

SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT

Mozambique Final Evaluation of the Programme “Accelerate Progress Towards Millennium Development Goal 1C (MDG1.C) 2013-2019” | A Joint Evaluation

The MDG1c Programme “Accelerate Progress Towards Millennium Development Goal 1C” in Mozambique was implemented from 2013 to 2019. It was funded by the European Union and implemented by the three Rome-Based Agencies (RBAs) of the United Nations (UN) – the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) – under the coordination of the Technical Secretariat for Food and Nutrition Security (SETSAN). This final evaluation of the programme was jointly commissioned in 2018 and managed by the EU Delegation in Mozambique and the three agencies, through a joint evaluation management group. Stakeholders were systematically engaged through the evaluation reference group as well as the programme task force.

SUBJECT OF THE EVALUATION

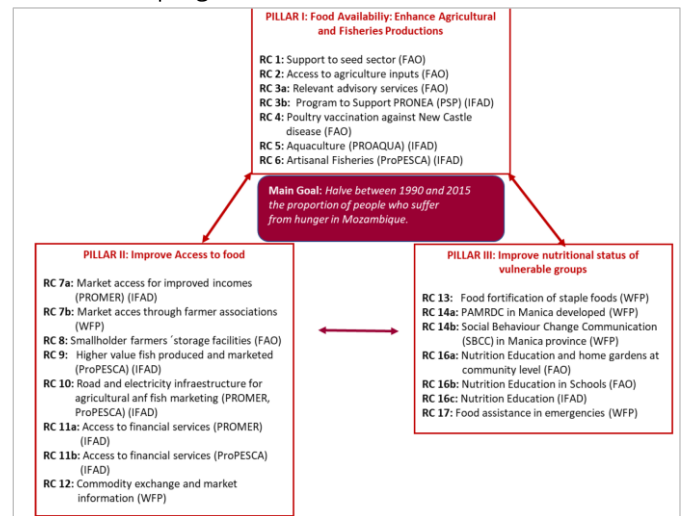
Considering the prevailing high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition in the country, the Government of Mozambique recognised that priority should have been given to achieving the MDGs targets for food security and nutrition, as was stated in the Poverty Reduction Plan (PARPA 2011-2014) and the Food and Nutrition Security Strategy (ESAN II 2008-2015). In 2011, the Government of Mozambique in partnership with FAO, WFP and IFAD, designed the programme with three objectives corresponding to the food and nutrition security pillars (see figure on the left). Recognizing that there are multiple factors that lead to food insecurity and malnutrition, the programme utilized a multisectoral approach, with integrated interventions to tackle diverse factors that constrain household food and nutrition security. The programme was implemented by FAO, WFP and IFAD, directly supporting line Ministries involved as main implementing actors in the field namely:

Pillar 1: Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MASA) with FAO’s assistance, the Ministry of the Sea, Inland Waters and Fisheries (MMAIP) with IFAD’s support.

Pillar 2: Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MIC), MASA, MMAIP and Ministry of Planning and Development, with the support of IFAD and WFP.

Pillar 3: Ministry of Health (MISAU), MIC and Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH) with the support of WFP, FAO and IFAD.

SETSAN had the role of ensuring overall coordination of the programme, monitor results, consolidate the reports of the three agencies and prepare a harmonized annual report for review of the progress.



EVALUATION OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The objective of the evaluation, which was conducted by an independent team of three evaluators, was to provide an independent assessment of the overall performance of the Programme against programme objectives; and to identify key lessons and make recommendations to improve current and future actions.

Coverage/Scope: The evaluation covered all the 17 results areas of the programme. In addition, the evaluation assessed the humanitarian assistance component supported with MDG1c Programme’s funds to respond to El Niño drought in 2016, implemented by WFP, and to Idai and Kenneth cyclones responses in 2019, implemented by FAO. The evaluation team liaised with the evaluators conducting the “Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Response to Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique” to share information and findings related to the humanitarian response component of the MDG programme. Nineteen districts in 8 provinces (Inhambane, Manica, Sofala, Tete, Nampula, Zambézia, Cabo Delgado, Gaza and Maputo) were visited to collect primary data in August/September 2019.

