

EVALUATION

Evaluation of the Agriculture, Rural Development and Forest Sector programmes in Africa

Country Report: ZAMBIA

(Final version)

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The logo for NIRAS features the word 'NIRAS' in a bold, uppercase, sans-serif font. The letters are red, and there is a small red graphic element above the 'A' that resembles a stylized flame or a leaf.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ABG	Agribusiness Group
ADP	Animal draft power
AFF	Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
ALI	Department for Africa and the Middle East of MFA
ARD	Agriculture, Rural Development
ARDF	Agriculture, Rural Development and Forestry
BEO	Block Extension Officer
CA	Commodity Association
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CCO	Cross-cutting objective
CEO	Camp Extension Officers
CMS	Co-management structure
CP	Cooperating Partner
CS	Country Strategy
CSA	Climate-smart agriculture
CSG	Commodity Study Groups
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	Core Support Programme
DACO	District Agriculture Coordinating Officer
DFA	District Farmer Association
DP	Development Partner
EQ	Evaluation Question
EU	European Union
FAB	Farming as a Business
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAV	Finnish added value
FFF	Forest and Farm Facility
FISP	Farmer Input Support Programme
FRA	Food Reserve Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHI	Global Hunger Index
GoF	Government of Finland
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HDI	Human Development Index

HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HR	Human resources
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IAPRI	Indaba Agricultural Policy Research Institute
ICT	Information and communication technology
INGO	International Non- Governmental Organisation
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
JPO	Junior Professional Officer
KPI	Key performance indicators
LCMS	Living Conditions Monitoring Survey
LDC	Least Developed Country
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MACO	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
MAL	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement
MFA	Ministry For Foreign Affairs
MGCD	Ministry of Gender and Child Development
MLFD	Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
MSME	Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NOCMU	Northern Province Cooperative and Marketing Union
ODA	Official development assistance
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PACO	Province Agriculture Coordinating Officer
PFD	Programme Framework Document
PLARD	Programme for Luapula Agricultural and Rural Development
PLWSHA	People living with HIV/AIDS
PME	Planning, monitoring and evaluation
PSU	Project Support Unit
SC	Steering Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency

SIP	Small-Scale Irrigation Project
SMART	Specific, measurable, assignable, realistic, time-related
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SOFI	State of food insecurity
SQ	Sub-question
SVB	Supervisory Board
S3P	Smallholder Productivity Promotion Programme
TA	Technical Assistance
TOC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of reference
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USD	United States Dollars
VC	Value Chain
VCA	Value Chain Approach
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WB	World Bank
ZAFFICO	Zambia Forestry and Forestry Industry Corporation
ZMK	Zambian kwacha
ZNFU	Zambia National Farmers Union

Key Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
EQ 1: How can Finnish co-operation efforts best contribute to the achievement of the SDGs - as well as other relevant international agreements - through ARDF sectors making optimal use of its comparative advantages?		
<p>Finding 1. Finnish comparative advantages, especially in Forestry, have partly shaped the MFA portfolio in Zambia, but other factors, such as Finnish long-term commitment to ARD have played a role. At the project level, a more systematic alignment with Zambia’s SDG related development policies could have enhanced the relevance of Finnish contributions to them.</p> <p>Finding 2. The Evaluation of Agriculture in the Finnish Development Cooperation (MFA, 2010) concluded that there was limited evidence of poverty reduction and it was not easy to see where Finland had clear expertise in agriculture – this is in contrast to other areas such as forestry and education where Finland had a clear comparative advantage.</p>	<p>Conclusion 1. When linked to SDGs, Finland’s future support could make a relevant contribution to the Zambian ARDF, especially in the rapidly changing forestry sector, where socially responsible private sector investments are needed. (This conclusion is based on Context 26, Finding 1 and Finding 2 and is the basis for Recommendation 1.)</p>	<p>Recommendation 1. In its support to ARDF, the MFA should ensure clear logical and explicit links to SDG targets, both in design and implementation, and thoroughly assess what the most appropriate size and focus should be. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 1.)</p>
EQ 2: Under what conditions can a value chain approach increase finance and investment in sustainable forestry and agriculture - while benefiting final beneficiaries in a sustainable way?		
<p>Finding 3. The Value Chain Approach has been an important framework for ARDF development in Zambia. Its materialization has been limited by a deficient enabling environment, including poor linkages within the public administration, and a lack of needed support services. VCA implementation through out-grower schemes can be beneficial to farmers but if often causes inequalities within the communities, side-lining women from the value adding processes.</p> <p>Finding 4. Value chain development was identified in the Sixth National Development Plan as a means to contributing towards national food security, employment creation and increased income from exports. However, according to IFAD (2014), the mechanisms for agribusiness and value chain development as a means of poverty reduction were constrained by several factors, including limited availability of infrastructure and poor access to market information, but also a political culture that does not enable a competitive, productive and transparent</p>	<p>Conclusion 4. Success and failure factors of a project supporting value chains fall into two main categories. First, a value chain approach needs emerging initiatives and dynamic businesses, enabling environment and support services (external conditions). Second, project design and implementation approach need to be sound (internal conditions) (This conclusion is based on Finding 3, Finding 4 and Finding 5 and is the basis for Recommendation 2.)</p>	<p>Recommendation 2. When designing and implementing a value chain strategy the MFA should ensure that i) it is properly defined at the outset of a project; ii) strengthening the value chain is focused on those stages that are most critical in the functioning of the entire chain (this is not necessarily the primary production); strengthening of value chains, while being at the core of the project’s rationale, is not outsourced but be kept under the project’s and its implementers’ direct control. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 2,</p>

<p>private sector environment for agribusiness development. Other challenges include macroeconomic instability, shortage of appropriate rural finance, high costs and unreliability of transport and power, low levels of irrigation development, land tenure issues.</p> <p>Finding 5. Finnish ARDF programmes have in principle relied on VCA, but have not been able to implement it comprehensively and consistently. Value chain development continues to be a strategic approach of key development partners, such as IFAD, although their experiences point out that investments in value chains is a complex task.</p>		Conclusion 3 and Conclusion 4.)
<p>Finding 6. In supporting value chains, PLARD II focused on the primary production, with much less attention to other stages of the chain.</p> <p>Finding 7. Among other development partners, IFAD has been strongly promoting investments in agribusiness and value chain development. They are one of IFAD's strategic objectives in Zambia, and the Fund has recognized VCA as a valid approach for poverty reduction and agriculture sector development in the country.</p>	Conclusion 2. Without paying adequate attention to both upstream and downstream stages of value chains, they are bound to have limited effects in overall added value. (This conclusion is based on Finding 6 and Finding 7 and is the basis for Recommendation 2.)	See recommendation 2 above.
<p>Finding 8. In PLARD II, financing in some value chains did increase, although it is impossible to present even rough estimates of the magnitude. The available data do not allow to approximate how third-party funding to Finnish-supported ARDF value chains has evolved. It is probable that in some cases it has decreased, as evidenced by withering of certain value chains supported by PLARD II.</p> <p>Finding 9. The most universally acknowledged success story of the PLARD II was the design and establishment of the Commodity Study Groups (CSGs).</p> <p>Finding 10. It is likely that the work of ZNFU has increased investments in value chains in various parts of the country. The legitimacy and representativeness of ZNFU among its membership base has contributed to this effect. The Finnish support has contributed to this process, but because of the nature of the core support it is not possible to estimate the exact role of the Finnish contribution and draw respective lessons. The abrupt ending of the CSP II makes it difficult to capture experiences ex-post.</p>	Conclusion 3. To bring about results, in favourable conditions, value chain support can be effective even with relatively modest resources. (This conclusion is based on Finding 8, Finding 9, Finding 10 and is the basis for Recommendation 2.)	See recommendation 2 above.

EQ 3: How can cross-cutting objectives and HRBA be successfully integrated and implemented in such a way that they support achievement of the Finnish development cooperation objectives and objectives of the ARDF interventions?		
<p>Finding 11. In Zambia there are gender challenges that have negatively affected women’s full participation in decision-making at the level of economy and agricultural development. These include women’s comparatively low level of education, their lack of support from political parties, lack of financial and other resources, structures disfavoring women, and cultural norms and values.</p> <p>Finding 12. Both sample programmes demonstrate and adequate awareness of gender equality in their plans (see Context 22). The implementation fell short in PLARD II whereas CSP II was more effective, although its exact record in gender equality is not reported. PLARD II challenges in gender equality related to excessive reliance on outsourcing, and lack of gender focus in the programme structure and management, both in the programme and the government institutions.</p> <p>Finding 13. PLARD II had the cross-cutting issues spread throughout the project document in this way and only appearing in the logframe indicators of some of the components, made planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluating these activities difficult.</p>	<p>Conclusion 5. Sensitivity to and awareness of gender equality does not necessarily lead to expected achievements, if the related activities are not an integral part of the programme’s structures, and supported by strategic decisions of its management and the implementing institutions. (This conclusion is based on Finding 11, Finding 12 and Finding 13 and is the basis for Recommendation 3.)</p>	<p>Recommendation 3. The MFA should strive to make significant efforts to adequately integrating cross-cutting objectives, including the HRBA, in design, implementation and monitoring of ARDF support, to ensure explicit targets, assigned resources, and appropriate indicators. To support these efforts and establish a conducive environment, the MFA should engage in regular dialogue with partner government, in collaboration with other like-minded development partners. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 5 and Conclusion 6.)</p>
<p>Finding 14. Operationalising a human rights-based approach in a programme like PLARD II has been a serious challenge. In the absence of respective guidance and know-how, results on human rights in a ARDF project are likely to be modest. The task has been further aggravated by a non-conducive socio-political environment. CSP II made positive contribution to human rights through the support to ZNFU, a democratically governed CSO. At the same time, ZNFU management disappointed its members severely in their basic right to rely on accountability and integrity in the organisation that represents their interests.</p>	<p>Conclusion 6. Achievement of cross-cutting objectives and human rights needs enforced supportive policies by the government and authorities of the partner country. In addition, the operationalization of HRBA is difficult in a project that has not sufficient expertise and experience for this purpose. (This conclusion is based on Finding 14 and is the basis for Recommendation 3.)</p>	<p>See recommendation 3 above.</p>
EQ 4: What are key success factors for achievement of ‘reduced poverty and inequality’, in particular in terms of benefits for women, vulnerable groups, and small and medium-size farmers?		
<p>Finding 15. PLARD II had no effect on poverty reduction, although the programme reported improvements. On the contrary, the poverty situation worsened in the Luapula province during the time the programme was operational. The ineffectiveness in poverty reduction may have resulted from inadequate overall attention to it, and a false assumption on how agri-business</p>	<p>Conclusion 7. Value chain and agri-business development are not always effective in reducing poverty. If reduction of poverty and inequalities, with focus on vulnerable groups, is an objective of the programme, there is a</p>	<p>Recommendation 4. If the reduction of poverty and inequalities is the overall objective of a programme, the suitability of agri-business and value chain approaches should be critically assessed.</p>

<p>development can reduce poverty, and inadequate access to markets. CSP II may have had an indirect positive impact in reducing poverty, but this cannot be verified. The sample projects in Zambia do not provide lessons for success factors for reducing poverty and inequalities.</p> <p>Finding 16. It is possible that the PLARD II focus on agri-business development was so pivotal that it reduced the attention to other development objectives, including poverty reduction. While not specifically mentioned, it is likely that PLARD II strategy assumed that economic development among the beneficiaries will automatically translate into a reduced incidence of poverty. On the basis of the poverty trends described in the first paragraph, this logic did not materialize.</p>	<p>need for a realistic and proven poverty reduction strategy. (This conclusion is based on Finding 15 and is the basis for Recommendation 4.)</p> <p>Conclusion 8. Poverty reduction is not always best addressed with the value chain approach. Effective value chain development needs stakeholders who have at least a minimum amount of assets, such as land, labour force, and entrepreneurship. This was not the case in all value chains supported by PLARD II. As many of its intended beneficiaries were poor, choices would have been needed between value chain focus and social development. (This conclusion is based on Finding 16 and is the basis for Recommendation 4.)</p>	<p>Causal linkages between business development and poverty reduction should be proven in concrete terms. If they cannot be credibly demonstrated, poverty focused adjustments would need to be made in the implementation approach. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 7 and Conclusion 8.)</p>
<p>EQ. 5: How can investment in sustainable land use and land management be made inclusive of smallholder and community needs while being attractive to responsible investors at the same time?</p>		
<p>Finding 17. Neither PLARD II nor CSP II had specific strategies or activities for investment in sustainable land use and management and they do not provide respective lessons learnt. Several studies indicate that Zambia’s land administration and management are disfavoured small-holder households, including women, that rely on customary land tenure. Inclusive land needs first and foremost the enforcement of public policies that support sustainable land-use investments, take into account multiple uses of land, and strengthen the collaboration of land related institutions.</p> <p>Finding 18. Insecure land tenure is prevalent, and various sources point out that property rights are not always acknowledged or upheld by investors, who gain formal title in land without arranging for appropriate consultation with or compensation for local communities. According to an interviewee, carbon trade projects do not always match with the interests of local communities. However, in the rapidly evolving context of Zambian forestry, there are socially responsible enterprises that invest in forest land.</p>	<p>Conclusion 9. Structures, norms and regulations determining access to land are central issues in Zambian ARDF development. They are a prime example of a broad-based challenge that influences the impact of a project, but on which a project cannot effectively impact. (This conclusion is based on Finding 17 and Finding 18 and is the basis for Recommendation 5.)</p>	<p>Recommendation 5. The MFA should not promote land related investments unless there are sufficient guarantees that the policies and regulatory framework protect the communities’ and households’ right and equitable access to land. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 9.)</p>

