

SUSTAINABLE AND EFFECTIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (SEED) PROJECT

SUMMATIVE EVALUATION REPORT

Submitted to:

Naomi Lax
Senior Development Officer
Mozambique Malawi Program
Southern and Eastern Africa Directorate
Geographic and Programs Branch
Canadian International Development Agency

Prepared by:



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARD	Agriculture and Rural Development
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CCO	Canadian Cooperation Office
CEA	Canadian Executing Agency
CEDARTE	Centre for the Study and Development of Arts and Crafts (<i>Centro de Estudos e Desenvolvimento de Artesanato</i>)
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DNSV	National Directorate of Veterinary Services (<i>Direcção Nacional dos Serviços Veterinários</i>)
DPAI	Provincial Directorate of Agriculture in Inhambane (<i>Direcção Nacional da Agricultura de Inhambane</i>)
DPM	Deputy Project Manager
F2f	face-to-face
FHH	Female Headed Households
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoM	Government of Mozambique
GreenArt	Private Sector Arm of CEDARTE
HH	Households
HLWHA	Households Living with HIV/AIDS
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
ILRP	Inhambane Livelihood Recovery Project
INCAJU	National Institute for Cashew Development (<i>Instituto de Fomento do Caju</i>)
LM	Logic Model
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MINAG	Ministry of Agriculture (<i>Ministerio do Agricultura</i>)
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
MZN	Mozambique Metcais Novo
NGO	Non-government Organization
PARP	Poverty Reduction Action Plan 2011-2014
PIs	Performance Indicators
PIP	Project Implementation Plan
PLWHA	People Living with HIV/AIDS
PM	Project Manager
PMF	Performance Measurement Framework
PO	Project Officer
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SDAE	District Services for Economic Activities (<i>Serviços Distritais de Actividades Economicas</i>)
SEED	Sustainable and Effective Economic Development
SIMA	Information System on Agricultural Markets (<i>Sistema de Informação de Mercados Agrícolas</i>)
SPP	Provincial Livestock Services (<i>Serviços Provincial de Pecuaria</i>)
TB	Tuberculosis
TORs	Terms of Reference
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
VSO	Volunteer Service Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 Background

The Sustainable and Effective Economic Development (SEED) project was a seven-year initiative that started in January, 2006, and ended in April, 2013. The project was funded by CIDA and managed by CARE Canada and CARE Mozambique in partnership with Irish Aid, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). CIDA's contribution was \$7.5 million. Irish Aid contributed Euros 1,218,906 towards funding for the cashew component of the project, and IFAD contributed Euros 353,630 towards funding for the goat component with research undertaken by ILRI staff.

The SEED project was implemented in a difficult and challenging environment. The primary stakeholders were the women and men living in the rural communities of the project area and their needs were many. Most were living at a subsistence level in some of the poorest districts and communities of Mozambique. There were limited economic opportunities as these communities were dispersed, populations sparse and transport access was very difficult to and between many communities. There was also a lack of service providers supplying agricultural inputs or technical support at the community and government levels. These communities were confronted with incidences of HIV/AIDS and the numbers of female headed households were high.

The original project design comprised 4 districts in northern Inhambane Province with the overall aim to reduce poverty and to sustain rural economic recovery of 6,000 vulnerable households (HH), including at least 25% female headed households (FHH) and 20% HH living with HIV/AIDS (HLWHA). The project design was based on evidence that normal coping strategies among the majority of the population were insufficient to meet their HH cash and food requirements; that HH with diversified livelihoods were better off than those depending only on subsistence production; and that market-based economic opportunities were an effective strategy for diversifying livelihoods.

2.0 Evaluation Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of the summative evaluation of the SEED project was to assess the achievement of results, their cost-effectiveness, and their potential for sustainability; to document operational and development lessons learned; and to contribute to knowledge of rural development initiatives in Mozambique. The findings of the summative evaluation will be used by CIDA for accountability purposes and to inform future programming. The findings will also be used by both CIDA and implementing partners for learning purposes and by Mozambican stakeholders who will assume ownership of project interventions following the end of CIDA's contribution.

3.0 Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation methodology used to undertake the summative evaluation of the SEED project was designed to meet the requirements and expectations set out in the evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR). The evaluators' primary role was to validate the performance information produced by the project, CIDA, CARE Canada and SEED partners and to provide an independent third party assessment of the evaluation questions and issues presented in the TOR. The evaluation was to provide an assessment of the achievement of results, their cost-effectiveness, and their potential for sustainability. The evaluation was also to document lessons learned and to contribute to knowledge of rural development initiatives in Mozambique.

There were four relatively distinct steps taken to implement the summative evaluation methodology: 1) document review and preparation of data collection tools; 2) data collection among Canadian partners; 3) data collection among Mozambican partners and stakeholders and project site visits; and 4) data analysis and report preparation. An evaluation mission was undertaken to Mozambique over a period of three weeks from November 25 to December 17, 2012.

The evaluation provided for the meaningful involvement of key stakeholders in the SEED project. They comprised: co-operation partners [CIDA, CARE Canada, CARE Mozambique, and Government of Mozambique (GoM) district and provincial offices]; primary stakeholders (participants involved in the livestock, arts and crafts and Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAS) components including paravets and promoters); and donor organizations (Irish Aid and ILRI). Over 200 persons were interviewed individually or in focus groups during 30 separate interviews conducted for the evaluation.

There were very few constraints and limitations that affected the findings of the evaluation. They were related to the availability of key informants; qualitative data that was absent from the project's Performance Measurement Framework (PMF); and lack of disaggregation of some data by components.

4.0 Evaluation Findings

4.1 Effectiveness

The SEED project has achieved its two expected intermediate outcomes. Participating HH were generating additional income for their families from commercially oriented activities when the project ended. Participating HH were also using SEED community based support services to increase their socio-economic security and resilience. Incomes have increased for participants in producer groups and for participants in VSLAs which in all likelihood has contributed to sustained rural economic recovery for vulnerable households in the 4 project districts. Primary stakeholders have a high level of satisfaction with the results achieved by the project. The GoM also has a high level of satisfaction with the changes achieved by the project. An improved training curriculum developed by the project for paravets is awaiting approval by the national extension services for use throughout Mozambique. Moreover, other donors are planning to adopt the SEED value chain models focusing on the training of paravets and promoters. All in all, the SEED project has been effective in achieving its expected outcomes.

4.2 Efficiency

Resources or inputs were converted into outputs in a fairly economical manner. The project was able to achieve its two expected intermediate outcomes within the timeframe and resources or budget allocated for undertaking activities that would generate the planned outputs and outcomes. The budget, however, was considerably underspent which may not have been desirable in a project with many remaining challenges. There were a number of other areas where project management could have been stronger: managing better numerous staff turnovers; incomplete PMF; insufficient analysis of assumptions and risks; and at times, late submission of work plans and narrative progress and financial reports which had implications for project management.

4.3 Relevance

The results achieved in the SEED project were very relevant to the needs and priorities of the primary stakeholders, of the districts and of the province. The priorities of the primary stakeholders are to generate additional income for their families, to save money in order to improve their homes, to

provide for a better education for their children, to improve the health of family members and to increase their socio-economic security and resilience. The SEED project has made a positive contribution in all of these areas. The project has been supportive of the GoM's Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PARP) and has strengthened the capacity of project participants and community members to provide extension services, thereby creating successfully an independent service delivery structure which government extension services could adopt and sustain after project completion. These services have contributed to the reduction of livestock diseases, theft of livestock, aggregation of animals for sale at fairs and the capacity building of promoters and paravets who are now able to assist the GOM extension services with the provision of community based support services to rural producer groups and communities.

4.4 Sustainability

The SEED project has demonstrated that the value chains created by the project can be sustainable. There is a high likelihood that the livestock and VSLA groups will be sustained but perhaps at reduced numbers than what existed at project completion because SEED will no longer be a catalyst. The arts and crafts groups may continue as social groups making some products as time permits, but the larger scale commercialization of arts and crafts products will be a challenge due to the difficulties in identifying intermediaries and linking products with steady buyers. People have changed in the way they think and in the way that they interact with each other because of the SEED project. Respondents stated that they do not want to go back to the old way of existing, i.e., subsistence living.

4.5 Cross-cutting Themes

The SEED project made considerable efforts to change perceptions on gender equality, on decision-making and on control over resources between women and men. All participant groups received gender training and agents of change were trained to work within the communities where they live. In addition, the project actively encouraged women to participate in production activities. Nevertheless, at the close of the project the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming has been difficult to assess. While important changes were achieved, the project was constantly challenged by fairly strong gender stereotyping within the SEED project team, government partners and project participants, which limited somewhat the economic impact of the SEED project for women in particular. In other areas, however, female respondents did confirm changes in their communities with respect to joint decision-making in HH and on the use of savings generated by project activities. Moreover, women producers of small animals have increasing control over these productive resources resulting in increased incomes for them.

Although the project did have gender consultants as well as mainstreaming officers in the project office, there may not have been sufficient critical resources to make the desired impact within the project's communities. Bearing this in mind, respondents felt that the project should have had a full time gender expert on staff at the Deputy Project Manager (DPM) position as well as a "prominent expert" in gender equality on the Project Steering Committee (PSC) to provide external and independent oversight to SEED mainstreaming activities as well as to share best practices. The project also would have benefitted from a dedicated gender equality results chain in the project design and a Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) that would provide gender equality results expectations at the output and outcome levels, performance indicators, targets and a dedicated gender budget.

The project has achieved results in environmental sustainability through initiatives that diminished the project's impact on the environment. An environmental diagnostic was undertaken during the

Project Implementation Plan (PIP) preparation phase in order to assess the potential impact on the environment from project implementation. As specific activities were undertaken, their impact on the environment was evaluated by project personnel. Whenever any potentially adverse environmental impacts were observed by project personnel, mitigation measures were put in place. The project also achieved results in the area of governance. The project provided training on group functioning and management to ensure good leadership, accountability and transparency (i.e., good or better governance), using specifically developed training modules. By the end of the project a total of 120 groups were formed and received training, and 5 associations (legal entities) were established with increased knowledge of how to better govern their groups.

4.6 Evaluation Issues

The SEED project design was appropriate and participatory and was based on analyses of gender equality, environment, governance, and on lessons learned from a previous CARE managed project implemented in the same rural areas as the SEED project. But there were some indications that the project design could have been improved. Two examples illustrate this point. The project's original plan was to reach 8,000 beneficiaries. During consultations after project commencement, however, a number of constraints and issues were identified that would prevent the project from reaching the intended number of beneficiaries. Therefore, a reduction in reach to 6000 HH was agreed upon by project partners. The change in the project's reach also required a revision to the Logic Model (LM) and PMF. Another area where the project design could have been better crafted was in the selection of components. The original project design components included livestock, horticulture and micro-enterprise. The arts and crafts component was added later on in the project. During the mid-term evaluation in 2009, it was revealed that the horticulture and micro-enterprise components were facing difficulties. Therefore, they were dropped and a new component VSLA was added. All components operating at the end of the project have been operational for a minimum of 3.5 years but they have not benefitted from a full 7 year implementation period except for the livestock component.

The CEA's reporting systems, data collection methods and analyses were to some extent effective in relation to RBM principles and practices. Although narrative progress reports were written well, they were, along with annual work plans and financial reports, sometimes late in submission. Data collection methods were overly complicated and analysis of data using the PMF was not totally in compliance with CIDA's 2008 RBM Policy and Guidelines because the PMF did not include qualitative indicators. The CEA's reporting systems could have been made stronger with the use of a simplified M&E data base, a PMF using quantitative as well as qualitative performance indicators, timely submission of reports, and an improved analysis of assumptions and risks. While the SEED project did have a system in place to monitor, report on, and manage risks, the system appeared to have been a modest one. An analysis of project reports gave the impression that although a risk register was prepared for the project, there were not much subsequent analysis and effort made to monitor and report on assumptions and risks.

5.0 Conclusions

The SEED project was a good project, which could have been better. It was a good project because it was able to generate additional income for the families of participating HH from commercially oriented activities with the assistance provided from community based support services developed and strengthened by the SEED project. It was a good project because it was able to work with over 8,000 households representing over 50,000 people in 274 communities.¹ It was a good project because

¹ The SEED Final Report stated that the number of registered households (HHs) participating in the project was 8,304 as of September 2012. These HHs were situated in 274 communities located in 5 districts. The number of registered HHs represents about 52,763 persons as the average number of HH members was 6.354 according to the SEED Final Report, Table 1, page 8.

it focused on improving the lives of women and of some of the most vulnerable groups comprising FHHs and HLWHA. It was a good project because it developed and demonstrated viable models for secure savings associations in rural areas and for value chains for major components. It was a good project because it chose to build on the existing resources of communities instead of providing substantial material donations, although the project did provide some financial support to communities. Without exception, there was a high level of satisfaction expressed by beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners interviewed for this evaluation.

But the SEED project could have been a better project. At the end of the project there remains concern about the sustainability of the project's achievements in certain areas. VSLAs and livestock producer groups have demonstrated a capacity to sustain their achievements. But there is concern that the arts and crafts component and the community based support services developed and strengthened by the project may not be sustainable at the same level and intensity that was achieved under the SEED project. Furthermore, there is concern that buyers may not continue to come to producer groups due to the quality of products or to decreased market demand. There is also concern that the GoM will not have the human, financial and physical resources to continue to provide extension services to the communities at the same level of intensity as the SEED project.

The legacy of this project is twofold. Firstly, there is no doubt that the SEED project has changed the lives for the better for the participating HHs. They now think differently, act differently as individuals, within groups and in HHs and they have the capacity to do things differently. Secondly, the value chain approach has been a good and proven model subject to certain conditions being in place to sustain these models. SEED participants now have the knowledge, skills, community based support services and linkages to buyers and to strengthened District Services for Economic Activities (SDAE) and the Provincial Livestock Services (SPP) offices. They did not have these when the project started. Sustainability of the results achieved by the SEED project is possible. But sustainability will depend on the motivation, determination and resilience of individuals, promoters and groups, on the resources at the disposal of SDAE and SPP and on external markets and economic factors outside the control of the participants.

6.0 Recommendations

This section presents practical and realizable recommendations that are supported by, and which flow logically from, the findings and specific conclusions found in this report. The recommendations are also derived from the suggestions of SEED project staff and stakeholders based on their reflection on the project and its achievements. These recommendations are made in order to enhance future programming by CIDA, CARE Canada, and local stakeholders in the agriculture and rural development (ARD) sector.

Recommendation #1: that ARD projects are designed to maximize the use of local resources and to avoid material donations to project participants.

One of the successful design features of the SEED project was the use of local resources as the base for project implementation. The design builds on the capacity of project participants to improve on and sustain production activities that they were already engaged in using local resources and avoid providing substantial material donations that could lead to dependency on the part of the recipients.

Recommendation #2: that sustained capacity building programs be built into projects.

Livelihood projects often take place in poverty stricken rural areas comprising people who are illiterate or who have little education. Therefore, ARD projects need to be designed to provide sustained

capacity building programs that provide continuous training to people and communities over the entire project implementation period.

Recommendation #3: that livelihood and ARD projects have longer implementation periods.

Changing peoples' behaviour, the way they think, expanding their knowledge and increasing their skills so that they can shift from subsistence to commercial activities takes much time in rural agriculture areas. Therefore, consideration could be given to allow for longer implementation periods for ARD projects located in poverty stricken rural areas with social, economic and climatic challenges.

Recommendation #4: that CSO partnership becomes an integral part of ARD projects.

Capacity building of people living in rural agriculture areas is time consuming and requires rather large amounts of human resource inputs. Therefore, ARD projects could develop partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) who would be able to use their local knowledge and experience to support and sustain capacity building programs in ARD projects.

Recommendation #5: that ARD projects supporting production activities identify and develop linkages with markets early on in project implementation.

Experience in ARD projects has demonstrated the benefits of identifying markets and buyers early on in project implementation. As such, ARD projects would benefit from having an output or an immediate outcome in the project design that would lead to a result of sustainable linkages established with markets and buyers as early as possible in project implementation.

Recommendation #6: that linkages be established or strengthened with other ARD programs and projects in order to create synergies between projects.

ARD projects are often complex endeavours focusing on production activities, capacity building and cross-cutting issues. Therefore, establishing linkages and creating synergies between other development assistance programs and projects could be beneficial and cost-effective for ARD projects.

Recommendation #7: that gender experts be engaged full time in ARD projects.

ARD projects comprise generally communities with traditional values and traditional relationships between women and men. Promoting gender equality in ARD projects is often quite a challenge. Therefore, ARD projects could have full time gender specialist on the project management team throughout the life of an ARD project.

7.0 Lessons Learned

Value chains development is a good approach for ARD projects. Value chains comprising group organization and management, technical training, promoter training and linkages to markets can be successfully applied to project components. But it must be recognized that value chain development

takes time to develop especially in livelihood projects or where markets do not already exist in any formalised manner.

Linkages developed between producers and buyers and between producers and GoM services are important. Producers need to know what the market demands and what buyers are looking for in terms of quality and quantity of products. And GoM services need to support producers to produce products that meet the demands of markets and buyers

Synergies created through interventions in different components of a project can lead to higher impacts on communities. For example, providing savings associations for producers whose incomes increase through the sale of improved products is a positive benefit for community members in that they have local, safe and secure saving systems in their communities.

Community leaders are important change agents in communities. Whether or not projects work directly with community leaders they should not be overlooked and should be fully aware of all activities that are designed for bringing changes to their communities.

Co-financing with other donors has advantages. It provides more financial and technical resources to affect change in a project and can complement the efforts of the lead donor.

Advocacy with government bodies at the provincial and/or national level is important. In parallel with the implementation of an ARD project, it is useful to advocate and lobby strongly for government support in the form of human and physical resources for provincial and district offices that would enable them to support and complement the activities of the ARD project.

Youth is a target group that is often overlooked in ARD projects. But they should not be since they are the future of rural communities. By including them in project activities, e.g., as paravets or promoters, they may be more inclined to remain in their communities and thus help to sustain capacity building initiatives and bring new energy and ideas to traditional communities.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Sustainable and Effective Economic Development (SEED) project was approved on November 4, 2005, as a responsive project in partnership with CARE Canada. The project was a seven-year initiative whose implementation period started in January 2006. The project completion date is April 30, 2013. The project was funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), managed by CARE Canada, and implemented by CARE Mozambique in partnership with Irish Aid, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). SEED collaborated with the Government of Mozambique (GoM) through the District Services for Economic Activities (*Serviços Distritais de Atividades Economicas-SDAE*), the Provincial Livestock Services (*Serviços Provincial de Pecuaria - SPP*), and the National Institute for Cashew Development (*Instituto de Fomento do Caju - INCAJU*).

The SEED project office was located in Vilankulo, a town located in the northern Mozambican province of Inhambane and was supported by CARE Mozambique headquarters in Maputo. The original project design targeted 4 districts in northern Inhambane Province: Mabote, Govuro, Inhassoro, and Vilankulo with the overall aim to reduce poverty and to sustain rural economic recovery of 6,000 vulnerable households (HH)², including at least 25% female headed households (FHH) and 20% HH living with HIV/AIDS (HLWHA) in these districts. The project was designed to achieve the following two intermediate outcomes:

- Participating households are generating additional income for their families from commercially oriented activities; and
- Participating households are using SEED services to increase their socio-economic security and resilience.

The SEED project design was based on evidence that normal coping strategies among the majority of northern Inhambane's population were insufficient to meet their household cash and food requirements; that households with diversified livelihoods were better off than those depending only on subsistence production; and that market-based economic opportunities were an effective strategy for diversifying livelihoods.

CIDA's contribution to the SEED project was \$7.5 million. Irish Aid contributed Euros 1,218,906 towards funding for the cashew component of the project, and IFAD contributed Euros 353,630 towards funding for the goat value chain component. Both components were implemented by SEED project staff with a research component undertaken by ILRI researchers in the goat value chain component.

A map of Mozambique with the project area circled in red is presented in Figure 1 on the following page.

