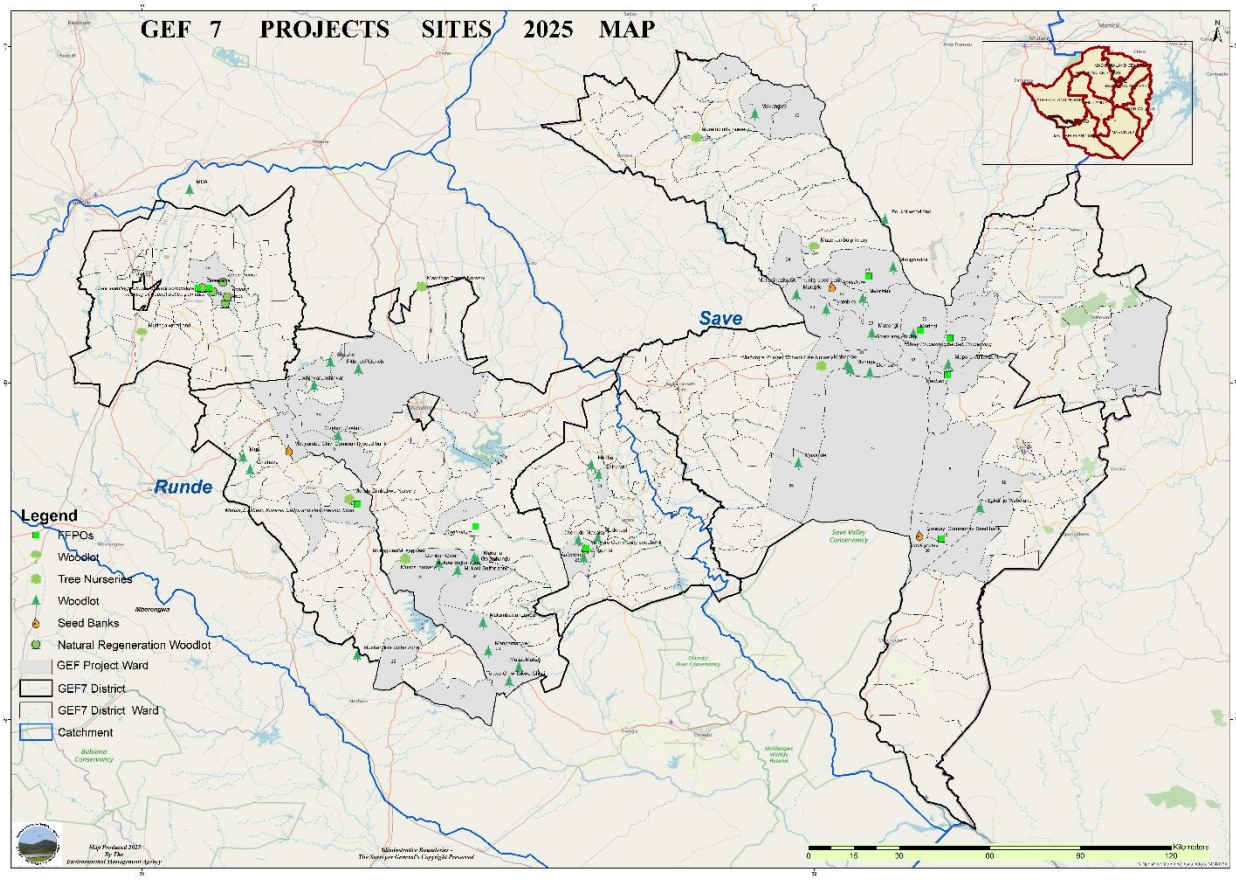
PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

Project Location



Overview

The Zimbabwe child project under the Drylands Sustainable Landscapes-Impact Programme (DSL-IP) is named ***"A Cross-sector Approach Supporting the Mainstreaming of Sustainable Forest and Land Management to Enhance Ecosystem Resilience for Improved Livelihoods in the Save and Runde Catchments of Zimbabwe"***. The project is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) under its seventh operational cycle and is led by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) as a GEF accredited entity. The Zimbabwe child project is implemented together with 10 other similar country projects in Southern and East Africa as well as Asia. In Zimbabwe, DSL-IP is implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Climate and Wildlife through the Environmental Management Agency (EMA) as the Executing Entity and four Implementing Partners, namely, Community Technology Development Trust (CTDT), World Vision, Forestry Commission and

Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority.

Project Goal
To support a transformational shift towards the sustainable and integrated management of dryland landscapes through sustainable land and forest management.

Project Objective
To halt and reverse negative trends of land and forest degradation and enhance climate resilience of degraded areas of Miombo and Mopane woodlands in the Save and Runde Catchments by applying holistic and integrated land and forest management approaches in support of Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN).

Expected Project Results:
- **2,150** hectares of land restored
- **172,540** hectares of landscapes under improved practices through the implementation of integrated land use plans promoting Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM).
- **1.26 million** metric tons of CO2e greenhouse gas emissions mitigated; and
- **15,000** direct beneficiaries (at least 52% of women).

2.0 Project Interventions
The programme broadly responds to Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Targets Zimbabwe and other countries party to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) set in 2017. The targets seek to reduce desertification, land degradation and drought. To achieve LDN, the project supports activities under 3 components:

Component 1: Strengthening the enabling environment for the integrated management of natural resources at the national and landscape levels;

Component 2: Demonstrating, implementing, and scaling up and out SLM and SFM good practices in Save and Runde basins.

Component 3: Strengthening Knowledge Management, Monitoring and Collaboration for addressing SLM/SFM at landscape, national, regional and global levels.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARD EXPECTED RESULTS

Outcome 1.1: Strengthened and harmonized intersectoral and multilevel decision-making and planning in the targeted sub-basins to avoid, reduce, and reverse land degradation

Since inception of the project in 2021 upto the current date, the project has supported Land Degradation Neutrality Technical Working Groups (LDN TWGs) from national to grassroot levels to enhance intersectoral and multilevel decision-making towards preventing, reducing and reversing land degradation. Institutional capacity building remained a core focus, with Provincial and District LDN Technical Working Groups integrating LDN into planning processes, including the development of 2025 fire management plans as enshrined in their terms of reference. The project has been instrumental in enhancing stakeholder collaboration across sectors as they all converge towards supporting Farmer Field Schools. The Farmer Field Schools approach through the project has been broadened to bring in components on tree planting and woodland management, catchment management, sustainable intensification, food and nutrition security, business development, and Village Savings and Lending, and wildlife area management among others.

Key engagements included capacity building of national LDN TWG on Integrated Landscape Assessment Methodology (ILAM) which involved LDN assessment at country and project level. This saw the establishment on an LDN monitoring grid at country level which is key for UNCCD reporting as well planning and/or decision making on LDN. Furthermore, this assessment through the use of the Ex-act tool was applied to deduce levels of carbon sequestration as a result of project interventions, which was pegged at -683,277 metric tons of CO2e greenhouse gas emissions mitigated; which is

65.5% towards the end term target of 1.26 million metric tons. The project continued to support engagement meetings for PDCs, RDDCs and ESCs with PDCs physically visiting project sites while a total of 11 Environmental Subcommittees (272 members: 183 men, 89 women) were trained on sustainable land and forest management across Bikita, Chivi, Masvingo, Chipinge, Zaka, and Shurugwi districts. These committees are now actively implementing WEAPs, monitoring natural resource extraction, reporting deforestation cases, leading community awareness campaigns on sustainable land and forest management and coordinating catchment restoration and forest management activities, working with other committees established under the project. Activities of these committees has seen catchment area restoration of over 705ha. Furthermore, high-level interactions, including Ministerial engagement and PSC learning visits, reinforced coordinated governance and knowledge exchange. The year ended with district stakeholder engagement meetings and progress review to ensure its success, as well as enhance project ownership and sustainability.

Outcome 1.2: Integrated Landscape Planning incorporating LDN objectives applied and sustained in the Save and Runde sub-basins

A stakeholder-driven ILUP framework was developed to address gaps identified in the MTR. The ILUP was review to adopt a bottom approach, provide site specific proposals negotiated with land users and key stakeholders. The framework was piloted in Masvingo Ward 22, producing a draft ILUP validated by stakeholders. Capacity-building of relevant actors and integration with ILAM strengthened technical skills, participatory planning, and data-driven land-use decision-making, with maps prepared to guide replication across other wards.

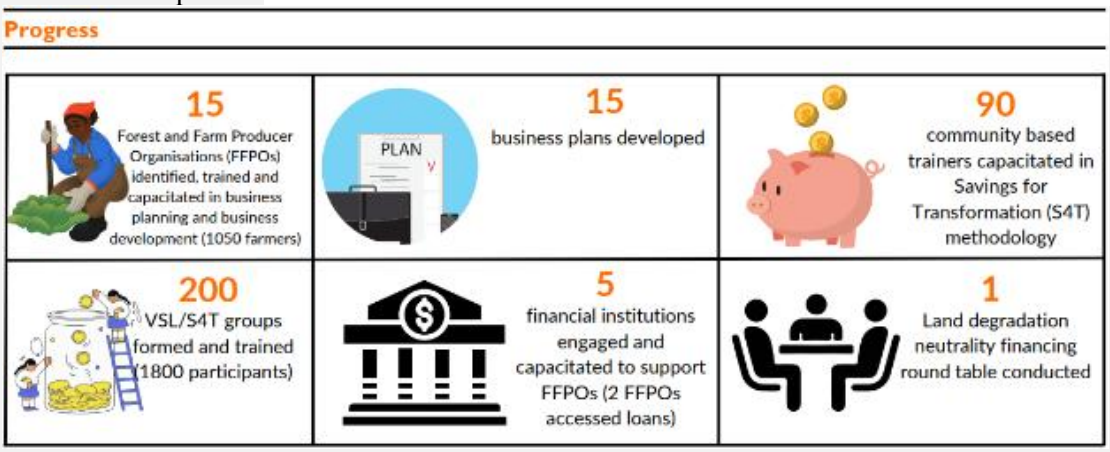
Outcome 2.1: SLM and SFM interventions implemented in Save and Runde sub-basins, and scaled up and out.

The table below shows achievements during the reporting period and cumulative achievements against end term targets for area under land restoration and improved practices. Land and forest management activities are an ongoing process.

Activity **Area of Land under improved practices**	**Target (Endterm)**	**July- December** **Achievement**	**Achievement (Cumulative to date)**
Sustainable Intensification	30,000	12,337	26,400
Woodlots	500	12.16	210.89
Veld Fire Management	7000	4,2	4,250
Rangeland management	5000	1,001	3,750
Area of Land under restoration	**2,150 (*broken down below)***		***2,989(broken down below)***
Assisted Natural Regeneration	2000	2,249	2,249
Restoration of Mining Areas	50	15	35
Gully restoration	100	600	705

(iv) Increase in the # of hectares of forests sustainably managed by community-based forest management committees	**130,000 ha *(broken down below)***		**155,986 *(broken down below)***
Woodland Management (CBFMC)	130,000	66,463	155,986 Riverrine: 111,766 hectares Buffer conservancy: 44,220 hectares

Outcome 2.2: Key sustainable dryland commodity Value Chains established and/or strengthened
Business development as a sustainability approach to SLM and SFM gained momentum during the reporting period. Procurement processes for Forest and Farm Producer Organisations (FFPOs) commenced particularly for poultry enterprises. The figure below summarises achievements to date under this component.



The project developed 15 bankable business plans for FFPOs, enhancing their investment readiness and commercial viability. To promote financial inclusion, 90 Community-Based Trainers were capacitated on savings group methodologies and cascaded training to 200 savings groups across eight districts, resulting in cumulative VSLA savings of US$58,000 and an active loan portfolio of US$84,600, supporting productive investments in green value-chain enterprises. The groups have a total membership of 1,568 (88 male youths, 218 female youth, 1043 females and 306 males) people who are active in savings groups.

Engagement with five financial institutions, including participation in the LDN Financing Roundtable at COP15, positioned DSLIP as a key contributor to national dialogue on LDN financing. Market access and collective bargaining were strengthened through collaboration with the Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU), including practical in-field training, exposure visits, and the formation of a Markets Association covering all eight project districts.

As a result of these interventions, total quarterly sales across supported value chains reached US$37,000, demonstrating tangible income generation and early returns on enterprise-strengthening efforts.

Outcome 3.1: Project implementation supported by an M&E strategy, based on measurable and verifiable outcomes and adaptive management principles
A total of 24 (6 females, 18 males) participants drawn from the various government departments were capacity developed on the Integrated Landscape Assessment Methodology (ILAM) that included

Collect Earth and Earth Map. This was mainly a Land Degradation Monitoring training to equip the LDN monitoring Technical Working Group (TWG). The purpose of the training was to equip the LDN monitoring TWG with the requisite skills for them to be able to monitor the extent of land degradation within specified landscapes and be better informed about the progress of the restoration efforts going on within the landscapes, validate the Collect Earth survey and national grid sampling framework, and endorse a work plan for data collection and reporting. The training culminated in the development of the Africa DEAL grid, particularly on the Zimbabwe national as well as the GEF 7 project grid. The grids will be used as evaluation tools to determine the progress made on the restoration of the landscapes.

