



AgReach at the University of Illinois

April 1, 2019 ACE OIP Advisory Committee Meeting
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AgReach seeks to **Build and strengthen the capacity** of systems, institutions, governments, NGOs, programs and individuals to better respond to the needs of both men and women smallholder farmers, through **extension and advisory services**, for **developmental impact**

CORE COMPETENCIES

Capacity building of extension workers and farmers

Gender-responsive and **nutrition sensitive** institution building

Human and institutional capacity development in **higher education**

Agricultural **extension system** development

Action-oriented research and rigorous monitoring and evaluation
Policy development and review

Where We Work



Our work spans **4 continents** and has reached **more than 50 countries** to date, **enabling rural clients** to receive **improved services** from **strengthened extension systems**.

Our Portfolio



SANE

2015-2020

\$15M USD

USAID-funded

Malawi

Strengthening Agricultural and Nutrition Extension

Strengthen extension system and stakeholder engagement platforms

Build capacity for extension workers and farmers

Improve coordination of extension service providers

Improve research-extension linkages

MEAS

2010-2016

\$9.2M USD

USAID-funded

40+ countries across 5 continents

11.5M clients receiving improved extension services

Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services

Transform and improve extension and advisory systems

Ensure systems play a stronger role in increasing farm incomes

Enhance systems to improve livelihoods among rural poor, especially women farmers



INGENAES

2014-2018

\$7M USD

USAID-funded

Feed the Future

9 countries

Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services

Reduce gender gaps in agricultural extension services

Cultivate empowerment of women farmers

Apply gender-responsive and nutrition-sensitive extension approaches to engage men and women



FAST

2013-2015

\$5.6M USD

USAID-funded

Tajikistan

Farmer Advisory Services Tajikistan

Design and implement extension program for household farms, especially supporting women

Support development of agriculture, water, and land policy

Establish extension systems in 11 districts in Khatlon Province

SEAS

2013-2015

\$2.6M USD

USAID-funded

Georgia

Strengthening Extension and Advisory Services in Georgia

Develop extension policies and build capacity in extension staff

Share best practices for orchard and vineyard management and soil training



Also: USAID funded AREA Project in Haiti; USAID funded WELD Project in Sierra Leone; State Dept activity in Sierra Leone; DFID funded SPHEIR higher ed activity in Sierra Leone; USAID funded Post Harvest Loss Innovation Lab (Ghana, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guatemala)

Meet the Team

Illinois, U.S.



Paul McNamara



Colette Powers



Austen Moore



Cristina Alvarez
Mingote



Festus Amadu



Hitomi Ho



Maria Jones



Avelardo Rivera

Graduate Research Assistant



Leon Hounnou

SPHEIR, Sierra Leone



Amber Martin

SANE, Malawi



Clodina Chowwa



Stacia Nordin

Consultants



Ben Mueller



Jan Henderson

Impact

Since 2010, AgReach has achieved impressive results, at scale, in areas that have historically proven problematic. These are some of the results from the MEAS Project.



1000

Extension Officers,
subject matter
specialists and policy
makers trained



130

Institutions that
received assistance
and are using training
modules and materials
developed



11,500,000

Rural clients
receiving improved
services from
extension systems



52

Academic papers
and case studies
published on
extension, gender
and nutrition



10

New extension
policies and
strategies and
methods defined

Strengthening Agriculture & Nutrition Extension

SANE project Malawi



Improve the policy environment to promote knowledge sharing across government, donor, NGOs and private sector

- *Mechanism:* Implement a pluralistic and demand-driven extension policy



Strengthen coordination and capacity of extension service providers

- *Mechanism:* Build networks of decision-makers, implementers, and extension experts.



Increase connections between research institutions and extension service providers

- *Mechanism:* Address communication and knowledge gaps and connect research institutions and extension providers.

