24, 2012

The World Bank's Development Impact Evaluation Initiative (DIME) has been contracted to lead in-depth impact evaluations on a subset of GAFSP projects, commencing with Haiti, Rwanda, Mongolia, Bangladesh and Niger. These in-depth impact evaluations will be initiated from the beginning of the project, allowing one to make a robust assessment of the effectiveness of the project in contributing to the GAFSP goal, i.e. improvement of income and food security of poor peoples in the project country.

This progress report covers the work completed by the DIME team on GAFSP projects from October 2011 to February 15, 2012. The next progress report will be produced in July 2012, and will cover the period from February 12, 2012 to June 30, 2012.

Progress on Overall Project Objectives

As outlined in the DIME-GAFSP work plan, DIME was expected to make progress on the following objectives

1. The DIME-GAFSP Trust Fund was created in October 2011. Disbursement of a USD 300K start-up allowance was then made to help support the staffing activities. The remainder of the FY12 envelope was disbursed in November.
2. Staffing: As planned, DIME hired two staff members to lead the DIME evaluations of GAFSP projects. Daniel Stein was hired as an Economist (GF), and Maria Jones as a Research Analyst (ETC, GE). Both started the week of Nov 28, 2011.
3. Data Collection:
 - a. Design of protocols for data collection: DIME has decided to use electronic data collection for the GAFSP impact evaluations. A report on the technical specifications for hardware and software for the electronic data collection is currently in preparation and will be finalized by end February 2012.
 - b. Procurement of the identified survey equipment will start in March 2012.
 - c. Common measurement instruments are currently in preparation. A draft will be circulated to the GAFSP M&E team for comments by end February, and final drafts of the modules are expected by end March. Rwanda will be the first country to field test this instrument after adaptation.
4. Concept Notes Review: The initial work plan called for a joint concept note review of all five initial evaluation countries. The plan was that the individual concept notes would be aggregated into one large note and evaluated together. However, the country-specific sections of the concept note can only be finalized once there is a concrete evaluation plan for each country. This should happen by the end of FY2012 for Rwanda, Haiti and Mongolia. Therefore, a joint CN review will be organized in July 2012 for this set of countries, saving Niger and Bangladesh for another CN review meeting.

Given delays in project implementation (specifically the lack of an established PIU in Mongolia, Bangladesh, and Niger), project activities and disbursement have been lower than projected. However, in the following three months disbursement will pick up rapidly (mostly through the hiring of field coordinators).

From October 2011 to Feb 15, 2012, DIME has disbursed \$106,000 from the GAFSP trust fund.

Progress on Individual Country Evaluations

As outlined in the GAFSP-DIME work plan, the following activities were expected to be completed within FY2012 for each country:

1. Identification of lead researchers: The research team consists of at least one DIME economist, and sometimes includes outside experts from academia.
2. First follow-up mission: The purpose of this mission is for the DIME team to work with the country team to understand more about the project and formulate a preliminary plan for the impact evaluation. This is a follow-up to initial conversations which took place at the DIME-AADAPT workshop in Dakar in April, 2011.
3. Concept Note for each evaluation, to be compiled for a joint concept note review.
4. Hiring of a Field Coordinator in each Country: The field coordinator works closely with the government team to prepare the evaluation design and manage the surveys. The field coordinators have an office in the government ministry, and work closely with the government team to design the evaluation, building internal capacity.
5. Preparation of Sampling Frame: The sampling frame comes from the evaluation design, and determines which households will be surveyed.
6. Terms of reference for Data Collection: An open call for proposals is made for survey firms.
7. Procurement of baseline survey, where operationally sensible within FY 12
8. Baseline report: An initial report on the findings from the baseline survey. Note that this was not expected to be delivered in FY2012. In the country –specific reports below, there is not a line item on the baseline report. It will be completed around a month after the survey is completed and data is entered for each country.

Progress has been made on these milestones for each country. However, a number of operations are experiencing implementation delays. In addition, the first follow-up missions have, in all countries except for Rwanda, discovered that FY12 would likely not be the optimal timing for a baseline survey to go out. Hence, activities (6) and (7) will not be realistically completed by the end of FY2012. As mentioned in the work plan, some baselines might be contracted but not completed; in other cases, procurement will be pending. The following presents a detailed update country by country.

Rwanda

Progress on Rwanda is on track, and should conform to the initial work plan. A CN should be completed and a baseline survey procured by the end of FY2012.

