

Terms of Reference for the Mid-term Evaluation

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:

- i. Increase the competitiveness of small commercial farmers and smallholder farmers involved in major value chains in cash and food crops
- ii. 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*
- c) Farmers' Capacity Initiative – aims to ensure farmers' exposure and access to innovation, technology and farming business models through technology centers (TCs), *Núcleo de Transferencia de Tecnologias* (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 (ITTfFs) for the 2019 main agricultural season and the subsequent cool season in Q1 & Q2 of 2020. The goal of this adaptive approach is to ensure that farmers are able to return to income generating agribusiness activities.

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 prioritised 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 utilise 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

- a. Are the project interventions (FBAs, ECPAs, NTT, TC and gender mainstreaming) technically adequate and appropriate solutions to the development problem at hand? Do they address the roots causes of the problem?
- b. 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 (FRRl), which uses voucher-based Input Trade and Technology Fairs, contributed to the humanitarian needs of existing beneficiaries?
- c. 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

- a. 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?
- b. 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

- a. How might the different elements of the adapted intervention (FBAs, ECPAs, NTT, TC and gender mainstreaming) be better aligned and coordinated to gain efficiency in the project implementation?
- b. 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

- a. 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?

- b. 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 April 1, 2020 to July 31, 2020. 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 but are targeted for May – June 2020. The list below outlines key deliverables for the evaluation process:

1. May 1st: Start-up meeting Embassy of Sweden & iDE Staff
2. May 15th: Draft inception report which includes review of SMART project documents and other relevant iDE documents.
3. May 22nd: Inception report presentation to iDE and Embassy of Sweden
4. May 30th: Final inception report
5. June – July: Field data collection and field trip report
6. July 15th: Draft evaluation report
7. August 6th: Preliminary findings workshop
8. August 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 logistics necessary for the assignment, excluding air-tickets and hotel.

6. Evaluation Team Qualification

The evaluation team should include the following competencies:

- a. 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.
- b. Experience working with relevant donors and evaluations, with expertise in assessment, designing and delivery of market-based approaches and system thinking.
- c. Experience and or academic qualifications in policy studies, developmental studies, agricultural economics or closely related field.
- d. Proven knowledge of the Mozambique agricultural sector.
- e. 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.