



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative



## Kpandai District RING Project Journal

### Summary of Efforts in Partnership with the Resiliency in Northern Ghana Project

Since 2014, the USAID-funded Resiliency in Northern Ghana (RING) Project has worked in partnership with Kpandai District Assembly to achieve a number of notable outcomes in the areas of agriculture, livelihoods, nutrition, good governance, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), all in an effort to sustainably reduce poverty and malnutrition throughout the district. The following pages contain a summary of those efforts, including key results achieved, successful areas of operations, lessons learned during implementation, and areas that the district has identified for continuation after the project closes in September 2019.

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Resiliency in Northern  
Ghana (RING) Project





## Glossary of Terms

AEA	Agriculture Extension Agent
APC	Anemia Prevention and Control
CAP	Community Action Plan
CHPS	Community-based Health Planning Services
CIYCF	Community-based Infant and Young Child Feeding
CLTS	Community Led Total Sanitation
CMAM	Community Management of Acute Malnutrition
CU5	Children Under Five
DHA	District Health Administration
DHMT	District Health Management Team
EHA	Environmental Health Assistant
ENA	Essential Nutrition Actions
FTF	Feed the Future
GHS	Ghana Health Services
GOG	Government of Ghana
IGF	Internally Generated Funds
LEAP	Livelihoods Empowerment Against Poverty
MMDA	Metropolitan, Municipal, District Assembly
MOGCSPP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MTDP	Medium Term Development Plan
MTMSG	Mother to Mother Support Group
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
NRCC	Northern Regional Coordinating Council
NRHD	Northern Regional Health Directorate
ODF	Open Defecation Free
OFSP	Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato
PIRS	Performance Indicator Reference Sheet
QI	Quality Improvement
RAD	Regional Agriculture Department
RDCD	Regional Department for Community Development
RDSW	Regional Department of Social Welfare
REHSU	Regional Environmental Health and Sanitation Unit
RING	Resiliency in Northern Ghana
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Associations
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index

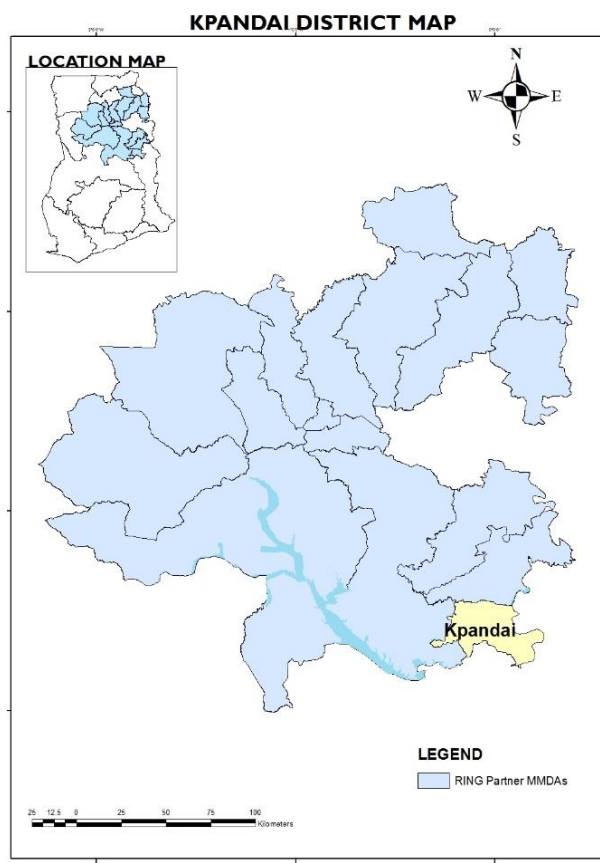
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## Overview of the RING Project

The Resiliency in Northern Ghana (RING) was a five-year integrated partnership under the Feed the Future (FTF) Initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), designed to contribute to the Government of Ghana's (GOG) efforts to sustainably reduce poverty and malnutrition. The project goal was to improve the livelihoods and nutritional status of vulnerable households in targeted communities in seventeen districts in northern Ghana. Consistent with USAID Local Solutions principles of direct support to host governments, RING was implemented through a collaborative approach with District Assemblies and seven departments of the Northern Regional Coordinating Council (NRCC), along with technical assistance from Global Communities. RING was designed to collectively contribute to the FTF goals of **decreasing stunting, wasting, underweight & anemia by 20% among women and children under five (CU5) and also increase incomes of at least 80% of target households.**

## District Overview & RING Partnership History



Kpandai is one of the 17 Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDA) that partnered with the RING project. The district comprises mainly rural communities, with large swaths of arable land. The average household size throughout the district is 7.1 (roughly 9.0% lower than the regional average of 7.8<sup>1</sup>) and there is a total population of approximately 135,000 people in the district's 245 communities<sup>2</sup>. People in this district typically engage in agriculture as their main source of income, with the primary crops being yam, cassava, maize, rice, and groundnut. The district has a poverty prevalence of 17.6%, with an average daily per capita expenditure of USD 5.24.

Since 2015, the district partnered with the RING project to reach over 7,600 people with a number of nutrition, agriculture, livelihoods, good governance, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions. These interventions were

<sup>1</sup>Ghana National Census, 2012

<sup>2</sup>Kpandai District Medium Term Development Plan (2014 – 2017)

### Cumulative Project Results

**1,733**

Communities Reached

**123,209**

Individuals Directly Benefiting

**GHS 108.6M/**

**US\$ 29.9M**

RING Direct Funding Support Allocated to 17 Partnering MMDAs and the NRCC

### Kpandai District Life of Project Results

**133**

Communities Reached

**7,679**

Individuals Directly Benefiting

**GHS 5.24M/**

**US\$ 1.44M**

RING Direct Funding Support Allocated to Kpandai District Assembly



based at the household, community, and sub-district level, and all worked cohesively toward reducing poverty and malnutrition in the most vulnerable households. The following pages summarize efforts under the project to date, along with qualitative analysis on lessons learned, challenges experienced and approaches used to overcome them, as well as next steps as the district looks toward the future and maintaining some of the positive outcomes realized during project partnership.

## Community & Household Selection Strategy

Communities and households benefitting from the RING Project were selected using a straightforward approach that included an exhaustive review of existing data at the Assembly on a number of areas, including:

- Potable water coverage;
- Household latrine coverage;
- Prevalence of infectious diseases among children under five (malaria, diarrhea, and acute respiratory infection);
- Accessibility to healthcare;
- Market accessibility; and
- Agriculture extension services received.

Once all data points had been included, communities were ranked according to how dire the situation was. For example, on a five-point scale, a community that showed 33% of their CUs had suffered from malaria in the last six months, compared to a community where only 11% of children had reported cases, the first community would have received more points. All data categories were considered for evaluation, but only those with complete data sets for all the communities in the district were included. This meant that all communities had an equal opportunity for inclusion in the project. However, due to funding limitations, a cap had to be placed on the number of communities to ensure that targeted households would adequately benefit from numerous interventions, as outlined in the strategic layering section below.

Once communities had been selected, household selection began. Per the project specifications, each household must have at least one woman of reproductive age (15-49) and one child under five, as these two groups were the most vulnerable to the health issues the project intended to reduce (anemia, stunting, wasting, and underweight). Per the community's standards, the households also had to be considered especially vulnerable (i.e. unable to provide three square meals a day, had limited access to land or farming inputs, state of the house structure was in poor condition, children were unable to attend school, etc.). Households were most often proposed by a group of trained community members or representatives, then Assembly staff engaged with the community and traditional authorities before validating the list of proposed households. Once this process was finalized, those households were the intended project beneficiaries over the next five years.

## Strategic Layering of Interventions

Poverty and malnutrition are complex topics and require a multi-faceted approach to address them at their root causes. As such, under RING, interventions were delivered by the Assembly at the individual, household, community, and sub-district level, looking at various aspects, including:

- Expansion of credit and savings access in rural households;
- Diversification of income streams;
- Accessibility and utilization of diverse foods;
- Improving key nutrition-behaviors, especially among women and young children;

- Improving key sanitation behaviors, especially among women and young children;
- Empowering local government institutions to identify and address the needs of the community (particularly those related to nutrition and livelihoods);
- Supporting communities through the process of identifying and addressing nutrition and livelihoods needs, as well as strengthening the communication channels between them and their local government offices; and
- Strengthening the capacity of the Assembly to monitor and evaluate development planning efforts.

With these broad objectives in mind, households and communities benefitting directly from RING efforts would, over time, receive multiple interventions from various technical areas, including agriculture, livelihoods, nutrition, WASH and good governance. By 2017, RING and the Assembly had identified the Village Savings and Loans Association, or VSLA, as a promising intervention upon which other activities could be appropriately layered. This was because VSLAs provided members with an option to take out a small loan to address an emergency need, rather than selling off an expensive asset, such as a small ruminant or several fowls. From there, other interventions, such as the Mother to Mother Support Groups (MTMSG), were added, enabling families, particularly women, the additional funds needed to purchase more nutritious foods or address healthcare needs in a timely manner, in line with best practices promoted during semi-weekly group sessions. This approach followed principles of strategic layering of interventions, ensuring that all direct beneficiaries were engaged in a number of complementary efforts that would build more resilient households. In Kpandai District Assembly, senior leadership took the strategic decision to layer MTMSGs and OFSP cultivation groups onto existing VSLAs, resulting in more effective community engagement and coordination of outreach efforts among the district implementation team.

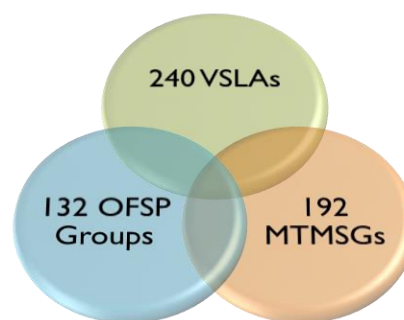


Figure 1 Summary of Strategic Layering of Interventions within Kpandai District

### Approach to Scaling Up Key Interventions

Throughout the course of implementation, district leadership and the RING technical team noted that several interventions had the potential to greatly benefit the population if they could be scaled up to cover all or the majority of partnering households. These were activities that the communities had shown high demand for, that the Assembly technical team had managed quite well over time, that fell in line with GOG priority areas related to the intervention, and had strong track records of addressing project goals of reducing poverty and malnutrition. VSLA was one such intervention, along with MTMSGs, the cultivation of orange fleshed sweet potatoes (OFSP) and a reduction in open defecation via the Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) activity.

Recognizing that to scale up activities effectively, the Assembly may require additional human resource support, leadership engaged with Global Communities RING on the matter, ultimately accepting assistance from several short-term consultants tasked with key areas in the implementation of CLTS, and VSLA and MTMSG formation and training. In doing so, all communities received VSLA support, 80.0% of those VSLAs were reached with MTMSG and 55.0% cultivated OFSP.

## Gender Integration Strategy

In rural northern Ghana, gender norms are quite rigid, with men generally expected to care for larger expenses related to the household, and women required to support the everyday family life, including caring for the children and feeding the family. Given RING's focus on improving malnutrition conditions within rural families, reaching women was a central priority. Through agriculture and livelihood activities, RING worked to increase the income accessibility of nutritious foods for the households. Nutrition activities achieved these by teaching women how to provide nutritious meals and access necessary health care services. Given that women are viewed as primarily responsible for the sanitation of the home (traditionally fetching water, cleaning and bathing the children), they were a key target for WASH interventions.

To further hone the impact of interventions toward gender-sensitive areas, RING activities utilized three key indicators within the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index, or the WEAI, to ensure that critical aspects were fully considered before the roll out of any intervention. These indicators included:

- Reducing women's time burden;
- Expanding women's social cohesion; and
- Increasing women's control over household assets and income.

In each activity the Assembly promoted under the RING Project, these areas were considered before they were introduced to communities. In some cases, during programmatic evaluations, original approaches were altered. For instance, cultivation of dry season leafy green vegetable gardens was eventually paired with manual and motorized water pumps as hauling water from a nearby source and manually watering the gardens proved to be quite cumbersome for women at times. Also, many community interventions, such as the Mother to Mother Support Group (MTMSG) are operated through small groups. By participating in the MTMSGs and VSLAs, for instance, women form closer bonds with one another, expanding their networks and increasing social resiliency. A pilot of the Father to Father Support Group (FTFSG) activity was also introduced to strengthen the men's role in the health and nutrition of the family as primary decision-makers and influencers. And lastly, small ruminants targeted women, but with strong community sensitizations involving the husbands explaining the benefits for the household and the men's their role to supporting their wives with the intervention.



Figure 2 Gender stakeholders undertaking a power mapping exercise to support lobbying efforts to receive gender funding

## Activity Planning & Reporting

The following pages include a number of interventions summarized to provide a big picture idea of what the Assembly was able to accomplish under its partnership with the RING Project. As mentioned above, the interventions focused on a number of levels for beneficiaries, including individuals, households, communities, and larger geographic areas, such as sub-districts or Area Councils.



Each activity was selected by the Assembly through a number of methods, including: analysis of GOG priority areas; utilization of data informing the most appropriate intervention based on the needs of the populace; and solicitation of community feedback on intervention preferences. USAID also provided an initial list of evidence-based interventions that the agency had supported implementation of globally and in Ghana, with positive results in the various thematic areas. The Assembly utilized this foundational list to identify a number of key interventions that fell in line with government and community priorities, as well as the needs of the people based on data in health and nutrition, sanitation, agriculture, and economic growth. Several times throughout the life of the RING Project, a number of MMDA and regional officials joined with Global Communities and USAID to conduct reviews of the existing menu of activities, eliminating those that had proven less effective during implementation, adjusting those with promise but facing challenges, and including new activities based on the changing local and national priorities. As a result, each year, the Assembly produced an action plan and budget which it successfully implemented over a 9 to 12-month period. In [Annex A](#), an example of the final iteration of the evidence-based activity menu can be found.

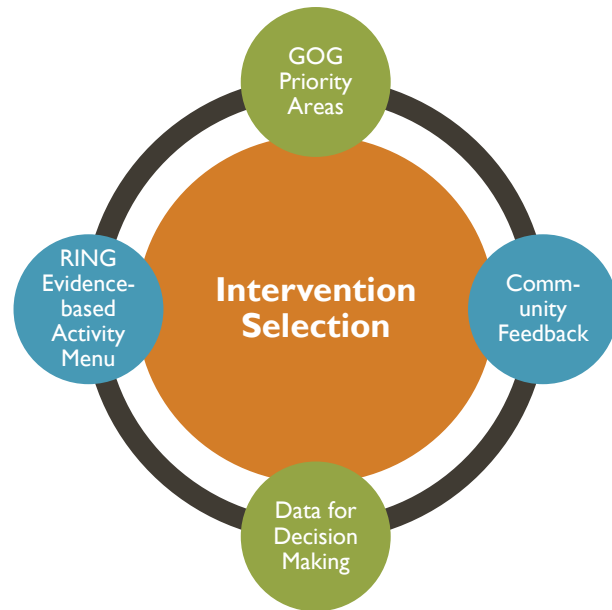


Figure 3 Priority areas for the Assembly during selection of interventions implemented via the RING Project

Throughout implementation, the Assembly was required to account for the funds spent as well as the programmatic outcomes of the interventions. This was done via quarterly and monthly liquidation and reconciliation reports, as well as semi-annual, then quarterly programmatic reports. Each round of reporting fell in line with the GOG requirements for financial and programmatic reporting and was required by USAID in order for the Assembly to continue to receive funds for implementation.

### Activities Implemented under RING Partnership

The following pages contain high level summaries of efforts undertaken by the district during the partnership with the USAID RING Project in agriculture & livelihoods, nutrition, WASH, and good governance. They contain the objectives of each intervention, how they were carried out, the officers involved in supporting those initiatives, the role of community members, and lessons learned throughout the process. In many cases, the Assembly has identified key areas of the interventions that it wishes to continue beyond the life of the project and those activities have been identified in the [Sustainability Strategy](#), which is included at the end of this document.

### Agriculture & Livelihoods Activity Overviews

Agriculture and Livelihoods interventions in the Kpandai District Assembly were geared towards strengthening the resiliency of households against social, environmental and economic shocks that disrupt the livelihoods of rural households. The Assembly strengthened women’s capacity in crop

diversification and alternative livelihoods opportunities. The prioritized crops women have been trained and coached on include soybeans, orange-fleshed sweet potato (OFSP), dry season leafy green vegetable (LGV) cultivation through gravity-fed drip irrigation, each of which fills a nutritional void found in carbohydrate-based staple crops, and complements customary agriculture efforts of northern Ghanaian women. The Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA), the small ruminant activity was also identified as alternative livelihoods interventions and extended to beneficiaries as part of building the resiliency of vulnerable households. VSLAs, which have enabled women to mobilize savings, have also provided access to credit to vulnerable women, enabling them to address pressing health and nutritional needs of their families, expand educational opportunities for their children, and engage in lucrative Income Generating Activities (IGAs). The following pages detail some of the outcomes of these efforts within the Assembly over the life of the project.

## Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA)

### *Village Savings and Loans Association Activity Summary*

*Training:* upon formation, each group was trained in the following areas: financial literacy, basic business management and entrepreneurial skills, VSLA mechanics, group dynamics, and conflict resolution. Upon completion of these trainings (which last between 2-4 days and were conducted at the community level), the women begin saving on a weekly basis.

*Follow-Up Support:* depending on the groups' progress, district facilitators met with a group over the course of a calendar year between 20-24 times; immediately following training and early in the group's life cycle, support was more intense – over time, the dependence on the facilitator waned and the group was able to meet on their own. Key events, such as loan taking, loan repayment, and share outs, were times when new groups needed more hands-on support.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* each group received monitoring support from facilitators over at least a two-year period, with some extending into three years, depending on the need. The ultimate goal is for each group to be able to carry out major milestones on their own, though the district still needs to meet with them periodically to pull savings and loans data for record keeping purposes.

Led by the Kpandai District's Department for Community Development, the district began Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) activity implementation in 2016. Since then, the 240 VSLAs formed across the 133 communities have operated consistently and, as a result, the 6218 members now have access to savings opportunities and credit to meet their pressing household food and income needs, or address economic shocks as they arise. To support activity implementation, the district led the formation of the groups and subsequent trainings, before the groups began meeting on a regular basis to save their own money, issue and repay loans, and conduct annual share out activities when members receive the full amount of money they had saved during the year. The district team also collects relevant savings and loans data for uploading into the global VSLA database, SAVIX (Savings Information Exchange platform).

During monitoring of the groups, the team proactively responds to challenges faced by the members. Given the RING Project's deliberate targeting of the most vulnerable households, many members struggle with literacy and numeracy, making record keeping quite difficult at times. Through consistent coaching, however, these issues have largely been addressed, though sporadic support is still required. The table below provides a year by year performance summary for Kpandai District's VSLAs supported through the RING Project.

Table 1: Performance of District VSLA Efforts (in Ghana Cedis)

Year	# of Comm' ties	# of Groups	# of Members	Amount Saved	Amount Loaned	Total Asset (loan interest + social fund)	Share Out Figures		
							Amount	# of Groups	# of Members
2019	4	5	124	27310	12500	35313	N/A	N/A	N/A
2018	29	64	1655	293354	55700	398829	133912	19	560
2017	85	137	3565	695984	206750	808141	617356	129	3397

Year	# of Comm'ties	# of Groups	# of Members	Amount Saved	Amount Loaned	Total Asset (loan interest + social fund)	Share Out Figures		
							Amount	# of Groups	# of Members
2016	15	34	874	185087	188566	298359	12032	5	148
<b>Totals</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>6218</b>	<b>1201735</b>	<b>463516</b>	<b>1540642</b>	<b>763300</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>4105</b>

Over the life of the RING project, the 240 groups formed saved a cumulative total of GHS 1.57M and loaned over GHS 463516, with an average of GHS 247 in total assets released to each member over the life of the project. These savings and loans often went to address healthcare needs for the family, provided funds for school fees, or gave women the necessary capital to set up a small business to earn additional income. Additionally, all VSLAs have been savings consistently due to the regular visits made by the district implementation team and the quality of financial literacy education provided. General performance analysis of these VSLAs indicates that all groups meet an acceptable health determination (i.e. high meeting attendance rates, excellent knowledge of saving amounts by members, and generally good enforcement of VSLA rules) and show promising signs for sustainability).

One key lesson learned during VSLA implementation was that implementation requires working with all the structures at the community level, including chiefs, opinion leaders, and community volunteers. When community participatory action learning tools are employed during community mobilization and sensitization, formation of functional VSLA groups becomes a collective responsibility of the community and key stakeholders and not the district team that introduced the concept to them.

One key step taken by the district to ensure the sustainability of VSLA implementation is to embark upon integrated community monitoring. This ensures that all activities implemented in these communities are monitored as resources will be put into judicious use. As field officers undertake community level visits, they will be encouraged by their Head of Department to follow up on a number of activities, such as Mother to Mother Support Group progress and Community Led Total Sanitation implementation, while also collecting the VSLA data. Upon return to the Assembly, this information would be shared with the appropriate district technical department for further action. There are a number of other areas related to VSLA that the district intends to sustain, which can be found in the [Sustainability Strategy](#) within this document.

## Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato Cultivation

### Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato Activity Summary

*Training:* women (along with their husbands) received basic training on land preparation (ridging), planting, field care, land maintenance, harvesting, and storage. Storage training included hands-on demonstrations on building boxes from clay, which are lined with sand. In this box, the tuber can be stored safely for up to two-three months. Each successful harvest was accompanied by a utilization training, emphasizing the nutritional content of the food and how it can be incorporated into traditional meals suitable for various members of the households, particularly children under five. District staff carried out this training, with facilitators comprising agriculture, nutrition, and environmental health staff to emphasize the importance of sanitation and hygiene during food preparation and before feeding.

*Follow-Up Support:* all households received regular monitoring from the district throughout the farming season, ensuring they were adhering to best practices and checking for any abnormalities in plant growth.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* each household is directly supported over the course of three years. During the first year, they receive technical training, OFSP vines, and farming tools (boots, cutlasses, hoes, etc.). During the second year, they receive only the vines. During the third year, all input donations cease and the households are linked to vine multiplication sites and farmers where they can purchase vines or draw from their own source that they have preserved from the previous year. Every year, all communities receive periodic monitoring from district agricultural staff, including prompting for timely weeding, observations on tuber growth and observations for pest infestations.

Orange Fleshed Sweet Potato (OFSP) cultivation started under the RING project in the Kpandai Assembly in 2015. This intervention was systematically scaled up in the district upon consultation with the other 17 RING implementing MMDAs following the promising results of the 2015 pilot. Initially, this intervention was carried out with individual beneficiaries, but, over time, the district layered the intervention onto the VSLAs. Each group was provided with 7,000 vines to cultivate for that season and was encouraged to engage in the block farming approach to reduce the level of effort required for extension services and harvesting support.

With the support of the University for Development Studies (UDS), Kpandai established a Decentralized Vine Multiplication site to build local capacity in vine multiplication, ensuring more households have access to vines and reducing challenges related to transportation of vines across the region from the UDS mother site. District staff were also fully trained on OFSP production from start to finish to support their facilitation of future trainings with interested farmers.

Over the lifetime of the project, the district engaged 69 communities and 3,642 farmers to cultivate 92 acres of land. Over 1.18M vines were distributed through this effort. Subsequently, 227.85 MT of OFSP roots were harvested, an average of 2.47 MT per acre. The table below provides a year by year performance summary for Kpandai OFSP efforts throughout the RING Project.

Table 2 District OFSP Performance Summary

LOP Totals	# Comm'ties	# of Farmers	Quantity of Vines Distributed	# of Acres Cultivated	Qty Harvested (KG)	Average Yield/ Acre (KG)
	69	3,642	1,778,949	92	227,852	2,468.60

In comparison to other RING districts also cultivating OFSP, the district fared well, resulting in a 49.9 % higher yield per acre average, compared to the other districts' 1.77MT per acre. Yield per acre varied from year to year, with the best performing years being 2015, 2016 and 2018. A number of factors accounted for these good yields performance. These include adequate rainfall, intensive and consistent technical supervisory support provided to beneficiaries by the OFSP implementing team and adherence to good agronomic practices by beneficiaries. But for the erratic rainfall patterns experienced beneficiaries will have been able to meet the regional average per acre. Establishment of district-level DVMs should ease the challenges associated with vine transportation.

During this experience, the Kpandai District Assembly has noted several lessons learned to support continued successful cultivation of OFSP. These include:

- Strengthening local capacity in the supply of vines is critical to ensuring timely supply of quality vines and reducing the logistical nightmare of distributing vines to communities;
- Access to land preparation services in timely manner is essential for timely planting;
- Timely extension services covering land management, production, harvesting, utilization and storage greatly benefits partnering households and has an impact on their overall yields; and
- Frequent monitoring during the season results in more proactive efforts by the farmers and ensures best practices are adhered to.

Based on the modest gains made in getting communities to accept the intervention under RING, the following key areas have been identified by the Assembly to continue after the close of the project, including provision of extension services and facilitate access to vines through the continued linkages between VSLAs and DVM sales agents. For more information on the upcoming plans, please review the district's [Sustainability Strategy](#) found at the end of the document.

## Soybeans Cultivation

### Soybean Activity Summary

*Activity Purpose:* soybeans are a nutrient rich crop that, although not native to northern Ghana, have become quite prevalent in the past decade, emerging into a cash crop. Throughout its evolution, women have had a majority, or equal footing when it comes to soybean cultivation, due to the low labor intensity for field management and harvesting, cleaning and storage. The bean itself is also a versatile and nutritious addition to the local diet; the flour can be easily incorporated into a number of traditional meals and the leaf, when fresh, can be added to a variety of stews. For these reasons, soybean cultivation was prioritized over the life of the RING project as one method of diversifying household diets with nutrient-rich foods.

*Training:* as with all crop cultivation activities, households received basic training on land preparation, planting, field care, land maintenance, harvesting, and storage. Storage training for soybeans included the promotion of the Purdue Improved Cowpea Storage (PICS) sacks, which are proven to reduce post-harvest losses due to spoilage or pest infestation. Storage training also emphasized proper drying and cleaning of the seeds before putting them into the PICS sacks. Utilization trainings were facilitated by agriculture, nutrition and sanitation staff from the district, each emphasizing crop diversification, nutritional impact from consumption, and the importance of hygiene during food preparation, respectively. Trainings were spread over time to take place at the appropriate moment during the agricultural cycle (i.e. planting, then maintenance, then harvesting).

*Follow-Up Support:* all households received regular monitoring from the district throughout the farming season, ensuring they are adhering to best practices and checking for any abnormalities in plant growth.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* each partnering household was directly supported over the course of three years. During the first year, they received technical training, farming inputs, such as seeds and plowing support, and farming tools (boots, cutlasses, hoes, PICS sacks, etc.). During the second year, they received only the seeds and plowing services. During the third year, all input donations ceased and the household is successfully linked to the market in which they can purchase their own seeds. Every year, all households receive periodic monitoring from district Agriculture Extension Agents (AEA).

Soybean cultivation began under the RING project in the district in 2015. Initially, the district opted to plant on one-acre-plots to ensure the participating women a greater opportunity for larger yields. However, over time, the district realized that the time burden associated with cultivation and ultimately management of a one-acre plot (in addition to other farming and household duties) was adversely affecting yield performance. Additionally, the district realized the nature of soils and weather patterns affected yields significantly. In 2016, after consultation with the Regional Agriculture Department (RAD) and the Global Communities RING technical team, the Assembly opted to shift to a half-acre cultivation support approach to ensure that women could effectively adhere to the best practices in field management, particularly timely weeding efforts, and also reduced focus on soybeans to get more beneficiaries to cultivate groundnuts.

Over the lifetime of the project, Kpandai engaged 77 communities and 832 farmers to cultivate 1,353.5 acres of land. This resulted in a total of 261MT harvested, an average of 193 kg/acre.

Table 3 District Soybeans Performance Summary

LOP	# Comm'ties	# of Farmers	# of Acres Cultivated	Qty Harvested (KG)	Average Yield/ Acre (KG)
Totals	77	832	1,353.5	261,114	193

Though the results fell short of the 772 kg per acre average of the Northern Region<sup>3</sup>, one must consider that, under RING, households were not encouraged to use chemicals such as fertilizer or pesticides. This was both due to costs and potential hazards associated with inadvertent misapplication and was in compliance with USAID guidelines on the matter. To achieve these results, the district engaged routinely with households throughout the season, ensuring best farming practices were followed. As with the OFSP, erratic rainfall patterns persisted throughout the life of the project, the peculiar climatic

<sup>3</sup> Source: Northern Regional Agriculture Department (RAD) 2017 harvest data



conditions and nature of soils in the district as well as some administrative delays experienced in obtaining approval from USAID to purchase restricted agricultural commodities with US government funds.

In the Assembly’s experience working with the communities to provide direct support with soybeans, tractor plowing services, guidance on land management and harvesting and storage, the Agriculture Team has taken note of several lessons learning, including:

- The need to assess the performance of an intervention according to district specific contexts and to make adjustment for an intervention that yields good results for beneficiaries
- Preparation for the upcoming farming season must be done in a timely manner – this includes identification of seed suppliers and tractor service suppliers;
- Proper community sensitization must be carried out before undertaking any sort of agriculture intervention at the community level; and
- Frequent supervisory monitoring of beneficiary fields should be undertaken throughout the season to ensure households are adhering to best practices (particularly timely weeding, to be done twice during the growing season).

## Groundnuts Cultivation

### Groundnuts Activity Summary

*Training:* groundnut households receive the standard trainings on land preparation, planting, field care, land maintenance, harvesting, and storage, including an emphasis on aflatoxin reduction. Storage training for groundnuts includes promotion of the Purdue Improved Cowpea Storage (PICS) sacks, which are proven to reduce post-harvest losses due to spoilage or pest infestation. It also emphasizes proper drying and cleaning of the seeds before storage. Trainings are spread out to occur at the appropriate period in the agricultural cycle (i.e. planting, then maintenance, then harvesting).

*Follow-Up Support:* all households receive regular monitoring from the district throughout the farming season, ensuring they are adhering to best practices and checking for any abnormalities in plant growth.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* each household is directly supported over the course of three years. During the first year, they receive technical training, farming inputs, such as seeds and plowing support, and farming tools (boots, cutlasses, hoes, PICS sacks, etc.). During the second year, they receive only the seeds and plowing services. During the third year, all inputs donations cease and the household is successfully linked to the market in which they can purchase their own seeds. Every year, all households receive periodic monitoring.

Groundnut cultivation began under the RING project in the district in 2016. The overall approach to groundnuts was the same as soybeans, but included more emphasis on post-harvest handling, including cleaning and storage, to reduce the prevalence of harmful aflatoxins and mycotoxins, two categories of contaminants linked to stunting and other nutrition-related illnesses).

Over the lifetime of the project, Kpandai engaged 30 communities and 604 farmers to cultivate 312 acres of land. This resulted in a total of 66.5 MT harvested, an average of 213.14 kg/acre.

Table 4 District Groundnuts Performance Summary

Year	# Comm'ties	# of Farmers	# of Acres Cultivated	Qty Harvested (KG)	Average Yield/ Acre (KG)
2017	26	502	201	59,059	226.28
2016	4	102	51	7,440	146
<b>Totals</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>66,499</b>	<b>213.14</b>

Though results fell short of the 700 kg per acre average of the Northern Region<sup>4</sup>, one must consider that, under RING, households were not encouraged to use chemicals such as fertilizer or pesticides. This was both due to costs and potential hazards associated with inadvertent misapplication and was in compliance with USAID guidelines on the matter. To achieve these results, the district engaged routinely with households throughout the season, ensuring best farming practices were followed. As with the soybeans and OFSP, erratic rainfall patterns persisted throughout the life of the project as well as some administrative delays experienced in obtaining approval from USAID to purchase restricted agricultural commodities with US government funds.

In the Assembly's experience working with the communities to provide direct support with groundnuts, tractor plowing services, guidance on land management and harvesting and storage, the Agriculture Team has taken note of several lessons learning, including:

- Preparation for the upcoming farming season must be done in a timely manner – this includes identification of seed suppliers and tractor service suppliers;
- Proper community sensitization must be carried out before undertaking any sort of agriculture intervention at the community level; and
- Frequent supervisory monitoring of beneficiary fields should be undertaken throughout the season to ensure households are adhering to best practices (particularly timely weeding, to be done twice during the growing season).

Based on the outcome of efforts under the partnership with RING, the Assembly has identified a number of key areas it wishes to continue after the close of the project, including continued provision of extension services, continued promotion of Groundnut cultivation with emphasis on aflatoxin reduction and integrated soil fertility management, continued linkages with tractor service providers and community farming groups, and linkages between farmers and improved seed suppliers to ensure quality planting materials are available in rural localities. For more information on the upcoming plans, please review the district's [Sustainability Strategy](#) found at the end of the document.

## Dry Season Leafy Green Vegetable Cultivation with Drip Irrigation

### *Leafy Green Vegetables with Drip Irrigation Activity Summary*

*Training:* training for LGV cultivation focused on the mechanics of the drip irrigation system set up and maintenance for a 1,000 square meter garden plot rather than cultivation of vegetables as those promoted under the activity are indigenous and the women are already well-versed in their planting and care from experiences during the rainy season. Plots were placed near a reliable year-round water source and outfitted with the simple and reliable gravity-fed drip irrigation system. Before planting, the drip kit suppliers and area mechanics conducted on-site installation and maintenance training for the women's groups, including setting up the lines, plant spacing, how to use the water pump, and basic trouble-shooting.

