

**Luapula Food Security, Nutrition Action and Communication
Project, Zambia
GCP/ZAM/059/BEL**

Tripartite Evaluation Mission

Final Report

August 2006

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Abbreviations

ADC	Area Development Committee
BH	Budget Holder
BSF	Belgian Survival Fund
CAP	Community Action Planning
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CMP	Community Micro-Projects
CNP	Community Nutrition Promoter
DACO	District Agriculture Coordinator
FAOR	FAO Representation
FFLS	Farmer Field and Life School
GCP	Government Cooperation Programme
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
HQ	Headquarters
IHFSAN	Improving Household Food Security and Nutrition in Luapula Valley Project (GCP/ZAM/052/BEL)
IGMP	Income-generation micro-project
JFFLS	Junior Farmer Field and Life School
LFSNAC	Luapula Food Security, Nutrition Action and Communication Project (GCP/ZAM/059/BEL)
LTU	Leading Technical Unit
MACO	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
MP	Micro-project
NDP	National Decentralisation Policy
TE	Tripartite Evaluation
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPTF	National Project Task Force
NTTO	National Technical and Training Officer
NTE	Not to be Exceeded
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PACO	Province Agriculture Coordinator
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PLWHA	Persons Living with HIV/AIDS
PM	Project Manager
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PS	Permanent Secretary
ProDoc	Project Document
TA	Technical Assistance
TCDC	Technical Cooperation from Developing Countries
TCAP	FAO service managing direct relations with donors
TCP	Technical Co-operation Program of FAO
TE	Tripartite Evaluation
T&V	Training and Visit System
TPR	Tripartite Review Meeting
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WFP	World Food Programme (United Nations)

Executive Summary

Overall view

1. The Tripartite Evaluation (TE) of Project GCP/ZAM/059/BEL, Luapula Food Security, Nutrition Action and Communication Project took place in the period 26 June – 14 July 2006. The members of the TE team were Ms Fannie De Boer, representing the donor Belgian Survival Fund (BSF); Mr Mathias Kanyemba, representing the Government of the Republic of Zambia, (GRZ); Ms Tullia Aiazzi, representing FAO and team leader. The team as a whole provided all required competences and experience. Ms Claudine Alvoet, Attaché for BSF at the Royal Belgian Embassy in Uganda, joined the TE from its second week in Zambia onward, as an observer.
2. It assembled in Lusaka, held meetings with the FAO Representation, travelled to Mansa, Luapula Province, where it met with the Project team and set off to the four Districts where the Project is working (six days). In all Districts, the TE met with District level stakeholders, with communities involved in project activities, with schools involved and not involved in the pilot testing of Nutrition Education material. Further meetings were held in Mansa and Lusaka upon return. The team also analysed at length all documents produced by the Project, which were made available. The team prepared an extended preliminary summary, for discussion during the Project Tripartite Review meeting (TPR) on July 14 in Lusaka. Comments stemming from the discussion were integrated, when pertinent, into the TE report.
3. FAO work in the Province dates back in time, with work on oil-palm in the late 1980s and early 1990s, through two FAO-funded TCP initiatives. Based on that experience, around mid-1990s a project idea was developed within the framework of the BSF-FAO Programme: a first Project, Improving Household Food Security and Nutrition in Luapula Valley (IHFSAN, GCP/ZAM/052/BEL) was implemented between January 1997 and February 2002, with a total budget of US\$ 3.3 millions. The final tripartite evaluation considered that IHFSAN had been a pilot initiative, bearing promises of success if further supported to make up for weaknesses and consolidate initial results. BSF asked FAO to formulate a new project, aimed at strengthening sustainability. The donor also asked explicitly, with GRZ's approval, that larger use be made of national consultants against international expertise. An FAO TCP ensured continuity to key IHFSAN activities. The ProDoc for GCP/ZAM/059/BEL was signed in May 2003, with a budget of approximately US\$ 2.7 millions, to be implemented over four years. The Project Entry-On-Duty (EOD) date was September 2003, Not-To be-Exceeded (NTE) date is August 2007.
4. During Project life, GRZ implementation of its decentralization policy progressed to the level of Area Development Committees, though at a slow pace; the country also strived to reach the HIPC completion point, attained in April 2005. This effort entailed heavy curtailing on all government expenditures, for both capital and recurrent budgets. This affected LFSNAC at different levels: previously existing government programmes, e.g. ZAMSIF, RIF and Constituency Development Fund phased out; GRZ was unable to meet its financial commitment to the project until 2006; all line ministries suffered severe cuts in their budget, thus affecting recruitment of staff to fill in vacant posts, the delivery of regular programmes, the availability of cash flow to carry on activities foreseen by the Letters of Agreement (LoAs). Last, since August 2005 the Zambian Kwacha went through a strong appreciation process against the US\$, which has eroded substantively the Project budget.