EQ 6: Which implementation approaches are most appropriate - in terms of scale, modality, instrument, channel and/or implementing organisations in future?		
<p>Finding 19. PLARD II faced many challenges in its design, management, as well as the operating environment. They proved to be insurmountable and the programme fell clearly short of its expected results. This led to the decision to end the 35-year Finnish support to ARD in Luapula, which included significant achievements. Rather than positive lessons learnt, the PLARD II demonstrates many examples of how a project can go wrong.</p> <p>Finding 20. PLARD II provides little positive experiences on the most appropriate implementation approaches. It is more relevant to create a mirror picture of the evaluation question, outlining factors that impeded efficient and effective implementation of the programme.</p> <p>Finding 21. In general, the new farming technologies promoted by PLARD II through CSGs produced good results for farmers in terms of yield. Irish potatoes, Supa rice, the use of knapsack sprayers and animal draft power are all examples of technologies that were quickly accepted by the CSGs. PLARD II produced tangible results in fisheries, aquaculture, and institutional capacity development. In fisheries, the legal framework for sustainable fisheries management was strengthened. Sustainable co-management structures (CMS) and actions were strengthened.</p> <p>Finding 22. Regardless of the shortcomings of PLARD II, Finnish support to ARD in Luapula has included successful projects. However, their lessons and experiences have not been followed through consistently, in spite of the long overall duration of the Finnish support to the province.</p>	<p>Conclusion 10. While PLARD II did produce useful results, it provides valuable lessons on risks and threats related to the modality of a tendered bilateral project and on its implementation approach that would merit attention in future ARDF support beyond Zambia. (This conclusion is based on Finding 19, Finding 20, Finding 21 and Finding 22 and is the basis for Recommendation 6.)</p>	<p>Recommendation 6. MFA should be cautious in engaging in large regional and multi-institutional programmes, because their structures are complicated, subsequent transaction costs high, and achievement of sustainable results is challenging. As an alternative, MFA could consider flexible joint projects, where results come relatively quickly and can exhibit a credible pathway from outputs to results. They could work at regional as well as at national level and focus on strengthening of capacities. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 10.)</p>
<p>Finding 23. CSP II has been a unique experiment among the Finnish support to ARDF, being based on significant non-earmarked core support to a national CSO. However, its total fungibility with the host organisation opened a way to mismanagement that eventually led to the programme's early termination.</p> <p>Finding 24. CSP was meant to be the mechanism for a long-term partnership with ZNFU. From the donors' side it looked as a highly credible and effective organisation, thanks to its performance in PLARD II and in CSP I. LIMA credit component was perceived highly effective and ZNFU is influential at the policy level in Zambia. At the same time, CSP II included a vague implementation strategy, which did not specify how the things will be done, by whom, what</p>	<p>Conclusion 11. Bilateral grant projects, such as CSP II, may provide an alternative to bilateral tendered projects, provided a number of conditions are met. (This conclusion is based on Finding 23 and Finding 24 and is the basis for Recommendation 7.)</p>	<p>Recommendation 7. When donors jointly finance operations of a CSO, they should together plan safeguards for possible negative incidents and avoid non-earmarked budget support. In all cases, control mechanisms must be in place and periodically tested. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 11.)</p>

resources, and through which activities.		
EQ 7: What type of monitoring and evaluation system is most appropriate for outcome monitoring of Finnish projects in the context of wider support for achievement of SDGs?		
<p>Finding 25. The objectives of the sample programmes were consistent with the MFA country strategy of the time (see Context 23). However, their M&E systems did not effectively provide appropriate data for the monitoring of the CS targets, nor did they support respective government systems.</p> <p>Finding 26. The planned M&E principles of PLARD II were adequate and M&E related training was carried out. However, the implementation was deficient, as the programme’s M&E failed to collect and process relevant data on time, and to focus it on the intended results. Partly this was due to an M&E approach that was not sufficiently participatory. As a consequence, the M&E system had a limited value to the decision-making of the programme.</p> <p>Finding 27. ZNFU proposed a relevant M&E plan for the CSP II. In practice, it was largely based on activities, rather than results, and could not capture achievements through the MFA support, because of the non-earmarked implementation approach. The M&E system, including the implemented audits, was unable to detect the fraud that eventually led to the programme’s early termination.</p>	<p>Conclusion 12. The utilization and usefulness of the M&E data and results needs to be the starting point when designing respective systems for a programme. Their utility and compatibility with wider monitoring frameworks, such as MFA theory of change and SDGs, need to be ensured. The programmes provide a unique opportunity to capture beneficiary level findings, which are best gathered through participatory methods. (This conclusion is based on Finding 25, Finding 26 and Finding 27 and is the basis for Recommendation 8.)</p>	<p>Recommendation 8. It should be verified at the programme’s outset that the M&E system is functional and capable of producing timely, relevant, and results-oriented information for the decision-making. Financial information needs to be included. MFA and the implementing institution should make sure that the programmes’ M&E systems are coherently linked to wider monitoring frameworks. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 12.)</p>
EQ 8: How have the lessons learned from the donors/development partners and development organizations been taken into account or implemented at project level and what kind of approaches do the organizations have for future challenges in the sector?		
<p>Finding 28. Documentation from both PLARD II and from CSP II does not identify any specific lessons learnt from other development partners. Despite of its institutional framework, PLARD II focused on out-sourcing partnerships rather than on strategic alliances. ZNFU could have become one, but both projects were terminated before the collaboration became any deeper.</p> <p>Finding 29. Major development partners in Zambia have supported agriculture, although the contributions to the sector seemed to have slightly diminished in recent years. Several focus on agri-business and value chain development, but their respective implementation approaches differ, as a result of each agency’s strategic thinking and the specificities of the environment they are operating in. Through detailed comparative studies, they could provide valuable lessons for Finnish ARDF programmes.</p>	<p>Conclusion 13. Useful lessons, including those from IFAD programmes, could have contributed to the effectiveness of the Finnish ARDF support but they were not systematically studied. (This conclusion is based on Finding 28 and Finding 29 and is the basis for Recommendation 9.)</p>	<p>Recommendation 9. The programmes should more proactively seek and establish strategic partnerships with organisations and projects that can strengthen mutual learning. If their objectives and strategies converge, more operational areas of collaboration should be identified. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 13.)</p>

EQ 9: How can 'Finnish added value' in the ARDF sector be realised (e.g. through access to Finnish markets and expertise or to Finland's experience in creating a favourable business environment)?

Finding 30. The experiences of the sample projects do not provide evidence on the realisation of the Finnish added value. It is likely that the successes and failures of both of them are results of other factors than those that could be related specifically and uniquely to Finland.

Conclusion 14. Finnish added value, including enhancement to Finnish markets, is addressed more appropriately by activities designed specifically for that purpose, rather than through programmes whose main objectives relate to poor communities and households in the partner country. (This conclusion is based on Finding 30 and is the basis for Recommendation 10.)

Recommendation 10. Finnish added value and its practical applications should be materialised only if they verifiably serve the achievement of a programme's objectives. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 14.)

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and scope of the report

This report is one of the products of the Evaluation of the Agriculture, Rural Development and Forest (ARDF) Sector programmes in Africa, supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA). The evaluation is based primarily on eight selected bilateral ARDF programmes, implemented in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, and Mozambique over the period from 2009 to 2018.

This is the Zambia country report, based on a desk study and interviews. Similar country-specific reports are prepared regarding Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique and Tanzania, and together they contribute to the main report of the evaluation.

The main rationale of this evaluation is to provide MFA with objective information about the relevance and effectiveness of its cooperation in the ARDF sector in future context. The MFA is seeking more effective approaches for implementing Finland's development policy priorities. The evaluation should therefore be forward looking and contribute to improving the effectiveness and relevance of Finland's support through different aid modalities, including the multilateral and bi-lateral cooperation between Finland and its partner countries.

The evaluation should not summarize the mid-term evaluations, programme completion reports or previous thematic evaluations (such as the 2010 Forest Sector Evaluation), nor be conducted as a final evaluation of the projects and programmes or evaluate the performance of the partner organisations or other collaborators. Instead, the purpose is to learn from the past and look forward how to improve the programme design, effectiveness, relevance and sustainability, and align with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The objective of the evaluation is to identify relevant and effective approaches, methodologies, instruments in the ARDF sectors' interventions to support the implementation of current programmes and the planning of possible future cooperation in the ARD and forest sector.

While the evaluation focuses on ARDF programs of MFA/ALI, the overall MFA support to the sector is much wider and fragmented. It includes projects of Finnish NGOs, multilateral arrangements, support to INGOs, aid for trade, contributions to international research centres, etc. While these aid modalities are not in the central focus of the exercise, they may have a role to play when the evaluation proceeds to developing new approaches and mechanisms.

1.2 Approach, methodology and limitations

The conceptual and methodological framework for the evaluation is outlined in the ToR. A key element is the evaluation matrix). It defines the evaluation questions, and indicators. They are stipulated to respond to the key evaluation criteria defined in the ToR, including programme design, relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability. The evaluation matrix also makes explicit the assessment of the cross-cutting objectives.

In the case of Zambia, the evaluation questions are addressed through the assessment of two sample projects, PLARD II and CSP II / ZNFU. These projects are studied through document review mainly as no field mission was carried out to Zambia, unlike to other four countries subject to this evaluation. The ARDF evaluation includes eight additional projects, implemented by multilateral organisations, CSOs, and public institutions with MFA support. Only FFF of these projects has operated in Zambia.

The assessment of the two projects took place through looking for evidence related to the evaluation questions, sub-questions and auxiliary questions. Interviews were carried out to complement the documented information. The names of the interviewed persons are in the list of references in the Annex I.

Context 1. The evaluation in the case of Zambia differs from other countries because in February 2019 Finland disclosed the decision to end its development aid cooperation with Zambia.

The MFA cited Zambia's poor economic outlook and the shrinking importance of development aid in the country as the reason for the decision to gradually discontinue the bilateral aid and move towards business and institutional cooperation. However, lessons learned from sample projects and others working in the ARDF sector can be useful, even with Finland phasing out from Zambia.

The major limitation of the two projects comes from the fact that they ended several years ago, PLARD II in 2015 and CSP II soon after, as a result of the MFA decision to suspend the support because of the fraud at ZNFU. It has been difficult to reach most of the actors for a bilateral interview or a structured survey. For the sample projects the key documented sources included project documents, monitoring and evaluation reports, and projects completion reports. The context analysis draws mainly on documented information from various sources, such as public statistics, thematic analyses, research reports, and publications of development partners.

For CSP II, the documented information is scarcer than for PLARD II. There is not even a final project document, but a proposal by ZNFU. It (final draft) is dated November 1st 2013, and the appraisal report October 2013. It is unclear whether the former includes the recommendations and changes proposed in the latter. According to MFA, there never was a final project document but the Proposal was utilized as one. There has not been a mid-term review been carried out, nor a completion report prepared. As a result of the fraud, much of the documentation is related to financial and management issues. The ZNFU approach differs from the 'conventional' programmes; therefore, the programme design and approach only were to be assessed in this evaluation.

Before the CSP II there was the first phase of support to ZNFU, known as CSP I 2009-2013. It was subject to a MTR carried out in February-March of 2012, so that evaluation does not cover the CSP II.

2 Context Analysis

2.1 Country context

Zambia has a relatively small population that since 2009 has grown by 27% to the current 17 million. In global HDI comparison, Zambia ranked 144 out of 188 countries in 2017. In the same year, the GDP/capita amounted to 3,557 USD. The government of Zambia subsidizes the farming sector substantially, which explains the relatively high use of agricultural inputs, such as fertilizers. Yet, food insecurity is commonplace, as indicated by the prevalence of undernourishment, which in 2015 affected 46.6% of the population (SOFI 2018). Zambia's lack of economic diversification and dependency on copper as its sole major export makes it vulnerable to fluctuations in the world commodities market and prices turned downward in 2015 due to declining demand from China.

Table 1. Key data on Zambia.

	Unit	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Population	million	13,5	13,8	14,3	14,7	15,2	15,6	16,1	16,6	17,1
Rural population	% of total	61,1	60,6	60,1	59,6	59,1	58,6	58,1	57,6	57
Life expectancy	years	55,2	56,6	57,8	59	60	60,1	61,4	61,9	62,3
HDI	Index	0.533	0.543	0.554	0.565	0.57	0.576	0.579	0.586	0.588
Aid per capita	USD	94,4	66,4	72,4	65,1	75,6	63,9	49,5	58	
Food production index		141,9	165,5	174,4	176,3	179,3	186,8	180,4	179,8	
Forest area of land	%	66,8	66,5	66,3	66,1	65,9	65,6	65,4		
Arable land total	%	4,8	4,6	4,8	5,1	5	5,1	5,1		
Fertilize consumption	Kg/ha of arable land	25,8	29,2	46,1	37,6	49	50,5	55,9		
Food imports	% of merchandise	6,5	4,7	5,1	5,5	4,4	4,8	5,6		
Employment in agriculture	% of total		63,4	60,7	56	55,6	54,7	53,7	53,3	53,3

Sources: World Bank, Gapminder, UNDP, FAO, 2018

Zambia had one of the world's fastest growing economies for the ten years up to 2014, with real GDP growth averaging roughly 6.7% per annum, though growth slowed during the period 2015 to 2017, due to falling copper prices, reduced power generation, and depreciation of the kwacha. Despite recent strong economic growth and its status as a lower middle-income country, widespread and extreme rural poverty and high unemployment levels remain significant problems, made worse by a high birth rate, a relatively high HIV/AIDS burden, and by market-distorting agricultural and energy policies (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018).

Context 2. Rural poverty remains high and almost static. 60% of the population still living below the poverty line, 42% living in extreme poverty, and 76.6% of the rural population lives in poverty (Central Statistical Office, 2016).

There is a particularly high concentration of poverty in the Northern, Eastern, Central, Luapula and Western Provinces, especially among smallholder subsistence farmers. Zambia ranks poorly in the Human Development Index and the prevalence of HIV among adults has contributed to an underperforming agriculture sector. The Gini coefficient's upward trend in rural areas implies both high levels of inequality and its further increase.

Context 3. Climate change is likely to bring about drastic and costly impacts on Zambia. The combined effects of increasing temperatures and decreasing rainfall present a serious challenge for rain-fed crop and livestock production.

The main water challenges in Zambia include the uneven water resources distribution across the country, high climatic variability made worse by climate change and the rapid growth of water demand for agriculture and hydropower. Parts of the Western and Southern Provinces receive less rainfall and have poorer soil fertility and higher acidity levels than other areas, requiring sustainable adaptation measures. Zambia's Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) to combat climate change include agriculture as a priority sector for mitigation and adaptation (since most greenhouse gas emissions originate from land use changes and forestry), supported by enabling legislation (Government of Zambia, 2015).

Context 4. The combination of high food insecurity, relatively low yields, high deforestation rates and localized land degradation leave Zambia particularly vulnerable to climate change.

The country is already experiencing weather variability and climate change-induced hazards, including drought and dry spells, seasonal and flash floods, extreme temperatures and changes in season onset and cessation. According to CIAT & WB (2017), some of these hazards, such as droughts and floods, have increased in frequency and intensity over the past few decades and have adversely impacted food and water security, water quality, energy and livelihoods of the people, especially in rural communities. Zambia's INDC indicates that climate variability and change have become a major threat to sustainable development in the country.

Regarding multilateral environmental agreements (MEA), the Government of Zambia ratified the UNFCCC in 1993 and signed the Kyoto Protocol in 2006. Additionally, two national communications have been submitted to the UNFCCC.

Context 5. As a Least Developed Country (LDC), Zambia developed its National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) in 2007, to address urgent and immediate adaptation needs. The programme focused on four key areas including agriculture, water and energy, natural resources (forests and wildlife) and human health, all with a relation to climate-smart agriculture (CSA).