*Follow-Up Support:* district staff provided regular monitoring support to the women and gather data surrounding consumption and sales of harvests.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* after the initial distribution of the drip irrigation systems (including seeds and farming tools), the districts maintained their monitoring support for a period of 2-3 years. Each group was supported with VSLA as well, enabling the women access to cash needed to maintain the low-cost drip irrigation kits. Because the suppliers did the installation and training, the women have market relationships with the firms that can help them maintain their drip systems over time.

The district began the cultivation of dry season leafy green vegetable cultivation in 2016. The interest was based on positive feedback from other districts that began the effort in 2015. Due to year-round water needs, the district targeted communities with a reliable water source to enable cultivate deep into the dry season. The overall purpose of the intervention was to provide women and their families with

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Northern Regional Agriculture Department (RAD) 2017 harvest data

nutritious foods during a particularly scarce period of the year, as well as extra income from the sales of surplus plots. To ensure the effective management of the drip irrigation kits, the DAD AEAs, with support from community Area Mechanics, trained women in the utilization of drip systems, land preparation and care and management of small sized vegetable plots. To create opportunities for men's involvement in the activity to reduce the workload on women, community members were sensitized to support the women in the erection of fences, pumping of water, and land preparation.

Over the life of the project, Kpandai District Assembly engaged 19 communities and 1,135 farmers with support to install 86 drip irrigation kits. This resulted in 34 acres of land under cultivation and ultimately more than 7,417 kgs of greens harvested. The average performance reflected 220.15 kg harvested per acre, which was a bit low in comparison to the 564 kg/acre averaged by other RING districts undertaking the intervention. This can be attributed to late starts in implementation and water bodies drying up earlier in the dry season than expected.

Overall, women engaged in the intervention were quite enthusiastic about the effort. Over the life of the project, households consumed over 4,092 kgs of leafy green vegetables and sold 3,325 kgs, resulting in profits for GHS 6,791. In addition to the money made by the farmers themselves, they also provided a great resource to other families who may not have otherwise had access to leafy greens, such as *biraa*, *aleefu*, and *ayoyo*, during this part of the year.

Table 5 District LGV Performance Summary

Year	# Comm'ties	# of Farmers	# Kits Installed	# of Acres Cultivated	Qty Harvested (KG)	Qty Consumed (KG)	Qty Sold (KG)	Profits (GHs)
2019	7	185	2	0.34	601	184	412	2,000
2018	4	535	44	22.1	5,990	3,470	2,520	4,000
2017	7	385	40	11	774	418	356	-
2016	1	30	-	0.25	54	20	32	224
<b>Totals</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1,135</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>33.69</b>	<b>7,417</b>	<b>4,092</b>	<b>3,325</b>	<b>6,791</b>

In the Assembly's experience working with the communities to support dry season cultivation through drip irrigation, a number of lessons learned have been noted, including:

- Undertaking LGV cultivation during the dry season provides an opportunity for women to diversify their livelihoods and expand their income base
- Access to spare parts for drip kits is imperative, necessitating linkages between the groups and parts vendors;
- Timely re-installation of kits from year to year drastically affects the yields and potential number of harvests each season; and
- Frequent check-ins with community groups must be undertaken throughout the season to ensure that households are abiding by best practices; and
- Involvement of men is very critical if women beneficiaries are to maximize yields from their gardens.

Based on the modest gains made from the efforts under RING, the Assembly has identified a number of key areas it wishes to continue after the close of the project, including continued provision of extension services to help women's groups during kit reinstallation, supporting LGV cultivation groups to access drip irrigation kits and parts from private sector actors, facilitate access to quality seeds for groups and supportive technical monitoring visits. For more information on the upcoming plans, please review the district's [Sustainability Strategy](#) found at the end of the document.

## Small Ruminant Rearing

### Small Ruminants Activity Summary

**Training:** training topics covered animal housing, supplementary feeding, and disease control and recognition. District staff carried out the training at the community level with households, then covered a much more in-depth level of information with Community Livestock Workers, especially in providing basic medical care to animals (i.e. wound treatment, closed castration, deworming).

**Follow-Up Support:** households were monitored regularly after receiving the animals, particularly in the two months immediately following distribution. CLWs also supported households with basic medical care, and alerted district officials if there were any emerging health issues or concerns. General monitoring was intense during the first four months following distribution, then tapered off to gradual interaction, generally to monitor lambing, mortality and sales data.

**Phase-Out Strategy:** each household received a one-time donation of three female animals. After receipt of the animals, the district provided general monitoring support over the course of 2-3 years, upon which time, the household should have successfully established a small herd of sheep and could maintain the animals on their own.

The Kpandai Assembly began implementation of the small ruminant intervention in 2015 with the aim of diversifying household income streams and creating an asset cushion during times of need. The district's strategy in engaging women centered on strengthening their capacity to effectively care for the animals, typically considered part of the male domain in northern Ghana, to ultimately benefit their families. Community Livestock Workers (CLW) were also trained by the district to provide a local level of basic animal husbandry support to participating families, as well as to assist the Assembly in gathering critical data on herd performance.

Over the lifetime of the project, the Assembly engaged 48 communities and 1,092 women in the provision of 3,131 small ruminants (this included ewes to each household and a number of healthy rams for each CLW). Of those provided, households reported selling 2% of the animals to address pressing household needs and cushioning families against external shocks, such as crop losses from bad weather, and the educational and health needs of families. Lambing rates were an appreciable 90 %, while mortality rates were 16%, representing a 151% increase in herd size. The Assembly performed very well in comparison to other RING partnering MMDAs, which averaged a 9% herd growth

over the life of the project. This performance is attributable to routine monitoring services provided by the Assembly, regular treatment of the animals for minor diseases and injuries, strict adherence to supplementary feeding and watering needs by the beneficiary households, and timely engagement of district veterinary services by the CLWs. Despite this, there were challenges with deaths caused by vehicle collisions, consumption of litter, and seasonal illnesses that prevented the district from reaching its full potential with this intervention. To curtail the levels of mortalities or missing animals, DAD Vet Officers have made sure that beneficiaries are sensitized on properly housing and treatment of animals are prioritized while construction of animal housing over the past 2 years became a condition for the receipt of animals.

### District Performance Summary

Since 2015:

- 48 communities reached
- 1,092 farmers supported
- 3,131 sheep distributed
- 90% lambing rate
- 16% mortalities
- 2% sold
- 151% increase in herd size

Table 6 District Small Ruminants Performance Summary

LOP Totals	Communities Reached	Households Supported	Animals Supplied
	48	1,092	3,131

In the Assembly's experience with the communities in providing support in management and care of small ruminants, the District Agriculture Team has taken note of several lessons learned including:

- Establishing strict protocols for intake, quarantine, and distribution of animals is key to reducing mortalities and ensuring that quality animals are distributed to households;
- CLW support is essential for improved management of livestock at the community level; and
- Ensuring beneficiaries of small ruminant distributions are members of VSLAs reduces the tendency for members to sell off animals prematurely in order to meet a pressing need – providing an alternative for a small amount of credit can prevent the decimation of a herd before it can grow.

Based on the small ruminant efforts under RING, the Assembly has identified a number of key areas it wishes to continue after the close of the project, including continued provision of extension and supervision services and treatment and vaccination of existing stocks in small ruminant communities. For more information on the upcoming plans, please review the district's [Sustainability Strategy](#) found at the end of the document.

## Nutrition Activity Overviews

Through the Assembly's partnership with the RING Project, the Kpandai District carried out a number of nutrition specific and nutrition sensitive activities at the district, sub-district, and community levels. Different strategies, such as capacity building, supportive supervision visits, and close engagement with the communities via Community Health Volunteers (CHV) and support groups, among others, were employed for the successful implementation of the activities toward maximum impact of changing behavior positively for improved nutrition and health. Through a strategic partnership with RING during implementation of key activities that fall along the continuum of care in strengthening health service delivery, the Kpandai District has contributed toward national goals of reducing malnutrition. The following curricula and approaches were utilized by the District Health Management Team (DHMT) to ensure integration and effective support and partnership with Ghana Health Services (GHS):

- Community-based Infant and young child feeding (CIYCF), which harnessed cascading trainings from health workers (HW) to CHVs and other community support groups.
- Community based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) trainings and follow-up visits also built capacities of both health staff and CHVs and provided platforms for community based case searches and counseling, ensuring that knowledge and skills on appropriate feeding practices exist at the community level.
- Anemia Prevention and Control (APC) for both HWs and CHVs through capacity building efforts augmented by technical support visits is another strategy used.
- Health worker trainings in Data Utilization, outreach planning, Logistics and Commodity Management and Quality Improvement (QI) leveraged on existing partnerships to expand upon and improve the use of data for decision making, as well as district nutrition indicators.
- Other community level activities targeted at leaders and groups with a focus on building community level structures to sustain gains made by the project, including: Stunting Advocacy Video (SAV) screenings, Father-to-Father Support Groups (FTFSG), Mother-to-Mother Support Groups (MTMSG), cooking demonstrations and integrated durbars.
- Utilization of a multi-sectoral approach to improving nutrition by building the capacity of School Health Education Promotion (SHEP) Teachers, Traditional Birth Attendants (TBA), and



Environmental Health Officers and Agriculture Extension Agents on integrating Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) into their routine activities.

These activities provided health staff, community leaders and caregivers with knowledge of optimal health and nutrition practices while providing motivation and support for families to adopt those practices. These activities are aimed at reducing the effects of food shortages and enhancing community capacity to restore livelihoods and improve nutritional status. The figures below summarize capacity building efforts in the above-mentioned areas undertaken through RING partnership since 2015.

Kpandai	CMAM	CIYCF	ANEMIA	MTMSG Facilitators	#MTMSG LOP	FTFSG-HW	ENA	SAV Lessons	SAV-Dissemination	Commodity Mngt.	Outreach PI.	Data U	QI	Integrated Comm. Eng
HW	62	57	83			5		44		65	82	51	65	
CHV	165	139	148			5								
Non-HW/ Participants				438	192	15	192		1592					23136

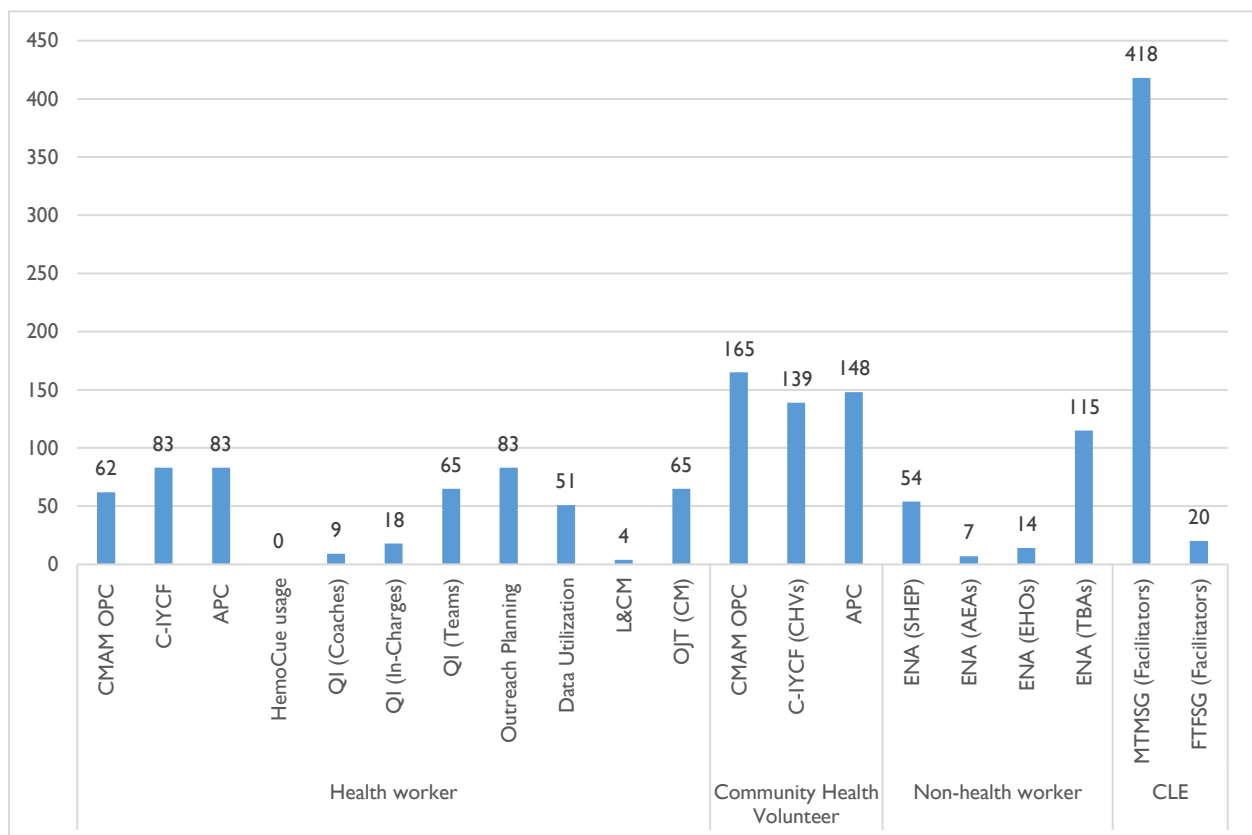


Figure 4 Health Worker and CHV Capacity Building Efforts Summary over RING LOP

## Capacity Building for Health Workers

**CMAM:** RING provided support for the Kpandai DHMT to conduct health staff training on CMAM to improve the screening and treatment of children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM). All health facilities and all strategic facility staff in the district were covered through effective targeting of health

professionals who come into contact with children under 5 years (CU5). In all, 62(59.6%) HWs were targeted and trained. The CMAM OPC training programme has tremendously improved the situation of SAM management in the district, as currently, nearly all health facilities actively search for SAM cases during their routine static and outreach clinics. Per the District Health Information Management System (DHIMS) and district annual reports, this has led to an increase in CMAM case load from 16 in 2014, to 58 in 2018, while defaulter rates decreased from 40% in 2014 to 14% in 2018. This achievement is largely attributed to the capacity building support provided to health workers.

**C-IYCF:** The District Health Directorate, with support from RING, prioritized building capacity of HWs in C-IYCF to promote nutrition best practices, improve counselling, and prevent malnutrition among the First 1000 Days population. Fifty-seven (57) HWs were targeted and trained, representing 79.8% of key staff in the District. The C-IYCF training programme has tremendously improved IYCF activities in the district. Almost all health facilities routinely provide targeted counselling during child welfare and antenatal clinics (CWC and ANC), records of which are found in the IYCF registers. The number of pregnant women and mothers with children under 2 years triaged for counseling has significantly increased which could partly have contributed to the reduction in number of children with underweight (weight-for-age indicator) in the district. DHIMS data indicated that underweight amongst CU5s also reduced from 20.2% in 2014 to 2.4% in 2018.

**APC:** Training on anemia prevention and control was conducted to augment health worker efforts in improving anemia testing and counselling support for pregnant women. A total of 83(79.8%) health workers have been trained on the APC curriculum. RING supported the District with HemoCue devices and testing strips and trained staff on its use to improve the general testing capacity of the district. As a result, APC efforts have significantly improved in the District. About 80% of critical HWs have been trained on the curriculum and provide critical services in the areas of antenatal care, postnatal care, growth monitoring, and counseling to community members at both static and outreach clinics. This has led an increase in hemoglobin testing for pregnant women from 35% in 2014 to 66% in 2018, per district annual reports and the DHIMS.

**ENA:** Over the period, GHS, with RING support, has used a multi-sectoral approach to improve nutrition at the district level by integrating appropriate nutrition messages (using ENA curricula) into various decentralized departments (Agriculture, Environmental Health, Community Development, and Ghana Education Service) that conduct nutrition sensitive activities. A total of 192 non-health workers, including School Health Education Programme (SHEP) Teachers, Environmental Health Officers (EHO), Agriculture Extension Agents (AEA), and Community Development and Social Welfare Officers were trained, respectively, to disseminate nutrition messages at their various levels of programming. The training of the non-health workers on the ENA built their skills and competencies to disseminate the key messages during their routine activities. Follow-up monitoring reports from the District suggest community members were engaged effectively through those officers' routine outreach and, because of that, some have become community change agents and continuously help to influence behavior positively.

## Capacity Building for Community Health Volunteers

CHVs provide a direct link from health service providers to the community and play an essential role in promoting nutrition and other health related issues at the community level. Kpandai District continued to make use of this interplay with support from the RING and trained a total of 165 (41.0%) CHVs on CMAM, 139 (35.5%) on CIYCF, and 148 (36.8%) on APC; these CHVs represented 300 total communities. These capacity building efforts equipped CHVs to better integrate essential messages into MTMSG discussions and community home visits. CHVs are now able to better support HWs during outreach services with community mobilization, weighing, SAM case search, community level referrals

and targeted counselling. According to the District's 2018 annual report, about 74.6% of trained CHVs are active at the community level thus creating an information continuum for health services delivery in the District.