The Evaluation followed the five OECD-DAC criteria (relevance/appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability) as well as humanitarian assistance criteria (timeliness, targeting, modality, and coverage) and cross-cutting issues of gender, environment and climate change.

Evaluation products included the [full evaluation report and four case studies](#). A stakeholder workshop was organized to disseminate the findings.

KEY FINDINGS

Below are some results on key outcomes under each pillar.

Pillar III: Nutrition	Pillar I: Food Availability	Pillar II: Food Access
<p>Improved health and nutrition practices Children 6-23 months diet diversity: 50.2% beneficiaries, 42.4% control group (No sig. Difference) Women dietary diversity: 2017: 28%, 2018: 40% (PROMER area) Adolescent girls dietary diversity: 2017: 55%, 2018: 68% (PROMER) Use of latrines and child's hand washing: + 20%</p> <p>Improved health and nutrition knowledge Increase in 20%-40% in the knowledge on malaria and diarrhoea prevention, hand washing and pregnancy care. Knowledge on exclusive breastfeeding and adequate complementary feeding has also improved</p> <p>Improved access to fortified food: wheat flour, maize flour, sugar and oil (In process through the National Food Fortification Programme)</p>	<p>Reduced % of households with less than four months food reserves Beneficiaries : 36.1% Control group : 44.1% Significant difference</p> <p>Increase productivity and production of staple food crops for farmers involved by 10% Increased maize productivity by +17% for e-voucher package A and +78% for package B</p> <p>Increase production of fish Number of families producing fish in fish ponds increased 6th fold (from 262 to 1950) Qualitative evidence on increase in the volume of captured and commercialized fish by artisanal fish folks</p>	<p>Reduced share of food consumption in total expenditure of households in lower income groups No specific data available, but indications that higher food production and income among beneficiaries, reduced the food expenditure share</p> <p>Increment of smallholder's income coming from market sells PROMER: Rural traders improved their financial capacities E-voucher beneficiaries improved their income by 4,800 MZN Qualitative evidence on the increased outcome among members of farmer associations and artisanal fishermen supported by the programme</p>

Below are the findings and conclusion by evaluation criteria.

Relevance

1. The MDG1c programme was highly relevant to the needs of the country, in terms of addressing one of the key problems – the prevailing high levels of food insecurity and malnutrition, particularly in rural areas.
2. The programme's main approach to address the complex set of determinants of food and nutrition insecurity by a set of multisector interventions was aligned with national policies and priorities such as the Distrital Development Plan (PDD) 2015-2019 and the National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (ESAN) and Multisectoral Action Plan for the Reduction of Chronic Malnutrition (PAMRDC).
3. The programme was also in line with the existing evidence pointing out that food insecurity and malnutrition should be addressed from different angles. However, the programme's original design based on the upscaling of dispersed interventions already in place, the large geographical dispersion and the lack of effective integration among components, resulted in a very complex programme that diluted the potential to effectively implement [jointly] the multisectoral approach. As a result, not all districts and communities could benefit from interventions addressing food availability, access and utilization at the same time.

Efficiency

4. Overall, the technical and financial execution was adequate. Activities were implemented and funds were almost totally used, even though initially there were delays.

5. However, the coordination mechanisms were not effective to ensure complementarity and synergies among implementing agencies. There is no doubt that the three RBA have expertise and comparative advantages on food and nutrition security, that allowed the MDG1c to adopt different approaches, methods and implementation modalities in several topics (i.e. nutrition education, support to farmer associations, extension services etc), that at the end resulted in important lessons learnt for future programmes. However, the potential to build synergies upon the comparative advantages of each agency was not fully developed as the implementation was rather fragmented, with few opportunities for complementarity and synergies, and for cross-fertilization.
6. Additionally, even if SETSAN's coordination role was important to ensure achievement of programme targets, it did not work as expected for convening the agencies to promote coordinated implementation, knowledge sharing and learning, harmonised monitoring of the programme outputs and outcomes, as well as other actors for sectors that were not addressed by the programme, like water and sanitation.