Figure 1: Map of Mozambique, Inhambane Province

² 6,000 households represent about 36,600 persons as the average number of household members in northern Inhambane is 6.1 according to the SEED baseline. At least 60% of these persons would be female.

and Project Location



Source: CARE Canada

1.2 Client and Stakeholder Audience

The client for this Summative Evaluation Report is CIDA's Mozambique Malawi Program. The main stakeholder audience for this report is CIDA's Evaluation Division. The report also may be of interest to CIDA's offices for gender equality and performance measurement. Other important stakeholder audiences for this report are CARE Canada and CARE Mozambique, its GoM partners at the national, provincial and district levels, e.g., the National Directorate of Veterinary Services (*Direcção Nacional dos Serviços Veterinários-DNSV*), SPP, and SDAE and its international partners Irish Aid, IFAD and ILRI.

1.3 Evaluation Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of the summative evaluation of the SEED project was to assess the achievement of results, their cost-effectiveness, and their potential for sustainability; to document operational and development lessons learned; and to contribute to knowledge of rural development initiatives in Mozambique. The findings of the summative evaluation will be used by CIDA for accountability purposes and to inform future programming. The findings will also be used by both CIDA and implementing partners for learning purposes and by Mozambican stakeholders who will assume ownership of project interventions following the end of CIDA's contribution. Irish Aid may also benefit from the findings of the evaluation

report since they are planning to fund a continuation of the cashew component that was part of the SEED project.

The summative evaluation had the following specific objectives:

- Assess and document the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, cost-effectiveness and sustainability of results achieved (including an assessment of local ownership);
- Assess project performance on cross-cutting themes, namely gender equality, environmental sustainability and governance;
- Assess the implementation of recommendations made by the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) of the Project;
- Assess the appropriateness of project design and strategies;
- Examine the project management structure; and
- Provide findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned to enhance future programming by CIDA, the implementing partners, and local stakeholders.

The scope of the evaluation covers the full Logic Model (LM) of SEED, presented in Annex 1. The evaluation covers 3 out of the 5 main components of the SEED project: the livestock, arts and crafts, and Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) which were funded by CIDA's contribution to the project. The evaluation covers the four districts in which the components have operated, including Mabote, Govuro, Inhassoro, and Vilankulo. The evaluation excludes the 2 other components related to the cashew value chain in Funhalouro and Mabote Districts and the goat value chain in Inhassoro District funded by Irish Aid and IFAD, respectively.

2 SEED PROJECT

2.1 Development Context

To appreciate fully the achievements of the SEED project, it is necessary to understand the difficult and challenging development context within which the project was implemented. It has been a tough neighbourhood to work in for a number of reasons.

Poverty

Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world and one of the poorest in southern Africa. Even though the national economy of Mozambique has grown over the last decade during the life of the project and progress has been made in reducing poverty, indications are that this progress has slowed in recent years and large pockets of poverty still exist, especially in rural areas. The Province of Inhambane is one of the poorest in Mozambique, and the districts comprising the SEED project are some of the poorest in the province. When the project commenced in 2006, over 70% of all households in the project area reported cash incomes of less than US\$1.00 per capita (Langworthy 2007).³ Although the province has good potential for tourism and private sector development, the majority of Inhambane's households continue to live at subsistence levels, depending on rain-fed agriculture, some livestock, fishing and petty trading for their livelihoods.

Agrarian Sector

The agrarian sector is one of the pillars of the national economy and it represented approximately 23% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2010 according to the National Institute for Statistics. Moreover, agriculture employs 90% of the female labour force and 70% of the male labour force, indicating that roughly 80% of the active population is formally employed in the agriculture sector.⁴ Although the agrarian sector is recognized as one of the pillars of the national economy, there has been a lack of investment by the GoM in the agrarian sector in general and in the smallholder sector in particular. Traditionally the GoM has relied on large farms whether state owned during the socialist era or privately owned as is now the case. As a consequence, the smallholder agrarian sector has suffered from decades of underinvestment leading to the current situation of food and nutrition insecurity in Mozambique even in the provinces with the highest agricultural production potential.⁵ Smallholder farmers practice subsistence agriculture, producing primarily maize and cassava, which occupy the majority of arable land. A study conducted in 2003 by the Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG) reported that less than 10% of the arable lands were cultivated annually (i.e. continuously) and the potential for agricultural improvement was high.

Livestock plays a vital role for the rural population. Sixty five percent of rural families have chickens, 25% have small ruminants (mainly goats), and 12% have pigs and cattle.⁶ Nevertheless, livestock production is still unable to meet demand, particularly with respect

³ Strachen, Lloyd and Taimo, Nelia, Mid-Term Evaluation of the SEED Project, page 1, July 2009.

⁴ An annual agriculture survey known as the TIA (Trabalho de Inquerito Agrícola), 2007.

⁵ CARE Canada Reports

⁶ TIA, 2007

to beef production. The country continues to depend heavily on external sources for its supply of beef to the main urban centers, with over 40% of the total consumption imported from neighboring countries.

Although Mozambique has a high potential for agricultural development, it is recognized that this sector faces many challenges that need to be addressed by all stakeholders in a coherent manner. This is why improving agricultural production was one of the key elements of Mozambique's National Poverty Reduction Strategy (PARP).⁷ And this is why CIDA's 2009 Country Engagement Strategy for Mozambique recognized agriculture as critical for poverty reduction in Mozambique and counted it amongst its three sectors of focus at that time.⁸ Improving agricultural productivity, market access and natural resource management has been the strategy for poverty reduction. The SEED project embraced this strategy and endeavoured to implement the project to the best of its abilities to achieve development results in the face of many challenges in the project's districts in Inhambane Province.

Challenges:

Climate Variability and Natural Hazards

The population of Northern Inhambane Province faces a wide range of challenges to sustain their livelihoods, challenges ranging from climate variability and natural hazards, infrastructure, HIV/AIDS, and the legacy of the civil war to changes in the global economy. The climate is semi-arid and drought prone. Coastal areas are also flood prone and regularly hit by cyclones. Most parts of the project area have an average annual rainfall of 500 to 750 mm during the growing season, with rainfall becoming increasingly erratic with climate variability. The soils are poor, in general, deteriorating further inland. Access to water is extremely limited, except along the Save and Govuro Rivers and in isolated areas that have surface waters such as streams, lakes and wetlands which are not brackish. These biophysical aspects compromise greatly the production of staple food crops, and the area is seen as more suited to livestock production, although access to water is a limitation for many areas.

Natural disasters, such as droughts and cyclones and the floods in 1999/2000 and 2000/2001, were a major concern for households in the region at the start of the project since many communities had to be resettled after the floods in areas where there were fewer economic opportunities and less agricultural potential. These concerns continued throughout the life of the project. For example, project activities were set back by about six months in 2006 when one cyclone hit the project area during the project implementation period. These weather-related disasters reduced the ability to grow crops and caused the loss of livestock and damaged or destroyed houses.

Infrastructure

⁷ Republic of Mozambique: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, June 2011.

⁸ CIDA's Country Engagement Strategy for Mozambique, 2009.

Although the GoM has considerably improved the road network at the national level (i.e., linking provinces with each other in “development corridors”), the rural road network in agricultural and livestock production zones still needs to be expanded or rehabilitated in order to reduce the serious market access problems. Lack of access leads to high transaction costs, discouraging farmers from participating actively in the market. This was the situation at the beginning of the SEED project. There was a lack of economic opportunity, in general, in the project’s 4 districts, as communities were dispersed, populations sparse and transport access very difficult to many communities. Main local markets are long distances away from the 4 project districts and from Vilankulo town (e.g., Maputo: 750km, Beira: 650km), with connections to the EN1, the main north/south national road, being limited from the rural hinterland and in some instances cut off during the rainy season.

There was also a lack of service providers supplying agricultural inputs (e.g., improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides) or technical support (e.g., extension services and linkages with research services) at community or district levels. Less than 2% of those SEED participants interviewed during the baseline survey had access to or use of these services.⁹ In addition to roads, the project’s 4 districts were challenged by a lack of basic infrastructure such as minimum electricity services, storage facilities, or price information systems for inputs and crops, the basic infrastructure that farmers need in order to be motivated to participate in the market. The district centers were still challenged at the time of the evaluation. For example, the district centre of Mabote often has no electricity services for the entire town, day or night.

HIV/AIDS and FHH

An additional major challenge identified at the start of the SEED project was the increasing HIV/AIDS prevalence in northern Inhambane Province, which had increased by over a third in two years; from 8.6% in 2002 to 11.7% in 2004.¹⁰ In the SEED baseline survey, 46% of the HH identified themselves as HLWHA (including having orphans, a death from chronic illness in last 12 months or a chronically ill person in the HH); 28% were identified as FHH with an additional 3% having their husbands away long term. In total 59% of the HH were regarded as vulnerable (23% were both FHH and HLWHA). Furthermore, women on the whole had limited decision-making power in HH, except around their in-kind income sources such as agricultural production.

Civil War

Prior to Mozambique’s civil war, communities and households had developed more effective coping strategies to deal with the weather-related risks and scarcity of other kinds of economic opportunities. But these strategies and traditional livelihood systems were eroded during the 18 years of civil war that began in 1977, two years after the end of the war of independence. About one million people died in fighting and from starvation, five million civilians were displaced, and many were made amputees by landmines. The civil war also destroyed infrastructure and isolated the country from markets. The consequences of the civil war that ended in 1992 and the subsequent HIV/AIDS epidemic provided new challenges that

⁹ SEED baseline survey, April 2007

¹⁰ "Relatório sobre a Revisão dos Dados de Vigilância Epidemiológica do HIV: Ronda 2004", Programa Nacional de Controle das ITS/HIV/SIDA. (Maputo, August 2005)

required a need for adaptation to livelihood strategies. The SEED project was designed to address these challenges.

Global Economy

The project has felt the impact of the recent global economic crisis and higher fuel prices, as national and international spending ability has decreased, affecting sales of the products developed by the project. Meat prices have declined in Maputo markets, while operating costs such as fuel have increased. Therefore, the sales of animals have declined slightly and accessing crafts markets has also been made more difficult than anticipated according to project staff. In addition, recent food prices are the highest they have ever been, and so while project participants were spending less on food than non-participants at the end of Y6, they were spending more than in Y4 and Y5 (but less than non-participants), indicating an increasing vulnerability beyond the control of the project.¹¹

2.2 Project Origins and Objectives

The SEED project was designed in 2004 with the intention to complement and build on the successes and lessons learned from a previous CARE initiative in Mozambique – the EU-funded six-year Inhambane Livelihood Recovery Project (ILRP) that lasted from 1998 to 2004. ILRP established the ground work for SEED, as the focus of ILRP was on re-establishing pre-war livelihoods by improving food security among rural HH through increased food productivity, improving markets and strengthening risk management in the districts of Mabote, Govuro, Inhassoro, and Vilankulo, the same 4 districts targeted for the subsequent SEED project.

The proposal for the SEED project was submitted to CIDA in 2004. The Contribution Agreement between CIDA and CARE Canada was signed on January 27, 2006. The signing of the contribution agreement commenced the project implementation planning process and the hiring of project staff. Project activities began in August 2006.

The overall objective of the SEED project was to reduce poverty and promote sustained rural economic recovery of 6,000 vulnerable HH, including at least 25% FHH and 20% of HH or people living with HIV/AIDS (PWLHA) located in the four project districts. Women were the main target group and were to represent approximately 60% of beneficiaries. The outcome of the project was to increase participant HH revenue by 30% from the baseline data through agriculture and other activities.

The initial components of the project were the livestock, horticulture and micro-enterprise components. The arts and crafts component was added later. After the MTE of the SEED project in July 2009, the VSLA component was added and the horticulture and micro-enterprise components were discontinued because they were no longer considered feasible. New funding from Irish Aid was granted to CARE in October 2009, to complement SEED activities with the addition of a cashew component. The implementation of the cashew component commenced on November 1, 2009, for a period of 3 years with Irish Aid providing

¹¹ CARE Canada Final Report, January 2013.

funding of EUR 1,218,906 for this component. This component had a target of reaching 1,200 HH, in addition to SEED targeted HH, in Mabote and Funhalouro Districts, the latter which added a fifth district for the SEED project.

CARE Mozambique obtained funding of EUR 353,630 from IFAD in February 2011, to support another complementary component which was implemented by SEED project staff with a research component undertaken by ILRI researchers. The main objective of this new component was to reduce poverty and increase food security through the establishment of small ruminant value chain platforms. This component, named 'imGOATS', became part of the SEED project with a focus on developing the goat value chain in Inhassoro District. The original target of this component was to work with 350 HH, 42% of which also worked with the SEED project, but it was able to work eventually with a total of 540 HH. The imGOATS component aimed at piloting sustainable and replicable organizational and technical models and researching, documenting and promoting evidence-based models through an innovative systems approach and learning. With the addition of the cashew and imGOATS components, overall SEED participant targets were increased from 6000 participants to 7200 participants.

There were many stakeholders and partners supporting the SEED project. The primary stakeholders and direct beneficiaries of the project were the members of the livestock and arts and crafts producer groups; members of the VSLAs; promoters (in all three groups); paravets; intermediaries working with these groups; and buyers of livestock and arts and crafts products. Other stakeholders and key partners were found in the private sector, research institutions, other CARE projects, non-government organizations (NGOs) and other donors. The main government partners for the project were SDAE and INCAJU since they were expected to provide some of the services which CARE provided after project completion. Other government partner agencies included SPP, the Provincial Directorate of Agriculture in Inhambane (DPAI), MINAG, and the Centre for the Study and Development of Arts and Crafts (*Centro de Estudos e Desenvolvimento de Artesanato-CEDARTE*).

Key private sector partners were commercial livestock keepers, cashew processors, and retailers; the Centre for the Study and Development of Arts and Crafts (GreenArt) and the local tourism industry. ILRI was the main partner research institution supporting the imGOATS project. There were also a number of NGOs who worked with the SEED project such as KUKULA (who worked in developing savings and loans groups in Inhassoro and Vilankulo districts), GIZ (which has a cashew programme in the north of Mozambique), and other CARE projects such as MaisVida (which worked with HH affected by HIV/AIDS) and Conservation Agriculture (which worked in partnership with the horticulture component). Co-financing partners with CIDA were Irish Aid and IFAD.

CARE Canada was the Canadian Executing Agency (CEA) for the project. CARE Canada managed the implementation of the project through its partnership with CARE Mozambique. Together they were responsible for overall project development and management, financial management, reporting and liaising with CIDA. The project operated from CARE's project office located in Vilankulo, Inhambane Province, and maintained field offices in each of the project districts. Thirty-eight SEED staff members worked at the project offices in Vilankulo and in the field offices. They were supported by short and long-term consultants as well as by volunteers.

Final project implementation activities for SEED were completed in September 2012. The only project component which will continue on after the SEED project is imGOATS although it may be noted that Irish Aid is planning a new project to support cashew production, conservation agriculture and VSLAs. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) convened for a final meeting in November 2012 with participation from CIDA, CARE Mozambique, CARE Canada, Irish Aid, SDAE and SPP representatives.

2.3 Expected Development Results

The ultimate outcome of the SEED project was to increase access to and control over a diversified portfolio of farm and non-farm income generating activities by women and men that operate on commercially, environmentally sustainable and equitable terms by poor households in the target areas of northern Inhambane Province.

The project purpose was:

1. To strengthen and increase farmers’ links with civil society, government and private sector partners who will contribute to commercial agriculture and non-farm enterprise opportunities;
2. To build farmer capacity to identify, develop and manage new or existing agricultural activities with the greatest potential for commercialization; and
3. To build farmers’ capacity to identify, develop and manage new or existing non-farm economic opportunities with greatest income-generating potential.

Figure 2: Expected Development Results.

Intermediate Outcomes	Immediate Outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participating households are generating additional income for their families from commercially oriented activities. 2. Participating households are using SEED services to increase their socio-economic security and resilience. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agro-livestock producers and artisans sustainably access markets. 2. Project participants have access to community based technical and market linkage support services. 3. Producers have increased capacity (skills) to manage commercially oriented activities. 4. Project participants have increased capacities in group management

	<p>techniques for local economic development activities.</p> <p>5. Project participants are aware of gender equality and the negative effects of HIV AIDS on the household economy.</p> <p>6. Project participants have access to VSLA services.</p>
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Source: SEED Summative Evaluation TORs

2.4 Value Chains

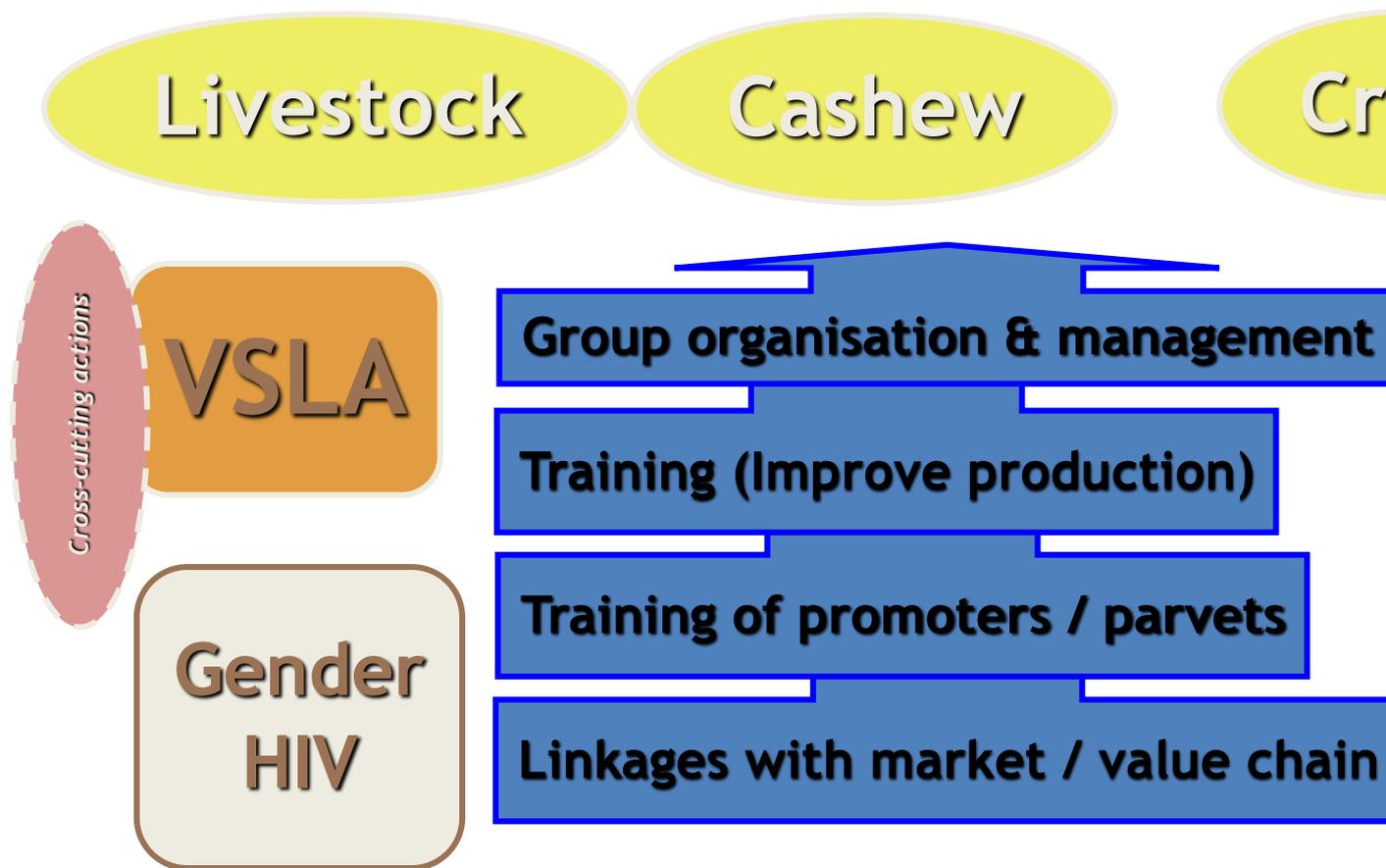
The SEED project developed a generic model for project implementation referred to as the SEED Project Value Chain. This was not a typical or traditional value chain that is normally concerned with bringing products from their conception to their end use and beyond and which generally encompasses aspects such as the design, production, marketing, distribution and support to the final consumer. Instead, the SEED project value chain included components such as group organization and management and training taking into consideration the context in which the project was being implemented, particularly the levels of poverty and illiteracy affecting project participants. That is why training was an integral part of the value chain and not ancillary to it. Providing training to producer groups on group functioning and management was important to ensure good leadership, accountability and transparency. Also important for producer groups was training on production aspects, including how to improve the quality and quantity of their products. Promoter training was important to build the capacity of promoters to provide specialist services in their communities regarding production quality, product improvements and commercialization.