### Health Systems Strengthening: Data Utilization and Outreach Planning

GHS through RING support trained 82 (78.81%) and 51 (48.96%) health staff on outreach planning services and data utilization respectively, ultimately equipping HWs with relevant skills to plan and implement outreaches in order to maximize the impact of the effort, as well as ensure the best use of resources at the community level. Outreach services have improved targets and reduced dropout rates for immunizations, ANC, and CWC services. By utilizing data from previous outreaches, sub-districts have created more outreach points and planned effectively with community members to conduct higher-impact/more relevant outreach sessions. The Community-based Health Planning Services (CHPS) strengthening programme has also made progress. In present times, all health facilities now plan before embarking on outreach visits and data generated at the facility level are now used by facility staff to inform facility level decision making. Other services, such as defaulter tracing, home visiting, MTMSG monitoring, and CHV monitoring, are now properly integrated with outreach services by some facilities instead of limiting it to only weighing and immunization of children. Feedback from community members revealed that facility staff now visit more routinely to provide outreach services compared to before. Follow up also indicated a reactivation of facility data teams to help validate their own data to ensure submission of quality information for informed decision making.

### Health Systems Strengthening: Health Facility Outreach Efforts

Ghana's vision for health care is to achieve universal health coverage (UHC) by bringing health services to the doorstep of every Ghanaian. The Kpandai District Health Administration (DHA) works to achieve this by conducting monthly outreach services to ensure the provision of health services to all citizens. RING provided some level of support for the implementation of outreach services activity including capacity building and provision of logistics. Outreach services have contributed to improving health targets and reducing dropout rates for immunizations, ANC and CWC services. By utilizing data from previous outreaches, sub-districts have created more outreach points and planned effectively with community members to conduct effective outreaches.

### Health Systems Strengthening: Quality Improvement

In 2017, RING supported the DHA by initiating facility-level QI activities to improve effectiveness and efficiency of health service delivery processes at the health facility and community levels. To support a downstream training approach, RING trained 9 key DHA staff as QI Coaches to enable them provide technical support to all 22 health facilities implementing the activity. Eighteen (18) health staff were also trained as In-charges to enable them facilitate formation of QI teams, and integrate and manage QI activities at the facility level. Subsequently, the District trained and formed 22 QI teams with 83 (79.8%) health staff trained as QI team members. QI is currently used as tool to improve all weak performing indicators in the District, ranging from low ANC coverage to improved facility level deliveries. The District has recorded 71 team meetings, 52 coaching visits, and conducted 4 peer learning sessions in support of the 22 facility teams. The QI approach has made progress as currently 22 of 22 facilities in the District have well-functioning teams that meet regularly and use their meetings as a platform to improve indicator coverages and service delivery through the continuous testing of change ideas.

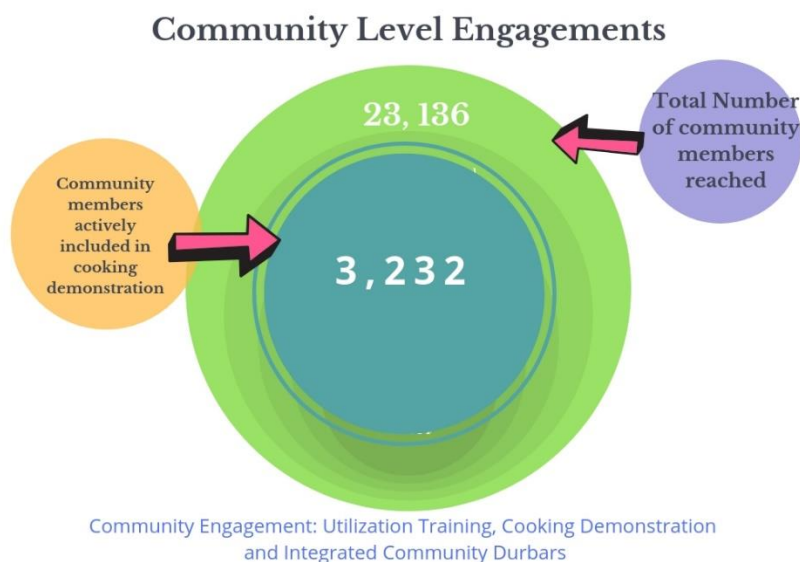
## Health Systems Strengthening: Commodity Management

GHS embarked on a new strategy to train staff in commodity management on-the-job. Sixty-five (65) staff from the District's 22 facilities were trained on proper management of nutrition commodities in line with the principles guiding GHS' system to provide more effective and efficient services. These trainings encouraged HWs to use job aids to perform logistics management procedures, complete bin cards, and complete the integrated Report, Requisition, Issue and Receipt Voucher. RING further supported the District Health Directorate to purchase commodity storage shelves for all facilities.

## Community Engagement: Utilization Trainings and Integrated Durbars

Under RING, the District promoted the cultivation and consumption of high nutritious crops including Orange Flesh Sweet Potatoes (OFSP), leafy greens vegetables (LGV) and soybeans. District-level staff facilitating the community outreach activity ensure that the demonstrations included a strong element of nutrition education. As a result, the value of the cooking demonstrations went above crop utilization skills and became a platform for social behavior change. The utilization training/cooking demonstration are largely conducted through the various MTMSGs at the

community level. A multi-sectoral team of District facilitators (agriculture, WASH, community development and health) support members of the MTMSGs to ensure a clean cooking environment and to properly prepare various nutritious recipes. Interaction with some community members revealed that communities have adopted recipes and practices promoted during the demonstrations and durbars. In larger communities, the sale of "soya" (locally made soy-based kebab) was introduced as a result of these demonstrations. Common discussion topics included practices related to exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding, consumption of vitamin-A-rich foods, care for sick children, and referring cases of malnutrition. Community durbars paired with the utilization trainings are a key way to reach large audiences with nutrition messages in a practical manner. **Over the life of the project, the district reached 23,136 people from 140 communities with various levels of utilization trainings and durbar-based outreach.**



## Community Engagement: Mother to Mother Support Groups

The District, with RING support, trained 438 MTMSG Facilitators, who then facilitation formation of 192 MTMSGs across 80 communities. These groups were leveraged from the existing VSLAs.

All groups received radio sets with a series of pre-loaded drama programs on topics ranging from optimum nutrition practices to WASH, along with counseling cards to aid their group meetings or discussions. These groups have contributed to an increase in knowledge-base and care practices for infants and young children by community members and have promoted the adoption of optimal IYCF

practices by empowering women to use their savings groups incomes (or IGA profits) to improve family nutrition. The groups regularly meet and discuss the IYCF practices. The District continues to provide support for these groups by conducting routine monitoring visits to the groups to ensure groups get to understand the MTMSG concept for sustainable performance.

## Community Engagement: Father to Father Support Groups

In mid- to late-2018, the District built the capacity of 2 senior health staff and 5 community HWs to lead FTFSG Facilitators training. Twenty (20) community group facilitators, CHVs, and representatives of community MTMSGs were ultimately trained, resulting in five FTFSGs formed (this activity was kept at a pilot stage under RING with only five groups per district formed). Post-training following up indicates that the groups are conducting their meetings regularly and sharing practical experiences. Three learning sessions have been held so far. Training and monitoring provided by the district staff through RING support has significantly improved groups' functionality, leading to an increase in uptake of family caretaking responsibilities, such as childcare provision and some types of household chores, formerly perceived as falling within the women's domain. It has also increased the knowledge-base and care practices for infants and young children by fathers. Men now take keen interest in the health and nutrition issues of their children by accompanying their wives to the health facilities for medical care.

## Outcomes, Lessons Learned, and Challenges during Implementation and Recommendations for Future Health & Nutrition Programming

1. Ensuring continuous monitoring and technical support proved effective for all thematic areas in improving service delivery. The use of recommended checklist has been useful in ensuring standardization of monitoring visits to both health workers and community members.
2. The integrated approach of the community level programs and outreach services where CHVs, HWs and community members are involved in planning and roll out of activities improves participation, acceptability and programme effectiveness. Messages on nutrition and health best practices are well coordinated to avoid confusion and conflicting messages.
3. Provision of job aids and other resources for community level groups, increased community engagement and group functionality.
4. For the CMAM program, improvements from the first three years of the implementation also faced setbacks following shortages in ready to use therapeutic food (RUTF) availability; this led to decreases in cure rates at the facility level.
5. The remarkable improvements in documentations and commodity management through the provision of bin cards, ledger booklets, shelves among others, were also hindered by regional level commodity shortages resulting from factors beyond the control of the district.

Based on the above lessons learned, the progress noted in key activities, and the priorities of the communities, district and national GHS, the District has identified the following areas to focus on beyond the life of RING:

1. Based on improvements recorded across thematic areas due to efforts of routine technical support visits, the Kpandai District, plans to continue providing HWs, CHVs and community support groups with routine technical support visits, using outreach services as a vehicle.
2. Quality Improvement has been identified as a low cost activity with significant potential for improving data utilization and health indicators. The District will continue to monitor group activities and provide on-the-job coaching in QI for newly posted staff. This would be done via routine quarterly integrated monitoring and data validation visits to sub-districts, often led by the DDHS.



3. Critical district and facility staff and CHVs have been trained on the CMAM OPC protocols, IYCF and anemia. These would be harnessed to continue to provide targeted counselling using locally available foods to improve family nutrition.

More information can be found in the District's [Sustainability Strategy](#) within this document.

## WASH Activity Overviews

The Kpandai District Assembly from 2014 to date, implemented a number of WASH interventions, including borehole repairs, institutional latrine rehabilitations, installation of institutional hand washing stations, Community-Led Total Sanitation and, Rain Water Harvesting and promotion of household water treatment and safe storage to improve adoption of positive sanitation and hygiene behaviors among rural poor households. The interventions were primarily implemented by Environmental Health and Sanitation Units and District Works Departments or District Water and Sanitation Teams, with technical support from Regional Environmental Health Unit and Global Communities RING. This journal showcases the objectives, the processes and the results of various WASH interventions implemented under RING project by Kandai District Assembly.

## Community-Led Total Sanitation

### **Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) Activity Summary**

*Activity Objective:* for all households in the community to own and use latrines and hand washing stations and adopt other positive behaviors to ultimately end open defecation. There is typically little to no external funding support for construction of sanitation and hygiene facilities, except in the case of extremely poor people who cannot afford latrines for themselves and genuinely require support.

*CLTS Process:* this is a sanitation improvement process whereby small, homogeneous communities are supported to analyze their sanitation profiles and collectively take action to end open defecation. The process begins with community engagement, which includes taking demographic information on the community. Then 'triggering' occurs, which is when the facilitation team (usually a GOG official or a development partner) guides the community through a number of steps that spurs them into realizing that, by defecating in the open, it leads to consumption of human feces. Communities are then ignited to make changes within their means, and through the post-triggering process, the facilitation team supports households during siting of latrines, constructing them, and erecting hand washing stations (tippy taps). Over time, all community members stop open defecation and use latrines and tippy taps to halt fecal-oral transmission of sanitation related diseases.

*Certification process:* throughout implementation, communities conduct self-evaluation of their own progress in halting open defecation, and construction of latrines and tippy taps and general environmental cleanliness improvements. Once the community is satisfied with their performance, they request for District Interagency Coordination Committee for Sanitation (DICCS) and Regional Interagency Coordination Committee for Sanitation (RICCS) assessments and obtain ODF certification. If the community meets benchmarks for the assessment criteria, they are declared Open Defecation Free and the community will host a small durbar to celebrate the achievement.

*Sustainability:* following ODF certification, continued monitoring and provision of technical support for communities to move up the Sanitation Ladder is expected. Behavior change through the triggering process should hold for some time, but communities, by and large, will require long-term periodic engagement with the facilitation team to prevent "slippage" and spur communities to continue to improve their sanitation and hygiene situation uninterrupted.

Kpandai District Assembly began CLTS implementation in 10 communities in 2015 and scaled up gradually to 21 by close of the project. The slowness in triggering more communities was in response to a decision that was taken at a national sanitation stakeholder's forum in 2016 to ensure that, at least 70% of triggered communities get converted to ODFs. Through RING project support, the District

Assembly converted 13 of the 21 triggered communities to ODFs, representing 62% conversion rate, which is much higher than both Northern and national. The District Assembly facilitated construction of 306 latrines and 245 tippy taps, providing safe sanitation access to 2,417 people in 21 communities. It imperative to mention that, the remaining 8 communities are potential ODF and were scheduled for RICCS verifications in June 2019, after the publishing of this report.

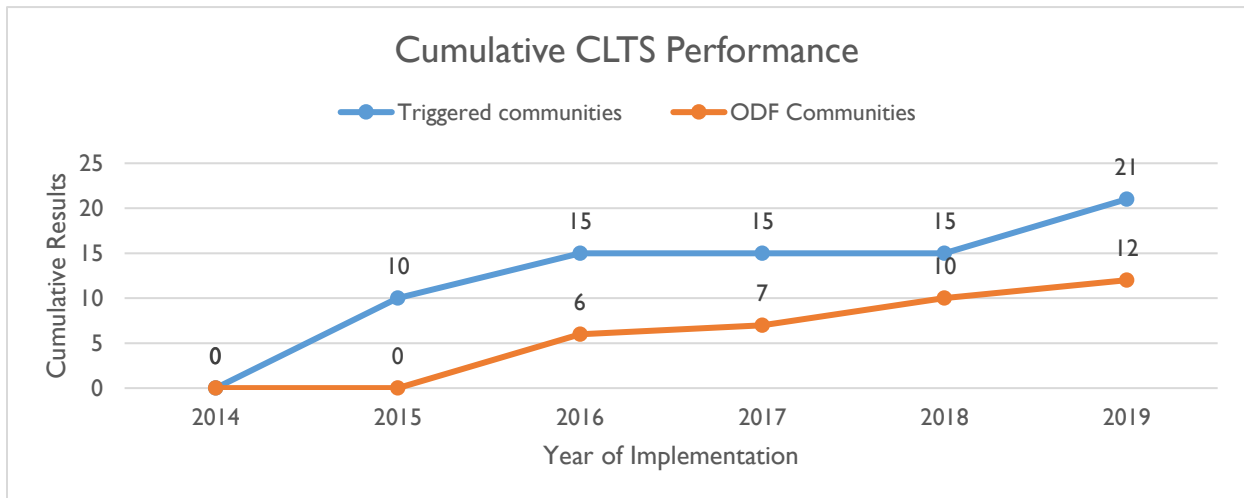


Figure 5 Summary of CLTS Performance over the LOP

While implementing CLTS, the district CLTS facilitation team (DFT) learned a number of lessons relevant for sustainability and future sanitation programming, including:

- CLTS thrives well in small, homogenous and stable communities. The opposite holds for migrant communities (Fishing and farming communities).
- Unity among team members and collaborative implementation yields fast and great results
- Dynamic and effective community leadership is a necessary ingredient for ODF achievement.

Moving forward, the under listed are the activities earmarked to be continued by the Kpandai District Assembly after the RING project phases out in September 2019.

- Monitoring and providing support to the remaining OD communities for them to become ODF.
- Establishment and continuous nurturing of Natural Leaders Networks in CLTS communities.

For more details on sustainability beyond the life of the RING project, please refer to the [Sustainability Strategy](#) within this document.

## Borehole Repairs, including WSMTs and Area Mechanics Training

### Borehole Repairs Activity Summary

*Activity Objective:* providing potable water access is a significant step in preventing the transmission of diarrheal diseases that often result in malnutrition-related illnesses. This activity ensured that existing boreholes were functional and that regular maintenance was systematized at the community-level, preventing most minor breakdowns. Repairs were coupled with water and sanitation management team (WSMT) training, as well as training and outfitting of pump caretakers and Area Mechanics.

### *Borehole Repairs Activity Summary (cont'd)*

*Process:* all targeted boreholes were technically assessed to determine the extent of damage and parts needed for the repairs of the pump and its ancillary works. Upon successful completion of the technical assessments, inputs were procured and boreholes repaired by a trained Area Mechanic under the supervision of District Works or Water Engineers. Alongside the repairs, WSMTs and pump caretakers are re-constituted and trained on operation and basic maintenance of the water facilities.

*Follow-Up Support:* After the repairs are completed, the boreholes are handed over to the WSMTs for operation and maintenance. They then assume the responsibility of internal fund mobilization and safe keeping of the money to be used exclusively for maintenance of the borehole in future. The District Water and Sanitation Teams, monitor functionality of the boreholes and provides technical support for WSMTs to carry out their responsibilities without much hindrance.

From project inception to date, RING has supported Kpandai District to repair 56 boreholes. As noted above, at the community level, these repairs are coupled with reconstitution and training of WSMTs and pump care takers to ensure continued maintenance and operations of the repaired facilities. In Kpandai District, 38 WSMTs, 47 pump caretakers and 7 Area Mechanics were trained. Each borehole provides an average of 300 people with access to potable water, meaning 16,800 people from 45 communities benefitted from this intervention. WSMT functionality also includes an element of revenue mobilization at the local level to ensure the community is prepared to undertake routine maintenance and basic repairs on the repaired facilities. The district has promoted this practice among the reconstituted WSMTs, each of which have a bank account and have raised various sums of money, a promising sign for the sustainability of these efforts. As of the close of the project in September 2019, data from 14 WSMTs have showed that GHS 3,514 had been saved to date for operation and maintenance.

