

AFRI SAS Soil to Society

Progress & Collaboration Survey Report

November 2022



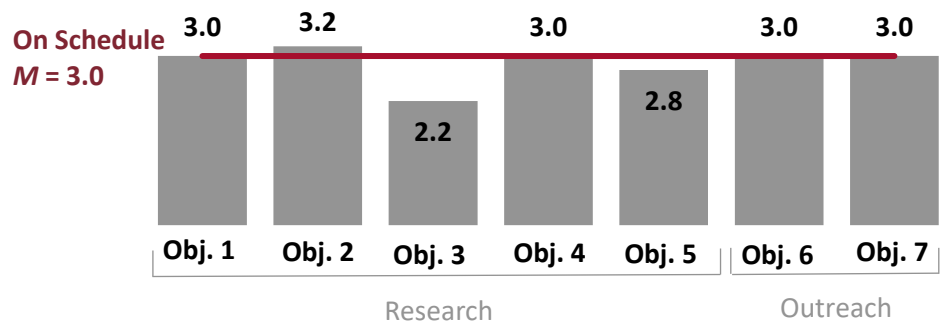
This document provides an overview of the results of the AFRI SAS Soil to Society Progress & Collaboration Survey. OEIE received responses from 27 of 47 team members, with 26 complete and one partial response, for a **57.4% response rate**. All seven project objectives were represented to some degree by survey respondents, with nine survey participants (**33.3%**) indicating involvement in two or more objectives.

Progress & Satisfaction

92% of participants indicated they were **satisfied with the overall implementation** of the project. The same number also indicated that they were **confident that the project will achieve its goals**.

Individuals indicating that work was behind schedule described **challenges with staffing (hiring graduate students) and supply/equipment shortages**.

Respondents reported progress for five objectives as “On schedule.”



Project Integration



Initial work being done to integrate between objectives

- ✓ Collaborating with other teams (e.g., data collections, field trials, analyses, plant breeding) to promote inter-group connections
- ✓ Emphasizing communication (e.g., frequent communication between teams, establishing structures/channels to enhance collaborative communication)
- ✓ Learning about other objective teams' research at the annual meeting was beneficial
- ✓ Recruiting graduate student assistance to promote integration with other objectives



Support or resources that would facilitate integration

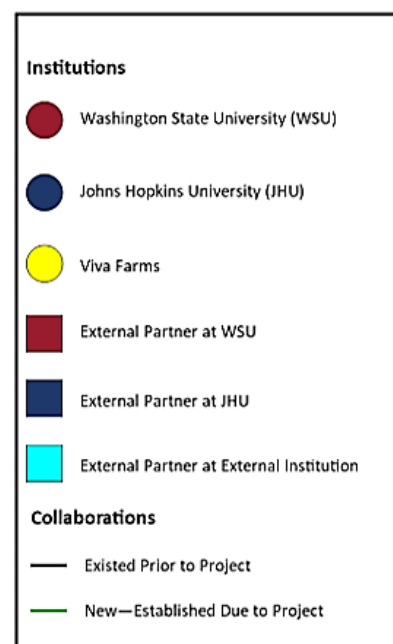
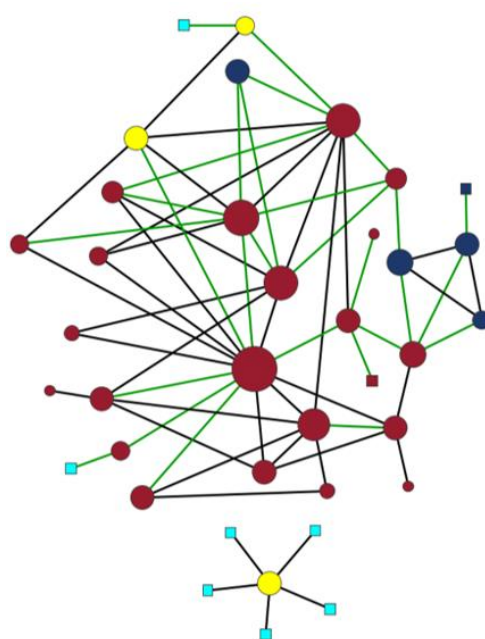
- + More communication with other objectives (e.g., at annual meeting to share about research, data, and to discuss opportunities for future synergy, for feedback)
- + Improve project logistics (e.g., regular project updates, shared information on collaborative tools and platforms)
- + Some participants indicated that no additional support is needed at this time

AFRI SAS Soil to Society Social Network Analysis & Collaboration

To understand the collaboration occurring as a result of the AFRI SAS Soil to Society project, respondents were asked to list up to five people with whom they collaborate most frequently on the project. **Twenty-two respondents submitted a total of 67 collaborative relationships.** The 67 relationships corresponded to **37 project collaborators, including 28 project team members and 9 external partners.**

Social Network Analysis

- 57% of the collaborations existed prior to the start of the project, while **43% of the collaborations were “new,”** established through the project.
- At this stage in the project, **collaborations were primarily between individuals within their own institution (72%).**
- **The 22 individuals in the network from WSU were involved in 56 collaborations.** Three individuals from **Viva Farms** were associated with **12 collaborations, half of which were with external partners,** and five individuals from **Johns Hopkins University** were involved in **11 collaborations.**



Final Thoughts from Team Members

✓ Benefits to being part of the project

- ✓ Expanding their network of collaborators
- ✓ Gaining specific knowledge, skills, and/or abilities
- ✓ Learning about research conducted by other project teams
- ✓ Benefitting from project-level inter/cross-disciplinary collaboration
- ✓ Involving external and private-sector stakeholder partners

✓ Team member suggestions

- ✓ Increase the number of interactions between project teams
- ✓ Plan now for impacts that will come later in the project (e.g., create a dissemination strategy, maintain a “seed material bank,” have an outlet for finished food products)

“I have been part of other large projects (although not of this magnitude) and I believe that good working relationships among collaborators is key to the success for the research. This collaboration has been extremely pleasant and rewarding for me since the first Zoom meeting when we started planning for the proposal.”