

# EXTERNAL EVALUATION

NOVEMBER 2014

## Building disaster resilient communities in Masvingo and Manicaland provinces, Zimbabwe



Funded by  
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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND SPECIFIC TERMINOLOGY

ACF	Action Contre La Faim
IEC/BCC	Information, Education and Communication / Behaviour Change Communication
CARE	CARE International, NGO
CBDRM	Community-based Disaster Risk Management
Community	in this context: a cluster of villages
CPU	Civil Protection Unit, <i>popular unofficial name</i> for the Department of Civil Protection
cIYCF	community Infant and Young Child Feeding
DA	District Administrator
DCP	Department of Civil Protection (in the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing)
DCPC	District Civil Protection Committee
DDC	District Development Committee
DFNSC	District Food and Nutrition Security Committee
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EPR	Emergency Preparedness and Response
FNSC	Food and Nutrition Security Committee
LIG	Low Input Garden
HH	household(s)
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IWSD	Institute of Water and Sanitation Development
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MoH	Ministry of Health
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OFDA	Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance
PFNSC	Provincial Food and Nutrition Security Committee
Stakeholders	in this context: staff of government departments and ministries
ToT	Trainer of Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VHW	Village Health Worker
VIDCO	Village development committee
VSLA	Village Savings and Lending Association
Ward	administrative unit, comprising generally between 10 and 30 villages
WARDCO	Ward Development Committee
WV	World Vision

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) - in partnership with Action contre la Faim (ACF) and the Institute of Water and Sanitation Development (IWSD) have implemented since the last quarter of 2013 a comprehensive Disaster Risk Reduction program in Zimbabwe, aimed at addressing vulnerabilities and mitigating risks through targeted Risk Management Policy and Practice, Water, Hygiene and Sanitation, and Agriculture and Food Security interventions in Manicaland and Masvingo provinces in Zimbabwe.

ACF's part in this program was the promotion of disaster risk management (DRM) and of national integrated food and nutrition policy and frameworks across ten priority districts, spread evenly over the two provinces. DRM committees were set up in three of these districts. In all ten districts food security and nutrition security committees were set up or revived, and strengthened through training and coaching. The overall aim was to strengthen the overall capacity of the government and of the communities to mitigate their vulnerability to disasters and to build long-term resiliency.

Two specific results were aimed at, namely (1) the improved capacity of institutions and communities to identify hazards, mitigate risks and to coordinate risk reduction interventions, and (2) to reduce the underlying risk factors in vulnerable communities.

An external evaluation was conducted between 27 October and 12 November 2014, some weeks before the closure of the ACF's part of the programme, which is about 3 months earlier than the two other consortium partners. The evaluation was aimed at assessing the effectiveness and the impact of the project, as well as the sustainability of this impact and its likely long-term effects.

At the same time, lessons learned from the project were to be identified and recommendations were to be made to strengthen similar projects in the future.

The evaluator was able to spend about 11 days in the project area, and to visit seven districts out of the ten that were touched by this project.

The main conclusions of the evaluation are the following:

1. This programme was relevant and appropriate. It enabled the Department of Civil Protection and the National Food and Nutrition Security Council to create and train a significant number of local committees in the provinces and districts that had been chosen according to priority criteria.

The national stakeholders, and the government departments at different levels, are unanimously satisfied with ACF's work. They valorise it as a crucial contribution to setting up decentralized structures in priority districts, without which it would have been impossible to implement the national policies on Disaster Risk Reduction and on integrated Food and Nutrition Security.

2. ACF's part of this programme has been well implemented, and almost all of its indicators have been achieved. An important effort has also been made in the area of nutrition improvement, particularly through training of ward and village level officials and volunteers in IYCF, through the support given to 10 nutrition gardens in Chipinge district, and to the promotion of communication events that aim at changing peoples nutritional habits, particularly about exclusive breastfeeding, diversified diets and growing drought-tolerant small grain cereals.

3. Particularly appreciated is the way in which ACF managed to let the Zimbabwean government department and officials in the driver's seat, while limiting itself to a predominantly facilitating and enabling role. ACF allowed government departments to take the lead in the processes, though always being close to assist and to facilitate when needed. As a result, there is a high degree of local ownership in relation to the various district committees on DRM and on FNS that were created and trained.

4. These district based committees, especially the DFNSCs, typically seem to go through a process in which they first are given an externally generated agenda: «make us an analysis

of your situation ( a specific disaster risk mapping plus a work plan for the DRM committees, and a district profile for the FNS committees), make us a workplan, organize a behaviour change communication event», and so on. Gradually, as in these committees a culture develops that is based on exchange of information across different government departments and local NGO's, a common understanding of the situation of the district based on a multi-sectorial point of view emerges. And a local home-grown coordination and action agenda comes up based on local specific needs and priorities. As such, a locally owned dynamic comes into being.

The oldest DFNSCs, like the one in Chipinge, where ACF worked before in 2012, are clearly the strongest and the most dynamic. Also their DRM committee is strong. It holds regular simulation exercises, intervenes effectively when a disaster occurs, even sent assistance to a disaster-stricken neighbouring district.

The youngest DFNSCs on the other hand feel more insecure, and not very certain about what is expected from them. The same applies also to the FNS committees at ward level. It is clearly also a matter of time, to allow for the capacity building process to unfold, as these committees go through a process of meeting regularly, and seeking the best way for action for themselves in their specific district. In this respect, one can certainly say that the ACF project is stopping too early, as the consolidation process is still ongoing and in certain cases even incipient.

5. It is very probable that nearly all of these committees, both on DRM and on FNS will continue to exist after the withdrawal of ACF at the end of its intervention end 2014. For the youngest and/or the weakest however, there is a serious danger for a radical setback, of a strong reduction of their level of activities. Firstly because the whole process is not yet fully «theirs», but also because the external impetus is no longer there, nor are ACF's cars or the limited funds that ACF had always available to assist with stationery, refreshments, lunches or lunch allowances, and for transport. Especially the actual dynamic to expand the creation and training of committees to the most priority wards, will most probably come to an end.

The evaluation allowed to formulate several recommendations. For the immediate future, that is for the coming last month of December 2014, ACF is encouraged to consider including some of the following elements in its exit strategy:

- ensure that consortium leader IRC is ready to take up a sort of watchdog and coaching role for the various committees that ACF leaves behind. Especially several of the DFNSCs need more coaching and strengthening.
- ensure that other INGOs that have projects in parts of the districts that were touched, take up the task to become a dynamizing and enabling local partner in the DRM and DFNSC of that district. Their contribution in terms of vision, expertise, and material and financial means is needed.
- re-write the relevant pages of the DRM training manual of the DCP in Shona into a guidelines document, for use as a reference document for local committee members at ward and village level.
- organize, or suggest to IRC to organize during the first months of next year, study and exchange visits for core members of especially the youngest and the most insecure DFNSCs to other, older and stronger, more dynamic DFNSCs. Such visits will most probably be eye-openers, allowing a more full understanding of the issues at stake and about what is possible.
- ACF could consider leaving some of its means of transport as a donation to its national partners DCP and/or FNC, under the agreement that these remain in Manicaland and/or Masvingo provinces, as a contribution to enabling the continued functioning of the DRM and FNS structures at district and sub-district level that have been created by this project.

With regard to future ACF projects, a further 6 minor recommendations have been formulated, related to the quality of the indicators in the Logical Framework, the appropriate dimensioning of the intervention, the timely design of an exit strategy, the importance of a

well made behaviour change communication strategy, and the absence of a minimal provision for investment, e.g. for repair or rehabilitation of specific productive equipment.

The evaluation finally also allowed also to identify two good practices, that could be of interest to other ACF projects and teams.

One is about the way ACf allowed the local government departments to stay in command of the processes, so that there is now globally a high level of ownership. The second one is about the way the project tried to create local dynamic around the improvement of nutrition through «behaviour change communication» events.

Both best practices are presented in annexe 1, p.27.

## 1. METHODOLOGY.

During this evaluation, the methodology that was originally proposed has been followed quite closely. The evaluation has on the whole been very much based on primary sources of information, and the analysis that was made has been validated through a process of confrontation and debate with major stakeholders and with the project team.

During more than two weeks, there has been intense collaboration between the ACF project team, comprising the DRM expert, the FNS coordinator and the M&E responsible, and the evaluator.

Most of the meetings with stakeholders and DRM and FNS committees were attended jointly, and all field visits were done together.

At national level, both the DCP and the FN Council have been met. At provincial level, only a meeting with the PFNSC of Manicaland has been possible. Their colleagues from Masvingo province were in a weeklong training at the occasion of the evaluation, and could not be met. In total, 7 districts have been visited (Gutu, Bikita, Chiredzi, Chipinge, Mutare, Mutasa, Nyanga) out of the 10 with which ACF worked in this project.

In total, 3 DRM committees at district and ward level were met, as well as seven DFNSCs and representatives of 4 ward level FNSCs. All-in all, five wards have been visited.

Additional meetings took place on an ad hoc basis with a team of leaders of one school health club in Masvingo, with one of the DA's separately, and with the Manicaland chief nutritionist. Two visits were made to vegetable growing «nutrition gardens», and allowed for discussions with fairly large groups of farmers cultivating each six beds there.

Semi-structured interviews were generally used, both in individual meetings as in focus group meetings. The latter occurred mostly at district, ward and village level.

A continuous dialogue took place with the project team, about the information gathered and the provisional assessments made. To a large extent this evaluation has therefore been a participatory reflexion with the project team, and with several of the DFNSCs during the meeting with them. The last days however most DFNSC preferred to hold the evaluation meeting without the presence of the members of the ACF project team. This has probably increased the liberty of the DFNSC members to speak out more at ease, but it closed out the ACF team members from the joint reflexion.

This was partly compensated by a final meeting that was held with the complete ACF project team in Masvingo on Friday 7 November 2014, during which the provisional conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation were discussed fully. So the participatory character of the evaluation as a reflexion and a learning exercise could be restored as much as possible.

Back in Harare a debriefing took place with ACF's country director Karl Riber, and a final debriefing meeting is foreseen for November 24 with ACF's HQ in Paris.

Limitations of this evaluation:

The programme as such is much broader than the relatively limited sections of it that were implemented by ACF.

It is therefore a pity that this evaluation was limited to ACF's part, and did not include the other components, implemented by IRC and IWSD, nor the coordination mechanisms that were practiced amongst the three at the level of the consortium.

The present evaluation exercise feels thus a bit amputated from a larger, more encompassing reality. The vision of an integrated multi-aspect intervention is largely lost. In retrospect, the evaluator believes that it might have been more interesting, probably also to the funder, to assess the global impact, and the sustainability of the achievements of all three actors together, at the same time.

## 2. CONTEXT

Zimbabwe inherited a profoundly colonial social and economic structure, that has evolved after independence, but that has not been changed in its essential nature.

The country's economy is to a very large extent characterized by the strong duality<sup>1</sup> between the modern (large scale) commercial farming, industrial and mining sectors, formerly entirely white-owned and managed, and a formerly entirely non-white «non-commercial» sector, which comprises now the «small scale commercial areas» and the communal areas.

The best land (45 % of the total agricultural land) in regions with higher rainfall had since the end of the 19th century been set aside for the white commercial farmers. At the time of independence, their number was around 1% of the total population. These farmers were well supported by various means (subsidies, research, extension, marketing, infrastructure, etc). The native African population was relocated to what is now called communal areas, generally in more marginal areas, where farming is less productive. These are mainly in the dryer and hotter areas which belong to agro-ecological zones IV and V of Zimbabwe's classification, or in more mountainous areas.