To ensure that water provided by the repaired boreholes met benchmarks for water quality, 17 samples were taken between 2017 and 2018, and submitted to Ghana Water Company Limited for testing. Of those, 7 were found to have excessive bacteria counts and required flushing and disinfection.

Over the course of implementation, the Kpandai team has noted a number of lessons learned when it comes to repairing of water facilities and developing community maintenance structures. Some of those include:

- Teamwork leads to timely and quality implementation; as the borehole repairs intervention has so many sub-activities requiring different expertise, it is crucial for the Environmental Health and District Works Teams to coordinate efforts.
- Although most borehole water is odorless and colorless, it may contain excessive amounts of bacteria that is harmful to human health. Quality assurance testing is a straightforward way to ensure water provided will not cause any harm to community members.
- Functional WSMTS are essential to sustainability of water facility repairs at the community level. WSMTs must have a bank account and routinely collect levees from facility users (per the community's schedule of collections, which may vary between locations) to support minor repairs.

## Institutional Latrine Repairs

### *Institutional Latrine Rehabilitation Activity Summary*

*Activity Objective:* provide facility users, especially young children and women of reproductive age, with alternative access to safe sanitation, while in school or seeking health care.

*Process:* prior to repair work, technical assessments were conducted to determine the extent of damage and repair requirements. Assessment reports were then validated by REHSU and Global Communities RING to ensure all issues have been captured in the report. Based on the assessment, inputs were procured and repair work commenced.

### *Institutional Latrine Rehabilitation Activity Summary (cont'd)*

*Monitoring and Quality Assurance:* during rehabilitation, district supervisory staff, the region and Global Communities RING would conduct field visits to assess progress and advice on any alternations required.

*Follow-Up:* to ensure sustainability of the repairs made, facility managers were sensitized by the Assembly on proper maintenance and reporting mechanisms to alert the district if any further major repairs were required.

In Kpandai District Assembly, latrine repair efforts were implemented by Environmental Health and Sanitation Unit and District Works Department. While EHSU handled dislodging and proper disposal of fecal matter, DWD to supervise masonry and carpentry aspects of the implementation. From project inception to date, the district rehabilitated 15 institutional latrines in 12 basic schools and 3 health facilities with a total 53 drop holes. Based on user data, these latrines were then able to provide safe sanitation access to approximately 2,650 people (design standard of 50 people per drop whole). In order to guarantee proper use and longevity of the rehabilitated latrines, health workers, teachers and school children of all beneficiary schools were sensitized on proper use, care and maintenance, particularly daily cleaning and disposal of anal cleansing materials.

While implementing the intervention, the staff learned the following lessons:

- Latrine repairs have two important components: dislodging and safe disposal of fecal matter, followed by the actual repairs. Proper implementation of the intervention requires close collaboration and communication between DWD and EHSU.
- Ineffective collaboration between two departments can result in improper disposal of fecal matter excavated, ultimately serving as of source of contamination to open water bodies and vehicle for quick spread of diarrhea-related diseases.

## Hand Washing with Soap

### *Hand Washing Stations and Community Outreach Activity Summary*

*Activity Objective:* to improve personal sanitation and hygiene behaviors among target audiences, even when they are outside the home. Targeting of key institutions, such as crèches, kindergartens, and health facilities, ensured high traffic from children under five and women of reproductive age and that transmission of diarrheal related illnesses is reduced through improved hygiene practices.

*Process:* to gain commitment of the beneficiary institutions on the use of the stations, the district organized sensitizations to discuss the rationale for the installation and the responsibilities of the institutions. Then the hand washing stations (locally fabricated water holding containers with taps, metal stands and a receptacle for waste water) were procured and installed, with at least one per institution. Alongside installations, use and maintenance demonstrations were conducted to provide users with basic information on the critical handwashing times and appropriate use.

*Follow-Up Support:* district staff conducted quarterly monitoring visits to beneficiary institutions to ensure the facilities are appropriately used and cared for.

Throughout the life of the RING Project, Kpandai District Assembly installed 48 hand washing stations in 40 institutions (12 schools and 28 health facilities). The district adhered strictly to the design guidelines shared with them by RING and the REHSU in 2015 and thus, always produced standard hand washing stations, with no or minimal defects. Alongside the installations, sensitization sessions were held at all locations to increase knowledge about the critical times and appropriate ways of washing hands with soap. During the demonstrations, teachers, health workers and school children took turns to practice washing their hands with soap.

During implementation of the intervention, the Assembly noted the following lessons learned:

- Regular water access is essential for the success of the intervention and continued effective management of the facilities;
- Adherence to specifications for the station construction ensures that the end product is high quality and long-lasting, reduces rusting and leakages associated with water holding facilities; and
- Routine monitoring by the Assembly has encouraged good management of the facility and appropriate use of the equipment.

## Water Filtration and Safe Storage

Through partnership with RING, the Assembly was able to effectively expand potable water access to a number of communities where boreholes had already been established. However, in communities where there was no borehole available, there were limitations on what could be done to ensure people had access to safe drinking water. One mechanism to address this need was the distribution of locally produced clay water filters to community members. Filter and storage container distributions were coupled with user and maintenance education sessions, as well as boxes of Aqua-Tabs (chlorine based tablets), safe and easy-to-use water treatment. Over the life of the project, the district supported 179 households in 5 communities with 234 boxes of aqua tabs and 173 water filters.

Over time, however, sustainability became an issue as the filters have a lifespan and could be cost prohibitive to replace for many households. Transportation of the items from the regional capital to the rural communities was also an issue; there were large costs associated with transportation, many of the clay filters would break *en route*, and households could not easily access replacement filters given the distances. Because of these challenges, the Assembly no longer implemented the activity after 2016, though it does recognize the positive impact made on the households that did benefit.

## Rain Water Harvesting

### *Rainwater Harvesting System Installation Activity Summary*

*Activity Objective:* some facilities that cater primarily to children under five and women of reproductive age were without a consistent source of water throughout the year, limiting the patrons' ability to adhere to proper hygiene standards, such as hand washing with soap. By affixing gutter systems and large storage tanks to these buildings (i.e. health facilities and kindergartens/crèches), it made water more available at the facility, enabling patients, school children, and healthcare service providers to practice proper sanitation behaviors.

*Process:* prior to the installations, DWD staff conducted physical assessments of the structures and institutional engagements to discuss the concepts, processes, roles and ownership issues. Inputs were then procured and installations done with first flush diverters and biosand filters to improve water quality.

As one goal of the RING project was to promote and improve sanitation behaviors, such as hand washing with soap, among the targeted population, a gap that emerged was availability of water at common gathering places for women and young children, such as schools and health facilities. This was particularly a challenge in the dry season. To address this issue, the district began affixing rainwater storage tanks and gutter systems to those facilities, coupled with filtration systems to reduce contamination from exposed rooftops.

In 2016, Kpandai District installed 6 rain water harvesting facilities in 6 institutions (3 schools and 3 health facilities) to harvest rainwater with the purpose of enabling handwashing and other sanitary practices. To ensure ownership of the system, district staff adequately sensitized facility managers on the use, care and maintenance requirements of the facilities. And to determine whether or not the facilities

were being put to proper use, DWD and DPCU staff conducted unannounced quarterly visits to installed locations.

Despite the benefits of added on-site water storage at the schools and clinics, one problem that emerged was the limited holding capacity of the heavy-duty water tanks. Though larger systems were available, the school and health facility physical structures could accommodate only limited sized tanks. After a careful cost benefit analysis in 2017, it was determined that the 1-3 months the water lasted into the dry season was not justifiable against the overall costs of procuring, transporting and installing the materials. Coupled with the fact that the tanks themselves began to break down from the harsh elements after a few years of exposure to the sun, the district opted to discontinue this intervention.

## Good Governance Activity Overviews

Good governance interventions under the partnership with RING took on two forms – actual implementation of interventions, coupled with community engagement, and administrative efforts. The interventions focused on systems strengthening, particularly toward further decentralization, as well as delivery of social services, community engagement and solicitation of citizen feedback on development planning, and subsequent production of development plans. From the administrative side, district leadership centered efforts on strengthening public financial management to ensure that US government donor funds were appropriately managed and that the district’s internal systems were in order to better manage GOG funding and locally generated resources. The following pages outline the Assembly’s successes, lessons learned, and plans for the future concerning good governance activities in the district.

## Sub-Structure Strengthening and Community Engagement

### *District Sub-Structure Strengthening & Community Engagement*

Through sub-structure strengthening, Assembly staff are in a better position to deliver development services to their constituents due to more frequent contact, reduced distances between community members and Assembly staff, and the ability to generate operational funds through revenue mobilization campaigns. Under RING, sub-structure strengthening came in two forms – work occurring at the Council office itself, as well as outreach to the communities channeled through the sub-structure. More on both areas can be found below.

### *Sub-Structure Functionality*

*Rationale:* Ghana’s government is based on a decentralized system all the way to the community, but throughout the country, decentralization efforts have largely halted at the district level, reducing the ability of the Assembly to deliver development programming due to the time and costs required to cover great distances. For the same reasons, the Assembly’s level of engagement with the community to seek feedback on development plans is hampered, reducing successful implementation of inclusive development planning and implementation reflective of local needs and priorities.

*Preparation:* to be functional, district sub-structures needed both staff and an inhabitable office to operate from. The Staff include Assembly representation (most often technical officers from agriculture, environmental health, and community development, among others, with some administrative staff as well), as well as elected or appointed community representatives known as Assembly Men or Women and Unit Committee Members. Before training sub-structure staff efforts began, human resources and physical logistics needs had to be addressed.



### Sub-Structure Functionality (cont'd)

*Training:* once the office was operational with staff and logistics, training for those working from the office began. Topics included: an overview of the local government system (emphasizing roles and responsibilities for the Council and the management positions), environmental health management (to further stress the national government's prioritization of improved sanitation), internal revenue generation and management, community action planning & participatory monitoring & evaluation, and advocacy, lobbying & social accountability, followed by Local Economic Development (LED) at a later period. The trainings were typically delivered by Assembly staff with support from Global Communities RING and, at times, representation from the Regional Local Government Inspector's Office.

*Follow-up Support:* upon receipt of training, staff began to work from the sub-structure, engaging in delivery of extension services to communities falling within the coverage area of the Council, as well as undertaking revenue mobilization campaigns based on agreed upon levies and fees. Staff from the district would periodically monitor the Council operations to ensure effective delivery of services.

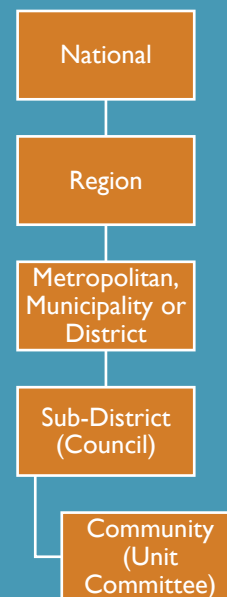
### Community Engagement via Sub-Structures

*Purpose:* GOG policies also indicate that development planning should be a participatory effort, with Assemblies seeking feedback from community members on their development needs and priorities. Utilizing the district sub-structures to hold such engagements is an effective use of time and resources, and also provides Council staff with concrete roles & responsibilities.

*Types of Activities:* outreach can be done in a larger groups setting or with more targeted individuals, but main purpose remains the same – information must be shared between the community and the Assembly, ideally with the Council acting as a conduit. Efforts the Assembly has undertaken include the GOG required quarterly meetings at the Council, Citizen's Forums (open to the larger public), the development of Community Action Plans (CAP) which are then harmonized into Council Plans and shared with the Assembly for incorporation into the District Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP), and then quarterly Area Council meetings, which are required by GOG mandate and include Assembly Members and Unit Committee Members, as well as other key stakeholders at the Council level.

The Kpandai District Assembly has 7 Area/Town Councils to represent its 245 communities. Under RING, sub-structure strengthening efforts for the Area Councils began in 2017. The district, having learned of the successes of the RING pilot in 2016, selected this activity from the menu for 2017 and targeted all 7 Area Councils in the district. Training of Council representatives on their roles and responsibilities, which was led by the DA team with support from the GC-RING Governance team, took place in 2017, with LED training occurring in 2019. To date, 6 of the 7 Councils are deemed operational, meaning that Assembly staff regularly operate from those locations, the offices themselves are functional, and the officers posted routinely deliver extension services as well as embark on revenue mobilization campaigns. The last area is particularly relevant to sustainability of development efforts as 50% of the funds generated at the Council go to supporting general operational costs, including paying for utilities and office supplies, motorbike fuel to conduct outreach, associated costs with community forums and meetings, and, if the budget will be sufficient, small-scale development efforts, such as funding needy-but-brilliant students, repairing school and health infrastructure

### Ghana's Decentralized Structure



periodically affected by rainstorms, repairing community water systems, or addressing emergency health needs.

During the partnership with RING, the Assembly was also able to compile 75 CAPs, part of which fed into the district's MTDP for 2014-2017 and the current MTDP which spans from 2018-2021. Quarterly Council meetings have occurred regularly, and the Assembly has also utilized the sub-structures to undertake 22 Citizen's Forums, open meetings that allow the sub-structure and Assembly staff to engage with community members on topics of interest to them and information the Assembly needs to share with the citizenry.

Throughout this process, the Assembly has identified a number of promising outcomes and lessons learned, including:

- Delivery of services via the Area Council is an effective use of Assembly resources with consideration to time spent on outreach and the fuel and other logistical expenses incurred.
- Reducing the distance between the communities and the service providers (the Assembly) improves communication lines, builds trust, and encourages community members to become more active in governance issues.
- Ensuring that Council staff have the necessary logistics and are monitored to ensure they are carrying out their field work results in better performance by sub-structure staff and overall improvements in Council operations.

Based on these positive outcomes, the Assembly has identified several steps it can take to ensure that sub-structure strengthening gains remain institutionalized, including ensuring district staff are posted to the Council offices, ceding the required 50% of mobilized revenue back to the Council for general operations, monitoring Council operations, and continuing to hold community engagement activities and quarterly Council meetings. More information on the activities the Assembly intends to continue beyond the life of the RING Project can be found in the [Sustainability Strategy](#) within this document.

## Social Protection and Expanding Linkages to GoG Safety Nets

### *Social Protection Efforts under RING*

Under the auspices of RING, social protection efforts are undertaken in a number of ways, including direct engagement of targeted households, community outreach, formation of action committees per GOG mandates, and strategic layering with GOG social protection programs. A summary of each area can be found below.

#### *Supportive Household Monitoring & Follow-up Visits*

*Activity Purpose:* this activity was included in the RING menu in 2017 and involves logistical support to the District Department of Social Welfare and Community Development to make follow-up visits to LEAP and other social protection intervention households to ensure that key challenges were identified and addressed. District teams also meet regularly through the Strategizing and Progress Meetings to discuss the matters emanating from the field and explore measures to resolve them.

*Training:* officers have received numerous trainings on poverty graduation and social protection from the Regional Department of Social Welfare (RDSW) with support from Global Communities RING. Social Welfare Officers (SWO) are equipped with skills on proper targeting, procedures in signing up households for social support programs (such as health insurance), and providing counseling and follow-up care. Officers were also trained on basic malnutrition monitoring and referral mechanisms for Ghana Health Services.

### **Supportive Household Monitoring & Follow-up Visits (cont'd)**

*Follow-Up Support:* via supportive monitoring, reviewing field reports, and oversight during LEAP payment days, SWOs identify challenges, gather feedback, and support beneficiaries to address their needs or escalate them to the regional level, if needed.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* LEAP monitoring will continue to take place during LEAP payments, allowing SWOs to continue engaging with LEAP beneficiaries and taking stock of their challenges. SWOs will continue to utilize capacity gains to serve beneficiaries.

### **Community Outreach**

*Activity Purpose:* to sensitize community members on social protection issues and encourage them to take action in addressing them. SWOs use a variety of approaches including storytelling, testimonials, visual aids and toolkits to discuss topics like child rights, child marriage, and social protection programs (ex. LEAP, NHIS, etc.), among other issues.

*Training:* SWOs received several capacity building trainings through the RDSW with support from Global Communities RING. These trainings focused on skills building for poverty graduation support, as well as understanding basic nutrition and WASH concepts to support integrated sensitization efforts.

*Follow-Up Support:* SWOs support communities to implement action steps and address any issues that arise.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* SWOs continue monitoring communities during LEAP payments and with support of the LEAP focal persons. Similar outreach events can be layered onto existing LEAP monitoring efforts to maximize resources.

### **District and Community Social Protection Committee Formations**

*Activity Purpose:* District and Community Social Protection Committees coordinate, implement and monitor social protection efforts at the district and community-level in line with GOG's National Social Protection Policy. DSPCs lead social protection needs identification, integrate and mainstream social protection into district medium term development plans, collect data on all related activities, provide platforms for experience sharing and review of best practices in monitoring, evaluation and service delivery. They shall also establish a number of necessary sub-committees (Ghana Social Protection Policy, 2015) and facilitate formation of Community Social Protection Committees (CSPCs) who support social protection mobilization efforts, engage with the district for feedback or complaints, and develop a social protection action plan.

