

Programme Area Summary

Country: Mozambique

Programme Area: Secure Rural Livelihoods 2005-2010

What is the aim of the programme area?

To contribute towards a reduction of food insecurity and rural poverty by improving the capacity of individuals and organisations to increase income and agricultural production.

Why is VSO working in that particular Programme Area and region?

The UNDP Human Development Index ranks Mozambique as one of the poorest countries in world. 70% of Mozambique's population live in rural areas. Of this, 95% are directly or indirectly dependent on agrarian activities for their livelihood, and more than 60% of people living in rural areas are estimated to be "food insecure". Rural poverty and household vulnerability is associated with geographical and economic isolation, insecurity around land ownership, lack of agricultural inputs, low productivity, food insecurity, limited access and integration of markets, limited opportunities for rural enterprise and poor infrastructure. Variable climatic conditions, gender inequity, and the HIV & AIDS pandemic further aggravate these factors.

The programme aims to support organisations working with the rural poor to improve their agricultural production and raise income.

The programme is implemented in 3 regions: Maputo, Manica/Sofala and Nampula/Cuamba – all selected due to their relatively high population density, agricultural importance and high prevalence of HIV & AIDS.

Key beneficiaries and partners:

Beneficiaries

- Small-scale farmers
- Rural communities

Partners

- Farmers associations and unions
- Community based organisations
- Local NGOs
- Agricultural training institutions
- Ministry of Agriculture

Key objectives of the programme and cross-cutting themes

- To improve organisational and institutional capacity of farmers' unions, associations, educational institutions and initiatives to improve stakeholder ability to increase smallholder production.
- To improve the capacity of organisations and associations in selected provinces to support smallholders to commercialise their produce and access farming inputs within the next 5 years.
- To strengthen the capacity of farmer/rural associations and agriculture training institutions to deliver training services and distribute information; supporting formal education facilities to develop skills in target provinces within the next 5 years.
- To improve partners' capacity to deliver services to increase income generation through surplus production, rural enterprise and value adding initiatives, with special attention on active participation of women.
- To strengthen the capacity of institutions working with smallholders to develop and implement relevant institutional and sector responses to HIV and AIDS

Cross-cutting themes are HIV & AIDS and Gender.

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Current programme activities

Focus of International Volunteer Placements

- International volunteer placements in the coming period will focus on increased volunteer delivery to support and build partners' capacity in organisational and institutional development, and service delivery. Skill areas include organisational development, agribusiness, agriculture/rural development, rural micro-credit, agriculture/nutrition/HIV & AIDS, and NGO capacity building.

Research

- Market Assessment study

Advocacy and Global Education

- Integrating analysis of gender in all programme work.

Partner exchange visits/study tours

- Training and learning exchanges for partner staff and target communities.

Providing grants and/or equipment for partners

- Small grants towards enterprise development and income generating activities

Other partnership activities

- Irish Aid is supporting the programme through the project "Improving Food Security and Nutrition of people affected with HIV & AIDS in the provinces of Sofala and Manica in Mozambique," over a three-year period.

What makes VSO's work in this programme area special?

- VSO Mozambique recognized the links between, and need to address cohesively the problems of food insecurity, nutrition, and HIV & AIDS early. We have made successful attempts to address the problem in a holistic manner through the Irish Aid supported project - Improving Food Security and Nutrition of people affected with HIV & AIDS in the provinces of Sofala and Manica in Mozambique.
- VSO Mozambique is carrying out a Market Assessment study. The learning will be used to support identified disadvantaged groups through specific markets and interventions.
- VSO Mozambique aims to increase support to enterprise development by providing opportunities for skill sharing and access to resources to enable start up of sustainable income generating enterprises.