Impacts of SANE



- SANE's system strengthening approach has far-reaching results
 - Engaging 150 DAESS platforms benefits the **5,407,334 rural people** they represent
 - Significant quantitative and qualitative evidence of increased functionality and performance of extension platforms
- Changes towards empowerment and ownership of services can occur
 - Communities **demanding better services** and **holding providers accountable**
 - Platforms actively **raising own funds** to promote sustainability
 - Districts **leveraging other resources** to expand service access and quality
- Investments in extension can produce multiplier effects
 - Strong systems underpin effective and needs-based services
 - Tangible agricultural and nutritional outcomes occur, which improves quality of life

Current Status

- SANE at its mid-point
- We need to show progress from baseline to midline at different components of the Theory of Change
 - Required to get the project to producing impacts
- Allows for Adaptive Management
- Four major M&E efforts provide this data
 - SCAT assessments of DAESS platforms – Y1 vs Y3 / SANE vs. Non-SANE districts
 - IFPRI/SANE household extension access/quality survey – Y1 vs Y3
 - Rapid Assessment qualitative report – stakeholder feedback on project impacts
 - Agricultural Extension Field Notebook report – training and capacity building effects

DAESS Structures

- Functionality scores increased between Y1 and Y3
 - Are also higher in SANE vs Non-SANE Districts
- Qualitative results confirm this change
 - National-level DAES official: *'Our problem has been to make the (DAESS) system function. With SANE we have realized this.'*

	Non-SANE Districts		SANE Districts					
	2018		2016		2017		2018	
Platforms	Number	Indicator	Number	Indicator	Number	Indicator	Number	Indicator
DAECCS	10	96%	10	n/a	10	95%	10	100%
DSPs	10	10%	10	n/a	10	40%	10	60%
ASPs	103	57%	130	n/a	135	80%	135	80%

Capacity Development

- Capacities have increased in SANE districts
- For example:
 - Adoption of Standard Operating Procedures

	Non-SANE Districts		SANE Districts					
	2018		2016		2017		2018	
Platforms	Number	Indicator	Number	Indicator	Number	Indicator	Number	Indicator
DAECCS	10	100%	10	n/a	10	100%	10	100%
DSPs	10	10%	10	n/a	10	30%	10	80%
ASPs	103	62%	130	n/a	92	99%	135	100%

Policy

- District Development Plans now include agriculture and nutrition more frequently
 - District Agricultural Development Officer: *'SANE has strengthened structures which have resulted in inclusion of agricultural projects in the District Development Plans.'*

Rank	SANE Districts				Non-SANE Districts			
	Blantyre	Dedza	Lilongwe	Mangochi	Mulanje	Ntchisi	Salima	Zomba
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								

Coordination/Collaboration

- Coordination/collaboration/co-location improving
 - Platforms working towards 3-Cs increasing

	Non-SANE Districts		SANE Districts					
	2018		2016		2017		2018	
Platforms	Number	Indicator	Number	Indicator	Number	Indicator	Number	Indicator
DAECCS	10	87%	10	100%	10	90%	10	100%
DSPs	10	17%	10	40%	10	10%	10	53%
ASPs	103	27%	130	50%	92	51%	135	82%