Major findings and conclusions

5. Within the overarching aim of making IHFSAN results sustainable, the Project aimed at improving food and nutrition security of vulnerable households and communities, by mainstreaming into the work of public institutions, methods, knowledge and outputs which would allow these same institutions to respond better to the needs of the target group. The Project approach was to be the “*full integration and institutionalisation of Project support into existing institutions, day-to-day implementation of Project supported activities through existing line ministries*”. Letters of Agreement (LoAs) would allow transfer of funds to line ministries and NGOs, to implement the Project supported activities.
6. Project objectives were achieved to a good extent in relation to improving awareness and knowledge about nutrition security, at different levels. Some progress was also reached in relation to mainstreaming a more holistic vision in the work of District level line ministries, in raising interest at national level about the potential of palm-oil industry, in producing some extension material. There is no evidence of consolidation and sustainability for the other components and sub-components.
7. Reasons for these shortcomings are several, mostly stemming from a misconceived institutional set-up and unrealistic assessment of necessary competences and resources, including finance. These intrinsic weaknesses were magnified by heavy and cumbersome procedures for project management and lack of GRZ resources to complement Project support. The TE considers that in the Project strategy, confusion was made between “project management” and “mainstreaming the Project outputs and results”, this leading to an unmanageable set-up which affected eventually the whole pace of implementation. Also, it should have been acknowledged that management of an FAO project of this size required full time dedication, knowledge of FAO procedures and competence, but this was not ensured through the institutional set-up. Equally, the ProDoc did not ensure that the thrust for capacity building could be properly implemented.
8. The budget has been heavily overspent, one year before NTE date. However, most project activities are heavily lagging behind schedule, and little has actually been achieved in terms of micro-projects and direct support to the communities. There was no effective monitoring system in place to help steering PCU activities and disbursement at field level. Information made available to the TE on the financial status of the project, was incomplete and not updated. This report contains the budget figures received on 22 August from the FAO Representation in Zambia, which differ from those made available to the TE in mid-July.
9. Against this picture, the TE could only propose two different scenarios for the Project exit strategy¹
 - i. The first scenario asks for the donor to increase its contribution to the project budget, to compensate the appreciation of the Kwacha. The donor already contributed US\$ 300,000 in 2005, above the initial budget. Thus, a further contribution of US\$ 160,000 US\$, to be confirmed after a more detailed account revision, would allow a reduced PCU, composed by the NTTO nutrition, the incumbent Project Manager, a car and a driver, to complete over 10 months, a few key activities. These would be as follows, in order of priority, along with final project report writing and closing progressively all LoAs:

¹ The Preliminary Extended Summary presented at the TPR on July 14, suggested three scenarios. Discussion in that occasion, led the TE to propose that first scenario, as a recommendation to all stakeholders.

- finalizing work on Radio Yangeni, including physical installation, fact-sheets and refreshment training (LoA), etc. (estimated budget US\$ 40,000);
 - finalize, including approval by Curriculum Commission, the Nutrition Education material for Grade 4, train teachers in the four Districts according to MoE standard training procedures, identify partner for printing (estimated budget US\$ 60,000);
 - prepare and finalize, including approval by Curriculum Commission, the Nutrition education material for Grade 6, train teachers in the four Districts according to MoE standard training procedures, identify partner for printing (estimated budget US\$ 120,000); the pre-condition for starting this activity would be the signature of an MoU with Unicef through which collaboration would be ensured and a detailed time-table for activities to be carried out;
 - assess the state of diffusion and impact of Community Nutrition Promoter, prepare a case study showing results, impact, strengths and lessons learnt;
 - assess the potential outreach capacity toward the vulnerable of Junior and Adult Farmer Field Schools, prepare a case study showing potential for results and impact and perspectives for further support and consolidation;
 - re-visit the CAP guidelines and refresh District and Sub-District staff capacity on CAP process, to make it more participatory.
- ii. The second scenario, within present budget balance, requires immediate phasing out of project activities and PCU, handing over to GRZ of equipment, closing of LoAs and termination of the project in three months time. If any budget will be available, priority should be given to complete work on Radio Yangeni and completion of Grade 4 manual.