Being relocated and restricted to these marginal areas, where opportunities for successful farming and income earning are few, able-bodied men and women had few alternatives other than becoming cheap labour force for the commercial farming sector, and later also for the upcoming industry.

The two systems were thus essentially linked, and the commercial sector relied -and still relies- heavily on the steady supply of cheap labour force, for which it is not obliged to pay for the reproduction cost, nor for the social costs of «disposing» of old, sick or accidented workers.

This social and economic order corresponds to the global development model set out under British colonial rule in the whole of southern Africa.

Since independence, and notwithstanding a number of efforts undertaken, this global set-up has not suffered fundamental changes. The essence of it is still the dominant scene in the country.

Over the past decennia, a number of positive developments have however taken place in the districts that have communal areas in their territory. The government has made important investments in many areas like public infrastructure, agricultural extension, water supply, health and education, while a number of external agents (UN agencies, international governmental and non governmental organisations) have implemented a high number of generally shorter term assistance and development interventions.

Globally however, the communal areas are still the cheap labour reservoir they were meant to be. They are not areas of good life, but concentration areas of poor families, who are to a large extent dependent for their survival on wage labour, both in Zimbabwe on farms, plantations and other businesses, as in neighbouring South Africa, as contract workers.

Various socio-economic crises, such as the high prevalence of HIV/aids which has a high impact, and the political crisis of 2008 with its accompanying economic meltdown, have further eroded the well-being of the people in the communal areas, especially of the more vulnerable households.

Within this context, ACF worked the past few years in a number of poverty stricken provinces to reduce the then very high levels of malnutrition and of food and nutrition insecurity. As globally during recent years there has been a slight positive tendency in terms of a decrease in malnutrition, the organization now closes its program in Zimbabwe. Also the agricultural season 2013-4 was a very good year, with bumper harvests.

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1 See also Ministry of Lands, document on the landreform programme: [www.lands.gov-zw/landreform-programme](http://www.lands.gov-zw/landreform-programme).



The current programme of which ACF implemented a significant part, was aimed at strengthening local structures for self-sustained prevention and mitigation capacity and activities, geared to both disaster management and prevention of food and nutrition insecurity at household and community levels. The programme was funded by OFDA/USAID to the IRC, which then made subgrant-agreements to both ACF and IWSD.

It was thus a programme aimed at the optimisation of the scarce resources, opportunities and possibilities that exist at local level, and at the strengthening and responsabilisation of local authorities and their appropriate coordination and intervention mechanisms in the two areas that can cause severe setbacks for the wellbeing and the fragile prosperity of the communities in the 10 districts in two provinces that were touched, namely natural disasters and food and nutrition insecurity, which are partly interlinked in their causes.

ACF (as well as IRC and IWSD) worked essentially through local structures at national, provincial and district level, strengthened existing disaster management coordination committees, and helped with the emergence and the strengthening of food and nutrition security committees at district level. A further, mostly internal, dynamic developed afterwards, aiming at the multiplication of such committees at sub-district levels, that is at ward and village levels.

At the time of the evaluation, the various government departments at district and ward level were experiencing a relative degree of scarcity in financial resources. Salaries are not very high, and they are presently being paid with some degree of delay. Funds for allowances, e.g. for work trips to wards and villages in their districts, seem to be less and less available. This creates to a certain extent a context in which the local government staff with whom this project has been implemented, feels at times somewhat discouraged.

### 3. FINDINGS AND THEIR ANALYSIS

In this section, the evaluation questions from the terms of reference, which were further elaborated upon in the inception report, will be used as a reference for the analysis of the main evaluation criteria: effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the results.

#### 3.1. EFFECTIVENESS.

##### 3.1.1. Have the stated project goal, specific objectives and indicators, as shown in the project logical framework, been achieved?

The project goal was defined as : Reduce disaster risk through enhanced community resilience to the effects of drought and floods through disaster risk management activities that enhance agricultural production and food security, improve water and sanitation infrastructure and hygiene practices and increase nutritional uptake.

No indicator was set for this global project goal. Globally however, one can state that ACF's work was a valuable and significant, yet inevitably partial and limited, contribution to a more global effort that is being carried forward by both national government and non-government actors, in partnership with international governmental and non-governmental actors.

The two specific objectives of this project were :

**Specific Objective 1:** improved capacity of institutions and communities to identify hazards, mitigate risks and coordinate risk reduction interventions.

Indicator value set as target : by the end of the program at least 70% of the target beneficiaries are aware of and use mitigation and response strategies related to hazards in their area. This corresponds *roughly* with Sector 1 of the programme.

and **Specific Objective 2:** reduce the underlying risk factors in vulnerable communities.

Indicator value set as target: 8.000 households, or about 40.000 people in vulnerable communities have their resilience to disasters strengthened by the programme.

This improved resilience was to be measured by increased access to safe water, increased agricultural production, improved nutritional uptake and increased household income.

With regard to the **first Specific Objective:**

There are 3 indicators for the activities that correspond with this specific objective:

**- number of trainings on DRM conducted. Target value : 3**

This target value refers to trainings at district level. ACF organized two trainings, and in common agreement IRC took care of the third one foreseen in Nyanga.

At the sub-district level however, many more trainings on DRM have been conducted by this project. The total overview is presented in the table hereunder:

**- number of people trained in disaster preparedness, mitigation and management.**

**Target figure : 9.120 persons.**

The total number of people trained in disaster preparedness, mitigation and management seems to be 7.474. Details: see table hereafter. There is thus a shortfall of 1.646 or 18 %. We can however safely assume that IRC took care of this remaining number by their work in Nyanga district, and that globally the target figure was achieved and even surpassed.

**- % of people trained who retain skills and knowledge after 2 months. Target: 70%.**

Surveys done in Chiredzi and Chipinge districts on a sample of trainees three months after the trainings at ward level, average rates of retention of concepts, knowledge and understanding were noted between 85 and 100%, varying according to the different themes. This indicator was thus largely achieved.

Level and content	Number of trainings at this level by ACF	Total number of participants (ACF's part)	% of participants with retention of knowledge after 2 months
District DRM	2	67	-
Districts, ToT for DRM	1	20 (ACF's districts only)	-
Ward level DRM	27	761	85 to 100%
Village level on DRM	74	6.678	-
School health masters	2	45	-
Totals:	106	7.464	
Target values	3	9.120	70 %
Shortfall :		1.646 or 18%	no

### Conclusion with regard to these indicators:

- globally, a much higher number of trainings has been organized than originally put forward by the target value for that indicator.

- the number of people actually trained at various levels in the 3 districts surpasses the set target.

- the % of participants to the trainings that still remember the essentials after 2 months is much more than the 70% that was put forward as a target.

The knowledge assessment tool that was developed can to a certain extent be questioned. It tends to attach more importance to the correct reproduction of formal DRM related concepts and terminology, which is probably of less practical use, to the detriment of a more practice-oriented, useful understanding of issues, and of the ability to act in the face of disaster risks, which are of course more difficult to measure.

Of these 3 indicators, the first 2 measure the performance of activities, not their results or their impact. Therefore they do not belong in a logical framework.

The third indicator measures results, and is thus the only indicator that really matters.

See also recommendation 5.2., page 27.

### Other (performance) indicators from the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) Plan.

- number of DFNSC meetings on a monthly/bimonthly basis. Target: 10. Achieved: globally there have been 66 meetings by the 10 DFNSCs between December 2013 and October 2014. That means 6,6 meetings per committee during 11 months or on average one meeting every 7 weeks. This means practically bimonthly meetings. Indicator value achieved.

- number of DFNSCs trained on food&nutrition surveillance and early warning, IYCF, food and nutrition security policy, disaster risk reduction, vulnerability assessments. Target: 10, achieved 10, if we leave out the reference to DRR in the indicator.

- number of DFNSCs that develop and use a district profile. Target: 10, achieved: 6 so far. The committee in Chimanimani is seriously lagging behind, due to the prolonged absence of the district chief nutritionist of the MoH, who was seen as a crucial element in the process. He recently returned to his post in the district, so possibly the process can resume and accelerate during the projects' last weeks.

- number of PFNSCs trained on food & nutrition security policy, surveillance and disaster risk reduction. Target: 2. Here two distinct (yet interrelated) things are lumped together: provincial FNSCs and provincial civil protection committees (CPC). Achieved: 2, with respect to FNS.

- number of new Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) committees formed. Target set: 40. Achieved: 27 at ward level (IRC takes care<sup>2</sup> of the remaining 13), and a non monitored number of EPR committees at village level, as a result of local initiative.

- number of ward-level EPR plans developed and disseminated to targeted communities. Target: 40. Achieved 27 only, but in common agreement IRC does the remaining 13.

- number of school health clubs trained in disaster risk reduction. Target : 20. ACF trained 45 school health masters, who all lead school health clubs in their schools. This performance indicator has thus largely been surpassed.

**Specific Objective 2:** Reduce the underlying risk factors in vulnerable communities. Indicator value set as target: 8.000 households, or about 40.000 people in vulnerable communities have their resilience to disasters strengthened by the programme. This improved resilience is to be measured by increased access to safe water, increased agricultural production, improved nutritional uptake and increased household income. For ACF, this corresponds to its work under Sector 3: Agriculture and Food Security.

ACF's work with regard to this specific objective 2 is however limited to:

- the support given to 10 community vegetable gardens in Chipinge district, including the healthy harvest training with an improved cooking component. People reached number at least  $10 \times 36 = 360$ .

- the support given to training in IYCF at various levels: numbers of people touched by the project:  $84 + 98 = 182$ . The number of families to whom the VHW gives advice and training should still be added tot his figure.

- the support given to the promotion of improved nutritional and cooking habits, through the behaviour change communication events. Total number of people reached is at least 219 through food fairs ( $87 + 41 + 51 + 120$ ), plus those attending 3 other events.

So the total number of people altogether reached in relation to nutrition is at least  $360 + 182 + 219 = 761$ .

In the PME plan, only three indicators can be found that refer to ACF's work. None of these corresponds to the four ways that were indicated to measure the improved resilience of the targeted 8.000 households. See also recommendation 5.2. on the quality of the indicators of this project, p. 27. The 3 indicators for ACF are:

### **1. projected increase in number of months of food self sufficiency due to agricultural input for beneficiary households**

It is very difficult to assess such an increased nutritional self sufficiency based on own household food production, because ACF is not directly involved<sup>3</sup> in activities at this level. As ACF's work focused more on the strengthening of the coordination and improved effectiveness of the work of the various decentralised government officials (including the VHW), in the framework of the respective food and nutrition security committees, this may have had a more indirect impact on the farming practices of households, in terms of conservation agriculture, the choice to plant more drought resistant crops, the use of the makonda system<sup>4</sup> of land preparation and other related techniques, a certain level of change in nutritional habits that increase the value of the food taken, especially for infants young children, and a certain level of changes in habits in the area of hygiene and sanitation.

<sup>2</sup> This division of tasks does not correspond to the terms of the subgrant agreement between IRC and ACF. There are several more differences between this agreement and the real division of tasks, that were never officially recorded.

<sup>3</sup> In common agreement with the IRC, ACF has not embarked on supporting farmer communities or groups with market linkages, notwithstanding the fact that this was foreseen in the agreement between IRC and ACF

<sup>4</sup> See further under point 3.2.2., p.15.

The IRC, by means of its promotion of VSLAs in function of agricultural development, should be able to identify a more direct impact of its work on a possible increase in food self sufficiency months in the households.

At most this evaluation can say something about the 10 vegetable gardens that ACF supports since a couple of years in Chipinge district. These have been further supported in the framework of this project, which is a bit exceptional<sup>5</sup>, as the major focus of this programme is on capacity building.