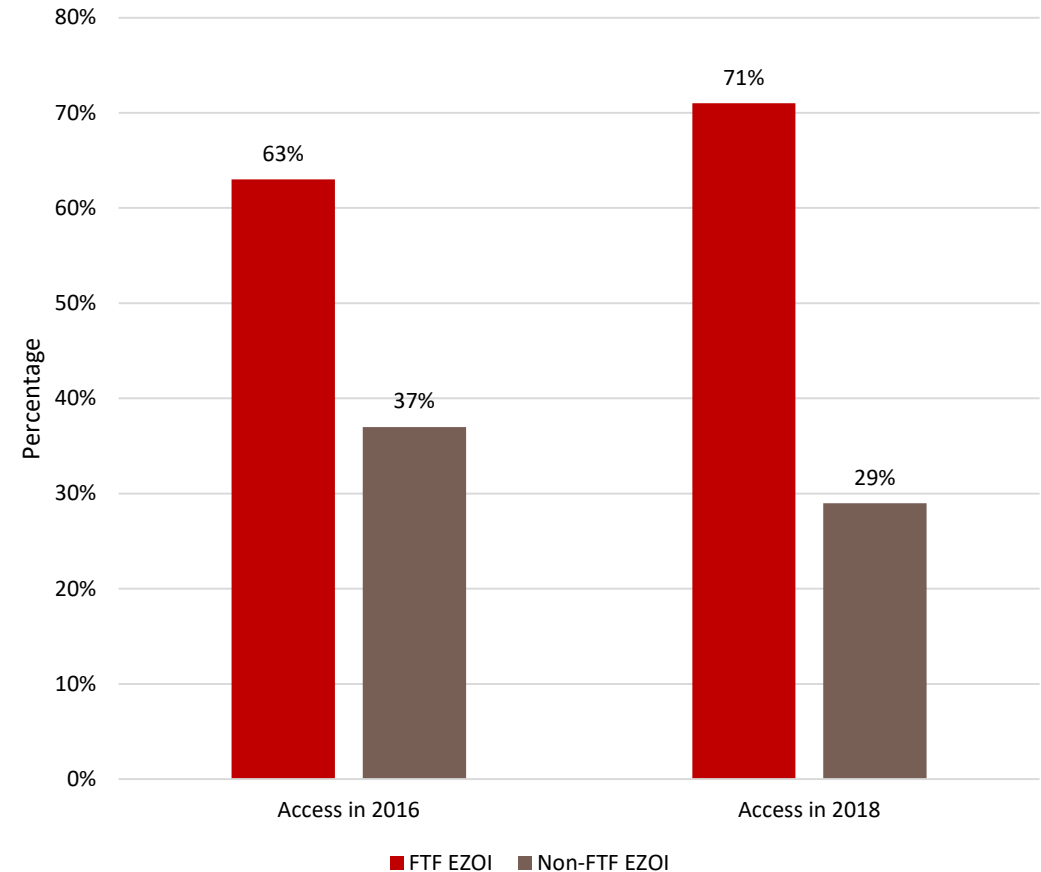
- Involvement of different stakeholders (private sector, NGOs, etc.) increasing
 - *"We are now able to bring all the stakeholders together and connect all agricultural interventions in the district."* DADO in SANE District
- Youth and women involvement also increasing

Farmers' Voice

- Farmers are increasingly advocating for prioritized needs and holding extension providers accountable
 - *"Farmers say what their problems are and they actually have demands. It is not business as usual. Now extension is required to find solutions."* Extension Worker in SANE District
 - VAC member: *'Yes, we have a voice. We communicate with service providers on various issues that are of concern.'*
 - VAC member: *'Previously (NGOs) would bring activities to us without our input. Currently, they depend on the reports that we as farmers present.'*
- Different sentiments in non-SANE districts:
 - ASP member in Salima: *'It's a top-down approach. We are receiving the projects that have been planned at a higher level, not what the community is in need.'*

