

COVID-19 Modified Operating and Implementation Norms

Supplemental Manual

iDE Mozambique

May 2020



Photo: iDE Mozambique 2020. iDE is sensitizing the community on best practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in remote areas.

A MESSAGE FROM THE MOZAMBIQUE COUNTRY DIRECTOR OF iDE

COVID-19 has been an unprecedented challenge to the global community, requiring difficult decisions that weigh economic risk against health risks as countries, regions, and individual towns evaluate what is necessary to prevent the transmission of the disease. In Africa, however, this debate is particularly difficult because of the relative insecurity of the food supply system, made even more precarious by the precautions of lockdowns and social distancing. While these are absolutely necessary to keep people safe, we can't let the cure be worse than the disease, and end up creating a hunger crisis that could easily kill as many, if not more, than COVID-19 itself.

For 38 years, iDE has been building market-based solutions for smallholder farmers around the world. During times like these, iDE's resilient networks of small entrepreneurs can be the difference for poor households between having a meal tomorrow or going hungry.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, iDE Mozambique has been working closely with iDE's headquarters in Denver, our field management teams, and our partners to keep abreast of the quickly evolving global developments. Our primary focus in agriculture has always been on creating income opportunities for smallholder farmers. We aim to make a lasting impact by connecting clients to markets that deliver innovative and affordable agricultural products and services in order for them to prosper through abundant, nutritious harvests. And while the COVID-19 pandemic has begun to jeopardize these efforts, iDE believes that we can demonstrate our resilience by showing our clients that in the face of extraordinary and difficult circumstances, iDE and its donors will continue to serve those who may be least able to cope.

iDE Mozambique remains able and committed to continue our support and implementation goals to the best of our abilities, while at the same time keeping our staff and communities safe by not only following all government policies designed for that purpose but also to go above and beyond where we see an opportunity. To that end, we canvassed all of our field managers for their input as well as the expressed needs and input from the smallholders farmers they work with. In an effort to ensure clarity to our partners in this continuously evolving environment, we prepared this operating manual detailing our adjusted project norms that will enable us to support our clients and drive impact where it is needed most.



Stefano Gasparini
iDE Mozambique, Country Director

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This manual serves as a supplemental set of guidelines for how iDE is currently conducting business while complying with the local rules and regulations as well as international recommendations related to COVID-19 challenges.

All iDE Mozambique offices (Maputo, Chimoio, Beira, Moatize, Ulongue, Mocuba and Palma) have taken recommended sanitation precautions as recommended by the World Health Organization and Mozambican Ministry of Health at the time of publishing of this document, including cleaning and disinfection. All staff receive updates from their respective iDE Managers and Country Director on the status of COVID-19. Further, government information materials are being shared with staff and our clients across the country. Despite these challenging circumstances, nearly all of our staff remain operational and continue to support last-mile clients.

The Current Context in Mozambique

The previous shock for Mozambican farmers in the Beira Corridor was Cyclone Idai in March 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic is hitting this vulnerable population almost one year exactly after the Cyclone, and for an already stressed market ecosystem, the challenges to maintain safe social distancing while still going about their farming activities will be extra hard for families.

The flow of goods and movement of people has been stymied, as all borders remain closed with the exception of movement for essential goods and cargo by licensed service providers. The supply of imported food commodities and agricultural inputs from neighboring countries, particularly South Africa, continue to be constrained and for some items, prices are rising on a daily basis. The rural economy has already begun to feel the effects of decreases in remittances. We expect the flow of domestically produced products will continue at lower than average rates due to restrictions on movement that have severe impacts on informal trade flows. The mandatory closure of small informal business is already leading to a decrease in income in urban and peri-urban areas, causing rises in unemployment. In rural areas agricultural labor will be less affected, although wages might fall below normal rates in the central and southern provinces due to a decrease in seasonal production and a decrease in income for middle class households.

Despite the harvest underway, the needs of smallholder farmers are expected to remain high as a result of the multiple shocks during the 2019/2020 agrarian season. This includes a severe drought in the southern region, persistently high prices, the escalating instability in Cabo Delgado Province, along with the COVID-19 restrictions that are currently impacting primarily poor urban households. The 2019/20 rains were characterized by periods of excessive rainfall, leading to localized floods in northern and central Mozambique. Severe rain deficits in the south have led to a third consecutive poor agricultural cycle.