In 2015, the Government submitted its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution, in which CSA practices such as agroforestry, fire management, water management, biogas, use of drought tolerant varieties and conservation agriculture were identified as a key intervention area to achieve mitigation and adaptation goals. The INDC builds on a number of policies, including: the National Policy on Environment (NPE), the National Climate Change Response Strategy (NCCRS), the National Forestry Policy (NFP), the National Agriculture Policy (NAP), the National Strategy for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (NS-REDD+), the Second National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP2)20, the Technology Needs Assessment (TNA) and the Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs), among others.

2.2 ARDF in the country

Half of the Zambian population depends on agriculture, primarily through small-holder production for their livelihoods and employment, and the sector was estimated to contribute 4.8% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2017, with a declining share since 2004. An estimated 34% of Zambia's total land is agricultural, with about 3% of it under irrigation. Over half of total land is classified as forest (57%), and deforestation is occurring at a rate of 1% annually.

Context 6. Zambia's farming households are predominantly small-scale farmers (82%), cultivating five hectares or less of rain-fed land. Agriculture is the rural population's main livelihood source, but the small-holder agriculture is characterized by low productivity, limited diversification and weak linkages to markets. Raising productivity and incomes in agriculture has the potential to impact significantly on both inequality and poverty due to the large proportion of farming households.

Zambia has a non-negligible group of commercially oriented farmers. They are generally large producers that are able to partnering with private sector stakeholders in response to market opportunities and to supply a sustainable quantity and quality of the required commodity and to access inputs and services on a commercial basis.

Women make up more than 70% of the agricultural labour force in Zambia and play a critical role in enhancing food security and nutrition (UNDP, 2019). In most places with high prevalence of undernourishment, women farmers have significantly less access to land, information, finance, and agricultural inputs. This makes them more vulnerable to climate shocks and affects their health and the food security and nutrition of the entire household.

Context 7. Zambia recognizes that agriculture is one of the key priority sectors in achieving sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction as outlined in the Second National Agricultural Policy (SNAP), Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP), National Agriculture Investment Plan, and Zambia CAADP Compact.

The budget for the agricultural sector in 2017 was 9.42% of the national budget, which is only slightly below the 10% recommended in the Maputo declaration. However, most of the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture is allocated to food subsidies, through the Food Reserve Agency (FRA) and Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP). It has been pointed out that these programmes mainly benefit larger and wealthier farmers (IAPRI, 2017). In order for Zambia to achieve some of its global and national commitments such as the SDGs, adequate public resources will need to be committed towards promoting rural growth and investment.

The NDP is structured around 5 pillars: 1. Economic Diversification and Job Creation, 2. Poverty and Vulnerability Reduction, 3. Reducing Developmental Inequalities, 4. Enhancing Human Development and 5. Creating a Conducive Governance Environment for a Diversified Economy, and targets five most promising sectors in terms of productivity and job creation, namely a) agriculture, including food processing b) manufacturing, c) energy, d) non-traditional mining and e) tourism.

Context 8. Zambia has both indigenous forests and forest plantations with exotic trees like pine and eucalyptus. The Zambia Forestry and Forestry Industry Corporation (ZAFFICO), a government parastatal, has more than 50,000 ha of forest plantations, while 7,000 ha are currently under other local supply plantations. Approximately 7,2 million ha of indigenous forests in 432 reserves are under government control.

However, some of these reserves have been de-gazetted in recent years for human settlement, which also involved clearing of land for agriculture, charcoal production, and other livelihoods. Agriculture is one of the main drivers of deforestation, behind charcoal production, causing forest losses of 250,000-300,000 ha every year (CIAT & World Bank, 2017).

Context 9. The potential for agricultural growth in Zambia is high. The country is uniquely endowed with resources rich for agricultural development, which could enable the country to become a major exporter of food products.

Between 2011 and 2016, the value of agricultural imports has stayed almost consistent whilst agricultural exports have been trending downwards. Despite the potential and suitability of diverse crop and livestock enterprises in the different agro-ecological zones, the country has been moving very slowly to diversify away from maize, which is grown by 83% of the farms (IFAD, 2014).

Although Zambia has been recording surpluses in staple food production, its food insecurity situation at household level remains worrisome. Several surveys measuring different aspects of food security indicate that almost 50% of the population is food insecure. Zambia's overall ranking on the Global Hunger Index (GHI) remains very low. According to the 2017 GHI, 37% of the population are estimated to be experiencing hunger.

Context 10. Private-sector participation in agricultural value chains remains constrained due to the Government's role as a major player in input and output markets, crowding out the private sector; absence of a holistic policy approach to address agribusiness development; smallholder farmers' capacity to produce adequate volumes and quality for the market; and inadequate rural infrastructure to facilitate market access (IFAD, 2019).

One of the government's efforts to promote market-oriented agriculture is the country-wide application of the electronic Farmer Input Support Programme (e-FISP). It is a system that enables greater choice of agro-inputs to support increased productivity and diversification. According to the government, the e-FISP represents a more cost-effective way of providing subsidies to smallholder farmers. By crowding in the private sector to act as the supplier of inputs, the e-FISP offers an opportunity to encourage growth of agro-dealers at both local and national levels, bringing in investment and creating jobs.

2.3 The donor landscape in support of ARDF in the country

Development aid to Zambia from traditional bilateral donors is declining (Table 2). Over the past 15 years development aid has fallen from 23 to 4% of GNI. The development aid per capita received by Zambia has declined from 94 USD in 2009 to 58 USD in 2016. About 80% of aid ends in health and social sectors. The share of aid assigned to agriculture, forestry and fisheries (AFF) has varied from 3% to 12%. Over the evaluation period, Zambia has been a highly aid-dependent country, with net ODA per capita above the average for Sub-Saharan Africa countries. Since Zambia obtained middle-income country status in 2011, the development assistance is to some extent being replaced by increased foreign direct investment and by accessing international credit markets. Emerging development partners from China and South Africa are increasing support.

Context 11. Finland's share of the total ODA to Zambia has been 2% to 5%, and 1.7% at its lowest in 2016. Finnish disbursements to AFF in Zambia have varied significantly over the years. In 2009-2012, their share of the total Finnish contribution was in double digits. In 2014 and 2016 they were insignificant.

Table 2. Official development aid to Zambia (commitments).

	Unit	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
ODA received total	mUSD	676	579	645	615	681	716	563	643
Finland ODA received	mUSD	22,16	20,53	16,54	13,06	35,38	24,58	15,99	10,98
Finland ODA from total	%	3,3	3,5	2,6	2,1	5,2	3,4	2,8	1,7
ODA to AFF total	mUSD	51,67	15,95	80,7	67,56	39,54	70,58	48,91	26,38
ODA to AFF total	%	7,6	2,8	12,5	11,0	5,8	9,9	8,7	4,1
Finland ODA to AFF	mUSD	18	2,2	8,77	9,46	2,82	0.04	3,54	0.28
Finland ODA to AFF from total	%	34,8	13,8	10,9	14,0	7,1	0.1	7,2	1,1

Source: OECD, <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=DACSECTOR#>

Context 12. Zambia has a relatively elaborate aid architecture. The Joint Assistance Strategy 2011-15 and the Division of Labour are the main aid coordination instruments.

The Strategy sets out the Cooperating Partners' support to the NDP, provides the medium-term framework to realize the aid principles, and aligns development to the aid policy and strategy. Country dialogue is carried out at various levels of Government. The Cooperating Partner Group leads the high-level dialogue with Government. The CP Group is led by a Troika that currently includes Ireland, UK, and US (AfDB, 2017).

Context 13. In agriculture, livestock and fisheries the leading development partners in Zambia are the United States, lead of the respective Cooperating Partner Group, AfDB, and Japan. Until its withdrawal from the ARD sector, Finland has participated in, and also led, the Agriculture Cooperating Partners group. Finland has led the CP Group in environment and natural resources, with members from AfDB, EU, Germany, Japan, UK, US, and the UN.

2.2 Finland's support to ARDF

2.2.1 Country strategies

Context 14. Finland's development cooperation in Zambia during the evaluation period falls under two country strategies, Country Strategy (CS) for Development Cooperation in 2014 – 2017 (MFA 2015) and 2016–2019 (MFA 2017). The traditional development cooperation between Finland and Zambia is ending, and new means to achieve more broadly-based economic relations between the countries are developed.

The CS 2016 – 2019 was designed to transform Finnish-Zambian relations into economic and trade-based collaboration, and to move to more diversified forms of cooperation. During this period, support to ARDF has been phased out.

Context 15. Objectives of both CSs are aligned with the Zambian government's development objectives, Zambia's Revised Sixth National Development Plan (R-SNDP) for 2013–2016 and Seventh National Development Plan 2017-202, respectively.

Context 16. Since 2013, Finland has supported four sectors, namely (i) agriculture, (ii) private sector development, (iii) environment and natural resources and (iv) good governance and accountability.

These sectors were chosen based on country level division of labor (Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia II, JASZ II) as well as both Finland's and Zambia's development policies while also taking into account Finland's strengths and added value.

Context 17. In the 2014 – 2017 CS, support to agriculture is to contribute to the R-SNDP’s objective “To facilitate and support the development of a sustainable, diversified and a competitive agricultural sector that assures food security at national and household levels and maximizes the sector’s contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP).”

The justification for the support was continuation of the long-term support in the sector, as well as agriculture having the greatest potential to address rural poverty and inequality, as most of the poor are in the rural areas and dependent on the sector for their livelihoods. Focus is especially on smallholder farmers, as they had not significantly benefited from the recent economic growth. This was due to dependency on rain-fed agriculture, low yields to generate marketable surplus, limited levels of diversification, and them mainly growing subsidized maize, which distorts the market and prevents them from moving into more profitable crop varieties. Finland aligned its support to enhance smallholder production and productivity, agricultural commercialization (farming as a business) and agricultural diversification through irrigation development. Finland’s support for agriculture is described more in detail in the sub-chapter 2.4.2.

Context 18. Finland has provided long-term support in environmental matters, especially in the forestry sector.

Environment and natural resources sectors have been selected as one of the primary sectors for Finland’s development cooperation due to the considerable challenges in the sector, especially related to deforestation which was considered one of the most alarming in the world. In the sector, public and private actors, CSOs and communities have been supported, to enhance government’s capacity to address environmental management challenges and to promote climate sustainability.

Context 19. Regarding private sector development, Finland aligned its support to focus more directly on strengthening a conducive business environment for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and promoting inclusive innovation and skills development in order to create decent green and formal jobs.

Context 20. The Country Strategy evaluation (MFA 2016) found that, despite progress in some areas, delays and other challenges in implementation have reduced the practical relevance of some interventions, especially in the agriculture and environment sectors. Following the recommendations of the evaluation and given the budget constraints, the support was streamlined.

Context 21. In the CS 2016 – 2019, support for agriculture as well as the environment and natural resource sectors is phased out.

The focus is shifted to developing a more dynamic and responsible private sector; and developing a more democratic, inclusive and better functioning society. Expected outcomes include accelerated growth of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) through innovations and start-up ecosystems; increased access to finance and markets; and extension of basic social protection to MSMEs and workers to contribute to the formalization of the economy.

Context 22. The CS 2014 – 2017 strongly features importance of HRBA and addressing CCOs.

Finland is to strengthen its HRBA in sector cooperation through a review of the HRBA in all project cycle stages from appraisal to final evaluations, capacity development of programme staff and by providing internal and possible external expertise. Cross-cutting objectives are to be integrated into all stages of each intervention following the three-pronged approach of mainstreaming, targeted actions and policy dialogue, in which the mainstreaming is the minimum requirement. Concrete measures include: direct support to vulnerable groups through matching grants; innovative interventions addressing gender and cultural barriers, such as promotion of labour saving technologies/ services and ICT- mobile phone -based extension; and facilitate women’s access to land, markets and credit.

2.2.2 ARDF in country strategies

Context 23. Finland's ARDF -related support within the 2014 – 2017 CS falls mainly under the Country Development Result 1: “To facilitate and support the development of a sustainable, diversified and a competitive agricultural sector that assures food security at national and household levels and maximizes the sector's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP).” (R-SNDP) Finland's support is focusing on increased agricultural production and productivity among smallholders contributing to improved household income.

This means improved access to resources and use of improved and sustainable agricultural technologies by smallholder farmers; and development of sustainable, efficient and professionally managed small-scale irrigation schemes for smallholder farmers. Investing in smallholder farmers is considered in the CS as one of the most effective ways to fight rural poverty.

Improvements in smallholder agricultural production and productivity are considered important in the CS in achieving inclusive economic growth, improving household food and nutrition security, and reducing poverty. In addition, distorted markets created by subsidies have reduced government's budget to respond e.g. to creating agricultural extension services that promote private sector and farmer-led extension services.

Context 24. In order to increase production and productivity, Finland's support concentrated on working with and improving the capacity of smallholder farmers to use sustainable and improved farming technologies such as conservation agriculture and supporting both the private and public sector in the development and provision of innovative agricultural services.

Support also includes increasing land under irrigation. Irrigation development is to increase resilience to climate change, improve yields and enable smallholders to diversify and produce all year round. Finland supports this through the development of commercially viable irrigation schemes and strengthening the capacity of farmers to professionally manage, operate and maintain the irrigation infrastructure.

Smallholder farmers need business and technical skills, modern agricultural inputs, productive assets and better markets in order to engage in profitable farming businesses.

Context 25. Interventions targeted at improving access to land are also important in encouraging on-farm medium to long term investments and the use of sustainable agricultural technologies by smallholder farmers.

A key issue is to recognize the critical role that women play in agriculture, ensuring that women and vulnerable groups can participate in and benefit from the interventions.

Context 26. The phasing out period, in the 2016 – 2019 CS, still included some limited support related to improved natural resource management at local level, especially related to environment.

Finland is to contribute to supporting improved capacity of environmental and forestry administrations, CSOs and communities for sustainable management of natural resources and pollution control; and strengthening monitoring and reporting systems for environmental protection. Justification for the support is that a large proportion of wealth in Zambia is tied to environmental assets: fertile soil, clean water, biomass and biodiversity. Unsustainable use and management of natural resources and inadequate control of environmental hazards threaten the country's development.

Context 27. Finland supports the strengthening of national monitoring and reporting systems in environmental management, and the development of Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) systems of forest resources for national and local level planning, not only from the watch-dog and prevention point of view, but also to obtain up-to-date information on the state of the environment.

This is expected to contribute to increasing institutional capacity for poverty alleviation and climate change adaptation.

Context 28. Support is channeled through CSOs, as they are considered an important resource for awareness raising and sustainable use and management of environment and natural resources, to hold the government and non-state actors accountable and advocate for the development of better environmental policies and legislation and improve livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable households. In addition, The Decentralized Forest and Other Natural Resources Management programme implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Lands, Natural Resources and Environmental Protection as well as the Civil Society Environment Fund, is supported during the phasing out period.