Effectiveness

7. The programme was highly effective in achieving most of the output level targets. At outcome level the various impact evaluations conducted for each result component and by SETSAN, have demonstrated that the programme's interventions have generated significant improvements on agricultural and fishery production, nutrition knowledge and to a less extent on health and nutrition practices, among beneficiaries. There are indications that the programme interventions have also positively influenced household income. Although due to data constraints these effects could

not be accurately quantified and extrapolated to district and national levels, these findings confirm that the programme interventions were relevant and appropriate to address the main constraints that affect food availability, access and utilization in the context of rural Mozambican communities.

8. In terms of targeting, the programme reached different target groups across its results components, including emergent and commercial farmers and most vulnerable groups. However data constraints did not permit an assessment of the extent to which the variable targeting approach enhanced or hindered the programme’s effectiveness and contribution to food security and nutrition outcomes.

Impact

9. The multisector approach of the programme and the set of interventions selected had the potential to contribute significantly to the improvement of food and nutrition security at household level. There is evidence from SETSAN impact evaluations that household food security situation (measured by proxy indicators such as Food Consumption Score and Household Dietary Diversity Index) among beneficiaries from agriculture, fishery and nutrition education/SBCC interventions was significantly better than those for non-beneficiaries. The evidence also shows that impact is larger for households that benefited at the same time from agricultural/fishery production and nutrition education/SBCC.
10. Although the magnitude of the programme’s contribution to changes in the nutrition status of vulnerable groups cannot be quantified¹ there are indications from the impact studies that there were improvements in the nutrition status of children under five years old among the beneficiary households, but the differences with the control group were not significant. Various factors explain this finding: the relatively short time of exposure to nutrition pillar interventions, diverse targeting criteria that not necessarily allowed to concentrate all components on families with under two years old children, the critical determinant factors of malnutrition that were not part of the programme like water and sanitation, early childbearing, women’s low education and heavy workload among others.

Sustainability

11. The programme has contributed to building of capacities at institutional and beneficiary level to sustain the activities, with a substantial effort in each Result Component to the continuation of project achievements. In the first place, knowledge and capacities were created at community level (such as vaccinators, farming field schools (FFS) facilitators, seed producers, silo construction artisans, health committees, care group mothers) which to a certain degree will allow the continuity of the activities. Many of the trained persons at community level have gained the respect and trust

of the communities and they are considered as knowledgeable persons. Additional skills have been delivered to improve leadership of farmer associations and cooperatives.

12. Capacities of national institutions, especially at local levels were strengthened in the different topics covered by the programme. This was more evident in those components that directly involved or were implemented through national institutions (namely IFAD’s interventions with IDEPA, DNR/MITADER, but also FAO and WFP, with several national/provincial MASA directorates, SDAE2, MIC, MISAU, etc.). Staff were trained and equipment in many cases made available to fulfil their task. However, staff turnover within the supported institutions and the limited financial resources in the public sector will be a constraint to continue implementing activities at the same level as under the MDG1c. Additionally, the private sector has been trained by many programme components to provide services to farmers, livestock keepers or fishermen.

