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INTRODUCTION

The VECO East Africa (EA) Uganda program, aimed at ensuring that agricultural food chains in Uganda are sustainable and inclusive for small holder farmers, was undertaken against the background of comprehensive changes in strategy and administration of VECO East Africa. An assessment of the previous strategy of 2006 that was guiding the 2008-2013 programs worldwide revealed that changes were necessary for the programs to have relevance and impact. The new strategic framework (2014-2019) identified the role of Vredeseilanden and VECO EA as that of enabling and supporting smallholder farmers to take up their role in rural poverty alleviation and to contribute to feeding a growing world population in a sustainable way. Value chain development was also integrated as a key component of the program in EA.

This transformation involved the selection of new program areas, new commodities (rice, fresh fruits and vegetables (FFV)), new partner organizations and new stakeholders to steer the program forward.

The first six months of 2014 were dedicated to transition and inception activities which included:

- Closing Country Offices in Kampala and Dar-Es-Salaam and opening a Regional Office in Arusha.
- Employment and induction of new staff.
- Relation building with the new project partners, conclude agreements, and detailed planning.
- Validating original baseline information generated from primary and secondary sources, by conducting research among farmer households in the pilots concerned; and subsequently re-defining results and indicators at pilot level.
- Inception meetings and workshops to kick-off programs with stakeholders, farmers, government and the communities in the program areas.
- Identifying and meeting private and public actors for mutual acceptance, coming into agreements and agreeing on areas of synergy.
- Re-organizing the finance and administration department to enhance transparency, efficiency, and quality control, and compliance with national as well as donor requirements.

As well, a lot of time and effort went into setting up the program and ensuring that we understood the different contexts well enough. We dedicated time to studies that enriched the methodologies on inclusive farmer business models, on quality management and on the organization of value chain finance in Uganda. Secondly, and equally important for reaching structural change goals, we invested in setting up a multi-stakeholder platform on rice, together with other relevant actors and in which each organization has projected results and an action plan complementary to the others.

The aforementioned activities delayed the start-up of implementation of activities of the rice and FFVs programs. It is important to notice that despite having originated before 2014, none of the proposed five partner organizations at pilot level – 4 in Fruits and Vegetables and 1 in Rice – had a business focus and they were lacking basic structures, rules and regulations. This first year, therefore, Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA) has been VECO’s partner on their behalf. Start-up activities existed mainly in preparing the farmer organizations to become organizations with a business focus.

The transition, inception and start-up phases were completed successfully and full implementation started in the second half of 2014. It was envisaged that time invested in constructing the basic foundations and preconditions for take-off would pave way for higher effectiveness and efficiency, thus leading to accelerated implementation.
A. CHANGES IN CONTEXT

Uganda’s Gross Domestic Product growth is estimated to have reached 6.6% in 2014 after a growth of 5.2% in 2013, owing to higher exports and public investment. The local currency has depreciated against the dollar by 12.4% over the period sparking fear that inflation will rise from 6.5% recorded in 2014. Agriculture is a key contributor to the economy of Uganda, forming half of the country’s exports. Much of the country is food secure due to favorable weather, although some areas are prone to food insecurity since they experience dry spells. With a growing population, there is need to increase food production. However, this is hampered by climate change, poor farming practices, limited access to finance, poor agro input use, and lack of timely and good quality market information among other constraints.

To improve agricultural growth, the government of Uganda is investing a lot in enhancing agricultural production and productivity, as well as improving marketing in order to guarantee food security for its citizens. At national level, several initiatives have been aimed at making this goal possible, ranging from policy review to direct government funding of agricultural projects. The government is also collaborating and partnering with donors such as Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), … to develop the sector, for example on: strengthening the national agricultural research system, providing farmers with quality advice, improving detection and control of pests and diseases, encouraging sustainable land and water use, … Plans are also underway to rehabilitate and establish irrigation schemes, rehabilitate rural infrastructure, improve access to markets, strengthen farmers’ organizations, and improve regulation and enforcement of food safety standards to enable greater levels of export.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries identifies agribusiness as a top priority in the development of agriculture in the country. Value chain development is now gaining acceptance as a path to promoting agribusiness in the country. However, Uganda has only been relatively successful in tapping into a number of global value chains, such as fish, floricultural and horticultural products, but growth prospects in these and other key product chains face a number of constraints: high production costs, high transport and energy costs, as well as weak product-specific policy and institutional frameworks that prevent the provision of adequate support to the development of selected value chains1. As such VECO’s interventions in the development of the rice and fresh FFVs chains in the country are in line with national agriculture goals.

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1Source: African Economic Outlook (AEO) 2014.
### General objective: A decent living for smallholder farmers (m/f) in South and North so that they can take up their role in contributing to reducing poverty, feeding the world and relieving the pressure on the planet.

### Specific objective: Agricultural food chains in Uganda are sustainable and inclusive for smallholders (m/f).

#### Hypotheses

- Production conditions (weather, pests, diseases,...) are favorable for the production of agricultural crops.
- There are no price fluctuations that strongly influence the prices of agricultural products.
- Public policies are favorable for smallholders.

#### Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOUTH COMPONENT</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Y3</th>
<th>Verification sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Number of market chains (pilot chains) in which family farmers (m/f) foresee in their livelihood in a more sustainable way (SSD – IMM)</td>
<td>All baseline data for the 5 livelihood outcomes for all pilot chains are available in the respective Chain Intervention Frameworks and are summarized in the annex to this Logical Framework</td>
<td>1. Increased income in the Fruits and Vegetables (FV) and rice chains 2. Strengthened position chain 3. Better resilience in the FV and rice chains 4. More sustainable use of natural resources in the FV and rice chains 5. Improved food security / sovereignty in the FV and rice chains</td>
<td>Impact Assessment Rapport, impact assessment, data collection tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The market share of smallholders (m/f) in local rice markets has increased by 5 % (SSD)</td>
<td>60% market share in 2012</td>
<td>65% market share in 2016</td>
<td>Government statistics, reports of national studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Number of companies that through their sourcing practices and/or policies demonstrate a greater inclusion of smallholders (IMM)</td>
<td>• Total number of companies selected: 5  • Number of companies for which there are indications for an inclusive sourcing practice and policy: 0</td>
<td>• Total number of companies selected: 5  • Number of companies for which there are indications for an inclusive sourcing practice and policy: 3</td>
<td>SCAMM reports, websites, promotion material of companies, IMM report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Share (in %) of family farmers (m/f) that is organized in economical farmers' organizations to collectively market their products (SSD – IMM)</td>
<td>13% of small-scale farmers market their products collectively</td>
<td>20% of small-scale farmers market their products collectively</td>
<td>Government statistics, research reports, IMM-and SSD report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Number of new and improved institutional</td>
<td>There are 2 policies/regulations for rice</td>
<td>There are 3 new and improved laws and</td>
<td>Context analyses, IMM-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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2The quality of the Livelihood is measured with the Vredeseilanden impact assessment tool (baseline study incl.). The concrete data for each of the 5 livelihood outcomes can be consulted in the relevant impact assessment reports and Chain Intervention Frameworks.
environmental factors that stimulate the inclusion of family farmers (m/f) (SSD – IMM) at the level of:
1. government: through policies and regulations
2. service providers: public and private service provision (BDS)
and 3 for FV

policy documents (provided by the government and/or private actors) for both rice and FV & SSD report

1. STATE OF AFFAIRE & EVOLUTION TOWARDS THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

EVOLUTION PILOT LEVEL

1.1. Indicative illustration of progression towards better livelihood

Rice

In 2010, the government of Uganda in partnership with World Bank rehabilitated the Doho Rice scheme with a view to transforming rice peasant farmers into thriving commercial entities. Doho Rice Scheme Farmers’ Association (DOSEFA) was established and registered to take up this new challenge. In 2013, DOSEFA changed to Doho Irrigation Scheme Farmers’ Cooperative Society Ltd (DIFACOS). At the time of starting partnership with VECO in 2014, DIFACOS faced several shortcomings such as production of low yields, poor quality rice, high production costs, uncertain markets, poor membership, low access to inputs and agri-finance, lack of skills on business management, and organizational governance among others. Since VECO started working with DIFACOS, the latter has made some considerable progress in laying the foundation that will strengthen the position of the farmers in the chain and increase their income as well as better their livelihoods. Potential markets have been identified including their quality requirements and a draft quality management system is in place. A business plan has been developed to guide their operations, a preliminary agreement has been reached to supply 100 tons per month to five rice buyers. In order to meet the quality requirements, the management board of DIFACOS has bought a mill and plans to pack and brand the K98 rice variety for supermarket chains (Uchumi and Shoprite). The management of the cooperative has also received training on governance and good management for better efficiency and impact.

To reduce the reliance of the farmers on shylocks and brokers for credit, DIFACOS initiated a savings and credit cooperative (SACCO) in June 2014. The SACCO is providing various loan products and has already advanced loans to 15 farmers worth Ush2,250,000/= (USD 785.34). The SACCO promotes savings and investments to invest in economic activities as well as livelihood needs (illness, school fees, burials).

With regard to natural resource management, farmers appreciate the need to conserve water and use it efficiently through the uptake of the system of rice intensification (SRI)3. Studies have also shown that rice waste products can be recycled through briquette making, which can be a good source of income, especially for rural women farmers.

Fruits and vegetables

With the support of VECO, the farmers’ cooperatives Bududa, Tororo, Kwapa and Sabiny have put in place various policies including bulking and collective marketing to enable them to strengthen their bargaining position within the chains. VECO has identified four companies in Europe (Ariza, Pajottenlander, Danone and Biofresh) 3

3Thanks to programs of the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) and National Agriculture Research Organization (NARO) (supported by JICA)
and two local ones (AMFRI Farms and Biofresh Uganda) with concrete interest in buying either organic or conventionally grown fruits pulp or both. The development of these markets is expected to increase the farmers’ income and to better their livelihoods. With regards to agri-finance, the farmers’ organizations have initiated SACCOs and Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs) to increase access to rural financing services including savings and credit for households, purchase of farm inputs, and other agricultural investments. The savings in particular are crucial to enable farmers to go through the dry financial spell between production, harvesting, and marketing of the crops. Efforts are underway to start training farmers on good agricultural practices including integrated pest and disease/crop management. The training will contribute to promoting sustainable use of natural resources.

1.2. Access or control over benefits men-women
Baseline studies at household level revealed major gaps in access to and control over benefits in the value chains between men and women. First actions towards gathering more in-depth information on gender constraints have been taken by using participatory appraisal methods. The findings reveal that generally, women in both value chains are responsible for the large part of the labor especially during production. Men are keener on sales and the monetary benefits although in FFVs it was found that women also engage in sales. More information is required on how the benefits are distributed and on the decision making dynamics in the use of proceeds at household level. A gender analysis study is scheduled in the first quarter of 2015. An ongoing study of the inclusive farmers’ organizational model may unearth some constraints and offer suggestions on the way forward.