It is expected that the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic will continue in the near to mid-term. However, while the future is uncertain, the expectation is that effects on food and income sources will continue through till October. In the event that it is not possible to continue operations as planned, we are pivoting to focus on the areas where work can be completed or moved forward and devising new plans that are consistent with the expectations of the changing environment.

COVID-19 Prevention

In line with recommendations from the World Health Organization and Mozambican Ministry of Health, the following measures will be taken in an effort to prevent the transmission of COVID-19:

- Clients and technical teams must wash hands with soap and water (or sodium hypochlorite solutions at 0.05%) prior to any project related activities.
- Fever tests with thermo-scans will be conducted at all events where possible given resources.
- Those that demonstrate any symptoms of the sickness will be directed to the relevant COVID-19 hotline and MISAU representative.
- Social distancing of at least two meters will be observed at all times.
- Clients will be instructed to avoid touching their eyes, noses and mouths given that these are the area most vulnerable to contracting the virus.
- At the outset of all program activities, clients and technical teams will be sensitized on best hygiene practices such as covering the mouth and nose with the inside of the elbow and/or using a handkerchief that is immediately discarded promptly thereafter.
- Should any staff member or client be feeling unwell, they will be instructed to stay home. Symptoms such as a fever, cough or difficulties in breathing must be reported to the Project Manager and the individual will be connected to the MISAU representative.
- Materials such as masks, disinfecting buckets, soaps, gloves and temperature scanners are all part of the materials that will be used to prevent the spread of COVID-19 amongst clients and staff. Additional donor support may be requested on a project by project basis.
- During the State of Emergency (level 3), iDE will work with groups of a maximum of 20 beneficiaries, naturally respecting cultural and religious norms per current guidelines. If guidelines change iDE will follow updated guidelines per government mandates
- Informative flyers in local language will be distributed to all the beneficiaries attending the workshops and made visible at project sites.



Travel

- During the State of Emergency, level 3, all interprovincial travel has been suspended. Exceptions to this guidance require prior approval from the Country Director, and in some cases may require a health certificate to be issued by the relevant Mozambican health authority.
- Travel within each province is currently allowable, but the situation is monitored daily for any necessary changes in plans.
- All field missions must be pre-approved by the relevant iDE Project Manager and shared with the Country Director. iDE staff are also required to undergo domiciliary quarantine once they have returned from areas that have been deemed high-risk for COVID-19.
- All field staff will be prepared to deliver a sensitization session before each field event, which includes traveling to the field with necessary materials such as disinfecting solutions, brochures, masks and gloves.

Emergency Response

In the event of an emergency, iDE has a robust communications stream to facilitate prompt information sharing and necessary action. They include an emergency contacts table that is shared with the internal team and project specific partners. For any specific questions about project contacts, please reach out to the iDE Mozambique Country Director.

Office & Vehicle Precautions

All iDE Mozambique offices (Maputo, Chimoio, Beira, Moatize, Ulongue, Mocuba and Palma) have taken recommended sanitation precautions as recommended by the World Health Organization and Mozambican Ministry of Health, including cleaning and disinfection.

- Most office staff are working remotely, therefore the office is primarily used by managers at this time. Nonetheless, all staff receive updates from their respective iDE Managers and Country Director on the status of COVID-19. Further, government infographics are being shared with staff and clients across the country.
- Office spaces, including conference rooms are cleaned every evening after office hours or early in the morning before rooms are occupied. If the contact surface is visibly dirty, it is cleaned with soap and water, followed by a disinfecting solution. Prior to cleaning, the cleaning staff must wear disposable rubber boots, gloves (heavy duty), and a triple layer mask.
- All indoor areas such as entrance lobbies, corridors and staircases, office rooms, meeting rooms and kitchens are mopped with a disinfectant containing 0.1% sodium hypochlorite (that is, equivalent to 1000 ppm) or phenolic disinfectants. High contact surfaces such as, handrails/handles, counter tops, phones, computer printers/scanners, table tops, chair handles, pens, diary files, keyboards, mouse, mouse pad, tea/coffee dispensing machines etc. and other office machines are be cleaned twice daily using a linen/absorbable cloth soaked in 1% sodium hypochlorite. For metallic surfaces like door handles, security locks, keys etc. 70% alcohol can be used to wipe down surfaces where the use of bleach is not suitable. This is particularly relevant for vehicles and motorcycle surfaces as well.
- Hand sanitizing stations have been installed in office premises (especially at the entry) and near high contact surfaces. Generally, public areas where someone has passed through or has spent minimal time in (corridors) do not need to be specially cleaned and disinfected. However, all rooms and common areas should be ventilated daily.