Outcome 3.2: Data collection and knowledge sharing approach on SFM/SLM, contributing to LDN assessment work, improved

DSLIP showcased its work at the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP) 15, where H.E. President Dr. E.D. Mnangagwa visited the project stand. The project also convened a Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Financing Roundtable discussion with development partners, strengthening collaboration around land restoration, biodiversity, and climate change financing. The project also participated in the Good Seed and Food Festival (26–27 Sept 2025, Harare Botanical Gardens) and the 85th Zimbabwe Farmers Union Annual Congress (24 Oct 2025, Masvingo), officiated by the Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Anxious. Masuka, strengthening project visibility and partnerships with key stakeholders.

Enablers
The DSLIP Grievance Redress Mechanism remained an effective platform for promoting transparency, accountability, and inclusive participation through working with stakeholders from government departments in the districts. While challenges persist, the progress made in strengthening GRM structures, increasing community awareness, and resolving grievances contributes positively to project performance and social cohesion. Continued investment in capacity building, communication, and monitoring will further enhance the effectiveness of the GRM in the next implementation period.

The upholding of Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) and continuous review of the risk matrix enabled the project to anticipate any potential social and environmental impacts as a result of project interventions. In the process, requisite social and environmental measures were put in place in order to deal with such impacts. The application of ESS was useful in risk and site screening for project investment. Social risks were highest in the reporting period.

B. PROGRESS REPORTING

Component 1: Strengthening the enabling environment for the integrated management of natural resources at the national and landscape levels
Outcome 1.1: Strengthened and harmonized intersectoral and multilevel decision-making and planning to avoid, reduce, and reverse land degradation and address LDN in the targeted sub-basins and nationally.
Output 1.1.1: National platform for LDN improved, with a particular focus on the national LDN TWG
Activity (iv): Provide training to national and catchment LDN TWG on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) as well as integrated landscape management planning, assessment, and monitoring.

Achievement:

National and sub-national capacity for coordinated Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) monitoring and reporting was strengthened through two LDN Technical Working Group (TWG) meetings. Cross-sectoral alignment among environmental management, land use planning, water, and agricultural institutions was enhanced, with harmonized LDN monitoring tools including the Collect

Earth survey design, national sampling grid, and reporting linkages. Continued stakeholder capacitation and technical support from GIS experts enabled the downscaling of national LDN targets to sub-national levels, improving the monitoring and interpretation of land degradation trends and supporting more targeted, landscape-specific land restoration and sustainable land management interventions.

The LDN Technical Working Group strengthened the quality and relevance of land use planning for Land Degradation Neutrality through the review and validation of the Integrated Land Use Planning (ILUP) development model. The model, refined in response to Mid-Term Evaluation recommendations and piloted in Masvingo Ward 22, was critically assessed and endorsed by TWG members as a context-appropriate approach for systematically integrating LDN considerations into Zimbabwe's land use planning processes.

Figure: ***Members of the LDN TWG attending ILAM training 06/10/25***

Output 1.1.2: Cross sectoral and gender sensitive governance platforms – including a landscape-level LDN working group – established at the landscape level in both Save and Runde sub-basins

Local and sub-national institutional capacity for advancing Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) was significantly strengthened through the integration of LDN into provincial and district planning processes across the Runde and Save catchments. Provincial and District Technical Working Groups supported the development of fire management plans, integrated land use plans, and catchment management frameworks.
District-level planning processes, including the Mukosi Ward 22 Integrated Land Use Plan and the Muni Woodland Catchment Management Plan, are now guiding sustainable land and forest management, and the prioritisation of LDN investments at local authority level. The project has significantly revived these committees, making them functional and executing their LDN planning, coordination and monitoring roles. Visits to sites enhanced their appreciation of LDN while bringing them together enhanced collaboration.

Output 1.1.3: Assessments of targeted sub-basins jointly deepened and extended, and effective current practices identified in support of LDN decision-making and a corresponding capacity development program designed and delivered for relevant stakeholders from government, private sector, civil society, and communities using a training-of-trainers approach.

A two-week training program on ILAM was held from 06 – 17 October 2025. The training involved a workshop and a field assessment in Mukosi Resettlement area, Ward 6 of Masvingo district which was aimed at validating plots characterized from the satellite image. Participants to the training were drawn from the Land Degradation Thematic Working Group (LDN TWG) and government experts involved in land resources monitoring. Government experts were drawn from the Department of Surveyor General, Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, University of Zimbabwe, and Zimbabwe National Geospatial and Space Agency. Experts from the implementing partners, namely the Environmental Management Agency, Forestry Commission, and Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority also took part. A total of 24 (6females and 18

males) participants took part in the training.

The project in 2025 embarked on the restoration of rangeland areas to support livestock production. The project conducted assessments of 3 rangeland sites targeted for FFPOs in Muringi in Buhera with total hactarage of 17,000ha, Chebvute in Masvingo with a hactarage of 14ha and Muni in Chivi with a hactarage of 500ha giving a total of 17,514hactares for the three sites. The assessment revealed that there is high levels of degradation in the sites as seen through the abundance of *Sporobolus pyramidalis* which is a classic increaser species or "pioneer" of disturbed ground. Its presence often indicates that the land has been overgrazed or poorly managed. Common grass species in the sites, in order of palatability from highest to lowest included *Eurocloa mosambicans, Panicum maximum Heteropogon contortus,Digitaria melangiana, Hyperhenia hirta, Hyperrhenia filipendula and Cynodon dactlon, ,* and *Eragrostis trichofora, Aristida spp,Juncus acutas* and *Sporobolus pyramidalis.*

As a summary of proposed interventions to improve its status were the following:

i. Farmer Clustering and Coordinated Grazing Management

Livestock farmers should be organized into structured grazing clusters to enable coordinated and controlled grazing practices, reduce uncontrolled animal movement, and minimize localized overgrazing. Combined grazing arrangements will improve pasture utilization efficiency, strengthen collective responsibility for rangeland stewardship, and facilitate easier implementation of grazing regulations and monitoring.

2. Invasive Species Management and Vegetation Balance

Targeted control of invasive and encroaching woody species should be implemented while mixed grazing systems involving both cattle and goats are promoted to enhance vegetation balance. Goats will assist in browsing woody and invasive plants, while cattle will preferentially graze grasses, resulting in improved species composition and reduced dominance of invasive species.

3. Establishment of Drought-Resilient Fodder Resources

Spineless cactus should be introduced and established in Buhera rangelands as a climate-resilient fodder source. The cactus will provide supplementary feed during dry seasons, reduce pressure on natural rangelands, and improve livestock survival during drought periods. Training farmers on proper establishment, management, and utilization of spineless cactus is essential to ensure sustainability.

4. Reseeding of Degraded Rangelands

The Chebvute rangeland should be reseeded with locally adapted and palatable grass species to restore forage productivity and ground cover. Reseeding will enhance soil stability, reduce erosion, and improve biodiversity. The use of indigenous or well-adapted species will increase establishment success and resilience to local climatic conditions.

5. Controlled Grazing and Forage Utilization

Controlled grazing practices should be enforced to allow adequate regrowth of palatable grass species. A maximum of 50% forage utilization (depletion grazing) is recommended to maintain plant vigor and long-term pasture productivity. Continuous grazing should be avoided, particularly during the main growing season, to prevent rangeland degradation.

6. Rotational Grazing Infrastructure Development

Support should be provided for the establishment of paddock fencing to enable effective rotational grazing systems. Rotational grazing will allow for planned resting of paddocks during critical growth periods, promote even grazing distribution, and enhance pasture recovery. Community involvement in fencing layout, maintenance, and grazing schedules will be critical to long-term success

Activity (iii) Jointly identify evidence-based and gender-sensitive good practices on SLM and SFM under use in the targeted basins.

Achievement:

Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources

Project interventions reached 15,000 farmers (9,485 women and 5,515 men) through Farmer Field

Schools, market access support, business literacy, and value-chain development, ensuring that women benefited equitably from capacity-building and livelihood opportunities. The project successfully reached the gender inclusion target, with 63% of beneficiaries being women and 37% men, surpassing the original target of 52% women. This demonstrates the project's effectiveness in promoting equitable access to resources, opportunities, and participation for women across all interventions.

During the reporting period, the project strengthened gender equality in access to and control over natural resources through evidence-based analysis and targeted capacity-building interventions. A gender assessment was conducted in Chivi District with Marula Zimbabwe and Buhera Atikorere FFPOs, including committees and sub-committees, to examine gender roles, leadership participation, and decision-making dynamics at both cooperative and household levels. The assessment identified persistent gender gaps, noting that despite women's presence in leadership positions, cultural norms, disproportionate workloads, and low self-confidence continue to constrain their effective influence and control over resources. At the same time, enabling factors such as supportive leadership, mentorship, and gender-sensitive institutional practices were documented as key drivers of women's participation.

Building on these findings, the project implemented gender scorecards in Mutiusinazita (Buhera) and Dumisayi (Chipinge) to systematically track women's leadership and participation across project-supported structures. Insights from the assessments and scorecards directly informed the design and delivery of targeted Gender and Leadership Training, ensuring a strong focus on confidence building, negotiation skills, and inclusive leadership. This evidence-driven approach represents a key achievement in closing gender gaps and strengthening women's effective participation, influence, and decision-making across FFPOs, FFS, VSLs, CBFMCs, nurseries, machinery, and water committees, thereby advancing more equitable and inclusive natural resource governance.

This engagement session also entailed an assessment on time saving as a result of equipment support by the project. The table below outlines time saving per activity, which is a significant impact that has been brought about by the project.

Table: Time Saving due to Equipment Use

Task	Equipment Introduced	Time spent before equipment with women	Time spent with women after equipment	Average Ti me Saved per Day	Changes Observed
Ploughing	Augers	2 days	30 minutes to 1hr	6 hours	Time reduced by 70%; allows timely planting
Threshing	Motorized thresher	2 days	1 hour	5 hours	Faster, cleaner process; time saved for other work and rest for women
Shelling / dehusking	Thresher	12 hours	2hours	10hrs	Process larger volumes collectively
Transport	Tractor trailer / cart	3 hours	30 minutes	2 hours	Reduced trips, easier marketing of produce

Gender Dialogues

During the reporting period two FFPO impact review workshops were conducted in the Save and Runde catchments to assess the outcomes of business incubation and gender mainstreaming support provided to VSLs, Gender Champions, and FFPOs trained in December 2024. The workshops engaged 92 participants, comprising 53 women (57.6%) and 39 men (42.4%), reflecting strong female participation in learning and reflection processes.

The reviews demonstrated effective cascading of gender dialogues by trained participants, reaching at least 1,924 community members, of whom 1,043 were women (54.2%), 219 female youth (11.4%), 306 men (15.9%), and 88 male youth (4.6%), indicating a strong emphasis on women and youth inclusion at community level. The integrated FFPO, gender, and VSL review process confirmed increased adoption of gender-responsive practices, contributing to improved social inclusion, more equitable access to resources, and expanded leadership opportunities for women, youth, and persons with disabilities across both catchments.

In addition, at least 15 positive masculinity sessions were conducted across eight districts, engaging men and boys in discussions on shared household responsibilities and gender equality. These efforts resulted in the establishment of 10 men's VSL groups, signalling growing male commitment to gender-transformative change and reinforcing more balanced and inclusive household and community decision-making structures.

Improving women's participation and decision making

The project achieved substantial progress in strengthening women's participation and leadership in community decision-making and land-use planning processes. Women currently account for over 52% of leadership positions across key project-supported institutions including Village Savings and Lending (VSL) groups, Forest and Farm Producer Organisations (FFPOs), Farmer Field Schools (FFS), Community-Based Forest Management Committees (CBFMCs), Community Seed Banks (CSBs), nurseries, machinery groups, and water committees. This level of representation reflects a significant shift towards more inclusive governance and shared decision-making at community and sub-national levels.

During the reporting period, targeted training on gender equality, leadership, confidence building, and negotiation skills was delivered to 233 participants, including men, women, youth, and persons with disabilities, across committees such as Marula Zimbabwe, Dumisayi, Atikorere, and Mutisuinazita.

These capacity-building efforts have yielded tangible empowerment outcomes. Women reported improved communication and greater ability to challenge restrictive gender norms. As a result, women are more actively contributing to discussions and assuming leadership roles within households, producer groups, and community institutions. Collectively, these achievements are strengthening inclusive governance, enhancing the effectiveness of land-use planning, and supporting more equitable and sustainable development outcomes.

Gender, Leadership, Confidence Building and negotiation skills training in Buhera and Chivi.

Success Story: Youth Leadership Advancing Gender Equality in Dhumisayi Community Seed Bank

Isaac Bangwayo , a youth representative from the Dhumisayi Community Seed Bank (CSB),Chipinge Ward 16 stands out as a positive example of youth leadership and gender advocacy under the DSLIP project. As a trained Gender Champion, Isaac was elected to the CSB committee to represent young people, strengthening youth voice and participation in local governance structures.

Feedback from community members, fellow CSB committee members, and outcomes from gender dialogue sessions highlight Isaac's commitment to inclusive collaboration. He has actively worked alongside elders, respectfully sharing knowledge and bridging generational gaps to support community learning and cohesion. His leadership has contributed to increased youth participation in CSB activities, enhancing sustainability and innovation within the seed bank.