EVOLUTION SCA LEVEL

1.3. Indicative illustration of progression towards structural changes
Various stakeholders and partners that will be useful allies in pushing forward the structural change agenda have been identified and their roles clarified. In the rice sector, NARO, IFDC, JICA, Africa Rice and Kilimo Trust have been identified as crucial partners. The partners have formed a Multi Stakeholder Platform (MSP) at national level where VECO participates. VECO is also part of a local MSP comprising of actors/organizations that are working within the Doho rice scheme pilot. The members of this local MSP participate in the national MSP as well. VECO’s engagement in the MSPs gives the opportunity to generate leverage and create multiplier effects.

In the fruits and vegetables sector, Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA) and hopefully the nascent Uganda Fruits and Vegetable Exporters and Producers Association, will take up the coordinating role. To improve access to agrifinance, studies have been initiated on inclusive farmers’ organizational models and small holder value chain finance in Uganda and Kenya. The objective of the studies is to draw-out best practices that not only feed into the innovations to be tested in the pilots but also will be upscaled by other partners. VECO entered into talks with microfinance institutions such as Opportunity Bank and Centenary Bank to learn more about tailored products that can benefit farmers in rice and FFVs.

1.4. Significant changes in external context
Rice
The development of the rice sector is guided by the National Rice Development Strategy (NRDS) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industries and Fisheries (MAAIF). The Ministry constituted the Rice Steering Committee (RSC) to oversee and guide the formulation and implementation of rice related policies and programs during the reporting period. In addition to the RSC, a Rice Technical Committee (RTC) was constituted as well as a Rice Industry Secretariat (RIS). The RSC through its technical arm, the RTC, will coordinate the responsible Government agencies in guidance, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the NRDS implementation process.

In summary, there is increased coordination of players in the rice sector as a result of government beginning to take up its role in the development of the chain. The rice initiative is giving a boost to the sector by bringing together various players, and supporting the stakeholders in harmonizing objectives and strategies. The idea
of the development of the national stakeholders' forum and the regional rice production hubs is even more interesting as the government, stakeholders and private sector have a forum to discuss and address pertinent issues.

**Fruits and vegetables**

In 2014, the Ministry of Agriculture directed that the many and often competing apex organizations including Horticulture Exporters Association (HORTEXA), Horticulture Promotion Organization Uganda (HPOU), Federation of Associations of Ugandan Exporters (FAU EX) and Federation of Fresh Produce Exporting Companies (APPEC) merge into one organization to enhance efficiency and impact. The apex body is now called Uganda Fruits and Vegetable Exporters and Producers Association with its offices in the Uganda Export Promotion Board building in Kampala. The body brings together farmers and exporters of fresh fruits and vegetables in Uganda. The overall objective is to provide a platform for lobbying and advocacy for the sector in terms of sector representation, provide training on production and marketing for fresh fruits and vegetables, to provide and disseminate information, to provide ground for standard's compliance for the horticulture sector.

1.5. **Evolution or adjustments of partners**

**Rice**

During the initial start-up phase of the program, VECO realized that there were far many more stakeholders working within Doho scheme than initially thought. This necessitated identification of the comparative advantages of each organization, areas of synergy and an agreement on the modalities of working. This exercise was important to avoid duplication of activities and to create cost effectiveness and efficiency. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was entered among several organizations namely; NARO, IFDC, JICA, Africa Rice, VECO and Kilimo Trust. The structural change agenda for the consortium as well as VECOs took into consideration this new reality.

1.6. **Methods**

Methodologies or screening tools used and applied for structural change agendas (SCAs) in 2014 include;

- Theory of change to develop structural change agendas
- Research on farmer business models and value chain financing for smallholders
- Value chain analysis, market appraisals
- Gender in value chains
- LINK methodology, participatory guide to Inclusive Business Models that link smallholders to markets

1.7. **Synergies**
Rice
Cooperation with NARO, IFDC, JICA, Africa Rice and Kilimo Trust is crucial to the development of the rice sector in Uganda in general and Doho in particular. This cooperation is very important for the achievement of VECO’s objectives at the SCA level due to the potential to leverage and share information among the different institutions. Of particular interest is Africa Rice, which is playing a leading role in spearheading the East Africa regional rice initiative with Tanzania as the center of reference and a branch in Uganda. In Uganda, Africa Rice is conducting nutrition studies and variety trials. It is involved in seed improvement through National Crop Resources Research Institute (NaCRRI) as well as mechanization and design of post-harvest handling equipment for rice. Africa Rice has National Performance Trials in Doho, where it is involved in variety evaluation, as well as seed production. The framework of cooperation and complementarity among partners has led to the development of complementary work plans, matchmaking, and joint planning. For VECO, this has led to the re-definition of its role in the SCAs as well as in some result areas.

Fruits and vegetables
With the inauguration of the Uganda Fruits and Vegetable Exporters and Producers Association, new avenues for cooperation with VECO will have to be defined. This body will be instrumental in the development of the industry and the implementation of the program particularly in regard to bringing together value chain actors in Uganda. The other key areas of cooperation will be: the provision and dissemination of information and standard’s compliance for the horticulture sector.

1.8. Over-all lessons learned related to this objective
Having some core partners with adequate funding to handle costly interventions like the provision of infrastructure (IFDC) or those that are of long term nature like research on varieties (Africa Rice, Naro), is crucial for VECO. By defining goals in line with VECOs core business and subsequently select intervention areas that complement interventions of other actors, VECO can achieve structural changes by applying efficiency and efficacy in resource allocation and use. It allows VECO to achieve maximum returns on its funding and to contribute to the overall objective of the national program. As a consequence, VECO has adjusted its areas of interventions at the SCA level; the draft MOU developed by all parties will focus on the developing and piloting of a quality management system, coordination of the Doho hub and agri-finance, including value chain finance.