Escola em Campo para Pequenos Agricultores (ECPA)

ECPA is a tailored approach to the FAO Farmer Field School methodology. In implementing ECPA activities, iDE will instruct staff, partners and ECPA participants to:

- Participate in an informational brief prior to the start of activities which details recommended practices to avoid the spread of COVID-19 during ECPA activities but also within households and communities.
- Wear masks and wash hands with clean water and soap before and after program activities. Where possible, ECPA participants will not share tools and when it is necessary to work together, small groups will be created.
- Adhere at all times to recommended social distancing of at least 2 meters.
- Avoid sharing tools or others inputs amongst participants.
- During the level 3 of the State of Emergency, the maximum number of beneficiaries will be 20 per event. Even after the end of the State of Emergency, iDE will continue to work with a limited number of beneficiaries per event, not more than 30, observing the social distance.



Input Trade and Technology Fair (ITTF)

As part of iDE's post-Idai Farmer Resilience and Rebuilding Initiative (FRRRI), iDE worked closely with our donors and partners including the Government of Mozambique to take preventative measures that would support the safety and well-being of clients, commercial inputs suppliers and our team amidst the COVID-19 global pandemic.

After close consideration and consultation, iDE decided, on March 20th of 2020, to continue with the second round of ITTFs for a total of 12,000 Mozambicans directly impacted by Cyclone Idai in Manica, Sofala and Zambezia Provinces. This decision was carefully evaluated in light of the devastation experienced by thousands of households as a result of the cyclone, in addition to the exacerbating impact of COVID-19 further devastating rural supply chains. Then in late March, a level 3 State of Emergency was declared by the Mozambican President, limiting gatherings of people to less than 300. This was later reduced to 50 and then to 20 or less, making the possibility of hosting these ITTFs extraordinarily challenging.

iDE's goal with the adapted ITTF approach was to continue to rebuild local market ecosystems, thus fostering resilient systems that are better equipped to respond to climate and global shocks. It is in this aim that iDE is currently accessing various contingency plans for the implementation of ITTFs for the main season in October 2020. Our goal is to make up for the inability to directly support 12,000 beneficiaries for the cool season in March and April 2020. As such, we aim to support 20,000 direct beneficiaries and more than 45 local commercial input suppliers through our ITTFs and Marketing and Field Days.

While these plans are ambitious given the uncertainty around COVID-19, in partnership with our donors and the provincial governments of Manica, Sofala, and Zambezia Province, iDE is assessing the possibility to tailor existing online transfer platforms. Our goal is to balance the following factors: mitigate COVID-19 risks, allow for funds to be directly injected into the local market ecosystem, and give beneficiaries the benefit of selecting what they deem best responds to their reconstruction needs.

If the level 3 emergency declaration is revoked before October 2020, iDE is currently prepared to organize the ITTFs following specific measures:

- Only groups of 250 beneficiaries will be allowed on the ITTF grounds at any given time.
- ITTF grounds are open spaces exposed to sunlight and ventilation which are roped off and monitored by Mozambican Police Officers (i.e. roped off football fields).
- Commercial input suppliers will set up their points of sale with at least 5 meters distance between another to avoid the close congregation of people. Each representative will be

equipped with masks, gloves, and disinfecting solutions. Where required and/or possible they will also be scanned for fever.

- All commercial input suppliers are requested to arrive at ITTF grounds 45 mins prior to the official opening in order to follow suggested prevention procedures.
- Approximately 15 hand washing stations will be dispersed on ITTF grounds and awareness raising infographics will be hung throughout.
- Communities will be informed prior to the day of their scheduled ITTF as to the time they will be allowed to enter the grounds. If beneficiaries arrive prior to their scheduled time, iDE will redirect them to waiting areas that are at least 300 meters apart.
- ITTFs will be scheduled to begin at 6 am with a brief speech on COVID-19 conducted by representatives of the Ministry of Health or other representatives.
- Groups of 250 will then be ushered through a roped off path to five registration booths at the entrance of the ITTF. Here beneficiaries will be scanned for a fever, they will disinfect their hands and subsequently receive their voucher booklet.
- These groups of 250 will only be allowed on fair grounds for a maximum of 1 hour.
- As one group is purchasing inputs in the ITTF, the next group of 250 will begin to receive information from the Ministry of Health on COVID-19. They will then proceed to the registration booths where they will undergo the same preventative procedures.
- A total of 4 groups will be allowed on ITTF grounds per day, but 5 groups may be also considered.

iDE and its partners are confident that with the measures taken, we can continue to rebuild local market ecosystems, thus fostering resilient systems that are better equipped to respond to climate and global shocks. As the situation and circumstances continue to evolve iDE will remain committed to further re-evaluate what is possible.