Recognizing his dedication and impact, and with support from the Ministry of Women Affairs,Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, Isaac was selected as a Community Development Officer for Ward 1, Maunganidze, Chipinge District. This achievement ensures continuity and scaling of project gains, as he will continue to work closely with FFPOs, Farmer Field Schools (FFS), and VSL groups to strengthen community development efforts and drive the gender equality agenda beyond the project's direct interventions.

Generating socio-economic benefits or services for women

Gender and social inclusion have been effectively mainstreamed across project interventions, resulting in expanded participation, skills development, and equitable access to productive resources for women and youth. The project achieved significant socio-economic gains for women through the systematic integration of gender-responsive approaches across land restoration, sustainable land management, and value-chain development interventions. Women's participation in community institutions and natural resource–based livelihoods increased (FFPOs) to 76%, leading to improved access to technical skills, and income-generating opportunities linked to sustainable land use.

These gains translated into measurable empowerment outcomes, with women accounting for 75% of trained machinery operators, demonstrating strong competence and confidence in the operation of two-wheel tractors, earth augers, threshers, dehullers, grinding mills, and peanut butter processing equipment. Youth engagement has been strengthened through Farmer Field Schools, with 18% serving as ward-based para-mechanics, 21% as machinery operators, and 35% participating in value addition activities using grain processing equipment such as threshers, grinding mills and peanut butter machines.

Enhanced skills and access to productive technologies have strengthened women's economic agency, and improved food while also building resilience to climate and land degradation shocks. These achievements contribute to reduced gender inequalities and support the development of more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable rural communities, in line with Land Degradation Neutrality objectives.

Challenges on Gender Mainstreaming

- Deep-rooted socio -cultural norms limiting women's voice and leadership. For example, in some communities the males reported that the women will not even select each other for positions but will opt for a male leader
- Time constraints due to women's domestic workload are affecting their participation in meetings

- Resistance from some male counterparts in community leadership structures.

Output.1.1.4: National policy framework, budgeting and finance mechanisms, and investment programmes, jointly reviewed by relevant government institutions within key sectors such as agriculture, forestry and land tenure sectors, and recommendations developed to integrate SLM, SFM and LDN

A policy organisation, the Zimbabwe Environment Lawyers Organisation (ZELO) engaged under the project developed draft Non-Timber Forest Produce Guidelines and the LDN Financing framework. The initial work involved a desk review of available policy to streamline and identify gaps impending on the attainment of LDN. The production of these draft documents has been completed and the outstanding work to be done is consultation, validation and adoption of the policies. These activities are posed to be achieved during the year 2026.

Furthermore, a comprehensive policy and legislative gap analysis was completed, identifying key institutional, legal, and financing constraints to achieving SDG 15.3. Key gaps include fragmented governance, weak tenure security, limited incentives, and insufficient and uncoordinated financing. Drawing on international best practice, the draft financing mechanism proposes a coherent national approach, including the establishment of a Zimbabwe National LDN Fund to mobilise and align public, donor, and private-sector resources. These draft policy instruments provide a clear, evidence-based roadmap for legal reform, institutional coordination, sustainable financing, and strengthened monitoring systems, and are scheduled for stakeholder consultation, validation, and adoption in 2026.

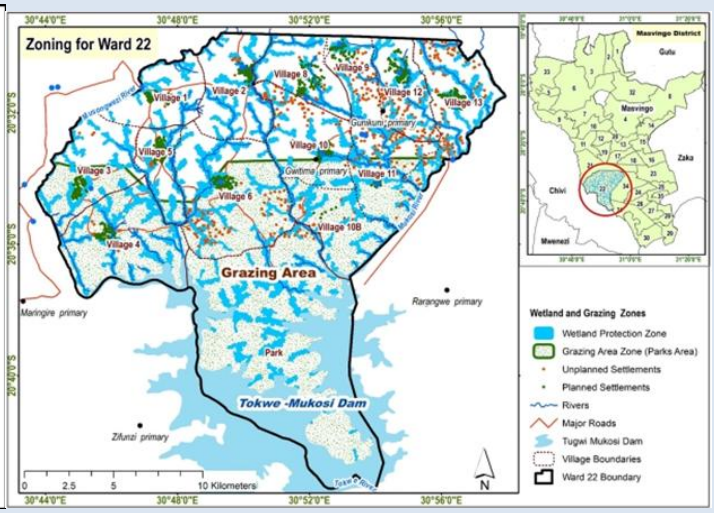
Output 1.2.1: Two integrated landscape management and corresponding action plans developed for Save and Runde sub-basins.

Achievement:
A ward-level Integrated Land Use Planning (ILUP) model was developed and approved to address gaps identified by the Mid-Term Review in Zimbabwe's land use planning processes. The model adopts a structured on-the-job training approach to build the technical capacity of LDN stakeholders across key government departments and local partners, supported by technical expertise from the University of Zimbabwe.

The piloting of the model in Masvingo Ward 22 demonstrated the feasibility of downscaling ILUPs to ward level through a participatory, GIS-enabled planning process. The pilot strengthened community ownership, built capacity amongst district-level stakeholders, improved the identification of land degradation hotspots, integrated LDN indicators into local planning, and enhanced inter-agency coordination. The resulting Ward-Level ILUP and Integrated Management Plan provide a practical framework for sustainable land and forest management, while generating lessons to inform replication and integration into district and provincial planning systems.

Proposed Landuse for Ward 22

Based on stakeholder and community engagements and guided by LDN assessments, the ILUP process saw the buffering of fragile ecosystems as shown on the map as well as the identification of unplanned settlements that have a bearing on the state of the environment in the Ward



Activity (ii): Prepare technical guidelines on land restoration, provide training and required equipment for the application of these guidelines.

Achievement:

Land restoration and sustainable land and forest management capacities were strengthened through the completion and technical review of the Land Restoration Technical Guidelines and the Sustainable Land and Forest Management (SLFM) Toolkit for the Save and Runde catchments. The toolkit provides a practical, field-oriented framework to support the achievement of Land Degradation Neutrality, combining participatory planning, GIS-based LDN assessments, and science-based approaches with indigenous knowledge systems. It equips stakeholders and communities with harmonised guidance on restoration, fire management, sustainable grazing, conservation agriculture, catchment protection, and nature-based livelihood options, thereby enhancing climate resilience, community empowerment, and the sustainability of land and forest management interventions across target landscapes. Site specific restoration proposals will be developed during the ward ILUP process.

Activity (iii): Strengthen the capacity of EMA's decentralized staff at the district and ward levels (ESCs) through training, improving communication equipment, increasing their mobility, and their visibility on the ground for the implementation of the ILUPs and LEAPs.

Achievement:

A total of 11 Environmental Sub-Committees (272 members) were capacitated to monitor environmental degradation, conduct awareness campaigns, and support enforcement of environmental legislation at community level. They were capacitated through training and provision of bicycles and mobile phones, thereby enhancing their capacity to execute their mandate. These strengthened local structures contributed to improved reporting of environmental offences, prosecution of environmental offenders, improved environmental monitoring, increased adoption of sustainable land practices, and the restoration of over 705 ha of degraded land across eight gully restoration sites.

Activity (iv) Develop the management plan for the Chimanimani National Park in collaboration with GEF7 project in Mozambique and support the process of finalization of the TFCA agreement between Zimbabwe and Mozambique for the Chimanimani TFCA

Achievement:

15 community engagements were successfully conducted across six wards adjacent to Chimanimani National Park to capture local concerns, expectations, and priorities for development of the Integrated Development Plan. A least 671 (242 Males and 319 females) participants and 61 (51 males and 10 females) stakeholders attended the meetings.

Key outcomes and recommendations highlighted

Cultural heritage and access

Communities demonstrated a strong cultural and spiritual connection to Chimanimani National Park, particularly to sacred sites such as Bridal Veil Falls, White Pool, and mountain caves. They emphasized the importance of regulated access to these areas to enable the continuation of ancestral and cultural practices.

Transboundary social ties

Given the park's location along the Zimbabwe–Mozambique border, communities highlighted challenges related to restricted cross-border movement. Many households have close family ties

across the border, making access and mobility an important social and livelihood concern.

Human–wildlife conflict

Communities reported persistent crop and livestock losses caused by wildlife, including hyenas, baboons, wild pigs, and monkeys, with occasional incursions by large migratory species. Limited benefit-sharing and the collapse of earlier CAMPFIRE initiatives were noted as factors weakening community tolerance for wildlife.

Livelihood opportunities

Existing initiatives, such as beekeeping and water abstraction projects, were acknowledged as beneficial in promoting natural resource stewardship. Communities expressed strong interest in scaling up these activities and introducing additional livelihood options, including aquaculture, to strengthen conservation incentives.

Park–community relations

Consultations revealed the need to rebuild and strengthen trust between park authorities and local communities. Concerns related to alleged harassment, corruption, and tensions around illegal mining and border crossings highlight the need for sustained dialogue and inclusive governance mechanisms.

Youth engagement

Youth groups advocated for increased access to the park through open days and structured programmes for tourism, education, and recreation. Such initiatives were viewed as crucial for fostering conservation awareness and long-term stewardship among young people.

Community-led conservation

Communities emphasized the value of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures, including involving traditional leaders in conservation efforts, establishing curio shops for local artisans, and reinvesting conservation revenues into community infrastructure to support both conservation and local development.


Consultation meeting at Chief Saurombe's Court and Nhuka Community engagement

Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) mission to Mozambique

In the reporting period a Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) mission was conducted in Mozambique, involving seven representatives from the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks). The purpose of the mission was to deliberate on key coordination and governance issues for the Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA), including clarification of coordination roles, the Memorandum of Agreement, and the definition of TFCA boundaries. The

meeting also reviewed progress on resource mobilisation, preparations for the Senior Officials Meeting, and the development of the Integrated Development Plan to guide the effective implementation of the TFCA.

The mission advanced the development of the Chimanimani TFCA Integrated Development Plan (IDP), providing a strategic framework to guide cross-border conservation, sustainable land use, and community development within the TFCA. These outcomes contribute to strengthened bilateral cooperation, formalized TFCA governance, and enhanced capacity for coordinated conservation planning.

Group photo with District Administrator-Her Excellency Angeline Ngirazi at the District conference center in Sussundengu District, Mozambique

Activity (v) Support Provincial Development Councils in identifying and prioritizing SLM and SFM interventions to address environmental degradation drivers to be funded with the Devolution Fund, in alignment with the ILUPs.

Achievement:

The project has been supporting PDCs in SLM and SFM interventions. Masvingo Rural District Council has supported catchment works through equipment support for gully reclamation activities in DSLIP selected wards. The Environmental Protection, Climate Resilience and Natural Resources Management Subcommittees of the PDC in Masvingo and Manicaland Provinces undertook monitoring visits to Vanyoro and Mutiusinazita CSBs respectively providing technical guidance on project implementation.

Chivi Rural District Council Champions Land Degradation Neutrality through Integrated Planning and Local Investment

*Chivi Rural District Council (RDC) in Masvingo Province provides a compelling example of how Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) can be effectively advanced through strong local leadership, inclusive planning, and targeted investment. Through active participation of the Chivi LDN Technical Working Group, the Council facilitated the development of the Muni Woodland Catchment Area Management Plan, an inclusive process that brought together district and ward-level stakeholders from key sectors including the Department of Mechanisation, Forestry Commission, Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, Agritex, the Ministry of Women Affairs, and Chivi RDC. The multi-sectoral assessment ensured that LDN principles were fully integrated into land use and natural resource management planning, strengthening ownership and coherence across institutions. As a direct outcome of this process, Chivi RDC adopted a forward-looking decision to establish an eco-tourism facility in the Muni Woodland, **p**ositioning conservation as a viable driver of local economic development while safeguarding critical woodland ecosystems.*

Demonstrating strong political and financial commitment to LDN, Chivi RDC earmarked 10% of

its resources in its 2026 Devolution Funds budget to support Community-Based Forest Management Committees (CBFMCs) and Forest and Farm Producer Organisations (FFPOs). These investments will support a wide range of LDN-aligned activities, including community infrastructure development, farmer training on market linkages, greenhouse establishment, afforestation and nursery development, and climate change adaptation programmes. This marks a significant shift towards embedding LDN priorities within local development financing mechanisms. Further reinforcing its commitment, the Council donated 2,000 square metres of land valued at USD 12,760 to the Marula Zimbabwe FFPO which will enable the group to expand sustainable production and value addition activities. This contribution not only strengthens community livelihoods but also demonstrates how local authorities can leverage land assets to catalyse sustainable land management.

The Chivi RDC experience illustrates how empowered district institutions, guided by LDN frameworks, can translate policy into action mobilising local resources, strengthening community structures, and delivering tangible environmental and livelihood benefits in support of Zimbabwe's Land Degradation Neutrality targets.

Outcome 2.1: SLM and SFM interventions demonstrated and implemented in Save and Runde sub-basins.
Output 2.1.1: Capacity development program delivered in the sub-basins and the targeted Forest, Farm, and Rangeland users supported in the implementation of SLM/SFM activities in the targeted production landscapes.

Achievement:

The Farmer Field Schools established within the Runde and Save Sub-basins continued to engage in SFM and SLM activities in the period under review. Over 300ha of land are under management through own farmer initiatives and the activities include gully restoration and tree planting. Gully reclamation activities have largely been through stone pitching and planting of vertiver and sisal.