Partnership at the SCA level cannot be static and VECO will have to be open to new partnerships as circumstances demand. Most commodity specific organizations are newly formed, influenced by the value chain development approach gaining momentum. As UCA is an apex of cooperatives rather than a commodity specific organization, going forward, VECO may need to embrace Uganda Fruits and Vegetable Exporters and Producers Association as well as any other body that comes up in the rice sector. This might mean that VECO Uganda still maintains the partnership with UCA as an apex of farmers organization alongside partnerships with other commodity specific value chain actors organizations.
RESULTS

Result 1: In Uganda pilot (market) chains of rice are set up, for which innovative practices and models are elaborated and implemented for the benefit of smallholders.

Hypotheses: 1) Public policy, regulation and the private sector are favorable to sustainable production and inclusive business models for smallholders in Uganda.
2) Weather conditions are favorable for the production of agricultural crops.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Target 2014</th>
<th>Achieved 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increase of productivity (tons/ha paddy and %)</td>
<td>18 bags/acre</td>
<td>18 bags/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>% of the (processed) products that meet the quality standards of the formal market</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Progress (on a scale of 4⁴) of the pilot chains on:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ecological or climate adapted production and processing</td>
<td>1. 0</td>
<td>1. 1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>gender equality in the chain</td>
<td>2. 0</td>
<td>2. 1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>integration of youth in the chain</td>
<td>3. 0</td>
<td>3. 1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Volume (in %) sold collectively by farmers’ organizations under long-term agreements with (in)formal buyers, compared with the total volume sold</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Progress (on a scale of 4⁵) in the pilot chains concerning financial service provision in and for the chain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

State of affairs of the result
Activities relating to increase of productivity were transferred to the IFDC and JICA under the MOU on cooperation and synergy. DIFACOS is still at an infancy stage and was officially handed over the responsibilities of managing the scheme in 2014. During this period, VECO and UCA focused on setting up management, financial systems, market information mechanisms and market linkages. Strategies on gender, integration of youth and collective marketing will be integrated in the design on strengthening farmer business organizations per pilot in 2015.

1. Increase of productivity
The MOU between VECO and other partners gives the task of supporting farmers to increase productivity to IFDC, Africa Rice/NARO and JICA due to the fact that they have had a long time relationship supporting the government and its institutions, and NARO in particular to develop better rice varieties. They have the capacity and adequate resources to match. IFDC is also supporting other aspects of productivity like soil management and irrigation facilities, including access to inputs, which is its main mandate.

2. Quality demands are met
VECO supported the Doho farmers to carry out a baseline of rice quality and existing quality management systems (if any) along the Doho rice value chain. The study found that most of the locally produced rice, except for that of Tilda Rice (a large-scale rice grower in Eastern Uganda), did not meet the quality requirements.

⁴ 1/ no progress; 2/ initial progress; 3/ moderate progress; 4/ great progress
⁵ 1/ no progress; 2/ initial progress; 3/ moderate progress; 4/ great progress
of the lucrative markets. Most of the supermarkets stocked imported brands that were sold at higher prices. To enable them capture this market segment, the following steps and actions have been taken;

- Development of a quality management system. A draft is already in place and further refinement will be made in collaboration with the stakeholders and Uganda Bureau of Standards (UNBS).
- DIFACOS has purchased a high quality milling machine, and is in the process of acquiring other components such as the de-stoner and color sorter, among other components.

3. Evolution towards more ecological and climate adapted production and processing and towards more gender equality and youth integration

IFDC and NARO through the support of JICA have supported intensive training and demonstration on the system of rice intensification (SRI) that aims to increase water use efficiency while also promoting management of sustainable land and water use. The uptake is yet to be quantified and an assessment of adoption levels will be done in 2015. The farmers’ organization manages the irrigation schedules that optimize water use by the rice farmers throughout the crop production cycle. At the same time, it undertakes periodic maintenance of the water canals to reduce incidences of leakages. Baseline surveys in the pilot projects have shown clear gender and inter-generational disparities in access to and control of resources needed for production. Preliminary results from the study on inclusive farmers’ business models have given VECO some potential leads on the challenges the youth and women face in the value chains. The results from the two studies will be used to develop clear intervention strategies to address the gender and intergenerational equity in 2015. Moreover, in depth gender analysis studies will be undertaken to determine the nature of the gender and youth dynamics in order to inform development of appropriate gender and youth inclusion strategies for the chain.

4. Collective marketing and long term agreements.

With VECOs support, DIFACOS has undertaken a market appraisal study and identified potential market segments. It has also developed a strategy to market rice collectively as from 2015 and efforts towards ensuring all the necessary mechanisms that are in place for production of quality rice are in top gear. To achieve high quality and market penetration, DIFACOS has identified two market segments:

1) Mass market segment whose quality requirements are not very stringent, identified five buyers in the mass market in Kampala with a total demand of 100 tons per month.
2) Modern markets whose quality requirements are very high: no impurities, branded packaging materials, consistency in the grade of the rice they supply to them.

5. Engagement of local governments and financial service providers

VECO in conjunction with DIFACOS has been working very closely with the District Local Government of Butaleja. This is crucial as the irrigation scheme is owned by the national government and DIFACOS is contracted to manage the scheme on a day to day basis, with the District Local Government of Butaleja playing an overseer role. The trade and cooperative departments have been instrumental in the formation and capacity building of both DIFACOS and the SACCO. The former is in charge of the day to day agriculture extension while the latter is in charge of cooperative development.

VECO has focused on initiating the formation of the rice farmers SACCO (and VSLAs) and increasing the levels of savings. The SACCOs and VSLAs will be linked with the banks in 2015. VECOs guarantee fund operated in collaboration with Opportunity Bank of Uganda will be used when the value chain is developed and DIFACOS is mature and stable. Mind that the guarantee fund is granted by other than DGD or DGD-co-financing funding.