Horticulture Activities

As part of iDE's efforts to increase the capacity of Small Commercial Farmers and Smallholder Farmers to improve nutrition and food security at the last-mile, in 2017 iDE began introducing affordable greenhouse and mini-tunnel technologies that allowed for quality horticulture production.

Naturally, these activities have also been affected by the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, now more than ever, it is being recognized that even if in some locations it is time to plant and in others it is time to harvest, local agricultural production is essential to providing the food that drives the future. The impact that COVID-19 can have in food security and destabilizing supply chains for agricultural inputs is unprecedented. As such, iDE is continuing to construct tunnels and greenhouses that contribute to local content, while abiding to measures that prevent the spread of the virus.

In the construction of the tunnels and the greenhouse, iDE will build the capacity of local installation, while sensitizing these community members on best practices against COVID-19. This entails always working with gloves and masks, conducting proper hand hygiene and practicing social distancing. As it relates to the installation of horticulture related technologies, given that the assembly has a minimum guaranteed distance, those working to assemble these technologies will not risk cross contamination as each team member will be assigned a specific duty.

- Measurement of installation area will be done prior to instructing each worker to remain 3, 6, and 30 meters away from the other.
- Required holes for the structural posts with the perforator will be done by one person.
- Fastening the pieces for the arches will be done by two people with a respective distance of 7 m between them.
- Fastening the base of the greenhouse can be done by two people. However, one person can in fact align, level and tighten anchors to the ground (20cm), allowing the other person to pour the concrete. This process will require additional time.
- Installing the door and the central posts can be done by two people who will maintain a distance of 2 m.
- Installation of the upper central structure can be done with four people, two of which will support the ladder for the remaining installers.
- Team members will be closest to another when the plastic covering is being mounted to the greenhouse because this requires holding and stretching the ends, which should take no more than 20 minutes. The workers that will be holding the remaining plastic covering can be spaced at 5 m each and will be wearing masks.
- The technical training of farmers will be done by one trainer in Palma and each farmer will be seated, maintaining a 3 m distance. All participants will be required to use gloves, masks, and practice proper hand hygiene using locally set up handwashing stations. Without this protective equipment, farmers will not be able to participate in the training nor remain in the vicinity.
- All equipment, including the structures will be disinfected before and after meetings.



Apiculture Activities

iDE has encouraged apiculture activities across Mozambique given that it is practical, lower in cost to initiate, requires little land and is therefore ideal for small-scale, resource poor farmers. Moreover, it can provide valuable food and medicine for families and cash crops of honey and beeswax to take to local markets.

In addition to offering many environmental benefits such as encouraging the preservation of local fauna and flora, apiculture serves as a valid source of income for households while allowing households to engage in other livelihoods activities, which is all the more relevant during the COVID-19 era. Furthermore, honey's healing qualities have been long recognized particularly considering that honey is the only natural food that, as long as it is kept airtight, does not spoil. Given that apiculture does not demand the exclusive attention of beekeepers, it can be a valuable option for rural farmers—including women and youth—looking to diversify incomes by producing high value goods.

Recognizing apiculture as both a means of food security and livelihoods generation, iDE is continuing these activities in the field, albeit not on a day-to-day basis. Through collaborative working relationships with SDAEs, iDE is also able to simultaneously facilitate food distribution. COVID-19 preventive measures as it relates to apicultures consist of the following:

- Participation in an informational brief prior to the start of activities which details recommended practices to avoid the spread of COVID-19 during apiculture activities but also recommended and useful within households and communities.
- iDE can seamlessly incorporate capacity building training in line with WHO and GoM recommendations for local carpenters to build the L.L. Langstroth hives in nearby towns.
- Apiculture trainings are conducted in groups of a maximum of 10, respecting cultural and religious norms.
- Once trainings are complete, in line with government mandates, beekeeping activities will be undertaken in strict compliance with the following measures:
 - Visits to apiaries by beekeepers and/or staff will be limited to the bare minimum (1-3).
 - Transhumance and hive movements will take place in compliance with regulatory provisions.
 - Preparation of equipment such as the preparation of wax, frames, cleaning equipment, etc. will be limited to small groups, max 10.
 - Harvesting of beehive products, in particular extraction of honey is done by one individual. When undertaking collective harvesting, all adequate social distancing practices will be observed.
 - Local honey processing and packaging will take place in disinfected spaces that ensure quality product and ensure the wellbeing of beekeepers.
 - The breeding of queens and the management of swarms will be done by one or two individuals.
 - Visits from beekeeping technicians will only occur when a problem has been observed in the apiary.
 - The sale and purchase of beekeeping equipment and by-products will be facilitated by iDE.