During the evaluation period other instruments have included the Development of Small-scale Irrigation Systems and the Small Holder Production Promotion Programme, and support to UN Green Jobs Programme, launched in 2013. It aims to create formal decent and green jobs in the building construction sector, bringing together all three pillars of sustainable development as well as inclusive innovation.

2.2.3 ARDF support projects included in the evaluation

The evaluation includes two bilateral programmes in Zambia, namely the PLARD II (Programme for Luapula Agricultural and Rural Development) and the Core Support Programme II (CSP II) for Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU), implemented between 2011 and 2017 (Table 3).

In February 2019, the GoF disclosed the decision to terminate bilateral development cooperation with Zambia (Mattinen, J., 2019). The final disbursements will take place in 2023.

Table 3. Key characteristics of PLARD II and CSP II projects.

Country and region	Project name and project purpose	Main components or result areas	Duration Previous and following phases	Budget (total, MFA contribution, other contributions)	Implementing agency	Evaluations
Zambia, Luapula Province	PLARD II - Programme for Luapula Agricultural and Rural Development. Raise Incomes through (i) developing farms as a business and (ii) improving businesses (producers, traders, processors) involved in the rice value chain in Luapula	1. Agribusiness. 2. Agriculture. 3. Capture fisheries. 4. Aquaculture. 5. Institutional and organisational development.	1/2011 – 8/2015 First phase 2006-2010.	Total 21,6 mEUR. MFA 10,4 mEUR. GRZ 11,2 mEUR.	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL).	MTR 7/2013
Zambia	ZNFU Core Support Programme II. Strengthened ZNFU with improved sustainability, strong leadership and organizational structures providing effective member representation and services.	1. Strengthened ZNFU institutional / organisational capacity. 2. Improved and diversified members services. 3. Strengthened ZNFU lobby and advocacy. 4. Effectively	2014 – 2017 First phase 2009-2013.	Total 27,3 mUSD. MFA 10 mUSD. Sweden 7,8 mUSD. W-effect 1,84 mUSD. ZNFU 7,7 mUSD.	ZNFU.	

Country and region	Project name and project purpose	Main components or result areas	Duration Previous and following phases	Budget (total, MFA contribution, other contributions)	Implementing agency	Evaluations
		mainstreamed gender, environment and HIV/AIDs issues.				

Source: PLARD II, 2015; PLARD II, 2010; ZNFU, 2013.

Finland has provided support to the development of the Agricultural Sector in Luapula since the early 1980s. Initial Finnish assistance, in the form of fertilizers provision, developed into the provision of technical assistance and grants that contributed to new agricultural production methods. These interventions targeting smallholder farmers focused on the use of fertilizer, improved seeds and better crop husbandry. The Agricultural Extension Programme, with its three subsequent phases, was implemented under different names until 2000. The evaluation of the early support is covered in some detail in the Evaluation of Bilateral Development Co-operation in Rural Sector between Finland and Zambia (MFA, 1998a). There was thereafter a gap of some 3-4 years before a new support programme was initiated. The Programme Framework Document (PFD) subsequently prepared as the basis for the start of PLARD I was prepared in 2005 and PLARD I commenced in January 2006 starting with a one-year Inception Phase. A complete programme document for the full implementation of PLARD I was completed in 2007 and covers the activities until end of phase I, December 2010 (PLARD II, 2010).

The Mid Term Review (MTR) of PLARD I and the formulation phase for PLARD II were fielded during May-September 2009. The MTR Report provided a foundation for PLARD II design and the formulation phase resulted in a first draft programme document submitted in November 2009. In line with MFA Finland procedures, an external appraisal of the formulation phase and subsequent adjustment of the programme design took place in the period May – June 2010 and led to the final programme document.

The ZNFU Core Support Programme (CSP) II 2014-2017 was a successor programme to the first CSP, which operated from 2009 to 2013. The MTR of that project recommended continuing core support mode of the support.

In 2013, ZNFU membership was 42,258 where women constituted 33.9% of the total. Among the main reasons why farmers were becoming members were services such as the LIMA programme and the financial services it provided. Some of the notable lobby and advocacy initiatives undertaken by ZNFU included (1) regulated exports of maize bran, (2) regulated importation of crude edible oils, (3) improved road work's in agricultural productive areas among others (WeEffect, 2014).

ZNFU has been supported by various donors in the past. The Joint Funding Arrangement partners for the CSP II were the MFA Finland, Swedish SIDA and We-Effect. The latter is owned by 60 Swedish cooperative and/or customer-owned companies and it was formerly known as the Swedish Cooperative Centre. In CSP II, MFA Finland was first the lead organisation in the partnership, later followed by SIDA. According to the appraisal report, the CSP II background information is limited, and it is not straightforward to find this information. A programme problem analysis is found in the Strategic Plan and Budget 2012-2016.

CSP II was terminated in 2016, after a fraud and misuse of funds at ZNFU had been discovered in 2015. MFA has requested the reimbursement of the funds in question. ZNFU has partially challenged the request and the case is currently in the Administrative Court of Helsinki.

3 Findings

3.1 Contribution to the SDGs and comparative advantages

EQ1: How can Finnish co-operation efforts best contribute to the achievement of the SDGs - as well as other relevant international agreements - through ARDF sectors making optimal use of its comparative advantages?

Finding 1. Finnish comparative advantages, especially in Forestry, have partly shaped the MFA portfolio in Zambia, but other factors, such as Finnish long-term commitment to ARD have played a role. At the project level, a more systematic alignment with Zambia's SDG related development policies could have enhanced the relevance of Finnish contributions to them.

Zambia's Seventh National Development Plan for the period 2017–2021 is the country's roadmap to achieving the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. 7NDP is driven by the overarching objectives to promote sustainable and inclusive growth and decent job creation (SDG 8), reduce inequalities and vulnerability (SDG 10) and enhance human development (particularly in health and education, SDGs 3 and 4) and create a conducive governance environment (SDG 16). Zambia has shown a consistent interest in renewable energy investments (SDG 7). It has recently enacted a renewable energy feed in tariff strategy and is preparing the ground to facilitate off-grid investments. In the SDG Index Dashboard Report 2018 Zambia ranks 129 out of 156 countries. A Voluntary National Review (VNR) of the SDGs is planned for 2020 (European Union).

The SDGs were not defined at the time when the PLARD and CSP operated, but correspondences can be assessed if the MDGs and SDGs are considered as a continuum. The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) did not play an explicit role in the CSP II design, but, overall, the project addressed the first MDG, eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (ZNFU, 2013). According to IFAD (2014), the country was on track to achieve most of its MDGs but its overall level of social and economic development was still quite low (ranked 163 out of 187 countries on the global Human Development Index in 2010). In the case of PLARD II, according to the project document, it would directly contribute to four of the eight Millennium Development Goals, namely eradication of poverty and hunger, promotion of gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS, and ensuring environmental sustainability (PLARD II, 2010).

The MFA Country Strategy for Development Cooperation with Zambia 2014–2017 defined that Finland will render support to inclusive growth and economic diversification in Zambia through working in three sectors: agriculture, private sector development and environment & natural resources. These sectors were chosen based on both Finnish and Zambian development priorities, on the country level division of labour as well as the Finnish strengths and experience.

The evaluation of the Finland' Country Strategy for Zambia (MFA, 2016b) found that Finland's agriculture sector support in the Zambian country context is fully consistent with the Zambian policy frameworks and with those of other partners. The interviewees of the evaluation stressed the high relevance of Finland's support in these sectors and valued especially Finland's long-term commitment and strong sector leadership when leading the CP coordination groups.

Finding 2. The Evaluation of Agriculture in the Finnish Development Cooperation (MFA, 2010) concluded that there was limited evidence of poverty reduction and it was not easy to see where Finland had clear expertise in agriculture – this is in contrast to other areas such as forestry and education where Finland had a clear comparative advantage.

According to an MFA informant, the province of Luapula was selected as the focal geographical area of the Finnish ARD support because its high level of poverty, and not because of Finnish comparative advantage. Finland emphasized its long-term partnership there and, perhaps, that new phases in the series of projects

there would find an effective approach that would deliver results. The importance of the Finnish support to Zambian forestry is underlined by the fact that virtually no other DP is contributing that sector.

3.2 Role of a value chain approach to increase finance and investment in sustainable forestry and agriculture

EQ2: Under what conditions can a value chain approach increase finance and investment in sustainable forestry and agriculture- while benefiting final beneficiaries in a sustainable way?

Finding 3. The Value Chain Approach has been an important framework for ARDF development in Zambia. Its materialization has been limited by a deficient enabling environment, including poor linkages within the public administration, and a lack of needed support services. VCA implementation through out-grower schemes can be beneficial to farmers but it often causes inequalities within the communities, side-lining women from the value adding processes.

A value chain can be defined as the full range of activities, which are required to bring a product or service from conception, through the different phases of production (involving a combination of physical transformation and the input of various producer services), delivery to final customers, and final disposal after use (Hellin, J. & Meijer, M., 2006).

Finding 4. Value chain development was identified in the Sixth National Development Plan as a means to contributing towards national food security, employment creation and increased income from exports. However, according to IFAD (2014), the mechanisms for agribusiness and value chain development as a means of poverty reduction were constrained by several factors, including limited availability of infrastructure and poor access to market information, but also a political culture that does not enable a competitive, productive and transparent private sector environment for agribusiness development. Other challenges include macroeconomic instability, shortage of appropriate rural finance, high costs and unreliability of transport and power, low levels of irrigation development, land tenure issues.

While the potential for agriculture is high, the VCA in Zambia has faced important challenges at the outset (Context 9). An example is the maize value chain in the Northern Province (adjacent Luapula where PLARD operated), studied by FAO and AfDB (2019). It remains fragmented and there is no specific institution to make the different actors come together. Farmer cooperatives exist in number at camp level, but governance seems to be weak and resources are scarce. Many cooperatives are said to have been founded with a view merely to gain access to the FISP. However, there is little coordination between them, NPCMU possibly being more involved in providing storage and milling capacities and ZNFU working towards facilitating credit access for farmers and sharing information. Farmers lack reliable access to the market; consequently, they have no incentive to increase production. With one major market player dominating to such an extent that farmers are left without any alternative, they are ill-equipped to take advantage of the opportunities that exist in the Southern Africa region. Commercialization of production is mainly done on an individual basis. Little capacity exists at the cooperative level, which weakens their bargaining power and limits their ability to access better services.

In Zambia, the promotion of private investment in agriculture is a central part of government efforts to enhance economic development (Context 7, Context 10). Out-grower schemes are one investment method, promoted primarily through the Farm Block Development Programme. They are a form of contract farming in which smallholder farmers grow crops under production contracts with large-scale enterprises, in exchange for crop price guarantees, inputs, such as fertilizer and seeds and other services. In 2004, between 35 and 40% of Zambia's nearly one million smallholders were participating in out-grower scheme arrangements (Matenga, 2017).

There are a number of potential development benefits for smallholder farmers involved in out-grower schemes, including employment, input support, guaranteed market access and infrastructure and/or grants for

community projects. (see also Finding 3) From the large-scale investors' perspective, out-grower schemes provide secure supply from local farmers, who are often the most efficient agricultural producers. Out-grower schemes also displace production risk to farmers. Matenga (2017) studied a sugar cane out-grower scheme. He concluded that, for the Zambia Sugar Company, it has been massively beneficial, as the company has been able to expand land under cultivation, gain access to water resources and attract investment aid funding from the EU, as well as gain tax breaks from the Zambian state, all on the back of a claimed commitment to poverty reduction and pro-poor agriculture. For the contract farmers and their households, the consequences have been more mixed. Sugar dividends tend to be captured by men, and increasingly an elite, often not connected to the local area, who have, through a range of means, gained access to the sugar land. While the rise in incomes from sugar is acknowledged by many, if spread too thinly, sugar income may only allow for simple reproduction, thus not leading to accumulation for investment.

Women are generally disadvantaged in terms of their place in the value chain, which in most cases, is at the lower, less lucrative node of the value chain. According to FAO (2018a), most women market their maize at farm gates or as traders. They do not process the maize to get value for their labour.

Finding 5. Finnish ARDF programmes have in principle relied on VCA, but have not been able to implement it comprehensively and consistently. Value chain development continues to be a strategic approach of key development partners, such as IFAD, although their experiences point out that investments in value chains is a complex task.

VCA is not a new concept in MFA. FINNIDA's unpublished "Finnish Development Co-operation in the Agricultural Sector in the 1990's" defined production chain approach as one of the strategic principles. It determined the development of agro-industries and support services as two of the five priority areas (MFA, 1998b). A sectoral evaluation in 2010 reminded that value chain development is not to restrict itself to activities from farmer to final consumer within the chain, but also to include activities from producer of agro inputs to farmers as final consumers (MFA, 2010). Finnish supported forestry projects have applied landscape approach as a strategic framework.

Neither of the assessed project documents and strategies has an appropriate and functional definition of a value chain. PLARD II project document states that "the strategy of the agribusiness component has two elements. The first is to support farmer groups in developing their farms as businesses. The second element is to support the rice sub sector using a value chain approach." ZNFU would also use a value chain approach in supporting the selected commodity/specialized associations. In addition to this the Union will heavily depend on Technical Assistance and backstopping from organizations and consultants (ZNFU, 2013).

Finding 6. In supporting value chains, PLARD II focused on the primary production, with much less attention to other stages of the chain.

The MTR observed that, while productivity and production levels have increased, particularly for cassava, beans, and groundnuts, there has not been a commensurate enhancement of market development and hence the farmers still got a low price with very little value addition (MFA, 2013).

However, a beginning was made with identifying agribusiness potentials and how to support agribusiness groups and link with agribusiness and service providers. PLARD II split its focus over an array of activities, including various financing schemes to facilitate trading and processing, and procurement of equipment and inputs for a number of productive purposes.

In contrast to PLARD II, CSP II was not a value chain project at its core. It did not include terms such as 'value chains', 'agribusiness', or 'commercialization' in the formulation of their purposes or result areas. There are no many reported achievements related to value chains. ZNFU's lobby and advocacy initiatives contributed to revision of government decisions on regulated exports. Due to the financial fraud in ZNFU discovered in 2015, the organisation is unlikely to raise interest of sponsors in the foreseeable future.

Finding 7. Among other development partners, IFAD has been strongly promoting investments in agribusiness and value chain development. They are one of IFAD's strategic objectives in Zambia, and

the Fund has recognized VCA as a valid approach for poverty reduction and agriculture sector development in the country.

However, IFAD Country Programme evaluation (2014) concluded that, despite progress, the value chain development potential has not fully realized. Investment in value chains is complex, requires a relatively high level of expertise, and involves a larger number of stakeholders (from primary production to consumption) compared to other investments. Weak prospects for sustainability in most IFAD-supported projects in Zambia represented a key issue of concern.