Lessons learnt and program adjustments

While striving for synergies with other organizations is a noble thing, there are also some potential risks. Some of the strategies used by the partners are short term in nature and potentially disruptive as in the case of heavily subsidized inputs or other services. Others are very central to the achievement of VECO’s immediate
objectives. Yet, these organizations are very powerful (e.g. IFDC) compared to VECO and have set objectives aligned to their implementation approach. The short duration of these projects compared to VECO’s rather longer term engagement can pose some potential risks:
- VECO being unable to reach its objectives as one or two partners have failed to do their work.
- Withdrawal of subsidies after the end of these programs might increase pressure on VECO which will have to take over these crucial intervention areas.
As such, it is imperative that VECO thinks about how to handle any shortcomings from partners by having contingency plans in place.

Result 2: In Uganda pilot (market) chains of high-value crops are set up, in which innovative practices and models are elaborated and implemented that stimulate the inclusion of smallholders in modern markets.

Hypotheses:
1) Companies and farmers’ organizations are willing to commit themselves sustainably in a chain logic.  
2) Weather conditions are favorable for agricultural production.  
3) Creditors can be convinced to invest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Target 2014</th>
<th>Achieved 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The number of private companies in the pilots that demonstrate sourcing practices and/or policies that are more inclusive towards smallholders</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. % of the farmers (in the supported organizations) complying with the quality requirements of buyers (Global Gap and Ugacert)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3. Progress (on a scale of 4) in the pilot chains towards:  
  1. ecological or climate adapted production and processing  
  2. gender equality in the chain  
  3. integration of youth in the chain | 1. 0     | 1. 1:4      | 0             |
| 4. Volume (%) sold through collective marketing by farmers’ organizations to the modern market, compared with the total volume sold | 0        | 10%         | 0             |

State of affairs of the result
Efforts were made to identify markets in Europe with a positive response of four companies. Production planning in 2014 was inspired by the identified demand. While the initial strategy envisioned VECO dealing with conventional and organic products, sensitivity to airfreighting of produce required a change of focus to products that could be shipped by sea. These include frozen fruits, fruit pulp and dried products. Unfortunately, the markets that have so far been identified are asking for very low volumes. Going forward, VECO will have to focus more on the local market and regional markets for the program to achieve its objectives.
Except for the Farmer Business Organization of Bududa, the focus of the other groups has been on production and not collective marketing. VECO’s efforts therefore have gone into linkages to local markets in addition to the European market. At the same time, VECO has invested time in setting up passion fruits farmers’ field schools and demonstration plots.
Staff turnover has also affected the project as the program officer left and it took time to fill the post.

1. More inclusive purchase practices and/or policy of private companies for family farmers

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6 1/ no progress; 2/ initial progress; 3/ moderate progress; 4/ great progress
The initial plan envisaged support to the horticulture export sector irrespective of whether the produce was airlifted or shipped by sea. This was later changed to avoid the sensitive issue of high carbon foot prints in air transport. Potential new markets in the local modern markets, organic as well as frozen fruits and pulp that could be shipped by sea have been identified. These include:

- Four companies in Europe interested in importing either organic or conventionally grown fruits pulp and vegetables from Uganda
- AMFRI Farms and Biofresh in Uganda
- Nakumatt and Shoprite supermarkets in Kampala

2. Quality demands are met
To improve on quality of produce, particularly passion fruits, 6 farmer business schools were set up. 1,045 passion fruit vines of better varieties were planted and 100 hundred farmers were supported to acquire basic passion fruits agronomic skills. With more farmers planting this high yielding variety and using the skills imparted on them, they will be able to meet the high volumes demanded by the markets.

On the other hand, as a result of the changes in the focus markets, the drive towards certification was put on hold until after the final markets were agreed upon by the farmers and VECO. With the new markets mentioned above, VECO will engage buyers and farmers to identify the required quality standards and work with them to address any challenges.

3. Evolution towards more ecological and climate adapted production and processing and towards more gender equality and youth
Some aspects of these areas were covered in the 6 farmers’ business schools where 100 farmers were supported to acquire basic passion fruit agronomic skills including ecological and climate adapted production.

With regard to gender and youth, the same situation prevails here as that discussed under the rice chain. A clear and coherent strategy will be developed and implemented in the coming year based on the analysis of the baselines and the findings of the inclusive farmers’ organization models.

4. Collective marketing
VECO with the support of UCA, has focused on helping farmers to identify potential markets and putting in place structures to support collective marketing. Thanks to the support and coaching by UCA, bulking and marketing policies are in place in all 4 farmers’ organizations. With consensus reached on how to deal with the marketing function, the farmers’ organizations will engage with the identified buyers (including Amfri Farms Ltd, an exporter of organic horticultural products) in 2015.

Lessons learnt and program adjustments
VECO’s IMM strategy in Uganda envisaged organic markets as a good opportunity to meet the program objectives. While this is not an impossibility, there are several factors that render an organic pilot a challenge in Eastern Uganda. The small farm sizes and multiple cropping systems that use conventional methods mean that the farmers are not able to achieve organic targets. This is made even more challenging as they have to meet the household food and livelihood requirements by planting many different crops mostly under conventional methods. Setting up an organic pilot in Eastern Uganda will require high investments in costs and time to educate the farmers on the ultimate costs and economic benefits of adopting organic methods. Conversion into organic farming also requires some time as the soils and plants slowly adopt to the new farming method. There is also the likelihood of the initial reduction in yield and thus income, as the farm switches to organic. To grasp the interesting opportunities the organic market offers, VECO will have to invest in a new pilot area where farmers have large farms and are already practicing organic farming.
Result 3: In Uganda farmers’ organizations in the pilot (market) chains have strengthened their management and business capacities to meet market requirements.