Left: Village 9A Gully, ward 9, Masvingo

Right: Richmond Gully, ward 6, Masvingo

Mixed land use/communal land:

Activity (x) Undertake sustainable agriculture intensification over 30,000 ha of communal land.

Achievement:
Sustainable Agricultural Intensification (SAI) forms one of the priority areas for achieving SLM in cropland areas. The approach has been successfully scaled across the target landscapes, with 26,400 hectares (88% of the 30,000-hectare target) under climate-smart practices including Pfumvudza/Intwasa, zai pits, mulching, terracing, agroforestry and gully reclamation. This outcome reflects effective farmer capacity development delivered through Farmer Field Schools, hands-on

demonstrations and targeted mechanization support.

Table: Adoption of Sustainable Intensification (Cumulative to Dec 2025)

Practice	Hectares	Primary Impact
Pfumvudza/CA	10,500	Moisture conservation, yield increase
Agroforestry	3,623	Biodiversity, soil fertility, microclimates
Green Mulching	1,500	Soil health, moisture retention
Terracing & SWC	7,777	Erosion control, water harvesting
Other (Zai, etc.)	3,000	Targeted rehabilitation
TOTAL	**26,400**	

Equipment support

During the reporting period, a second tranche of equipment: 150 earth augers, 8 dehullers, 8 grinding mills and 6 peanut butter processing machines were distributed across the project landscape. To ensure safe, efficient and sustainable use of equipment supplied, the project established a decentralized maintenance system by training 44 ward-based mechanics (40 men, 4 women) and 20 AGRITEX officers across eight districts. This approach reduced equipment downtime, eliminated reliance on distant technicians, and strengthened local technical ownership. Integration of preventive maintenance and record-keeping has ensured timely servicing and extended equipment lifespan, resulting in improved productivity, reduced labour constraints, and enhanced household resilience and food security, while embedding sustainable mechanisation support within local institutions.

Table: Equipment received across the landscape

DISTRICT	Grinding Mill	Dehuller	Peanut Butter Processor	Earth Auger
Zaka	1	1		4
Chipinge	1	1		29
Buhera	1	1	2	29
Masvingo	2	2	2	27
Bikita	1	1		9
Chimanimani	1	1		22
Chivi	1	1		24
Shurugwi			2	6
TOTALS	8	8	6	**150**

Practical session during Ward Mechanic Training at Birchenough Bridge.

The integration of labour-saving technologies, particularly earth augers and other small-scale implements, has removed critical labour bottlenecks and accelerated adoption. Land preparation time for a standard 0.06 ha Pfumvudza/Intwasa plot was significantly reduced from seven days to less than two to three hours**,** significantly increasing efficiency and farmer confidence. Mechanisation groups embedded within FFS structures operationalized 887 implements**,** providing threshing and processing services that reduced post-harvest losses from 40% to 25% while improving value addition. As operator proficiency continues to improve, further reductions in losses and gains in productivity are anticipated, contributing to enhanced household resilience and food security. Widespread use of multi-crop threshers enabled the processing of 300 tonnes of sorghum, pearl millet, rapoko and maize in the landscape enhancing value addition, reducing labour, and contributing to improved food security and household incomes while aligning production gains with environmental sustainability.

Success story: Enhancing equipment sustainability:

Tamuka Farmer Field school from ward 25 Bikita district are beneficiaries of a multi crop thresher from the GEF funded DSL IP project. To date the group has threshed 20tonnes of traditional grains. To enhance sustainable utilization of the thresher the group of twenty-six farmers decided to have the thresher as one of their business units. They have asked community members who would want to have their crops threshed to come and pay $5 per 1 cart load of unthreshed panicles. The money collected is borrowed by the group members through the Village Savings Lending model and paid back with interest. The group plans to buy a Dehuller from the proceeds and this will give them diversified income sources.

Support of inputs

The project distributed inputs that include *svoboda* (500 kg), Pearl Millet Tsholotsho Bearded (2,500 kg) and Sorghum Cimezile (1,000 kg) reinforcing seed security, reduced reliance on external seed markets, and contributing to more resilient and sustainable farming systems. Enhanced competencies in varietal selection, seed production, processing, quality assurance, labelling, and storage have increased the availability of high-quality, locally adapted farmer-managed seed. In parallel, targeted capacity building of 24 community seed producers and multipliers (10 men, 14 women), including 12 AGRITEX officers**,** has strengthened the local seed value chain. These participants were drawn from CSB FFPOs.

Training on Seed Production and Multiplication at Chevron Hotel in Masvingo

Farmer facilitators acknowledging receipt of their seed in Chimanimani and Shurugwi

FFS using seed resources managed to plant hectarages indicated below:

Table : Total area planted based on the input support provided

Crop	Seed support (tonnes)	Seed rate (kg/ha)	Total area projected using project support (ha)
Pearl millet	4.478	5 kg/ha	895.6 ha
Cowpeas	10.0	10 kg/ha	1,000 ha
Sorghum	1.2	5 kg/ha	240 ha
Sun hemp	1.0	25 kg/ha	40 ha
Lablab	1.0	20 kg/ha	50 ha
Velvet bean	2.5	25 kg/ha	100 ha
TOTAL			**2,325.6 ha**

Farmer variety for seed multiplication (Farmer-Managed Seed Multiplication)

Farmer-managed seed multiplication systems have been strengthened across all operational districts

through the provision of improved crop varieties for local multiplication. This outcome has expanded farmer access to elite, climate-resilient germplasm with high yield potential, improved grain quality and resistance to bird damage, directly enhancing household food and income security. By promoting locally adapted varieties Tsholotsho Bearded, Cimezile, Okatshana and Svoboda the project has increased farmers' capacity to adapt to erratic weather conditions while reducing reliance on external seed markets. The intervention has reinforced sustainable, community-based seed systems that underpin long-term resilience and productivity.

Table: Preferred crop varieties with which FFS were supported for multiplication

Crop / Variety	Seed supplied (kg)	Seed rate (kg/ha)	Projected area to be planted (ha)
Svoboda	530	5 kg/ha	106 ha
Sorghum (Cimezile)	1,250	5 kg/ha	250 ha
Pearl millet (Tsholotsho Bearded)	3,000	5 kg/ha	600 ha
TOTAL	**4,780**	**—**	**956 ha**

Activity (xi): Establish woodlots by using fast-growing multipurpose indigenous species for firewood, timber, fodder and food (e.g. fruit trees) over at least 500 ha of communal land.

Achievement:

Training on SFM has generally increased local skills and knowledge for establishing and managing tree-based systems, promoting sustainable natural resource use, improving ecosystem restoration, and supporting climate-resilient livelihoods. The project has made measurable progress in establishing woodlots across the target landscapes; with an achievement of 12.16 during the reporting period out of a cumulative total of 210.89 ha. Overall seedling survival rate is 55–60%**.**

Beekeeping Sustainability Assessment for Proposed Forest and Farm Producer Organizations (FFPOs)

The project has laid the groundwork for sustainable beekeeping as a green value chain that enhances community livelihoods while supporting sustainable forest management (SFM) and land restoration. During the reporting period beekeeping and woodland suitability assessments for five proposed Forest and Farm Producer Organizations (FFPOs) namely Chapunduka (Buhera), Muni (Chivi), Mbuyanehanda (Bikita), Chebvute (Masvingo), and Dapitapi (Zaka) using a woodland suitability index were conducted. All sites demonstrated strong potential for productive and healthy apiaries, offering favourable conditions for hive establishment and honey production.

This outcome sets the stage for targeted interventions, including capacity building in hive management, harvesting, processing, marketing, and strategic enhancement of floral resources to ensure year-round forage. These measures are expected to transform beekeeping into a viable, sustainable livelihood option, increasing household incomes, diversifying rural economies, and contributing to ecosystem restoration and climate-resilient forest management.

Agroforestry

Agroforestry adoption has accelerated across the project landscapes, with 3,623 hectares now under integrated tree–crop systems, marking a 32% increase from the previous reporting period of January to June 2025. At Poshayi Primary School in Ward 12, Shurugwi, learners intercropped maize within the existing 0.4-hectare avocado orchard. In Masvingo, Chisase secondary school planted a total of 65 fruit trees (avocado 40, Mango 10, Guava 10 and Lemon 5). This expansion has delivered multiple co-benefits, including improved soil fertility, reduced erosion, enhanced on-farm biodiversity, diversified household income sources, and strengthened climate change mitigation and adaptation. Farmers are integrating high-value and resilient tree species such as Ziziphus jujube (musawu), paw paw, banana, macadamia and acacia with legumes, vegetables and staple cereals

including pearl millet and sorghum. This demonstrates a clear transition toward more productive, resilient and environmentally sustainable farming systems that support long-term livelihoods and landscape restoration.

Activity (xiii): Undertake land and gully restoration interventions (including removal of invasive species if required) over 100 ha.

Achievement:
The project applied catchment management works including gully restoration, contour pegging and construction, and establishment of storm drains in 705 hectares of land. The sites include Nenhowe (Chimanimani); Dumisayi (Chipinge), Mutiusinazita (Buhera), Mukosi (Masvingo), Vanyoro (Zaka), Poshayi (Shurugwi) and Muvava (Masvingo).

Table: Catchment Management Work in Save and Runde Catchments

Catchment District	District	Gulley name	Ha Restored
Save	Chimanimani	Nenhowe A	200 ha
Save	Chipinge	Dhumisayi	100 ha
Save	Buhera	Mutiusinazita	50ha
Runde	Masvingo	Muvava	40 ha
Runde	Chivi	Gwenyanya	50 ha
Runde	Chivi	Matihwa	4.6 ha
Runde	Masvingo	Mukosi	42 ha
Runde	Zaka	Vanyoro	11ha
Runde	Midlands	Poshayi	208
Total			**705 ha**


Mukosi ward 22, Masvingo gabion structures.

Research on eradication of *Lantana camara*

The project is conducting a pilot on innovative, community-led approach to invasive species management in wards 17 and 34 of Zaka District. Training of Trainers (ToT) was conducted for 13 (7 men and 6 women) farmers, farmer leaders and government officers on Kon-Tiki kiln construction, biochar production, and biochar charging techniques using organic inputs, strengthening local technical capacity and enabling replication beyond the pilot sites. The participatory approach enhanced community ownership, generated strong farmer uptake, and demonstrated a scalable, climate-smart solution that integrates land restoration, improved soil fertility, and carbon sequestration. Overall, the initiative delivered a practical, evidence-based model that converts an environmental threat into an ecological and livelihood opportunity, with clear potential for integration into wider landscape restoration and climate-resilient agriculture programmes. To support the rollout of community-led biochar production under GEF-7, the project conducted a technical look-and-learn visit to the BAOBA Rushinga Project, strengthening institutional readiness for scaling biochar interventions in the Save and Runde Catchments.

Activity (xiv) Implement land rehabilitation measures to enable natural regeneration for soil stabilisation and biodiversity and construction of water retention structures over at least 2,000 ha.

Achievement:
Assisted Natural Regeneration activities continued in Shurugwi. These include patrols to protect the site from stray livestock, illegal tree cutting, fire management, enrichment planting, and seed-balling, and seedling production. A total of 10 000 tree seedlings of indigenous species were raised for enrichment planting at the Zamazama nursery. Tree species planted are *Musawu, Mumvee,* Acacia, *Muuyu*, and *Munyii*. in the satellite nurseries as part of ANR.

Activity (xv) Establish community-based forest management committees for the protection and sustainable management of 130,000 ha of woodlands around riverine areas and conservation areas

Achievement:

The project strengthened community-based woodland management, improving both forest conservation and community benefits.18 additional woodlands were brought under formal management, increasing the total area managed by Community-Based Forest Management Committees (CBFMCs) to 155,986 hectares, largely in buffer and riverine areas. Through outscaling and replication, the project also reached communities beyond the original target areas. In total, 27 woodlands (68,077 ha) in the Runde catchment and 28 woodlands (87,909 ha) in the Save catchment are now under active community management.

CBFMCs demonstrated strong capacity and commitment, conducting 596 forest patrols and 351 coordination meetings, which improved surveillance, compliance, and collective decision-making. Restoration activities were advanced through seedling production, enrichment planting, fire management, and protection of Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) sites, contributing to improved forest regeneration and biodiversity conservation.

Targeted investments further strengthened forest protection and restoration. Seven CBFMCs received 28 bicycles and 224 visibility materials, improving patrol efficiency, safety, and community accountability. In addition, 26 earth augers were procured, enhancing tree planting efficiency and seedling survival. A DJI Matrice 400 RTK drone was procured and this will significantly improve evidence-based forest monitoring, enforcement, and tracking of forest cover, restoration performance, and carbon stocks.

Activity (xvi): Restore abandoned small-scale mining sites over 50ha**50 ha in Shurugwi district with species useful to local communities to support livelihoods.**

Achievement:

Restoration of disused mining areas was carried out at Musara Village ward 13 of Shurugwi which saw the restoration of 30 ha of grazing land. Following the restoration of the disused mining site, a participatory engagement meeting was held with the community to determine actions to be considered for improved biodiversity on the site and livelihoods enhancement. The community proposed the following interventions that are under consideration: installation of a solar-powered borehole, construction of cattle feeding and watering troughs, establishment of a community garden and a community orchard, and fencing off of the community graveyard site.

