Terms of Reference for the Mid-term Evaluation
Strengthening the Missing Middle in Agribusiness for Rapid Transformation (SMART) Project

The COVID-19 pandemic is hitting vulnerable populations in Mozambique almost one year exactly after Cyclones Idai and Kenneth, and for an already stressed market ecosystem, the challenges to maintain safe social distance while still going about farming activities will be extra hard for families.

Given the challenges posed by COVID-19, iDE and the Embassy of Sweden are relaunching a modified version of the Terms of Reference for the Mid-term Evaluation of iDE Mozambique’s Strengthening the Missing Middle in Agribusiness for Rapid Transformation (SMART) Project.

1. Project Background
Strengthening the Missing Middle in Agribusiness for Rapid Transformation (SMART) is a project implemented by International Development Enterprises (iDE) in the provinces of Maputo, Sofala, Manica, and Tete. Funded by the Embassy of Sweden in Mozambique, the five-year project aims to reduce rural poverty through increased incomes for smallholder farmers.

SMART is an agro-enterprise development project, implemented using a Market Systems Development (MSD) approach, designed to help respond to low agricultural productivity of smallholder farmers (SHFs), including women and youth, due to fragmented agricultural supply and value chains, and poor access to agro-extension and financial services. SMART specifically seeks to:

1. Increase the competitiveness of small commercial farmers and smallholder farmers involved in major value chains in cash and food crops
2. Strengthen private sector players along supply chains, who respond to urban and rural demands, providing access to adequate infrastructures, technologies, inputs and working capital, through non-formal finance mechanism (catalytic funding and matching grants) and technical assistance.

The project is implemented using a gender inclusive approach through iDE’s proven farm business advisor (FBA) model, thus increasing overall productivity of FBAs, small commercial farmers (SCFs) and smallholder farmers (SHFs). SMART consisted of an inception phase and three components, which have been adapted to the post-Idai context:

a. Inception – used to better understand the agribusiness market and potential partners’ capabilities for engaging in private sector-based agribusiness development initiatives
b. FBA and SHF upgrade initiative – designed to provide FBAs/SCFs and SHFs improved access to quality agro-inputs, output markets, and extension services through iDE’s tailored Farmer Field School approach known as Escolas em Campo para Pequenos Agricultores (ECPA)
c. Farmers’ Capacity Initiative – aims to ensure farmers’ exposure and access to innovation, technology and farming business models through technology centers (TCs), Nuclei of Technology Transfer (NTTs), and demonstration plots
d. Value Chain Initiative – seeks to ensure availability of strong input supply, value addition, aggregation, market linkage, and agribusiness development services to the farmers

Given the impact Cyclone Idai had in SMART’s intervention areas and the subsequent humanitarian response, iDE adapted its market systems development approach to respond to
rebuilding needs through voucher-based Input Trade and Technology Fairs (ITTFs) for the 2019 main agricultural season and for the subsequent cool season in Q1 & Q2 of 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, gatherings of any size are now a lethal danger to the communities we serve, leading iDE to re think field activities. Namely, Input Trade and Technology Fairs (ITTFs) that were scheduled from March 26th to April 17th, 2020 have been reprogrammed for the beginning of the new agrarian season 2020-21, when the expected impact of this virus will be also more significant in rural communities.

In addition, to respond to long term impact of cyclone IDAI, the Embassy of Sweden has decided that the remaining period of the SMART program should incorporate enhanced resilience approaches on its interventions. Nevertheless, the type and scope of the resilience approaches to be incorporated are still being developed.

2. Evaluation Purpose
The purpose or intended use of the mid-term evaluation is to help the Embassy of Sweden and iDE Mozambique assess the progress of the on-going SMART project, learn from what works and what does not work well, informing decisions on how the project implementation may be adjusted and improved.

The evaluation will also identify areas of improvement and recommendations for the remainder of the agreement period. The recommendations should be prioritized in accordance to the roles that the users (iDE Mozambique, the Embassy of Sweden in Mozambique) play in the SMART project:

The primary intended users of the evaluation are the following:

- iDE Mozambique management and project staff
- Embassy of Sweden in Mozambique.

Additional interested parties such as other iDE global programs, government authorities, private sector companies, local market led practitioners, the wider donor community, and academia, who may want to utilize the results of the evaluation, are potential secondary users of the evaluation.

3. Evaluation Objective
The objective of the mid-term evaluation is to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and potential sustainability of the SMART project and formulate recommendations as an input to upcoming discussions on how project implementation may be adjusted and improved:

The specific evaluation questions are:

a. Relevance
   o Are the project interventions (FBAs, ECPAs, NTT, TECH and gender mainstreaming) technically adequate and appropriate solutions to the development problem at hand? Do they address the roots causes of the problem?
   o Specifically, how has the SMART project remained relevant to the clients and beneficiaries operating in areas impacted by Cyclone Idai? How has the adapted approach referred to as the Farmer Resilience and Rebuilding Initiative (FRRI), which uses voucher-based Input Trade and Technology Fairs, contributed to the humanitarian needs of existing beneficiaries?
   o Given the context was this the most appropriate approach for a market system program? What additional components of the project need to adapt to the new operating environment?

b. Effectiveness
   o To what extent has the project contributed to the intended outcomes? If so, why? If not,
why not? What can be done to make the project more effective?