According to SEED reports, the purpose of developing these modified value chain models that support smallholder farmer development was to ensure the sustainability of project initiatives through the development of strong functioning producer groups; strong community based promoters who would provide specialist services to these producer groups to increase production quality and quantity and aggregation of products; strong linkages to the market through a variety of buyers and/or intermediaries; and to create new income generating streams for SEED participants. Most, if not all, participating HH were able to generate additional income from the project initiatives supported by the value chains for each component with limited financial risk for themselves.¹²

The three value chains developed for the livestock, cashew, and arts and crafts components have in common four components: group organization and management; technical training; promoter training; and linkages to markets. Figure 3 on the following page presents a generic model of the SEED project value chain developed for smallholder producers.

Figure 3: Generic Model of the SEED Project Value Chain Developed for Smallholders

¹² SEED Final Report, page 14, January 2013.



Source: CARE Canada

2.5 MTE Recommendations

The MTE of the SEED project was completed in July 2009. The purpose of the MTE was to provide current information on the extent to which progress was being made towards planned project outcomes and to identify programming adjustments that would help to increase efficiency and effectiveness over the remaining life of the project. Project progress (successes and challenges) was assessed, sustainability issues were examined, lessons learned were identified, opportunities for programming adjustments noted and recommendations were made to strengthen project implementation.

One of the specific objectives of the summative evaluation was to assess the implementation of recommendations made by the MTE. There were a total of 20 recommendations made by the MTE and all but two of the recommendations were implemented by the SEED project. Annex 2 presents a summary of the MTE's evaluation findings and recommendations.

The recommendation concerning the vegetable component was not implemented because this original component was dropped by the project when it was found to be not feasible to pursue. The recommendation to repatriate the control of the project's database and to maintain it in Mozambique, ideally within the CARE structure, has not happened.

The project has been successful in implementing the remaining 18 MTE recommendations. The SEED project took an active role in helping the government to control bovine TB in Govuro district. The project also helped to reduce livestock damage to food crops by teaching producer groups how to build corrals and to use better techniques for herd management. Active consultation was undertaken between SEED project staff and staff from the NGO Sviluppo as well as with the Livestock Producers Association in Govuro in order to increase the sustainability of project activities in this district. The SEED project supported the government's poultry vaccination campaigns as well as promoted and provided training and refresher courses for female vaccinators. The project also assessed the value of a SEED goat marketing activity with special emphasis on the likely impact on women. The consequence of this assessment was the imGOATS project funded by IFAD, which became part of the SEED project in 2011 with a focus on developing the goat value chain in Inhassorro district.

For the participants in the arts and crafts component, a skilled designer was brought in by the project to assist the participants to strengthen the quality of their products in terms of design and structure. The SEED project also explored additional opportunities for the promotion and sale of arts and crafts products by working with local tourist-oriented businesses and intermediaries, and with national NGOs. The SEED project provided close and regular supervision for the VSLA promoters and the community groups they were working with. The project also reviewed the number of VSLA participants targeted for future years to ensure the quality of the activity and the project's ability to continue to provide necessary support for existing groups.

SEED field staff and coordinators were provided with additional training in group empowerment, participatory and management techniques as well as with technical and commercial knowledge, including exchange visits to other projects to learn from them. Basic money management and investment skills were taught to project participants, especially those selling livestock and those in VSLA groups. The SEED project contracted a qualified gender specialist for the CARE office in Vilankulo to provide gender mainstreaming support for all project activities. The project also hired two independent consultants to train staff, review existing modules and to develop new modules that ensured relevant gender-specific approaches were being implemented across all components. Moreover, the project collaborated with the Human Rights League in training influential community leaders and members of SEED community groups in Human Rights areas such as inheritance laws.

Systematic information on prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS was provided to project staff within the Vilankulo project office and in the project's district or field camps by reserving a period of time during each quarterly project staff planning meeting to allow for a discussion on gender and on HIV/AIDS issues. SEED project management and CARE Maputo undertook a number of initiatives to address project management issues. They discussed issues concerning how to increase the level of CARE staff satisfaction in the Vilankulo region and studied options for providing staff who are required to live away from their families with ways to increase their level of satisfaction. Project management also updated the project's original LM and Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) as was recommended by the MTE.

The above paragraphs provide a brief assessment of the implementation of the recommendations made by the MTE. Further discussion and examples of the extent to which

the recommendations were implemented are presented in the evaluation findings section within various components such as the livestock component.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

The evaluation methodology used to undertake the summative evaluation of the SEED project was designed to meet the requirements and expectations set out in the evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR), presented in Annex 3. The methodology also took into account the information received from the CEA, CARE Canada, the Canadian Cooperation Office (CCO) personnel based in Maputo and from discussions with the CIDA Senior Development Officer who was also the Evaluation Manager.

The evaluators' primary role was to validate the performance information produced by the project, CIDA, the CEA and SEED partners and stakeholders and to provide an independent third party assessment of the evaluation questions and issues presented in the TOR. The evaluation approach comprised the following phases:

1. Preparatory Work – scoping, consultations and preparations for the evaluation.
2. Data Collection:
 - a. Canadian Research – data collection and analysis in Canada of SEED project files, documents and reports as well as interviews/meetings with CEA and CIDA officials. The product of this phase was the preparation of an evaluation work plan that guided the evaluation.
 - b. Mozambican Research – a three week evaluation mission to Mozambique from November 25 to December 17, 2012, to validate preliminary findings and to collect additional information needed to further develop the evaluation's conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned. At the end of the mission, an in-country debriefing or validation meeting was held three days before departure from the field to validate preliminary data with staff from CIDA and from the CCO.
3. Preparation of the Evaluation Report. Draft and final reports were prepared in Canada based on the evaluation mission's findings and debriefings in Mozambique as well as on the debriefings with CIDA headquarters after the mission's return to Canada. The findings and conclusions of the draft evaluation report were submitted to the CIDA Evaluation Manager and CARE Canada for review and comments.

CIDA representatives in Canada as well as in Mozambique were involved throughout the evaluation and were consulted at important milestones during the evaluation process. All logistical decisions were made in consultation with CIDA and the CEA's staff in Ottawa and with CIDA, CCO and SEED project staff in Mozambique. Consultations undertaken during the preparation of the evaluation work plan clarified the commitments, responsibilities and expectations of CIDA, CEA, CCO, SEED project staff, and the evaluation consultant.

3.2 Evaluation Matrix

An evaluation matrix was prepared for this evaluation and was based on the evaluation matrix template provided in Annex 2 of the TOR. The matrix presents the overall structure of analysis for the evaluation. The matrix first presents the evaluation issues, in the form of both primary and secondary questions. Measures or indicators, data sources and data collection instruments and techniques are presented for each secondary question. The evaluation matrix is presented in Annex 4.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Data Collection Techniques and Tools

There were a number of data collection techniques or tools that were used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data for the summative evaluation. They included document content analysis; face-to-face (f2f) interviews with CIDA and CEA staff in Canada; telephone interviews and email information exchanges with Canadian and locally engaged staff at the CCO; and an evaluation field mission involving interviews with Mozambican and CEA partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Document Content Analysis

There was adequate data available about the SEED project after seven years of project implementation and after maintaining a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) reporting system for the project. Existing information was collected through document content analysis from the following data sources: six-month and annual performance progress reports; annual work plans; special reports, e.g., SEED Exit Strategy; MTE Report, and from secondary data analysis. Thus the evaluation did not collect much new performance data. It focussed instead on validating existing information. A list of references and data sources used for this evaluation is presented in Annex 5.

Field Mission

The field mission to Mozambique was three weeks in duration. The purpose of the field mission was to collect additional data through individual and focus group interviews in order to reach conclusions about the project's performance, to develop recommendations, and to capture lessons learned to improve the design and implementation of future projects. CIDA field staff and Mozambican national counterparts at the CCO were briefed by the evaluator upon arrival in Mozambique and debriefed on the mission's preliminary findings prior to departure. The schedule for the field mission is presented in Annex 6.

Geographic Coverage

It was not possible to visit each and every individual, producer group or association that has benefitted from the SEED project. The distances are great, travel is slow because of poor infrastructure, people are busy with their personal agendas and the field mission had a limited time period within which to conduct the evaluation. Given time, distance and travel considerations, the geographic coverage was limited to a sub-set of the three districts of Vilankulo, Mabote, and Govuro where the project was still most active, reviewing activities that were typical of the larger area. The evaluator visited stakeholders and beneficiaries in the project districts on one or two day trips based out of the SEED project office in Vilankulo.

Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholder participation was fundamental to this evaluation. The evaluation provided for active and meaningful involvement of key stakeholders as appropriate. Additional data was collected during the field mission through f2f interviews with CIDA and CCO personnel; implementing partner staff from CARE Mozambique and GoM agencies at the provincial and district levels (SPP and SDAE); CEA field Project Manager (PM), project technical staff, local technical consultants and a volunteer working with the SEED project; and institutional and private sector partners (promoters, paravets, service suppliers, intermediaries and retailers). Donor agencies and NGOs such as Irish Aid, ILRI and the Aga-Khan Foundation were consulted to gain knowledge and experience derived from implementing projects in the agriculture and rural development (ARD) sector. Focus group interviews were conducted with women and men members of producer groups in the livestock and arts and crafts components, members of the VSLA groups as well as with SEED project staff. The integration of cross-cutting themes (gender, environment, and governance) in project activities was examined during the field visits through individual and focus group interviews.

Over 200 persons were interviewed individually or in focus groups during 30 separate interviews conducted for the evaluation. Table 1. below provides an analysis of the number of persons interviewed by category of interviewee.¹³

Table 1. Number of Persons Interviewed by Category

CIDA HQ	CIDA & CCO	CARE HQ & Field	Livestock Component	Crafts Component	VSLAs Component	GoM officials	Retailers	Donors	Total
2	2	13	126	18	55	9	1	3	229

Source: Evaluation Interview Notes

Interview Questions

The evaluation questions contained in the evaluation matrix were incorporated into an interview guide or questionnaire that was tailored for each individual and focus group interview with SEED partners and stakeholders in Canada and in Mozambique. All of the questions were reviewed and adapted where necessary after further information was gathered from both indirect and direct sources at the start of the implementation phase of the evaluation. The interview guide is presented in Annex 7.

¹³ Because interviewees were not asked permission to list their individual names as references in the evaluation, they have instead been listed by category of interviewee.

The evaluation consultant and a local interpreter who assisted the consultant, strictly adhered to the evaluation standards as set out in the Treasury Board of Canada's Evaluation Policy, the "*OECD-DAC (2010) Quality Standards for Development Evaluation*" and evaluation best practices when engaging stakeholders in interviews. The evaluator and interpreter acted with integrity in their relationships with all stakeholders to ensure objectivity and when conferring with stakeholders on decisions such as confidentiality, privacy, communications and ownership of findings and reports.

All interviewee responses have been kept strictly confidential in the evaluation report. All data collected from interviewees has been pooled. Only the evaluator involved on this evaluation has had access to this information. Although some interviewees have been quoted, the source of the quote has not been identified by name, position title or specific institutional affiliation.

Appropriate Representation

Sampling of geographical coverage, organizations and participants for proposed site visits was based on the following criteria to ensure appropriate representation of SEED activities:

- Geographic scope to cover those districts where major activities took place;
- Program scope to cover all three key components of livestock, arts and crafts and VSLAs;
- Strong and weak and old and new producer groups and associations, men and women; and
- Communities and components where gender issues are being addressed and where they are not.

Focus group interviews were undertaken with nine groups comprising 199 members participating in all three components, including promoters for each group. Ninety-four or 47% of the members interviewed in focus groups were women. Five groups were considered as successful or strong groups and 4 as less successful or weak groups. Information was collected from these focus groups in order to inform the evaluation questions listed in the interview guide. For example, information was collected from all focus group interviews to answer interview question number 2, *Has the project achieved the expected outcomes from the standpoint of the primary stakeholders (male and female producers, male and female heads of households, promoters, buyers, and district officials)?*

Data Analysis and Triangulation

Data analysis was based on the responses from partners and stakeholders to the key evaluation questions posed in the interview guide modified for each interview. Findings for each key evaluation question were based on data triangulated by source whenever possible. For example, in analyzing data collected on progress being made toward a particular outcome, the evaluator analyzed data from progress reports and from responses made by CIDA, CEA, partners and/or project beneficiaries that would support data triangulation, i.e., information from three or more sources. The evaluation matrix presented in Annex 4

indicates the data sources used for triangulation purposes and the data analysis used to inform the evaluation findings for each evaluation question.

Gender issues were analyzed through document content analysis and through information collected from interviews. Gender issues that were included in the interview guide or questionnaire (Annex 7, questions 12, 13 and 14) were addressed in all individual and focus group interviews where appropriate and relevant. Almost half (48%) of all interviewees were women, 110 out of 229 persons interviewed. Table 2 presents the gender disaggregation of persons interviewed by category.

Table 2. Gender Disaggregation of Persons Interviewed by Category

Category	Women	Men	Total
CIDA Headquarters	1	1	2
CIDA Field Staff & CCO	-	2	2
CARE Headquarters & Field Staff	8	5	13
Livestock Component	26	100	126
Craft Component	18	-	18
VSLA Component	50	5	55
Retailer		1	1
GoM Officials	6	3	9
Donor Representatives	1	2	3
Persons Interviewed	110	119	229

Source: Evaluation Interview Notes

After each major step in the evaluation process, i.e., work plan preparation, final work plan report, evaluation mission debriefing, draft evaluation report preparation, the evaluator consulted with the CIDA Evaluation Manager to discuss findings to date, constraints encountered and the next steps in the evaluation process. This provided a quality assurance and quality control process that ensured the monitoring of the SEED evaluation work plan implementation and the quality of the SEED evaluation research and products. Further input from CIDA and CARE Canada was invited to review the draft evaluation report before this final report was prepared. CIDA's and CARE Canada's comments have been incorporated into this final report. CARE Canada's feedback in the form of track changes to the draft summative evaluation report is presented in Annex 8.

3.4 Constraints and Limitations

For the most part, there were very few constraints and limitations that affected the findings of the summative evaluation of the SEED project. The few that did exist were related to the availability of key informants, qualitative data, disaggregation of data and evaluation questions deemed too difficult to answer given the time and resources provided for the summative evaluation.

Availability of Key Informants

The evaluation took place after the close of the project implementation period and during the final months of the project which meant that a number of the SEED project staff at the project office in Vilankulo had left already to seek further studies or other employment by the time the evaluation was undertaken. There was only about a third or less of the project staff remaining in the project at the time of the evaluation. But fortunately, of this number, a few key informants comprising long-term and key project management staff such as the PM, a Project Officer (PO) for livestock, an experienced consultant and a volunteer and some government officials, were available for interviews. Project beneficiaries, those persons who live in the communities comprising the project area and who have participated in and benefitted from project activities were available as key informants concerning the impact or changes the SEED project has brought to their HH and communities, to their behaviour and to their way of thinking about issues such as gender equality. Nevertheless, in the two week period available for the field mission in the project area it was only possible to visit a small sampling of the 8,304 participating HH living in 274 communities located in 5 rural districts that had been supported by the SEED project. Mitigation strategies to address this situation included, inter alia, limiting the fieldwork to a sub-set of the three districts where the project was still most active, reviewing activities that were typical of the larger area and to meeting a representative sample of successful or strong and less successful or weak producer groups and VSLAs.

Lack of Qualitative Data

The annual progress reports for the project consisted entirely of quantitative data presented in the tables reporting on progress made towards the achievement of outcomes. There were no qualitative performance indicators used to measure changes in the communities. This situation was mitigated by the collection of qualitative data by the evaluator during individual and focus group interviews. Qualitative sub-questions of key evaluations questions were presented to interviewees in a manner that solicited a response using a qualitative indicator of change, e.g., dealing with levels of satisfaction or changes in behaviour.

Disaggregation of M&E Data

The M&E system developed for the project was rather complex and detailed and overly complicated according to respondents. It relied on data being collected from the field by project staff working closely with participants in rural communities. The evaluator did not have the mandate or time to check carefully the validity and reliability of data collected by project staff on results achieved by the project. It was necessary for the evaluator to take this data at face value. Furthermore, data was not always disaggregated by component so it was challenging at times to interpret properly the data presented in reports and verbally to the evaluator during interviews. For example, when data is provided about HH income, it was not always clear if the increase in income was derived solely from SEED activities, e.g., selling cattle or if it included other income from, perhaps, selling items from small stores to community members or income derived from working for a fee clearing a farmer's field. Furthermore, data sometimes was presented for livestock producers as a whole that included cattle and goat producers. The explanation for this is that in Mabote and Govuro Districts, livestock keepers tend to keep both cattle and goats. So data related to how many cattle or how many goats were kept by members of livestock groups were not separated out in the

annual surveys. Yet the evaluation was not asked to assess the changes influenced by the imGOATS project funded by IFAD. Consequently, this made it difficult, at times, to extract statistics or data on changes achieved by livestock producer groups as a result of only raising cattle. Mitigation strategies for this situation included consultations with project field staff to clarify or disaggregate data reported in the annual progress reports as well as collecting more specific data during individual and focus group interviews with producer groups and with VSLAs.

Evaluation Sub-Questions

The evaluation was limited in its inability to collect data with which to answer a few of the original evaluation sub-questions. One sub-question was: *If a comparison is possible, was SEED implemented in the most efficient way compared to similar projects?* The second sub-question that was not possible to answer by the evaluator was: *has the intervention supported women and girls in the realization of their full human rights?* These two sub-questions were dropped from the evaluation after discussion with the Evaluation Manager.

With reference to the first sub-question, CARE Canada noted that in many ways, the SEED project has been a unique project especially in northern Inhambane Province. It was unique because no other project was supporting the development of value chains. But this has changed recently. In southern Mozambique, IFAD is investing in value chains as is Oxfam, but these investments have only started in the last year. To answer this sub-question would have required the evaluator to compare the SEED project to similar projects in other countries in order to achieve a fair comparison. While data may have been available to answer the first sub-question, it was not readily available, and thus would have taken more time and effort for the evaluator to collect this information than was available to do so. With respect to the second sub-question, realizing full human rights for women was never an objective of the SEED project. The SEED project did have, however, a rights component in terms of training sessions on the Family Law as well as involvement in HH decision-making.

4 EVALUATION FINDINGS

There were twenty evaluation questions that the summative evaluation was to answer.¹⁴ The findings to each evaluation question are presented below under the following sections on effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability, cross-cutting themes and other evaluation issues.

4.1 Effectiveness

One of the most important evaluation criteria is effectiveness of the results achieved in the project. Evaluation question number one was: *has the project achieved the expected outcomes and made progress towards the ultimate outcome as per the intervention logic?* To answer this question, the evaluation assessed the progress that has been made towards the achievement of expected outcomes; the achievement of expected outcomes from the standpoint of the primary stakeholders; and whether there were any unintended results achieved in the project.

4.1.1 Achievement of Expected Outcomes

The project had two intermediate outcome level results expectations. These are outcomes that were to be achieved and results or changes that were to be observed when the project was completed. The two intermediate outcomes were:

- Participating households are generating additional income for their families from commercially oriented activities; and
- Participating households are using SEED services to increase their socio-economic security and resilience.

Generating Additional Income

The first intermediate outcome focuses on two key issues: generating additional income and doing so through commercially oriented activities. The project has generated additional income for participating HH. Data from the project's Y6 annual survey indicated that the mean total cash income of SEED participants was 92% above the baseline by Y6, compared with 74% for non-participant HH in the same communities where the SEED project was working. Participants in the livestock component increased their mean total cash income by 105%, VSLA by 108%, and arts and crafts by 76% from the baseline. Participants interviewed for this evaluation (respondents) all confirmed that they were able to generate additional income from their participation in the three SEED supported components that are the focus of the evaluation. Table 3 on the following page presents the changes in mean total cash income of SEED participants in terms of Mozambique Meticals (MZN) and US dollars (US\$).

¹⁴ CIDA. November 2012. Terms of Reference for the Summative Evaluation of the SEED Project. Page 10.