Main Recommendations

To all Stakeholders

10. The TE notes that in Luapula Valley huge gaps still exist in the capacities of local institutions to be effective service providers for the local communities and contribute to local sustainable development. Weaknesses include among others, capacities and skills on participatory processes, Farmers Field and Life Schools, monitoring and evaluation, economic and technical feasibility of micro-projects, small scale irrigation, Integrated Pest Management, etc. GRZ could include these in its priority list, to discuss with its partners interested to work in this area of the country. The recently started area-based project funded by Finland, could be the first opportunity. BSF and FAO, each according to its own mandate and role, could further assist GRZ in its efforts.

To the Government of Zambia

11. The TE strongly recommends that if the GRZ contribution to the project, already included in the Yellow Book and profiles for MACO in 2006, can be transformed from staff time into financial resources, it be used in close coordination with the FAOR and the Project, to close the LoAs still pending.
12. The TE strongly recommends the Ministry of Education to mainstream Nutrition Education into its curriculum countrywide, by diffusing the manual/s produced by LFSNAC.
13. The TE strongly recommends the Ministry of Health to invest in the role of Community Nutrition Promoter, who can play a key role in a very cost-effective way, to improve the

nutritional status of rural communities.

To FAO

14. FAO should improve the quality of the project documents it formulates, by paying more attention to operational aspects and institutional frameworks. More realistic assessment should be made of competences available at local and national level and of necessary financial resources. Adequate measures and safeguards should be introduced for ensuring that high quality staff, national and international if required, are recruited, together with annual performance appraisal of project and FAOR staff, as pertinent per each respective mandate. Further, adequate backstopping measures should be taken on administrative and operational issues as well.
15. FAO should develop more effective tools than present LoA, to collaborate with partner institutions. These should allow smooth implementation while making adequate provision for monitoring activities. The suggestions formulated in Mozambique for the adoption of a revised format of LoA would be a good such example.
16. FAO should fine-tune roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in field project management - BH, Programme Planning and Budget officers, Field Programme Officers and Central Accounting Reporting and Control Office, LTU, other technical units in the Task Force - to clarify the scope of action, authority and level of accountability of each of them.
17. FAO in Zambia should pursue its role of “honest broker” and promoter of coordination and exchange at national level, among different stakeholders on oil-palm development. The business plan for nurseries produced under the Project can be a starting point for further discussion and identification of partners.
18. FAO in Zambia, building on the experience of LFSNAC, should take a leading advocacy role in relation to the promotion of nutrition education and related matters.
19. FAO in Zambia should invest efforts in building capacities on Farmer Field Schools and Farmers Field and Life Schools, respecting the true concept of the approach and integrating into the second, life-skills for adults and youth.

To the Project, including Budget Holder and Leading Technical Unit

20. The TE strongly recommends that the deadline of 15 August be set for all pending reports on LoAs by respective Implementing Institutions, to be forwarded to the PCU for technical and financial clearance. If by that date, reports will still be missing, the LoA will be considered closed and no further payment will be made to the Implementing Institution. Reports received by August 15, should be cleared by September 15. If clearances cannot be issued because of non-compliance with LoA, the LoA will be cancelled. Procedures should be started immediately afterward, to cancel the unsatisfactory LoAs.
21. The TE appreciates the efforts by the FAOR during its work, to provide as much information as possible on the budget situation. In consideration of the complexity of the issue, and of the lack of complete information, the TE strongly recommends that all concerned (BH, TCAP, RAF and AFF) join information and produce an updated clear status of the Project funds. This will be key to inform the donor on the actual impact of the ZKw appreciation on the Project budget and to allow producing a Budget Revision including the selected activities for completion. If the parties will be unable by the end of August 2006 to produce such budget status report, the TE recommend that an external audit be organized.