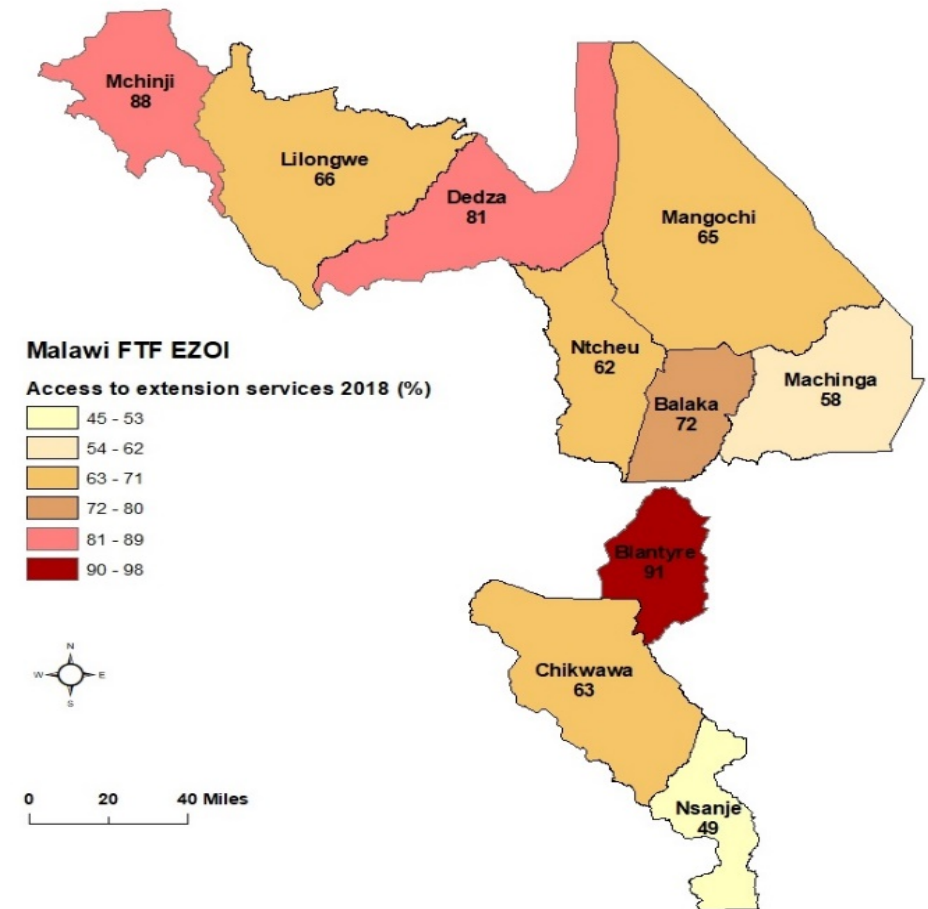
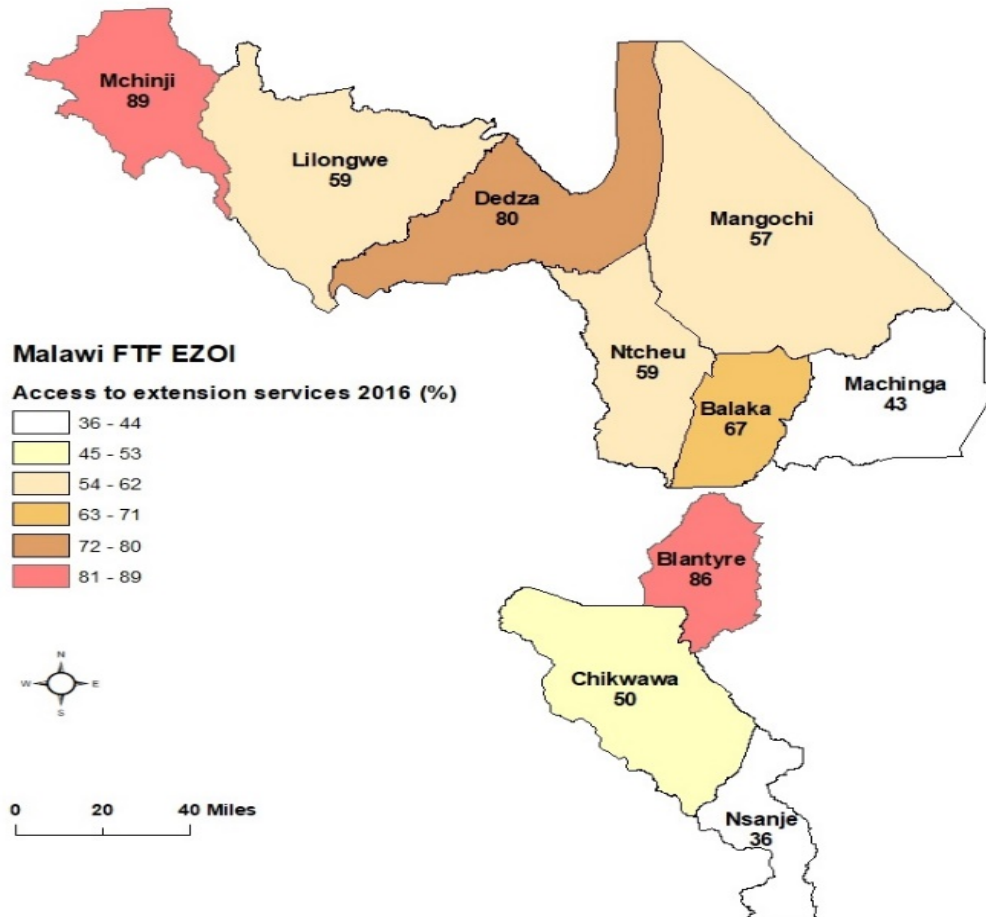
Extension Service Access