**Hypotheses:**
1. The authorities and the private sector are interested in businesses of smallholders and support their development;
2. All partners that support the market chains join forces;
3. Presence of and access to financial and non-financial service providers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Target 2014</th>
<th>Achieved 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Number of farmers’ organizations that have improved their economic viability(^7) (based on the operating profit margin % (OPM))</td>
<td>0/4</td>
<td>0/4</td>
<td>0/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 The number of farmers’ organizations in the pilot chains that have strengthened their business capacities(^8) on:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Group management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Business management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Marketing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sustainable production and natural resources management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. External relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See business development capacities matrix</td>
<td>1. 0/4</td>
<td>1. 3(^9)/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 0/4</td>
<td>2. 0/4</td>
<td>2. 0/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 0/4</td>
<td>3. 0/4</td>
<td>3. 0/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 0/4</td>
<td>4. 0/4</td>
<td>4. 0/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 1/4</td>
<td>5. 0/4</td>
<td>5. 0/4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 The number of farmers’ organizations in the pilot chains that make use of locally available ‘Business Development Services’ (BDS), particularly concerning:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. agro-finance</td>
<td>1. 0</td>
<td>1. 0/4</td>
<td>1. 2(^10)/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. agro-technical aspects</td>
<td>2. 0</td>
<td>2. 0/4</td>
<td>2. 1/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. business management</td>
<td>3. 0</td>
<td>3. 0/4</td>
<td>3. 1/4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**State of affairs of the result**

During the period under review, VECO focused most on developing the required management, financial systems, facilitating their registration as business organizations and establishing of SACCOs. Armed with these skills and systems in place, it is expected that the groups will be able to manage their marketing, collectively procure inputs and improve sustainable production and natural resources management in 2015. Apart from Doho, the other groups have yet to set clear systems and processes to manage the agro-technical aspects and business management.

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\(^7\) Economic viability according to a predetermined formula of the Operational Gross Margin %

\(^8\) The business capacities are monitored with the ‘Business Development Matrix’ for farmers’ organizations

\(^9\) All four organizations have been strengthened in group management, but they are still in an infancy state

\(^10\) All four organizations make use of these services, but access is still very low
Rice farmers’ organizations
Initially, DIFACOS’s main role was to manage the irrigation scheme on behalf of government, with less focus on engaging itself in any form of business management. However, with support from VECO, the farmers’ organizations board and management staff’s thinking has been oriented towards business and organization management to achieve higher incomes and better livelihoods for the farmers. Subsequently, the group has now come up with a general business plan (draft) to guide its operations. The new focus of the proposed business is on milling and marketing high quality rice, packaging and branding rice to meet the quality expectations of conscious buyers/consumers.

The following has been achieved with regard to changing orientation towards business and strengthening their business management their during the reporting period:

1. Increased economic viability (by calculating the operating profit margin % (OPM %))
VECO and UCA have focused on sensitization on business management and coaching in order to build a strong foundation for the engagement of the organization in collective marketing of its produce.

2. Business capacities
As a result of training and coaching in cooperative management and leadership by UCA, the Board and management staff have been able to undertake the following:

i. Group management
   • formulate various policies among them: financial policy, bulking and marketing policy, asset management policy.
   • put in place management and financial systems that allow to control income and expenditure as per the budget.
   • enact a by-law barring children from working in the rice fields in the scheme during the school term.
   • various committees have been set up to run functions including marketing, SACCO among others.

ii. Business management
   • A draft business plan is now in place that focuses on production, milling and marketing high quality rice, as well as packaging and branding rice to the quality conscious buyers/consumers.
   • The cooperative has recently acquired a milling machine as a means to supply high quality milled rice to its wholesale buyers. It is in the process of acquiring other key components of the milling plant to ensure quality such as a de-stoner, grader, color sorter, etc.

iii. Marketing
DIFACOS has identified 5 mass market wholesale buyers based in Kampala, with a demand of 100MT of rice monthly. Supplying these markets will begin early 2015. DIFACOS will supply these markets in the short term as they gain the required experience and resources to supply the quality conscious high-end, high paying supermarkets in the long term.

iv. Sustainable production and management of natural resources
Through the intervention of VECO by way of capacity building and technical backstopping, DIFACOS has been able to do the following with regard to management of natural resources:
   • DIFACOS has organized their members to contribute to the operations and maintenance of the irrigation infrastructure through the water users committee. Maintenance services include de-silting of the canals, and ensuring that individual farmers maintain the ridges clear (to avoid build-up of pests), and likewise the water channels.

1 Target is to produce grade 1 milled rice. The major characteristics (maximum limits) of this grade are as follows: Broken-5%; heat damaged rice-1.5%; damaged rice-1.5%; chalky-2%; red or red streaked-2%; immature grains-1%; other contrasting varieties-1%; organic matter-0.1%; inorganic-0.1%
• DIFACOS also has in place a cropping calendar, with a clear schedule for opening and closing the water gates to optimize water use by the rice farmers throughout the crop production cycle.
• A study has been undertaken that has shown that the making of rice briquettes from recycled waste can be a good source of income especially for women farmers who only dedicate to farming and produce rice on less than 2 acre plots in the scheme. Nineteen percent of the women farmers fall under in this category.

v. External relations
The management of DIFACOS has undergone seven (7)12 training sessions on governance and sound management of the organization. They also had an opportunity to interact with actors and partners within the value chain, such as VECO, IFDC, JICA, Africa Rice, World Bank, … thus giving them exposure and first-hand experience on how to manage external relations. However, more interventions are required for the group to reach a higher level of management of external relations.