EMA and Forestry Commission official facilitating the community needs assessment in Musara 2 village ward 13, Shurugwi District.

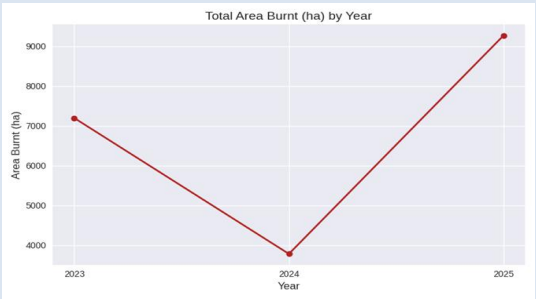
Activity (xvii): Reduce the risk of veldt fires through awareness raising, training and providing equipment over at least 7,000 ha

Achievement:

To reduce the risk of veld fires, the project implemented targeted fire awareness and management training across 21 sites in Chivi, Masvingo, Bikita, Chipinge, and Chimanimani districts. A total of 805 community members (427 women and 378 men) were reached, building local capacity to prevent and control fires across more than 7,000 hectares of woodland. The interventions covered 21 priority woodlands Chivi (5areas), Masvingo (8 areas), Bikita (3areas), Chipinge (2 areas), and one in Chimanimani with additional awareness activities conducted beyond targeted wards to safeguard surrounding landscapes.

Complementary fire awareness campaigns in fire-prone wards of Masvingo, Chimanimani, and Shurugwi reached a further 753 participants, strengthening understanding of fire prevention, sustainable fuelwood use, and the legal framework governing charcoal production. These efforts aimed to reduce human-induced fires while promoting responsible woodland management.

Burnt-area analysis demonstrates both impact and ongoing risk. In 2023 (baseline), 7,195.52 hectares were burnt in the targeted wards. In 2024, this declined to 3,784.71 hectares, a 47% reduction. However, in 2025, burnt area increased to 9,267.99 hectares, reflecting continued vulnerability linked to climatic variability, human pressure, and enforcement gaps. The increase in veld fires is due to high rains received in the season, increasing biomass.



Fire Management Incidences: a Snapshot

Zamazama: The Zamazama Fire Management Committee of Ward 12 mobilized swiftly in response to a fire outbreak that happened at midnight. The committee coordinated community members in frontline firefighting efforts and promptly alerted Tongogara Rural District Council (RDC) authorities. RDC staff responded with their fire tender, assisting in containment operations. Preliminary assessments indicate that the fire originated in Ward 13. The exact cause remains undetermined. The blaze affected an estimated 30 hectares of land before being brought under control

Poshayi CBFMC contained a fire outbreak on time and only one hectare was burnt.

The Marizhe Woodlands Fire Management Committee in Shurugwi successfully contained a veld fire that broke out at Tumba Village in Ward 13. The fire, which affected an estimated 0.6 hectares, was reportedly caused by children playing with matches.

The project procured veld fire management equipment during the reporting period, table below refers

Table: Fire management equipment procured during the reporting period

Item	Buhera (Save)	Masvingo (Runde)	Total delivered
New Holland tractor TT75, TT754WD, Blue	1	1	2
Hay rake, Field King	1	1	2
Rotary Cutter- Field King, 1.8 Rotary cutter, Orange	1	1	2
Hydraulic disc harrow, 9x9 harrow, Field King, Orange	1	-	1
Four-wheel trailers	1	1	2

Output 2.1.2: Output 2.1.2: CSBs established/strengthened and tree nurseries strengthened in support of SLM and SFM

Activity (i) Review the functioning of existing CSBs and identify the gaps for the creation of a robust CSB network in the targeted sub-basins.

Achievement:


Fig : Committee members undergoing training on CSB Operation, Maintenance and Sustainability

Community Seedbank Construction and Functionality

In 2025 construction of Community Seedbanks (CSBs) at Buhera (Mutiusinazita) and Chipinge (Dumisayi) was completed, while Manyumbu CSB in Chivi reached 30% completion. To date, three CSBs are fully operational, with the fourth expected to be completed by the first quarter of 2026.

These facilities enable farmers to preserve crops and maintain seed diversity, strengthening food security and local resilience. In addition, the CSBs have empowered farmers to actively participate in decisions affecting seed management and resource use, fostering greater community ownership and sustainable agricultural practices.


Dumisayi CSB in Chipinge in ward 16 on left and Mutiusinazita CSB in Buhera District

Conduct participatory mapping and collection of propagation and multiplication materials and breeds, for the available climate-resilient and suitable indigenous crop varieties/cultivars, poultry breeds and NTFP tree species (timing depending on the season)

Germplasm collection was successfully conducted in 2025, resulting in a total of 2,187 accessions across the three operational Community Seed Banks (CSBs): Chipinge (926), Buhera (526), and Zaka (735). Additionally, the bulk storage facility in Zaka was utilized to store 150 kg of finger millet and 100 kg of sorghum. The collected accessions include traditional grains, legumes, and indigenous tree seeds, each documented with detailed passport data capturing source, name, and collection date.

CSB committees were trained and cascaded knowledge to members on best practices, including the annual regeneration of leguminous crops such as groundnuts to maintain seed vigour and viability. A CSB networking platform was also established to facilitate exchange of ideas, innovations, and seeds, promoting learning and collaboration among communities. These interventions enable farmers to participate in crop breeding programs, preserve biodiversity, develop new crop varieties with desirable traits, and strengthen household food security through access to diverse and resilient germplasm.

Figure : CSB participants collecting seed and conducting germination tests before stocking

11 Seed and Food Fairs were successfully held with the key aim of promoting agro biodiversity, expanding access to climate-resilient seed varieties, and strengthening community seed and food security.

Activity (iii): Strengthen/establish CSBs and tree nurseries (for crops, grass, shrubs, herbs, and trees) jointly managed by a community group, association, or cooperative.

Achievement:

The project is supporting seven nurseries—Zamazama and Poshayi (Shurugwi), Madzivire (Bikita), Nenhowe (Chimanimani), Murambinda (Buhera), Marula (Chivi), and Masvingo—thereby strengthening decentralized seedling production systems across the landscapes. During the reporting period, borehole capacity tests were conducted at Masvingo, Murambinda, and Madzivire nurseries, and essential nursery tools were procured for five sites. Solarization of existing boreholes was completed at Masvingo, Buhera, and Madzivire sites, while new boreholes were successfully drilled at Zamazama, Marula Zimbabwe, and Madzivire Primary School, significantly improving water availability for nursery operations. In addition, perimeter fencing of the 2-hectare Zamazama nursery was completed, enhancing site security and protecting investments. Collectively, these interventions strengthened nursery infrastructure, improved irrigation reliability, and enhanced the sustainability and productivity of community-based nursery systems.

The project strengthened community-based nursery systems, building local capacity for tree production and agroforestry. Four established nurseries (Vanyoro, Dumisayi, Mutiusinazita CSBs, and Mukosi) remained operational and produced a total of 61,206 tree seedlings of various species during the period under review bringing total seedling production to 105,211. Most of the satellite nurseries are either being run by CBFMCs or Farmer Field Schools (FFS). Project support included seeds, polythene bags, technical backstopping, and irrigation demonstrations, while communities contributed labour, seed collection, and nursery preparation, strengthening local ownership and sustainability.

In addition, 77 village-level nurseries managed by Farmer Field School (FFS) groups were supported through practical training in seedling production and nursery management. These interventions are increasing the availability of quality seedlings, accelerating agroforestry adoption, supporting household incomes, and contributing to landscape restoration and climate resilience.

In Shurugwi, bamboo propagation through community nurseries showed promising results as a nature-based solution for land rehabilitation. Market linkages facilitated by the Forestry Extension Officer created demand for bamboo for restoring degraded and mined sites, linking ecosystem

restoration with sustainable income generation for GEF-7-supported communities.

Bamboo Production Summary

Site	Bamboo Grass Production through cuttings
Zamazama Nursery, Ward 12	1,000
Poshayi Primary School, Ward 12	160
Bondongwe Nursery, Ward 12	200
Tumba Primary School, Ward 12	100
Total	**1,460**

N
ursery with potted and seeded polythene bags at Mutiusinazita and Dumisayi CSBs

Outcome 2.2: Key sustainable dryland commodity Value Chains established and/or strengthened.

Output 2.2.1: Miombo Woodlands Value Chains ("basket product approach") identified, selected, and developed along with bankable business plans

Achievements:

The reporting period recorded a notable shift in community perceptions and practices towards sustainable utilization of natural resources within the Runde and Save catchments. Communities increasingly view Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) and traditional grains as viable economic assets, reinforcing both conservation objectives and livelihood diversification. This change in mindset has translated into increased participation, particularly among Forest and Farm Producer Organizations (FFPOs)**.** FFPOs have actively engaged in value addition for NTFPs and small grains, while simultaneously diversifying livelihoods through small-scale livestock enterprises**,** with poultry emerging as a preferred option due to its low capital requirements and rapid turnover.

These community-driven enterprises mark a clear transition from subsistence-based activities to market-oriented production, demonstrating growing local capacity for enterprise development and resilience building. In terms of measurable results**,** FFPOs operating in the Runde and Save catchments achieved combined sales of approximately US$37,000 during the reporting period, reflecting early gains from value-chain development efforts. However, performance across FFPOs remained uneven as some groups dependent on seasonal harvesting of raw products**,** particularly baobab without value addition, recorded low sales**,** compounded by reduced baobab yields due to adverse climatic conditions**.** Marula value-chain development is still at a promising stage**,** currently involving only one FFPO, with limited but emerging market interest. While some sales were achieved, market access and volumes remain insufficient, and per capita earnings for FFPO members remain below US$40**,** underscoring the need for continued investment in value addition, market development, livelihood diversification and scaling of emerging NTFP enterprises.

Table: Annual Sales figures per value chain

Value Chain	Sales	(Number of FFPOS)
Traditional Grains	$18,000	3 FFPOs (Vanyoro, Dumisayi and Tongogara Processing)
Honey	$9,000	5 FFPOs (Chapunduka, Mbuyanehanda, Dapitapi, Chebvute, Muni)
Baobab	$4,500	4 FFPOs (Baomix, Chimani Delights, Kubatana, Maunganidze)
Marula	$2,000	1 FFPO (Marula Zimbabwe)
Small livestock (Poultry and Goats Combined)	$3,500	5(Marula, Hatikorere, REMCODA, Mavambo eBudiriro, Zamazama
Total	$37,000	15 FFPOs

Products from Marula Group in Chivi District

Activity (ii): Based on Activity 1, (i) identify Green Value Chains that the project will support with emphasis on the identified "core theme" related Green Value Chains, (ii) identify key buyers and inputs suppliers for those Green Value Chains, (iii) undertake capacity needs assessment of the selected FFPOs (direct contribution of the DSL-IP GCP ICDIP), (iv) deliver basic technical trainings such as; organizational governance, group dynamics and expansion, constitution making, development of group constitution, linkages to finance institutions and look and learn tours.

Achievement:
Within the first year of GEF-7 DSLIP implementation, the project successfully met its engagement targets by onboarding 15 Forest and Farm Producer Organizations (FFPOs) through a structured and results-driven process. Key achievements included the systematic mapping of FFPOs, comprehensive capacity needs assessments, and application of a transparent selection framework to ensure strong alignment with project objectives and implementation readiness.

The project achieved a key milestone by developing and finalizing 15 comprehensive business plans that provide clear, actionable roadmaps for the growth and sustainability of targeted forest and farm enterprises. Through a participatory process involving FFPOs, the project in partnership with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Small and Medium Enterprises, Community Development, the project

developed, reviewed and aligned the business plans with community priorities and national development frameworks.

Designed as adaptive, living documents, the business plans are being regularly reviewed to respond to changing market, environmental, and policy conditions, strengthening enterprise resilience and long-term viability. Importantly, FFPOs have already begun implementing priority actions using their own resources while awaiting project-supported equipment, demonstrating strong ownership, improved entrepreneurial capacity, and the catalytic impact of structured business planning on community-led economic transformation.

Activity (iv): Prepare a business development plan manual that integrates both Market Analysis and Development (MA&D) and training in use of FAO Rural Invest Tool and other relevant tools used by IIED, such as the risk self-assessment and management tool 'Securing Forest Business' for development of business plans.

Achievement:

The project completed the identification and selection of priority green value chains within the first year of implementation, establishing a strong platform for scaled investment and impact. The selected value chains baobab, marula, honey, traditional grains, and small livestock reflect a diversified portfolio with high potential for sustainable livelihoods, climate resilience, and nature-positive economic growth.

Across these value chains, Forest and Farm Producer Organizations are at varying stages of maturity, enabling tailored support and phased capacity development. Notably, enterprises such as Chimani Delights, Baomix, Chapanduka, and Marula Zimbabwe have already advanced to active production and market engagement, demonstrating tangible economic outcomes. These early successes underscore the project's catalytic role in accelerating enterprise development, strengthening market participation, and promoting sustainable forest and farm-based value chains within targeted communities.