Table 3: Changes in Mean Total Cash Income of SEED Participants

Category of Participant	Baseline Mean Total Cash Income (MZN)	US\$ Value (April 2007 Baseline Survey)	Y6 Mean Total Cash Income (MZN)	US\$ Value (February 2012 Y6 Survey)	Percent Change from Baseline (MZN)
Total Participants	37,348	\$ 1.45	71,757	\$ 2.66	92%
Total Non-Participants	37,348	\$ 1.45	65,102	\$ 2.41	74%
FHH Participants	37,348	\$ 1.45	67,841	\$ 2.51	82%
Livestock	37,348	\$ 1.45	76,445	\$ 2.83	105%
Arts and Crafts	37,348	\$ 1.45	65,637	\$ 2.43	76%
VSLA	37,348	\$ 1.45	75,859	\$ 2.81	103%

Source: SEED Final Report. January 2013.

The livestock component provides a good illustration of how the SEED project was able to contribute substantially to the generation of additional HH income for participants. A key focus of this component was to encourage livestock producers to sell their animals in a formalized manner through livestock fairs and to see them as a source of steady income instead of just keeping them as a status symbol (i.e., traditionally the more animals you owned the more prestige you had) or selling them only in times of need (e.g., deaths, weddings, festivals, or for supplementary income). The project was successful in changing the behaviour and thinking of livestock producers so that they did in fact start commercializing the selling of their livestock. Data substantiating this change in behaviour and thinking from subsistence to commercial activities can be found in the number of animals sold, in the value of sales and in the number of people selling which has increased substantially since the start of the project. For example, the number of people selling cattle in Y2 was 15 and at the end of Y6 the number was 402. The average seller of cattle made US\$ 323 in Y2 and US\$ 695 in Y6, an increase of 217% from Y2 to Y6. Project reports and respondents, including paravets and SDAE representatives, indicated that increased income from the sale of cattle was due to the fact that the animals were healthier and thus weighed more, in part, because of the consistent treatment by the paravets living in the same communities as the producer groups. The following Table 4 presents the value of livestock sales and numbers of sellers per year and Figure 4 on the following page the average income of livestock producers.

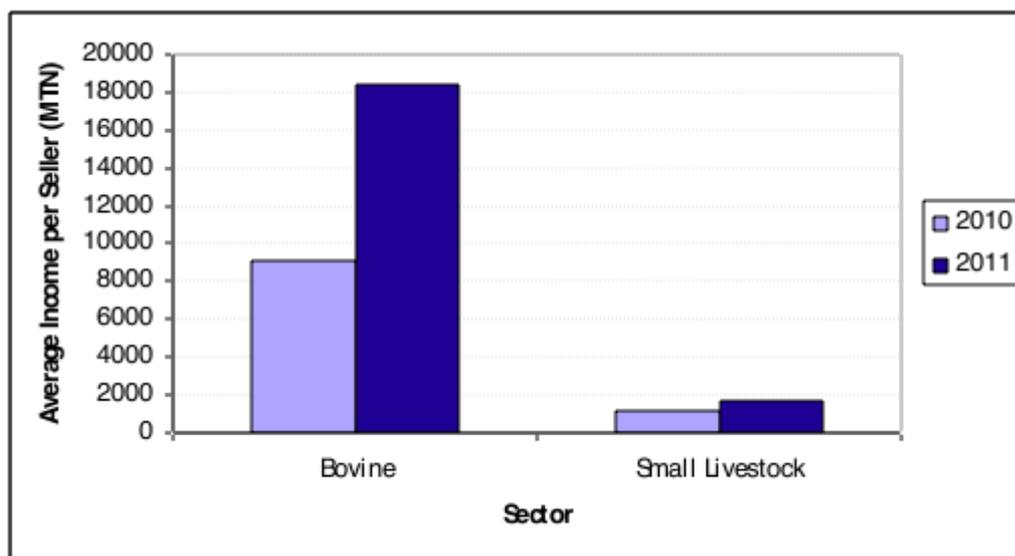
Table 4 - Value of Livestock Sales and Number of Sellers per Year (Y3 to Y6)

Year	Small Species			Cattle		
	Sales(MT)	Sales USD	Nº of Sellers	Sales(MT)	Sale USD	Nº of Sellers
Y2	-		0	768,490		15
Y3	1,060		4	1,896,350		111
Y4	194,752	6,955	164	2,652,357	94,727	293
Y5	261,186	8,425	153	7,076,834	234,428	385
Y6	206,948	7,525	185	7,682,493	279,363	402
Total	663,946	22,905		13,076,531	608,518	

Average Value 2009/10	1188	42	9052	323
Average Value 2010/11	1707	55	18381	609
Average value 2011/12	1119	40	19110	695

Source: SEED Annual Progress Report, April 2011 to March 2012, page 26, June 2012.

Figure 4 - Average income (MZN) per bovine and small livestock producer (2009/10 & 2010/11)



Source: SEED Annual Progress Report, April 2011 to March 2012, page 26, June 2012

Commercially Oriented Activities

Commercialization as defined by the project is the identification or selection and aggregation of products (livestock or arts and crafts) by promoters in preparation for selling these products at livestock fairs or to intermediaries and/or commercial buyers. A key component of commercialization was having products of quality and of quantity to attract buyers or intermediaries. Without this component or focus, the buyers would not have continued to come for livestock and arts and crafts products. Consequently, developing a commercially attractive marketing system as well as developing linkages to buyers or intermediaries was very important for commercialization of products. Linkages to markets either did not exist at all or were very weak or ad-hoc in the livestock and arts and crafts components at the beginning of the project. Ensuring that products were aggregated in a manner which attracted buyers was an important role of the promoters trained under the project. The project has made progress in the commercialization of products since the beginning of the project.

Sales in the livestock component were all done on an ad-hoc basis at the HH or community level when the project started in 2006. Cattle buyers would have to drive house to house and from community to community to purchase cattle since there were no cattle fairs where cattle were aggregated for sale to buyers. There were no cattle fairs and no regular buyers at

the beginning of the project. There was no formal pricing system; instead it was based mostly on what the buyer was willing to pay for an animal which often put the seller at a disadvantage. Moreover, there was no public information on livestock prices, dates and locations of sales. This had all changed by the end of the project.

Livestock sales are now almost always done at regular livestock fairs. There have been over 50 different buyers who have participated in the fairs over the past 6 years. While the exact number of buyers who attend the livestock fairs fluctuates from fair to fair, there continued to be 27 dedicated buyers (including 2 buyers for goats) and 1 association as of the Y6 survey. While project reports noted that the project has been challenged to find consistent buyers, reports also noted that 88% of all livestock producers who recorded sales were selling to at least two or more different buyers during the closing period of project implementation.

All sales are now done using a weighing scale unless a scale is not available for use. Electronic scales are used for cattle and small mechanical scales are used for goats. All sales are done using live weight prices that are negotiated every 6 months between livestock associations and buyers with the facilitation of SDAE, the GoM extension services. Furthermore, market information relating to pricing, location and date of fairs is now collected at each fair and shared nationally through SIMA, an information system on agricultural markets.

There have been a number of positive results from the changes that have taken place in the livestock component due to the commercialization of livestock products, especially with cattle. A fee is now paid per animal sold at the fairs, and managed by SDAE, so that costs associated with organizing the fairs and with the maintenance of the weighing scales are now covered by the producers. There has been a decline in the theft of cattle due to sales only occurring at fairs. Furthermore, Mabote and Govuro Districts were by the end of the project the only locations in Mozambique where there was a fully functional and formalized fair system as well as where SIMA is receiving information on livestock prices.

Commercialization of products made in the arts and crafts component has been much more challenging than in the livestock component. Nevertheless, changes have taken place. Xindzalas¹⁵ or traditional handmade baskets were not seen as a source of income for women when the SEED project started to work with the arts and crafts component. Instead, they were produced and used locally within HH and rarely sold commercially. Moreover, there were no formalized marketing and sale systems and there was no formalized pricing system. This has changed now. A pricing table is used that is based on the size and design of the product. As the project comes to an end, Xindzalas and other related products are reportedly being sold in 3 local lodges in Vilankulo, 7 locations in Maputo, 1 location in Beira and 1 in South Africa. Sales of 40 baskets were made internationally for the first time in the United States in October 2012, and further orders are being negotiated according to project reports and interviews with intermediaries. The arts and crafts participants have formed, in addition, 2 associations, one in Mabote and another in Inhassoro District, at the artisans' own initiative. Their aim is to be able to attract external funding for their associations.

¹⁵ Xindzalas are traditional baskets commonly made in Inhambane Province using special reeds and thatch generally found locally. The baskets were traditionally used for storage of grains but are now also used for decorating purposes.

Although the main aim of supporting the arts and crafts component was to support, in general, women and women producer groups, a sharper focus was on FHHs and on women in HLWHA. Furthermore, the project design took into consideration that the arts and crafts groups also provide a social gathering for women who welcome an opportunity to meet regularly with their peers to discuss issues of mutual concern. During this time spent in groups they make Xindzalas with the intention of selling a few as a source of supplementary income. It is recognized that most women are still too busy with family, household and agricultural or livestock responsibilities so that they cannot, nor do they necessarily desire, to make Xindzalas on a full time basis in large quantities. The commercialization of Xindzalas and related products has not reached the magnitude of sales as has been seen in the livestock component. But then it was never really intended to do so. The intention has always been to provide a supplemental source of income for the most vulnerable women, especially targeting FHH and women in HLWHA. There were a few exceptions found, however, in some of the more dynamic arts and crafts producer groups who had formed two associations by the end of the project in order to strengthen the commercialization of Xindzalas for their groups.

It is important to remember what the existing situation and conditions were for participating HH at the beginning of the project in 2006. There were no producer groups formed in the livestock component. All livestock keepers operated as individuals. They did not receive any training on herd management, did not aggregate animals for disease treatments or disease control, nor for sales at fairs. They tended to sell animals only when there was an emergency or a need for additional income. There were no producer groups formed for the arts and crafts component. Arts and crafts activities tended to be done at home on an individual basis. Although there existed savings groups referred to as “Xitique” groups at the beginning of the project, these groups had poor rules concerning borrowing procedures, i.e., who could borrow and how much as well as poor rules around savings as members could save very different amounts which created conflict amongst the members. It may be noted that conflict was avoided in the CARE supported VSLA system because a certain savings amount is set as the minimum and a member can only save three times that per VSLA session. In addition to issues concerning borrowing and saving, there were also issues concerning money safety and transparency in how much was saved.

It was very strategic and important for the SEED project to develop value chains with strong functioning producer and VSLA groups who could generate additional income from the project initiatives. Clearly, the project has achieved the intermediate or end-of-project outcome whereby participating HH were generating additional income for their families. The baseline target of overall change was a 30% increase in participant household revenue. By the end of the project, the mean total cash income of participating HH had increased by 92% above the baseline.

Using SEED Services

The second intermediate outcome of the SEED project is that participating households are using SEED services to increase their socio-economic security and resilience. SEED services are defined as community based support services provided by promoters, paravets, intermediaries and VSLAs. Participating households were using SEED services to increase their socio-economic security and resilience at the end of the project.

Developing community based support services was a key strategy of the SEED project primarily to support producer groups. Promoters were identified by their community groups in each component and then trained by the SEED project to provide specialist services in their communities regarding production quality, product improvements and commercialization or linkages with markets. Promoters received refresher training which was important to deepen their understanding of more complex technical issues, e.g., identifying animal diseases, as well as to allow networking with each other. The SEED project also supported the promoters to become entrepreneurs (e.g., paravets or VSLA promoters) who could provide affordable community based support services to producer groups for a fee and thus generate an income for themselves. They were also taught how to operate independently in their communities. All promoters received a minimum of 2 years of support from the SEED project. A total of 182 promoters were trained by the project: 54 for livestock; 56 as vaccinators; 21 for crafts; and 51 for VSLA. These promoters were crucial to the successful development and sustainability of producer groups.

The formation of producer groups was another important strategy of the project with the aim to increase production quality as well as to aggregate products in order to allow for better access to markets. To accomplish this, the project first focused on forming interested producers into groups and then providing the producer groups with training on group functioning or organization and management issues to ensure good leadership, accountability and transparency, all contributing to good governance. The more advanced or mature groups have been encouraged to form associations in order to acquire legal status that would in turn facilitate and strengthen the commercialization process of other producer groups who may desire to join these associations. With the support of the SEED project, 120 producer groups (excluding VSLA) were formed and received group formation, organization and management training and 5 associations were established, 2 in arts and crafts and 3 in livestock.

Once the producer groups were formed, they were able to take advantage of technical training to improve production. Specific training focused on how to improve the quality and quantity of production and was provided by the SEED project in the form of training modules and a training calendar. Training courses were designed to be practical and were aimed at participants with low literacy levels to ensure active and participatory learning. All producer groups received at least 2 years of technical training from SEED project extension staff and from promoters trained by the SEED project.

Training in these various modules was also provided to government partners in order to ensure sustainability of the producer groups. The project has always worked in close conjunction with government partners, especially SDAE, SPP and INCAJU. Government extension officers at the district level have always participated in paravet and producer group training sessions subject to their availability. Moreover, the SPP Director even facilitated some of the training sessions for promoters and was actively engaged in all levels of project activities related to the livestock component. This has been critical in creating a uniform language when dealing with producer groups and buyers according to CARE project staff and government officials. It also has been important in determining what activities the project could support and coordinate including construction of a nursery in Mabote for the cashew component, distribution of seedlings, and SDAE's engagement in the organisation of fairs

beginning in Y6, as well as the monitoring of activities. Furthermore, the administrators and heads of SDAE's offices have regularly received 6 monthly reports on project achievements and proposed future activities. It may be noted that although training of government extension officers has been ongoing since early on in project implementation, it was only in Y7 that the project started to undertake joint planning with the SDAE's. This was as an important part of the project's exit strategy since the project needed to define how the process should work post project and make it functional and realistic bearing in mind the lack of resources at the district level.

The SEED project also demonstrated how to establish linkages to markets. In all the economic sectors or components, linkages to the market either did not exist at all or were very weak or ad-hoc when the project started. Developing a commercially attractive marketing system as well as establishing linkages to buyers and/or to intermediaries was found to be crucial in order for the producer groups to succeed. To achieve this, the project trained promoters on how to teach producer groups to aggregate products in a manner which would attract buyers. The project also undertook specialist market studies to identify gaps and potential buyers as well as undertaking visits to existing markets to talk with buyers and to attract them to the project area during fairs and sales events. The project paid some of the travel costs to expose buyers to the products and provided early on in project implementation a revolving fund to buyers or intermediaries to kick start sales which proved to be a successful strategy in a system where credit access was very difficult. Furthermore, and very importantly, the project played a key role in ensuring that market prices were available at the producer level.

The introduction of the VSLA component was a later, yet important addition to the project. It also was a crucial component for project participants because it allowed participants to save money safely in their rural communities; to learn how best to manage their money; and to learn how best to use additional income generated from VSLAs to diversify their income sources. VSLA users were encouraged by promoters to take out loans from the VSLAs saving schemes and to re-invest the loans into new economic activities, e.g., microenterprises, in order to diversify their livelihoods. It was also seen as a cross-cutting component since participants in the livestock and arts and crafts value chains were encouraged to save through the VSLAs their additional income that they generated from the sales of their products. As in the other components, training modules were developed for VSLA groups and promoters based on the 9 month savings cycle for VSLA groups.

There were a total of 274 VSLA groups formed by promoters (also called Village Agents) and project extension officers during the project. The project trained 51 promoters from the start of the project and 29 (57%) promoters are still active at the end of the project, up from Y5 where it was found that only 43% were active. The promoters' responsibilities were to form groups, train them on the rules of VSLAs, and to provide services relating to the distribution of savings and to the allocation of loans. Their role was to act as a facilitator and ensure that the process was undertaken according to the VSLA methodology, for which the promoters received a fee.

It is important to note the main reasons why close to half of those trained have not continued in their role as VSLA promoters. Some promoters left their positions due to their desire to move out of the area in search of more profitable and stable work. Other promoters did not

find the work profitable in the beginning as it took a long time to mobilize people to form a group from where the promoter would then be paid. This delay was discouraging for most promoters. The project also acknowledged that the selection criteria and process for VSLA promoters was not adequate enough in the beginning and thus revisions were made. The more stringent criteria were applied to promoters selected for subsequent training in the project. Consequently, there was substantial improvement in promoters' performance during the more recent training sessions than in previous training sessions. The VSLA promoters continued to receive support from the SEED extension officers to market their services at the community level after completing their training sessions.

The project has clearly demonstrated that participating HH have and continue to use community based support services particularly the promoters, paravets and intermediaries who provide technical services and advice to producer and VSLA groups and who support linkages to markets. Participants are clearly using SEED services in a manner that enables them to generate additional income for their families.

4.1.2 Primary Stakeholders

The second evaluation question was to assess whether the project has achieved outcomes from the standpoint of the primary stakeholders. Data supports and respondents all agree that the project has achieved its outcomes from the standpoint of the primary stakeholders. The primary stakeholders are male and female producers, male and female heads of HH, promoters, buyers, and district officials.

The glue that is holding the project together and which is expected to contribute to sustainability of project initiatives is the fact that all participants, with few exceptions, are now making more money from participating in SEED components than when the project started. Moreover, they now have increased technical and commercial skills enabling them to generate additional income for themselves and for their families. Progress reports and interviews confirm that arts and crafts producers are satisfied with the additional income they generate from the sale of their crafts as well as with the new designs that they have been taught. In addition, livestock producers are very satisfied with the achievement of the project's outcomes. Male and female producers of livestock now have healthier animals which command a higher price and are sold by live-weight using scales with sales being based on negotiated prices monitored by government representatives, SDAE. Fewer cows are stolen and fewer cows have diseases and thus mortality has declined in large part due to the technical services provided by promoters who live in communities where the livestock producer groups exist.

Female heads of HH are also highly satisfied with the achievements of outcomes in the project. They are generating additional income through the raising of cattle but more often through the raising of smaller animals such as goats and chickens and through the production of arts and crafts products. (Please refer to Table 4, page 21). The VSLA component has provided a rural savings scheme that allows producers and both male and FHHs to save money safely and to make some additional income generated from interest gained from the VSLAs with which to reinvest in microenterprises or to use for home improvements or for

educational purposes. This is generally a win-win situation for VSLA participants who are often also members of producer groups

Promoters are satisfied by the outcomes achieved by the project. They have received technical training from the project and have been supplied with initial supplies and medicines. They also have received increased respect and status in their communities from their role as promoters in the livestock, arts and crafts and VSLA components. They receive fees for their services, so they are making money which keeps them interested in fulfilling and maintaining their roles as promoters.

Buyers are satisfied with the outcomes achieved by the project in a number of ways. They no longer have to drive house to house nor to many communities to buy a small quantity of animals since sales for cattle and goats are now aggregated and there are fixed dates for fairs so that buyers can plan ahead to attend these fairs. Buyers are buying healthier livestock that command higher prices in larger cities such as Maputo. Livestock are free of diseases such as TB. Another benefit is that with negotiated prices for live-weight sale of livestock conflicts are avoided between buyers and sellers over what is a fair price for an animal.

District officials are very satisfied with the outcomes of the project. District offices in the project's 4 districts are desperately lacking in human, financial and physical resources with which to serve the communities in their districts. District veterinarian services (SPP) have considered the SEED project field extension staff as their "hands in the community", especially with the treatment of animal diseases. They have been especially happy with the way that paravets in the livestock component, working closely with SDAE and SPP staff, have been able to control the spread of TB which at one time was a major problem for Govuro District. Because district level SPP and SDAE extension staff lacked vehicles and petrol, they often joined SEED extension staff as they travelled in the districts so as to facilitate better access of government services to rural communities. SPP and SDAE extension staff were able to increase their capacity (knowledge, understanding and skills) with respect to the value chain model for livestock production by accompanying SEED extension staff on their travels throughout the districts. They also were able to increase their knowledge and skills through their participation in training sessions for paravets and producer groups. They learned about improved livestock rearing techniques, e.g., corridor structures for treating ticks, and improved animal health practices. They also learned how to schedule fairs encompassing the sale of livestock by live-weight using scales.