In all these gardens, the produce effectively supports the completion and diversification of the food intake of the households involved. These are typically gardens of 40x40m, divided into 36 rows of 6 beds each, for 36 families, established (for free) by ACF in an earlier project. Generally, this number is small as compared to the existing number of HH in the village. Most excluded households are said to be very interested in also joining this vegetable growing opportunity. So it is effective and relevant, but with a high % of «exclusion».

In the case of one of the gardens that were visited, the Mudirangebetu garden, all produce is consumed locally, as access to markets is almost inexistent. Markets are too far, and transportation in taxis proved to be too expensive to be profitable.

The gardeners buy their seeds themselves, and are not (any more) heavily reliant on any project or on ACF. There is thus a fair chance of a relative degree of sustainability. Most probably other NGO's or donors will include ACF's 10 gardens in future support programmes, so as to allow for their extension and possibly also new additional water points here and there, because current water supply capacity seems to be generally too small in relation to the needs of all households in the villages.

**2. Number of ward level cadres trained on IYCF and actually conducting sessions.** The target was 75, the actual number trained is 92. It is unclear whether all of them «are actually conducting sessions». Probably most do, more or less regularly.

**3. Number of VHW trained on IYCF.** Target was 75, actually trained is 84.

These two latter indicators are about performance of activities, not about outcome. The first one is really the one that matters, but ACF's work has hardly any link to it.

By way of **conclusion**, it can be said that ACF's work :

- corresponded well to, and even surpassed most of the performance indicators
- does in practice not correspond at all to the desired first outcome of section 3, on reducing the average number of months of the «hunger gap» in vulnerable households.
- contributed to an increase in capacity at district and ward levels. This capacity can however not easily be measured or assessed. With regard to natural disasters at district and ward levels, trained committees are in place at various levels, and some of them are taking action at local problems, e.g. gully stopping.

With regard to FNS, the picture is more complicated. Some of the district FNS committees are robust and active, others are still quite weak and uncertain. See also the analysis made hereafter with regard to impact and sustainability, p. 20-24.

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<sup>5</sup> These gardens are not mentioned in the original IRC application, nor in the subgrant agreement IRC-ACF.

### **3.1.2. Is the implementation approach adequate to reach the general objective? What alternative approach would have been more effective ?**

The general objective was defined as: To reduce disaster risk through enhanced community resilience to the effect of droughts and floods through

- (i) disaster risk management activities that enhance agricultural production and food security,
- (ii) improve water and sanitation infrastructure and hygiene practices and
- (iii) increase nutritional uptake.

As the evaluation was limited to ACF's part of the multiactor programme only, it was not possible to make an overall assessment of the global implementation approach as a multi-faceted programme.

It was noted though that, with regard to the global implementation approach :

- ACF positioned itself clearly in a supporting role, leaving leadership roles in the various processes to government department officials, at the various levels. While it allowed government departments to take the lead, it was however always there to support. This was very much appreciated by all government stakeholders.
- while ACF's part of the programme might look as too sectorial in its approach, limiting itself to a few aspects and geographical areas, it was though very complementary to the other parts of the programme that were implemented by its partner IWSD and by IRC, the consortium leader. On the ground, there appears to have been a considerable degree of collaboration and coordination. The risk of fragmentation, and loss of coherence, due to a division of tasks between the 3 implementing organisations, based on capacities and experience and on practical considerations, may well have been avoided through a lot of formal and informal coordination. This latter aspect was however not evaluated.

At first sight, no immediately available alternative approaches were identified that could have been more effective. Several suggestions have however been made by various stakeholders regarding specific aspects of the project. These have been incorporated in the recommendations to ACF for future projects, pages 27-28.

### **3.1.3. Identify challenges that ACF was confronted with, and assess how they were overcome.**

During the implementation of this project, the ACF team met with the following difficulties and constraints:

1. The short timeframe, within which this project had to be implemented, has put a severe stress on the team. As they had always to accommodate to the availability and the agendas of the stakeholders, this has made work very difficult.
2. There was quite often a lack of commitment of the district food and nutrition security committee members. There were those who understood and saw the advantages of it, but for several others the new committees were often looked upon as initiatives that brought them just more work.

As in general projects implemented by foreign NGOs are seen as sources of allowances for civil servants, after many years of exaggeration in this practice, the reduction of allowances and other advantages to the very minimum<sup>6</sup> is not encouraging the stakeholders at district level. ACF has mostly paid lunches for government staff that went on field trips with them.

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<sup>6</sup> In a context where their own ministries and government department are seriously short of funds, and become increasingly incapable to pay the normally foreseen allowances for work and visits in the wards and villages. Also salaries are being paid with delays.

3. As the project was designed predominantly as a training and capacity building initiative (priority to «software» contributions), without much provisions for concrete tangible interventions («hardware»), this lack of possibilities to support committees at district or ward level with funding for specific initiatives, has taken away possible options to stimulate more the committees that proved less committed. The budgetline for the communication events focused on behaviour change strategies could for instance have been more important. See also the discussion of best practice number 2 on page 24.

4. Government staff are generally used to receive orientations coming from above, and to implement these. So also the new committees tend to wait for instructions. The project wanted them to be more creative and pro-active by themselves, with regard to local situations, needs and opportunities, but such an attitude is not really proper to the culture of most government officials. Especially not for those who still do not fully understand the philosophy and the objective of the FNCSs. One can only hope that the more the committees come closer to the village and household reality, they become more geared to down-to-earth needs and issues.

All of these difficulties were apparently overcome to a very large extent with hard work and flexible attitudes from the side of the ACF project team.

#### **3.1.4. Evaluate the degree of satisfaction with the program in the targeted stakeholders and communities.**

During this evaluation, in all visited provinces, districts and communities, and also at national level, there is generally a high level of satisfaction with the projects implemented by ACF in general and with this project in particular.

It was highly appreciated that ACF positioned itself clearly in a supporting role, leaving leadership roles to government stakeholders at the various levels. ACF also respected the normal procedures of these stakeholders, therefore allowing for a high degree of ownership. This directly leads to higher chances for sustainability for the various outcomes of this project.

At national level, it was stressed that this programme has allowed, as do some other ongoing projects, the implementation of national policy in some of the most vulnerable and critical areas of two provinces, both in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, as of Food and Nutrition Security. Without ACF's support, this would not have been possible.

#### **3.1.5. Have M&E lessons been integrated in the implementation of the project ? Were sufficient systems in place to ensure adequate integration of lessons learned ?**

This project has been implemented during a too short period of time. Capacity building and strengthening are processes, that take their time, as people first familiarize themselves with concepts and then move to gradually put them into practice in their own context, according to the priorities and the constraints dictated by that context.

Due to the very short timeframe, ACF has but to a limited extent been able to coach such «putting policy into practice»-processes in the districts, and not at all at ward level. The monitoring and evaluation system of the project has furthermore put priority on the monitoring of a number of relevant indicators, and much less on the identification of «lessons learned». There has thus been very little if no integration of M&E lessons into the implementation of the project.

As the same project team had been working in earlier projects in several of the same districts and provinces, they have however been able to integrate lessons learned from those earlier projects in the implementation mode of this project.

One of these is the inclusion of village level DRM committees now, which were not foreseen in an earlier pilot project that was implemented in Chipinge in 2012. Also the inclusion of the provincial level for DRM is a new feature as compared to earlier projects.

The advanced level of capacities and ownership demonstrated by the district DRM and FNS committees of Chipinge at present, clearly indicates that sufficient time is needed for processes of capacity building and development. The solidness of these committees in Chipinge, with whom ACF worked since 2012, contrasts obviously with the relative «newness» of these same committees in the other districts, where work mostly only started early 2014.

## **3.2. IMPACT**

### **3.2.1. Has the programme contributed to improved disaster resilience of the population targeted, and to which extent ?**

**Identify the positive and negative, including unexpected, impacts.**

The project has resulted in the creation of a certain degree of readiness, consciousness, and awareness of disaster risks and the ways to reduce them or mitigate their impact and consequences. This is most probably a significant improvement as compared to earlier situations, though difficult to measure or to assess.

This at district and ward level, and probably also to a certain degree at village authority level.

#### **Positive impacts:**

- the increased attention to disaster prevention, brought about by this project has increased local capacity to analyse, anticipate, mitigate and also most probably, increased capacity to coordinate and to share resources.
- the existence of a plan, in which various actors have assigned roles in case of disaster, however weak or incomplete the first plans may be, is certainly an improvement with earlier situations. Reports on the Tokwe-Mukosi flood tragedy of February 2014 for instance indicated indeed a far too low level of preparedness of the local authorities as to prevention of damage, including loss of life, next to serious shortcomings in the mitigation of the impact.
- the strongest district DRM committee, the one of Chipinge, has even been able to send assistance to the Chivi district when this was struck by the Tokwe-Mukosi dam break disaster. This was an act of highly appreciated solidarity, but also a proof of their increased capacities, after the earlier project implemented there by ACF.
- Chipinge is so far also the only district that has done simulation exercises, to test and upgrade their operational readiness for emergency situations. The Chipinge DRM committee intervened quite promptly when earlier this year a severe road accident occurred, that caused 20 victims.
- the main impact is in a way the presence now of a capacity for looking differently at things, to prepare for prevention and mitigation. This capacity implies the potential for action in the field of prevention, and of mitigation of damage in case of disaster occurrence.

#### **Negative impacts:**

- possibly a certain level of dependency on allowances and stationary and transportation support on the side of the local government officials, has been developed and/or maintained.
- by using pre-established templates, people are tempted to copy a language that is full of official terminology, often very general and thus vague when related to local specific situations. It may tend to become «empty language». The project may have reinforced this tendency to produce «well sounding» but relatively empty reports and plans, for the sake of their superiors. Many plans are indeed difficult to understand for an outsider.

#### **Unexpected impacts:**

No unexpected impacts have been identified.



### 3.2.2. What is the possible long-term impact of the program at individual household level?

- Various in-field water saving and soil conservation techniques, that are being proposed to farmer households by Agritex and other actors, when adopted by a larger part of the HH, may well be very valuable in contributing to increase harvests, or maintain them at a minimal level<sup>7</sup> in case of adverse rainfall, both in HH and communities.

The makomba<sup>8</sup> system of planting in shallow excavations, that collect rainwater and conserve humidity is however not very popular, given the heavy demand of preparation work<sup>9</sup>. It is seen to be something for the poor families, not a technique to be adopted by the better-off farmer families in the communities. For both reasons the scope of its future expansion is probably rather limited.

- increased knowledge (if based on proper understanding, which is a medium to long term process that requires sustained efforts and appropriate pedagogical approaches and support material) at HH level about nutrition, especially for young children and babies, may be of significant importance as a contribution to improving the general growth and health situation of the children in any given community.

- the existence of DRM (disaster risk management) and FNS geared committees at provincial, district and sub-district level (ward and district) will most probably contribute to increase the level of attention of local government structures and of possible external interventions in favour of these three interlinked issues: disaster prevention and mitigation, food security, and nutritional security at HH level.

- the existence of trained committees at village and ward level, that communicate regularly with their corresponding superior levels at district levels, can potentially be instrumental in contributing to giving the rural communities more voice in relation to technical issues. This potential is intrinsically linked to the wider socio-economic-political context, but it is more probable to acquire a voice in technical and disaster or food and nutrition security issues first. Indirectly, such a development can have wider positive effects on the rural communities.

- these trained village/ward level committees function as an additional early warning system for disasters and outbreaks of FNS threatening situations (droughts, failed harvests, animal diseases, ...) next to the presently existing upward communication links proper to each government department. It contributes to the strengthening of the existing surveillance mechanisms.