Monitoring and Evaluation

iDE has prepared the necessary tools to conduct a baseline and endline for each project. However, given the risks posed to clients by external field enumerators, iDE's Monitoring and Evaluation department will utilize a remote approach.

- Locally based enumerators will be trained virtually on the use of instruments and best practices when conducting qualitative and quantitative surveys. Data will be collected using tablets via our data collection platform Taroworks. The quality of the data gathered will be monitored in real time from our cloud base platform Salesforce.
- The training of the enumerator will be conducted in the iDE field offices, ensuring that the space and relevant materials have been sanitized.
- Following each day of field work, iDE staff will be responsible for a debrief where all necessary precautions are being followed, while supporting the collection of robust data.

All local surveyors will also be equipped to deliver sensitization training to the communities prior to engaging in their work.

- This will entail providing each M&E team member with the basic tools listed under "COVID-19 Prevention" section of this manual.
- When visiting communities and households, enumerators will follow all required procedures to ensure a safe information gathering, such as wearing personal protective equipment, respecting distances with interviewees and sanitizing hands and points of contact.
- Surveys will be conducted in open spaces containing sunlight and proper ventilation.

iDE is also considering other innovative ways to continue our impact. One possibility is to equip FBAs, rural entrepreneurs, and trainers with phones, solar chargers, enough airtime and a monetary incentive, based on performance outputs. As such, these agents will serve as iDE's eyes on the ground. This will allow iDE to continue supporting communities without a physical presence. These rural entrepreneurs, agents, and FBAs have already worked with iDE across various projects and iDE will vet them to ensure the continuation of field activities and relevant M&E data such as the measurement of production, which is meant to be harvested in the coming weeks. Updates on this possibility will be provided as developed.



Needs

In order for iDE to continue to operate in this challenging environment, there is a strong need for information flyers, masks, disinfecting buckets, soaps, gloves, and temperature scanners. iDE already has most of these materials currently available. However, due to transport difficulties, small plastic drums with taps are more challenging to acquire and remain a fundamental need that must be met, particularly as these materials do not exist at the last-mile.

Recognizing that wearing masks in any public spaces where people congregate is now mandatory, iDE must now account for and obtain funding for the unforeseen cost of supplying masks to all individuals involved in our programming.

iDE managers will ensure all field staff are trained in the safety procedures and guidelines. Wearing masks in any public spaces where people congregate is now mandatory, under level 3 of the State of Emergency.

Conclusion

iDE recognizes and takes seriously the new risks and responsibilities related to the safety of our staff, clients, and communities while striving to continue our work during this pandemic. As a result, we endeavor to provide community orientation and sensitization to the recommended best practices related to COVID-19 safety measures while we continue to carry out important implementation work in support of our critical projects. The modified guidelines in this document have become a fundamental consideration to each program. Abiding strictly to the COVID-19 prevention measures, while delivering impactful training and skills to clients is something that iDE has the ability to deliver.

However, should the Government of Mozambique, or a specific donor, or iDE decide it is most prudent to further slow down or pause a project, iDE will work with the donors to do so with limited modifications to the existing budget.

Rural smallholder farmers make an investment in their crops every planting season. Each head of cabbage represents needed income in the hands of the farmer. When it is time to harvest and the market is closed or heavily restricted, farmers are at risk of being unable to sell their produce, make a profit, and recoup that investment. Not only does this mean that the farmer will be unable to reinvest in their business next planting season, lack of income also creates an immediate threat—food insecurity. **Farmers are not just responsible for feeding themselves and their families. The larger community relies on them each day for their next meal.**

It is for this reason that in the face of rapidly evolving changes, we believe we must keep a positive attitude, demonstrate compassion, follow required guidelines and focus our collective energy and passion on helping the clients we serve, because the work that we do has never been more essential. iDE is confident that the modified operating and implementation norms detailed in this manual will allow us to help mitigate a health crisis from becoming a hunger crisis. Thus, our interventions can support the rebuilding of local market ecosystems, leading iDE to foster resilient systems that are better equipped to respond to climate and global shocks.

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