4.1.3 Participants

Another achievement of the project was the fact that by the end of the project it was able to reach and surpass the number of participants or beneficiaries that it had targeted. It is important to be clear that this project, and its main results expectations, were not just about numbers nor just about reaching a certain number of participants who would benefit from the project, but ensuring quality interventions and training of participants. Nevertheless, the extent of the project's reach is noteworthy in a geographical area where communities were hard to reach and serve. The SEED project originally targeted 8,000 HH as beneficiaries or project participants. This number was reduced to 6,000 shortly after project commencement and after consultations with partners in order to improve the quality and delivery of services.

Later the project was able to expand this target to 7,200 HH due to the addition of the cashew component financed by Irish Aid. The project was reaching a total of 8,304 participating HH as of September 2012, according to project reports. The total number of people living in these HH is estimated to be 50,654 persons based on an average of 6.1 family members per HH.¹⁶ The project exceeded not only its target for the total number of participants, but also for the total number of participants in all three sectors being evaluated. Table 5 presents the total number of participants by components, gender and targets.

Table 5: Total number of participants by component, gender and targets.

SECTOR	Male	Female	Total September 2012	% Female	Participants By Sector Sept. 2012	Target by end of Project	Achieved
Livestock	1140	589	1729	34%	21%	1500	115%
Crafts	30	337	367	92%	5%	350	105%
VSLA	1008	3998	5006	79%	57%	4150	120%
Cashew	600	602	1202	50%	17%	1200	100%
Total	2778	5526	8304	67%	100%	7200	115%

Source: CARE Canada

The registered project participants were situated in 247 communities in 5 districts. An important accomplishment of the project, not to be overlooked, was the synergies that were achieved between the main components of the project. Two components were implemented in 92 communities, three components in 29 communities and four components in 21 communities.

The project set specific targets with the intention of ensuring active participation of women in the project as well as the inclusion of more marginalized and vulnerable members of the community. The project set a target of 60% female participation, 25% of FHH and 20% of PLWHA. The project was able to exceed its targets as shown in Table 6 on the following page, except for the target set for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Table 6: Percentage of beneficiaries who are female, FHH and/or PLWHA.

	Target	Achieved By Year 7
Female Participation	60%	67%
Female Head of Household (FHH)	25%	30%
People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA)	20%	15%

Source: CARE Canada

The project endeavoured to include PLWHA in project activities as much as possible. The focus was on engaging with PLWHA and ensuring that they too could participate in the development and sale of products. Furthermore, training sessions using an income expenditure tree were

¹⁶ The number of household members in northern Inhambane province was 6.1 according to the SEED baseline. At least 60% of these persons were considered female at the time of the baseline survey.

given to producer groups on how chronic illness can affect the ability of HH to engage in economic development as a means of increasing their awareness about this relationship between chronic illnesses and economic development. Although a target of 20% was set for PLWHA, the project was not able to achieve this target due to difficulties with integrating PLWHA into the activities of various components. Some of the difficulties were due to the inability of PLWHA to participate in project activities because of their illness being either too sick or too weak to develop or to sell products with which to generate additional income that would allow them to participate actively as members of producer groups or VSLAs. Another difficulty was an absence of reliable statistics since it was not easy for the project to determine who, in fact, was living with HIV/AIDS because of the stigma attached to HIV/AIDS and because of confidentiality issues. The rate of HIV/AIDS in Mozambique was around 11.5% in 2009 according to UNICEF statistics. The project was able to assess that it had worked with about 15% of SEED participants who were categorized as PLWHA which more than proportionately represented the population.¹⁷

4.1.4 Unintended Results

The third evaluation question was to ascertain the question of whether there are any unintended results, positive or negative. One of the unintended positive results from the SEED project is the possible adoption of the paravet and livestock producer model or value chain that has been developed by the project. While the use of paravets to provide services to the community has been ongoing for some time in Mozambique, the SEED project was able to develop an improved model of how paravets can better serve their communities. Under the SEED project, a paravet and livestock keeper training curriculum was developed which focussed on the active and participatory training of participants in the livestock component with low literacy levels. This livestock training curriculum was reviewed and approved at the district and provincial levels and by the DNSV at the national level. It was still awaiting approval by the national extension services at the time of the evaluation. But the intention is to scale up this model for paravets serving producer groups beyond the province for use in other parts of Mozambique.

Another unintended positive result from the project is the influence it has had on the design and development of new projects in Mozambique funded by IFAD, Irish AID, and DANIDA using the value chain models developed in the SEED project. IFAD has used the imGOATS value chain model (based on the livestock value chain model from SEED) as part of their PROSUL value chain development project for livestock in Gaza Province. The evaluation was informed that Irish Aid is planning a new multi-year project to continue their support for the cashew component using the SEED value chain and training model in some of the former SEED project districts as well in new districts to be identified. Furthermore, the evaluation was informed that DANIDA is also planning with CARE Mozambique a 6 to 10 year project that would replicate the SEED value chain models that are based on well trained promoters supporting producer groups.

¹⁷ SEED. January 14, 2013. *Draft Final Report on the SEED Project.*

4.2 Efficiency

Efficiency is another criterion that was assessed by the summative evaluation. The two evaluation questions posed here to address efficiency were *how economically were resources or inputs (human and financial resources, time) converted to outputs (evaluation question 4), and how efficient and responsive was the project management structure (evaluation question 5)?* The following sections assess the efficiency of the project.

4.2.1 Resources Converted to Outputs

Resources were, for the most part, converted to outputs in an economical manner. There were seven main project outputs that were generated by the project. One was that commercial links were established between service providers, producers and buyers, although there is some concern about the strength and sustainability of these linkages which will be discussed later under the section on sustainability. In addition, significant amounts of capacity building or training were provided by the project in order to develop the capacity of producer and community groups to undertake and sustain commercial activities that would generate additional income for their families. Capacity building activities generated outputs in a number of areas: producers were trained in the management of commercial activities; participants were trained in group management techniques for economic development; groups were trained in mainstream activities such as gender and HIV/AIDS issues related to economic development; some of the stronger groups were trained in business practices; VSLAs were formed and trained; and community based service providers were trained to provide continuing support to their communities. These seven outputs combined together to generate 6 immediate outcomes which in turn combined together to generate 2 intermediate outcomes that contributed to the ultimate outcome of the project. These results were achieved within the overall budget and implementation period allocated for the project.

SEED extension staff were located in district centers or field offices which provided a cost-effective approach to provide technical support and training to participants. Travel and living cost were reduced because of this delivery strategy. Moreover, local staff, many of which spoke the local dialect, Xitswa, were hired to work with the communities thus providing for more effective training of participants by reducing the need for interpretation and by improving the understanding of participants trained in their local dialect. The project office was located in Vilankulos relatively near the districts served by the project. All of these elements contributed to an economical approach and to the achievement of under expenditures in the SEED project budget.

While under expenditures in project budgets can be a laudable achievement if warranted, the under expenditure in the SEED project was a cause for concern for a number of respondents. The project reported a balance of CDN\$ 1,619,144 as of March 2012. This amount represented about 22% or about a quarter of project funds unused with only nine months remaining in the project implementation period. Part of this balance was due to the favourable exchange rates between the US\$ and the CDN\$ and part was due to the co-financing from Irish Aid and IFAD which complemented the SEED budget and reduced the amount of money the SEED project had to provide to certain components, e.g., the cashew component. Nevertheless, respondents felt that this money could have and should have been

used in a more efficient manner throughout the life of the project through better planning and more effective project implementation that would have avoided the situation of having a large surplus of funds remaining at the end of the project.

4.2.2 Project Management Structure

CARE Canada managed the implementation of the project through its partnership with CARE Mozambique. They were responsible collectively for overall project development and management, financial management, finalization and presentation of all work plans, narrative or progress and financial reports and liaising with CIDA. The project management structure that was developed at the beginning of the project was maintained throughout the life of the project.

SEED was managed by a PM based at the project office located in Vilankulo, Inhambane Province. The PM received support from the CARE Mozambique Assistant Country Director of Programs and CARE Canada for strategic oversight. The total number of team members was 40 of which 38 were SEED staff, 1 was a Peace Corp volunteer and 1 was a long-term technical consultant.

A number of respondents were surprised and somewhat disappointed with CARE Canada's management of the project. It could have been stronger in managing the SEED project. CARE Canada has a long history of working with CIDA in the delivery of development assistance programs and projects throughout the world. CARE is fully aware of CIDA's reporting, RBM and gender equality requirements in the delivery of projects. CARE Canada and its implementation partner Care Mozambique had and continue to have considerable local experience working with other CARE managed projects in Mozambique. Based on its long history working with CIDA and from working in Mozambique and on its experience from implementing the IRLP prior to the SEED project, CARE Canada and CARE Mozambique ("CARE") could have been more efficient and effective in the management of the project. There are a number of areas where the management of the SEED project by CARE could have been stronger:

- **Staffing:** Based on the experience of managing staff in the IRLP and in other projects in Inhambane Province and in Mozambique, CARE could have been fully aware of the difficulties of staffing qualified people for the SEED project. There will, of course, always be challenges with staff turnovers in any and all projects. But based on past experience, one would have expected CARE to have been more strategic in its staffing of the SEED project in order to minimize staff turnovers that disrupted the management of the project. Moreover, the project may have been more proactive in finding ways and means to ensure a full complement of staff remaining during 2012, the last year of project implementation

Staff turnovers of SEED project personnel at CARE Canada's headquarters in Ottawa and in the field were a fairly significant problem for the project. For example, there was a turnover of four different CARE Canada PMs within a three year period. Over the course of 7 years there were a total of five PMs managing the SEED Project Office in Vilankulo including the use of a technical consultant to fill in the management gaps

from time to time. At the SEED project office in Vilankulo, the project rarely had a full complement of 38 staff members for sustained periods of time. There were also a number of turnovers in Deputy Project Managers (DPMs) and technical and extension staff serving the communities. Staff turnovers were mainly due to the difficult (e.g., staff time away from families, adequate schooling) and expensive (e.g., housing and food) living conditions as well as staff having other opportunities to study. But there also were dismissals for poor performance (VSLA and Livestock), the death of 3 staff members (1 in arts and crafts and 2 in livestock), the M&E officer resigned and DPM of VSLA went to another CARE project. A few staff left the project before the end of the project. One was the DPM of livestock. Another was the M&E officer who left in March 2012, and a Volunteer Service Organization (VSO) volunteer recruited in July 2011 for M&E had to leave in August 2012. This left a big gap in the M&E team with only the data entry officer left in the project.

Notwithstanding the challenges and problems posed by the number of staff turnovers, the project management structure demonstrated responsiveness and flexibility to these challenges. It used the services of a locally-based technical consultant to occupy, on a temporary basis, some key staff positions that were vacated from time to time as well as to assist with the preparation of reports for the project (e.g., the SEED Exit Strategy and Final Report on the Project). Furthermore, Peace Corp and VSO volunteers were used to support the mainstreaming component, preparation of the Exit Strategy and maintenance of the M&E system. The management structure was also responsive to and flexible with the shift in the components of the project moving from horticulture and microenterprise components at the beginning of the project to VSLA, cashew and goat components that started later in project implementation and hiring technical staff to support these new components.

- Gender Specialist: The project would have benefitted from a full time gender specialist assigned to the management structure of the SEED project. The challenges of changing perceptions, attitudes and behaviour about gender equality, access and control to resources and human rights for girls and women are significant in the project area where traditional values and customs are entrenched. Furthermore, attitudes of project staff towards gender equality were also in need of change. A full-time, experienced gender specialist would have benefitted the project and improved the mainstreaming of gender equality into the value chains of all of the main components;
- Reporting: It is unclear how an experienced and capable organization like CARE was not able to provide required progress and financial reports and annual work plans consistently on time and as required under the Contribution Agreement. Furthermore, it is unclear why CARE did not improve its PMF as the project evolved over time to conform to CIDA's RBM reporting requirements. As noted previously, no qualitative performance indicators were used to measure change in the project, assumptions and risk were not always carefully monitored and fully reported on, and the M&E web-based data system was found to be overly complicated and too detailed for practical analytical and maintenance purposes.

CARE Canada noted that in specific circumstances there were occasions when reports were submitted late. But this was not the norm during the 7 years of the project. In most instances, CIDA was provided with the required reports but a back and forth discussion occurred that made for longer final approvals of reports. CARE further noted, that with respect to RBM reporting requirements and the project's PMF, it was decided at a PSC meeting that SEED would not change its M&E plan even after CIDA introduced the new RBM system in 2008. It was agreed in conjunction with CIDA to keep the current M&E system that was developed with the project design;

- Stronger Linkages: Stronger and additional linkages could have been established from the very beginning of the project with buyers, retailers, GoM offices at the national level with DNSV and at the provincial level with SDAE and SPP. For example, the important role played by buyers early on and throughout the project is acknowledged. Livestock buyers have provided improved males to improve participants' breeding stocks and buyers of crafts have provided ideas around new designs and products. But respondents felt that the SEED project could have been able to develop stronger institutional or corporate linkages starting as early as possible in project implementation and as soon as there were quality products and reliable supplies available, with abattoirs or supermarkets or departments stores or other corporate buyers instead of relying mostly on individual buyers or intermediaries as markets for livestock and crafts products.

It was also felt that stronger linkages could have been established with SDAE, e.g., to undertake joint planning exercises from the very beginning of project implementation so as to ensure better preparation for handover of activities and for building SDAE capacity to support SEED components at project completion and beyond. With respect to this point, CARE noted that project focus was always on producer groups and promoters. Capacity building of SDAE staff was not part of the project focus. Nevertheless, from the start of the project SEED project staff sent semi-annual reports to SDAE offices and held regular meetings with SDAE staff and the administrators, at a minimum of every 6 months. Project staff worked with SDAE staff to ensure SEED activities were incorporated in the SDAE planning budgets and work plans completed in March of each year. From Y5 SDAE received copies of the Annual Work Plan (AWP), but it was only in Y6 that the project started to work with SDAE's in terms of developing the SEED AWP. When the SEED AWP was produced, SDAE and the administrators of each district were asked to comment and meetings were held with SDAE. In Y7, SDAE's all had participated in refining the SEED AWP and changes were made according to their comments;

- Donors: While the Irish Aid cashew and the IFAD/ILRI imGOATS components may have been complementary to other SEED project components, they also may have placed, nevertheless, an extra burden on the management staff of the SEED project. It may have been better to focus SEED management and technical resources on the few original components of the project instead of taking on additional management responsibilities later on in the project implementation period that were related to other donor-funded components;

- CSO engagement: CARE Canada and CARE International are committed to helping the poorest of the poor and to building the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) in all the countries in the world where they work. But the SEED project comes to an end without any Mozambican CSOs fully engaged with project activities. While not part of the original project design, CARE could have started, nevertheless, working early on in project implementation in partnership with Mozambican CSOs with expertise in the agriculture and rural development sector to develop their capacity to help sustain and expand in the districts, after the completion of the SEED project, the community based support services (“SEED services”) that were developed by the project. Some possible candidates as CSO partners for the SEED project could have been the CSO forum in Inhambane Province or the National Union of Farmers; and
- Managing expectations: It was suggested by respondents that not all SEED partners fully understood what the SEED project was about. Although CARE has the experience and capability, for some reason it was not able to better manage the expectations of key partners and stakeholders of the project so that a clear and common understanding of the project’s results expectations, value chains, methodologies and sustainability strategies could have been understood better by all SEED partners and stakeholders.

It is important to note that as part of its project management strategy, CARE Canada had highly recommended a no-cost extension of 6 months to a year which it submitted to CIDA for consideration more than a year before the end of the project implementation period. The no-cost extension would have included, inter alia, more training for GoM partners for sustainability purposes, more time in which to undertake an Y7 annual survey and preparation of the Y7 and final report on the project and more utilization of the total project budget. CIDA did not approve a no-cost extension to the project as requested by CARE Canada.

Before leaving this section on project management, it may be useful to provide a few comments on CIDA’s management of the project. Even though this was a responsive project, CIDA did provide considerable funding for the project and as such had an opportunity and a responsibility to provide improved oversight and to perhaps be a little bit more proactive on the management of the project. Better monitoring of financial disbursements by CARE may have assisted and encouraged CARE to find useful and appropriate ways to disperse all of the project funds by the end of the project. CIDA could have provided better oversight and guidance on the application of CIDA’s RBM guidelines, so that the LM and PMF, which was revised subsequent to project approval, could have been improved at this time to include, inter alia, a balance of qualitative PIs. At several times in project implementation, e.g., after the MTE and after the submission, review and approval of regular progress and financial reports along with annual work plans, CIDA had an opportunity to carefully review progress in the project and to suggest and even request modifications to improve the performance and sustainability strategies of the project.

A number of respondents felt that there was a lack of understanding between CARE and CIDA about what the project was about, what it was supposed to accomplish, the methodologies

used to achieve results as well as the sustainability strategies that were put in place by the project. Just as CARE could have managed stakeholders' expectations better, CIDA also could have better managed its expectations of the SEED project and of CARE's management of the project. Finally, CIDA was funding a number of other programs and projects in Mozambique during the same period of time that the SEED project was being implemented. There is little evidence that CIDA or CARE endeavoured to coordinate their other programs and projects with the SEED project or to develop strategies to capture synergies between all CIDA funded programs and projects in Mozambique, especially those focused on government support in Inhambane Province. This is something that could have been done for the benefit of the entire CIDA country program in Mozambique.

4.3 Relevance

Another important evaluation criterion is relevance of the results achieved in the project. There were two evaluation questions to be answered here with respect to relevance. Question number 6 was: *are the results achieved relevant to the needs and priorities of the primary stakeholders*, and question number 7 was: *are the results relevant to the needs and priorities of the project's districts and of Inhambane Province?*

Primary Stakeholders

The results achieved in the SEED project are very relevant to the needs and priorities of the primary stakeholders. The primary stakeholders, as outlined previously, are the men and women living in the rural communities of the project area. Their needs are many. Most are living at a subsistence level in some of the poorest districts and communities of Mozambique. There are limited economic opportunities as these communities are dispersed, populations sparse and transport access is very difficult to and between many communities. There is also a lack of service providers to these communities supplying agricultural inputs or technical support at the community and government levels. These communities are confronted with incidences of HIV/AIDS and the numbers of FHH are high. The priorities of the primary stakeholders are to generate additional income for their families, to save money in order to improve their homes, to provide for a better education for their children, to improve the health of family members and to increase their socio-economic security and resilience.

The SEED project has met the needs and priorities of the primary stakeholders. They have increased capacity to manage technical and commercial aspects of the value chain in which they are involved. Consequently, they are now generating additional income for their families from commercially oriented activities as opposed to the traditional subsistence, non-commercially oriented activities that was the case when the project started. They now are able to save money in a secure manner through the VSLA schemes and these savings are used to improve their homes (e.g., tin roofs, brick walls, cement floors), cope with social events such as deaths in the family, pay school fees, invest in microenterprises and on their farms, and be more aware of proper behaviour that avoids the spread of HIV/AIDS. The SEED project has been important for vulnerable HH, especially those participating in the arts and crafts component. Arts and crafts products are produced locally with no cost to the producers. The inputs to make the products are collected locally from the surrounding environment. So for

vulnerable HH having an income source where they do not have to invest initially has been critical.

Community leaders are important change agents in these communities. Those community leaders interviewed for this evaluation confirmed the positive economic and social changes that the SEED project has brought to their communities including the change in attitude with respect to gender equality and control of assets (e.g., decisions concerning the utilization of savings and interest generated from VSLA membership) between men and women in their communities. Community leaders have been trained to support the promoters and to understand the project model so that they are able to engage and resolve conflicts between producers and promoters should they arise. Furthermore, linkages have been established and strengthened with buyers, retailers and with government service providers. Overall, the primary stakeholders are less vulnerable and have more resilience; are accessing markets and earning more money; and are saving money and re-investing in a diversity of activities more so than in 2006 when the project started.

Districts and Province

The results achieved by the SEED project are very relevant to the needs and priorities of the project districts and of Inhambane Province. As noted earlier in this report, northern Inhambane Province is one of the poorest regions of one of the poorest countries in southern Africa. The GoM prepared the Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PARP) 2011-2014 in order to address the widespread poverty that exists in the country. The PARP is focused on the objective of combating poverty and promoting a culture of work, with a view to achieving inclusive economic growth and reducing poverty and vulnerability in the country.¹⁸ To achieve this objective, the government defined general objectives, to which all government efforts were to be directed at the provincial and district levels. These are: (i) to increase output and productivity in the agriculture and fisheries sectors; (ii) to promote employment; and (iii) to foster human and social development, while maintaining a joint focus on (iv) governance and (v) macroeconomic affairs and fiscal management.