Operations at Chimani Delights (Left and Centre) and Marula products (Right)

The project is now working on tools to carry out a markets assessment for NTFPs and NUSs. The market assessment will respond to the following key objectives:

i. Value Chain Mapping and Actor Profiling
ii. Market Demand Analysis
iii. Pricing and Revenue Potential
iv. Infrastructure and Logistics Assessment

v. Policy and Regulatory Environment
vi. Gender and Social Inclusion
vii. Business Development and Investment Opportunities

The project is working hand in hand with World Vision Australia technical support team.

Activity 5: Support DSLIP selected FFPOs in the target landscapes in the screening of viable Green Value Chain options using the Market Analysis and Development (MA&D) toolkit (Phase 1 – assessing the existing situation)

Achievement:
The project achieved a major institutional strengthening milestone through the establishment of eight cross-sectoral selection panels one in each district providing coordinated oversight and support for FFPO development. District-level coordination meetings were successfully convened, bringing together implementing partners and key government institutions, including the Ministry of Women Affairs, Local Authorities, District Development Coordinators, and AGRITEX. These platforms enabled structured review of FFPO progress in developing and operationalizing their business plans.

Key achievements included accelerated progress toward formal registration of FFPOs, with Buhera District leading efforts to register groups as Public Business Corporations (PBCs). This represents a critical outcome, as legal recognition will position FFPOs as legitimate trading entities, expand market access, and unlock opportunities for engagement with corporate buyers and financial service providers. In addition, the meetings strengthened governance arrangements, clarified asset management and handover processes, and reinforced the roles of line ministries in supporting enterprise operationalization. Collectively, these outcomes enhance institutional readiness, accountability, and the sustainability of FFPO-led green enterprises under the project.

Activity (vii): Support selected FFPOs in preparing Business Development Plans (MA&D Phase III – Preparing an enterprise development plan) including a financing scheme, and an annual implementation plan for the first year – and presentation of their business plans to the selection committee

Achievement:
Business Plan development manual developed

Activity 6: Facilitation of data collection by the FFPOs themselves of the five main areas of data required for Business Plan design with consolidation of interest groups that will form the eventual management team for those businesses (MA&D Phase II – Carry out surveys) with particular attention to the sustainability of the business (social, environmental and economic sustainability) for the selected FFPOs
Achievement:

Data collection exercise by FFPOs in Bulawayo

The project completed a structured green market learning visit as the final phase of FFPO data collection, delivering a key outcome in strengthening market literacy and commercial readiness among community enterprises. Through exposure to both formal and informal markets in Bulawayo, FFPOs enhanced their understanding of output market dynamics for NTFPs and Neglected and Underutilized Species, including pricing structures, offtakers networks, market geography, and applicable policy and regulatory frameworks.

Eighteen marketing agents (10 men and 8 women) from participating FFPOs directly engaged with traders, retailers, and aggregators to conduct practical market diagnostics, generating real-time insights on demand trends, pricing benchmarks, consumer preferences, and market access constraints. Supported by the Zimbabwe Farmers Union, this intervention addressed a core DSLIP barrier related to limited community technical and market capacity. As a tangible achievement, the visit led to the establishment of a multi-district Markets Association representing all targeted FFPOs, providing a sustainable mechanism to advance market linkages, collective negotiation, and value capture during and beyond the project lifecycle. This committee will help push the market linkages agenda during and post project implementation phase.

Activity 7 Support selected FFPOs in preparing Business Development Plans (MA&D Phase III – Preparing an enterprise development plan) including a financing scheme, and an annual implementation plan for the first year – and presentation of their business plans to the selection committee

Achievement:

The project supported capacity-building outcomes by training a total of 533 farmers from five Forest and Farm Producer Organizations across the Runde and Save catchments in business planning and enterprise development. As a direct result of this investment, participating FFPOs successfully developed structured action plans that now guide their enterprise operations and growth strategies.

The trainings equipped members with practical competencies in enterprise planning and financial forecasting, organizational governance and constitution development, sustainable business model design, and compliance with cooperative and community-based enterprise regulations. These achievements have strengthened the operational effectiveness and governance of FFPOs, enhanced market readiness, and laid a solid foundation for improved access to finance. Overall, the intervention has contributed to increased socio-economic resilience and long-term viability of community-led green enterprises, with participation tracked through gender-disaggregated data to ensure inclusivity and accountability.

Table: Farmers trained in Business Planning

Name of FFPO	Target	Achievement						
		Male Youths	Female Youths	Adult Males	Adult Female	Totals Males	Totals Females	Cumulativ Total
ZamaZama	70	0	15	22	35	22	50	72
Tongogara Oil	70	6	32	18	51	24	83	107
Biomix	70	0	3	2	27	2	30	32
Chimani	70	5	10	23	28	28	38	66
Maunganidze	70	4	12	26	63	30	75	105
Atikoreri	70	0	12	20	60	20	72	92
Chapanduka	70	2	3	23	31	25	34	59
Total	490	17	87	134	295	151	382	533

Business planning training in Save

Output 2: Finance and business incubation mechanisms established in support of Forest Farm Producers and their organizations

Achievement:

The project significantly strengthened financial inclusion for Forest and Farm Producer Organizations (FFPOs) by engaging key financial institutions to co-design tailored financial products, improving access to credit, investment management, and enterprise growth. Participation of selected institutions in the LDN Financing Roundtable further positioned finance as a catalyst for land and forest conservation, with emerging microfinance models integrating positive environmental practices into credit appraisal—showing promising links between environmental stewardship and improved loan performance.

At community level, the project expanded and strengthened the Village Savings and Lending (VSL) model, empowering 1,568 participants through targeted financial literacy, savings, and loan management training. These interventions enhanced household financial resilience, promoted inclusive economic empowerment, and laid a strong foundation for sustainable, community-led investment in green enterprises while reinforcing social cohesion.

VSL loans are increasingly financing green enterprises, particularly in Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) such as baobab, honey, coffee, oils, and powders, alongside diversified retail activities and solar-powered agro-processing. Targeted technical support, including apiculture feasibility assessments, has improved the commercial viability of selected FFPO ventures.

Overall, 1,924 participants are now active in digitally supported savings groups linked to FFPOs and Farmer Field Schools, with cumulative savings of US$49,854 and a loan portfolio of US$74,631. The integration of DreamSave has improved savings behaviour, loan repayment, and financial inclusion, while catalysing sustained community investment in environmentally sustainable

livelihoods.

DSLIP digitised Village Savings and Lending through the DreamSave platform, improving transparency, record-keeping, and access to financial data. The mobile-based system strengthens financial literacy, builds credit histories, and supports linkages to formal finance. The platform is being piloted with 20 VSL groups, providing a scalable model for resilient community-based savings and lending systems.

Dreamsave interface page (left) and feedbacks to groups in Chivi (Right)

In addition the project is Village Savings and Lending (VSL) with Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets by linking financial inclusion to community-led environmental restoration. VSL groups are planting and tracking trees during meetings, with at least 1,500 trees expected across eight districts by project end.

VSL groups planting trees soon after savings sessions in Zaka (Left) and Buhera (Right)

Activity (vii): Provide training to an apex level farmers organization in business incubation services that it might then provide to its member FFPOs in implementing their business development plans (using the ForBInc toolkit) - and help facilitate with that apex level FFPO risk self-assessment and management training for those member FFPOs (using the 'Securing Forest Business' toolkit to identify areas of organizational and business management that require priority attention in the year ahead

Achievement:

The project conducted an Agripreneurship and Marketing Capacity Building Workshop at Zimpride Lodge in Zaka District, in partnership with the Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU), targeting 32 marketing and production officers from FFPOs in Chivi and Shurugwi (17 men and 15 women). Participants gained practical skills through strategic business development tools, including the Wheel of Success, Principles of Minimum, Bird's Eye Model, and Business Model Canvas, enabling improved business planning, value chain optimization, and market engagement. The training directly enhanced FFPO performance across production, storage, packaging, marketing, and distribution, laying a foundation for increased income generation, expanded market access, and greater resilience of rural livelihoods. Overall, the workshop contributed to building sustainable, community-led enterprises with strengthened service delivery and long-term profitability.

Using highly interactive methodologies including group exercises, storytelling, hands-on practice, and team-building activities, training outcomes were tailored to participants' literacy levels,

resulting in improved knowledge, attitudes, and skills for enterprise management and financial decision-making. In a complementary achievement, the project, in collaboration with ZFU, established a Markets Association for FFPOs, which participated for the first time in the ZFU Annual Congress in October 2025, providing a platform for collective decision-making, market linkages, and enhanced visibility. Overall, this intervention strengthened income-generation capacity, enterprise sustainability, and women's economic empowerment within the target communities.

Activity (viii): Provide or coordinate required training identified by the risk self-assessment processes with each member FFPO (such as training in community seed bank [CSB] development to be supported by CSB workstream, SLM, post-harvest practices supported by FFS workstream, processing and packaging technologies, mobilizing and managing internal investment funds, market analysis, negotiating skills, policy advocacy, administrative management, brand development, labelling and marketing to selected FFPO groups with at least 70 members on average.

Achievement:
The project has strengthened risk management and financial resilience within communities by integrating social insurance funds into the Village Savings and Lending (VSL) model, addressing a key risk, and the potential dissolution of savings groups due to shocks such as illness or death. This innovation provides members with access to emergency financial support without depleting personal savings, enhancing group stability and continuity.

Structured contributions from VSL members typically $1 per member per month enable groups to collectively build substantial insurance funds, supporting both individual and household emergencies. Early results demonstrate tangible benefits: for example, the Chebvute FFPO in Masvingo has already disbursed up to $100 to members for health-related expenses. This intervention not only safeguards savings groups against external shocks but also strengthens social cohesion, financial resilience, and the sustainability of community-led economic initiatives under DSLIP.

Social insurance records for Gutsai Group in Ward 17, Zaka District

Activity (xi: Build the capacity of the selected FFPOs to develop their own internal investment funds (savings and loans funds), with a track record of financial management (preferably banked),

Achievement:

In October 2025, the project conducted two FFPO impact review workshops in the Save and Runde catchments, engaging 92 participants (39 men, 53 women) from VSLs, FFPOs, government, and GEF-7 partners to assess business incubation outcomes.

The workshops consolidated field evidence, identified implementation challenges, and agreed on actionable improvements, including strengthened investment planning, fund development, and interest rate setting. Recommendations to increase minimum VSL contributions (from USD 2 to

USD 5–10) were made to boost capitalisation. Targeted technical guidance supported enterprise diversification, including feasibility assessments for apiculture.

The reviews strengthened governance, financial literacy, market linkages, and M&E systems, enhancing the sustainability and economic viability of community-led green enterprises.

Participants of review workshop

Catchment Area	Target	Achievement						
		Youth Male	Youth Female	Adult Female	Adult Male	Female Totals	Male Totals	Cumulative TOTAL
Runde	45	3	6	21	18	27	21	48
Save	45	3	3	23	15	26	18	44
TOTALS	90	6	9	44	33	53	39	92


Participants at annual review workshops (Save left and Runde-Right)

Review Meetings

The project conducted a Village Savings and Loans (VSL) Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop at Pote Hill Hotel, building the technical capacity of 35 community cluster facilitators (22 women and 13 men) across the 8 DSLIP districts. The training equipped participants with practical skills in core VSL modules, including individual self-screening, group formation and leadership, constitution development, fund mobilization, and record keeping, enabling them to cascade knowledge and best practices within their communities.

The training emphasized household-level engagement and mutually agreed lending terms, fostering a culture of savings, productive investment, and community-driven financial resilience. Collectively, this intervention strengthened facilitator capacity, enhanced financial inclusion, and laid the foundation for sustainable, community-led investment and socio-economic empowerment.

Activity 13: Engage and mobilize microfinance institutions to increase financial support for smallholder farmers, groups and associations interested in adopting or developing SLM and SFM practices in alignment with the identified GVCs and corresponding SLM/SFM interventions (Output 1).

Achievement:
The project successfully advanced financial inclusion for Forest and Farm Producer Organizations (FFPOs) by convening five financial institutions, including Vision Fund International, First Mutual Microfinance, Microplan, Generational Impact Finance, Virl Microfinance, Empowerbank and Zimbabwe Association of Microfinance Institutions (ZAMFI), for a high-level roundtable discussion on tailored financing models in the Runde and Save catchments. The workshop engaged CEOs, Managing Directors, and business development teams to explore innovative financial solutions for smallholder farmers, including microinsurance products to mitigate operational risks.

The discussions emphasized the strategic role of Village Savings and Lending (VSL) groups as a foundation for financial inclusion, highlighting the need for a comprehensive database to support informed lending decisions. The Zimbabwe Association of Microfinance Institutions (ZAMFI) reinforced the importance of expanding financial services to rural communities, promoting

economic empowerment and sustainable development. Building on these engagements, the project is now progressing toward formalizing partnerships through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with participating financial institutions, creating a framework for enhanced access to finance for underserved rural populations.


Participants from various financial institutions

Activity (14): Organize one national level LDN Donor/Finance RoundTable workshops with government and non-government partners, and relevant private sector actors

Achievement:

The project convened the first Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) Financing Roundtable panel ducting COP15, bringing together high-level representatives from the UNCCD Global Mechanism, GEF, IUCN, and the Ministry of Finance to identify pathways for scaling investment toward Zimbabwe's LDN targets. The dialogue generated clear, actionable guidance on improving project bankability, strengthening institutional coordination, and aligning national priorities with global environmental finance frameworks.