1 Introduction

22. The Tripartite Evaluation (TE) of Project GCP/ZAM/059/BEL, Luapula Food Security, Nutrition Action and Communication Project, was intended to provide the government, FAO and the donor with information on the relevance of the project, on the efficiency of the project implementation, on the efficacy, impact and sustainability of the results accomplished, and with recommendations on eventual steps necessary to consolidate progress and ensure achievement of objectives. Terms of Reference (ToRs, see Annex I) were discussed with stakeholders and adjusted accordingly.
23. The members of the MTE team were Ms Fannie De Boer, representing the donor Belgian Survival Fund (BSF); Mr Mathias Kanyemba, representing the Government of the Republic of Zambia, (GRZ); Ms Tullia Aiazzi, representing FAO and team leader. The team as a whole provided all required competences and experience.
24. Ms Claudine Alvoet, Attaché for BSF at the Royal Belgian Embassy in Uganda, joined the TE from its second week in Zambia onward, as an observer. The TE thanks her for her valid contribution, though the evaluation team is the sole responsible for the quality of its findings, its conclusions and its recommendations.
25. The TE took place in the period 26 June – 14 July 2006. It assembled in Lusaka, held meetings with the FAO Representation, travelled to Mansa in Luapula Province, where it met with the Project team and set off to the four Districts where the Project is working (six days). In all Districts, the TE met with District level stakeholders, with communities involved in project activities, with school head masters and teachers. Further meetings were held in Mansa and Lusaka upon return. The team also analysed at length all documents produced by the Project, which were made available to it. The team prepared an extended preliminary summary, presented during the Project Tripartite Review meeting (TPR) on July 14 in Lusaka. Comments made during that meeting were integrated when pertinent, into the present TE report.
26. This is the final draft report, the TE presents to all stakeholders, to receive their comments and suggestions, which will be included when pertinent into the final report. Once finalized, the report will be sent through the responsible service in FAO (TCAP), to the Donor and the Government of the Republic of Zambia, accompanied by FAO's management response prepared under the coordination of the Budget Holder.

2 Background and Context

27. The 2004 Joint Annual Review (JAR) concluded that Zambia's economic outlook had considerably improved in the previous four or five years, with an average growth of 4.7% for the 2000-2004 period. Other macro-economic indicators related to the fiscal and external sectors, had also markedly improved and in 2004, the economy grew by 5%. Sound macroeconomic policies played an important role in the improved economic outlook with inflation dropping from 26.7% in 2002 to 17.5% at the end of 2004. The Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) review was successful and Zambia reached the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) completion point in April 2005.
28. In spite of the positive economic outlook, Zambia still faces enormous challenges in the fight against poverty. The country ranks 164 out of 177 in the 2004 UN Human Development Index. In the 2002-03 Living Conditions Monitoring Survey Report, 67% of Zambians were classified as poor, with 46% as extremely poor. Stunting was found in 49% of the children, and 60 % of households were described as food insecure.

- HIV/AIDS is also an important cause of illness and death, depriving Zambia of a critical human resource base; estimates indicate infection rates of the adult population in the range of 16-20%.
29. Following the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), the Government intensified the decentralisation process: the National Decentralisation Policy (NDP) advocates devolution as the guiding governance principle. Under this system, the district is the focus of development and service delivery. The policy provides for strengthening local Government through reactivation of mandates at this level and transfer of additional responsibilities, providing matching resources to different levels of government and focusing on improvement of overall service delivery.
 30. NDP's implementation is spread over a period of 10 years divided in three phases from the date of its adoption. The current phase, which is the second, involves finalisation of the Decentralisation Policy Implementation Plan and the beginning of the implementation phase of the policy. It is worth noting that some Ministries such as Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MACO), Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Health (MoH) have decentralised operational structures, which now reach down to district and ultimately local community level.
 31. Zambian Agriculture Policy aims to facilitate and support the development of a sustainable and competitive agricultural sector that assures food security at national and household levels and maximizes the sector's contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The agricultural sector generates an average of 18-20% of the GDP and is a major source of livelihood for more than 50% of the country's population. The sector absorbs about 68% of the labour force and remains the main source of income and employment for most rural population, which represents about 63% of the total. Therefore, increases in rural incomes will result in overall poverty reduction and increased food security in the country.
 32. MACO decentralised operational structure enables it to deliver some extension services to farmers as and when they are required. However, this operational arrangement has not functioned smoothly so far, because of constraints relating to staffing levels and operational resources. MACO adopted the Participatory Extension Approaches (PEA) to replace the T&V system in 2000. The PEA was adopted as the official extension methodology to allow for the mobilization, diagnosis, planning and implementation of interventions in an integrated manner. This extension strategy is based on dissemination, through 1500 field extension staff throughout the country, of key messages that reflect the priority needs of farmers and respects and builds on their indigenous knowledge. The current coverage of farm households is estimated at between 20-40%, due to lack of resources.
 33. FAO presence in Luapula Valley dates back in time. Work on oil-palm started in the late 1980s and early 1990s, through two FAO-funded TCP initiatives: TCP/ZAM/0154: Prevention of Vitamin A Deficiency in the Luapula Valley, and TCP/ZAM/2356: Smallholder Oil Palm Production, Processing and Nutrition Education. Based on that experience, around mid-1990s a project idea was developed within the framework of the BSF-FAO Programme. BSF and FAO have the common objective of alleviating problems of malnutrition and its underlying causes, including household food insecurity and poverty, among vulnerable population groups in a sustained manner. The Programme seeks lasting improvements in household food security and nutrition: emphasis is placed on people's participation and empowerment, through promotion of community-centred action planning processes.
 34. A first Project, Improving Household Food Security and Nutrition in Luapula Valley

