

**Cohen, Marc;** Oxfam

Moishebear@aol.com

Authors: Marc Anglade, Ayiti Inclusion; Tonny Joseph, Oxfam; Marc J. Cohen, Oxfam

**Title: Does the Feed the Future North Project in Haiti Conform to the Principles of Development Effectiveness?**



A decade ago, the Obama Administration launched Feed the Future (FtF) to help finance the G8 L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, which sought to “free mankind from hunger and poverty.” Since then FtF has invested \$1 billion annually in developing-country agriculture, improved child nutrition, and empowering women farmers. The reported results include contributions to reduced poverty and child stunting, as well as increased agricultural productivity, resilience to shocks, and farm income, while providing resources to rural women.

How does this effort to help achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2 (zero hunger) conform to the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness? We/I examined this question in relation to Feed the Future North (also known as AVANSE) in Haiti. This six-year, \$87 million project runs through 2019. We/I compared our findings with our/my previous assessments of Feed the Future projects in Haiti and four African countries.

Like our/my earlier work, we used qualitative methods, including focus group discussions with beneficiary farmers and in-depth interviews of other key project stakeholders. The earlier assessments found projects aligned with national agricultural development plans, thereby supporting the principle of country ownership. There was, however, a trade-off with another aspect of ownership, consultation and inclusion of beneficiaries throughout the project cycle. Instead, projects focused primarily on productive areas and commercially oriented smallholders.

This tradeoff is likewise evident in AVANSE. Because the US Agency for International Development and its implementer, DAI, failed to consult either the Haitian government or participating farmers in project design, AVANSE has not adequately addressed local concerns about access to water, despite periodic severe droughts. Nor has the project focused on local food crops, such as yams, or livestock, despite farmers' expressed desires. AVANSE has targeted resources to women, but it has mainly engaged them in traditional activities, such as building soil and water conservation structures and food marketing, without seeking to transform gender relations.

We/I determined that AVANSE lacks well-developed plans to maintain farmer income and productivity gains once the project ends. The study recommends systematic stakeholder engagement to ensure such sustainability. Such engagement is crucial in agriculture for development programming.