3. Business Development Services
i. Agri-finance
DIFACOS has mobilized its members to set up their own SACCO through which farmers could access affordable and appropriate credit. The aim is to promote savings and access to credit so they can invest in their own economic activities and cover urgent livelihood needs (illness, school fees, burials). The SACCO currently has a membership of 85 (72M, 13F). By the end of the reporting period, it had a share capital of Ush 2,172,600/= (USD 758.32) and Ush 1,972,000/= (USD 688.30) of savings. Of this, only Ush 445,000/= (USD 155.32) was from members savings. Its credit products include rice production loan, school fees loan, housing, and business/commercial loan. 15 members (14M/1F) have acquired loans worth Ush 2,250,000/= (USD 785.34) from the SACCO. The SACCO has been supported to set up a management information system (MIS) and develop a lending policy. As a result, shareholders of the SACCO can know the financial position and health of their SACCO in real time.

ii. Agriculture, technical aspects
To augment services of the government extension staff, DIFACOS has employed an extension worker since July 2013 to provide technical support to its members.

iii. Business management
The organization is yet to reach the stage of offering this service as it is still in the inception stage.

Fruits and vegetables farmers’ organizations
While the groups were in existence before the program., most of them did not have a clear business focus. Sabiny Agro Commodity SACCO has been operating a savings and credit scheme as its main activity despite the fact that they have a coffee program as its main commodity with a company called KAWACOM. BududaYetana Area Cooperative Enterprise Ltd also deals with coffee and passion fruits. Kwapa and Tororo groups are still at their infancy stage; these groups are not well organized in a business sense as their involvement in collective marketing is very minimal. VECO has achieved the following during the reporting period:

1. Increased economic viability (by calculating the operating profit margin % (OPM %))
VECO and UCAs has focused on sensitization of the groups on business management and coaching with the aim of setting up a solid foundation of the business organization.

12 Breakdown is as follows; Board- 1 session; Sectoral committee members- 1 session; Block leaders- 1 session; and Strip leaders (a total of 135 leaders)- 4 sessions
2. Business capacities
VECO has facilitated UCA to mentor and coach the farmers in financial and general management, leadership, marketing and establishment of linkages with other actors. As a result, board and management staff have been able to undertake the following:

i. Group management
They have been able to formulate various policies including finance, bulking, marketing, and asset management. At the same time, management and financial systems have been put in place and various committees have been set up to run various functions including marketing, SACCO among others.

ii. Business management:
Strategies of management of their business entities have been discussed in all the groups. At the same time, a draft business plan has been developed for Sabiny Agro Commodity SACCO. More efforts will be put in this area in 2015, including development of business models appropriate to their identified markets.

iii. Marketing
VECO and its partners’ efforts went into identification of buyers and markets willing to procure produce from smallholder farmers supported by the project. These markets include local modern markets, organic and conventional markets.

iv. Sustainable production and management of natural resources
Farmer training included sustainable natural resource management as part of the establishment and management of the passion fruits orchards. A more comprehensive approach will be undertaken in 2015 to establish an overarching approach to sustainable production and management policy and strategy.

3. Business Development Services
The four farmer organizations have improved their capacity to offer agri-finance services and have over Ush 1 million (USD 349) saved by the members in the VSLAs and SACCOs over the period under review. 50 farmers (5%) received credit during the same period. 6 farmer business schools were set up, 1045 passion fruit vines planted and 100 farmers were supported to acquire basic passion fruits agronomic skills. Sabiny and Bududa have agronomy staff who not only offer services to their members but also link farmers to private providers.

Lessons learned
UCA and VECO have promoted a tripartite model of cooperatives development in Uganda over the years. This entails setting up of a secondary-level marketing cooperative (ACE), a financial Cooperative (SACCO), and primary cooperatives (RPOs) serving the same farmers. While it has worked in areas without farmers’ organizations, this has been resisted by the groups as they have been organized differently. It is very important for VECO and its partners to take into consideration the business environment (including commodity) and socio-cultural factors before making a decision on the organizational structure.

Evolution target group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total nr of farmers (female) 2014</th>
<th>Total nr of farmers (male) 2014</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice: Doho Irrigation Farmers’</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative Society</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits and Vegetables</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total nr</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Result 4: In Uganda evidence from the pilots (and other market chains) is used for up-scaling in order to contribute to structural changes.

Hypotheses: 1) There are sufficient means for capitalization from the pilots and for documentation; 2) Partners and other sectors are open to (and see the added value of documentation and capitalization and are willing to cooperate actively; 3) Authorities and donors recognize the pertinence of an evidence-based approach and open their minds to it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Target 2014</th>
<th>Achieved 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Number of practices, models and experiences in pilot chains supported by Vredeseilanden (or other market chains) that are capitalized.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Number (and type) of chain related studies and analyses organized by partner organizations and VECO to support evidence</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Number of improvements of learning-oriented data collection and reflection processes in cooperation with chain actors (PLA)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

State of affairs of the result
In 2014 the program activities were focused on setting the stage for implementation at the pilot level. For rice several months of consultations had to go into partners working in the Doho rice scheme agreeing on the best modalities of working together. For FFVs, the groups were either very weak or non-existent, meaning a lot of effort was taken to start organizing them. The lack of an apex body at the beginning caused another setback. Additionally, structural change agendas had to be redesigned to give them better clarity and relevance. Lessons learnt in the on-going pilots together with the studies initiated on value chain finance and inclusive business models are expected to generate lessons and subsequent consolidation of methodologies in 2015. At the same time, the newly constituted actors’ coordination forums are expected to generate areas of interest that will be the source of new studies. The rice actors and stakeholders have identified the development of a rice quality management system as an area for which VECO should take the lead. Already, a study on the rice quality along the whole value chain to determine the most critical control points and the actors involved has been done and a draft quality management system is in place. In FFVs, the formation of the apex body is a good move forward.