- Access to extension services is increasing in SANE districts
 - Gender and age gaps are closing
 - Women much more able to access agricultural information
 - Younger men are more included, as are older women
- ICT proliferation is a major factor
 - Neither face-to-face interactions or ICT went from 37% to 7%
 - Face-to-face consistent but ICT way up



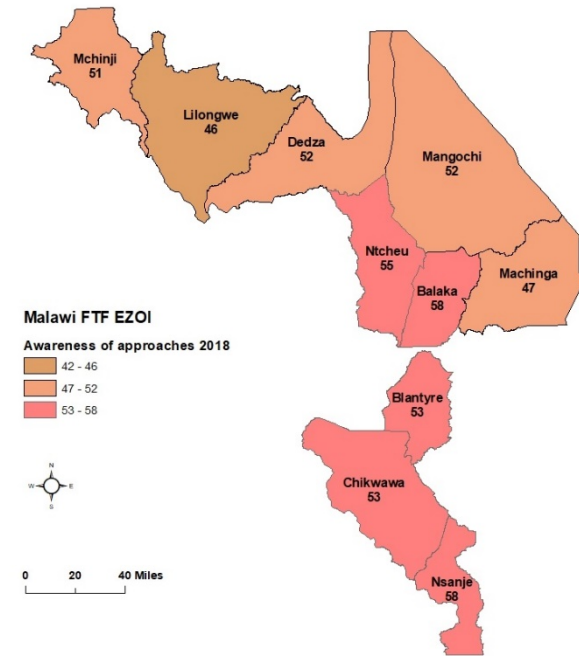
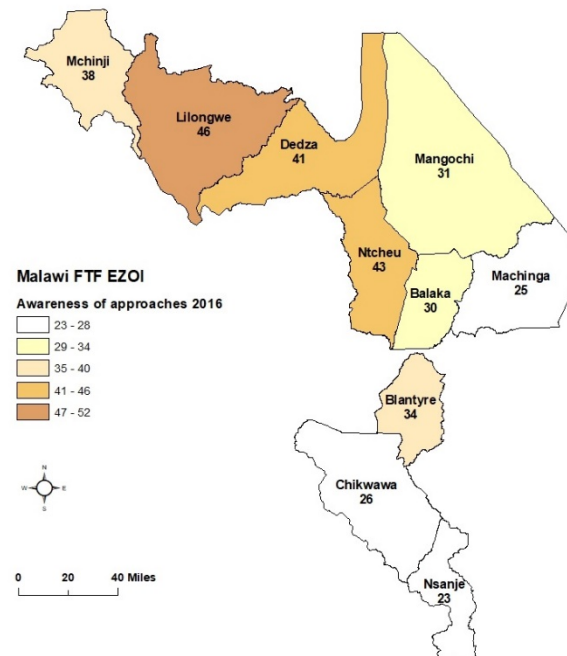
Extension Service Access

- Geographic factors continue to be clear
 - Districts along the main road are reached more readily