The SEED project has been directly relevant to the PARP in that the project has focused on increasing output and productivity in the agriculture sector through livestock and cashew production. It has promoted employment through creation of paravets, promoters, retailers and intermediaries. The project has fostered human and social development through capacity building of community members and training in gender equality and awareness raising with respect to HIV/AIDS. It has improved governance through group management formation and training and improved fiscal management through VSLAs. More SEED participants are involved in macroeconomic affairs than before the project started, whether creating microenterprises such as small stores selling salt or petrol or miscellaneous supplies for village members, or goat and chicken rearing or producing and selling arts and crafts.

Government services in the districts were very limited when the project started and unfortunately, they remain very limited. But there was and is a great need and a growing demand from rural communities and livestock producers for the district government offices

¹⁸ Mozambique PARP, 2011 to 2014

to provide extension and veterinary services to them. Thus the SEED project was very relevant to the work of the district offices. The project developed model value chains for the major components of the project, e.g., the livestock component comprising paravets and vaccinators that were able to provide many of the veterinary services that the government district offices were and are not able to provide due to the lack of human, financial and transport resources. A retailer or supplier of veterinary supplies was established in Mabote district improving communities' access to the supplies they need to keep their livestock healthy. District extension and veterinary officers interviewed for this evaluation confirmed how relevant and valuable the SEED project was to their work.

The control of theft of animals and the reduction in livestock diseases has been a very important, relevant and much welcomed contribution to the district government offices. Every month, thousands of animals in the project's districts are treated for ticks by the paravets trained by the SEED project. Over 159,000 chickens have been vaccinated against Newcastle disease and over 16,000 cattle have been tested for TB with the support of the project. Livestock keepers and paravets are now able to identify diseases and treat many of them due to the training they received from the project.

4.4 Sustainability

Sustainability is an important issue and a concern for all development assistance projects. It is no less so for the SEED project. That is why one of the four major evaluation criteria is sustainability, asking the question of *what is the probability of the benefits of the intervention continuing in the long-term?* This section discusses evaluation questions 8, 9, 10 and 11. Evaluation question 8 asks what is the likelihood that the results or benefits derived from the SEED project will continue after CIDA's funding and the CEA's involvement ends in each of the three CIDA-funded areas of intervention (livestock, arts and crafts and VSLA)? Evaluation question 9 asks whether the financial and human resources committed by stakeholders are sufficient to maintain project results and benefits after project completion. Evaluation question 10 asks whether there is a clear definition, understanding and acceptance amongst project participants and stakeholders of roles and responsibilities for sustaining results achieved by the project and evaluation question 11 asks whether the CEA's operating assumptions regarding sustainability were successful.

Likelihood of Results Continuing

There is a likelihood that the results achieved in the livestock and VSLA components will continue after CIDA's funding and the CEA's involvement ends. It is less certain, however, with the arts and crafts component that this will be the case. Respondents believed that most groups in all three components formed under the project will continue after project completion but possibly at reduced numbers, estimated to be at about 70% to 80% of what the number of groups is now at the end of the project. There are a number of factors that will determine the extent to which there will be any reduction in the number of producer groups. The producer groups most likely to continue will be those groups who are closest to the main roads and highways and to district centers. They will have a greater chance of continuing than those located in the more remote areas. Those groups with strong and motivated promoters, group members and community leaders will have the greatest chance of succeeding. Those

groups that make the most money from the sale of livestock, or interest earned from VSLA schemes or from the selling of crafts are expected to continue after the project ends, motivated by the opportunity to generate additional income for their families. It would be useful to look more closely at the achievements made by each component and the challenges to their sustainability that will confront them after project completion.

Livestock Component

The livestock component has been one of the strongest and most successful components of the SEED project. It has many noteworthy achievements. This component has worked with 56 livestock groups (this includes 21 groups for the imGOATS component) comprising a total of 1,729 participants of which 34% were female participants. These groups are now able to plan the development of their herds based on sales potential (e.g., castration, sale of older animals, or exchange of bulls to improve genetic variety). They also treat their animals against diseases on a regular basis and are willing to pay for this service. They have constructed 17 treatment corridors. Three groups independently have become associations (i.e., legalized producer groups) and are able to negotiate live weight prices with buyers.

Another achievement is the paravet system established by the project. It is the only properly functioning paravet system in Mozambique today, according to project reports. At the end of the project, there were 54 economically functional paravets who were providing services for tick and other treatments such as parasites and sores and for commercialization activities, e.g., the aggregation of animals for sale. The paravets have all received a certificate of recognition from SPP that they have completed SEED training courses. In Mabote and Govuro Districts, the paravets meet on a monthly basis with the SDAE extension staff regarding animal production issues, disease control and commercialisation in order to ensure ongoing interaction and partnerships between themselves and the government.

To support the development of livestock producer groups and paravets, a training curriculum was developed by the project to focus on active, participatory training of participants with low literacy levels. This was reviewed and approved at district and provincial level and by DNSV at the national level. All the veterinary supervisors and medics from the districts in Inhambane Province have been given a one week training course on how to use the curriculum to provide formal training to paravets and how to facilitate the training of producer groups in the field.

Another achievement of this component is improved disease control and prevention affecting livestock production. Livestock producers and paravets are now better able to identify diseases because of the training they received under the project and as a result they are requesting increasingly more support from SDAE to control and prevent diseases in the future. To support the livestock producers, the project has facilitated the selling of veterinary supplies in the districts, especially in Mabote, by retailers thus providing paravets with ongoing access to supplies for treatment and prevention of livestock diseases. In addition, the animal fairs and the ability to control the sales of animals have also assisted significantly in containing TB especially in the Govuro District.

The regular fair system (every month in Govuro and every 3 months in Mabote) is the only fully operational system in Mozambique using live weight pricing and weighing scales according to project reports and respondents. Every 6 months, with the livestock associations and buyers, a new live weight price is negotiated. The SEED staff facilitated this process for most of the project implementation period but now SDAE has taken on this responsibility in Y6 to act as a neutral party. The negotiated live weight prices have largely kept pace with inflation. SPP is in the process of using the model SEED developed to expand the fair system to 6 districts in Inhambane and SPP has made a verbal commitment and has put in place a management scheme to continue to support community groups in maintaining and replacing the weighing scales to ensure sustainability. A fee per head of animal sold is charged by the livestock associations to pay for organizational costs of the fairs and for the future maintenance of the weighing scales.

Partnerships established with government organizations have been another achievement of this component. For example, a system was established with the paravets and SDAE extension staff whereby the live weight sale price is transmitted to SIMA¹⁹ in Inhambane and then on to SIMA in Maputo. This is the first time that SIMA is reporting livestock prices at a national level based on this activity of the project according to project reports and respondents. SDAE and SPP representatives have indicated through reports and interviews that their partnership with the SEED project on the livestock component has been one of the most successful partnerships with an NGO in terms of their engagement in project activities through training and other supporting activities provided to their staff. They now feel better able to support the livestock sector after the completion of the SEED project. Furthermore, the value chain/paravet model and its training curriculum for the livestock component may be accepted at the national level in the near future. The DNSV has expressed their satisfaction with the activities of the project and with the development of the model, especially the paravet/promoter model or system which they see as an affordable and efficient system because of its ability to supply veterinary services to producer groups in remote rural areas. DNSV also acknowledged that another valuable attribute of the model is that the fairs developed with the project's support have been a critical component in disease control and in the prevention of animal theft through the control of sales.

The elements necessary to sustain the livestock component are clearly in place. Producer groups have been formed, animals are healthier and producers are making more money. Paravets have been trained, are paid for their services and they are making money. A retailer in Mabote District has been established and is making money selling veterinary supplies. There is also a retailer in Inhassoro District, although not as strong as the Mabote retailer. Fairs have been established, linkages with buyers have been made and purchases based on live-weight and the use of scales is occurring. Partnerships with government agencies have been established and training provided to some agencies, and at the national level there is interest in adopting the paravet model or system for implementation throughout the country. All in all, a model value chain for livestock production has been established and successfully tested. At the end of the project the livestock value chain is functioning as expected and can be sustained. Nevertheless, there are a few supporting activities which still require follow up in order to strengthen the chances of sustainability in this component.

¹⁹ This is an information system on agricultural markets.

The approval of the training curriculum by DNSV and continued training of paravets is still required in the project area and will be required if the training curriculum is to be scaled up and out to other provinces in Mozambique. SDAE has an important role to play in sustaining the livestock value chain. SDAE will need to find additional resources in order to provide continued support and training to paravets on a regular basis, e.g., technical training and monthly meetings of paravet forums. SDAE extension staff with the support of SPP also will be expected to continue to assist the 3 livestock associations in organizing the livestock fairs, in negotiating live-weight prices and in the maintenance of weighing scales. The assumption is that SDAE and SPP will continue to support stakeholders in the livestock component, especially the training of old and new paravets and in maintaining linkages with buyers. There is a medium to high risk that these GoM agencies will not be able to continue to provide their full support not because of a lack of interest but simply because they may not be given the human and financial resource to do so.

Village Savings and Loan Associations Component

The VSLA component has also made a number of achievements. The most notable achievement of this component is that it has provided a significant benefit to communities by increasing their ability to engage in economic activities, diversify their livelihoods, improve their assets, and increase their resilience in periods of stress, all in geographic areas where there was no or little access to either savings systems or credit provisions. The VSLA component has achieved this by forming saving groups and by introducing to them savings and promoter systems.

Over 5000 people have participated in 274 savings groups since the start of this component. Out of this number, 255 savings groups are still active (93%) at the end of the project. During each 9 month saving cycle they have tended to increase their savings. Participants in savings groups have made on average between 21% and 23% interest return on their savings. Participants save on average US\$ 86 over a cycle (approximately 5% of their HH income based on the Y6 annual survey of HH income data) and are taking US\$ 25 in loans over this same saving cycle according to SEED progress reports.

The project introduced a savings system and methodology to support these 274 savings groups. This system is based on a system used by CARE for a number of years in other projects and in other parts of the world. This savings system allows illiterate communities to easily engage in a transparent system which minimizes their risk. This is accomplished by putting in place a system where there is a maximum and minimum amount which can be saved; only people in groups may take loans; and where no one may take more than 3 times what they have saved. This has ensured that savings groups become engaged in repeated savings cycles as confidence is built over time in the groups.

A promoter system has been established by the project to support the savings system. Twenty-nine promoters (34% female) continue to be active and train groups in the VSLA methodology. They provide services for a fee on how to establish a VSLA group, on how to distribute funds, and on the process for taking of loans. A promoters' forum has been

established in each district, which is expected to meet every 6 months with SDAE extension staff to have experience exchanges and obtain support from SDAE.

A tried and true VSLA system, comprising the formation of savings groups using a savings methodology that is promoted and supported by VSLA promoters and based on previous experience in other projects and countries has been put in place by the SEED project. Consequently, the VSLA component and the savings groups are expected to continue after project completion. In fact, some savings groups already have been operating independently for over two years without any support from the project. Sustainability is built in the VSLA system. It is a self-perpetuating and sustaining system with the promoters forming new groups, and existing groups using the learned methodology to repeat savings cycles. Experience in other projects and in other countries has confirmed that there is a high likelihood of sustainability of VSLAs. An exception may be found in the more remote rural areas where there may be a higher incidence of poverty and thus much less ability to save. In these areas there most likely will be a drop in the numbers of VSLA groups. The potential lack of participants due to the dispersed nature of communities and the difficult travel in the more remote rural areas has meant that it was and will continue to be difficult for some promoters to continue to travel to these remote areas to form new groups.

There are few, if any, requirements in terms of sustainability for the VSLA system. It is basically a self-sustaining component if rules and regulations for the management of VSLAs are followed properly. Ongoing government support through the promoters who were trained by the project would be desirable, however, in terms of assisting, e.g., with distribution of money when requested by VSLA groups. SDAE also has a role to play here in ensuring that promoter forums will meet every 6 months with SDAE extension staff to provide advice and any necessary support to promoters to ensure the smooth functioning and the sustainability of VSLAs. The assumption here is that SDAE will continue to provide support to VSLA promoters as individuals and in forums. The risk assessment is medium to high that SDAE will not be able to provide support due to a lack of resources.

Arts and Crafts Component

The arts and crafts component was designed to provide an additional income source for the most vulnerable of the SEED project participants comprising elderly women, FHH and HLWHA in a manner that would not increase their financial risks. This component was able to work with 367 artisans of which 92% are females consisting of 20 arts and crafts producer groups in different communities by the end of the project. They have the capacity to produce a variety of about 150 to 200 woven products a month subject to their availability, production plans and orders from buyers. Their capacity has been developed through the support provided by the project in developing a value chain for the arts and crafts component comprising the producer groups, community and district promoters, partnerships with intermediaries and NGOs and linkages with buyers.

The project has created a promoter system in order to control the quality and to aggregate the products for market. Nineteen community promoters were trained by the project to ensure that groups work to their production plans and produce products of quality. Production designs and quality of work have improved dramatically since Y3 based on the Aid

to Artisan²⁰ consultancies, training from SEED project extension staff, and on increased supervision by the community promoters as well as by the district promoters. There are two district promoters who receive the products from the community promoters, verify the quality and then take the baskets to the intermediary that existed in Vilankulo at the time of the evaluation. Both community and district promoters receive fees for every basket sold.

Improved production designs and quality and support from promoters have enabled the crafts producers to generate additional income for their families. At the end of the project, a total of 235 arts and crafts producers (100% women) reported transactions in Y6 of a total of US\$ 5,699. Those who sold made on average US\$ 24 per producer compared to US\$ 16 per producer in Y5. While US\$ 24 per person may appear to be a modest sum, it nevertheless represents a significant supplemental income for women in poor rural communities many who are FHH and come from HLWHA. From April to mid-November in Y7, US\$ 3,815 worth of baskets was sold. The number of producers was not recorded as sales were being recorded by the producers themselves and not controlled by CARE.

The project originally bought the arts and crafts products in order to bear the risk of production for the artisans while market linkages to buyers were being developed. Since the start of 2012, the project has not bought any crafts according to progress reports. These have been bought instead by an intermediary in Maputo, for distribution to shops in Maputo; by a buyer in Beira; and by CEDARTE²¹, with their private sector arm GREENART, which has shown a strong interest in increasing their role and in acting as more of an intermediary on an orders basis. As noted previously in this report, but it is worth repeating, that at the end of the project, arts and crafts products were being sold, according to project reports, in 3 local lodges in Vilankulo, 7 locations in Maputo, 1 location in Beira and 1 in South Africa and for the first time sales have been made internationally in the United States in October of 40 baskets, and two orders were being negotiated for over 400 baskets. In addition, the art and crafts participants have formed, at the artisans own initiative, two crafts associations, one in Mabote and another in Inhassoro, with the aim of being able to access external funds.

Similar to the livestock and VSLA components, the SEED project has established a functioning model value chain for the arts and crafts components that was working as planned at the end of the project. There is a likelihood that this component can also be sustained. Nevertheless, of the three components evaluated, the arts and crafts component appears to be the most fragile in terms of sustainability. It is confronted with many challenges such as low literacy levels and older members with few young women joining these groups. Many of the women who engage in arts are crafts are FHH or older women and labour availability is an issue. Even in HH which are male headed, women have few hours when they are able to engage in other activities. Lack of strong and committed intermediaries are probably the biggest challenge facing this component. Finding a strong and committed intermediary was a challenge both in Maputo and Vilankulo during the life of the project. The producer and promoters system,

²⁰ Aid to Artisans is a grant-funded organization founded in 1976 to create economic opportunities for artisan groups around the world where livelihoods, communities, and craft traditions are marginal or at risk.

²¹ CEDARTE is a non-lucrative organization working toward the development and promotion of traditional and modern arts and craft in the country. They have been responsible for organizing arts and craft fairs at the national level and also provide some support to producers and intermediaries.

however, now function fairly well especially in the stronger producer groups. Of critical importance in the sustainability of arts and crafts producer groups is the assumption that there will be the ongoing functioning of strong and committed intermediaries in Vilankulo, in Maputo and elsewhere who can work closely with producer groups, take orders, liaise with CEDARTE and ensure that products of quality and variety can reach their final markets. Based on reports and interviews, the risk assessment is medium to high that strong and committed intermediaries will not be found to work in a sustainable manner with the producer groups.

To ensure the sustainability of the project, the SEED project created value chains that could function independently when the project was finished with the inclusion and support of promoters and with a strong partnership with the GoM to assist in carrying forward aspects of the project that still required support. The capacity building of various partners to take on specific key roles after project completion has been critical for the project's success and for the sustainability of project components. However, the sustainability of project components will depend ultimately on the motivation and drive of individuals, of community and group leaders, and of producer group members; on the resources available to GOM extension services to support and train producer groups; and on external economic and market conditions which are ultimately out of the control of the project.

Roles and Responsibilities

Reports and interviews suggest that there is a clear definition, understanding and acceptance amongst project participants and stakeholders, including local government authorities, of their roles and responsibilities for sustaining results achieved by the project. This has been achieved through the careful and thorough development of model value chains for each of the three components of the SEED project. It has also been achieved through sustained, appropriate and relevant capacity building for participants that have enabled them to clearly understand their roles and responsibilities for sustaining results. Producer groups now not only have the capacity, but they also now know their roles and responsibilities for producing better and higher quality products. These groups also realize that they must pay for "SEED services" such as for community based support services provided by paravets, promoters and intermediaries as well as for supplies from retailers. Participants are also familiar with their roles and responsibilities with respect to the importance of aggregating products for sale at fairs or elsewhere.

Local, provincial and national government authorities have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for sustaining project results. The SEED project has worked closely with local and provincial government staff, especially SDAE and SPP. Government extension staff at the district level have participated to the maximum extent possible considering their human and financial resources in training programs provided to producer groups. A good example is the Provincial Director of SPP who facilitated some of the training courses for promoters and has been actively engaged at all levels of activities supporting the livestock component. This partnership that has developed between the project and government agencies has been important in determining what activities the project could support, coordinate, and monitor with the support of government agencies, e.g., in the prevention and

control of TB in cattle and in the Newcastle vaccination program. In the last year of project implementation, joint planning of activities has been undertaken between the project and SDAE extension staff in the project's districts.

Stakeholders' Financial and Human Resources

The financial and human resources committed by stakeholders may not be sufficient to maintain project benefits and results after project completion at the same magnitude and intensity as under the SEED project. Lack of sufficient financial and human resources may, in fact, be the Achilles' heel of the project.

The value chains established by the project are meant to be self-sustaining based on the facts that minimal investments are required by participants (i.e., they already own livestock and natural materials for crafts products are collected free from nature) and that all parties involved in the value chain will make money. Producers make money selling better quality products at market prices; promoters are paid fees for their services; retailers sell more supplies as production expands and buyers make more money selling more and better quality products. Furthermore, the SEED project was careful to select value chains where there was a demand for the product which could be sustained. Project staff noted that numerous value chains were examined for support by the project, e.g., fish and natural seeds and oils. But these were not deemed easily viable by project staff since either the market was more difficult to develop and link up to or else the product like fish was easily perishable. The challenge to sustaining the value chains lies in many external factors such as the domestic market place may not demand nor offer the right prices for the products that are produced by the producer groups. Moreover, the changes in global food prices or fuel prices or droughts affecting production are other external factors that will also challenge the sustainability of the value chains.

There is also a genuine concern that GoM's financial and human resources may not be sufficient to maintain project results since these resources are still very limited at all levels of government, but particularly at the district level. SDAE and SPP staff were interviewed at Govuro District offices and they noted that for the whole district of Govuro there were 2 SDAE staff and one SPP staff who is responsible for covering other districts as well. SDAE had at their disposable one motorcycle and 30 litres of petrol a month to service the whole district, assuming that the petrol allocation from the GoM arrives as promised. As this illustration shows, the GoM may not have enough resources to support the project participants in the future.

Operating Assumptions

The CEA's operating assumptions regarding sustainability were to a major extent successful. The operating assumptions were basically that the rules of the market would assure sustainability of the SEED interventions provided that:

- The supply of products is of good quality and quantity to satisfy the needs of the buyers;
- The buyers have been adequately linked to the producers;

- A marketing system is in place and conducive for fair transactions;
- Promoters are earning revenue for the technical and commercial services they are providing; and
- Savings and loans services are available at community level and contribute to the dynamism of the market and provide security to producers.