Discussions highlighted key constraints such as policy misalignment, limited pipeline development capacity, and weak integration of environmental finance into national planning while advancing practical financing options such as blended finance, concessional loans, green and land bonds, payment for ecosystem services, and carbon and biodiversity credits. The engagement also underscored the critical role of domestic financial institutions in co-developing bankable green investments.

The roundtable in future will strengthen Zimbabwe's readiness to mobilize domestic and international finance for land restoration and sustainable land management. Its recommendations are being consolidated into the national LDN Financing Mechanism under the project's policy development component.


Participants and panelists who participated during the LDN Financing Roundtable, 29/07/25

Component 3: Strengthening Knowledge Management, Monitoring and Collaboration for addressing SLM/SFM at landscape, national, regional and global levels.

Output 3.1.1: M & E strategy developed with relevant stakeholders, clearly defining the expected outcomes, expected implementation timeframe, and confirmation through objectively

verifiable indicators and means of verification.

Achievement:

Joint Monitoring and support visits: Monitoring support visits were conducted at National, Catchment, District and ward level. The objectives of these monitoring visits were for strategy refining, tracking project progress, capacity building as well as to provide technical back stopping.

2.3.1 Capacity Building on the Integrated Landscape Assessment Methodology (ILAM)

As part of bench marking and monitoring the impact of the project, the Global Coordination Project (GCP) Monitoring and Learning Officer, Marcelo Rezende based at the FAO/HQ facilitated a two weeks physical training on the Integrated Landscape Assessment Methodology. The training was attended by 33 (8 females, 25 males) participants drawn from the key government departments (Forestry Commission, EMA, ZINGSA, Surveyor General, FAO and the Ministry of Environment, Climate and Wildlife. As an output for the training the team carried out a remote sensing assessment (through Collect Earth) of the project area and the entire country to deduce the status of land degradation. Participants completed collecting data on the project grid and 67% on the national grid. The skills gained will allow easy and accurate assessment of a country or projects' efforts towards the achievement of LDN and support country reporting to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) every four years.

Collect Earth training theory and ground truthing session at Gwatura village, in ward 22, Masvingo District.

2.3.2 Outcome Harvesting

An outcome harvesting exercise was carried out in the reporting period .This exercise highlighted a number of outcomes that have come about as a result of the project as well as recommendations for improvement in some project sites. The survey generally found a significant increase in knowledge and awareness of causes and drivers of land degradation within communities, and improved

behaviour towards conservation of natural resources. For Vanyoro CSB particularly, as one of the first project interventions, it was realised that the project has enhanced production of traditional grain, moving from an average of 3 tonnes/hactare to 7.5 tonnes per hactare. Furthermore, there has been improved processing efficiency and grain quality as well as access to clean and safe water for communities living around the CSB. There is, however, a potential source of conflict on the use of water between households and the CSB activities, especially for CSBs that have low-yielding boreholes in the dry seasons.

With improved business skills attained from the project, there has also been wide adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices, coupled with wide adoption of livelihood initiatives, though with some limitations in meeting the critical demand being offered by markets in the cities.

Output 3.2.1: Knowledge Management strategy developed and implemented with lessons learned and best approaches/practices on addressing LD at landscape-level captured for their dissemination at the landscape and national levels

Activity (ii) Compile and package the knowledge and experience generated by the project interventions under Components 1 and 2 on a continuous basis.

As the project is being implemented, continuous documentation of good practices is being carried out. The table below summarizes all the documentation done during the reporting period with a link to the products.

Table: Knowledge Products Developed during the 6 Months

Knowledge Product	Theme / Focus Area	Output Type
FFPO Documentation	Baobab & Marula Value Chains	Story + Community Voices Video
Farmer Field Schools	Sustainable Land & Forest Management	Video + Newsletter Article
Project Explainer	Programme Achievements Overview	1 Video
Gender IEC Materials	Gender Mainstreaming & Inclusion	Posters & Leaflets
Mined-Out Area Restoration	Ecosystem Recovery & Best Practices	Photo Essay + Story
ZFU 85th Congress Coverage	FFPO Visibility & Policy Advocacy	Video + Write-up

Below is the link with communications and visibility materials developed during the reporting period: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19LLghjDVUyW04lHXo-4ZncTMtO4cFHn0?usp=sharing

During the reporting period, as part of ongoing efforts to develop and strengthen knowledge-sharing products, a second edition of the project newsletter was produced and disseminated. The newsletter was circulated to relevant stakeholders and project staff, providing updates on project progress, key activities, and emerging insights, and supporting effective information exchange and engagement across the project network. Below is the link for accessing an electronic copy:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1UwHFc1e1KK2W1P6MSiJqfA1Z-ezdAlV3?usp=sharing

Radio

During the reporting period, the project conducted a total of ten radio programmes, comprising five broadcasts in the Runde catchment and five in the Save catchment. The programmes were aired through Chimanimani FM in the Save catchment and 98.4 FM in Gweru for the Runde catchment. The use of community radio stations was strategically adopted to enhance knowledge sharing through a localized and context-specific approach, ensuring that information was accessible and relevant to target communities.

Print media

During the reporting period, the project received print media coverage highlighting several of its key interventions and the support provided to beneficiary communities. These publications helped showcase the project's activities, raise public awareness of its impact, and demonstrate its contribution to improving community well-being.

Achievements:
Output 3.2.2 Knowledge exchanges on Dryland IP results and collaboration between neighboring countries and at regional and global levels to support mutual capacity development and Learning

Activity (i) Disseminate knowledge and experience generated by the project interventions on regional and global platforms.

The project participated at the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, Convention of Parties 15 in Victoria Falls. One of the key highlights was the President of Zimbabwe, His Excellency Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa visiting the DSLIP stand to hear more about our work.

Some of the highlights during COP 15 includes

- Over 400 visitors including representatives from government, academia, NGOs, and international development agencies
- 9 bilateral meetings with prospective partners and stakeholders
- Engagement with youth groups and media personnel for outreach amplification
- Strengthened visibility and awareness of dryland conservation issues in the broader wetlands discourse.

Exhibitions and Food Fairs

The project implemented a series of knowledge exchange and outreach activities aimed at promoting sustainable land management, climate resilience, and biodiversity conservation across local, national, and regional platforms. At the Good Food and Seed Festival in Harare, seven farmers and three agricultural extension officers participated in showcasing locally adapted seed varieties, sustainable agricultural products, and innovative practices, facilitating peer learning and stakeholder engagement on agroecology and seed sovereignty.

The project also participated in the Masvingo Provincial Agricultural Show, where 384 visitors were reached through structured exhibitions and interactions focusing on sustainable land management (SLM), sustainable forest management (SFM), and wetland protection, raising awareness among farmers, policymakers, and the general public. At the local level, Agricultural and Seed Fairs were

organized in Shurugwi, Zaka, and Chivi, providing platforms for farmers to exchange indigenous seed varieties, share context-specific innovations, and promote the conservation of agricultural genetic diversity.

In addition, the project supported regional capacity building through participation in a climate-resilient forestry training hosted by the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI), where the Shurugwi Forestry Officer acquired technical knowledge on indigenous tree species management, bamboo-based landscape rehabilitation, and gender-responsive forestry approaches, strengthening the application of inclusive and climate-smart forestry practices at the local level.

Regional and Global Engagements/Knowledge Sharing

Agroforestry Training in Kampala

The Plant Production and Protection Division (NSP), in collaboration with FAO, convened a regional workshop in Kampala to advance large-scale agroforestry implementation. 12 practitioners (6 women, 6 men) from Côte d'Ivoire, Namibia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe participated. The project was represented by Somandla Ndlovu (Runde Catchment Coordinator – Project Management Unit), Edwin Machokoto (Provincial Forest Extension Manager – Forestry Commission, Masvingo) and Plaxedes Gweme (Agronomist –Community Technology Development Organisation), strengthening cross-institutional learning and positioning Zimbabwe to benefit from regional best practices.

The workshop identified practical solutions for planning, procurement, and value-chain challenges, established a regional Community of Practice for ongoing knowledge exchange, and initiated the development of a practitioner-oriented agroforestry implementation guide to support effective, scalable GEF-funded agroforestry investments.

Southern Africa Regional workshop
The Zimbabwe project team members participated at the third regional meeting which was held in Maputo, Mozambique on 29 September to 3rd October 2025. The project's participation in the workshop strengthened cross-country learning among government institutions, implementing partners, and FFPOs. The exchange improved stakeholder capacity to apply climate-resilient agriculture, sustainable natural resource-based value chains, and gender-responsive approaches that enhance livelihoods while protecting ecosystems. Knowledge shared highlighted Zimbabwe's experience in revitalizing traditional grains through community seed banks and indigenous knowledge systems, contributing to improved resilience and food security. Lessons from Zimbabwe and Namibia demonstrated how value addition such as marula oil and baobab powder production combined with women-led enterprises can drive inclusive, sustainable forest-based livelihoods. The workshop also reinforced the project's contribution to climate-smart agriculture, biodiversity conservation, and inclusive value chain development, with clear potential for regional replication.

Learning Events
The project participated in the DSLIP Learning Event themed "The Role of Gender in Sustainable Dryland Management: Insights and Practices from the DSL-IP." This platform provided an important opportunity to showcase Zimbabwe's practical experience in integrating gender into Sustainable Land Management (SLM) interventions.

During the event, the project delivered a presentation titled "Gender-Responsive SLM in Zimbabwe: Planting Pits in Conservation Farming for Improved Soil Health and Sustainable Land Management – A Case of Maunganidze Farmer Field School." The presentation highlighted how gender-responsive conservation farming practices, particularly the use of planting pits, are contributing to improved soil health, moisture retention, and crop productivity in dryland areas. The Maunganidze Farmer Field School case demonstrated how deliberate inclusion of women and men in training, decision-making, and implementation of planting pits has enhanced adoption of SLM practices.

Participation in the DSLIP Learning Event strengthened cross-country learning and positioned the project as a practical example of how gender considerations can be effectively mainstreamed into

SLM interventions.

ENABLERS

Grievance Redress Mechanism

During the reporting period July–December 2025, the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) continued to function as a critical mechanism for strengthening community trust, enhancing participation, and ensuring timely resolution of grievances in line with DSLIP and FAO safeguard requirements.

The GRM operated at two levels:

District Level: The project supported and strengthened 8 District GRM Committees coordinated by District Development Coordinators (DDCs) and relevant line ministries. The committees developed Terms of References, and agreed to have the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development to be the secretary for the district's committees given their nature of work in conflict management and resolution. Clear referral pathways and escalation procedures were reinforced to ensure unresolved cases at lower levels were addressed at higher levels.

Project Level: Capacity Building, awareness raising, and grievance management was actively handled at project level through the various existing structures while ultimately resting with the project GRM committee.

Grievances received during the period mainly related to:

1. Participation in trainings
2. Access to project equipment by project beneficiaries.
3. Committee leadership and representation issues.
4. Breakdown of equipment.
5. Late payments of funds to beneficiaries
6. Conflicts between stakeholders and beneficiaries

All reported grievances were recorded in GRM registers. The majority of cases were resolved at project and community level through dialogue and mediation, with a few escalated to district level for further action.

Grievance Statistics Summary

Category	**Number of Grievances**
Total grievances received	16
Grievances resolved	9
Grievances pending	6
Resolution Rate %	80%

Challenges

- Delays in resolution of complex grievances requiring multi-stakeholder engagement.