- a revival of the old Zundera Mambe system is being promoted, in which villages cultivate on a voluntary basis a common field, so as to constitute a minimal cereal stock in a village granary, from which food assistance can be given to the local elderly, sick and vulnerable households. It is unclear to what extent this intention from the government is being met with acceptance or not, by the villagers.

### 3.2.3. Is there sufficient multi-sectorial integration in the conduct of DFNSCs?

There certainly is an important level of multi-sectorial integration in the composition of the DFNSCs. During most of the encounters held at the occasion of this evaluation, a

<sup>7</sup> In case small grain cereals have been sown under low rainfall conditions, as their drought resistance is combined with a lower productivity level.

<sup>8</sup> This is a local adaptation of the zai shallow planting excavations that are generally in use in the Sahel area. There another type of planting hole is also used, namely the «demi-lunes» (or half-moon) shallow planting holes/excavations. These excavations are wider (1m to 1,5 m diameter half moons), also shallow, and are planted with a balanced mix of cereal (sorgho or millet), and cowpea. In Zimbabwe, the monoculture concept dominating, there is only one crop sown in any given field prepared with makomba planting excavations. Fertiliser and manure can be added in microdosis per planting hole if the farmer can afford these. This system is used both for cereals and pulses.

<sup>9</sup> It is nicknamed diga-ufe, meaning dig-and-dia. See also: Opportunities for optimization of in-field water harvesting to cope with changing climate in semi-arid smallholder farming areas of Zimbabwe. By George Nyamadzawo (Env. Sc., Bindura Univ. of Sc.educ.), Menas Wuta (Dept Soil Sc. and agri. engineering, Univ. Zimb. Harare), Douglas Gumbo (idem), and Justice Nyamangara (ICRISAT Bulawayo),, 2013, SpringerPlus, online document.

generally high number of departments was represented. Sometimes also ngo's, but never businessmen, though they were said also to be members.

This broad composition should normally transpire in the conduct of these committees.

They are however fairly new. So that it is difficult to analyse closer their functioning.

This evaluation could not go into the assessment of this level. On a one day visit to a district, only an overall assessment and appreciation of their nature and of their functioning has been possible.

Much depends also on the varying capacity level of the people who are actually member of these committees, on their levels of understanding and motivation, and mainly of committment.

Pooling of resources, like transport opportunities, is at present not really explicitly at the forefront of their ambitions.

There is however a clear improvement in the flow of information between government departments, resulting in better mutual knowledge and coordination. This avoids duplication of efforts, and intervention plans are said to be improved as a result.

### **3.2.4. Was the timeframe sufficient to fully operationalize DRM and nutrition practices in the communities supported ?**

The timeframe of this project has certainly been insufficient to fully operationalize DRM and nutrition practices in the communities of the wards and districts that were touched. This in fact requires a medium-term committment with gradual phasing out of training and coaching components, and a corresponding timeframe.

This project practically only allowed for the strenthening of two provincial DRM and FNS committees, the training of two district committees on DRM and of ten on FNS, and the training of a number of people on IYCF practices.

Consolidation of the training and the functioning of all these individuals and committees could ideally take place through a coaching process, conducted by an external body. Ideally this role could be taken up by the provincial DRM committee and the provincial FNCS, possibly supported by an international ngo that can bring in methodological support and if needed an extra bit of expertise.

Especially so in periods of actual disaster events and/or of an upsurge of nutrition problems. A coaching-from-the distance position, not intervening with authority but available for counselling, advice and support if needed, could have been an option, were ACF not closing down their programme in Zimbabwe, even before the very end of this project.

Possibly organisations like World Vision can, if they have a sufficiently strong «capacity building» vision and skills, fulfil this role after ACF's withdrawal. WV, Plan International, CARE International and Johanniter Hilfswerk, organisations that all seem to be willing to actively support DFNSCs, will probably only be able to do so to a certain extent and only in those districts and wards where they are now operational.

Certain activities require a longer term, before impact is realized at a sufficiently significant scale. Changes in nutritional patterns is one of such fields, where longer term sustained promotion by various approaches and strategies at the same time is needed, before lasting change can take take place. Food habits especially are very tough to change, in all cultures, and can take generations.

On the one hand, tradition is still strong here, with its food preferences, and with the mothers-in-law counselling the young mothers into often not so optimal patterns of infant feeding.

From modernity's side on the other hand, there is the impact of publicity and its promotion of junk-commercial foodstuff that is conducting its own campaigns, mostly not at all promoting healthy food uptake: generally it is about food with lack of vitamins and excess of saturated

fat and sugar. So these counterforces try to change people's traditional food patterns in favour of the debatable interests<sup>10</sup> of the food industry.

The DRM aspect is probably the only one that fits rather well in the given timeframe, at least with a view on it as a pilot project. Provincial and district disaster prevention and mitigation committees have been created and trained, and in several places even at local ward and village level there are now disaster prevention committees that are active in assessing risks, working out responses and prevention mechanisms, and organising their implementation, mostly with local means and with modest impact, while actively looking for additional external resources.

### **3.2.5. What is the relevance of DFNSCs in coordinating timely food and nutrition problem identification and their capacity in early warning / surveillance at district level ?**

The relevance of the DFNSCs for the coordination of timely food and nutrition problem identification and for contributing to surveillance and early warning in their district, is very high. The DFNSCs, which are generally a subcommittee on food and nutrition of the District Development Committee<sup>11</sup> (DDC), are the ideal forum for information sharing between different government department, each from its own surveys and field staff reports, for developing a common understanding, and for joint seeking of complementarity and pooling of resources and efforts to optimize impact, guided by a vision that poverty, malnutrition and food insecurity are multi-faceted issues with multiple interrelated underlying causes.

Some DFNSCs are struggling to get a better idea of what they are actually being expected to do in practice. The Bikita committee, that started well after the others<sup>12</sup>, sent a delegation of four members to neighbouring Zaka district on a study visit, so as to learn from their experience. They also are not very sure of the purpose of creating ward level FNS committees. Apparently, their training process was not enough to convince all members sufficiently. On the other hand, the internal debates in the committee are very positive in that they enhance local ownership to a very large extent.

Time was too short in this project to really see the effective functioning of these structures at their various levels. The most newly set up co still have difficulties in understanding well purpose and meaning. The creation of the DFNSC comes to them as an externally pushed phenomenon and dynamic.

Some DFNSCs may well appear to be «empty boxes» in the near future, with a tendency to formalism and compliance to instructions from the higher up authorities, but without proper self-steering dynamics geared at local problems and their solutions.

The transition from an initially externally defined agenda (work out a district profile, make a plan, organize a behaviour change event, etc) towards an internally defined agenda based on local priorities, is often not yet fully completed.

The trained village and ward level committees function as an additional early warning system for disasters and outbreaks of FNS threatening situations (droughts, failed harvests, animal diseases, ...) next to the presently existing upward communication links proper to each

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<sup>10</sup> See the dominant publicity for excess-sugar containing softdrinks, the tendency of practically all fastfood outlets to serve cheap, thus lowquality excess-fat food, the general presence of publicity for tobacco, though a recognized health hazard of prime importance, the publicity for alcoholic drinks as beer and chibuku, associating their consumption with masculinity, and so forth.

<sup>11</sup> The DFNSCs thus not only revive the old-time and defunct Food Security Management Teams of the years 80 and 90, but also substitute and incorporate existing DDC subcommittees on food security in some districts, e.g. in Chipinge.

<sup>12</sup> In June-July 2014

government department. It contributes to the strengthening of the existing surveillance mechanisms.

It was also relevant to combine both DRM and FNS into one project. There has been a lot of mutual correspondance. Also the «Ensure»-programme of World Vision in Chipinge combines several thematic approaches into one global multi-aspect intervention.

### **3.2.6. Was the partnership well-coordinated to realize impact ?**

The partnership between the IRC, ACF and the IWSD, that each contributed with the implementation of a share of the planned activities of this programme, seems to have been rather efficient and effective on the ground.

This aspect of the programme could however not be deepened out fully at the occasion of this evaluation, as it was not part of its ToR, since these focused exclusively on the component implemented by ACF. Later evaluations of IWSD's and IRC's parts of the programme will hopefully allow to analyse more specifically this aspect, which is of crucial importance.

At least on the ground, there has been close collaboration and even sharing of operational bases between ACF and IWSD. This points to a high degree of formal and informal coordination and seeking for complementarity. The nature of the work to a large extent obliged to that, since for instance both worked in Chipinge and Chiredzi in the same wards and with the same VHW, so that could not be done in an uncoordinated way. In a similar way, the training of 45 school health masters in DRM interfered strongly in IWSD's sphere of work. Globally, the three consortium partners worked in a well coordinated way in the same 40 wards that were identified jointly with the local authorities according to priority criteria. The EPR plans at ward and village level have guided IRC's programme by identifying priorities for waterpump and borehole repair, and have equally served to indicate IWSD areas of priority in terms of sanitation and hygiene efforts.

The practical division of tasks in the field has been somewhat different than what was agreed upon in the agreement between ACF and IRC. There have thus been later amendments to this sub-grantee agreement, that remained largely informal. These differences are the following:

- the duration of ACF's work is three months shorter than foreseen
- ACF's responsibilities for market linkages and for supporting VSLAs under Sector 3 seem to have been cancelled somewhere. The IRC took them over entirely. ACF's field team has expressed regret over the lack of contact between the VSLAs in the villages, and their work to promote improved nutrition. There was no link or coordination at all.
- ACF's target for EPRs was to achieve these in 40 wards, according to the contract. In reality however IRC took over 13 wards<sup>13</sup> of this target figure, leaving only 27 for ACF.

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<sup>13</sup> IRC took over the DRM work in Nyanga district from ACF, mainly for practical reasons: it had the capacity and could easier do so because of an existing MoU with the Nyanga district, while ACF had none. MoU's take quite a while before being agreed upon and signed.

### **3.3. SUSTAINABILITY.**

#### **3.3.1. How succesful were the activities in strengthening the capacity of local agencies, organizations and individuals ?**

The activities undertaken by ACF were important and essential to get the two types of district committees started. Gradually, as these committees develop a common understanding based on a more integrated way of looking at problems that exist at local level in their district, a process develops whereby the agenda of these committees evolves from externally determined by the provincial level committee and by the ACF team (they were given tasks to make an EPR, make a district profile, make a workplan, to put up a behaviour change communication event, to train ward level committees, etc), towards a more internally generated agenda (with priorities like gully erosion stoppage, increased attention to supporting nutrition gardens, promotion of small grain cereals, etc.

These processes take their time, and depend to a certain extent on local circumstances and conditions. There is thus a certain level of variation among the various districts. Where the process started last, like in Bikita, there has not been enough time for a sufficient internalisation of the dynamics.

A comparison of the way the various districts organised, or not, behaviour change communication events as proposed by ACF, illustrates this variation in capacity to locally design and implement activities that make sense and a difference.

The degree of success of the behaviour change communication (BCC) events indeed varies widely. One committee, the one of Chimanmani, has not yet organized its event. Of the other 9 district FNS committees that were provided with 500 \$ each, four used the money to organize the set up and training of some ward level FNS committees. This is in part because these DFNSCs had no other money to work with, so they redirected this fund to what they perceived as their priority.

The remaining five organized real «behaviour change communication strategy» events of various nature:

Two organized food fairs, in which respectively 7 and 51 participants prepared improved balanced dishes from local foods, that were offered to visitors to taste, with accompanying cooking advice. The visitors numbered respectively 41 and 120.