*Training:* DSPC trainings are led by the SWOs and DPCU to ensure they are aware of their mandates; CSPCs are then trained by the DSPC members to support their role in sensitizing communities on social protection, supporting household identification and data collection, assisting in monitoring and case management of beneficiaries, reporting on social protection activities and supporting linkages to other social protection programs and opportunities.

*Follow-Up Support:* DSPCs meet regularly to review social protection progress, challenges and next steps. SWOs and DSPC members regularly monitor CSPCs to ensure they meet regularly, implement their action plans, carry out their responsibilities, and provide feedback to the district.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* DSPCs and CSPCs are part of GOG policy. DSPCs should continue meeting regularly with the support of the Assembly, while SWOs will continue to monitor CSPCs during LEAP payments.

### **Linking LEAP Households to VSLAs**

*Activity Purpose:* to support GOG poverty graduation efforts via their Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) Programme, LEAP households have been integrated into existing VSLAs or new VSLAs have been started to cater to LEAP household members. Studies have shown that VSLA has a tremendous positive effect on building resiliency of LEAP households (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2018).

*Training:* LEAP VSLA members go through the same training that is provided to the standard VSLAs, including VSLA mechanics, business planning, financial literacy and numeracy, among other things.

*Follow-Up Support:* district VSLA team members and SWOs monitor groups to ensure progress and proper backstopping as challenges are encountered. Support provided to LEAP VSLAs is in line with the standard VSLA monitoring strategy.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* SWOs assume some monitoring responsibilities of LEAP VSLAs, incorporating it into their bi-monthly LEAP payment outreach. SWOs have also worked with the LEAP Focal Persons to keep them informed in case issues arise during monitoring visits.

According to Ghana’s National Social Protection Policy of (2015), Assemblies are responsible to “implement national social protection programmes in their localities with assigned resources and undertaking local, complementary social protection programmes including food security, education, health, housing, sanitation.” In response, the Assembly, through RING support, introduced more deliberate social protection interventions in late 2015/early 2016 due to prioritization of social protection at the national level.

Under the above-listed social protection efforts, Kpandai Assembly has prioritized the following activities: household monitoring, Social Protection Committee formation at the district and/or community level, community outreach, and layering VSLA onto LEAP beneficiary households. Overall, these efforts have been quite successful. In undertaking the outreach, those working on social protection issues at the Assembly have noted a number of positive outcomes, including linking households to the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) or addressing issues with renewal of existing accounts, addressing challenges faced by LEAP beneficiary households on accessing payment points, and connecting families with the Registry Office at the district to take record of recent births and deaths. The District Social Protection Committee (formed in 2017) has also supported formation of 5 CSPCs, which have been quite engaged in the community level efforts, facilitating linkages with ideal households for social protection programs and taking note of challenges for follow up by the Assembly. The Kpandai Assembly also conducted community outreach, sensitizing the citizenry on such relevant topics as women’s participation in local governance, persons with disabilities participation in productive ventures and among other social protection issues. Communities reported taking action steps like renewal of health insurance cards, meeting with health directorates and meeting with banks in-charge of LEAP payments in order to address issues of social protection and poverty graduation in their communities.

**District Performance Summary**

Since 2016:

Household Monitoring:

- 2,954 LEAP beneficiaries monitored across 49 communities
- Number of people linked to:
  - NHIS registration or renewal – 1,356
  - School Feeding – 45
  - Other social protection interventions – 36

Community Outreach:

- 3 sensitizations carried out, reaching 95 people (55 men & 40 women)

DSPC (inaugurated in 2017)

- 12 members (11 men, 1 women)
- 8 Meetings held

CSPC

- 5 CSPCs formed in 10 communities  
50 members (30 men, 20 women)

Capacity Building Training: Poverty Graduation

- 55 staff (49 males/ 6 females)

LEAP VSLAs

- 48 LEAP VSLAs formed in 29 communities with 1,501 members
- GHS 193,770 saved and GHS 81,580 loaned by LEAP VSLA members

Lastly, the Assembly opted in 2018 to begin integrated some LEAP beneficiary households into the highly successful VSLA intervention, which has proven to build economic resilience of families within the district. To date, 1,501 people have been linked to VSLAs in 29 communities. Results from their first year of implementation show that GHS 74,543 has been saved and GHS 27,890 has been loaned out to the members, providing a vital economic cushion for pressing household needs these families may face. Furthermore, women felt unity within their groups and were happy to have connections with other VSLA members where they can turn to discuss problems and seek advice.

In the Assembly’s experience working in implementing these social protection interventions to strengthen service delivery, the district has taken away several lessons learned, including:

- Consistent household monitoring and strong case management is key to facilitating linkages to social safety nets, backstopping challenges, and supporting beneficiaries to build internal resiliency.
- CSPCs are effective in addressing social protection issues and supporting social protection programs in the communities, but need consistent monitoring and support to stay engaged.
- There is high demand from LEAP beneficiaries to join VSLAs, and preliminary results show that women develop an immediate culture of saving, increase their social capital, and increase their sense of financial security in the event of economic shocks.

Based on the success of the efforts under RING, Kpandai South Assembly has identified a number of key areas it wishes to continue after the close of the project, including:

- Monitoring visits of LEAP beneficiaries to provide critical backstopping during LEAP payments by district officers.
- DSPC meetings will continue to coordinate and integrate social protection efforts in the district and effectively monitor and support the CSPCs.
- Monitoring of LEAP VSLAs by district officers to ensure the groups remain supported.

For more information on the upcoming plans, please review the district's [Sustainability Strategy](#) found at the end of the document.

## Gender Mainstreaming into Local Government and Community Development Efforts

### *Gender Efforts under RING*

Under the auspices of RING, gender efforts are undertaken in a number of ways, including mainstreaming into government development plans and budgets, general community outreach, and engaging individuals via gender-related programming. Below is a summary of each area.

#### *Gender Support Network*

*Activity Purpose:* to mainstream gender at the district, Gender Desk Officers (GDO) conduct various activities to reach community members and district stakeholders. GDOs build their Gender Support Network (GSN) to coordinate, strategize and strengthen gender efforts throughout the district. The GSN is a platform established at the district that brings together appropriate stakeholders to identify areas and advocate for gender to be mainstreamed into development plans. This is done by discussing current gender-based gaps, strategizing on how to address them, coordinating stakeholder efforts, and monitoring and evaluating for quality implementation. Additionally, GDOs may also hold capacity building trainings for MMDA staff to sensitize them on new policies or other gender issues.

*Training:* GDOs received an initial capacity building training from Regional Department of Gender (RDOG) and Global Communities RING. GDOs also attend review meetings twice a year with capacity building components, these allow GDOs to share their experiences, discuss their challenges, and figure out their next steps.

*Follow-Up Support:* GDOs work together with their GSNs during meetings each quarter to track progress on their gender action plans and overall impact of efforts.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* GSNs require little resources to continue meeting and will continue to be led by the Coordinating Director with support of the Gender Desk Officers.

#### *Community Outreach*

*Activity Purpose:* to mainstream gender at the community level, GDOs conduct various types of outreach to engage community members on gender-related topics. GDOs will carry out community sensitizations, durbars or targeted outreach to address specific gender issues or gaps in their districts, ranging from sensitizing communities on the dangers of child marriage, increasing women's participation in governance, and reducing women's time burden, among other things. Depending on the district specific action plan, GDOs may also utilize other activities like radio sensitizations.

### **Community Outreach (cont'd)**

*Training:* GDOs received an initial capacity building training from the RDOG and Global Communities RING on their roles and responsibilities and foundational gender concepts. GDOs also attend semi-annual review meetings with capacity building components, such as M&E and ICT, built in; these forums allow GDOs to share their experiences, discuss challenges, and determine next steps. RDOG also provided facilitation guides, posters and materials to GDOs to strengthen their community sensitizations. Community members are also encouraged plan action steps to address the various issues raised during forums.

*Follow-Up Support:* GDOs monitor communities after the activities have taken place to track the progress in addressing the gaps or issues and implementing their action steps.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* GDOs plan to continue monitoring and carrying out community sensitizations as the needs arise and to keep community members active in addressing gender issues.

### **Gender Model Family**

*Activity Purpose:* engage families in a holistic manner regarding gender-related issues stemming from Northern Ghanaian socio-cultural dynamics. Developed by SEND Ghana, the approach is voluntary and supports all family members to critically explore household delegation of duties and decision-making powers in a way that will support women's empowerment in terms of asset ownership and distribution, and a reduction in their time burden. The Gender Model Family (GMF) is also a pathway to directly engage men on being active caretakers for the daily needs of the family. The approach is entirely voluntary and milestone achievements are based on family-set goals that address issues that members have jointly identified & agreed upon.

*Training:* the RDOG and Global Communities RING led two rounds of training of trainers for the district teams, which covered the 7 steps within the model, while the district teams then led community-level trainings with the families that volunteered to participate in the GMF approach. During this training, families come up with an action plan consisting of practices or issues within their family that they would like to address.

*Follow-Up Support:* district GMF teams monitor families at least twice a month, during which they discuss progress against to start to discuss their progress and challenges, and then continue monitoring as needed. Additionally, communities hold monthly GMF meetings that allow families to meet to exchange experiences, share advice with other GMFs, and to celebrate their successes. Districts also plan quarterly or annual events to promote experience sharing between GMFs and to share the model with other stakeholders.

*Phase-Out Strategy:* the GMF model is implemented for at least a year long-cycle with district support, at which point the behavior change is more or less engrained and likely to continue. Gender Model Families are also asked to recruit others interested in the model in their community after completing the process. The GMFs then serve as mentors for the next group of GMFs. The district GMF team may periodically monitor the communities, but after a year of practicing the behavior change it is likely to be sustained at the household level.

The Regional Department of Gender and District Gender Desk Officers officially engaged with the RING Project in 2016. RING's gender approach is in line with the Government of Ghana's Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MOGCSP) policies and frameworks and supports the National Gender Policy's (2015) goal "to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment concerns into the national development process in order to improve the social, legal, civic, political, economic and cultural conditions of the people of Ghana; particularly women and men, boys and girls in an appreciable manner and as required by National and International Frameworks," as well as its objectives. Under the leadership of the RDOG, RING supports several strategic interventions in pursuit of this goal. District GDOs, whose mandate is to mainstream gender into local development efforts, tailor action plans to localized needs then carry out the plans under the leadership of the RDOG and with support from Global Communities, RING's technical assistance contractor.

In addition to the policy, RING's gender priorities directly align with FTF's Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index's (WEAI) Gender Integration Framework in three key areas:



### **Increased Control & Use of Income**

- Women increase their control over the use of income and have adequate control over and are engaged in decisions about the use of household income

### **Improved Time Use & Decreased Time Poverty**

- Women are able to allocate time to desired productive and domestic tasks, leisure activities, increasing human capital and goal setting

### **Increased Social Capital & Leadership in the Community**

- Beneficiaries have increased social capital, improved social networks, and an increased voice within their communities.

In 2015, Kpandai Assembly developed their Gender Desk Officer Action plan. Over the life of the project, Kpandai Assembly has reached 85 communities through gender outreach efforts, such as encouraging women's roles in managing community resources (such as water facilities), and women's roles in asset ownership among the RING livelihoods interventions, among others, reaching a total of 4,765 community members.

Kpandai formed their Gender Support Network in 2015 with 22 members (15 men & 7 women). Since its inception, the GSN's key achievements include: development of District Gender Action Plans, advocacy for Assembly adoption of the Gender Model Family concept and a budget line for gender activities, securing the renewal of NHIS Cards for lepers in Nkanchina community, promoting the inclusion women in Water Boards throughout the district, and having revived the Gender Sub-Committee, among other things.

In 2018, Kpandai introduced Gender Model Family to 5 communities (Nkachina #1, Ogegerege, Jentimah, Kinyinkpa, and Tikarni). The district recruited, trained, and supported 62 GMFs (62 men & 79 women). Through their action plans, GMFs have reported the following key successes: men and boys are participating in household chores, more joint decision-making in the household, wives accessing useful household assets (motorbikes, bicycles, radios), husbands and wives are sharing finances like paying for school fees, and husbands are supporting their wives' farming activities.

In the Assembly's experience working with the communities to mainstream gender and address gender gaps, the Gender Desk Officer and GSN members have taken note of several lessons learning, including:

- The Gender Support Network has given a voice to gender in the districts, and improved collaboration on gender efforts between decentralized departments and civil sector stakeholders.
- Monitoring and continued engagement with community members is critical to supporting communities to address gender issues.
- Leadership's commitment to gender is critical, especially to have adequate resources to implement the Gender Desk Officer Action Plans.
- The Gender Model Family takes a holistic approach to address gender inequities at the HH level, engaging men in child rearing and HH chores, including women in decision making and providing a

#### **District Performance Summary**

Since 2016, Kpandai through their GDO and with support from the RDOG, have carried out a number of initiatives, including:

##### Community Outreaches:

- 120 sensitizations in 85 communities
- 4,765 men & women reached

##### Gender Support Network:

- Year inaugurated: 2018
- 22 Members (15 men & 7 women)
- 7 Meetings held

##### Gender Model Family (GMF):

- 5 communities engaged
- 62 GMFs (62 husbands & 79 wives) recruited, trained and supported

platform for stronger communication and harmony in the home. This holistic model helps to address gender barriers to other interventions by building a strong cohesive family, like engaging men more in the health and nutrition of the children, giving women and children more access to family resources.

Based on the success of the efforts under RING, Kpandai has identified a number of key areas it wishes to continue after the close of the project, including:

- Gender Support Network Meetings to continue effective coordination of gender efforts in the district.
- Sensitizations and monitoring of beneficiaries to keep communities actively engaged in addressing gender inequities.
- Monitoring of GMF Families and expansion of GMF model, if possible.
- More Advocacy on the inclusion of women in community management positions.

For more information on the upcoming plans, please review the district’s [Sustainability Strategy](#) found at the end of the document.

## Public Financial Management

**Public Financial Management**

*Focus Areas:* Public Financial Management (PFM) under the RING project considers eight key thematic areas, including budget planning & execution, accounting & reporting, procurement, human resources & payroll, information technology (IT), cash management & treasury, internal controls, and audit & compliance.

*Rationale for PFM Efforts:* PFM activities under RING aimed to strengthen the Planning, Organizing, Controlling and Monitoring of the use of public financial resource to ensure that funds are used for their intended purposes, accounted for properly and achieve ‘value for money’. To achieve this aim it become necessary to put in place measures to address mostly inherent and control risks (see below) in the existing PFM system in a way that not only protects USG government investments in the RING Project, but also to further strengthens GoG systems for managing its own funds & resources.

*Risk Assessments:* Before the RING project officially began, USAID undertook an assessment of each MMDA’s PFM systems based on the above focus areas. The assessment resulted in the identification of PFM risks categorized as critical, High, Medium and Low and further sub-divided MMDAs into directly funding (by USAID) and indirectly funded or sub-contracted (through Global Communities)

*Risk Mitigation Plans:* With the support of USAID and GC Kpandai Assembly (EGMA) put in place a risk mitigation plan to address the PFM gaps over time thereby building more robust internal control systems. By the close of the project, the Assembly had addressed 100% of risks through a number of mechanisms, including training, regular meetings between key district officials, receiving coaching and mentorship from Global Communities RING and regional counterparts, and providing documentation of such efforts.

Before engaging with the RING project, the Assembly received a financial management risk assessment by USAID with the following outcomes:

Table 7 Summary of PFM Risk Areas Identified Pre-RING Implementation

PFM Thematic Area	Risk Levels (# of Risks)	PFM Thematic Area	Risk Levels (# of Risks)
Budget Planning & Execution	High(1) Medium (1)	Cash Management & Treasury	High (2) Medium (1)
Procurement	Medium (3) Low (1)	Accounting & Reporting	Medium (2)
Information Technology (IT)	Medium (1)	Internal Controls	Critical (1)
Human Resources & Payroll	High (1) Medium (2) Low (1)	Audit & Compliance	High (1)

Based on the outcome of this assessment, the Kpandai District Assembly was classified as a sub-contracted district, meaning it was eligible to receive USG funding indirectly via Global Communities to implement selected agriculture, livelihoods, nutrition, WASH and good governance interventions. The assessment also detailed areas that the Assembly should proactively address, regardless of its classification, in order to build a more robust internal control system. To address these gaps, the Assembly undertook a number of steps, including training key personnel in PFM-related GOG laws, receiving mentorship and coaching from USAID and Global Communities RING in best practices, and putting in place internal measures and controls in line with GOG policies.