Recommendations and Way Forward

- Conduct refresher trainings for GRM committee members and community focal persons
- Enhance coordination between community, district, and PMU levels to reduce resolution timelines.
- Continue mainstreaming GRM awareness across all DSLIP interventions.
- Engagement of traditional and local leaders to prevent escalation of conflicts

Progress towards targets					
Results chain	**Indicators**	**Baseline**	**Progress to date**	**Percentage achieved against a target for the reporting period**	**End target (expected value at project completion)**
Impact	To promote the sustainable management of Miombo and Mopane production landscapes in Save and Runde sub-basins following an LDN approach.				
Outcome 1.1	Strengthened and harmonized intersectoral and multilevel decision-making and planning to avoid, reduce, and reverse land degradation and address LDN in the targeted sub-basins and nationally				
Output 1.1.1: National platform for LDN improved, with a particular focus on the national LDN TWG	# of National platform for LDN improved, with a particular focus on the national LDN TWG.	The existing committee with adhoc meetings, is mainly involved in UNCCD reporting.	2 LDN Meetings conducted with the TW focusing on ILAM and ILUP.	100%	2
Output 1.1.2: Cross-sectoral and gender-sensitive governance platforms – including a landscape-level LDN working group – established at the landscape level in both Save and Runde sub-basins	# of landscape-level cross-sectoral governance platform for land use planning and management in Save and Runde sub-basins established and operational, with # active members.	No landscape-level cross-sectoral governance platform in place in the Save and Runde sub-basins	3 Provincial and District Technical Working Groups supported the development of fire management plans, integrated land use plans, and catchment management frameworks.	100%	3
Output 1.1.3: Assessments of targeted sub-basins jointly deepened and extended, and	# of Assessments of targeted sub-basins jointly deepened and extended, and effective current	-	The project trained Agropastoralists/ FFSs carried out a baseline on rangeland management in both the landscapes.	100%	2

effective current practices identified in support of LDN decision-making and corresponding capacity development program designed and delivered for relevant stakeholders from government, private sector, civil society and communities using a training-of-trainers approach	practices identified in support of LDN decision making and corresponding capacity development program designed and delivered for relevant stakeholders from government, private sector, civil society, and communities using a training-of-trainers approach		Technical assessments are currently underway and the results are yet to be provided to the project team for decision making. One WOCAT baseline exercise was carried out		
Outcome 1.2: Integrated Landscape Planning incorporating LDN objectives applied and sustained in the Save and Runde sub-basins.					
Output 1.2.1: Two integrated landscape management and corresponding action plans developed for Save and Runde sub-basins	# of ILUPs for integrated land-use management planning developed and under implementation in the Save and Runde sub-basins. ii) # of SLM/SFM policy recommendations at national level developed, submitted and adopted	(i)No integrated land-use management plans are available for the targeted sub-basins There are several weaknesses in the policy framework regarding the integrated management of natural	2 ILUPs for Runde and Save have been developed, 44 Ward ILUPs are currently being developed to capture site specific interventions , 1 Ward ILUP developed , 43 Outstanding 3 Draft policies review document under development, ie SLM & SFM Guidelines, NTFPs Guidelines, and LDN Financing Mechanism	20% 50 % (consultation, validation & adoption)	Two ILUPs developed, validated and under implementation in the Save and Runde sub-basins (2 policy recommendations

		resources.			
	Increased support for SLM and/or SFM through # government finance mechanisms and programmes as a result of the project.	The budget allocated to LDN-relevant interventions across public institutions is unknown	LDN Financing Mechanism under development	50%	Operational framework of the finance mechanisms and programmes
	# of by-laws developed/updated in the targeted districts/wards in support of the implementation of the ILUPs	By-laws are needed in the targeted districts/wards to guide the implementation of national policy of NRM , LDN& alignment with ILUPsT	4 RDC by-laws have been reviewed	50%	At least six by-laws developed/updated to address land degradation issues validated and under implementation
		(ii) Each of the 8 districts has a DDP. LEAPs haven't been developed. Pending outputs from the	4 District LEAPs have been reviewed for gaps , recommendations are yet to be validated and incorporated ; 44 WEAPs have been completed	50%	At least 10 existing development plans from the Provincial to the Village level across

		contracted consultant			the targeted sub basins integrating the ILUPs and LDN aims (e.g. LEAPs, DDPs
	# of management plans for Protected Areas developed for conservation and sustainable use	iii. Chimanimani National Park does not have a management plan. There are ongoing engagements between Zimbabwe and Mozambique on the Chimanimani TFCA.	15 Community consultations conducted in Chimanimani A mission visit to Mozambique for TFCA. Engagement of a consultant for the Park Management Plan.	69%	1 Manage
	(iv) Increase in the # of ha of forests sustainably managed by community-based forest management committees.	iv. The Forestry Commission is implementing community-based	155,986 hectares under woodland management through CBFMCs. ● Riverrine: 111,766 hectares	119%	

		forest management	• Buffer conservancy: 44,220 hectares			
Outcome 2.1: SLM and SFM interventions demonstrated and implemented in Save and Runde sub-basins						
Outcome 2.1: SLM and SFM interventions demonstrated and implemented in Save and Runde sub-basins	(i)# of ha of Miombo and Mopane production landscapes under SLM and/or SFM practices for improved and sustainable production with the following distribution across the targeted LUS:	(i). LD Assessment: more than 70% of the area is considered to be affected by soil erosion by water and fertility decline. Grasslands in the Save and Runde basins have shrunk over the years and the remaining patches are under threat from overgrazing, veld fires, and invasion by alien species such as Lantana camara.	*Presented below:*			

	# of ha of cropland in Save and Runde sub-basins under sustainable intensification.	The baseline is yet to be carried out	SAI practices that were done by farmers were technologies that increase agricultural productivity while minimizing adverse impacts on the ecosystem. These practices included conservation Agriculture (CA) Intwasa as it is commonly referred to, crop and animal diversity, efficient water use, integrated pest management, nutrient management. 730 small scale equipment distributed to communities. A total of 26400 hectares have been covered to date.	88%	30,000 Ha
	# of ha of mixed landscapes with SLM and SFM practices applied for sustainable NTFP and wood harvesting	-	12.16 ha additional woodlot established. Total to date now at 210.89ha	42%	500Ha
	# of ha of rangeland under improved management.	-	3750 hectares reached in Zamazama, Poshayi The trained Agropastoralists FFSs are supporting catchment management activities and woodland management practices such as controlled grazing and social fencing. The breakdown of improved rangeland is as	75%	5000Ha

			follows: - 300 ha at Zamazama - 100 ha at Poshayi - 2,349 ha in through Agro-Pastoral Field Schools (APFs) accross both the landscapes		
	# of ha of mixed landscapes under improved fire management.	80% of forests are considered to be affected by veldt fires (especially in Chipinge, Masvingo, and Bikita districts), and 40% of forests are affected by deforestation and invasive alien plants and other species. Gully formation affects 2,220 ha across the eight targeted districts.	4,250 ha managed to prevent veldt fires.	55.%	7000 Ha
	# of ha of forests and mixed landscapes under regeneration (contributing to GEF Core Indicator	N/A			

	3, Sub Indicators 3.2 and 3.3) # of ha of degraded forests under assisted natural regeneration (ANR)		2,249 under ANR	112%	2000 Ha
	# of ha of degraded forests (mining sites) under rehabilitation.	N/A	30 ha of disused mining sites restored in Musara village in Shurugwi	10%	50ha of disused mining sites restored.
	# of ha of mixed landscape (gullies, land degraded by invasive species) under rehabilitation.	N/A	705ha of degraded landscapes restored through gully reclamation and conservation works.	100%	100 ha of degraded landscapes restored
	(iii) # of management plans for Protected Areas developed for Conservation and sustainable use.	(iii) Chimanimani National Park does not have a management plan	Under development	2%	1 plan
	(v) Increase in the # of ha of forests sustainably managed by community-based forest management committees.	(iv) The Forestry Commission is implementing community-based forest management	155,986 hectares under woodland management through CBFMCs. • Riverrine: 111,766 hectares • Buffer conservancy: 44,220 hectares	73%	90,000 ha in riverine areas 40,000 ha in the buffer

		committees at a small scale in the sub-basins			zone of Save Valley Conservancy
Output 2.1.1: Capacity building program delivered in the sub-basins and the targeted Forest, Farm and Rangeland users supported in the implementation of SLM/SFM activities in targeted production landscapes	# of ward-level project sensitization meetings in 44 wards.	Limited capacity by stakeholders in the sub-basins, forest, farm, and rangeland users to support the implementation of SLM/SFM activities.	A total reach of 2073 (1016m:1 057f) people reached. 51% Females attendance	100%	44 meetings
Output 2.1.2: CSBs established/strengthened and tree nurseries strengthened in support of SLM and SFM.	# of CSBs established/strengthened and tree nurseries strengthened in support of SLM and SFM	No/ limited CSB and tree nurseries in support of SLM and SFM in targeted landscapes	100% (All the four sites have been identified Buhera and Chipinge CSBs were constructed and have been operationalized. Buhera 100% complete and Chipinge CSB 100% complete and Chivi 30% complete.	100%	1 CSB in Chivi still under construction.
Outcome 2.2: Key sustainable dryland commodity Value Chains	(i) Develop the Value Chains' selection criteria – and corresponding selection criteria for the business plans – to refine the Value Chains' assessment undertaken during the PPG phase and establish a cross-	SHARP results: 29% of farmers in Runde and 12% in Save direct their production to local markets. 90% did not manage to sell due to low production			

established and/or strengthened	sectoral selection committee	rates. The Post-harvesting practices include treatment methods (ashes for maize) (33%), cleaning (32%) and sorting (5%) the produce. None reported transformation of crops or animal products (ii) Farmers have limited access to microfinance schemes (e.g. SACCOS, Youth and Women Banks). EMA and the FC receive some support from the private sector (e.g. FOTE), but this is not regular and not rigorously monitored.			

				0%	100%
	(iii): Support identified producer organisations in the development of a business plan and sustainability strategy, and prepare a business plan development manual.		15 FFPOs identified and supported with Business Plans.	100%	15
Output 2.2.2: Finance and business incubation mechanisms established in support of Forest Farm Producers and their organizations	Activity (vii) Build the capacity and engagement of CBOs in innovative funding mechanisms to access and channel resources to their members, and strengthen savings and credit groups**.**	N/A	5 financial institutions, including Vision Fund International engaged for a high-level roundtable discussion on tailored financing models in the Runde and Save catchments. Engaged CEOs, Managing Directors, and business development teams to explore innovative financial solutions for smallholder farmers, including microinsurance products to mitigate operational risks.	40%	100%
Outcome 3.2: Data collection and knowledge sharing	Activity (ii) Compile and package the knowledge and experience generated by the project interventions under Components 1 and 2 on a continuous basis.	**N/A**	DSLIP showcased its work at the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP) 15 The project also participated in the Good Seed and Food Festival (26–27 Sept 2025, Harare Botanical Gardens) and the 85th	100%	2

approach on SFM/SLM contributing to LDN assessment work improved			Zimbabwe Farmers Union Annual Congress (24 Oct 2025, Masvingo), officiated by the Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Anxious. Masuka, strengthening project visibility and partnerships with key stakeholders.		
Output 3.2.1: Knowledge Management strategy developed and implemented with lessons learned and best approaches/practices on addressing LD at landscape level captured for their dissemination at the landscape and national levels	Activity (i) Disseminate knowledge and experience generated by the project interventions on regional and global platforms	N/A	Continuous documentation carried out during the reporting period. The following were produced: FFPO Documentation Baobab & Marula Value Chains Story + Community Voices Video Farmer Field Schools Sustainable Land & Forest Management Video + Newsletter Article Project Explainer Programme Achievements Overview 1 Video Gender IEC Materials Gender Mainstreaming & Inclusion Posters & Leaflets Mined-Out Area Restoration Ecosystem Recovery & Best Practices Photo Essay + Story ZFU 85th Congress Coverage FFPO Visibility & Policy Advocacy Video +		

			Write-up. Below is the link for accessing an electronic copy: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1UwHFc1e1KK2W1P6MSiJqfA1Z-ezdAlV3?usp=sharing		

C. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

C.1.1) Key achievements/strengths

Stakeholder Review Meetings

Review meetings with key stakeholders including DDCs, RDCs, Women Affairs, and AGRITEX supported adaptive project management and yielded concrete outputs, notably the development of Terms of Reference for the GRM District Committee, a standardized project handover form, and consolidated reporting on Sustainable Agricultural Intensification (SAI).

The process improved coordination, harmonized implementation approaches, and enhanced technical capacity in catchment management, FFS, VSLs, nursery management, and land restoration. Districts validated SAI achievements covering 26,400 hectares, refined workplans, and strengthened reporting systems, reinforcing shared ownership and positioning districts for effective, climate-resilient delivery in the 2025/2026 season.

Completion of Community Seed Banks

The project successfully completed the construction of two Community Seed Banks (CSBs) at Dumisayi (Chipinge District) and Mutiusinazita (Buhera District), with both facilities now fully operational. The final works included walling, roofing, installation of internal shelving for seed storage, ventilation systems, and secure doors to safeguard germplasm. Both CSBs were jointly inspected and certified ready for use by AGRITEX, local leadership, and community committees, providing functional infrastructure for the preservation of seeds, improved food security, and enhanced community participation in seed management.

Provision and Operationalization of Mechanized Implements and Agro-Processing Equipment

The project successfully distributed mechanized implements and agro-processing equipment to Farmer Field Schools (FFS) across the Save and Runde landscapes, promoting labour-saving technologies, reducing drudgery, and enhancing agricultural productivity, particularly for women and youth. A total of 150 earth augers, 8 dehullers, 8 grinding mills, and 6 peanut butter processing machines were provided and made fully operational, supporting improved land preparation, planting, and post-harvest handling.

Early results demonstrate tangible benefits: generating USD 400 in revenue, while 185.12 hectares of land were cultivated using the provided augers, 56 FFS operators received hands-on training in basic operation and maintenance, ensuring sustained use and local capacity to manage the equipment effectively. These interventions have strengthened productivity, income generation, and adoption of mechanized agricultural practices at community level.

Out-scaling of interventions to other wards

Significant replication of DSL IP interventions was noted in Shurugwi neighboring wards mainly in small scale mechanization as well as sustainable agriculture intensification practices.

Procurement of Veld Fire management equipment. Equipment was procured for use in veld fire management in the two catchments

C.1.2) Beneficiaries

The project has reached a total of 15000 farmers (5515 males and 9485 females) achieving 100% of the targeted 15000 beneficiaries. Sixty three percent (63%) are women with men constituting thirty-seven (37%) of the total number of project beneficiaries.

C.1.3) Problems Encountered and Actions Taken

The project experienced procurement delays. Measures are being implemented to streamline procurement procedures, including early planning of procurement cycles, close coordination with the procurement units of IPs and prioritization of critical items to minimize delays and ensure timely project implementation. The project encountered increased expectations for welfare support from stakeholders who are key to the implementation of the project. This was addressed through the provision of fuel and airtime for AGRITEX Extension officers. Fuel for project monitoring was also made available to MWACSMED officials