1. The lead researchers from this project will be Florence Kondylis and Daniel Stein, both DIME economists.
2. A field coordinator, Jasmeen Batra, was placed in December 2011. She is sitting in the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAGRI), working with the project team on a day-to-day basis. She has been working closely with the government M+E staff, assisting them with integrating impact evaluation methodology into their processes.
3. The first follow-up mission took place from Jan 16-27, attended by DIME-GAFSP team members from DC [Florence Kondylis, Daniel Stein, and Maria Jones] as well as the local field coordinator, Jasmeen Batra. The team gave presentations on impact evaluation methodology, and worked closely with the technical teams to develop a preliminary impact evaluation plan.
4. A concept note is under production, and will be completed once the final details and operationalization of the impact evaluation are decided.
5. Progress was made during the mission on how to determine a sampling frame, and selection of sites for treatment and control groups is underway.
6. The TOR for survey firms will be completed by March 2012.
7. Potential survey firms have been identified, and the baseline survey will be procured through competitive bidding. We hope to begin with the survey in May/June 2012.

	FY12												FY13	
	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
First Phase Milestones / Deliverables														
Researcher Identified			■											
First Follow-Up Mission							■							
CN for IE drafted									■					
Field Coordinator Placed						■								
TOR for baseline issued									■					
CN for IE reviewed													■	
Baseline procured												■		
Baseline completed													■	■

Haiti

Impact evaluation of Haiti is progressing, but the impact evaluation cannot be firmly planned until a number of important implementation decisions are taken.

1. The lead researchers have been confirmed Daniel Stein, DIME economist, as well as Karen Macours and Jeremy Gignoux, faculty members at the Paris School of Economics who have experience with agricultural impact evaluations.
2. The first follow-up mission, consisting of Karen Macours, Jeremy Gignoux, and Daniel Stein, took place from December 5-10, 2011. During this mission, the team worked with the project implementation team from the Ministry of Agriculture to develop some preliminary impact evaluation ideas.

3. The CN will be finalized when more concrete decisions are made on the impact evaluation strategy, including agreeing upon an implementation strategy that provides for a suitable control group. This will be pushed forward with another mission in March 2012. [The project was officially launched in February 2012.]
4. A field coordinator has been identified, and will start working in April 2012.
5. The sampling frame will need to be determined once the evaluation plans are firmed up.
6. TORs for data collection will be prepared in March/April 2012.
7. Potential survey firms have been identified, and will be selected through competitive bidding. The survey is expected to begin in June 2012, subject to confirmation of the project implementation schedule.

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Baseline procured														■
Baseline completed														■

Mongolia

The project implementation unit for the Mongolia GAFSP project has yet to be established. This poses challenges in the finalization of the impact evaluation design, as decisions cannot be taken in the absence of a PIU.

1. The lead researcher has been confirmed as Daniel Stein, DIME economist.
2. The first follow-up mission, consisting of Daniel Stein and Maria Jones, took place from Jan 30-Feb 4, 2012. The team delivered training on impact evaluation methodology, and held working sessions with the M+E team on evaluation strategy. However, it was not possible to take specific decisions on evaluation design as the PIU has yet to be established. In addition, the project director from the Ministry of Agriculture could not take part in the mission meetings due to a concurrent government reshuffling.
3. A concept note will be completed once the evaluation strategy is solidified. This will likely only be possible after the establishment of the PIU, which should take place in early April 2012. A second follow-up mission will travel to Mongolia to finalize the plans thereafter.
4. A field coordinator (Aaron Szott) has been hired, and he will begin work shortly after the establishment of the PIU, likely April 2012.

5. The sampling frame will be established once the selection of the program areas is completed.
6. TORs for data collection will be completed by March 2012.
7. Potential survey firms have been contacted, and will be selected through competitive bidding. The baseline survey will likely take place after elections in July 2012. (It is necessary to start surveying after elections, which are June 2012.)

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Bangladesh

The PIUs in Bangladesh have yet to be established, and the TTL has requested that impact evaluation activities wait until there is a more established team on the ground.

1. The lead researchers are confirmed as Daniel Stein, DIME economist, and Mushfiq Mobarak, Bangladeshi researcher currently affiliated with Yale University.
2. The first follow-up mission will take place in May 2012.
3. A concept note will be written after the first follow-up mission.
4. Potential field coordinators are being interviewed. The field coordinator will be hired in March 2012 and should start his/her work in Bangladesh May-June 2012.
5. The sampling frame will be determined after the first follow-up mission.
6. TORs for data collection will be determined after the first follow-up mission.
7. Survey plans will be determined after the first follow-up mission.

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Baseline procured												■		■	
Baseline completed													■	■	■

Niger

The Niger project is still in early development, with a PIU yet to be established.

1. The lead researcher is yet to be determined, but we have established interest from a couple of candidates.
2. The first follow-up mission will take place in May 2012.
3. A concept note will be written after the first follow-up mission.
4. Potential field coordinators are being interviewed. The field coordinator will be hired in March 2012 and should relocate to Mongolia May-June 2012.
5. The sampling frame will be determined after the first follow-up mission.
6. TORs for data collection will determined after the first follow-up mission.
7. Survey plans will be determined after the first follow-up mission.

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