Gender

13. The incorporation of the gender dimension across the programme cycle was not homogeneous, it was very weak in the design phase as it did not consider the specific needs of women, men, youth and other groups.
14. Implementation was more gender sensitive by actively promoting the inclusion of women into programme activities and conducting gender sensitization, but evaluation and reporting was rather weak in gender analysis. Nevertheless, involving and training women in Farm Field Schools, health committees, farmer organisations, saving groups, care groups and other groups, empowered women to be behaviour change promoters, allowing them to gain the respect of the communities. Yet, programme contributions to critical aspects such as women’s decision-making power over productive resources, food and household income and alleviation of heavy workload was relatively low, in part due to the fact that the programme did not have a strong gender transformative focus.
15. It is perceived that overall, the programme implementing agencies suffered from low capacity, in terms of staff, methodological guidelines, tools, and analysis to mainstream gender issues across all the results components. Very few specific studies were conducted on gender, while gender disaggregated data collection and analysis was not systematically undertaken nor reported across the result components. The lack of more quality gender analysis and studies in turn limits the possibility of the programme to disseminate best practices and lessons learnt to create more gender awareness among the stakeholders involved in food and nutrition security policy and programming. Little can be learnt from the MDG1c Programme in of terms for instance

¹ With existing data, it is not possible to measure which percentage of any changes in the nutrition status are due to the programme’s action or other factors.

² District Service for Economic Activities/Serviço Distrital

Reference:

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mainstreaming gender into multisectoral food and nutrition programmes.

Environment and climate change

16. The Programme did not include a specific strategy to focus on or to mainstream environment and climate change issues in its logic of intervention. Such issues were addressed at the results components level by developing and adopting approaches related to adaptation to climate change aimed at increasing resilience in production systems as well as to promote the sustainable use of natural resources (like seeds selection, soil and water conservation practices in FFS, post-harvest, losses reduction and conservation facilities). However, even if national regulations were respected, some concerns remain about the lack of additional studies assessing the environmental impact of important infrastructures, mainly roads and increased access to market, but also on increased pressure on natural resources and biodiversity (like fisheries).
17. Furthermore, the Programme did not adopt a specific strategy to reduce disaster risk by increasing communities' preparedness capacity to face natural disasters and extreme events, but it acted in response to events like the El Niño drought in 2016 and the 2019 Idai and Kenneth cyclones in order to reduce their effects, taking advantage of the indirect effect of some activities, like improved health and hygiene practices, increased food availability and conservation, intra-groups solidarity, etc. Follow-up projects, like the FAO/GEF, now have a stronger resilience approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation made recommendations are related to programming EU support to rural development focal sector and integrating emergency support (e.g. food assistance) with long term approaches to food security. The MDG1c programme demonstrated that better effects on food security are achieved when integrating productive and nutrition interventions. Considering that one of the objectives of the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) is to improve food security and nutrition, it is recommended that the EU strategy to rural development in Mozambique continue having food and nutrition security as one of its main focus and that synergies and complementarity among the interventions on food production, access and nutrition are sought. Different options to achieve this are recommended below:

Recommendation 1. Coordination and Planning

- 1.1 Align multisectoral programmes to context specific analysis of main causes of food insecurity and malnutrition, to better select the best set of evidence-based interventions to address the main determinant factors of malnutrition and include overlooked crucial factors (like water and sanitation).

- 1.2 Try as much as possible to converge interventions in the same communities or at least the same districts.
- 1.3 Strengthen the multisector food and nutrition security planning process at district level, to select and integrate sectoral interventions according to the context specific analysis and seek complementarity with relevant interventions from other actors/donors.

Recommendation 2. Integrated Approaches

- 2.1 Enhance nutrition sensitivity of the productive and market-oriented investments by: promoting the production, processing and marketing of more nutritious foods (i.e animal protein sources, legumes, vegetables, bio-fortified foods), integrating nutrition education with agriculture/fishery production and market interventions. In this respect the experience and lessons learnt from related programmes such as PROMER³, ProPESCA⁴, PSP⁵ could be a good starting point.
- 2.2 Increase the climate change/resilience nexus, integrating approaches on adaptation to climate change (water and soil conservation, forestry, agro-forestry and agro-ecology), climate-proof/resilient investments (roads and markets), disaster risk reduction and preparedness to disasters at both institutional and community levels. The logic of intervention of new initiatives should mainstream environmental issues in all components towards sustainable development based on a sound management of natural resources.