In IFAD's current Country Strategy (IFAD, 2019), the strategic objective 2 is to develop efficient nutrition-sensitive agricultural value chains that increase the participation of smallholder farmers in markets and create employment opportunities. To do this, a number of conditions and activities are needed, including capacity-building at the central, provincial and local levels of government, as well as among farmers and value-chain stakeholders, and development of multi-stakeholder platforms to facilitate dialogue among value chain players. Climate change adaptation activities need to improve risk analysis along prioritized value chains.

Finding 8. In PLARD II, financing in some value chains did increase, although it is impossible to present even rough estimates of the magnitude. The available data do not allow to approximate how third-party funding to Finnish-supported ARDF value chains has evolved. It is probable that in some cases it has decreased, as evidenced by withering of certain value chains supported by PLARD II.

Agribusiness was planned to receive increased attention under PLARD II, including "Farming as a Business" (FAB) and value chain development, with an intention to access additional services through outsourcing. The mid-term review found that this process was significantly delayed (MFA, 2013). PLARD II did not manage to involve private sector and no market linkages were facilitated. Agribusiness groups (ABG) were not adequately supported and only few were established. Local value-adding opportunities were not properly identified and, apart from the value chain study, VC strategies were not developed.

For agribusiness development, the PLARD II planned its approach as bottom-up starting at community level, with the line ministry staff at field level the Camp Extension Officers (CEOs) as key facilitators. Following the project document, an agribusiness service provider was to be tendered at the start of PLARD II. The component also contains a Value Chain Study, which was undertaken at the start of the programme for cassava and rice only. However, the Programme Document was not clear with regard to who should implement the Value Chain. The agribusiness service provider was not recruited although a lot of work was done to identify what procedures to be followed. In value chains support, PLARD II had problems in engaging private companies that had human resources of sufficient quantity and quality. Hopes were placed in food product demand in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo, but exports did not materialize. Even with studies carried out at the outset, it is not clear if PLARD II operated with sufficient understanding of structures, dynamisms and vulnerabilities of households, communities, and markets.

According to the mid-term review, PLARD II had potential to become sustainable only if it addressed the business side of production. If this side was not developed, the programme would not be able to gain any impact in form of raising the income level, and the food security level among fishers would remain low. The farmers, fishers, vendors and small agro-businesses had very limited understanding of the advantages gained by using financial services i.e. saving and credit. The original plan to launch a credit component outside the PLARD II was therefore still highly relevant - to address the need of financial services to farmers and to agro-businesses.

The PLARD programme was planned to be complemented with a separate credit scheme to be implemented by the commercial bank NatSave. The plan was to provide credit for trading and processing with a view to promote agribusiness and fisheries trading and processing activities. This type of credit sub-component would include loans intended to promote the marketing of agricultural produce and supplying of agricultural and fisheries inputs (e.g. loans for working capital, storage facilities, fishing gear, acquisition of transport for marketing). It would also include loans to facilitate value addition like loans for acquisition of rice dehulling mills, fish freezing equipment, oil expellers, hammer-mills and other agro processing and fish processing equipment.

The MTR of 2013 discovered serious omissions in the VC support by PLARD II. According to the internal review most of the planned activities had not been implemented: 1) the costs and benefits of various options had not been yet fully analysed and documented; 2) there had been little involvement of the private sector; 3) the agribusiness groups (ABG) had not been supported and only four have been established so far; 4) no market linkage facilitated; 5) no value chain had been supported; 6) local value-adding opportunities had not well-enough been identified; 7) apart from the value chain study, the opportunities had not been systematically mapped, nor strategies developed; 8) only few had benefitted from the opportunities.

Finding 9. The most universally acknowledged success story of the PLARD II was the design and establishment of the Commodity Study Groups (CSGs).

This approach to extension was appreciated by farmers and extension agents alike and it was consistent with the Department of Agriculture's policy that extension approaches should be participatory and based on groups. Work continued with the 533 CSGs inherited from PLARD I and a further 300 were planned. Inputs were procured and supplied to the existing CSGs and commuted allowances were provided to Block Extension Officers (BEO) and CEOs. The main problem here was that allowances for extension staff would consume most of the budget available for this activity (PLARD II, 2011).

Regarding the achieved results in value chains:

- Supa rice seed procured from Mongu District in Western Province was introduced in the 2014/15 agricultural season for demonstrations with selected farmers (46 farmer groups were trained (1,017 men and 583 women). As well as supplying improved seed, farmers were trained in rice production techniques and the importance of maintaining pure seed stock for the subsequent seasons. To help farmers produce clean rice in a timely manner, the programme purchased portable threshers and grain cleaners.
- PLARD II supported a groundnut value chain study to develop a guide for potential investors and development organisations with a view to helping expand this vital, traditional, but underdeveloped, commodity for the market.
- ABGs were linked to key buyers, including Shoprite, for vegetable production and WFP's Purchase for Progress (P4P) project that supported local buying of beans for the schools' supplementary feeding programme. Furthermore, the work done with CSGs on the introduction of two other lucrative crops – i.e. Irish potato and Supa rice – strengthened the farmers' marketing position. The introduction of mechanisation, e.g. through animal draft power (ADP), provided farmers with the capacity needed for market-oriented production.

An increasing number of farmers (including women and women groups) expressed interest in topics that they found important from a market-oriented point of view: e.g. marketing and market linkages, farm planning and budgeting, as well as group administration and management issues. Many farmers observed that their farming skills had improved and started to look for more rewarding cash crops (and more productive technologies to produce them).

Even in cases where agricultural work is divided between men and women, the women often have no right to own or control assets, such as land and livestock. Women find themselves in an unequal position compared to men in terms of access to land, which is not without consequence on the place they occupy in farming and forestry. The project document of PLARD II paid particular attention and allocated adequate resources to the cross-cutting themes, particularly gender, HIV/AIDS and vulnerable groups and environment/climate change. A substantial amount of work was planned to be outsourced, particularly concerning HIV/AIDS and vulnerable people's issues. The outsourcing, however, did not succeed.

Finding 10. It is likely that the work of ZNFU has increased investments in value chains in various parts of the country. The legitimacy and representativeness of ZNFU among its membership base has contributed to this effect. The Finnish support has contributed to this process, but because of the nature of the core support it is not possible to estimate the exact role of the Finnish contribution and

draw respective lessons. The abrupt ending of the CSP II makes it difficult to capture experiences ex-post.

There is no documented information about the value chain approach applied in CSP II. In the CSP II project proposal it was planned that ZNFU would also use a value chain approach in supporting the selected commodity/specialized associations. In addition to this, the Union would heavily depend on technical assistance and backstopping from organizations and consultants. There is no available documented information on the results of the ZNFUs work on value chains. According to the Finnish Embassy, ZNFU was active in providing financial services to small-scale producers, and the reimbursement rates of the loans were satisfactory. ZNFU developed new financing mechanisms for procurement of agricultural inputs. They also implemented activities to strengthen transportation capacities, facilitate cross-the-border trade, and dissemination and use of market information (Starckman. M., 2019).

According to an interviewee, ZNFU's performance has varied as a result of changes in its top management. The time that coincided with CSP I was considered 'good', whereas during the CSP II ZNFU's focus on financial autonomy overrode the strive for results.

Smallholder farmers require access to financing to improve productivity through use of external inputs. However, financiers in Zambia are reluctant to provide financing as smallholder farmers generally lack repayment ability, and traditional collateral in the form of agricultural land is limited in Zambia. Better cooperation and coordination between farmers and financial institutions would be needed to enhance improved financing. As a response, ZNFU looked for innovative solutions to provide services to its members. Among them was the Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP) e-voucher pilot that was designed to shift from the conventional FISP (centralized procurement and physical distribution of inputs) to an e-voucher system. It was a prepaid VISA card platform, which allowed beneficiaries to purchase inputs of their choice through preselected point of sale terminals. In line with the above shift, 13 Districts targeting 241,000 beneficiaries were selected to pilot the FISP E-voucher mode of inputs subsidy management (MAL-ZNFU FISP e-voucher pilot, 2016).

3.3 Integrating cross-cutting objectives and HRBA

EQ3: How can cross-cutting objectives and HRBA be successfully integrated and implemented in such a way that they support achievement of the Finnish development cooperation objectives and objectives of the ARDF interventions?

Finding 11. In Zambia there are gender challenges that have negatively affected women's full participation in decision-making at the level of economy and agricultural development. These include women's comparatively low level of education, their lack of support from political parties, lack of financial and other resources, structures disfavoring women, and cultural norms and values.

Zambia government has made some progress in mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment in the agriculture and rural sector. This includes allocation of financial resources to push forward the agenda of gender equality in agriculture and various initiatives to improve women's productive capacities and strengthen their resilience to shocks. According to FAO (2018a), women's participation at wholesale markets remains limited due to intimidation by men brokers who create an unfriendly environment that makes marketing of products by women very complicated and harsh.

A study of Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP) carried out by the Ministry of Gender and Child Development (MGCD) revealed the persistent lack of effective agricultural policies (policy rhetoric), and follow-through and practice on the ground at implementation level regarding gender equality and equity. In FISP, the selection criteria (the ability to pay 50% upfront), which marginalises women from accessing inputs did not consider the poverty situation of women compared to men in rural areas. The subsidised fertilizer loans under the FISP are distributed through cooperatives despite the fact that female membership in cooperatives is generally low because of gender dynamics at both household and community levels. The

result was that inputs were being disproportionately distributed in favour of men. It also noted that there was inadequate supply of inputs to women-only cooperatives. There was a lack of gender disaggregated data on the beneficiaries of FISP. Additionally, the study showed that there was a lack of gendered monitoring and evaluation to assess the extent to which women and men participate in and benefit from FISP.

Finding 12. Both sample programmes demonstrate adequate awareness of gender equality in their plans (see Context 22). The implementation fell short in PLARD II whereas CSP II was more effective, although its exact record in gender equality is not reported. PLARD II challenges in gender equality related to excessive reliance on outsourcing, and lack of gender focus in the programme structure and management, both in the programme and the government institutions.

The cross-cutting issues included in the PLARD II design were:

- promotion of the rights and the status of women and girls, and promotion of gender and social equality,
- promotion of the rights of groups that are easily excluded, particularly children, people with disabilities, indigenous people and ethnic minorities,
- promotion of equal opportunities for participation,
- combating HIV/AIDS; HIV/AIDS as a health problem and as a social problem.

Finding 13. PLARD II had the cross-cutting issues spread throughout the project document in this way and only appearing in the logframe indicators of some of the components, made planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluating these activities difficult.

In the PLARD II Project Support Unit (PSU), the coordination of the cross-cutting issues fell under the responsibility of a Finnish JPO who worked with a number of counterparts and focal points in MAL provincial and district offices. This implementation structure was combined with instability of focal points in the districts and province and, to some extent, an inadequate level of mainstreaming capacity among the key staff affected the achievements. However, many stakeholders felt that the proportion of PLARD II funding applied to cross-cutting issues was unusually high for an agriculture and fisheries programme (PLARD II, 2011). The general concern of limited communication among the province, districts and PSU also affected the implementation of cross-cutting issues. Implementation plans for district level activities were not produced or, if they were produced, they did not pass the approval process with the implementers receiving neither money nor feedback.

According to the project proposal (ZNFU, 2013), CSP II was designed to help ZNFU come up with tangible and deliberate strategic measures that will help:

- Increase the number of female farmers accessing ZNFU services and resources;
- Improve female farmers' representation at all ZNFU leadership levels; and
- Increase ZNFU environmental protection activities and climate change smart services amongst others.

CSP II would thus put in place pragmatic measures that would enable the Union to integrate gender, HIV/AIDS and environmental protection issues.

As a strategy for gender and environment mainstreaming, in addition to measures of establishing the Women Farmers Forum, promoting farm forestry, having a dedicated senior staff member to oversee the mainstreaming cross cutting issues involving gender and environment, the Union intended to do the following under CSP II:

- As a concrete action towards gender integration, CSP II will ensure full institutionalization and operationalization of the Women Farmers' Forum structures at all ZNFU levels;
- Promotion of women response targeting mechanisms and specific services for women farmers;

- Ensuring that issues of specific interest to women farmers will be incorporated into the ZNFU, Commodity Associations (CA) and District Farmer Associations (DFA) lobby agenda;
- Facilitate the formation of the ZNFU Farm Forestry National Commodity Committee;
- Developing a ZNFU programme monitoring and evaluation (PME) system that will have very specific gender aggregated and environmental protection sensitive key performance indicators (KPI).

ZNFU, through its decentralized District Farmers Associations (DFAs), is playing an organizing role in the marketing of producer commodities for its members. However, the women are not equally represented in the DFA decision-making processes to adequately push the gender agenda in marketing at this level. It is very important to ensure equal representation and participation of women in the DFAs since women have mobility and security challenges in going beyond their local area to market their produce.

The high prevalence of HIV/AIDS remains a major health and social problem, especially in large cities, requiring sustainable government source of financing. According to the project document, PLARD II would allocate substantial resources for HIV/AIDS awareness raising and for working directly with people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWSHA) and other vulnerable groups, with a view of building their confidence and capacity to become active participants in the “mainstream” of economic life. This was supposed to be achieved through contracting a specialised service provider. One channel of support was going to be a saving and credit scheme for these people. The decision to outsource the implementation of the activities related to the cross-cutting objectives was not fortunate. Very little was done with the CCOs as the major part of this was to be outsourced. Instead of major outsourcing of cross-cutting activities, they needed special attention and special budget within PLARD II main implementation organisation.

Finding 14. Operationalising a human rights-based approach in a programme like PLARD II has been a serious challenge. In the absence of respective guidance and know-how, results on human rights in a ARDF project are likely to be modest. The task has been further aggravated by a non-conducive socio-political environment. CSP II made positive contribution to human rights through the support to ZNFU, a democratically governed CSO. At the same time, ZNFU management disappointed its members severely in their basic right to rely on accountability and integrity in the organisation that represents their interests.

Respect of human rights has decreased and the democratic space has shrunk, particularly in terms of freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom of the media. According to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Sweden (2018), corruption and shortcomings in terms of accountability affect poor people particularly badly.

Human rights were quite well reflected in the project document of PLARD II but not necessarily in the implementation. The most critical issues were that the actions planned for vulnerable people were not implemented and that the final beneficiaries were not involved in planning and M&E. The Baseline Study results could help defining who the most vulnerable people were and what PLARD II could do to support their livelihoods. However, the prevailing lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities affected PLARD II's accountability. In addition, the indicators did not adequately reflect the progress made in the adoption of the human rights.

3.4 Key success factors for reducing poverty and inequality

EQ4: What are key success factors for achievement of 'reduced poverty and inequality', in particular in terms of benefits for women, vulnerable groups, and small and medium-size farmers?

Finding 15. PLARD II had no effect on poverty reduction, although the programme reported improvements. On the contrary, the poverty situation worsened in the Luapula province during the time the programme was operational. The ineffectiveness in poverty reduction may have resulted from inadequate overall attention to it, and a false assumption on how agri-business development can

reduce poverty, and inadequate access to markets. CSP II may have had an indirect positive impact in reducing poverty, but this cannot be verified. The sample projects in Zambia do not provide lessons for success factors for reducing poverty and inequalities.