There was a sustainable strategy developed for the SEED project which is presented in Annex 9. Creating sustainability was the main approach of the whole project model from the very beginning of the project according to the CEA. Key elements of this approach included selecting sustainable value chains and capacity building for producer groups and promoters through the provision of specific technical services for each of the components and through training to strengthen groups to ensure cohesion of group members. Training also was provided for leadership, accountability and the election process with a direct focus on improving governance and on developing technical and commercial skills.

The SEED project developed a network of promoters for each component that provided participants and other members of the community with access to specific technical support at affordable prices. In addition, the promoters ensured aggregation of quality products and ensured linkages to buyers. The project model proved profitable from the beginning for participants which ensured accessibility and replication. The techniques and methods that were promoted were affordable and allowed participants to implement them with minimal financial risk. By involving all levels of government (regional, provincial and national), and linking them to participants, communities and promoters, the sustainability of the project successes was increased. These were the operating assumptions regarding sustainability of the project.

The CEA's operating assumptions are sound, in principle, and should contribute to self-sustaining producer groups. But there was a concern expressed by a number of respondents about what will happen with the closure of the SEED project. The project provided significant capacity building activities for producer groups and promoters, provided many training activities to strengthen producer groups to ensure their cohesion, and provided specific technical services for each of the components. The project also developed linkages to buyers and created linkages between all levels of government, participants, communities and promoters. The SEED project has occupied the center of all of these activities for the past seven years. Now that the SEED project is removing itself from the center, it is uncertain if the components will be able to sustain themselves at the same magnitude and intensity that they achieved when the SEED project served as the catalyst.

The SEED project has developed value chains of producer and VSLA groups that rely on paravets and on promoters to support these groups. Most paravets and promoters are also members of their communities and thus may also be a producer or VSLA member themselves. Promoters earn money from fees paid for their services and they usually have gained prestige within the community in their role as a promoter. These points suggest that paravets and promoters will remain in their position after project completion. There is, however, no clear mechanism for supporting and training the next generation of paravets or promoters other than the reliance on the paravets or promoters themselves to train their successors and/or on the GoM district and provincial offices. If the current paravets or promoters become ill or

die or move away there is no clear succession plan for replacing them. Paravets and promoters have been encouraged to identify an assistant, preferably a younger person, who can be trained to take the place of the current paravets or promoters if and when they leave. This has happened in the livestock component where over 50% of the paravets are operating with an assistant as well as calling on neighbouring paravets if they are unable or need extra assistance to treat their animals.

To the credit of the project, it has developed partnerships with GoM agencies, the private sector and research stations in order to create synergies and to ensure sustainability of the project. SDAE has been the main partner for the project with the expectation that SDAE would provide after project completion some of the services which the SEED project provided. The project worked with the district SDAEs to increase their technical capacity to provide training and refresher training to promoters, paravets, vaccinators and producer groups. SDAE staff also worked alongside SEED project staff to increase the awareness of livestock producers to participate in commercialization activities such as the aggregation of products and undertaking sales at fairs using weighing scales and a pre-determined sale price. Project staff provided support to SDAE livestock technical staff to organize fairs and to develop linkages to buyers and markets. SDAE extension staff in each district have been trained to support promoters in VSLAs and they have also assisted arts and crafts producer groups and associations. For example, in all 5 project districts a SDAE extension officer was trained in the VSLA methodology so that they are now able to assist with the distribution of funds as well as to provide support if conflicts arise within VSLA groups. Furthermore, within each district a forum of promoters was set up which will meet with SDAE every six months to a year to raise issues regarding the VSLA and promoter system and to discuss any support required from the GoM. SPP has also been a strong partner with the SEED project by providing training to promoters and vaccinators on how to control and prevent Newcastle disease in chickens and by developing a payment system to support the maintenance of the weighing scales at livestock fairs. Clearly the capacity of local government staff has been strengthened to support and sustain project results. But as has been discussed previously, the local government resources are very limited and therefore it is doubtful at this time that government district offices will have the human, financial and physical (e.g., transport and petrol) resources to fully support producer groups in the project area at the same level of intensity that the SEED project has been able to do over the past seven years.

Respondents suggested that an obvious omission in the project's sustainability strategy was that no partnerships were developed with any Mozambican CSOs who have experience working in the agriculture and rural development sector. Project staff noted that there were no local CSOs in the project area. But provincial or national level CSO(s) could have been considered as key partners of the SEED project and of local government offices right from the beginning of the project and provided additional human and financial resources to support promoters and producer groups. Furthermore, CSOs could have applied their experience and knowledge on how best to support agricultural development in the rural areas of Mozambique, including the existing project areas.

4.5 Cross-cutting Themes

4.5.1 Gender Equality

As per CIDA's *Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan*, the integration of gender equality as a cross-cutting theme in the SEED project was addressed by the summative evaluation. This section will discuss evaluation question 12 as to whether a specific approach, plan or strategy was developed to achieve results in gender equality. It will also discuss other cross-cutting themes related to decision-making and control over resources. Evaluation question 13 assesses whether the project has advanced women's equal participation with men in decision-making. Evaluation question 14 assesses whether the project has reduced gender-based inequalities in access to and control over the resources and benefits of development.

Gender Strategy

A considerable amount of work was undertaken to design activities relating to gender mainstreaming during the commencement of the project in 2006 and later in 2008. The Project Implementation Plan (PIP) included a gender strategy. The purpose of the PIP gender strategy was to ensure that both women and men and gender mainstreaming would be incorporated across all the components of the project. Specific targets were made during the design of the project to include men and women and FHH.

The PIP gender strategy was updated in 2008 through a consultancy that was carried out between December 2007 and January 2008 with the objectives of further developing a mainstreaming strategy, an action plan for gender equality and a training plan in gender skills. The 2008 gender strategy had two main objectives of creating more economic opportunities for women, i.e., increasing female beneficiaries, and ensuring project benefits for all members of the family, i.e., fair decision making. The strategy also identified good opportunities to address gender issues in project activities. For example, one opportunity was promoting Human Rights in VSLA groups (e.g., issues of inheritance rights according to current laws) and another was training for women in relevant areas (e.g., Newcastle vaccination of chickens since these belong to women). Data collected for the project and for annual surveys was gender disaggregated and gender focal points or gender officers were hired as part of the SEED project staff. The following paragraphs discuss how the actions and results planned for the gender strategy have been achieved by the project.

A main turning point in making progress towards mainstreaming gender equality was when 2 independent external consultancies were hired to train project staff in Y3 and Y5 in order to increase their awareness, understanding and sensitivity toward gender equality so that they would be more effective in mainstreaming gender into the project activities that they were supervising. Training SEED staff was important since an early challenge confronting the project according to SEED staff was the lack of understanding by most, if not all, project staff of what exactly was meant by the term gender equality. Moreover, there was a reported absence of a positive attitude towards gender equality by some male staff. This was especially true for the older male staff whose cultural beliefs often led to a resistance to discuss gender issues.

In addition to training SEED staff, the external consultants made a significant contribution by reviewing existing gender equality training modules and by developing new modules that ensured relevant gender-specific approaches were being implemented across all

components. The project provided gender training for promoters, and for group training of participants in the field. Agents of social change were trained to work within their communities where they live and all producer and other groups, e.g., VSLAs, received gender equality training. For example, 100 groups representing 1,749 participants (68.8% female) were trained in gender equality related to economic development. The project also actively encouraged women to participate in activities, e.g., livestock rearing of small animals, and to engage with the commercialization process of aggregating animals for selling to buyers. A target was set for 60% female and 25% FHH participation by the end of the project. Both targets were exceeded with 66% female and 30% FHH participation achieved by the end of the project (Table 6, page 30).

Notwithstanding the achievements of the project, the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming has been difficult to assess at the close of the project. While important changes were achieved, the project was constantly challenged by fairly strong gender stereotyping within the SEED project team, government partners and project participants, which limited somewhat the economic impact of the SEED project for women in particular.

Decision-Making

The project did advance women's equal participation with men as decision-makers within each component as well as within the communities served by the project. Gender equality issues were mainstreamed in the development of value chains for each component by focusing on two important aspects: ensuring that women were able to actively participate in the components with respect to decision-making taking place within these components or to actively participate as officers of groups (e.g., Treasurer or Secretary of a group), and ensuring that they were able to engage in household decision-making around additional income generated through membership in producer groups, VSLAs and other activities. Training around household decision-making using an income expenditure tree was given to every participant group based on their training calendars or schedules.

Changes in awareness concerning decision-making were monitored in the annual surveys undertaken by the project. The annual survey data from Y6 indicated that 45.8% of SEED households had women making at least half the decisions, and 27.9% of SEED HH had women leading the decision-making. In non-FHH headed HH, 66.5% have women making decisions, an increase from 62% in Y5 and above the 42% target for the project. In addition, 80.1% of males were able to name two benefits of female participation in decision making, up from 74% in Y5. Female respondents also confirmed that they observed changes in their communities with respect to joint decision-making in HH, e.g., on the use of savings generated by sales of livestock or by participating in VSLAs.

The project trained 19 agents of social change, women who live in their communities and provide training to community members to increase their awareness around gender and other social issues and to assist community members in resolving conflicts in communities. These "change agents" provided training to different project target groups in community meetings, group meetings, churches and even at water point sources. For example, 333 participants were trained in the new Family Law with a focus on Inheritance Law.

Control over Resources

Increasing women's decision-making power concerning the control of resources at the household level was an important issue and a significant challenge for the SEED project. To increase women's control over resources the project put in place strategies to ensure that women would be engaged in the more lucrative project activities, especially the livestock component which was, and still is, very male dominated. It was a challenge to engage women in the livestock sector because historically and culturally large livestock were owned and controlled by men. At the beginning of project implementation, female participation in the livestock component was as low as 3% in Y3.

Recognizing this situation, the project looked at strategies to integrate women and began to include in the livestock component small animals, such as chickens and goats, traditionally owned by women. The project engaged and trained women in small livestock rearing activities with goats and chickens which enabled them to have more direct control over economically productive activities. Women who were trained to administer the Newcastle vaccination for chickens received a fee for their services. Increasing women's access to markets and increasing their power to negotiate in these markets was another important training activity of the project. Moreover, many buyers of small animals were women and they were actively encouraged to participate and buy from producer groups supported by the project. The result is that 34% of participants in the livestock component were women at the end of the project compared to 3% in Y3.

Women producers of small animals have increasing control over these productive resources and they have seen their incomes increase during the life of the project. While some respondents noted that they still have to turn their money earned from sales over to their husbands, many more said that they have increased control over this money which they use to increase their number of animals, expand farm production or improve their houses (e.g., tin roofs), pay for children's education, or start microenterprises.

It may be noted that the VSLA groups remained largely female dominated (79% female participation), although males were requesting increasingly to participate as VSLA members by the end of the project. The arts and crafts component was comprised of 92% women primarily because this component was not valued much by men since culturally making arts and crafts products has always been perceived as a typical women's activity.

Mainstreaming gender equality in traditional communities is always a challenge. It was no less so for the SEED project. The cultural beliefs of older male participants and community leaders were a challenge to change in the mainly male dominated culture that existed in the project areas. Bearing this in mind, some respondents felt that the project should have had a full time gender expert on staff at the DPM position. The project did have gender consultants as well as mainstreaming officers in the project office. But this may not have been enough critical resources to make the desired impact within the project's communities. It was also suggested that the PSC could have benefitted from a "prominent expert" in gender equality to provide external and independent oversight to SEED mainstreaming programs and activities as well as to share best practices that could have been adopted by the SEED project. Finally, the project would have benefitted from establishing a results chain in the original project design and in the PMF that would provide results expectations at the output and

immediate outcome levels, performance indicators and a budget dedicated to mainstreaming activities. This would allow for better tracking of mainstreaming activities and the achievement of results with respect to gender equality.

4.5.2 Environmental Sustainability

Evaluation question 15 asked whether the SEED project achieved results in environmental sustainability. The project has achieved results in environmental sustainability through initiatives that diminished the project's impact on the environment. Firstly, an environmental diagnostic was undertaken during the PIP preparation phase in order to assess the potential impact on the environment from the implementation of proposed project activities. Secondly, as specific activities were undertaken in the project their impact on the environment was evaluated by project personnel. Whenever any potentially adverse environmental impacts were observed by project personnel, mitigation measures were put in place. For example, in the livestock component, an evaluation was undertaken on the use of tick chemicals by the paravets trained in their management courses to minimize any adverse impacts that may have arisen due to the improper application and disposal of the tick chemicals. In the cashew component, which was not evaluated but is worth noting, the environmental and health impact of all chemicals used during disease control of the trees was undertaken, and appropriate training was given to promoters on how to minimise environmental impacts relating to the appropriate application of the chemicals and their disposal. In addition, a pilot initiative was undertaken with sulfur as an alternative for spraying the trees as this is an organic product with less health and environmental impacts. In both the livestock and cashew components, promoters were required to wear the appropriate protective equipment when using and applying various chemicals used for pest and for disease control and prevention.

Although the impact on the environment from implementing project activities has been minimal and measures have been put in place to ensure environmental sustainability, there is one area that has been of concern to the project. And that has been the lack of available water. The project area has been affected by climate variability and thus experiences drought conditions frequently. This condition has been a large challenge for the livestock component as well as for the cashew component as water is required for making up the chemicals used for spraying trees. Access to water is very important for increased animal production. If animals have access to water, production increases substantially both in terms of an increase in health and a decline in mortality of adult and young animals. To deal with this problem, some communities have built with their own resources small troughs of water near boreholes for animals to drink from. Other communities have prepared with the assistance of SEED project staff applications to SDAE to obtain boreholes for their livestock. As a result of this intervention and GoM support for communities, 8 boreholes were installed in communities working in the SEED project.

4.5.3 Governance

The project has achieved results in the area of governance which was a question posed by evaluation question 16. This can best be illustrated by the work undertaken by the project related to group organization and management. The first important set of project activities was to focus on forming interested producers into groups and to provide training on group

functioning and management to ensure good leadership, accountability and transparency (i.e. good or better governance), using specifically developed training modules. The groups were then a key focus of training by SEED extension staff. The project believed that the formation of groups and improving the management and governance of these groups was a critical project strategy to increase production quality and then aggregate production to allow for more viable access to markets. In addition to the governance structures of producer groups, it is important to note that the VSLA governance structures are also very strict, especially in terms of how much can be saved or lent and who can lend money.

Over time, as the groups in each component matured, they were encouraged to form associations and therefore have legal status, in order to facilitate and strengthen the commercialization process on behalf of other groups. As noted previously, by the end of the project a total of 120 groups (excluding VSLAs) were formed and received training, and 5 associations (2 in crafts and 3 in livestock) were established all with increased knowledge of how to better govern their groups in a manner that benefits every member of the group.

4.6 Evaluation Issues

In addition to a number of evaluation criteria and cross-cutting themes, there were a few other evaluation issues addressed by the summative evaluation. The following sections provide answers to three evaluation questions 17, 18 and 19. One question was to assess whether the project design was appropriate, participatory and based on sound understanding of the local context. Another asked whether there were effective systems in place to monitor, report on and manage risks, and the third asked whether the CEA's reporting systems, data collection methods and analyses were effective in relation to RBM principles and practices.

Design Considerations

The SEED project design was appropriate and participatory and was based on analyses of gender equality, environment, governance, and on lessons learned from a previous CARE managed and EU-funded livelihood project, the ILRP that was implemented from 1998 to 2004. The project design was appropriate because it focused on poor rural agricultural communities with a particular focus on women. The SEED project targeted the same areas as the ILRP with the objective to create new income generating streams for targeted districts in Inhambane Province, one of the poorest provinces in Mozambique. The successes and lessons learned from ILRP were incorporated into the project design and specific targets for the inclusion of women and vulnerable HH (including at least 25% FHH and 20% HLWHA) were made during the design of the project. Lessons learned from other CARE projects such as a Farmer Trainers project in Tanzania were also taken into consideration during the design of the project.

The project design embraced a few key strategies. One was to use and build on the existing resources of the communities in the project area. These resources included livestock (cattle, goats and chickens), traditional arts and crafts, cashew trees, horticulture, and microenterprises. A second was the deliberate decision not to provide significant inputs or material donations to the communities, such as boreholes, or fencing, or dipping tanks for tick control, etc., material donations that participants in the project area were used to

receiving based on experience with past development assistance projects. A third key strategy was to focus more on building the capacity of communities to create and sustain new income generating streams and to focus less on building the capacity of GoM extension services. This is because GoM extension staff had, and still have, only very limited physical and financial resources with which to support rural communities. Moreover, GoM staff tend to move frequently out of the districts and sometimes the provinces in which they are initially placed. A fourth strategy to change the behaviour of participants was to be accomplished through significant capacity building/training programs in order to teach participants how to work together in producer groups and later on in associations; to be willing to pay fees for services from promoters; and to commercialize their agricultural products through aggregation of products, selling at fairs and developing linkages with buyers. A key component of the capacity building was experience exchanges between all stakeholders including producer groups, promoters, buyers, external markets and the GoM to ensure interactive lessons learning.

Designing a seven year implementation period was also an important strategy of the SEED project recognizing that livelihood projects require a longer implementation period than the usual 5-year project cycle found in many development assistance projects. The project design took into consideration that working with smallholder farmers to commercialize their agricultural products would take time because they generally face many challenges in their communities and they tend to be risk averse due to their low financial capacity. Consequently, they would require a large amount of knowledge transfer to effect behavioural changes in their communities which warranted more time than what is usually given to a development assistance project.

The project design was undertaken in a participatory manner. CARE Canada and CARE Mozambique worked closely in the design of the project in partnership with key stakeholders such as GoM offices of SDAE and SPP. Later the project design was modified in partnership with Irish Aid and their funding of the cashew component and with IFAD and ILRI due to IFAD's funding of the imGOATS component.

Analyses of gender equality, environment and governance informed the design of the project. Women were the main target group for the SEED project and were to represent 60% of beneficiaries of which 25% were to be FHH. To achieve this, a gender strategy was developed during the first stages of the project, as discussed previously, in order to incorporate women and men through gender mainstreaming initiatives across all the main components. During the project design, an environmental diagnostic was undertaken in order to assess the potential impact on the environment of the proposed activities planned for each component. Governance was an important consideration that was incorporated in the formation of producer groups and VSLAs. Participants were trained on issues concerning leadership, transparency and accountability with respect to their participation as officers or members in producer groups and later as members in producer associations.

In view of the above, the project design was based on a fairly sound understanding of the local context. Yet there were some indications that the project design could have been improved. Two examples related to number of participants and changes in components illustrate this point.

The project's original plan was to reach 8,000 beneficiaries. During consultations after project commencement, however, and as a result of a workshop to discuss the PIP, a number of issues were identified that would prevent the project from reaching the intended number of beneficiaries. At the PIP workshop, key project stakeholders involved in the design of the project, including GoM staff and CIDA, both expressed concern that in their opinion the target of 8000 HH was too ambitious given the types of constraints existing in the project areas, constraints such as gender inequality, incidences of HIV/AIDS, inadequate GoM extension services, challenging transport services, poor financial and commercialization networks and a dearth of physical infrastructure. Moreover, the conditions in the target districts were such that they would require considerable capacity building efforts, monitoring, as well as attitude changes all of which would require much time for any effects to be observed or for any results to be achieved. Consideration was given to the capacity of SEED project staff to implement what was basically an intensive service delivery project where human resource costs made up the bulk of the project budget. Also of concern was the fact that most of the project staff needed to be trained in economic development aspects before they could efficiently and effectively perform their tasks. Therefore, a reduction in reach to 6000 HH was agreed upon given the constraints and issues mentioned above. The change in the project's reach also required a revision to the LM and the PMF. It is unclear why these myriad constraints and issues were not sufficiently taken into account during the initial design of the project based on CARE's previous experience with the ILRP, with other projects in Mozambique, with CARE Mozambique's local knowledge and experience and with CARE's long partnership with CIDA.