(IHFSAN, GCP/ZAM/052/BEL) was prepared through an FAO-funded preparatory phase and approved in 1996. Implementation took place between January 1997 and February 2002, with a total budget of US\$ 3.3 millions. The final tripartite evaluation considered that IHFSAN had been a pilot initiative, bearing promises of success if further supported to make up for weaknesses and consolidate initial results. BSF asked FAO to formulate a new project, aimed at strengthening sustainability. The donor also asked explicitly, in agreement with GRZ, that larger use be made of national consultants against international expertise. TCP/ZAM/2802, “Oil Palm cultivation and processing, with a view to improving household food security and nutrition: preparation for BSF assistance” was funded by FAO, to ensure continuity to key IHFSAN activities and prepare the new initiative.

35. The ProDoc for GCP/ZAM/059/BEL was signed in May 2003, with a budget of approximately US\$ 2.7 millions, to be implemented over four years. The Project Entry-On-Duty (EOD) date was September 2003, Not-To be-Exceeded (NTE) date is August 2007.
36. Last, it should be noted that during IHFSAN and while the ProDoc was formulated, GRZ was providing substantive support to communities, through a number of programmes (Rural Infrastructure Fund, RIF; Zambian Social Investment Fund, ZAMSIF; Constituency Development Fund, CDF). These were supposed to provide financial resources to implement micro-projects identified through the Project methodologies, but they phased out of Luapula Province by the time the Project became operational. Although other funds were available, such as the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and Community Response for HIV/AIDS (CRAIDS), the TE did not see any evidence of linkages between them and the project at field level yet.

3 Assessment of Project Objectives and Design

3.A Justification

37. The key reason for funding LFSNAC Project was the need to consolidate results achieved under IHFSAN and ensure their sustainability.
38. From a wider perspective, however, data available from 1996 Zambia Demographic and Health Survey, later confirmed by the 1998 Baseline survey carried out under IHFSAN project, showed high rates of chronic malnutrition, micro-nutrient deficiencies, and 22 to 37% of households with chronically ill members and inadequate provision of care. Other risk factors identified were poor access to adequate health, water and sanitation; and the poor knowledge base due to the lack of education and communication opportunities. The ProDoc stated that in Luapula Province, “...about 50% of households are chronically food insecure and a large proportion of the population is nutritionally vulnerable.”
39. A more positive picture stems today from District authorities in the Project area: they depict the population they administer as food secure if not surplus-producing. If this may be a slightly over-optimist analysis, it was also partly confirmed by the Beneficiary Impact Assessment carried out by the Project in June 2006 and by the TE direct observations, whereby most households have access to food throughout the whole year, if somewhat in reduced quantities during the lean period (November through February). Pockets of food-insecurity may still exist, also because the increasing numbers of chronically ill persons cause an increasing burden on able households and persons.

40. Thus, the focus of the Project on the nutrition and health aspects of the food security equation was still highly pertinent. Equally important, actions aimed at improving sanitation and social infrastructures had the potential to improve health status, access to services, markets and information. The inclusion of actions on production and access was also justified insofar these played a demonstration role for diet diversification, and represented a source of increased income generation.

