On July 4 and 5, the Facility, supported by its partnership with the USAID[1] and the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Assets and Market Access I4 Initiative at UC Davis[2], organized a workshop on agriculture insurance for developing a first Peer Learning Platform for Policymakers. Representatives from Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia, working with a diversity of public entities (ministries of agriculture, finance, social development, central banks, insurance regulators and the planning commission) participated in the two-day event. Specialised institutional arrangements in various countries, like the Agriculture Transformation Agency (ATA[3]) and Public Financial Enterprises Agency (PFEA) in Ethiopia or the Nigeria Incentive-Based Risk Sharing System for Agriculture Lending (NIRSAL[4]) were also represented and shared how these institutions are assisting the government ministries in implementation of financial services based agriculture programmes. The participants included the Director General of the PFEA, the Director of the TIRA (Tanzania Insurance Regulatory Authority), and the Additional Director of the State Bank of Pakistan[5]. In addition, development sector organisations like USAID, WFP, IFAD and their partners for local projects also shared their thoughts and experiences.

The objective of the Peer Learning Platform is to stimulate government involvement to achieve greater scale and impact with agriculture insurance. The topics focused on how governments and regulatory bodies have a critical role to play to make agriculture insurance products more accessible and responsible. They can do this by investing in infrastructure to capture weather data, providing smart subsidies, leveraging agriculture extension services, conducting national education campaigns, and drafting conducive regulation and consumer protection. Insurance can be part of a broader strategy that creates capacities and incentives for agricultural risk management. In addition, insurance mechanisms can be leveraged for social protection purposes.

The programme included a number of interactive sessions where the key element was to allow participants to learn from a diversity of experiences in a structured way. Various formats like small group discussions, panel presentations or roundtable with representation of different functions and different countries provided an opportunity for the participants to learn from the experiences of other countries and how similar challenges have been overcome in other countries. The ongoing PPP driven programme in Kenya for livestock and crop insurance was showcased and detailed presentations from the State Departments of Livestock and Agriculture and the implementation agencies highlighted the scope of work being undertaken. Extensive interactions with the participants also allowed for feedback and further explanations about the operations issues related to the programmes.

In addition other cases demonstrated how government interventions have improved the implementation of agriculture insurance programmes and made it more accessible to a larger population in their respective countries. Participants also shared opportunities and challenges and how the governments and regulators can act as effective change agents.

Participants were very enthusiastic about the first Peer Learning Platform for Policymakers meeting. They enjoyed the various country experiences and case studies that were shared, as well as the highly interactive discussions. In particular the discussion of government interventions was appreciated by