Over time, the Assembly addressed some of the most critical PFM gaps and this, combined with technical performance assessments carried out by the NRCC, USAID and Global Communities allowed the district to transition to the G2G funding mechanism, an indication of improvements in the Assembly's financial management systems. By the close of the project, the Assembly had addressed 100% of its previously identified PFM risks. Some notable outcomes of these efforts include development of an electronic Fixed Asset Register, strengthened procurement function, preparation of Strategic IT Policy and Plan, establishment and training of an Audit Committee, and establishment of a budgetary control reporting system, among other things. In the past three years (2015-2017), the Assembly has also performed well in external audits as there were no significant findings in the key areas of procurement, cash and asset management, and compliance. These are promising results for future management of GOG and donor funds.

Throughout this process, the Assembly has identified a number of promising outcomes and lessons learned, including:

- Though cumbersome at times, adherence to GOG and RING project guidelines for public financial management results in prudent use of funds, ensuring transparency and accountability for all resources that are funneled through the Assembly.
- Effective teamwork and collaboration between implementing departments ensures timely delivery of public services through robust cash planning and timely liquidation reporting. Coordination between departments also ensures that cash requests are based on actual need, thereby reducing the instance of excess or insufficient cash (available at a time) to execute planned activities.

Based on these positive outcomes, the Assembly has identified several steps it can undertake to ensure that PFM gains remain institutionalized. Among the steps include enhancing the independence of the Internal Audit Units by making available a separate budget for field work and, as part of the IT Strategic Plan, implementing electronic record keeping and revenue data management systems to enhance IGF collection. The IT was fashioned in full anticipated of the Ghana Integrated Financial Management Information System (an electronic funds management system designed to improve uniformity in accounting at all levels of government). More information on the activities the Assembly intends to continue beyond the life of the RING Project can be found in the district's [Sustainability Strategy](#).

## Monitoring and Evaluation Systems Strengthening

Building on The Government of Ghana's increasing demand for the use of data in decision-making, under RING, the Assembly has made significant strides in its internal monitoring and evaluation systems. In addition to basic capacity building in monitoring activity implementation, reporting using standardized templates, and the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) to support development planning, the

Assembly worked closely with the NRCC and the Global Communities RING technical team to systematize its approach for reporting data to the region and accessing that data for future analysis through the newly-established Northern Regional Management Information System (NORMIS).

To support these efforts, the region formed a core team to support down streamed trainings to the district-level. Each district now also has a number of trained user managers that can access the data and share it among departments for further analysis. The database was successfully launched in May 2019 and district teams were subsequently trained by the core regional team. Data entry is done in accordance with the Performance Indicator Reference Sheet, or PIRS, developed by the regional core team with input from some key Assembly staff. In line with the National Development Planning Commission's (NDPC) mandate that all regions should consolidate district-level data for reporting to the national level, the indicators featured here are sourced from national data needs and region-specific needs. The PIRS developed for each indicator also includes information on data collection methodology and sources, and how often and when the data should be collected and reported on. To manage the data collated at the district level, the Assembly also established a basic Management Information Center, equipped with the requisite computers and storage software and hardware.

To ensure that this system is maintained by GOG beyond the life of the RING project, the Kpandai District Assembly, along with other Northern Region MMDAs, are exploring options to directly fund the annual subscription costs for the cloud-based storage system. In cooperation with other districts in the region, costs will be minimal and the investment worthwhile for long-term strengthening of internal monitoring and evaluation systems.

## Lessons Learned and Areas for Opportunity

Throughout implementation of the RING Project, the Assembly has noted a number of areas that have had an impact on development programming in the district. These lessons learned have implications for how the Assembly carries out its day-to-day work and how it approaches future development efforts. Some of these lessons include, but are not limited to:

- *The role of leadership in implementation:* sustaining an engaged leadership at the Assembly is critical concerning the success of interventions in all sectors. The Chief Executive, as the highest level of authority in the Assembly, must have a solid grasp on programmatic themes and must be willing to regularly engage the implementation team, prioritize the release of funds, and closely monitor implementation and fiscal accountability. The Coordinating Director and Heads of Department also have a critical role in fostering success in implementation. In addition to managing their staff, they are tasked with monitoring progress to ensure timely implementation towards a successful completion, ensuring that officers receive funds to implement and are held accountable for results, and that delegation of efforts occurs, and reducing the emergence of bottlenecks.
- *Delegation of efforts:* in line with the above lesson learned, delegating activities on a large project such as RING must occur, otherwise individual staff who must also fulfil mandates in accordance with their GOG role may become overwhelmed with the responsibilities, particularly during seasons with time-sensitive efforts, and activity progress can stall. Therefore, engaging multiple technical team members in implementation and monitoring duties can help ease this burden, and also create a greater sense of ownership of the results by the department as a whole, rather than individuals.
- *Coordination between and within technical departments:* The RING project sought to holistically address the issues of poverty and malnutrition among the district's most vulnerable households. As such, a

multi-faceted approach was adapted to planning and implementation. Over the life of the project, the level of coordination between the various technical units increased and improved, as both leadership and the implementation team noted its significance in ensuring that complex programming was successfully delivered. To this end, the Assembly instituted routine coordination meetings between implementing technical units, promoted joint implementation of cross-cutting activities (i.e. utilization trainings and gender or social protection-based community outreach), and encouraged sharing of information between and within implementing departments. As a result, technical knowledge and skills have expanded among Assembly staff, enabling all staff to speak more confidently to basic information in agriculture, livelihoods, nutrition, and WASH, no matter that officer's technical sector.

## Next Steps: Sustaining Gains Made under RING

Upon review of the RING's progress over the life of the project, the Assembly has identified a number of areas as having high potential for development progress within the district, if continued. Additionally, there are some project efforts that the Assembly can build upon, taking the activity to the next level. In the following pages, there are a number of approaches, interventions, and strategies outlined that the Assembly has prioritized for implementation over the next several years. In some cases, the Assembly will have the funds or resources available to carry out the efforts, while in others, there will be a reliance on partnership with current or future development programs.

Main Technical Area	Activity Selected	Sub-Activity	Action Points	Strategies to Carry out Action Points	Baseline Data/ Existing Data used to Set Targets	Targets	Time-frame	MMDA Department/ Unit Responsible	Resources Required	Resource Acquisition Plan(s)
Livelihoods	VSLA	Monitoring of VLSA Groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Identification of communities,</li> <li>2) Identification of members,</li> <li>3) Formation of group,</li> <li>4) Development of group constitution,</li> <li>5) Training of group on VSLA principles,</li> <li>6) Commencement of share purchases, and</li> <li>7) Entry of group data into the SAVIX database</li> <li>8) Identification and training of champions</li> <li>9) Strengthen the capacity of group members to ensure ownership and sustainability</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Engage Dept. of Community Dev't to compare existing VSLA community locations to communities without registered VSLAs</li> <li>2) Set clear criteria for group membership - any demographics targeted should be clearly communicated during community entry</li> <li>3) Evaluate community response to note # of groups needed and begin engagements for leadership elections</li> <li>4) Guide leadership through Constitution development and ratification process</li> <li>5) Conduct training via district VSLA team</li> <li>6) Follow established guidelines on VSLA rollout</li> <li>7) Ensure VSLA implementation team MIS officer gets data on a monthly basis and updates accordingly</li> </ol>	241 in 128 communities VSLAs in the District (approximately 6,367 (Female 6232 Male 137) members and 4.65 % of district population)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30% of district population participating in VSLA</li> <li>* 100 more groups (approximately 2,000 more people)</li> </ol>	November 2019 - December 2020	Community Development, with support from existing District VSLA team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 5600 cedis for community visits (x visits per community over x months)</li> <li>* Laptop access for SAVIX data input</li> <li>* Phone credit resources for collection of SAVIX data from group secretaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 25% of funds to come from Common Fund</li> <li>* 75% of funds to come from Area Council IGF (proportional to where VSLAs are found)</li> <li>* Community Development currently has access to a laptop (may need servicing annually at a cost of XX cedis)</li> </ul>
Agriculture	Crop Support: Groundnuts	Promotion of Groundnut Cultivation with Emphasis on Aflatoxin Reduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Sensitization of VSLAs for Groundnut Production</li> <li>2) Procurement and distribution of inputs (ploughing &amp; seeds)</li> <li>3) Land Preparation,</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engage Dept. of Agric, AEA's to undertake / execute all the activities slated for the cultivation of groundnuts</li> <li>2. The department facilitates the distribution of seeds and ploughing( if possible) to VSLAs</li> </ol>	20 Communities in the District (approximately 500 members and 4% of district population)	4% of district population participating in groundnut production	March 2020 - June 2020	Dept. of Agric / Kpandai District Assembly	GH¢ 503,540.00 expected for all the activities involved in the groundnut intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 25% of funds to come from Common Fund</li> <li>* 75% of funds to come from Area Council IGF (proportional to where VSLAs are found)</li> <li>* Staff of agric.</li> </ul>



Main Technical Area	Activity Selected	Sub-Activity	Action Points	Strategies to Carry out Action Points	Baseline Data/ Existing Data used to Set Targets	Targets	Time-frame	MMDA Department/ Unit Responsible	Resources Required	Resource Acquisition Plan(s)
		n and Integrated Soil Fertility Management	Planting, and Field Care Training 4) Harvesting & Storage Training with an Emphasis on Aflatoxin Reduction 5) Monitoring Visits							Dept. have laptops and means of transport (motorbikes)
Agriculture	Crop Support: LGV	Promotion of Leafy Green Vegetable Cultivation	1) Sensitization of VSLAs for LGV Production 2) Procurement and distribution of inputs (ploughing & seeds) 3) Training of VSLAs on principles of vegetables production 4) Land Preparation, Planting, and Field Care Training 5) Monitoring Visits	1. Engage Dept. of Agric, AEAs to undertake / execute all the activities slated for the cultivation of LGVs 2. The department facilitates the distribution of seeds and ploughing( if possible) to VSLAs	10 Communities in the District (approximately 300 members and 3% of district population)	3% of district population participating in groundnut production	Sept 2019 - June 2020	Dept. of Agric / Kpandai District Assembly	GHC 54,530.00 expected for all the activities involved in the LGV intervention	* 25% of funds to come from Common Fund * 75% of funds to come from Area Council IGF (proportional to where VSLAs are found) * Staff of agric. Dept. have laptops and means of transport (motorbikes)
Agriculture	Crop Support: OFSP	OFSP Cultivation	1) Sensitization of OFSPs for VSLA 2) Land Preparation, Planting, and Field Care Training 3) Harvesting & Post-Harvest Storage Training 4) Processing & Utilization Training 5) Monitoring Visits	1. Engage Dept. of Agric, AEAs to undertake / execute all the activities slated for the cultivation of OFSPs 2. The department facilitates the distribution of Vines and ploughing( if possible) to VSLAs	100 Communities in the District (approximately 60,000 members and 50% of district population)	50% of district population participating in groundnut production	June 2019 - Nov. 2020	Dept. of Agric / DCD / Kpandai District Assembly	GHC 643,550.00 expected for all the activities involved in the OFSP intervention	* 25% of funds to come from Common Fund * 75% of funds to come from Area Council IGF (proportional to where VSLAs are found) * Staff of agric. Dept. have laptops and means of transport (motorbikes)
Agriculture	Agriculture Extension Services Support	Quality Extension Delivery to VSLA Groups	1) Provide crop extension services to VSLA Groups 2) Provide Vet. extension services to VSLA Groups	Engage Dept. of Agric, AEAs for the delivery of proven quality extension services to farmers	All the four intervention areas that will be engaged by	508% of district population participating in four intervention	March 2019 - June 2020	Dept. of Agric / Kpandai District Assembly	GHC 43,120.00 expected for all the activities involved in the four intervention areas	* 25% of funds to come from Common Fund * 75% of funds to come from Area Council IGF

Main Technical Area	Activity Selected	Sub-Activity	Action Points	Strategies to Carry out Action Points	Baseline Data/ Existing Data used to Set Targets	Targets	Time-frame	MMDA Department/ Unit Responsible	Resources Required	Resource Acquisition Plan(s)
					the department	areas				(proportional to where VSLAs are found) * Staff of agric. Dept. have laptops and means of transport (motorbikes)
Agriculture	OFSP (Vine Multiplication & Community Use)	Establishment of One-Acre Vine Multiplication Site	1) Establishment of One-Acre Vine Multiplication Site: Site Preparation, Cost of Planting Materials and Site Maintenance 2) Distribution of Vines to VSLA Groups	Engage Dept. of Agric, AEAs for the establishment and management of the vine multiplication site 2. The department facilitates the distribution of vines to VSLAs	1 Community in the District (approximately 50 members and 0.012% of district population)	0.012% of district population participating in groundnut production	March 2019 - June 2020	Dept. of Agric / Kpandai District Assembly	GHC 50,200.00 expected for all the activities involved in the establishment and management of the vine multiplication site	* 25% of funds to come from Common Fund * 75% of funds to come from Area Council IGF (proportional to where VSLAs are found) * Staff of agric. Dept. have laptops and means of transport (motorbikes)
Livelihoods	Small Ruminants	Provision of clinical services to farmers	1) Treatment and vaccination of Existing stocks 2) Monitoring and supervision	Engage Dept. of Agric, Vet Staff to carry out treatments and vaccinations. 2. Vet AEAs to conduct routine monitoring exercises	Ring Existing Ruminant Communities in the District (approximately 600 HHs and 3% of district population)	3% of district population participating in ruminant production	July, 2019 - Nov. 2020	Dept. of Agric / Kpandai District Assembly	GHC 33,540.00 expected for all the activities involved in the groundnut intervention	* 25% of funds to come from Common Fund * 75% of funds to come from Area Council IGF (proportional to where VSLAs are found) * Staff of agric. Dept. have laptops and means of transport (motorbikes)
Nutrition	Technical Support Visits to (District to Facility)	Quarterly Technical Support Visits to	Quarterly Technical Support Visits to Health Staff.	District to conduct Technical Support Visit to health staff on CMAM, C-IYCF, ANAEMIA, GMP, COMMODITIES MANAGEMENT, ANC ETC.		4 Quarterly Support Visits to Health Staff	Quarterly	GHS	Fuel, Stationary	IGF, DA

Main Technical Area	Activity Selected	Sub-Activity	Action Points	Strategies to Carry out Action Points	Baseline Data/ Existing Data used to Set Targets	Targets	Time-frame	MMDA Department/ Unit Responsible	Resources Required	Resource Acquisition Plan(s)
	Health Staff	Health Staff.								
Nutrition	Technical Support Visits (Facility to Community) to Health Volunteers	Quarterly Technical Support Visits to Health Volunteers.	Quarterly Technical Support Visits to Health Volunteers.	Facility staff to conduct Quarterly Technical Support Visits Health Volunteers.		4 Quarterly Support Visits to Health Volunteers.	Quarterly	GHS	Fuel, Stationary	IGF, DA
Nutrition	Quality Improvement	QI Meetings . Coaches Support Visits to QI Meetings	Monthly Facility QI Team Meetings. Quarterly Coaches Support Visits to QI teams. Quarterly Learning Sessions. Annual Harvest Meetings	Facilities to Organise Monthly QI meetings at facilities. Quarterly Learning Sessions to be Organised at the Sub-District Level. Quarterly Coaches Visits to be integrated into Quarterly Technical Support Visits to health Facilities. Annual harvest Meeting to be Organised at the District Level	The District Formed 21 QI Teams in All health Facilities with monthly meetings conducted.	21 QI Meetings a Monthly. 4 Quarterly Coaches Visits a year. 4 Learning Sessions a year. 1 Annual Harvest Meeting a year.	Monthly. Quarterly .Annually.	Ghana Health Service	Fuel, Stationary	IGF. District Assembly
Nutrition	Management of SAM(CMAM)	Active Case Search. SAM Case Management. Technical Support and On-the Job Training to Improve Programme Quality.	Active Case Search. SAM Case Management. Technical Support and On-the Job training to Improve programme Quality	Active Case search by health staff during Outreach Services, home visits, OPD and Health Volunteers during home visits at community. Case Management of SAM at Health facilities. Technical Support and On the Job training to Health Staff and Health volunteers during quarterly technical support visits.	All essential Health Staff and Active health Volunteers are trained on CMAM.		Weekly. Monthly. Quarterly	Ghana Health Service	Fuel, Stationary	IGF, DA

Main Technical Area	Activity Selected	Sub-Activity	Action Points	Strategies to Carry out Action Points	Baseline Data/ Existing Data used to Set Targets	Targets	Time-frame	MMDA Department/ Unit Responsible	Resources Required	Resource Acquisition Plan(s)
Nutrition	Targeted counselling services (C-IYCF)	Active Screening for Children with SAM and Underweight. Registration of all Pregnant women and children with faltering Growth. Monthly Counselling of all Pregnant women and Children registered under C-IYCF. Technical Support and On the Job Training to health staff and community health volunteers.	Active Screening for Children with SAM and Underweight. Registration of all Pregnant women and children with faltering Growth. Monthly Counselling of all Pregnant women and Children registered under C-IYCF. Technical Support and On the Job Training to health staff and community health volunteers.	Registration of pregnant women at ANC. Triaging and registration of women at CWC, Outreach Services and Home visits. Conduct regular home visits and counselling. Technical Support and On the Job Training during Quarterly Technical Support Visits.	All essential Health Staff and Active health Volunteers are trained on C-IYCF.		Weekly. Monthly. Quarterly	Ghana Health Service	Fuel, Stationary	IGF, DA
Nutrition	Community Outreach (MTMSG)	MTMSG Monitoring. FTMSG	MTMSG Monitoring. FTMSG Monitoring. Stunting Advocacy Video Show and	MTMSG Monitoring, FTMSG Monitoring and Stunting Advocacy Video Follow Up Through Monthly Outreach Services. Conduct Stunting	5 FTMSG formed and Trained. 188 MTMSG formed from		Quarterly	Ghana Health Service	Fuel	IGF, Community Members, DA

Main Technical Area	Activity Selected	Sub-Activity	Action Points	Strategies to Carry out Action Points	Baseline Data/ Existing Data used to Set Targets	Targets	Time-frame	MMDA Department/ Unit Responsible	Resources Required	Resource Acquisition Plan(s)
	-FTFSG-SAV-INTEGRATED COMMUNITY ACTIVITY)	Monitoring. Stunting Advocacy Video Show and Follow-Ups. Integrated Community Activity	Follow-Ups. Integrated Community Activity	Advocacy Video Show and Integrated Community Activity through community level initiatives.	VSLA groups. Stunting Advocacy Video Shown to Over 240 Community Leaders. 100 integrated Community Activities Carried Out.					
WASH	CLTS	ODF Achievements	DICCS verifications and ODF durbars, as well as support for training and rewarding Natural Leaders and their integration into the Natural Leaders Network							
WASH	CLTS	Natural Leaders Network - Continuation of Existing Effort	1. Provide additional intensive training session for the selected NLs, 2. Support to the NLs for logistical needs to visit their assigned community. 3. Monitoring support for the DA staff to assess performance and collect data on progress (i.e. latrines, tippy taps, and soak away pits constructed), and support for eventual ODF declaration.							