Recommendation 3. Gender and Vulnerability

- 3.1 To enhance the effects of the investments on the food and nutrition situation, adequate targeting is important. In this sense targeting should be inclusive of the most vulnerable (i.e. subsistence farmers with less than 1 ha, women-headed households). Appropriate schemes should be designed to facilitate access of the most vulnerable to improved agricultural/fisheries inputs and technology together with INAS, including social protection schemes.
- 3.2 Ensure that the investments properly incorporate the gender dimension across the programme cycle, from design, implementation, evaluation and reporting. Differentiated analysis of the needs of women, men, youth should be the basis for the design of the interventions. Interventions that allow women empowerment and alleviation of their heavy workload should be prioritized.
- 3.3 Integrate women's empowerment strategies to improve their access to income opportunities, work saving technologies, profitable cash crops, financial services, but also childcare and education (literacy).

³ Rural Markets Promotion Programme

⁴ Artisanal Fisheries Promotion Project

⁵ Programme Support Project

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Recommendation 4. Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation

- 4.1 It is highly recommended to include robust monitoring and evaluation systems in the design of the interventions, to allow building of evidence on the effectiveness of multisector nutrition-sensitive interventions that would inform decision-makers on which intervention or combination of interventions are less or more effective in different contexts.
- 4.2 Continue disseminating the lessons learnt, best practices and challenges of the programme and promote their inclusion in future food and nutrition security policies, programmes and plans.

Recommendation 5. Advocacy

- 5.1 Support (agencies and the EU) the government seeking additional funding to overcome the remaining challenges for strategic actions that proved to be very relevant for Mozambique such as food fortification and nutrition education at schools.

Recommendation 6. Institutional Support

- 6.1 Continuous support to strengthen SETSAN capacity to perform its mandate, especially in the framework of the establishment of the CONSAN - the National Council for food and nutrition security

Recommendation 7. Integration of emergency support (e.g. food assistance) with long term approaches to food security

- 7.1 Recovery and rehabilitation objectives should be incorporated in the immediate relief operations to allow for smooth and timely shifts between emergency and rehabilitation, with strong inter-agencies coordination mechanisms.
- 7.2 Response options should be based on appropriate needs assessments of the affected people, strengthening timely and accurate needs assessment information generation mechanisms (such as the Mozambique Vulnerability Assessment Committee). Needs could change rapidly in an emergency context; updated data is necessary at all stages to inform the design of the most appropriate response options.

Recommendation 8. Capacity building for Resilience

- 8.1 Capacity building of the affected people to cope with the shock, reduce further impact on lives and livelihoods and support medium-and long-term rehabilitation/development needs to be incorporated in the first stages of the emergency operations. In the first phase, for instance, training on knowledge and skills required to reduce the risks of mortality, malnutrition and diseases should be incorporated. Later, interventions with medium-or long-term impacts such as nutrition/health behaviour change communication/ education, transfer of

climate smart agriculture practices among others would be appropriate.

- 8.2 To increase resilience and benefit the communities in the long term, asset creation at both community and household level (physical, economic assets), and development of human and social capital (i.e. through support to school meals to avoid children dropping out of school) should be the focus of food assistance, immediately after the lifesaving assistance. The adopted modalities (either food, vouchers, cash or any combination) would depend on the needs assessments and the context.

LESSONS LEARNT AND BEST PRACTICES

In addition to the full evaluation report, the evaluation team developed four thematic case studies that detailed specific approaches, results, lesson learnt and best practices.

Case Study 1: Nutrition education and social behaviour change communication (SBCC)

9.1 Delivery of the same messages through different sources and channels leverages the effect on knowledge improvement and improved practices.

