



EX-POST PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT EVALUATION SUMMARY

GRAPE VALUE CHAIN AND FOOD SECURITY IN DODOMA, TANZANIA

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) commissioned Valuing Voices to independently conduct an ex-post evaluation of our Grape Value Chain and Food Security project in Dodoma, Tanzania three years after its conclusion to measure its lasting impact and long-term sustainability. The evaluation was conducted between July and September 2018 in Mpunguzi and Hombolo villages.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The goal of the project was to strengthen smallholder farmer participation in the grape value chain and increase food security for families by improving farmers' yield, quality and marketing of grapes, thereby increasing their incomes and ability to meet their food consumption needs year-round. The project was implemented in two phases, from 2006 to 2010 and 2011 to 2015, in collaboration with four Agricultural Marketing Cooperatives Societies (AMCOS). The participating AMCOS were: UWAZAMAM in Mpunguzi, UWAZAMAH in Hombolo, MAMCOS in Mbabala and GAWAYE in Gawaye. The project targeted 2,000 smallholder farmers.



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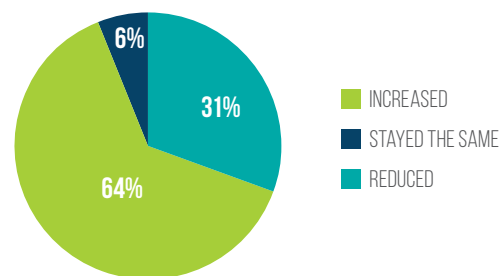
EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Valuing Voices employed a mixed-method research approach for the evaluation, using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data was collected from 124 farming households using a questionnaire, 54 percent of which directly participated in the project. Qualitative information was collected from nine focus groups (FGDs) — each consisting of 4 to 8 people, who completed the questionnaire — and key informant interviews (KIIs) with grape farmers, wine processing companies, government officials, and other members of the value chain from private organizations. The Most Significant Change (MSC) methodology was also used during the FGDs.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. LASTING INCOME INCREASES FOR THE MAJORITY

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS' INCOME FROM GRAPES SINCE THE END OF THE PROJECT



Two-thirds of farmers interviewed reported their incomes have continued to increase from grape farming since the end of the project, leading to improvements in quality of life. The evaluation also found that youth, seeing the improved earnings of their parents, are returning from larger urban areas to participate in grape farming.

One-third of those interviewed, however, reported that their incomes have not increased or sustained at the level they were during the project. The report attributed this outcome to poor capacity of the cooperatives after the project.

LWR RESPONSE 1.1: LWR should examine developing the inclusion of youth in value chain activity into a formal programming opportunity.

LWR RESPONSE 1.2: LWR should continue to provide contextualized, farmer-level extension services. It should carefully assess which farmers are not adopting practices recommended in trainings and refine trainings to better reach them.

"I left home in 2010 to look for work in Dodoma town ... I would get little salary and sometimes I would not be paid. In 2014 my mother asked me to stay home and assist with household chores because she was busy in the grape farms and also the pharmacist shop she had opened. I agreed and to date I am glad I did. I have seen my parents grow from poverty to a point where they have built a good house, bought a car and started businesses. I am also happy because I work in their businesses including grape farming and get paid. Also, I have been given half an acre by my father and I just planted my grapes last season."

– A young female farmer, Dodoma region

2. COOPERATIVES' CAPACITIES DID NOT IMPROVE

No systemic cooperative capacity assessment was conducted at the beginning or end of the project. This resulted in a lack of tailored approach to working with each cooperative from the beginning. Instead, cooperative leaders were expected to adopt better management approaches by participating in a series of trainings. The evaluation found that these trainings were insufficient, did not reach all the necessary people, and were not sustained beyond the project. As a result, the cooperatives failed to provide better services for their farmer members. Had LWR conducted a capacity assessment at the end of the project, it might have decided to continue working with these cooperatives until their capacity was high enough to be self-sufficient.

LWR RESPONSE 2.1: As part of the REAL strategy¹, capacity assessments are expected to be an integral part of the project design phase.

LWR RESPONSE 2.2: Additionally, as part of the implementation of the REAL strategy, LWR will curate a suite of tools and metrics for evaluating and improving the capacity of cooperatives. These tools and metrics should be developed for the use of implementing project teams. Metrics should include both the information necessary for managing the cooperative as a profitable business and ensuring it is meeting its social responsibilities.

LWR RESPONSE 2.3: Rather than relying exclusively on trainings, agriculture projects implemented through farmers' cooperatives should look to a "mentor" model that provides on-going and contextualized support to leaders.



¹ The REAL strategy is LWR's Rural Economies and Agricultural Livelihoods strategy, adopted in 2018 concurrently with this evaluation.



3. LACK OF EXIT STRATEGY CONTRIBUTED TO UNSUSTAINABILITY

The evaluation found the project did not have a sufficiently robust exit strategy. There was no clear articulation of a theory of change, a shared sustainability model, nor of roles and responsibilities for continuing relevant work after the project's end.

LWR RESPONSE 3.1: LWR should adopt a suite of project-tested tools that assists teams in ensuring that sustainability plans are well-developed and continually referenced throughout design and implementation. Field testing for the tools adopted should be included in the REAL strategy pilot projects then further refined to the context of each project.

4. PROJECT STAFFING WAS NOT ADEQUATE

There was a shortage of staff members involved in the development and implementation of the project, which led to inadequate project oversight and ultimately to poor cooperative management and limited support of farmers.

LWR RESPONSE 4.1: LWR should ensure that staffing for each project is adequate, both in terms of technical expertise and human resource support, to provide cooperatives with the necessary and relevant coaching and development. This should include project-level monitoring, evaluation, and learning staff who support cooperatives in gathering and analyzing relevant data.

CONCLUSION

LWR undertook an ex-post evaluation of one of our projects with the earnest intent to learn and improve our program quality and assess the long-term benefit to the communities involved. We learned that our short-term objective of increasing incomes for grape farmers was realized and sustained with the additional benefit of reducing youth migration. However, we also learned there was unrealized potential to sustain and expand these results. This ex-post evaluation provided concrete evidence for programming shortfalls we suspected had been occurring — shortfalls we intend to address with the adoption of our Rural Economies and Agricultural Livelihoods (REAL) strategy, developed in 2018. Through the REAL strategy, we will utilize a systems approach to assess the rural economies where we work and to evaluate the capacities and needs of enterprises — including cooperatives — in order to serve them more holistically and for the longer-term.

Going forward, LWR plans to conduct more ex-post evaluations of our past projects in order to gain further insight into the impact and sustainability of our agriculture programming and to inform our adaptations so that we continue to improve for the people we serve.



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