Main Technical Area	Activity Selected	Sub-Activity	Action Points	Strategies to Carry out Action Points	Baseline Data/ Existing Data used to Set Targets	Targets	Time-frame	MMDA Department/ Unit Responsible	Resources Required	Resource Acquisition Plan(s)
Governance	Sub-Structure Strengthening	Quarterly Acs meetings	Organize quarterly Area council meetings at Acs level							
Governance	Citizen's Forums/ Town Hall Meetings	Quarterly Town Hall Meetings	1. Community forums with an emphasis on sharing information with the public 2. Seeking feedback on various issues, and making decisions that may affect the community/district.	1. Area councils are tasked to organise town hall every quarter 2. Area councils are to use part of the 50% ceded revenue to provide water 3. NCCE to support the community mobilization	DA has tried outsourcing organization of town hall meetings to Acs and the results is encouraging	21 Town Hall meetings in a Year	Quarterly	NCCE, DPCU, Acs	Water and Fuel for HODs	* 25% of funds to come from Common Fund * 75% of funds to come from Area Council IGF (proportional to where VSLAs are found) * Implementing Staff have laptops and means of transport (motorbikes)
Governance	Coordination and PFM Meetings	Monthly Coordination and PFM Meeting	1. Review meetings to track PFM progress against risk mitigation plans.	Activity be tied to internal Auditor and external Auditors findings, outstanding risk mitigation measures and weak areas identified in monitoring visits.		4 PFM Meetings in a year	Quarterly	Central Adm.,DAD, GHS,GES,D OSW/CD.E HU	Water and Fuel for HODs	* 25% of funds to come from Common Fund * 75% of funds to come from Area Council IGF (proportional to where VSLAs are found) * Implementing Staff have laptops and means of transport (motorbikes)
Gender	Gender Model Family	Monthly GFM meetings	Carry out review meetings with Families	Monthly follow up meetings		12 meetings in a year	Monthly	DPCU,DOS W/CD	Fuel, Snack& Water	* 25% of funds to come from Common Fund * 75% of funds to come from Area Council IGF (proportional to where VSLAs are found) * Implementing



Main Technical Area	Activity Selected	Sub-Activity	Action Points	Strategies to Carry out Action Points	Baseline Data/ Existing Data used to Set Targets	Targets	Time-frame	MMDA Department/ Unit Responsible	Resources Required	Resource Acquisition Plan(s)
										Staff have laptops and means of transport (motorbikes)
Governance	Joint Monitoring by DPCU	DPCU Quarterly monitoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carry out joint monitoring by members of various technical Departments and units</li> <li>2. Carry out on-spot monitoring by specific departments</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Joint monitoring will be conducted by members of various technical units and district leadership, limited to three visits per year.</li> <li>2. On spot monitoring conducted by specific departments</li> </ol>		3 Joint Monitoring	Quarterly	Central Adm. DAD,GHS,GES,DOSW/CD. EHU, CSOs, Assembly members	Fuel, Lunch, Snack& Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 100% of funds to come from Common Fund</li> <li>* Staff of all Decentralised Dept. have Desktops, laptops and means of transport (motorbikes)</li> </ul>
Governance	District Monitoring & Evaluation Systems Strengthening Efforts	NORMIS training	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identification of participants and indicators</li> <li>2. Training of data entering and analysis</li> <li>3. Ensure the effective data management</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organise training for USERS of the NORMIS</li> <li>2. Create a share drive for use by all officers</li> <li>3. Linking the NORMIS platform to the District Local Area Network</li> </ol>		25 officers	By June ending	Central Adm.,DAD, GHS,GES,D OSW/CD.E HU	Consultancy fee, lunch and Snacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* 100% of funds to come from Common Fund</li> <li>* Staff of all Decentralised Dept. have Desktops, laptops and means of transport (motorbikes)</li> </ul>

## Annex I – RING Evidence-based Activity Menu (2018)

Activity	RING 2018 Agriculture and Livelihoods Activity Menu	RING Result
<b>VSLA</b>	Community level savings groups that build financial literacy, business skills, trust, and cohesion among members, provides access to small loans, and encourages economic growth and investments in income-generating activities.	Increased access to savings & credit among target households
<b>OFSP</b>	OFSP cultivation incorporating GAPs for vine and root production and consumption, with a priority on group or block style farming; vines will be distributed through the VSLA platform to existing groups who have prepared one half-acre plot for their group farm.	Increased availability of affordable, diverse plant & animal foods throughout the year among target households
<b>Soybean</b>	Soybean cultivation on half-acre plot per beneficiary incorporating GAPs and integrated pest management for improved yields	Increased availability of affordable, diverse plant & animal foods throughout the year among target households
<b>LGV</b>	Dry season farming of vegetables grown on 1,000 meters square plots using gravity fed drip irrigation systems; also includes support for OFSP vine multiplication and tuber production during the dry season	Increased availability of affordable, diverse plant & animal foods throughout the year among target households
<b>Small Ruminants</b>	Sheep rearing and animal husbandry training for households on proper housing, feeding, disease control/recognition, and use of animal droppings for soil improvement; also includes community livestock workers trained and equipped for community-based support	Increased diversification of income throughout the year among target households
<b>Poultry</b>	Provide basic business skills and production management training through the distribution of poultry (selected districts)	Increased diversification of income throughout the year among target households
<b>Groundnut</b>	Groundnut cultivation on half-acre plot per beneficiary incorporating GAPs and integrated pest management for improved yields (selected districts)	Increased availability of affordable, diverse plant and animal foods throughout the year among target households
RING 2018 Nutrition Activity Menu		RING Result
<b>Health Facility Strengthening</b>	Provide logistical support (fuel) and technical assistance for carrying out well-planned, high quality community outreach visits with emphasis on nutrition service delivery and improving routine data quality	Increased adoption of positive nutrition behaviors among target households
<b>Cooking Demonstrations</b>	Demonstrate utilization of locally-available foods to promote dietary diversity, timely and appropriate complementary feeding, and adequate maternal diet. Targets health facilities and strategically-identified communities and will not overlap with similar agriculture activities in soybean and OFSP cultivation communities.	Increased adoption of positive nutrition behaviors among target households
<b>Integrated Mass Media Outreach</b>	Promote social and behavior change to increase uptake of key agriculture, nutrition, sanitation and hygiene practices and services through mass media including video screening, road shows and community forums (e.g. durbars) Using The First 1000 Days concept and additional messages for children 2-5 years old.	Increased adoption of positive nutrition behaviors among target households
<b>Technical Support Visits</b>	Provide logistical support (fuel) for routine monitoring and Technical Supervision Visits to the DHMT and health workers to improve quality of services and provide on-site mentoring and coaching (using a checklist)	Increased adoption of positive nutrition behaviors among target households
<b>Quality Improvement</b>	Promote QI methods at the district and facility-levels to solve problems and bottlenecks around nutrition service delivery by supporting monthly QI team meetings, quarterly learning sessions, and annual harvest meetings	Increased adoption of positive nutrition behaviors among target households
<b>ENA Monitoring</b>	Provide supportive monitoring, mentoring and coaching to non-health sector DA staff and community leaders previously trained on ENAs	Increased adoption of positive nutrition behaviors among target households
<b>Mother-to-Mother Support Groups</b>	Establish MTMSG in RING target communities, overlapped with VSLAs, to promote improved nutrition for pregnant women and infant and young child feeding practices (The First 1000 Days)	Increased adoption of positive nutrition behaviors among target households
<b>Father-to-Father Support Groups</b>	Establish FTFSG in RING target communities including husbands of women in existing MTMSGs to promote improved nutrition for pregnant women and infant and young child feeding practices (The First 1000 Days)	Increased adoption of positive nutrition behaviors among target households
<b>Anemia Training</b>	Develop skills base of health workers on anemia prevention and treatment, and of community health volunteers on anemia prevention with an emphasis on counseling ( <i>available for selected districts with demonstrated low coverage thus far - template has been removed from</i>	Increased adoption of positive nutrition behaviors among target households

	<i>work plan file, but can be re-included if district wishes to hold these trainings)</i>	
	<b>RING 2018 Water Access, Sanitation &amp; Hygiene Activity Menu</b>	<b>RING Result</b>
<b>CLTS</b>	Community Led Total Sanitation - takes the community through a number of steps geared toward the realization that open defecation leads to the consumption of human feces; the approach places high value on community members devising local solutions to sanitation needs. Sub-activities include triggering, monitoring, DICCS verifications and ODF durbars, as well as support for training and rewarding Natural Leaders and their integration into the Natural Leaders Network.	Increased adoption of hygiene and sanitation behaviors among target households and their communities
<b>Natural Leaders Network under CLTS</b>	Support for a maximum of 20 communities per district with 2 selected Natural Leaders coming from communities that have already achieved ODF status. This will include an additional intensive training session for the selected NLs, direct support to the NLs for logistical needs to visit their assigned community (maximum of 16 visits), monitoring support for the DA staff to assess performance and collect data on progress (i.e. latrines, tippy taps, and soak away pits constructed), and support for eventual ODF declaration. This activity will be tied heavily to district performance, with strict adherence to pilot protocols (i.e. no more than 2 NLs/community, only 1 community per pair of NLs, restricted time frame of 12 weeks).	Increased adoption of hygiene and sanitation behaviors among target households and their communities
<b>Hand-Washing Stations for Strategic Institutions</b>	Hand washing station installation in public institutions with high traffic from women of reproductive age and children under five (CHPS compounds, Health Centers, KGs and crèches) and supportive follow-up outreach	Increased adoption of hygiene and sanitation behaviors among target households and their communities
<b>Institutional Latrine Rehabilitation</b>	Funding for minor repairs to existing latrines in public institutions with high traffic from women of reproductive age and children under five (CHPS compounds, Health Centers, KGs and crèches)	Increased adoption of hygiene and sanitation behaviors among target households and their communities
<b>Borehole &amp; Livestock Watering Repairs (with WSMT &amp; Pump Caretaker Training)</b>	Rehabilitation of existing boreholes and reconstruction of separate livestock watering areas; should include supplementary training for WSMTs and PCTs, as well as community sensitization on proper borehole maintenance and usage; Area Mechanic trainings can be included on an as-needed basis.	Increased adoption of hygiene and sanitation behaviors among target households and their communities
	<b>RING 2018 Governance Activity Menu</b>	<b>RING Result</b>
<b>Monthly RING Team Coordination Meetings</b>	District led meetings with representatives from the various technical units to discuss RING project progress and areas for collaboration or coordination.	Strengthened capacity of target DAs and the NRCC to respond to Community priorities for improved nutrition
<b>Collaborative Planning &amp; Budgeting Meetings</b>	Stakeholder meetings (2 per year) to review RING progress and get input for plans for the coming year - should include key stakeholders and be open to the public.	Strengthened capacity of target DAs and the NRCC to respond to Community priorities for improved nutrition
<b>Social Protection Outreach at the Community Level</b>	Provision of logistical support to carry out community and household visits and perform follow-up actions, as needed. These visits will center on ensuring households are linked with the appropriate social safety nets (NHIS, LEAP, SFP, etc.) and are linked to other supportive mechanisms, such as RING-supported VSLA (where possible), and monitored for positive health and nutrition outcomes (i.e. child health record book and immunization record reviews, growth chart monitoring, MUAC measurements, etc.). Will also support quarterly District Social Protection Committee Meetings and some community-level committee engagements.	Strengthened capacity of target DAs and the NRCC to respond to Community priorities for improved nutrition
<b>PFM Strengthening via Technical Training &amp; Progress Review Meetings</b>	Review meetings to track PFM progress against risk mitigation plans. Activities must be tied to outstanding risk mitigation measures and weak areas identified in subsequent monitoring visits.	Strengthened capacity of target DAs and the NRCC to respond to Community priorities for improved nutrition
<b>Gender Desk Officer Action Planning</b>	Multi-step process which may include: appointing a Gender Desk Officer, reviewing existing work plans, and allocating funding for the implementation of GDO activities.	Strengthened capacity of target DAs and the NRCC to respond to Community priorities for improved nutrition
<b>District Sub-Structure Strengthening</b>	Strengthening of Area/Zonal/Town Councils by providing logistical support for regular meetings. Additional capacity building training on	Strengthened capacity of target DAs and the NRCC to monitor efforts for nutrition & livelihoods

	Local Economic Development will be offered, building upon trainings that were conducted during the first phase of the rollout.	
<b>Citizens Forums</b>	Community forums with an emphasis on sharing information with the public, seeking feedback on various issues, and making decisions that may affect the community/district. Prioritization will be on making meetings more effective and efficient, ensuring agendas are set according to GOG guidelines and that follow-up actions occur.	Strengthened capacity of target DAs and the NRCC to respond to Community priorities for improved nutrition
<b>Community Action Planning (CAP)</b>	Activity will be limited to districts with currently low CAPs coverage of RING communities. Districts with high CAPs coverage may opt to develop Area Council Action Plans, which will support and be integrated with sub-structure strengthening efforts, in line with NDPC guidelines. All plans will feature an emphasis on including input from vulnerable groups (young women, PWDs, elderly, etc.) on practical activities they can undertake with the DA related to livelihoods, nutrition and WASH. <i>[Activity is limited to those districts with &lt;50% coverage of CAPs in RING communities so far - for those achieving more than 50% coverage, the focus will be on Area Action Plans, under the Sub-Structure Strengthening Activity]</i>	Strengthened capacity of target communities to integrate nutrition and livelihood priorities
<b>Establishment of Management Information Center within the District Registry</b>	Activity provides logistical support to outfit an existing space at the Assembly, as well as capacity building training for the managing officer, to maintain and analyze district records related to activity implementation, monitoring, and results of interventions. Recommended logistics are a desk top computer, with a printer-copier-scanner, a tablet/strong smart phone for the managing officer, a desk and chairs, and some shelves and filing cabinets. Final recommendations on the specifications are forthcoming from the, but GC RING recommends each district blocks off GHs 10,000 from their 2018 budget to ensure they have enough funds to set up the office.	Strengthened capacity of target DAs and the NRCC to monitor efforts for nutrition & livelihoods
<b>Coordinated Monitoring Visits by DPCU</b>	Joint monitoring conducted by members of various technical units and district leadership, limited to two visits per year as general monitoring is incorporated into all other interventions.	Strengthened capacity of target DAs and the NRCC to monitor efforts for nutrition & livelihoods
<b>District Logistical Support &amp; Management</b>	Consolidated activity for recurring expenditures that support all units in general project implementation. Will include vehicle maintenance, phone & internet credit, and the purchase of office equipment, stationery, and motorbikes (as justified by detailed distribution plan and up-to-date Fixed Asset Register)	Strengthened capacity of target DAs and the NRCC to monitor efforts for nutrition & livelihoods









*Photo: Kpandai District CLTS Implementation Team. As of the publication of this report, Kpandai stands second in the region in the inter-district ODF League Table in terms of number of communities now open defecation free, the number of households with latrines and hand washing stations, and the district's demonstrated commitment to achieving ODF Districtwide status.*

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**Disclaimer:** this report was compiled with data from the RING Project and experiences by the Kpandai District Assembly and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the US Government.

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