

ISFP PROJECT PROPOSAL

Country:	Mozambique
Agency:	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Project Title:	Mitigating the negative impacts of soaring food prices through the provision of agricultural inputs to vulnerable farming households in Mozambique
Sector:	Agriculture and Livelihoods
Objective:	<p>Overall objective: strengthen the food security status of vulnerable, agriculture-based households to counter the affects of soaring food prices in Mozambique</p> <p>Specific objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to make available relevant agricultural inputs (including tools) to 25 000 vulnerable households during the 2008/09 agricultural season; and • to strengthen the technical and coordination capacity of Government extension staff in supporting agricultural extension activities.
Beneficiaries:	25 000 households (125 000 persons)
Implementing Partner(s):	Ministry of Agriculture (MINAG)
Project Duration:	July 2008 – June 2009 (12 months)
Total Project Budget:	USD 1 700 000

Needs

Over 80 percent of Mozambique's vulnerable households live in rural areas, with an average per capita annual income of USD 230¹. Regular occurrences of natural disasters, such as floods and droughts, have led to conditions of food insecurity, which have been aggravated by soaring prices of food, agricultural inputs and fuel, mainly affecting the vulnerable poor. Levels of chronic malnutrition remain high and 54 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

Approximately 80 percent of the population are dependent on agricultural livelihoods. Some 520 000 people are in a situation of chronic food and nutrition insecurity in the arid and semiarid provinces of Maputo, Gaza, Inhambane, Sofala, Manica, Zambézia and Tete (according to the Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SETSAN) of October 2007).

Only about five million hectares (13.8 percent) of the arable land is under cultivation, with 99 percent cultivated by smallholder farmers². While land is available in abundance, expansion of land under effective agricultural use is limited by constraints that include labour, limited availability of sustainable farming options (such as CA) across the agro-ecological zones and limited use of draught power. Additional constraints to productivity include: limited access to water for household use and irrigation; nutrient leaching and water-logging owing to excessive rainfall; and the rising number of chronically sick, elderly-headed, female-headed and orphan-headed households, as a result of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. As a result of soaring prices, an increasing number of agricultural inputs are becoming unaffordable, culminating in increased food insecurity and vulnerability.

Mozambique registers a 1 million tonne deficit of various food products, including rice, wheat, maize, Irish potatoes, chicken, fish and cooking oil, according to the Government's strategic plan to combat

¹ The country ranks 168 out of 177 countries in the United Nations development index.

² Trabalho de Inquérito Agrícola (TIA) 2007.

soaring food prices. The shortage of sufficient basic food commodities, owing to the lack of established food value chains and increases in international market prices, has had the greatest impact on the net food buyers in the rural and urban areas. Bread prices have increased by over 50 percent, provoking protests to price increases in major urban areas. Supporting sustainable agriculture initiatives for vulnerable small-holder farmers strengthen food security, income generation and sustainable livelihoods, thereby buffering the negative impacts of soaring food prices.

Activities

FAO's emergency agricultural programme for Mozambique is a poverty reduction and food security-oriented package of integrated project activities. Rehabilitation of small-scale irrigation schemes and CA have been promoted to increase the capacity of farming households to cope with the impacts of climate change and, more recently, of soaring food prices. Provision of agricultural inputs through input trade fairs (ITFs) and the promotion of crop diversification have been done through capacity building activities and practical demonstrations at school garden and community levels, in collaboration with MINAG. Support is currently also being given at small-holder level to promote the local production of food commodities, such as cassava, including their processing in order to counter soaring food prices.

The proposed project activities include:

1. preparation of a National ITF Team composed of MINAG and FAO to agree upon beneficiary identification criteria;
2. organizing and conducting refresher workshops for extension staff on ITF methodology in each province;
3. selection of 25 000 beneficiaries at local levels and briefing them on the ITFs;
4. formation of local ITF Preparation Groups;
5. identification and assessment of potential sources of agricultural inputs and raising awareness among the identified input traders;
6. printing vouchers;
7. conducting ITFs in selected provinces;
8. preparing and disseminating packages outlining practices of agricultural technologies (such as post-harvest conservation, CA, drought-resistant crops, livestock management and other aspects which are usually part of the extension programme); and
9. conducting monitoring and evaluation activities on the fairs and subsequent crop planting and harvesting by households.

Outcomes

1. An estimated total of 100 000 tonnes of food (comprising 28 000 tonnes of maize, 10 000 tonnes of dry beans and 62 000 tonnes of various vegetables) will be produced from 160 tonnes of seed and 200 000 hand tools will have been distributed to 25 000 households.
2. Food supply to the 25 000 vulnerable households during the marketing season of 2009/10 will have been increased through production from inputs supplied through ITFs.
3. Household expenditure on basic food commodities during the 2009/10 marketing period will have been reduced.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY	
Budget Items	USD
Staff costs	100 000
Inputs costs	1 400 000
Administration costs	200 000
Total	1 700 000