1. Capitalization of practices, models and experiences in the pilot chains supported by Vredeseilanden (or other market chains)
This being the first year of operation, the program had not recorded adequate experiences that could be capitalized for further dissemination. However, the studies on models of farmers’ organizations and agri-finance will be completed during the first quarter of 2015 and pilots emanating from them will be disseminated and hopefully capitalized in the coming year. Capitalization in the sense of using for realizing further impact at pilot level, is taking place: Again in the area of finance, the model of VSLAs (saving groups) and SACCOs (saving and credit groups) that are linked to farmer business organizations that have fixed contracts with buyers, is being capitalized. Banks have started to lend money for working capital and assets based on the production and sales records that the farmer business organizations keep, the off-take agreements and the amount of savings as an alternative partial collateral.

2. Chain related studies and analyses organized by partner organizations and VECO to support evidence
VECO in collaboration with UCA initiated a study of the small holder value chain finance initiatives including rural savings and credit models in Uganda and Kenya. The objective of the study was to establish best practices in value chain finance including rural financial services targeting the small holders. The study will be completed in the first quarter of 2015 and disseminated to the stakeholders. A second study on smallholder farmers’ organizational and inclusive aggregation models
in Uganda is also ongoing. The objective of the study is to establish best practices in inclusive farmers’ organization and aggregation models which enable smallholder farmers to meet the requirements of modern markets.

3 Improvement in learning-oriented data collection and reflection processes, in cooperation with chain players (PLA)
With the identification of all actors and establishment of systems and structures successfully finalized in this first year, the stage has been set for dialogue and identifying common areas of interest including learning-oriented data collection and reflection.

The following was achieved in 2014 with regard to PLA:
- Data recording systems installed and applied for running of farmer business organizations
- Quarterly meetings with local and regional staff to review achievements
- Quarterly meetings with partners to plan and review achievements
- Chain analysis and planning through using LINK methodology with participation of UCA and TRIAS.
- Participatory appraisals with a gender perspective executed to enrich baseline information and to raise awareness on the relevance of a gender approach.

Lessons learned and program adjustments
In theory, development of a structural change agenda is supposed to be stakeholder driven where issues are supposed to be agreed upon by consensus including the required interventions. In real life, most of the programs of involved stakeholders are written in advance and staff have no authority to change their log frames without going through very lengthy bureaucratic process of making any changes. VECO has learnt the most appropriate way to deal with the situation is to dialogue with them and chose its niche.

Result 5: In Uganda a dynamic and social base is created among and with actors, networks and alliances in the region, which contributes to the inclusion of smallholders and to structural changes

Hypotheses: 1) External actors and networks acknowledge the added value of putting the inclusion of smallholders on the agenda and of taking joint action; 2) Other donors also focus on this theme and foresee extra funds to also support the dynamic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Target 2014</th>
<th>Achieved 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Number of people reached by VECO and its partners through digital/printed publications (case studies, best practices, lessons learned, videos, …) and face-to-face events (seminars, conferences, round tables, …) about innovative practices and models on inclusion of small-scale farmers</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Number of times that VECO and its partners are asked as an external resource person for their expertise with regard to the inclusion of small-scale farmers</td>
<td>4¹³</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Number and type of networks, round tables, conferences and (learning) alliances in the region around inclusion of small-scale farmers set up (facilitated/supported or not by Vredeseilanden and/or partner organizations)</td>
<td>1¹⁴</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹³ VECO EA was consulted by CORDAID and MicroSave to give trainings about micro-financing, financing of value chains and value chains analysis.
¹⁴ VECO is part of the Agriprofocus network
### State of affairs of the result

VECO has been very active in the rice stakeholders’ forums and the formation of the Eastern Uganda rice hub. Other alliances and networks include agri-profocus and the national rice platform. More will be identified and further engagements made in 2015. It is expected that with increased exposure, VECO staff will be more consulted as external resource persons.

1. **Publications made and face-to-face events organized by VECO and/or its partners and the number of people reached.**
   There were no publications or face-to-face events organized by VECO due to the reasons stated earlier.

2. **Consultations of VECO and/or its partners as expert external resource persons asked for by others.**
   CORDAID and MicroSave Consultants, the program implementing partners of the EU funded Agricultural Finance Program in Kenya and Uganda, consulted VECO on agriculture value chain finance. VECO staff carried out value chain finance studies for the poultry chain for Small and Micro-Enterprise Program Micro Finance Bank (SMEP) in Kenya, and for the dairy value chain for Opportunity Kenya Ltd. VECO staff also facilitated one of the workshops organized by CORDAID and MicroSave.

3. **Networks, round tables, conferences and learning alliances set up in the country on inclusion of small-scale farmers.**
   VECO staff participated in the FIN4ag International Conference in Nairobi on revolutionizing finance for agri-value chains and the annual National BDS Donor Coordination Conference in Mombasa, Kenya. The focus of the FIN4ag conference was to share experiences in agriculture financing in Africa. The BDS conference is an annual event organized by various donors engaged in facilitating business development including smallholder agriculture in Kenya and other East African countries. The aim of the conference is to share experiences on best practice in business development facilitation.

4. **Common actions and interventions by civil society actors in support of the SCAs**
   Being the first year of operation of the program, most of the time was spent on identifying potential alliances and partners. More concrete discussions on common actions and interventions will be carried out in 2015.

**Lessons learned and program adjustments**

No changes are envisaged during the forthcoming period as there is need to continue monitoring the situations for any new eventualities that may necessitate change.