3.B Objectives

41. Within the overarching aim of making IHFSAN results sustainable, the ProDoc defined the development objective as follows: *“To improve household food security and nutrition of vulnerable population groups and contribute to absolute poverty reduction”*. This was to be reached through three Immediate Objectives:
- i. *By 2006, to strengthen the capacity of district and sub-district institutions to the extent that they will have adopted a participatory and integrated programme approach towards the improvement of nutrition and household food security situation in the district.*
 - ii. *To increase access to a variety of nutritious foods and generate income, among poor and vulnerable groups, including those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, through improved production, agro-processing, small enterprise/product development and marketing.*
 - iii. *Enhance communities’, households’, and school children’s knowledge on important food, nutrition and health issues and promote positive attitudes and behavioural changes that result in improved diet quality, adequate nutritional intakes and better dietary utilisation.*
42. Each Immediate Objective had a number of outputs, wide-ranging and ambitious, coherent with the Project strategy. This, likewise for IHFSAN, was structured around a dual approach: different sectors were to be brought together to achieve the common objective of improving food and nutrition security; and partnerships were to be promoted among civil society, government and the private sector to empower the poor to take part in decision making and sharing the benefits of development.
43. The link between communities and institutions was to be strengthened through capacity building at all levels and mainstreaming participatory approaches. Institutions included public agencies, NGOs and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). All these were often depicted in the ProDoc as a uniform group of stakeholders, in spite of their very different nature, mandate and capacities.
44. IHFSAN had contributed to set up and was working with 120 self-help groups when it came to an end. LFSNAC was to extend the area of intervention to the highlands on the eastern side of Luapula valley still within the Districts boundaries, and to reach more communities with direct support in the form of micro-projects. Indeed, the ProDoc foresaw to target *“the entire population of the District through a set of cross cutting interventions that include capacity building of community support organisations, and of governmental and non-governmental institutions at district and province level. Strengthening of institutional capacities of the District Development Co-ordinating Committees, including their capacity to work closely with traditional leaders, will benefit the District population at large.”* Further, the Project was to reach those households most vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition.
45. In conclusion, the Project aimed at improving food and nutrition security of vulnerable

- households and communities, by mainstreaming into the work of public institutions, methods, knowledge and outputs which would allow these same institutions to respond better to the needs of the target group.
46. These relevant objectives required high quality inputs for capacity building, and experienced management to run the Project, with a clear overall vision of strategy and resources, as well a good understanding of what belonged to the project management sphere and what was to be transferred and mainstreamed into the institutions' domain.
 47. Given the thrust of the Project on strengthening sustainability of IHFSAN results, the TE considers that amending the previous ProDoc with an articulate plan of work focused on selected actions, would have been a better option. If a new project document was necessary for administrative purposes, its objectives should have been more focused and better targeted.
 48. Furthermore, none of the two IHFSAN evaluation missions had challenged the strategy inherited from the initial TCPs, to promote hybrid oil-palm for nutrition, improve Vitamin A intake in Luapula Valley, and cash crop purposes. However, the TE considers that the rationale for such an emphasis on oil-palm is not fully clear. Until very recent years, Luapula Valley populations had access to an abundant cheap source of Vitamin A in the fish catch available to all valley communities. Thus if a problem existed in relation to Vitamin A intake in children, this was most likely linked to weaning and feeding practices, correctly picked up by IHFSAN and LFSNAC, than actual lack of sources for this micro-nutrient.
 49. Oil palm as a cash crop is not an easy and short-term investment either: pre-germinated seedlings of hybrid oil palm have to be imported from Costa Rica, and transported 800 km to reach Luapula. They need further 18 months care under nurseries conditions and four years of adequate management, including irrigation, before they start producing.
 50. Admittedly, the tradition of oil-palm processing already existed in the valley, but manual transformation of oil-palm nuts is a labour- and energy intensive process, usually the responsibility of women already burdened with endless tasks and chores, which produces with a highly perishable produce. Technology innovation in processing, even at the level of wet flush extractors as proposed by LFSNAC, requires a scale of production very far from the present reality of a five-ten seedlings/households distributed to vulnerable households or to members of small groups in scattered communities.
 51. Over the years, interest and enthusiasm has grown in the country for palm-oil production, in particular in government, and investors are taking their first steps in this promising sector. Although a few farmers have purchased apparently up to 100 seedlings each from the nurseries, these are small-scale investments yet. No external actor has entered Luapula Valley so far and it is too early to say whether in the medium to long term, benefits from investments in the neighbouring province, will reach Luapula. In any case, important efforts will be necessary in capacity building and organization of production for this to happen.
 52. Evidence so far indicates that very few plants of those distributed by IHFSAN, produce expected quantities. The amount of work necessary to reach optimal yield may well be beyond the capacity of targeted vulnerable households and the TE has serious doubts about the benefits which will eventually accrue to these Project participants. A more critical analysis of the strategy and a wider analysis of potentialities and constraints at the beginning, could have contributed better to poverty alleviation by now.

