**BANGLADESH – USAID**

**AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAINS (AVC) PROJECT**

* In the input supply sector, AVC worked to introduce and expand the sale and use of higher-quality inputs such as improved seeds, specialized varieties, and appropriate fertilizers and bio-pesticides. Some of the key input supply companies (Ispahani, Partex, and NAAFCO Pharma) provided embedded training to a combined 39,000 lead farmers in the use of high-quality inputs, resulting in an increase in sales of these products in southern districts of up to 60 percent.
* In supply chain management, AVC’s collaboration with the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) is particularly notable. Additionally, through support from AVC, three large agribusinesses launched national-level safe food brands: Banglafresh (NAAFCO), Gardenfresh (Ispahani), and Shuddho (Shwapno), to introduce new agricultural practices and quality assurance procedures to deliver certifiably safe food to consumers. Within three months of the introduction of the Shuddho brand, 45,203 customers have purchased 118 tons of Shuddho vegetables, generating sales revenue of approximately BDT16 million.
* Finally, and most importantly, AVC patronized to enable a productive business environment by convening stakeholder workshops, sector-wide events and dialogues and regional and national agro-input, agro-technology, and value chain specific industry fairs. AVC’s efforts in this area were meant to shift firms away from competition, resulting in several partners have engaged in firm-to-firm cooperation, focusing on joint branding, marketing, or mutually beneficial investment opportunities.
* AVC’s approach to market systems development was guided by three core principles: Facilitation, Targeting, and Self-selection.
* AVC interventions focused on three core technical areas: Input Distribution Models (partnered with agricultural input suppliers; promoted modern marketing and promotional strategies), Supply Chain Management (facilitated agricultural firms, traders and processors; launched three national safe food brands by leading retail outlets, requiring significant investments in SCM, benefiting the smallholder farmer suppliers), and Interconnected systems and support services (targeted agricultural machinery firms, specialized agricultural services, agricultural universities and research institutes, policy and advocacy organizations most notably DCCI, media, and financial services).
* AVC’s adaptive management approach drew in four fundamental ways: First, AVC incorporated two teams (Market Systems team & Interconnected Systems team) to encourage responsive adaptation and modification towards better practices on marketing and branding, media and strategic communications, behavior change, entrepreneurship, and research and technology; Second, incorporated a regular series of learning events and courses with a few key initiatives like; Quarterly Portfolio Reviews (to reflect on the project’s performance and its partners), Learning Lunches (to highlight activities of the partners), and Systems Talks (to deepen interested staffs' understanding); Third, expanded the mandate of the Monitoring and Evaluation/Knowledge Management team to include data collection and monitoring, knowledge management, & the Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting (CLA) function; Fourth, realigned its partnership engagement strategy to coincide with the new technical approach by being adaptive, strategy driven, and accessible to private sector firms.

**Interventions based on Specific Products**

* PULSES, – Input Distribution Channel, Marketing and Branding, Mechanization and Access to Local Service Providers, Processing, SME/Trader Support.
* GROUNDNUT – Input Distribution Channel for High-Yield Seeds, Improved Marketing, Investment in Supply Chain Management.
* SUMMER VEGETABLES – Input and Technology Distribution Channel, Improved Marketing and Branding Strategies for Inputs, Safe Vegetable Branding.
* MANGO – Policy and Advocacy, Safe Application of Inputs, Supply Chain Management, Marketing Strategies.
* TOMATO – Pest Management and Safe Application of Inputs, Tomato Included in Safe Food Brands, Financial Services.
* POTATO – Supply Chain Management.
* FLOWER - Domestic Marketing and Promoting, Investment Promotion Efforts, Tissue Culture and Seed Commercialization, Market Infrastructure in Jessore.
* NATURAL FIBER – High Quality Inputs, Processing for Agricultural and Paper Product Inputs, Export-Oriented Marketing.
* Specific Technologies supported by AVC: Mango Storage Technology and Drying Beads.
* Significant techniques introduced and supported by AVC to mitigate environmental impact were: Support for specific agricultural products (Integrated Pest Management, Compost, Coir Pith, High-yield Seeds); Safe Food Brands; Policy Dialogues on Environmental Mitigation; and Crop-Specific Trainings.