Another area where the project design could have been better crafted was in the selection of components. During the preparation of the PIP in 2006, a number of potential project components were identified, including horticulture, microenterprise, fisheries, livestock, arts and crafts and cashews. The project, however, had never worked with participants in the fisheries sector, and there were other organizations already involved in this sector. As such, the project commenced with activities in the livestock, arts and crafts, microenterprise and horticulture components. The SEED project worked for three years with participants in the Vilankulo District on strengthening micro-enterprises and on the development of business skills, and in horticulture in the development of technical and commercial skills. During the MTE in 2009, it was revealed that these two sectors were facing difficulties. Amongst other things, it was realized that neither sector would be able to increase the number of participants sufficiently to meet overall project targets. Skill development was limited in the microenterprise component and ensuring long term sustainability of the commercial linkages due to perishable products and access to consistent buyers was proving complex in the horticulture component. Therefore, the project stopped working actively with these two components.

In late Y3, with agreement of CIDA, the project began incorporating the VSLA component based on the realization that the lack of access to financial services for rural communities was limiting economic development. In October 2009, new funding from Irish Aid supported the development of the cashew component. And in 2011, funding was received from IFAD to support a goat value chain with research support from ILRI. With the addition of the cashew and goat components, overall SEED participant targets were increased from 6000 participants to 7200 participants. For the last 4 years, SEED activities have been focused on the livestock

sector (both small and large species), arts and crafts, VSLA and cashew (both raw cashew nut and processing).

It would have made for a stronger project if the project design would have been able at the very beginning to select viable components which the project could have worked with constantly for the full 7 years. Instead, only the livestock component was able to benefit from a full 7 years of project support. The arts and crafts, VSLA and cashew components have been operational for only 3.5 years and the imGOATS component for 1.5 years, thus providing a challenge for all the new components to achieve significant results in a rather short time frame. Nevertheless, one must acknowledge that the SEED project did demonstrate flexibility in its ability to adapt to new challenges and to the realization of what was working and what was not. The project was able to change its design to embrace new components that would allow the project to achieve its stated results expectations, its gender equality agenda and to meet and even exceed its targeted number of women and men beneficiaries.

Results-Based Management

The CEA's reporting systems, data collection methods and analyses were to some extent effective in relation to RBM principles and practices. Progress reports were well written but not always timely in submission. Data collection methods were overly complicated and analyses of data using the PMF was not totally in line with CIDA's 2008 RBM Policy and Guidelines requiring the use of qualitative performance indicators.

The PIP for the SEED project called for the preparation of a gender-sensitive Logical Framework Analysis (LFA - now referred to as the Logic Model - LM) and PMF. A LM and PMF were prepared and modified with the adoption of new components later in the project, e.g., the VSLA component. While the LM was well prepared in a logical manner, the PMF was not as well structured which has contributed to a less than strong analysis of the achievement of project results.

There are a number of areas where the PMF could have been strengthened to conform to CIDA's RBM principles and practices. All 30 or so performance indicators used to measure change in the project are quantitative performance indicators (PI) consisting of either "percentage of" or "number of". There are no qualitative PIs being used to measure change in the project. There is not a desirable balance of quantitative and qualitative PI being used by the SEED project to measure progress being made towards the achievement of results. Furthermore, at the intermediate outcome level or at the end of project, there are no qualitative PI being used that would capture the voice of the beneficiaries (e.g., level of satisfaction or change in behaviour). Furthermore, there are not three or more PIs representing three different data sources to demonstrate triangulation of data sources that would confirm the achievement of the intermediate outcomes. Finally, there were no end of project targets of change which is usually expected in projects where you have three sets of targets: end of project, annual and 6 month targets of change against which to report

progress. Project staff reported that targets were set only on a year on year basis and not for any longer period of time.

An M&E plan was produced in February 2007 and a baseline survey was completed by April 2007. To cope with the data processing of information collected on the project's participants and on quantitative performance indicators, a web-based database was structured in March 2008. This took some time to develop and was problematic at times according to reports and respondents due to poor and unreliable internet connections at the project office in Vilunkulo. The development and maintenance of the data base also faced challenges due to a backlog on participant registration until Y7, when no new participants were registered, due to field staff not registering their group participants consistently. The backlog of data was sorted out for participants by March 2012 by the M&E officer and assistant. The M&E officer left the project in March 2012 and although his position was advertised, it was still vacant at the time of the evaluation. This situation left a big gap in the M&E team with only the data entry assistant left to manage the M&E system. The project noted that the M&E system had become increasingly a challenge to maintain. It was overly complex, costly and time consuming to manage and maintain and it was a challenge to find and retain skilled personnel for the M&E system. The last annual survey was completed in February 2012 for Y6 of the project. A final and Y7 annual survey was not undertaken because project activities ended in September 2012, only 7 months and less than a year after completion of the Y6 survey.

The numerous reports prepared by the project (annual and semi-annual progress reports, exit strategies, draft Final Report) have all been fairly comprehensive and of a high quality and have reported against results achieved on the basis of PIs. But, as noted previously, the reports could have been improved with the use of a simplified data base, a PMF using quantitative and qualitative PI, timely submission of reports, and an improved analysis of assumptions and risks.

Assumptions and Risks

The SEED project had a system in place to monitor, report on, and manage risks that could have an impact on the development of the SEED project. But the system appears to have been a modest one. Although the AWP dated June 16, 2012, did include an updated risk analysis and strategy, the Annual Progress Report for the period April 2011 to March 2012 presented no analysis of assumptions and risks that may have affected project performance during the reporting period. Furthermore, the draft Final Report on the SEED project makes no mention of assumptions and risks that could have had an impact on the development of the SEED Project. The impression is that although a risk register was prepared for the project, there was not much subsequent analyses and effort made to monitor and report on assumptions and risks. For example, in the last AWP, the only comment preceding the presentation of the risk register is that "the risk analysis and strategy remains unchanged for the sixth year of the project".²²

²² SEED Annual Work Plan for the period April to December 2012, dated June 16, 2012.

5 CONCLUSIONS

A Good Project

The SEED project was a good project, which could have been better. It was a good project because it was able to generate additional income for the families of participating HH from commercially oriented activities with the assistance provided from community based support services developed and strengthened by the SEED project. It was a good project because it was able to reach over 8,000 participating HH representing over 50,000 people in 274 communities in some of the poorest communities, in some of the poorest districts, in one of the poorest provinces, in one of the poorest countries in southern Africa. It was a good project because it was able to change the knowledge, awareness, understanding and behaviour of participants by building their capacity to move from subsistence to commercial production activities; by creating employment opportunities for community members who became paravets, promoters or intermediaries; by linking producer groups to buyers; by addressing gender equality, environment and governance issues; and by strengthening the capacity of GoM district offices to provide continuing support to producer groups.

It was a good project because it focused on improving the lives of women and of some of the most vulnerable groups comprising FHHs and HLWHA. It was a good project because it developed and demonstrated viable models for secure savings associations in rural areas, for training paravets and for adopting value chains for major components. The paravet training model is now being proposed for adoption at the national level by the GoM and the value chain models are being adopted by other donor projects. It was a good project because it chose to build the capacity of communities to sustain production activities more so than to build the capacity of GoM services as well as to build on the existing resources of communities instead of providing substantial material donations or financial contributions to communities. In some cases, though, the project did contribute to the travel costs in the initial start up phases of the project to expose buyers (e.g., CEDART, cashew and livestock) to the products of the producer groups and receive from these buyers their inputs and guidance concerning, e.g., product designs, quality of livestock and market expectations. In other situations, the project provided a revolving fund to buyers or intermediaries to kick start sales, which proved to be successful in a system where credit access was very difficult.

This was a livelihood project, full of many challenges like all livelihood projects, with the objectives of contributing to the reduction of poverty and to sustaining rural economy recovery for vulnerable HH. The SEED project clearly demonstrated during the life of the project that it was able to bring real and material changes to the lives of participating HH in a manner that has contributed to the economic recovery for many of these HH. Without exception, there was a high level of satisfaction with the achievements of the SEED project expressed by beneficiaries, stakeholders and partners interviewed for this evaluation.

Sustainability Concerns

But the SEED project could have been a better project. At the end of the project there remains concern about the sustainability of the project's achievements in certain areas. There is concern that the community based support services developed and strengthened by the

project may not be sustainable. The focus here is on paravets and promoters and how their services will be sustained if these service providers need to be replaced. Even though these service providers are paid for their services there is no guarantee that they will not look for employment elsewhere. Although they have been encouraged to train younger assistants who could replace them in the future, there is no guarantee that this will happen. Service providers or promoters have been linked up with SDAE and SPP district offices who could offer further training to existing and/or new service providers, yet there is no guarantee that this will happen primarily due to the lack of GoM human and financial resources. Furthermore, intermediaries who collect products for selling to buyers may not be able to sustain their roles as intermediaries since many products are acquired on a consignment basis where the intermediaries are often only paid when a product is sold. And buyers may not continue to come to producer groups due to the quality and/or quantity of products or to decreased market demand for these products. There is also concern that the GoM will not have the human, financial and physical resources to continue to provide extension and other services to the communities at the same magnitude and intensity as the SEED project.

Establishing Linkages

To mitigate the concerns mentioned above, the SEED project could have established linkages at the very beginning of the project with one or more Mozambican CSOs and worked together over the course of the project so that when the project ended the CSO could have been able to sustain, to a certain level, the support that the SEED project was providing to the communities. The producer and savings groups still need a “hand-on-the-shoulder” to support the proper functioning of their groups and a local or national CSO could do this. The project could have established stronger linkages with individual and/or institutional or corporate buyers early on in project implementation so that markets would have been well established and a variety of buyers would have been secured by the end of the project. The project’s key partner in Mozambique, CARE Mozambique, could have lobbied from the beginning of the project and more forcefully with GoM departments, especially the Ministry of Agriculture, and with other donor programs and projects, such as those supported by CIDA, in order to develop synergies between GoM and donor programs and projects in support of the SEED project activities as well as to attract more resources and capacity building for GoM district offices so that they could have been prepared better to support producer groups during and after the project.

Project Management

Project management could have been stronger in the SEED project based on the fact that CARE Canada and CARE Mozambique had vast local experience, considerable experience managing CIDA projects and experience from implementing a previous livelihood project in the same province. Therefore, project management could have been better prepared and put into place strategies to deal with the challenges of attracting and retaining qualified professional staff at the project office in a highly competitive environment where the pool of experienced and qualified professionals remains very small due to years of war and where competition for professional staff has increased, particularly in the last 3 years with the extractive industry’s boom in Mozambique. Project management could have been able to appreciate more fully the challenges of mainstreaming gender equality and thus hired a full

time senior gender expert. Reporting could have been timelier and more in line with CIDA's RBM requirements and an M&E system could have been more practical and less costly to maintain. Furthermore, the project budget could have been disbursed completely instead of leaving a considerable amount of money on the table for a project comprising many communities whose needs are great. CIDA could have provided more oversight to ensure compliance with progress and financial reporting requirements, financial disbursements, and RBM/PMF requirements. CIDA and CARE could have managed better stakeholders' and each others expectations concerning the achievement of results and project management.

The Legacy

The legacy of this project is twofold. Firstly, there is no doubt that the SEED project has changed the lives for the better for participating HH. They now think differently, act differently as individuals, within groups and in HH and they have the capacity to do things differently. Most respondents in producer groups stated that they will not go back to the old ways of doing things, i.e., subsistence living. Secondly, the value chain approach has been a good and proven model subject to certain conditions being in place to sustain these models. SEED participants now have the knowledge, skills, community based support services and linkages to buyers and to strengthened SDAE and SPP district offices. They did not have these when the project started. There is a high likelihood that the livestock and VSLAs groups will be sustained, but the arts and crafts groups are more fragile and may not be commercially sustainable. Nevertheless, respondents in the arts and crafts groups said that they desire to stay together with or without large commercial sales of their products primarily for social reasons. Sustainability of the results achieved by the SEED project is possible. The know-how is there and the value chain model has been demonstrated successfully during the life of the project. But sustainability will depend on the motivation, determination and resilience of individuals and groups, on the resources at the disposal of SDAE and SPP and on external markets and economic factors outside the control of the participants.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents practical and realizable recommendations that are supported by, and which flow logically from, the findings and specific conclusions found in this report. The recommendations are also derived from the suggestions of SEED project staff and stakeholders based on their reflection on the project and its achievements. These recommendations are made in order to enhance future programming by CIDA, CARE Canada, and local stakeholders in the agriculture and rural development (ARD) sector.

Recommendation #1: that ARD projects are designed to maximize the use of local resources and to avoid material donations to project participants.

One of the successful design features of the SEED project was the use of local resources as the base for project implementation. The project was designed around traditional production resources and activities such as raising livestock, caring for cashew trees and producing arts and crafts products. The design strategy was to build the capacity of project participants to improve on and sustain production activities that they were already engaged in using local resources and avoid providing substantial material and/or financial donations that could lead to dependency on the part of the recipients, e.g., introducing a new crop unfamiliar to participants that requires inputs external to the project area or supplying bore holes that require sustained and expensive maintenance.

Recommendation #2: that sustained capacity building programs be built into programs and projects.

Building the capacity of project participants to improve on and sustain production activities requires sustained capacity building initiatives. Livelihood projects often take place in poverty stricken areas comprising people who are illiterate or who have little education. Therefore, these people who become trainees require more than just one training session when introducing new ideas and techniques. The SEED project was successful in increasing the capacity of producer group members to manage technical and commercial aspects of the value chains in which they were involved through sustained capacity building programs using high quality training modules. ARD projects need to be designed to provide sustained capacity building programs that provide continuous training to people and communities over the entire project implementation period. Donors will need to recognize that to achieve this will require generally a service delivery project where capacity building costs make up the majority of the budget.

Recommendation #3: that livelihood and ARD projects be provided with longer implementation periods.

Changing peoples' behaviour, the way they think, expanding their knowledge and increasing their skills so that they can shift from subsistence to commercial activities takes much time in rural agriculture areas. The SEED project had a seven year implementation period, longer than the usual 5 year implementation period of most development assistance project. This longer implementation period allowed the SEED project to change participants' way of thinking and their skill levels so that they are now better able to sustain their commercial activities. But

this took time to achieve. Therefore, consideration could be given to allow for longer implementation periods of 6 to 10 years for one project or for multiple implementation phases for ARD projects located in poverty stricken rural areas with social and climatic challenges.

Recommendation #4: that CSO partnership becomes an integral part of ARD projects.

Capacity building of people living in rural agriculture areas is time consuming and requires rather large amounts of human resource inputs. Therefore, ARD projects could develop partnerships with CSOs who would be able to use their local knowledge and experience to support capacity building programs in ARD projects. Working with local CSOs often has the added benefit of building the capacity of the CSOs themselves. Pursuing this approach would enable CSOs to continue to sustain capacity building initiatives after the completion of ARD projects.

Recommendation #5: that ARD projects supporting production activities identify and develop linkages with markets early on in project implementation.

Experience in ARD projects has demonstrated the benefits of identifying markets and buyers early on in project implementation. Understanding clearly what the requirements and demands of markets and buyers are at the beginning of ARD projects and then producing products to meet these demands and requirements has proven to be a more successful approach than producing a product and then looking for markets and buyers to accept or purchase these products. As such, ARD projects would benefit from having an output or an immediate outcome in the project design that would lead to a result of sustainable linkages established with markets and buyers starting as early as possible in project implementation.

Recommendation #6: that linkages be established or strengthened with other ARD programs and projects in order to create synergies between projects.

ARD projects are often complex endeavours focusing on production activities related to crops and/or livestock, capacity building and cross-cutting issues. Therefore, establishing linkages and creating synergies between other development assistance projects could be beneficial and cost-effective for ARD projects. For example, a gender or health project dealing with HIV/AIDS could provide support (e.g., staff, training materials) to an ARD project to address these cross-cutting issues. Another example is where a research project could undertake research using the resources of project participants in an ARD project as was the case where IFAD funded research undertaken by ILRI for goats being raised by SEED project participants.

Recommendation #7: that gender experts be engaged full time in ARD projects.

ARD projects comprise generally communities with traditional values and traditional relationships between women and men. Promoting gender equality in ARD projects is often quite a challenge. This was the situation that confronted the SEED project working in male-dominated communities with traditional values and traditional relationships between women and men. The project was constantly challenged by fairly strong gender stereotyping within the SEED project team, GoM partners and project participants. Based on the challenges

experienced by the SEED project, ARD projects could have full time gender specialist on the project management team throughout the life of an ARD project. To support the gender specialist, ARD projects could have a budget and a results chain (gender related activities generating gender related outputs generating immediate outcomes) dedicated to achieving changes with respect to gender equality. Moreover, ARD projects could have a local or internationally recognized gender expert on the PSC to share best practices and to provide external oversight on progress being made towards the achievement of gender equality in ARD projects.

7 LESSONS LEARNED

Evaluation question 20 asked what were the key lessons learned from the SEED project? There were a number of lessons learned which may be taken into consideration for enhancing future programming by CIDA, the implementing partners and local stakeholders. Lessons learned also may be taken into consideration for improving the design and implementation of future ARD projects.

Value chains development using the SEED value chain models is a good approach for ARD projects. The SEED project developed three value chains for the livestock, arts and crafts and cashew components as well as the methodology to implement these value chains. The value chains had four components: group organization and management, technical training, promoter/paravet training; and linkages to markets. It also comprised cross-cutting actions related to VSLAs, gender mainstreaming and awareness raising on HIV/AIDS. This approach, broader than traditional value chain development, was successfully applied to project components. But it must be recognized that value chain development takes time to develop especially in livelihood projects similar to the SEED project.

Linkages developed between producers and buyers and between producers and GoM services are important. Producers need to know what the market demands and what buyers are looking for in terms of quality and quantity of products. Therefore, linking producers with buyers as soon as possible in project implementation is important. Furthermore, linking producers with GoM services is also important. GoM extension and veterinary services need to know what their roles are in assisting and in developing the capacity of paravets and vaccinators to provide services to producer groups in rural communities as well as the capacity of producers to produce products that the market demands and that buyers are willing to purchase.

Synergies created through interventions in different components of a project can lead to higher impacts on communities. Providing savings associations for producers whose incomes increase through improved products is a positive benefit for community members in that they have local, safe and secure saving systems in their communities. Providing training to producer groups in techniques for improved management and good governance contributes to the sustainability of producer groups. Increasing the awareness and understanding about gender quality, HIV/AIDS and environmental issues amongst producer groups and other community members contributes to positive changes in behaviour in communities, changes that contribute to increased involvement of women in decision-making and in the control of resources, in improved health of families and in protection of the environment in which they live.

Community leaders are important change agents in communities. Whether or not projects work directly with community leaders they should not be overlooked and should be fully aware of all activities that are designed for bringing changes to their communities. Community leaders have great influence in traditional communities and changes in communities, e.g., with respect to gender equality, will depend largely on the approval and support provided by the community leader. Building the capacity of community leaders to be “change agents” is a useful strategy for ARD projects.

Co-financing with other donors has advantages. It provides more financial and technical resources to affect change in a project and can complement the efforts of the lead donor. The SEED project benefited from co-financing from Irish Aid and IFAD which allowed the project to expand its project area, increase the number of beneficiaries and contribute to research knowledge undertaken by ILRI for the benefit of the project and of other projects in Mozambique and in other parts of the world.

Advocacy with government bodies at the provincial and/or national level is important, especially in a country where government resources are scarce and where ARD projects rely on government support during and after project completion. In parallel with the implementation of a donor-funded ARD project, it is useful to advocate and lobby strongly for government support in the form of human (qualified staff) and physical (transport, petrol, supplies) resources for provincial and district offices in order to support and complement the activities supported by donor-funded ARD projects located in these provinces and districts. Often times, governments have national programs for agricultural development and these programs and some of the funding could be channelled or directed to support specific provincial and district offices working with donor-funded ARD projects in their areas.

Youth is a target group that is often overlooked in ARD projects. But they should not be since they are the future of rural communities whose existence depends on their staying in place and supporting their communities. Youth often have higher education levels and are more open and less resistant to embracing new technologies and to changing their behaviour and ways of thinking with respect to gender equality and HIV/AIDS. By including them in project activities that build their capacity with a view to providing them with gainful employment opportunities as, e.g., paravet, promoters or intermediaries, they may be more inclined to remain in their communities and not travel afar seeking employment outside of the project area or in other countries. Youth remaining in their communities has the benefits of sustaining capacity building initiatives, e.g., for paravets, supporting aging populations, bringing new energy and ideas to traditional communities and to the maintenance of family structures in communities where there are many incidences of FHH with aging and vulnerable women.