- Do project participants experience outcomes equitably? Particularly among participants of different genders, poverty statuses, disabilities, and other social identities. If so, why? If not, why not? What can be done to make the project more equitable?

c. **Efficiency**
   - How might the different elements of the adapted intervention (FBAs, ITTFs, ECPAs, NTTs, TECH and gender mainstreaming) be better aligned and coordinated to gain efficiency in the project implementation?
   - Is the project staffing structure and overall capacity sufficient/well aligned to achieve the project objectives? If not, what recommendations can be made to the project structure that lead to greater impact?

d. **Systems Change and Resilience**
   - Are there early signs of the project generating systemic change in scale (the project is influence and benefiting people beyond those directly involved in the intervention); sustainability (that the changes and impacts will last beyond the end of the project without external assistance) and resilience (market players can adapt to changing market conditions)? What are the key learnings so far?
   - How has the SMART project contributed to increasing climate resilience for households, communities and private sector actors to anticipate, absorb, and adapt potential future climate related shocks and stressors? Are there additional activities that should be integrated into SMART that ensure a greater impact on climate and market resilience?

The evaluation shall further address the following gender equity and social inclusion questions:

1. Has the project been implemented in accordance with a rights perspective: i.e. Have target groups been participating in project planning, implementations and follow up? Has anyone been discriminated by the project through its implementation? Has the project been implemented in a transparent fashion? Are there accountability mechanisms in the project?
2. Has the project any positive or negative effects on gender equality? Could gender mainstreaming have been improved in planning, implementation or follow up?
3. How has the project focus on “farming as a family business” contributed to improved gender norms and roles within households and communities? Have there been any negative repercussions as a result?

4. **Methodology for Data Collection and Analysis**

   The bidders are expected to provide their detailed approach and methodology for the evaluation. Some parameters are however provided as follows;

   - We expect the bidder to describe and justify an appropriate methodology and methods for data collection in the tender. The evaluation design, methodology and methods for data collection and analysis are expected to be fully presented in the inception report.
   - iDE will facilitate provision of relevant baseline and annual survey data to the evaluation team to help them assess the implementation status of the SMART project during the period of implementation. Evaluators should take into consideration appropriate measures for collecting data in cases where sensitive or confidential issues are addressed, and avoid presenting information that may be harmful to some stakeholder groups.
5. **Time Schedule and Deliverables**

It is expected that a time and work plan is presented in the tender and further detailed in the evaluator’s inception report. The evaluation shall be carried out between October 2nd, 2020 to January 31st, 2021. The timing of any field visits, surveys and interviews need to be settled by the evaluator in dialogue with the main stakeholders during the inception phase. The list below outlines key deliverables for the evaluation process:

1. October 2nd: Start-up meeting Embassy of Sweden & iDE Staff
2. October 16th: Draft inception report which includes review of SMART project documents and other relevant iDE documents.
3. October 23rd: Inception report presentation to iDE and Embassy of Sweden
4. October 30th: Final inception report
5. Nov - December: Field data collection and field trip report
6. December 16th: Draft evaluation report
7. January 11th: Preliminary findings workshop
8. January 31st: Final evaluation report

The reviewer must be able to travel to project areas outside of Maputo, which will include considerable amount of road travel and spend days in remote rural areas of Maputo, Sofala, Manica and Tete provinces.

iDE Mozambique will be responsible for providing field transport necessary for the assignment.

6. **Evaluation Team Qualification**

The evaluation team should include the following competencies:

1. The competence in the team should be complementary with strong expertise in undertaking evaluation of qualitative and quantitative orientated programs with bias towards agricultural value chains in last-mile markets.
2. Experience working with relevant donors and evaluations, with expertise in assessment, designing and delivery of market-based approaches and system thinking.
3. Experience and or academic qualifications in policy studies, developmental studies, agricultural economics or closely related field
4. Proven knowledge of the Mozambique agricultural sector
5. Proven experience evaluating resilience in market systems development programming

A CV shall be included in the call-off response for each team member and contain full description of the evaluators’ qualifications and professional work experience. The evaluators must be independent from the evaluation object and evaluated activities, and have no stake in the outcome of the evaluation.

7. **Resources and Deadline**

The maximum budget amount available for the evaluation is **$44,000.00**

The deadline for submission is **June 30th 2020**.

Proposals to be sent to **mozambique@ideglobal.org**