SNV targets to improve food security and incomes of smallholder farmers through intensification of maize-pigeon pea production and marketing in Tete province of Mozambique

**Food security and nutrition in Mozambique**

The food crop subsector has immense potential for poverty reduction in Mozambique, as the country is a net importer of staple food and rapid economic development in the last decade is not being followed by improvements in nutrition. In 2007, as much as 27% of households faced a period of hunger. During the previous season the country had a net shortage of about 170,000 Mt of maize, while exporting (in)formally to neighbouring countries. On the other hand, Mozambique is in a prime position for investment in agriculture, with 36 million ha of arable land and agro-climatic conditions that allow a broad and diverse range of agricultural production. MZ had the 6th highest agriculture growth in the world from 2000 to 2008 (7.9%). The country can become an exporter of food crops in the future, but then sub-sector competitiveness, including a more favourable enabling environment needs to improve. The main development for the staple crops pigeon pea, maize and cassava is that they continue to move from food crop to cash crop. That shift in status and importance of these crops requires changes in the value chains and its environment which will change these sub-sectors for the future.

**Key Issues in the pigeon pea and maize Value Chains that need to be addressed**

- Lack of SMEs: the transition of staple crops as food crops to cash crops will depend largely on the development of small and medium enterprises in the sub-sector.
- Production increase and stabilization: To enable the staple crops industry to grow, farmers need to produce staple crops at a quantity beyond household consumption use.
- Productivity and Quality (low-tech agricultural practices). Yields in Mozambique are on average about half of the regional standard.
- Organizing Farmer Cooperative Societies/Associations: As more farmers will be able to commercialise their produce, business will deal with producer organisations;
- Market linkages: moving from food crop to cash crop implies the need to develop market linkages for small holder producers and processors/business;
- Financial services: Lack of adequate credit and the high interest rates on loans that are available severely impacts on the producers and processors earnings;
- Government policy. The spread of new cultivation techniques had been insufficient, and the development and dissemination of new varieties has been slow;
• Services provision/extension system: Embedded service delivery from within the value chain is inexistent;
• Competitiveness: improvements in economies of scale, reduction in transaction costs, quality enhancement and a more enabling environment.

**SNVs interventions**
The staple crop sub-sectors have all the characteristics of a value chain in its embryonic stage of development: low production and productivity so no economies of scale and high transaction costs, few or no forward and backward business linkages, spot market buying and selling and in need of much support to overcome the wide range of issues the sub-sector is facing. SNV’s interventions will address common challenges faced by smallholders through a Value Chain Development approach, which will include the following interventions:
• Analysis of the value chain and driving forces for improvement of bottlenecks: identification of market based solutions;
• Linking farmers to input markets;
• Capacity building of farmers, farmer organizations and extension workers in ISFM, GAP, marketing skills and better farmer organization;
• Linking farmers to output markets through an inclusive business approach.

The production of pigeon pea and maize will be promoted in the three high-potential districts of Moatize, Tsangano and Angonia in Tete province, targeting 20,000 smallholder farmers - with 30% of them being women.

**Strengthening Local Service Providers**
Access to quality and sustainable extension services remains a challenge. With a view to improving the efficiency of the intervention and to increase its outreach and impact; the implementation of the training and extension support will be initiated with the help of an experienced Local Capacity Builder: Sustainable Agriculture Technology. SAT is a Zimbabwean non-profit organisation, providing consulting and training for the promotion of food security and agricultural profitability of small-scale farmers through improved land use and management practices. SNV has contracted SAT to organise, implement and monitor a number of interventions to strengthen local organisations and individuals so that they can provide quality services aimed at Capacity Building of farmers, Farmer Organizations and the Extension workers in ISFM, GAP, Marketing, Post-harvest and better Farmer Organization.

**Technology Transfer**
Central to the extension methodology are the demonstration centres,
where farmers receive practical, hands-on instruction on GAP, followed by controlled application at farmers’ fields. This method of transfer of technology tells the farmer the whole story. It shows the full potential of the areas and on a sliding scale to zero inputs what the yield potential is. It also shows the farmers the benefits of legumes under different fertilisation regimes, to maximise income germination and profits. The different planting dates show the optimal planting date for that area as many farmers get this wrong and yield is severely affected.

Envisaged results of the project
The main outcomes of the AGRA funded project over 3 years will include (a) Improved household food security and incomes due to increased productivity of farms with respect to pigeon peas and maize, (b) increased use of fertilizers and improved seeds of pigeon peas and maize, (c) stronger farmers organizations in the facilitation of farmers’ access to inputs and (d) stronger links of farmers to output markets. The project anticipates to have at least 50% of the farmers (10,000 farmers, of which at least 30% women) producing maize and pigeon pea on 1 ha each, providing food security and incomes.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Starting date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant amount</td>
<td>US$ 800,000 – AGRA budget</td>
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<tr>
<td>SNV contributes</td>
<td>100 PPdays (international) advisor for project supervision</td>
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