Poverty is a persistent phenomenon in the Zambian society, as pointed out in the chapter on the context (see Context 2). In addition, there are significant provincial variations in poverty levels. According to Mphuka, Kaonga & Tembo (2017), Western province has the highest proportion of people living below the poverty line at 84% followed by Luapula and Northern at 83%. In Luapula province poverty has increased: the incidence increased by 8%, poverty depth increased by 7% and severity increased by 7% from 2006 to 2015. In rural areas as a whole, the proportion of people living under poverty line reduced by 3%, from 81% in 2006 to 78% in 2015. It seems that the more rural a province is, the higher is the proportion living below the poverty line. However, the poverty gap is more responsive to growth in the agriculture sector compared to other sectors. Lwanda & van Ufford (2013) found that there are two provincial exceptions to overall stagnant poverty levels: in Luapula Province, poverty increased by 8% and in Central Province, poverty declined by 29% from 2006 to 2010. (see also Context 6)

Related to poverty reduction, the Finnish ARDF support in Zambia has not been consistent. The Evaluation of Finnish Aid for Trade 2012-2015 found that the agriculture sector interventions have a poverty emphasis and were designed to focus on smallholder farmers with “farming as a business” approach and agricultural diversification (MFA, 2016a). The evaluation of Finland’s Country Strategy for Zambia pointed out that the ZNFU strategy is focused on membership and not on poverty and inequality, with anyone allowed to become a member (MFA, 2016b). The membership fee is quite high, and this might prevent the poorest of the poor from becoming direct members, apart from being beneficiaries.

Reduction of poverty and inequality was not an explicit goal of PLARD II. This may have stemmed from the perception that everybody in Luapula is poor, including the potential number of beneficiaries amounted to approximately 60,000 families (350,000 people, about 35% of the population of the province).

The available documentation has no relevant data on how PLARD II contributed to the reduction of poverty and inequality. Even the mid-term review (2013) does not address the poverty reduction explicitly, although the topic was one of the questions defined in the ToR.

According to the completion report, incomes of the surveyed rural people working with PLARD II had increased by approximately 34% for all activities not including crops. Even though there seems to have been a clear increase in the gross income of the targeted beneficiaries during the programme period (even up to 421% increase), it was not possible to establish a reliable causal link between the agribusiness activities initiated by PLARD II and the raised income in such a short period. However, according to reports, during the lifetime of the programme, the number of people taking two or more meals had steadily increased by 25%. It is difficult to explain why these improvements are not reflected in the overall poverty tendency in Luapula, cited above.

Finding 16. It is possible that the PLARD II focus on agri-business development was so pivotal that it reduced the attention to other development objectives, including poverty reduction. While not specifically mentioned, it is likely that PLARD II strategy assumed that economic development among the beneficiaries will automatically translate into a reduced incidence of poverty. On the basis of the poverty trends described in the first paragraph, this logic did not materialize.

On the basis of the available information, CSP II had no explicit and detailed strategy in relation to poverty reduction. In its overall essence, however, it would have contributed to poverty reduction, had it operated according to the plan.

3.5 Investment in sustainable land use and management

EQ5: How can investment in sustainable land use and land management be made inclusive of smallholder and community needs while being attractive to (responsible) investors at the same time?

Finding 17. Neither PLARD II nor CSP II had specific strategies or activities for investment in sustainable land use and management and they do not provide respective lessons learnt. Several studies indicate that Zambia's land administration and management are disfavoured small-holder households, including women, that rely on customary land tenure. Inclusive land needs first and foremost the enforcement of public policies that support sustainable land-use investments, take into account multiple uses of land, and strengthen the collaboration of land related institutions.

Zambia follows a dual land tenure system, which is a remnant of its colonial past: land is either customary land or State land (Sambo, 2015). Customary land titles are recognized by Zambian law and operate in parallel to formal or statutory land titles. The majority of land in Zambia is under customary tenure and the vast majority of the Zambian population relies on land in customary areas for their livelihood. Since the introduction of the Lands Act 1995, both types of land have been open to lease by national and foreign investors, although customary land is only open to lease if it is converted. The leases, also called leasehold titles, are the only legal means of holding land rights. There are four different types of leases, with the most relevant for investment the 99-year renewable leasehold for surveyed land. The erosion of customary rights that results from conversion is particularly burdensome on rural communities that depend on customary lands for drinking water, firewood, livestock, and other resources. Only 2% of Zambian small-holders have formal title to their farms (CIAT & World Bank, 2017).

Zambia's Lands Act provides support for women who hold statutory land, but the law does not apply to customary land. Most land is held under custom and most customary tenure systems do not provide women with significant land rights. Even when they do, traditional institutions often do not effectively implement the rules. Under customary law, men dominate the allocation, inheritance and use of land. A woman has access to land through male folk, her father, husband, brother or son, and women have limited participation in the land allocation processes. While women lack control over land, they may have access and user rights to the land. To improve women's access to land, the Ministry of Justice has issued a circular allocating 30 percent of all advertised land to women.

Sambo et al (2015) identified four major challenges, common to all four key sectors that limit the capacity of Zambia to attract and regulate sustainable investments:

- There are very few incentives that support sustainable land-use investments.
- Customary land tenure remains insecure, with limited processes enshrined in the legal framework to uphold social safeguards, such as consultation with land users.
- There is low institutional capacity to enforce the social and environmental safeguards that are established in the law.
- Access to information on investments is limited in Zambia, which reduces the potential for public scrutiny and participation.

Finding 18. Insecure land tenure is prevalent, and various sources point out that property rights are not always acknowledged or upheld by investors, who gain formal title in land without arranging for appropriate consultation with or compensation for local communities. According to an interviewee, carbon trade projects do not always match with the interests of local communities. However, in the rapidly evolving context of Zambian forestry, there are socially responsible enterprises that invest in forest land.

According to ZNFU (2013), the majority of farmers in Zambia are small-scale farmers cultivating less than five hectares (approximately 800,000). There are fewer (around 50,000) emergent farmers cultivating from 5 to 20 hectares and very few large farms around (700). ZNFU membership had grown since 2009 to 2012 by

93.2% to more than 71,000 members, the majority of members being small-scale farmers (99%). (see Context 6).

According to Sambo et al (2015) there is an ongoing preference among Zambia's elite to attract investments to the country, with only minimal oversight of how these investments could benefit the country. Opaque and individualized investor contracts reduce the contribution of investments to Zambia's development, as taxation breaks and other financial incentives reduce the amount that investors return to the country. These financial incentives are not extended to domestic MSME investors, who have been overlooked by the legal framework. The development of MSMEs can reduce poverty, improve livelihoods and contribute to the sustainable development of Zambia, through wealth and job creation. These investors therefore constitute a key investment opportunity.

In the context of a favorable agricultural development strategy and given the uncertainty of many other types of investment in Zambia, many salaried urban-based Zambians are directing their resources towards investments in agricultural land. Sitko and Jayne (2014) argue that the apparent widespread under-utilization of land among these emergent farmers, particularly those holding title to their land, draws into question Zambia's agricultural public spending strategy, which is disproportionately directed to their benefit. While state support for emergent farmers through input and output market subsidies appears to be effective at increasing staple food production, especially on farms that are already relatively large, this spending strategy is ill-equipped for enrolling small-scale farmers into a sustainable process of capital accumulation.

3.6 Implementation approaches and modalities

EQ6: Which implementation approaches are most appropriate - in terms of scale, modality/ instrument, channel and/or implementing organisations in future?

Finding 19. PLARD II faced many challenges in its design, management, as well as the operating environment. They proved to be insurmountable and the programme fell clearly short of its expected results. This led to the decision to end the 35-year Finnish support to ARD in Luapula, which included significant achievements. Rather than positive lessons learnt, the PLARD II demonstrates many examples of how a project can go wrong.

PLARD II was preceded by PLARD I, which had been launched in April 2006. The two programmes were designed to answer to the same objectives but differed in their implementation strategies in many ways. PLARD I was mainly implemented through the Programme Management Unit whereas PLARD II was moved to the district and provincial level for implementation – a step towards an alignment with the GRZ system. At the outset of PLARD I, the programme was expected to have a 12-year duration in separate phases. The change of the approach between the first and second phase altered this continuum.

PLARD II was the final stage of many MFA supported ARDF intervention in Luapula, which started back in early 1980ies. While the MFA did not explicitly conceive PLARD II as an exit phase, it took into account the forthcoming IFAD programme that was to support small-scale farmers in Luapula. Gradually it was envisaged that the IFAD programme would give Finland an opportunity to exit from Luapula and provide the most effective PLARD elements to the IFAD programme. Due to diverging time tables and other reasons, the shift did not take place as planned.

PLARD II was designed to be implemented by two ministries: Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MACO) and Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries Development (MLFD). The two ministries were merged into one in 2011, becoming the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL). The subsequent re-unification of the ministries delayed decision-making processes and created confusion in the institutional setting. Parallel structures formed under the two old ministries continued for a period, using vital resources before the new ministry was able to streamline itself into a single effective unit.

The PMU of PLARD II included a technical assistance team of five long-term specialists, employed by the consulting company. In addition, significant resources (720,000 EUR) were dedicated to support staff.

Finding 20. PLARD II provides little positive experiences on the most appropriate implementation approaches. It is more relevant to create a mirror picture of the evaluation question, outlining factors that impeded efficient and effective implementation of the programme.

- The start of the programme was slow. As the PLARD II was designed to be fully aligned with and implemented by MAL, most of its operations were planned to be carried out at the district level. Accordingly, new implementation modalities were developed to support this process. This meant that the programme had to start afresh in many ways that caused discords until they were settled in November 2011. These changes in the strategy and programme design proved very difficult to implement. The alignment with the GRZ systems meant that new planning procedures, new funding channels, and new banking and accounting systems had to be established.
- GoF outsourced the technical assistance of PLARD I as well as PLARD II through an international competitive bidding. Technical assistance of PLARD I was taken up by NIRAS, whereas in PLARD II it was outsourced to FCG International Ltd (FCG). There was one month overlap between the incoming TA (FCG) and the outgoing one (NIRAS) in January 2011. PLARD I/NIRAS operated through a Programme Management Unit, while PLARD II/FCG established a Programme Support Unit (PSU) at the provincial level.
- MAL line offices also faced high staff turnover at the province and district levels. A large number of newly recruited officers were being posted to the districts. The Programme Coordinator placed at the PSU started working only in June 2012. A new acting PACO was appointed to the province in October 2012.
- During the Annual Review discussions, the review team found that it was getting completely different descriptions of aspects of the same programme from different stakeholder groups. There were totally differing perceptions of PLARD II objectives and implementation modalities. This severely affected the relationships between different stakeholder groups and hampered programme implementation. Most importantly, there was a breakdown of trust between PSU and GRZ ‘implementers’ as well as a lack of a shared understanding between and within the other major stakeholder groupings, including ‘Donor’ (MFA, PLARD II PSU), ‘Service Providers’ (PACO/DACO, Private Sector, NGOs) and ‘Beneficiaries’ (Farmers, Fishers, Traders).
- The implementers of PLARD II i.e. the provincial and district MAL found the programme management system too cumbersome and bureaucratic, and this was confirmed in the stakeholder workshop. The planning system, the accounting system and the monitoring and evaluation systems had been established at all levels, (provincial, PSU, districts), which duplicated activities and took the responsibility away from the implementing agencies in the districts and in the agriculture camps.
- There was no clear understanding of the role of the Steering Committee, the Supervisory Board and that of the Management Committee. It was reported that the Steering Committee is not always able to make decisions but has to await directions from above. According to the minutes of the Steering Committee meetings, decisions were often revisited.
- A lot of programme and PSU resources were put into issues that should have been in place prior to programme start – i.e. the outsourcing. The set-up of new planning systems at the district level and the associated delay in financial flow delayed the implementation with at least one year.
- Regarding the strengthening of capacities, the results produced in the first two and a half years of programme implementation under the Institutional component lagged behind the expected outcomes as identified in the logframe. Major constraints hindered the achievement of the outcomes, including
 - a poor handover from PLARD I,
 - the lack of a Programme Coordinator for fifteen months,

- difficulties in recruiting PSU finance/admin support staff,
 - change in the Provincial Agricultural Coordinator, the GRZ delay in setting the new national accounting system (IFMIS), further postponed due to the rebasing in the currency,
 - delays in outsourcing the baseline study and the Institutional Development consultancy.
- In PLARD II, there was a tendency to overload the inception phase with tasks and activities that should have been completed in the preparatory phase. This may have led into hasty execution of duties that were vital for the overall strategy. In addition, the preparatory process of the programme document does not reflect the results of the initial analyses. Later updates of the programme document are not correctly approved and/or registered.
 - The GoF funding of PLARD II was budgeted at 10.4 mEUR. The project document foresaw a sizeable government contribution of 11.2 mEUR, consisting disbursements for PLARD activities, staff salaries, operational costs and contributions to subsistence allowances. There is no available reporting of the actual spending of the GRZ budgeted contribution.

Finding 21. In general, the new farming technologies promoted by PLARD II through CSGs produced good results for farmers in terms of yield. Irish potatoes, Supa rice, the use of knapsack sprayers and animal draft power are all examples of technologies that were quickly accepted by the CSGs. PLARD II produced tangible results in fisheries, aquaculture, and institutional capacity development. In fisheries, the legal framework for sustainable fisheries management was strengthened. Sustainable co-management structures (CMS) and actions were strengthened.

In aquaculture, developing local capacity for fish farming took place, and local production systems for high-quality fingerlings was established. Regarding organisational and institutional development, PLARD helped strengthening financial management and reporting; capacity and systems were established for integrated planning, monitoring and evaluation incorporating results-based indicators; and the institutional role of MAL was also strengthened.

Finding 22. Regardless of the shortcomings of PLARD II, Finnish support to ARD in Luapula has included successful projects. However, their lessons and experiences have not been followed through consistently, in spite of the long overall duration of the Finnish support to the province.

According to an interviewee, Luapula Rural Development Programme (LRDP), implemented in 1988-1992, produced significant results, such as the introduction of a new agricultural extension system. Luapula Livelihood and Food Security Programme (LLFSP) in 1992 to 1998 was twice selected by OECD as the rural development programme of the year.

Finding 23. CSP II has been a unique experiment among the Finnish support to ARDF, being based on significant non-earmarked core support to a national CSO. However, its total fungibility with the host organisation opened a way to mismanagement that eventually led to the programme's early termination.

The design of CSP II is interesting but its final quality could never be proved because of the early termination due to the fraud. Among the evaluated projects, it is one of the two (the other is Farmers Clubs project by ADPP in Mozambique) that were implemented by a local CSO, without government involvement, consulting company, or international technical assistance. In both projects, the GoF contribution to the project was governed according to the Finnish Law on State Grants (valtionavustuslaki).