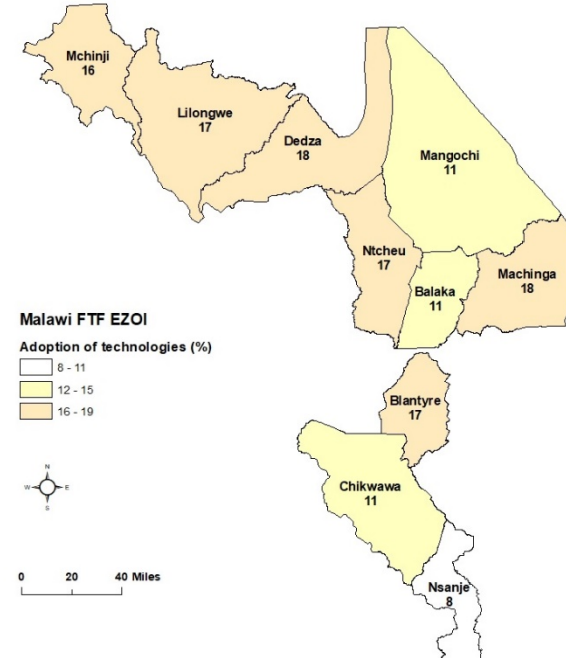
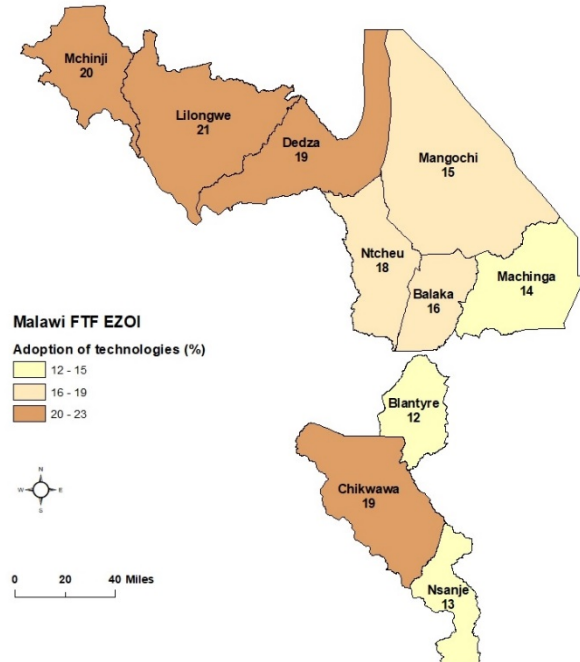
Extension Service Quality

- Extension quality is still a challenge
 - Self-reported perspectives of quality were largely useless
 - Quality instead evaluated by looking at awareness of technologies/ approaches and adoption
- Awareness is way up
 - Possibly due to ICTs
 - Also due to FAW work



Extension Service Quality

- Adoption of same technologies is low
 - Behavior change is not occurring
- Geographic factors are again clear
 - Distance from the road (ie. lowest face-to-face engagement)
 - ICTs are not enough to change behavior



Nutrition and Food Security Research with CRS and Caritas in Bangladesh

Research questions: 1. Intensive versus extensive programming approaches and cost-effectiveness; 2. indirect pathways to nutrition improvements e.g. ag marketing to nutrition links, etc. 3. targeting questions 4. sustainability of local institutions questions 5. Effective gender empowerment in ag



In Bangladesh Reaching women farmers with homestead farming, horticulture, poultry improvements, aquaculture, marketing extension services led to income increases of \$23-44 per month per participating household, greater female participation in marketing decisions on poultry and vegetables, increased poultry at household level, increased likelihood of planting a vegetable garden and increase in a number of types of vegetables by 2-4



Learning About Savings Groups: Evidence from WELD in Sierra Leone

World Vision USAID-funded WELD Learning Results

Paul E. McNamara, Han Bum Lee (UTSA), and Cristina Alvarez, AgReach & Dept of Agric. & Consumer Econ, UIUC

Research questions: 1. Effective capacity development in the rigorous M&E&L area with local and senior staff 2.

Sustainability of interventions (SGs) and autonomous dissemination of interventions 3. FS impacts of SGs, Health and

Insurance Properties of SGs 4. Poverty targeting questions

Other learning domains and questions

- **NRM and FS and Livelihood links – Amadu PhD dissertation and related body of research**
- **Governance and effective means of increasing capacity of local institutions, especially governmental institutions**
- **Sustainability of service provision to smallholder farmers**
- **Remote sensing, digital techs, ICTs in Learning**
- **Effectiveness research**

- Many SG loans were extended to help women develop and expand their marketing businesses



Partnership Challenges and Solutions

- IP, ideas, and willingness to share -- a real issue in our personal and programmatic experience
- Tension between NGO/implementation environment and scholarly standards on evidence and rigor
- Solutions
 - Build some trust among partners and council members
 - Prime sets tone and guides expectations
 - Mobilize resources to change the dynamic