The three remaining districts organized events of a different nature, in which songs, drama, and poetry were performed in village settings, mostly at the hall of a local chief, in order to convey messages around balanced food, behaviour changes, and/or exclusive breastfeeding. Also school children were associated to these events. One event coincided with the national day on Breastfeeding, and was therefore an Exclusive Breastfeeding promotion day. This type of events drew several hundred of participants.

#### **3.3.2. Was the partnership with DFNSCs and CPU (civil protection unit, national level) relevant?**

These two partnerships were essential to the project.

With DCP, the Department of Civil Protection of the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, collaboration has been straightforward and intense, and focussed mainly on the training of Disaster Management Committees at provincial and district levels. This was a real partnership, as ACF strenghtened the abilities of the DCP to go ahead with the creation and training of such provincial level Disaster Management

Committees. ACF did not take the lead in these trainings, but supported with financial, logistical and transport resources.

This partnership was very relevant and correctly conceived.

The other partner at national level was the Food and Nutrition Council FNC. ACF's work in this project assisted the FNC to create the two additional provincial FNS committees. These were formed and trained by means of the resources (and expertise) brought in by ACF. This partnership was also crucial and very relevant.

**Relevance:** the FNC in Harare is quite satisfied with the project and with the collaboration with ACF in general. ACF projects in recent years, including this one, have been pilot for them to implement the establishment of DFNSCs, train them, and get them into regular functioning. ACF's DFNSCs and PFNSCs were among the first to be launched<sup>14</sup> and this experience provided valuable lessons learned.

ACF was however much more active at the level of the 10 districts touched by this project. Here, they supported more directly, but always in a joint approach with the two provincial PFNSCs.

Their relative «weight» is therefore more important at this level, and, at the time of the evaluation, several DFNSC were not feeling very comfortable with the imminent end of the ACF project. ACF's departure may severely hamper their activities, and reduce their dynamic and pro-activity, they fear.

This partly due to their scarcity of resources (transport, facilitation of trainings, allowances), but also to a certain level of uncertainty as to the tasks to be performed by them. This may reveal an uncertainty about the correct vision, understanding and perhaps also a certain lack of commitment.

FNC needs ngo's as partners to push/motivate the launching of local FNSCs. Of the 60 districts in Zimbabwe, at present 24 have established DFNSCs, and more 15 are in the process of being launched. That makes 39. There are a few other NGOs like World Vision that are active in DRM, Foodsec, nutrition and WASH, and they actively follow the DFNSC approach.

### **Was it an appropriate way to ensure sustainability of the activities implemented by ACF ?**

These partnerships are certainly a very appropriate contribution to ensure sustainability of the whole process of creation of and capacity building in the various district and sub-district committees that have been set up so far, as well as for those that are still in the process of being created by local endeavour.

It is however not a sufficient condition for sustainability. Other factors and elements enter in this respect:

- local interest, commitment, motivation and capacity, especially among key members of the various structures.
- minimal level of resources for functioning
- idem for investment, e.g. for repair and maintenance of waterpumps and gardens, also for new boreholes, etc.

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<sup>14</sup> Unicef supported the launching of the very first ones, a bit ahead of ACF.

### 3.3.3. Are the necessary frameworks/plans in place useful for the sustenance of the project ?

ACF worked to assist in the creation, the training, and the coaching of the first regular activities of the DFNSCs.

The existence of frameworks and plans is of course very useful, they provide orientation, guidance to these new structures. The 2014 plans were however of a debatable quality. These were made up somewhere in the course of the year as tasks the new committees had to perform, next to the drawing up of district profiles. This was part of their initial, externally driven, agenda.

The plans mostly follow a general template that follows closely the 7 commitments in the national food and nutrition security policy. On the one hand this provides guidance, which is positive. On the other hand, this seems to lead to the use of empty language, copy-paste style, often not very concrete, not down-to-earth. At most the plans mention sensible intentions, which are rarely «operational», mostly not even quantified.

Most of the time important, perhaps unrealistic, contributions (also resources) are expected from NGO's that are working in the district.

At the time of the evaluation, not one district council had been preparing a work plan for 2015. It is therefore not at all certain whether, after the end of ACF's intervention, the dynamic is likely to continue in all districts. In one instance, a DFNSC vice chairman was very explicit about his doubts for the immediate future: «*without resources, what are we going to plan for ?*» In other districts like Chipinge and Mutare on the other hand, there seems to be sufficient local ownership, capacity and dynamic for them to continue, and to draw up appropriate plans. The presence of committed NGO's in the district makes a significant positive difference.

After ACF's exit, it seems therefore highly recommendable for the IRC to step in during the first months of 2015, so as to ensure a minimal continuation of guidance and support. Recommendation 5.1. page 27.

### 3.3.4. To what extent will the benefits of the project continue after donor funding has ceased ? Ascertain factors that are likely to influence the success/failure of the sustainability of the project initiatives.

The hoped for future benefits of this project consist in various elements:

- continued existence and optimal effective functioning of the various committees of two types that have been launched (and which continue to be multiplied at local sub-district levels), namely the ones on disaster risk management and those on food and nutrition security;
- the continued practice of making risk analysis, conceive of actions to ensure proper prevention measures and mitigation of the expected negative impacts, joining information and resources and joint action planning. This is the content of the effective functioning mentioned above.
- a continued and increasingly integrated way of looking at both nutrition and food insecurity at household and community levels, leading to appropriate and jointly performed interventions to prevent and to mitigate the effects of such insecurity situations.
- a gradually spreading and more effective behaviour change in terms of nutrition and cooking habits, especially with relation to infants and young children feeding.
- a gradually spreading and adoption of a number of farming techniques that favour soil and water conservation, yet allowing for sufficient yields to make farming households prosperous: short cycle small grains rather than mostly maize, various ways of in-field rainwater saving and conservation techniques, though labour intensive,

- an increased level of attention for and investment in local community gardening initiatives, which are vital for the upgrading of nutrition at household level. Most probably these benefits will continue to exist in part of the districts, while possibly fading away in others.

#### **Factors to influence the sustenance of such continued benefits :**

- ownership of the process is at times significantly high at local level (district, ward, village), both for DRM, maybe a bit less for FNCS. At national and provincial level ownership seems to be OK, but that may not be sufficient to guarantee an effective transmission of dynamics to the local levels. With authority only it won't work. It takes time to make the shift from the initial externally steered agenda, plan and dynamic to an internally generated agenda and dynamic.

- other capable and willing actors are often present in the field at local level. As they are part of the local DRM and/of FNS committees, they may, when needed, be prompted or requested to take over and/or continue the facilitating and enabling role of ACF, so as to (1) provide essential minimal resources for various activities related to DRM and/or FNS to take place (2) provide a dynamic, a reason of being and of coming together for these committees, in case the local authorities and/or committee leaders/chairs or prominent members do not by themselves come up with sufficient dynamism, motivation and commitment. This will give the DFNSCs more time and opportunities to develop their own dynamic.

#### **Factors to influence failure in the sustainability of the DRM and DFNS committees :**

- in some places, local staff may partly be of insufficient educational and technical capacity level. Vision, understanding and ownership may be lacking to a certain extent, and therefore also commitment. Much depends on the DA, the assistant DA, and on the chair and the vice-chairs, who appear mostly to be people with a higher level training.

- in some places, resources may really be lacking for effective activities on the ground. This does of course not make coordination impossible, rather much more needed. But it may seriously affect the level of activities and local dynamic.

- the shortness of the exposure to proposals for behaviour change. If the efforts are not continued, any initial effect obtained up to now may well fade away rapidly.

- the district committees foresee drawbacks with regard to the absence of the ACF cars of the project, which have been of particular importance for the implementation of various activities, particularly the training of committees at ward level.

- the too high reliance on voluntary work, particularly from the side of the village health workers may come to cause problems in the future. These VHW are of pivotal importance to the issue of hygiene and sanitation (IWSD), nutrition and food security (ACF), yet they are volunteers for the Ministry of Health, not receiving any compensation other than the social prestige inherent to their function. Not even a means of transport, like a bicycle, have they got in compensation of their efforts, which amount to several days per week on a regular basis.

It is therefore to be expected that the VHW will implement whatever activities and tasks they are requested to perform, but at a rather low rate of engagement/enthusiasm, as they are probably reckoning only on such rewards as social recognition and prestige at local level, the opportunity to learn and be in some ways positively linked to the outer world, and the chances of maybe ever get access to a function or position that brings about financial recompensation, in one way or another (e.g. in the framework of a NGO project).



- the overall adverse conditions and very high natural risks for limited resource-farming and communal living in the marginal areas of Zimbabwe's agro-ecological zones IV and V simply do not allow for important successes as to the improvement of the average levels of vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity. In the best case, success will mean to be able to be a little bit more effective in addressing adversities, problems, hazards, so as to better cope with them, as communities and as households.

Tentative sustainability rating table for the DFNSCs that were visited during the evaluation.

<b>District</b>	<b>Expected sustainability: 1 is low, 5 is high</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Chiredzi	3	This is a rather weak committee, with few or no resources
Chipinge	5	High degree of local ownership and capacities Strong and interested INGOs are present and could contribute
Gutu	4	Significant level of ownership, the pursuance of their priorities in terms of the inclusion of new wards and the support to be given to nutritional gardens will keep them going
Bikita	2	Not yet sufficiently stabilized, still too new
Mutare	5	Strong internal dynamic. Aware of the difficulties ahead. They count on collaboration with Plan-Int.
Mutasa	3	The gardens as priority will provide for a significant internal dynamic. World Vision can probably give support in various forms.
Nyanga	3	Strong intention to continue functioning. Will request assistance from GOAL.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS.

4.1. This project was relevant and appropriate. It enabled the Department of Civil Protection and the National Food and Nutrition Council to create and train a significant number of local committees in ten districts in two provinces, where levels of disaster risk and of food and nutrition insecurity are high. These important structures are now in place, so that their national policies can now effectively be put into practice. It was appropriate to associate the two domains, disaster risk management and food and nutrition security, because these are often quite interrelated.

The two national level partners are very pleased with this project. They valorise it as a crucial contribution to setting up decentralized structures in priority districts, without which it would have been impossible to implement the national policies on Disaster Risk Reduction and on integrated Food and Nutrition Security.

4.2. The project was well implemented, most or all of its indicators have been achieved. See also **recommendation 5.1.** hereafter on the quality of the logframe and the indicators. The national stakeholders at various levels have expressed their high level of satisfaction with the effectiveness of ACF's performance in this project, and with the very good collaboration with ACF in general, and they regret that this collaboration with ACF comes to an end.

4.3. The impact of the project is significant, though not yet fully realized. The project was effective in promoting and conducting the process through which a number of decentralized structures for disaster risk management and food and nutrition security could be set up at district and sub-district level, and were trained.

There is thus a capacity created, which constitutes a potential for futur impact into the lives of households and communities in their respective areas. The result so far is an increased awareness, an increased level of preparation, and here and there the beginning of specific activities, e.g. related to gully stopping or to water saving cultivation techniques in farming. The only area where so far no any direct impact of the project could have taken place at household level, is about nutrition, in those wards and villages where IYCF training and promotion has taken place. This was however not monitored as such.

4.4. The ACF team has been confronted with several important difficulties during the implementation of this project.

The short timeframe, coupled to the large geographical area to be covered, has put a severe stress on the team. They had moreover to accomodate always to the agendas and the availability of provincial and district government department officials, which has made their work quite difficult. See the related recommendations 5.4. and 5.5.