When comparing the modalities to the support to ADPP in Mozambique and ZNFU in Zambia, the main difference is that, in the former case, MFA supported a project (Farmers Clubs), with its logic, structure, mechanisms, and standards being based on MFA's Manual for Bilateral Programmes. MFA did not provide a general support to ADPP. In the case of ZNFU, there was no distinct project, despite of the project proposal that presented the CSP II as such. The support was not earmarked to any particular purpose but to strengthening the Union as an organisation and to promoting the implementation of its strategic plan. The

external funding was fungible with the rest of the ZNFU's income. In terms of aid modalities for the public sector, the equivalent for CSP II would be non-earmarked budget support.

The strategic plan was prepared by ZNFU, without the partners' influence. While the three supporting partners (MFA, SIDA, and WeEffect) jointly agreed to support the same strategy in similar ways, there was not joint funding in the sense of one basket. The financial support to CSP II came through three separate channels, based on three distinct financing agreements. This may have complicated effective financial control and monitoring of the CSP II. The sponsors worked in the spirit of aid effectiveness, and rotated supervision responsibilities. Towards the end of CSP II, the partners agreed that SIDA would be the leader among them. Until the fraud was discovered, there were no separate audits for the partners' contributions, but they were subject to ZNFU's general periodical audits.

CSP II was not subject to an independent evaluation and its effectiveness is difficult to assess based on ZNFU's reports alone. The project reported positive but not significant changes in net income, maize yields, food security, and information services among the ZNFU members. As a core support to ZNFU, the project's rationale was to strengthen the capacity of its host organisation. This was expected to translate into benefits to the members over varying periods of time. The financial fraud discovered in 2015 and the subsequent termination of CSP II cut this development short.

Finding 24. CSP was meant to be the mechanism for a long-term partnership with ZNFU. From the donors' side it looked as a highly credible and effective organisation, thanks to its performance in PLARD II and in CSP I. LIMA credit component was perceived highly effective and ZNFU is influential at the policy level in Zambia. At the same time, CSP II included a vague implementation strategy, which did not specify how the things will be done, by whom, what resources, and through which activities.

CSP was also considered an example of a joint donor operation, combining resources of MFA, SIDA, and WeEffect. The project proposal was a professionally prepared document of high quality. Despite the shortcomings of CSP II, some stakeholders even after 2016 saw that, in comparison to many other bilateral projects, CSP II was more effective and efficient, in spite of major abuse of funds.

According to WeEffect, there were many reasons to engage in CSP II support. Since early 2000, ZNFU had significantly widened its membership base, involving many small-scale farmers. It included both large- and small-scale producers in the same organisations, whereas in many neighbouring countries these groups belong to separate unions. One-union model was welcome for everyone: the small-scale producers benefitted from service delivery and the large ones saw their political weight growing through a more effective lobbying.

According to the project proposal, CSP II would use a mix of implementation modalities so as to enhance the programme performance and results (ZNFU, 2013). ZNFU would be the lead implementing organization and all planned CSP interventions and activities would be implemented by the respective ZNFU Management Units, with the Executive Director's office offering management oversight. According to the appraisal report, it was difficult to see how the project proposal document – as it was presented - could be the lead document for implementation. It was suggested that a revised document should be developed that includes a logical framework that follows a Result Based Management approach to planning, monitoring and evaluation (FCG International Ltd., 2013). As stated in the chapter on methodology, it is not known whether the project proposal includes the appraisal's comments or not.

The Project Proposal defines no organisational structure for the project. It is understood as completely embedded in the ZNFU organisation and management. According to the appraisal report, the revised programme proposal should have included the ZNFU organogram and key roles of the council and board the role and responsibilities the HQ departments and the lines to Field level staff. Also, a description of the organization, the structure and roles (and autonomy) of the member organizations would have been helpful (FCG International Ltd., 2013). The issue of stakeholders and partners of CSP II has not been specifically addressed in the available documentation.

According to the core support intervention plan, the expected results are divided in long, medium and short-term results. There has not been an independent external evaluation carried out in CSP II, so it is difficult to objectively establish what have been its achievements. In the annual report of 2015 the results were summarized as follows (ZNFU, 2016a):

“In line with its 2015 lobby and advocacy agenda, the Union was successful in influencing several policy and regulatory issues. Many results were obtained in ZNFU visibility enhancement and improvement of other key intra-inter communication – outreach. Major member services and support results were achieved.

In the first semi-annual report of 2016, the tone was pessimistic (ZNFU, 2016b):

“First half of 2016 was characterised by:

- *Late start, erratic and prolonged dry spells;*
- *Depressed economic situation manifested by run away inflation, increased interest rates, devaluated Kwacha, continuing trade deficits and stunted GDP growth; and the*
- *Resultant escalated agricultural input costs - fertilizer prices rose by over 50% and seed prices increased by 49% on average.*

ZNFU also suffered a huge financial setback following the freezing of external funding by CPs as an aftershock of alleged financial irregularities and fraud by a special audit on the Union. Over 70% income for 2016 was lost as a result.”

3.7 Monitoring and evaluation systems

EQ7: What type of monitoring and evaluation system is most appropriate for outcome monitoring of Finnish projects in the context of wider support for achievement of SDGs?

Finding 25. The objectives of the sample programmes were consistent with the MFA country strategy of the time (see Context 23). However, their M&E systems did not effectively provide appropriate data for the monitoring of the CS targets, nor did they support respective government systems.

Concerning coordination and alignment, the Joint Annual Review found that the levels of complexity of PLARD II planning, management, monitoring and evaluation were so much greater than those of current GRZ systems that ‘full alignment’ was unlikely to be achieved during the life span of the programme, unless there was some ‘give and take’ on both sides (i.e. PSU and MAL).

Finding 26. The planned M&E principles of PLARD II were adequate and M&E related training was carried out. However, the implementation was deficient, as the programme’s M&E failed to collect and process relevant data on time, and to focus it on the intended results. Partly this was due to an M&E approach that was not sufficiently participatory. As a consequence, the M&E system had a limited value to the decision-making of the programme.

The project document defines that the PLARD II M&E system will aim to integrate with Government systems. In doing this, it will act as a pilot for moving Government M&E from being activity based to being result oriented (PLARD II, 2010).

The Embassy in Lusaka felt that the monitoring and evaluation system of PLARD II was deficient. It did not produce data and information needed for the decision-making. As a key member of the Programme’s Steering Committee and Supervisory Board, and considering the distance between Lusaka and Mansa, timely access to relevant information was critical for the Embassy to effectively play its role.

Improvements were achieved in terms of strengthening capacity for integrated planning and M&E aligned to logframe results-based indicators, even if the indicators of the logical framework often were not SMART, which constituted a challenge for the implementers. In 2012, 40 District staff and 14 provincial officers were

trained in Result Based M&E, following PLARD II M&E Manual - developed in 2011 - in line with GRZ system. The manual was also coherent with the new MAL Planning, M&E manual released in April 2013 (MFA, 2013).

PLARD II promoted mainstreaming of the cross-cutting issues into all components. This led to a situation where cross-cutting issues had no specific purpose, outputs or targets in the logframe and only few indicators under the components were disaggregated by gender or other relevant variables, which made the M&E of the cross-cutting results difficult.

The MTR of 2013 found that to follow the effectiveness and impact in relation to the logframe of the programme was not possible. The programme had limited data available as the baseline data had been collected late and follow up data - although collected - were still being analysed. Monitoring effectiveness and impact was hampered by the fact that planning was done following the departmental lines, not the activities in each area (camp or fishery management group area). Adoption of results-based planning at the district level would require further training.

To assess achievements and effectiveness, the programme had limited data available, as the baseline data was late, and follow up data – although collected – were analysed late. Furthermore, the limited avenues to field level that was to be developed through the outsourcing of the agribusiness and the cross-cutting agribusiness components had undermined the impact. Another factor in relation to assessing effectiveness and impact was the planning system with the implementation plans that had been activity based and not related to results expected in specific places or by individual groups.

The way the Programme Document defined the PLARD II stakeholders and beneficiaries is to some extent vague. It used all the following definitions: primary stakeholders, final beneficiaries, target groups, secondary stakeholders, project partners and direct beneficiaries. The complexity of the definition made it difficult to monitor the programme's effects and impact.

Finding 27. ZNFU proposed a relevant M&E plan for the CSP II. In practice, it was largely based on activities, rather than results, and could not capture achievements through the MFA support, because of the non-earmarked implementation approach. The M&E system, including the implemented audits, was unable to detect the fraud that eventually led to the programme's early termination.

According to the project proposal, CSP II monitoring would focus on attainment of programme results (outputs and intermediate outcomes) and less on activities performed. Major activities that would characterise the programme's M&E would include the CSP II baseline survey that was supposed to provide all the needed baseline information on all outputs and outcome indicators. The baseline survey results would also help in agreeing on and setting of mid- and end-line performance targets on each and every output and outcome indicators.

ZNFU planned to develop a Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) strategic plan and implementation manual, which was considered being very critical as it would help describe the strategy for implementing all ZNFU PME as the overall M&E System of the CSP II (ZNFU, 2013).

According to the appraisal report, the presented evaluation system was sufficient for documenting results of the planned programme (FCG International Ltd., 2013). This system should, however, be described in detail in the revised Programme Proposal. The day-to-day Monitoring and Evaluation system should be modified to collect the data needed to follow the indicators that were to be chosen in the revised Programme Proposal. However, the Programme Proposal has a total of 104 indicators in the Logframe. Most of these indicators are activity-based, and not result-based indicators, and the outputs and objectives are not formulated as results. There are too many indicators and it is not clear what means of verification are to be used in each case. The existing monitoring system and tools – described in the ZNFU Strategic plan and budget 2012-2016 – should be modified and used for M&E in the future.

Against the background of the fraud discovered during the CSP II, it is interesting that the MTR of CSP I found that a well-recognized and appropriate computer-based financial accounting system is in use and this

provides for adequate financial data capturing and oversight for both headquarters and field levels (Indevelop AB, n.d.).

WeEffect published a baseline report of CSP in December 2014 (WeEffect, 2014). Its overall conclusions were positive. The findings from the baseline survey indicated that ZNFU service provision was good because many of the ZNFU farmers were generally satisfied with the service delivery being rendered to them. It was generally observed that both members of the board and ordinary members expressed their views of ZNFU in a positive way. However, there were still areas of improvement, which the union would have to address during their future implementation of services in the programme, which is mainly the facilitation/coordination of bulk selling of produce. Among the strongest services ZNFU was providing to its member's financial services, facilitation/coordination of bulk buying of agriculture inputs, general agriculture information and extension were among the services rated highly by members. Farmers in this survey expressed satisfaction on the LIMA scheme, an input loan financial service, which is mainly eligible to farmers who are ZNFU members.

3.8 Lessons learnt from the development partners

EQ8: How have the lessons learned from the donors/development partners and development organizations been taken into account or implemented at project level and what kind of approaches do the organizations have for future challenges in the sector?

Finding 28. Documentation from both PLARD II and from CSP II does not identify any specific lessons learnt from other development partners. Despite of its institutional framework, PLARD II focused on out-sourcing partnerships rather than on strategic alliances. ZNFU could have become one, but both projects were terminated before the collaboration became any deeper.

Following the 2013 MTR, PLARD II selected and developed a partnership with the Zambian National Farmers Union (ZNFU) to provide training in farming as business (FAB) and financial services to farmers. As a result, ZNFU increased quickly its membership and thereby made available loans and development funds to farmers (PLARD II, 2015).

Finding 29. Major development partners in Zambia have supported agriculture, although the contributions to the sector seemed to have slightly diminished in recent years. Several focus on agri-business and value chain development, but their respective implementation approaches differ, as a result of each agency's strategic thinking and the specificities of the environment they are operating in. Through detailed comparative studies, they could provide valuable lessons for Finnish ARDF programmes. (See Context 13).

In 2006 to 2014, the World Bank financed the Agricultural Development Support Project for Zambia that aimed to improve smallholders' access to markets and the competitiveness of their agricultural commodities. The project focused on high potential agricultural areas and adopted a value chain approach to make sure that all levels of the chains are operating efficiently and increasing value added. This was done through (a) providing resources for working capital and term lending for capital investments in productive and marketing assets/activities to improve productivity, quality and efficiency of supply chains; (b) targeted investments into public/collective goods, such as feeder roads and into key public service functions; and (c) building market, technical and managerial knowledge of farmer groups and producer organizations through extension. The status report of 2014 concluded that the project was implemented satisfactorily.

Since 2012, IFAD is financing the Smallholder Productivity Promotion Programme (S3P). Its overall goal is to have income levels, food and nutrition security of poor agricultural households in Luapula, Northern and Muchinga Provinces sustainably improved. To achieve this goal, S3P seeks to contribute to increased agricultural production, productivity and sales of smallholder farmers in the three provinces. It has two components and six sub-components. Component 1: Sustainable smallholder productivity growth, to improve smallholder access to knowledge, extension, adapted technologies and improved planting material;

and, Component 2: Enabling environment for productivity growth. IFAD monitoring has concluded that in overall S3P is making moderately satisfactory progress as it is mostly on target with respect to the realisation of outcomes and is expected to meet the objective at completion subject to adequate funding.

Sweden continues to support rural development and entrepreneurship as one of its three focal areas in the development cooperation with Zambia. The main focus of Sweden's cooperation is to work catalytically with business stakeholders to remove barriers for companies to reach out to small-scale farmers with input commodities or with financial services, trade with them, and create more jobs. The Swedish cooperation aims at opportunities to promote inclusive growth by partnering with businesses, despite the many challenges in the country. One of the interventions is the support to Musika, which is a non-profit company owned by six key Zambian agriculture related institutions.

3.9 Finnish added value

EQ9: How can 'Finnish added value' in the ARDF sector be realised (e.g. through access to Finnish markets and expertise or to Finland's experience in creating a favourable business environment)?

Finding 30. The experiences of the sample projects do not provide evidence on the realisation of the Finnish added value. It is likely that the successes and failures of both of them are results of other factors than those that could be related specifically and uniquely to Finland.

Finnish added value was highlighted in the GoF development cooperation policy of 2007, under which PLARD II was prepared. In practice FAV was often interpreted as the use of Finnish technical assistance, and application of Finnish values and practices. To some extent, promotion of FAV was perceived contradictory to other basic principles, such as reduction of poverty, ownership by the partner country, and coordination between development partners (Karttunen, 2011).

Neither PLARD II nor CSP II available documentation has defined had specific lessons on Finnish added value. Finnish know-how in agricultural extension services probably has played a role in projects such as PLARD II. According to an MFA interviewee, Finnish consulting companies and technical assistance had always a strong role in the Luapula projects, which partly can explain the long Finnish presence in the province.