9.2 The Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) approach facilitates sustained nutrition/health awareness.

9.3 Some quality elements of the design and implementation of nutrition education programmes are formative research that identify enabling and hindering factors for improved practices, participatory development of education materials, experiential learning in the context of low literacy and strong monitoring and evaluation systems to collect and analyze information.

9.4 Involvement of key stakeholders and alignment with national priorities and strategies guarantees ownership.

9.5 Harmonization, coordination and common approach among implementing stakeholders is key to build synergies, seek complementarity but most important to avoid delivering contradictory messages to the population.

9.6 Community mobilization through community actors increases coverage rapidly.

9.7 Nutrition education as a stand-alone intervention is necessary but not sufficient to ensure adoption of improved practices and final contribution to improved nutrition.

Case Study 2: Reducing food insecurity and malnutrition through a multisector approach

10.1 In practice implementing a multisector approach at national scale is very challenging, context specific planning and implementation seems to be one of the more effective and efficient ways to apply and combine different interventions.

10.2 Strong governance, including coordination mechanisms are required at all levels from national to local to facilitate multisector programming and implementation.

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10.3 Multisector programme implementation requires strong capacity building in topics, methods and approaches to implement effective programmes.

10.4 One of the promising ways to operationalize multisector approaches for food and nutrition security is through nutrition-sensitive programming in non-nutrition sectors, but this requires minimum guiding principles.

10.5 Selecting a few interventions based on the context is more realistic and feasible to operationalize than very comprehensive, ambitious programmes.

10.6 Appropriate targeting criteria is key to ensure that the target groups are receiving the multi-sector interventions at the same time.

10.7 Engagement at all stages with national government and civil society stakeholders is critical to ensuring sustainability and ownership.

10.8 Cross cutting issues like gender and resilience to climate change should be considered across the whole programme cycle.

11. Case Study 3: E-vouchers

11.1 Interaction with Farm Field Schools (FFS): studies show strong interaction between the participation in the e-voucher scheme and FFS membership. FFS members under the e-voucher scheme (RC2) had higher productivity (+10%-17%) than non-members, including the FFS members of the control group who did not receive a voucher. The potential is there to use the FFS approach for further technology development.

11.2 Agriculture inputs: farmers showed high interest in purchasing improved inputs and in increasing their production capacity.

11.3 Packages: their composition, especially in terms of crops, was defined based on MASA priority having been designed to facilitate access to quality inputs of cereals and beans. Over the course of the MDG programme, additional crops (groundnuts, soyabeans and vegetables) were also included in the voucher package in response to farmers' feedback to have more flexibility in the use of the e-voucher subsidies including other crops or small-scale irrigation.

11.4 Contribution: for many farmers, even the small requested contribution for package A (for subsistence farmers) was considered a constraint. There is a major challenge to scale-up the e-voucher programme as resource-poor farmers have little possibilities to benefit. As a result, relatively few farmers benefited from the e-voucher scheme (in some FFS less than 30%).

11.5 Agro-dealers: the capacity to reach farmers in remote areas, eventually through on-truck sales, increased the system coverage and the trust felt by farmers, even if sometimes implying delays in the inputs delivery. The potential for improving the business, but the limitation in being able to provide the different range of inputs requested

by the farmers through this system, promoted the establishment of smaller retail shops in rural areas, enlarging the existing network.

12. Case Study 4: Farmers Field Schools

12.1 The FFS approach is a good basis to integrate learning activities contributing to improved agricultural productivity.

12.2 Strengthening of FFS capacity at community level has strongly contributed to ownership of service provision.

12.3 Institutionalization through a strong focus on capacity development: A strong point of both the FAO and Programme Support Project (PSP) activities to strengthen the FFS approach has been the strong focus on capacity development through the training of MASA and SDAE staff at different levels including FFS masters through in-service training. This approach is considered to be one of the successes in capacity enhancement of the public extension service.

12.4 Positive results have created the ground for the mainstreaming of FFS in Mozambique.

12.5 FFS establishment should be based on voluntary participation.

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