The project was designed to almost exclusively contain components of training and capacity building, and practically no previsions for concrete tangible interventions («hardware»). The context however would have required at least a minimal possibility to overcome local technical problems. On the other hand the budget line for behaviour change communication events was probably a bit too small. See also the discussion of best practice N° 2, page 28. A final category of probles originates in the culture of government staff in Zimbabwe. Firstly government department officials are used to receive orientations from above, and therefore the new committees tend to wait for instructions, rather than rapidly developing an own, local dynamic. Secondly, they generally expect allowances for field trips and work in the wards and villages, while the respective Ministries are less and less able to provide their staff with these lawful entitlements. This has been causing a certain level of disappointment and disencourgement.

4.5. The sustainability of the various committees that were initiated and trained will most probably be relatively high, as to their continued existance and basic functioning. They are indeed being followed up by their corresponding committees at provincial level, who will

normally push the district committees towards the various tasks implied by the national policies on DRR and on integrated food and nutrition security.

Some district committees however, are much weaker than the eldest and strongest ones. That is partly because they are often of recent creation, and still are a bit unfamiliar with the whole set-up and unclear with the tasks expected from them.

The project duration was too short to allow for a successful consolidation phase in the younger and weaker FNS committees. It was not possible to accompany them in getting started with regular functioning, and coaching them minimally.

There is also a structural lack of financial and material means in the government departments at local levels. Without ACF's facilitating role in terms of stationery, lunches, lunch-allowances, and transport, a serious draw-back is to be expected in terms of activities. Especially the plans to create committees at ward and village level, and train them, may well come to an end, as this was to a large extent facilitated and funded by ACF. See also recommendations 5.1 and 5.6 (p. 26 and 27) with suggestions for the last four months of this programme.

4.6. The project paid specific attention to strengthening nutrition, which was very appropriate. An important number of people at local level was trained in «infant and young child feeding» (IYCF). Especially the VHW were trained, as they are crucial and central persons at village level with regard to the changing of nutrition habits of young mothers and households in general. Their well targeted educative work was supported in some wards districts by a few experimental «behaviour change communication» public events on nutrition, which promoted, by means of music, songs, drama and/or cooking demonstrations several relevant and appropriate improvements, like cooking «four star dishes», growing more small grain cereals, and exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months. These latter events were good examples of what is possible, but they remained too much as isolated experiments. See also recommendation 5.3. hereafter.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1. Exit strategy element that are being suggested to ACF with regard to this project/programme, for the month of December 2014 :

- for the coming few months, up to March 2015, ACF should make sure that consortium leader IRC is ready and prepared to take up a sort of watchdog and coaching role for the various committees that ACF leaves behind in a rather weak state. IRC may even consider recruiting ACF's project staff for the first quarter of 2015 for this follow-up work, if their present team lacks capacity for this extra task.

Especially a number of DFNSCs may benefit a lot from some extra coaching and strengthening.

- discuss, in each of the 10 districts, with (some of) the other INGOs that have programmes going on in the field of food security, nutrition and/or water, sanitation and hygiene, including behaviour change, the possibilities for them to -partially or wholly- take over the dynamizing role that ACF has been performing up to now in relation to the local FNS committees. In the 3 districts of Chiredzi, Chipinge and Nyanga this includes the local DRM committees and the VHW, especially in relation to the IYCF-upscaling effort. Such a discussion must be organized in together with the district committee chairman and vice chairmen, and with the DA and assistant DA.

- rewrite the relevant pages of the DRM training manual of the DCP in Shona, into a «guidelines document» for use as a reference document of e.g. 15 pages, for the local committee members at ward and village levels. This guidelines booklet should be both practical and down-to-earth, in simple language and with many drawings and examples.

- similarly, write up a guidelines leaflet for the ward level FNSCs. As more of these sub-district level committees are being created, such a guidelines leaflet can be an additional element of consolidation, of leaving the newly created committees with some kind of a tool, that can provide them with guidance as they seek their way in the near future.

- organize, or suggest to IRC to organize during the first months of next year, some study and exchange visits for core members of especially the youngest and the most insecure DFNSCs to districts where the DFNSC is already older and stronger. Such visits will most probably be eye-openers, allowing a more full understanding of the issues at stake and opening the minds to what is actually possible to do with local means. It will also encourage the visitors to be more self-confident in developing a dynamic of their own, geared to local problems, needs and priorities. Ideally one could even think of a study visit to specific good-example districts in the south of Malawi, where the putting into practice of an integrated food and nutrition security policy seems to be more advanced as yet than in Zimbabwe.

- consider leaving some of ACF's equipment as donation to local DRM and/or DFNSCs or to the national partners DCP and FNC, under the agreement that these remain in Manicaland and/or Masvingo provinces. In the first place means of transport like cars could be considered here, as well as office equipment like computers and printers. This may be a valuable contribution to the continued functioning of the DRM and FNS structures at district and sub-district levels.

#### **Recommendations for future ACF projects:**

5.2. ACF should try to identify and formulate the indicators in the logical framework or in the equivalent PME plan, with some more rigor. In this project they were too often indicators to monitor the degree of performance of activities, which do not normally reflect the results or

the outcome. More effort should be put at finding real output measuring indicators, or as close as possible proxy-indicators.

5.3. ACF has encouraged all ten district FNSCs into setting up behaviour change communication events, destined to motivate the public to modify certain less appropriate cooking, farming and/or infant and child feeding habits. This is very valuable as such, and some of the events proved to be a success in many respects.

But this effort has not enough been solidly prepared. There was no proper behaviour change strategy or programme to underpin or guide these somewhat isolated efforts .

The good example is being given by World Vision's current «Ensure» programme in Chipinge, which did first a «barrier analysis survey» so as to identify the obstacles to recommended changes in behaviour. On the basis of this survey, that identified 11 critical behaviours to be targetted, a behaviour change programme and strategy has been designed. All activities have then to fit in into this multi-faceted strategy, so as to be mutually reinforcing.

In future interventions, ACF may wish to follow a similar methodological approach, when preparing for the promotion of important changes in the deep-rooted cultural patterns of the households and its individual decision makers.

5.4. This action, that was implemented by ACF, was somewhat ill-sized in various respects. Therefore ACF should for future interventions try to plan the size and the duration of the intervention, and the corresponding budget, more in correspondence with the complexity of the tasks at hand. This entails various aspects :

- the geographical area should not be too stretched. This results in project staff being always «visitors» in the supported districts, as they cannot be closely or locally «residing coaches», which is what local people often expect, for easier dialogue and counselling. Project staff may end up spending not enough time in every district.

- the more the geographical area is overstretched, the budget is correspondingly too low.

- the timeframe set out for this programme is probably too short. On top of that, the closure of ACF's programme in Zimbabwe by the end of this year reduces the project implementation period with another three months. Capacity building processes take time. After all main activities have taken place in all districts, to establish and train the committees and get them started, a final period of say an extra six months is ideal for further coaching, consolidation, study and exchange visits, provincial meetings to reflect on experiences so far and on difficulties met, and so on. Gradually, the NGO can then fade away, as the committees are less and less in need of its presence and coaching.

5.5. In a country like Zimbabwe, where public infrastructure in the rural areas is becoming increasingly old and worn out, any intervention in terms of nutrition and food security should at best have a minimal component of financial means to intervene for the repair or expansion of specific crucial «hardware» components, like nutrition gardens or small scale irrigation schemes. To rely on training and capacity building only, is not ideal in this given context.

5.6. ACF's projects should have a relatively clear exit strategy, before even starting the intervention. This exit strategy should then be clarified and adapted as the project is implemented and the exit date comes nearer. Stakeholders should be informed well in advance, and plans should be prepared together. Exit should preferably not be abrupt, but smooth and well prepared.

5.7. ACF may try to be somewhat more transparent as to the resources that are available for use by/for the district committees it is supporting. That would allow a better planning from the side of these committees, knowing what resources are available.

## ANNEXES

## ANNEXE I. Two best practices have been identified during this evaluation.

## Best practice 1:

<b>Title of this best practice</b>	<b>Create opportunities for District Food and Nutrition Security Committees to organize local «behavior change communication» events.</b>
<b>Innovative features and key characteristics</b>	<p>ACF has made available 500 USD per district FNS committee, so as to allow for the setting up of a behaviour change communication event of their choice, destined to a wider public, in function of local needs and preferences. The money was made available in cash without much strict rules and orientations, except for a sound financial report. The expectations were communicated : organize a local event, for as many as possible an audience, in an as much captivating and convincing way, so as to encourage people to change some of their habits on some specific items in the field of nutrition. As such there was much freedom for the local committees to decide which way to go. Half of the districts used the money for events that addressed the local public about nutrition issues that are very relevant locally. Most of these events were public gatherings of a festive nature, with music and a meal for the attendants, at a central place in the ward, often at the home of the local chief.</p> <p>In one case a public event was organized with songs, drama and poetry, to promote of the cultivation of small grain cereals in dry areas, rather than the habitual maize, which tolerates drought rather badly. At that occasion, about a month before the expected onset of the rains, seed packs of sorghum and/or finger millet (rapoko) were distributed for free among interested farmers.</p> <p>In two other cases the central activity was the preparation – and joint tasting- of dishes of cheap and local food, prepared in alternative ways so as to constitute «complete meals», with all four categories of daily required nutrients clearly present, labelled a «four star meal» (starch, proteines, vegetables, fruit). These meals were tasty and were shared for free with all visitors, so as to encourage them to try the same preparations at home, and make a habit of it.</p> <p>In one case, on National Breastfeeding day in Zimbabwe, an event was organized with music, song, poetry, and a meal for everyone, promoting of exclusive breastfeeding of babies up to the age of six months. This event was organized in a rural ward in the district with the lowest percentage of exclusive breastfeeding mothers of the province. The festive atmosphere helped drawing several hundreds of people to attend the event.</p> <p>This opportunity was given to District FNS committees only once.</p>
<b>Practical and/or specific recommendations for roll out</b>	<p>In this project in Zimbabwe , only a few of the district FNS committees have used the money for an event that really wants to promote habits in the field of nutrition. The other half used the money to pay for the costs of organizing and training FNS committees at ward level, which did not really correspond to ACF's intentions.</p>

	<p>One could therefore think of the following suggestions or recommendations to ACF projects who would like to include this good practice in their interventions :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there could have been a moment of sitting together between the DFNSC and ACF about the plans for the event, allowing ACF to give advice, without however removing ownership from the local DFNSC.</li> <li>- the value of a behaviour change communication event increases when it is part of a more coherent campaign, that has a certain duration. Other elements could therefore be added to the behaviour change effort, e.g. improved dish cooking sessions in villages, intensified explanations on food issues to the households in the nutrition gardens, drama sessions in the villages by secondary school children, etc.</li> <li>- externally funded projects could give such an event opportunity regularly, e.g. once or twice every year. Ideally, after the external intervention, local authorities are able to budget for the organization of such events by themselves.</li> <li>- there could have been an joint evaluation e.g. per province, allowing for an exchange of experiences. That would give more ideas so as to improve or to modify the event the next time, in the sense of it having more impact.</li> <li>- ACF could write up some «guidelines sheets» for various types of possible or recommended communication events. These sheets can mention elements to consider during preparation, ideas for setting up things practically, suggestions for making the event attractive to a larger audience, and approaches to improve the impact on the specific target group of each type of event.</li> <li>- globally, this approach does not give too much work to ACF project staff, as ACF's rols should be more of an enabling character, completed with methodological guidance and advice, rather than organizing or supervising.</li> </ul>
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### Best practice 2:

<p><b>Title of this best practice</b></p>	<p><b>Ownership strengthening and promotion by the strict adoption of an exclusively enabling, facilitating and coaching role, while leaving the role of main actor to the national partner organisations.</b></p>
<p><b>Innovative features and key characteristics</b></p>	<p>ACF has supported the further implementation of two national policies in Zimbabwe, by facilitating the creation in two provinces and in 10 priority districts, of local decentralized structures (committees) of local government stakeholders and other relevant local actors, and the training of these committees, and their launching into more regular functioning.</p> <p>ACF has avoided to take up a more important role, thus allowing that the ownership of all processes remained largely in the hands of the national structures, in this case the Department of Civil Protection, with regard to DRM issues, and the Food and Nutrition Council with regard to the national Food and Nutrition Security Policy. Ownership is strong at national and provincial levels.</p> <p>The district committees, both DRM and FNS, are of more recent</p>

	<p>creation and are still somewhat in the process of shifting from an originally externally proposed agenda, to the development of a local dynamic, geared at the solution of local issues and problem situations in the fields of disaster management and food and nutrition insecurity.</p> <p>ACF skilfully allows for such processes to happen, and is available for support and advice, without intervening in a too dominant way. The ACF also is too small for that, and has no permanent team member on the ground in each district. So necessarily it has but a light presence, which is positive in the end, as it obliges the members and leadership of the new committees to actively reflect on their own way forward. This is not an easy process, and especially in the beginning there is much doubt, uncertainty, and questioning.</p> <p>As ACF had come to the end of its engagement in Zimbabwe (the organization withdraws from the country end of 2014), it was clear to all that any local structure that was supported, should be strong enough by the end of the project, to stand by itself and work towards the issues that are at the core of its tasks largely by its own insights and means.</p> <p>Probably this circumstance has helped ACF to implement this enabling, advisory and coaching approach correctly.</p>
<p><b>Practical / specific recommendations for roll out</b></p>	<p>To manage a project the way ACF has done in Zimbabwe requires firstly a clear vision on your role as a temporary supporting outsider, and a fair understanding of the capacities, strengths and weaknesses of the government departments and/or structures that are your national partners in the joint effort.</p> <p>It is not everywhere possible the way it was implemented in this case.</p>



## II. DAC based rating table

Criteria	Rating (1 low, 5 high)					Rationale
	1	2	3	4	5	
Impact			x			The impact of the project has so far been mainly the existence of local committees and a certain level of capacity, thus mainly the establishment of a <b>potential</b> for (future) coordination, sharing of information, and developing a common understanding so as to prepare for improved actions in the fields of disaster risk management and food and nutrition insecurity. There has been little or no impact so far on household or community level.
Sustainability				x		This is a central issue. Most probably the various committees will continue to exist at provincial, district and ward levels. Their functioning however may well be very variable in the near future, according to differences in local capacity, vision, and dynamics. In some districts therefore, there may well be a serious setback after ACF's withdrawal. All these committees will have to function in an environment that is characterized by a severe shortage in financial resources on the side of the government. The sustainability of the of the impact of the various trainings on nutrition will depend on these being continued over the next years, as the changing of nutritional habits is a slow process.
Coherence				x		The project was probably a bit too ambitious in its geographical scope. Budget was perhaps a bit low, while the time foreseen for its implementation proved too short. A phasing out period of another 3 to 6 months could have allowed for more consolidation of the weakest half of all committess created, by a process of coaching.
Coverage			x			Coverage is not complete, was not the objective. It was to start up a process, that is to be carried forward in intensity, and scope by the local provincial and district committees of the two types (disaster management and food and nutritioin secu).
Relevance/ appropriate- ness				x		This was a very relevant project, that was conceived and implemented in a most appropriate way, in the sense that ACF essentially gave a strong contribution to the implementation of national policy in the fields of DRM and FNS.
Effectiveness					x	All tasks were performed, all indicators of the logical framework have been achieved. The team has worked very hard in the short timespan that was given.
Efficiency				x		This project has globally been implemented in an efficient way. This aspect was however less thoroughly analyzed.

### III. List of people met during the evaluation, and overview of visits made

#### Individual meetings:

Mpho Chiringa, ACF programme manager, Masvingo  
 Zenzo Mketiwa, acting head of the ACF Masvingo base  
 Macdonald Tandi, DRM responsible of the programme for ACF  
 Ulilia Chamisa, ACF M&E officer of this project  
 Nathalie de Roubin, administrative coordinator ACF Harare  
 Kudzai Mukundoka, programme officer, Food and Nutrition Council, Harare  
 Mr. Betera, DCP, Harare  
 Irvine Siyafa, IRC programme focal point, Mutare.  
 Jeff Musamarla, IWSD, Harare (in the absence of Mrs. Henrietta)  
 Ackmore Muchemwa, IWSD field officer based in Chiredzi  
 Rangandu Muchipe, IWSD field officer based in Chipinge  
 Mr. Nyede, assistant DA Chiredzi  
 Mrs. Clara Muzenda, District administrator Chiredzi  
 Mr. Edgar Senza, DA in Chipinge  
 Mr. Freeman Mavhiza, assistant DA in Chipinge

#### Group discussions held and visits made:

- In Chiredzi: meeting with 6 members of the Chiredzi district FNCS
  - In Ward 25 in Chiredzi: 4 village heads, 1 councillor and 10 village health workers.
  - In Chipinge: 10 members of the district DRM Committee of Chipinge
  - also 13 members of the district FNS committee of Chipinge, with Charles Mhandu (Agritex)
  - Visit to Kondo, ward 16 in Chipinge, meeting with seven ward DRM committee members.
  - Visit to ward 22 in Chipinge, Mukhuyu. Meeting with seven local ward FNS committee members and visit to their nutrition garden
  - Visit to the Mudirangebetu nutrition garden in ward 4, meeting with 28 vegetable growers.
  - In Gutu : 9 members of the district food and nutrition security committee
  - In Goko High school near Birchenough Bridge : Dhliwayo Gift, deputy head master, and three teachers who are leaders of the school health club: Moyana Doreen (trained by ACF), Gloria Sithole and Gift Makhase.
  - In Bikita : meeting with the DFNSC: 11 members present.
  - In Mutare: meeting with the provincial chief nutritionist Mr. Gomora, together with the Chimanimani nutritionist Mr. Libery.
- Meeting with the PFNSC, 7 members present.  
 Meeting with the DFNSC: 6 members present amongst whom the acting DA.
- In Mutasa: meeting with the Mutasa DFNSC: 23 members present.
  - In Nyanga: meeting with DFNSC : 12 members present.
  - In Gotegote health centre, ward : meeting with Mr. Sariri Mlambo, nurse in charge, member of the ward FNCS.

Final meeting with the ACF project team in Masvingo: Mpho, Macdonald and Ulilia on 7/11.  
 Debriefing session with country director Karl Riber in Harare on 10 November.

In total, 173 persons have been met and interviewed. Totals per category are:

- 4 ACF project staff + country director
- 4 staffmembers of the consortium partner organizations IRC and IWSD
- 2 national level stakeholders
- 8 provincial stakeholders (in Manicaland only)
- 94 district level stakeholders: members of 8 DFNSCs, of one DDRM committee and some DA's and assistant DA's.
- 58 ward and village committee members
- 3 secondary school teachers, responsables of a school health club.

**IV. Terms of Reference of this evaluation.**



**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

For the External Evaluation of ACF's

**Building Disaster Resilient Communities in Masvingo and  
Manicaland Provinces, Zimbabwe**

Programme Funded by  
**USAID/ Office for Development Assistance**

Contract Reference  
**AID-OFDA-G-13-00162**

**September 2014**

## 1. DETAILS OF THE EVALUATION

### 1.1. Key Evaluation Dates

Expected Start Date:	3 November 2014
End Date:	30 November 2014
Submission of Draft Report	23 November 2014
Submission of Final Report	28 November 2014

### 1.2. Language of the Evaluation

Language Requirements for the Evaluation:	English & Shona (Desired)
Language of the Report:	English

### 1.3. Workplan & Timetable

Activities	Working Days
Documentation Review	1
HQ Briefing (skype)	0.5
Travel to Zimbabwe	1
Briefing Mission, review of documents and preparation of field work	2
Travel from Harare to Masvingo	1
Field work & meeting stakeholders in the field	8
Travel back from Masvingo to Harare	1
Collection of secondary information in Harare	2
Data analysis and preparation of the draft report	4
Debriefing in Harare based on the draft report	1
HQ debriefing	0.5
Travel back from Zimbabwe	1
Finalization of the report, based on field, HQ and ACF-UK comments	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>

### 1.4. Budget for the Evaluation

	<b>USD</b>
<b>Total Amount Available</b>	15,000

<b>Deadline for invoicing (Contract End):</b>	4 December 2014
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All local accommodation, travel and necessary arrangements will be made and paid for by ACF.

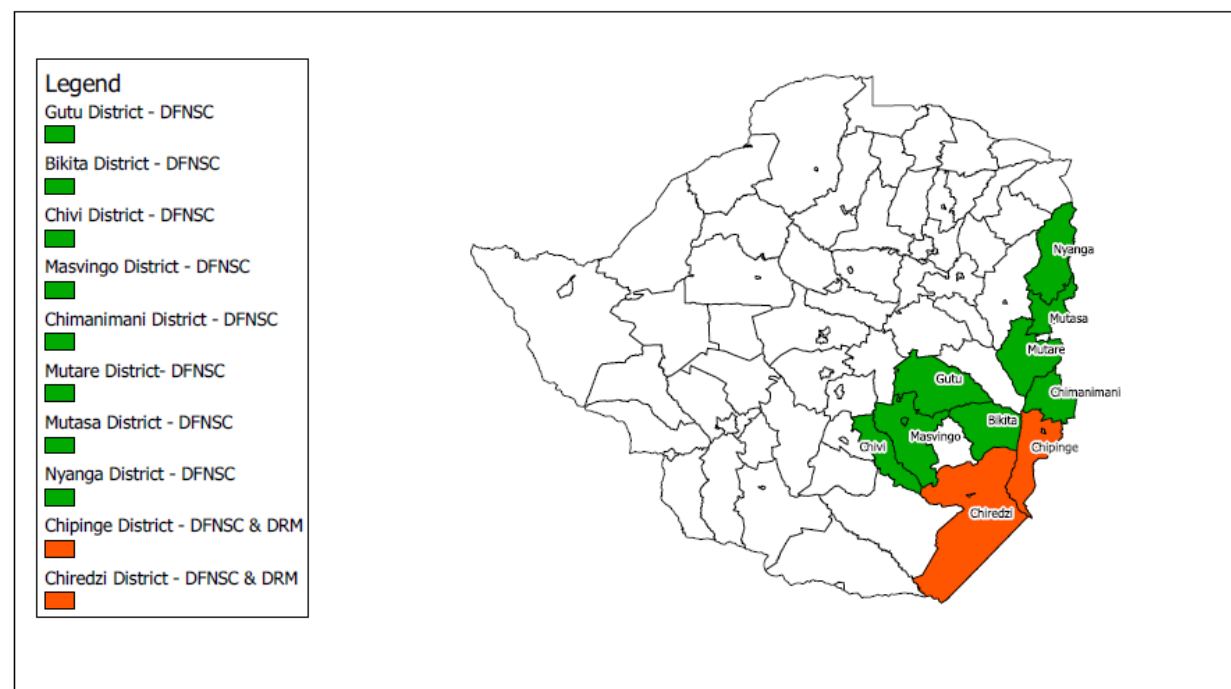
The consultant is responsible for personal insurance during the evaluation. The consultant will also provide any necessary materials (including laptops) required for the evaluation.