4 Conclusions

Conclusions – on the role of future Finnish support for ARDF

Conclusion 1. When linked to SDGs, Finland’s future support could make a relevant contribution to the Zambian ARDF, especially in the rapidly changing forestry sector, where socially responsible private sector investments are needed. *(This conclusion is based on Context 26, Finding 1 and Finding 2 and is the basis for Recommendation 1.)*

Both PLARD II and CSP II contributed to MDGs, especially the eradication of poverty and hunger. While the MDGs were not among the projects’ explicit goals, their strategies were geared towards them and partly contributed to the GRZ development policies.

Finnish ARDF support to Zambia was partly based on Finnish comparative advantages, especially in forestry. In ARD, more important was the long legacy of Finnish development cooperation that started in Luapula province already in early 1980ies.

Conclusions - on application of the value chain approach

Conclusion 2. Without paying adequate attention to both upstream and downstream stages of value chains, they are bound to have limited effects in overall added value. *(This conclusion is based on Finding 6 and Finding 7 and is the basis for Recommendation 2.)*

PLARD II had no clear value chain strategy and it planned to outsource this part of its operations to outside service providers. The VC related work focused on primary production and not much attention was paid to upstream or downstream stages of value chains. Commodity Study Groups were reportedly an effective tool of agricultural extension.

Conclusion 3. To bring about results, in favourable conditions, value chain support can be effective even with relatively modest resources. *(This conclusion is based on Finding 8, Finding 9, Finding 10 and is the basis for Recommendation 2.)*

The list of conditions for VCA to succeed is quite demanding and no project has them all. There is no algorithm to determine when the prerequisites are optimal. Every project is a specific case and unique in terms of context, time, and space.

Conclusion 4. Success and failure factors of a project supporting value chains fall into two main categories. First, a value chain approach needs emerging initiatives and dynamic businesses, enabling environment and support services (external conditions). Second, project design and implementation approach need to be sound (internal conditions) *(This conclusion is based on Finding 3, Finding 4 and Finding 5 and is the basis for Recommendation 2.)*

The first set of factors was limited in the area where PLARD II operated.

For the second condition, the intervention strategy must be appropriate in relation to the expected results and the operating environment, and, finally, that strategy has to be implemented correctly. PLARD II fell short also on many of these internal conditions. Food security and value chains were addressed mainly through primary production, leaving other stages of the chain to become possible bottlenecks in the overall value adding process.

Conclusions - on the integration of cross-cutting objectives in ARDF interventions

Conclusion 5. Sensitivity to and awareness of gender equality does not necessarily lead to expected achievements, if the related activities are not an integral part of the programme's structures, and supported by strategic decisions of its management and the implementing institutions. *(This conclusion is based on Finding 11, Finding 12 and Finding 13 and is the basis for Recommendation 3.)*

The process towards gender equality in the agricultural sector has been slow as women continue to face challenges of unequal access and control over productive resources, unpaid labour, drudgery and limited participation in rural institutions and markets.

Conclusion 6. Achievement of cross-cutting objectives and human rights needs enforced supportive policies by the government and authorities of the partner country. In addition, the operationalization of HRBA is difficult in a project that has not sufficient expertise and experience for this purpose. *(This conclusion is based on Finding 14 and is the basis for Recommendation 3.)*

According to several stakeholders, since the election in 2016, the political climate in Zambia has worsened and polarisation in the country has increased.

Conclusions - on success factors for reduction of poverty and inequality

Conclusion 7. Value chain and agri-business development are not always effective in reducing poverty. If reduction of poverty and inequalities, with focus on vulnerable groups, is an objective of the programme, there is a need for a realistic and proven poverty reduction strategy. *(This conclusion is based on Finding 15 and is the basis for Recommendation 4.)*

PLARD II reported significant poverty reducing improvements, but according to third party studies, the poverty in Luapula has worsened during the period when the programme was implemented. CSP II most likely contributed to poverty reduction although there is no precise data on this.

Conclusion 8. Poverty reduction is not always best addressed with the value chain approach. Effective value chain development needs stakeholders who have at least a minimum amount of assets, such as land, labour force, and entrepreneurship. This was not the case in all value chains supported by PLARD II. As many of its intended beneficiaries were poor, choices would have been needed between value chain focus and social development. *(This conclusion is based on Finding 16 and is the basis for Recommendation 4.)*

According to an interviewee, many MFA's ARD projects have faced conflicts between the objectives of poverty reduction and economic development. The projects have not had effective means to address rural poverty, such as cash transfer initiatives.

Conclusion - on inclusive land investment in ARDF development

Conclusion 9. Structures, norms and regulations determining access to land are central issues in Zambian ARDF development. They are a prime example of a broad-based challenge that influences the impact of a project, but on which a project cannot effectively impact. *(This conclusion is based on Finding 17 and Finding 18 and is the basis for Recommendation 5.)*

Neither PLARD II nor CSP II had specific strategies or activities for investment in sustainable land use and management. Luapula province is not a priority area for external land related investments and therefore land tenure probably had less effect on PLARD II than it has had on development programmes in other parts of the country

Conclusions - on implementation approaches and aid modalities

Conclusion 10. While PLARD II did produce useful results, it provides valuable lessons on risks and threats related to the modality of a tendered bilateral project and on its implementation approach that would merit attention in future ARDF support beyond Zambia. (This conclusion is based on Finding 19, Finding 20, Finding 21 and Finding 22 and is the basis for Recommendation 6.)

PLARD II was difficult to implement. It experienced shortcomings in design, many delays, renewal of the strategy, shifting structures, high turnover and limited staff. Delays in implementation, especially in the beginning of a project, are difficult to catch up and can cause irreversible harm to the execution of the overall plan. The move towards alignment was difficult to implement, and there were delays in outsourcing. Results of capacity strengthening were weak at all levels. Outsourcing of the implementation of critical activities led to the loss of control and made the project difficult to manage.

Conclusion 11. Bilateral grant projects, such as CSP II, may provide an alternative to bilateral tendered projects, provided a number of conditions are met. (This conclusion is based on Finding 23 and Finding 24 and is the basis for Recommendation 7.)

A careful selection of the partner is crucial, to engage with one that is competent, reliable, and has a proven record of satisfactory performance. It is possible that a modality of a separate project, as was the case in the Farmers' Clubs with ADPP in Mozambique, would have made it easier to keep safeguards and thus maintain positive results obtained by the CSP II support. Implementation by a Zambian CSO would possibly need close support and capacity strengthening from a competent Finnish NGO. Regardless of the selected modality, support to ARDF requires long-term and consistent commitment.

Conclusion - on the functionality of monitoring and evaluation systems

Conclusion 12. The utilization and usefulness of the M&E data and results needs to be the starting point when designing respective systems for a programme. Their utility and compatibility with wider monitoring frameworks, such as MFA theory of change and SDGs, need to be ensured. The programmes provide a unique opportunity to capture beneficiary level findings, which are best gathered through participatory methods. (This conclusion is based on Finding 25, Finding 26 and Finding 27 and is the basis for Recommendation 8.)

Both sample projects had challenges in operationalizing their M&E systems. In their strategies they defined appropriate M&E approaches but in practice they failed to produce relevant and timely data for strategic decision-making. Results-based management was not a driving force in the studied projects. In CSP II, financial monitoring was inadequate. A participatory M&E approach utilising competent service providers could be more effective.

Conclusion - on lessons learning from other organisations

Conclusion 13. Useful lessons, including those from IFAD programmes, could have contributed to the effectiveness of the Finnish ARDF support but they were not systematically studied. (This conclusion is based on Finding 28 and Finding 29 and is the basis for Recommendation 9.)

Neither PLARD II nor CSP II available documentation has defined any specific lessons learnt from other development partners. Although there were several programmes and organisations potentially suitable for PLARD II alliances, the programme emphasized out-sourcing rather than partnerships. On the other hand, the context-specificity of other programmes and the focus on their own objectives reduced the scope for strategic collaboration, even though many of them were based on agri-business and value chain approach.

Conclusion - on the realisation of Finnish added value in the sector

Conclusion 14. Finnish added value, including enhancement to Finnish markets, is addressed more appropriately by activities designed specifically for that purpose, rather than through programmes whose main objectives relate to poor communities and households in the partner country. (This conclusion is based on Finding 30 and is the basis for Recommendation 10.)

Neither PLARD II nor CSP II available documentation has defined any specific lessons on Finnish added value. Finland started the support to agriculture and rural development in Luapula already in early 1980ies and continued for 35 years. Tens of Finnish agricultural experts have worked in the related projects, and it is likely that Finnish models have been tried out, for example in agricultural extension. It is unverifiable, however, what value this has possibly added. Farmers' organisations in Finland, MTK, and in Zambia, ZNFU, are both members of the World Farmers' Organisation. It is possible that they could have collaborated within the framework of CSP II, but the programme's early termination made any plans in this regard void.

5 Recommendations

Recommendation – on the role of future Finish support for ARDF

Recommendation 1. In its support to ARDF, the MFA should ensure clear logical and explicit links to SDG targets, both in design and implementation, and thoroughly assess what the most appropriate size and focus should be. *(This recommendation is based on Conclusion 1.)*

When designing a new project in Zambia or in other countries, based on PLARD II experience, one of the basic choices needs to be made in the intended size and focus. Should the intervention address multiple dimensions and nexuses related to its overall objectives, or should it try to achieve more focused but tangible results? Both approaches have advantages and disadvantages, and the choice between them implies complicated trade-offs.

Implementing this recommendation would require an explicit linkage between SDGs and the programme's intended outcomes.

Recommendation – on application of the value chain approach

Recommendation 2. When designing and implementing a value chain strategy the MFA should ensure that i) it is properly defined at the outset of a project; ii) strengthening the value chain is focused on those stages that are most critical in the functioning of the entire chain (this is not necessarily the primary production); strengthening of value chains, while being at the core of the project's rationale, is not outsourced but kept under the project's and its implementers' direct control. *(This recommendation is based on Conclusion 2, Conclusion 3 and Conclusion 4.)*

A project conceived to work foremost with and for the primary producers, should focus on the strengthening of their organizational, economic and social capacities. Technical aspects are also important but in the past they have often had an excessive weight.

Recommendation – on the integration of cross-cutting objectives in ARDF interventions

Recommendation 3. The MFA should strive to make significant efforts to adequately integrate cross-cutting objectives, including the HRBA, in design, implementation and monitoring of ARDF support, to ensure explicit targets, assigned resources, and appropriate indicators. To support these efforts and establish a conducive environment, the MFA should engage in regular dialogue with partner government, in collaboration with other like-minded development partners. *(This recommendation is based on Conclusion 5 and Conclusion 6.)*

There is a strong connection between the human rights-based approach and food security, and therefore emphasis needs to be placed on the realization of the right to adequate food.

Recommendation – on success factors for reduction of poverty and inequality

Recommendation 4. If the reduction of poverty and inequalities is the overall objective of a programme, the suitability of agri-business and value chain approaches should be critically assessed. Causal linkages between business development and poverty reduction should be proven in concrete terms. If they cannot be credibly demonstrated, poverty focused adjustments would need to be made in the implementation approach. *(This recommendation is based on Conclusion 7 and Conclusion 8.)*

When a programme aims at supporting poor rural households and communities, it is important that the support begins with them. Programmes should evolve with local government ownership and be phased to start with identification of existing farming systems and integrated supply chains that will be supported and whose inter-linkages will be facilitated to achieve the programme purpose.

Recommendation – on inclusive land investment in ARDF development

Recommendation 5. The MFA should not promote land related investments unless there are sufficient guarantees that the policies and regulatory framework protect the communities' and households' right and equitable access to land. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 9.)

There is a common perception that Zambia counts with reserves of available land. According to an interviewee with long-term ARDF experience in Zambia, this is a fallacy and all land given for investors is taken away from somebody.

Recommendations – on appropriateness of cooperation approaches and modalities

Recommendation 6. MFA should be cautious in engaging in large regional and multi-institutional programmes, because their structures are complicated, subsequent transaction costs high, and achievement of sustainable results is challenging. As an alternative, MFA could consider flexible joint projects, where results come relatively quickly and can exhibit a credible pathway from outputs to results. They could work at regional as well as at national level and focus on strengthening of capacities. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 10.)

The MFA should follow the principle that projects should be radically revised if it turns out that a critical number of premises fail to materialise. Particularly important is a critical review between project phases. In the same vein, a project should not be continued in the same geographical area or institutional framework if previous phases have not brought about sufficiently positive results. Strategic revisions are needed, even if they signify cashing in losses.

Recommendation 7. When donors jointly finance operations of a CSO, they should together plan safeguards for possible negative incidents and avoid non-earmarked budget support. In all cases, control mechanisms must be in place and periodically tested. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 11.)

Non-earmarked budget support is not a recommendable modality for a CSO support, especially when it is significantly high in relation to the CSOs own income generation. It is more advisable to design a separate project, with standard systems and mechanisms, where the CSO is responsible for the implementation, applying its own strategic objectives and principles.

In this case, the donors and the partner organisation would need to agree upon the dialogue and rules of the game at the outset. If crisis such as the one in ZNFU cannot be avoided, the unintentional consequences and effects on the final beneficiaries may be opposite to what the development partners had planned initially.

Recommendation – on the functionality of monitoring and evaluation systems

Recommendation 8. It should be verified at the programme's outset that the M&E system is functional and capable of producing timely, relevant, and results-oriented information for the decision-making. Financial information needs to be included. MFA and the implementing institution should make sure that the programmes' M&E systems are coherently linked to wider monitoring frameworks. (This recommendation is based on Conclusion 12.)

Strengthening participatory monitoring signifies empowerment of citizens and improving the quality of governance at the local level are essential for effective poverty reduction.

Recommendation – on lessons learning from other organisations

Recommendation 9. **The programmes should more proactively seek and establish strategic partnerships with organisations and projects that can strengthen mutual learning. If their objectives and strategies converge, more operational areas of collaboration should be identified.** *(This recommendation is based on Conclusion 13.)*

Principles of aid effectiveness – ownership, harmonisation, alignment, mutual accountability, management based on results – should be strategic considerations in the MFA’s ARDF programme. All projects should have an aid effectiveness strategy. The projects should strive for synergies with Finnish interventions of other modalities, relevant national stakeholders, as well as with those of all development partners. Participation in joint operations must not exclude the possibility of MFA earmarking its resources to purposes it deems important.

Recommendation – on the realisation of Finnish added value in the sector

Recommendation 10. **Finnish added value and its practical applications should be materialised only if they verifiably serve the achievement of a programme’s objectives.** *(This recommendation is based on Conclusion 14.)*

There should be a distinction between the objectives of the programmes and the promotion of Finnish business opportunities. The focus should be in strengthening and developing enabling factors. Then the beneficiaries and stakeholders can make their own choices.

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