## 2. DETAILS OF THE PROGRAMME

<b>Name of the Programme:</b>	Building Disaster Resilient Communities in Zimbabwe
<b>Location:</b>	Masvingo and Manicaland Provinces, Zimbabwe
<b>Starting Date:</b>	01 October 2013
<b>End Date:</b>	31 December 2014

### 2.1. Map of Programme Area

#### ACF DISTRICTS FOR DRM & NUTRITION INTERVENTIONS



## 2.2. Programme Overview

### 2.2. Programme Overview

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) – in partnership with Action Contre La Faim (ACF) and the Institute of Water and Sanitation Development (IWSD) conducted a comprehensive Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) program that aimed at addressing vulnerabilities and mitigating risks through targeted Risk Management Policy and Practice, Water Sanitation and Hygiene, and Agriculture/Food Security interventions in Manicaland and Masvingo Provinces.

ACF in this consortium was responsible for promoting disaster risk management (DRM) and integrated food and nutrition government policy and frameworks across ten districts. Specific government institutionalized civil protection and district food and nutrition committees (FNCSs) were supported through trainings. The activities were meant to strengthen the overall capacity of local government and communities 'to mitigate their vulnerability to disasters and build their long-term resiliency.

### 2.3. General Objective

To reduce disaster risk through enhanced community resilience to the effects of droughts and floods through disaster risk management activities that enhance agricultural production and food security, improve water and sanitation infrastructure and hygiene practices and increase nutritional uptake.

### 2.4. Specific Objectives/Results

**Objective 1:** Improved capacity of institutions and communities to identify hazards, mitigate risks and coordinate risk reduction interventions

**Objective 2:** Reduce underlying risk factors in vulnerable communities

### 2.5. Programme Activities

**DRM-** to build a culture of safety and resilience in target areas, the program sought to strengthen the ability of government authorities and communities to effectively prepare for and respond to disasters while ensuring that the underlying risk factors affecting 40,000 people in particularly vulnerable communities are mitigated through targeted, high-impact interventions. The following activities were conducted by ACF;

- PCVA (CBDRM) sessions in communities
- District stakeholder training on DRM
- Ward level stakeholder training on DRM
- Conduct disaster preparedness review workshop
- Formation of EPR committees
- DRM ToT for Chipinge and Chiredzi
- Review of ward EPR plans and dissemination to communities
- Training of School Health Masters in DRM in Chipinge and Chiredzi

**FOOD AND NUTRITION-** the intervention was premised on reviving the former Food and Nutrition Management Teams (FNMTs) which were established in the 1980s with a primary responsibility of coordinating an integrated system for addressing food and nutrition security. These teams were less functional in addressing food and nutrition security issues from a developmental context than what the current DFNSCs are mandated to achieve. The revival of the DFNSC committees is part of the process that has been identified as contributing to operationalizing the National Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) policy for Zimbabwe. The policy promotes coordination across key government line ministries and other sectors through enhancing positive food and nutrition security outcomes by strengthening decentralized sub-national structures. The overall program goal is to contribute to coordinated multi-sectorial action in response to the prevailing household food insecurity and malnutrition. The following activities were conducted;

- Situational analysis of 10 DFNSCs
- Revival of 10 DFNSC and 2 PFNSCs
- Develop/Update DFNSC Profile
- Distribution and discussion on FNC policy documents guidance manual
- Facilitate monthly DFNSC meetings Supported monthly/bi-monthly FNSC meetings a provincial and district level
- Conducted PFNSC and DFNSC trainings on Policy Practice Connection, Nutrition Surveillance, Nutrition Security, Monitoring & Evaluation and basic M&E
- Training of ward level cadres in IYCF in Chipinge, Chiredzi and Nyanga
- Training of VHWs in IYCF in Chipinge, Chiredzi and Nyanga
- Formation and support to 150 IYCF support groups in Chipinge, Chiredzi and Nyanga
- Support of 10 nutritional gardens in Chipinge
- Support of 10 nutrition behaviour communication strategy events for the 10 DFNSCs

### 3. AIM OF THE EVALUATION

#### 3.1. Target User(s) of the Evaluation

ACF	ELA Unit
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<b>Implementing HQ</b>	Pool Desk FSL, WASH & Nutrition Technical Referents
<b>Field Level</b>	FSL, Nutrition Technical Advisors, Masvingo Field Coordinator, Project Manager, PM, M&E Officers, Compliance Manager
<b>Other</b>	Local authorities, District Administrator, Relevant government line ministries in the DFNSCs and CPU, FNC , Department of Civil Protection

### 3.2. Objective(s) of the Evaluation

- Evaluate the effectiveness, sustainability and likely long-term impact of the project and evaluate the impact of the project in accordance with the specific questions outlined in part 3.3 below.
- Draw lessons learned from the project and provide useful recommendations to strengthen similar projects in the future.

### 3.3. Scope of the Evaluation

The topline questions (in bold below) will serve to focus the evaluative work on those 5 areas. The evaluator will be required to produce an inception report during the preparation stage in which they will detail what questions they will pursue in order to comprehensively cover the questions and additional points below. This will be shared with the evaluation manager (ELA Unit), the evaluation focal point (ACF-Zimbabwe) and the desk (HQ), who will provide feedback to ensure all necessary areas are covered.

#### 1. Sustainability

- How successful were the activities in strengthening the capacity of local agencies, organizations and individuals?
- Was the partnership with DFNSCs and CPU relevant? Was it an appropriate way to ensure sustainability of the activities implemented by ACF?
- Are the necessary frameworks/plans in place useful for the sustenance of the project?
- To what extent will the benefits of the project continue after donor funding has ceased. Ascertain factors that are likely to influence the success/failure of the sustainability of the project initiatives.

#### 2. Impact

- Has the programme contributed to improved disaster resilience of the population targeted and to which extent?
- Identify the positive and negative, including unexpected, impacts.
- What is the possible long-term impact of the program at individual household level?



- Is there sufficient multi-sectorial integration in the conduct of DFNSCs?
- Was the timeframe sufficient to fully institutionalize DRM and nutrition practices in the committees supported?
- What is the relevance of DFNSCs in coordinating timely food and nutrition problem identification and their capacity in early warning / surveillance at district-level?
- Was the partnership well-coordinated to realize impact?

#### 4. Other

- Have the stated project goal, specific objectives, and indicators – as shown in the project logical framework – been achieved?
- Is the implementation approach adequate to reach the general objective? What alternative approach would be more effective?
- Identify challenges that ACF were confronted with and assess how they were overcome.
- Are there recommendations and practical tools to better implement the program?
- Evaluate the degree of satisfaction with the program in the targeted stakeholders and communities.
- Were lessons learned from M&E activities been incorporated into the program, and shared with partners?
- Were sufficient systems in place to ensure adequate integration of lessons learned?

### 3.4. Evaluation Criteria

ACF subscribes to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria for evaluation: Impact, Sustainability, Coherence, Coverage, Relevance / Appropriateness, Effectiveness and Efficiency. ACF also promotes systematic analysis of the monitoring system and cross cutting issues (gender, HIV/AIDS etc.). External evaluations are not expected to use DAC criteria to structure the report, nor systematically address every criterion, but should adhere to the standards in data analysis and reporting.

Nevertheless in every case the evaluator will be expected to use the following table to rank the performance of the overall intervention using the DAC criteria. The table should be included as an annex to the report and will typically take up one page.

Criteria	Rating (1 low, 5 high)					Rationale
	1	2	3	4	5	
Impact						
Sustainability						
Coherence						
Coverage						

Relevance/Appropriateness						
Effectiveness						
Efficiency						

### 3.5. Best Practices

The evaluation is expected to provide one (1) key example of Best Practice from the project/programme. This example should relate to the technical area of intervention, either in terms of processes or systems, and should be potentially applicable to other contexts where ACF operates. The examples of Best Practice should be presented as an annex in the report using the following table:

<b>Title of Best Practice</b>	(max 30 words)
<b>Innovative Features &amp; Key characteristics</b>	(What makes the selected practice different?)
<b>Practical/Specific Recommendations for Roll Out</b>	(How can the selected practice be replicated more widely?)

### 3.6. Evaluation Outputs

The result of this evaluation should be presented in a written report and through several oral presentations:

- One on the mission (to Country Director and relevant technical staff)
- One at HQ (in person or via teleconference, if required).

### 3.7. Methodology

#### 3.7.1. Briefing

Prior to the evaluation taking place, the evaluator is expected to attend a briefing at field level with the Country Director and/or the relevant technical focal point. Briefings by telephone must be agreed in advance.

#### 3.7.2. Field activities

With the help of Monitoring and Evaluation teams, the consultants are expected to collect an appropriate range of data. This includes (but not limited to):

- Direct information: Interviews with beneficiaries - Visit to project sites and to the facilities provided to the beneficiaries
- Indirect information: Interviews with local representatives; interviews with project staff expatriate and national staff; meeting with local authorities, groups of beneficiaries, humanitarian agencies, donor representatives and other stakeholders.
- Secondary information analysis: including analysis of project monitoring data, periodic reports and KAP surveys or of any other relevant statistical data.

### 3.7.3. Report

The report shall follow the following format.

1. Cover Page
2. Table of Contents
3. Executive Summary: must be a standalone summary, describing the programme, main findings of the evaluation, and conclusions and recommendations. This will be no more than 2 pages in length.
4. Main Body: The main body of the report shall elaborate the points listed in the Executive Summary. It will include references to the methodology used for the evaluation and the context of the action. In particular, for each key conclusion there should be a corresponding recommendation. Recommendations should be as realistic, operational and pragmatic as possible; that is, they should take careful account of the circumstances currently prevailing in the context of the action, and of the resources available to implement it both locally and in the commissioning HQ. Annexes: Listed and correctly numbered.
5. Annex I (Best Practice)
6. Annex II (DAC-based Rating Table)

The report should be submitted in the language specified in the ToR. The report should not be longer than 30 pages excluding annexes. The draft report should be submitted within the proposed timeframe on the work plan (section 1.3). The final report will be submitted no later than the end date of the consultancy contract. Annexes to the report will be accepted in the working language of the country and programme subject to the evaluation.

### 3.7.4. Debriefing & Learning Workshop

The evaluator should facilitate a learning workshop:

- To present the draft report and the findings of the evaluation to the Mission and other stakeholders.
- To gather feedback on the findings and build consensus on recommendations.
- To develop action-oriented workshop statements on lessons learned and proposed improvements for the future.
- A key output for this evaluation is recommendations for a clearly articulated exit strategy for ACF from this project. These suggestions should be discussed in the workshop and additional ideas gathered from the mission through this discussion.

### 3.7.5. Debriefing with ACF HQ

The evaluator should provide a debriefing with the relevant ACF HQ on her/his draft report, and on the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. Relevant comments should be incorporated in the final report.

## 4. PROFILE OF THE EVALUATOR

- Demonstrated significant field experience in the evaluation of humanitarian / development projects
- Specific experience on evaluation of DRM and nutrition integrated projects
- Relevant degree / equivalent experience related to the evaluation to be undertaken
- Significant experience in coordination, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes
- Good communications skills and experience of workshop facilitation
- Ability to write clear and useful reports (may be required to produce examples of previous work)
- Fluent in English (and Shona would be desirable)
- Understanding of donor requirements
- Ability to manage the available time and resources and to work to tight deadlines
- Independence from the parties involved

## 5. RIGHTS

The ownership of the draft and final documentation belong to the agency and the funding donor exclusively. The document, or publication related to it, will not be shared with anybody except ACF before the delivery by ACF of the final document to the donor.

ACF is to be the main addressee of the evaluation and its results might impact on both operational and technical strategies. This being said, ACF is likely to share the results of the evaluation with the following groups:

- Donor(s)
- Governmental partners
- Various co-ordination bodies

### **Intellectual Property Rights**

All documentation related to the Assignment (whether or not in the course of the evaluator's duties) shall remain the sole and exclusive property of the Charity.