3.C *Project Design*

53. The Project approach was the “*full integration and institutionalisation of Project support into existing institutions, day-to-day implementation of Project supported activities through existing line ministries*”. Letters of Agreement (LoAs) would allow transfer of funds to line ministries and NGOs, to implement the Project supported activities. In other words, a hybrid between a classic FAO project and a nationally executed project was sought, without ensuring that competences, resources and necessary authority to coordinate work of different ministries, were available. The different responsibilities related to “managing” one LoA and a Project, and “implementing” one LoA and institutionalising approaches and outputs, were not clearly spelt in the ProDoc, and were partly ignored when proposing the institutional framework.
54. LFSNAC was located in the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MACO), and cooperation with other ministries was to be coordinated through a National Advisory Committee, later on called project National Project Task Force (NPTF), co-chaired by the Permanent Secretaries (PS) of MACO and Luapula Province and the FAO Representative. The latter was to be in charge of overall project co-ordination through the existing Provincial Development Coordinating Committee (PDCC), but a National Project Coordinator (NPC) was to be appointed from the Provincial Planning Unit (PPU) for “*conceptual guidance, overall planning, monitoring and evaluation*”. The ProDoc stated also that the NPC was “*responsible for the overall supervision and implementation of project activities.*”
55. The NPC, within a Project Coordination Unit (PCU), was to coordinate the work of National Technical/Training Officers (NTTOs). Their ToRs stated they were responsible to provide technical support, supervision, and operations management to line ministries departments and sectors at Province and District level. They were to be recruited by FAO, thus benefited of FAO’s privileges in terms of salaries, responded administratively and technically to FAO but their work was to be coordinated by the NPC.
56. Project staff at District level, as it had been the case in IHFSAN, was abolished. Coordination of Project activities was entrusted to the District Development Coordinating Committee (DDCC) and implementation, under NTTOs’ supervision, was delegated to line ministries staff.
57. The Pro-Doc stated further that the NPC had to carry out his/her Project tasks “...under the guidance and in close collaboration with the FAO Representative, who as Budget Holder will have full responsibility for financial administration and proper utilisation of project inputs”. This, with the NPC sitting at 750 km from FAO Representation.
58. It is difficult to see how this arrangement could have worked: the NPC would have a double job, both quite demanding and challenging, with possibly contradicting priorities. S/He did not have any real authority on NTTOs and would be entitled only a small allowance from FAO to compensate for the extra work.
59. From FAO side, the set-up for national field project management since 2001 foresees an articulate splitting of responsibilities. The Leading Technical Unit (LTU) has “*lead responsibility for the technical quality and relevance of project results*”²; in the case of LFSNAC it was ESNP, re-named AGNP³ in 2006. The FAO Representative in the

² Circular on Responsibilities and Relationships, FAO Headquarters and Decentralized Offices, August 2004

³ AGNP: Nutrition Programmes Service, Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division, Agriculture, Biosecurity, Nutrition and Consumer Protection Department.

country is the Budget Holder (BH), responsible for⁴:

- i. *operating the project;*
 - ii. *establishing, convening and chairing the Project Task Force (PTF);*
 - iii. *requesting the LTU to designate their representative to the PTF;*
 - iv. *procuring inputs within the authority delegated by the relevant Manual Sections;*
 - v. *delivering the other inputs foreseen in the project document within the resources allocated to the project; and*
 - vi. *reporting on project progress.*
60. This arrangement requires perfect harmony in the vision about Project strategy and management, and optimal communication, among the various stakeholders: technical choices have financial and operational consequences, and they have to be agreed and understood by all to be properly implemented. On the other hand, responsibilities for recruitment and procurement are split between BH, LTU, FAO Regional Office/Operations and Procurement Service. In the practice of project management, the balance of decision-making depends to a large extent on personalities, even in full respect of rules and regulations. If disagreements occur on managerial choices, negotiations and discussions can last a long time.
61. Budget Revisions (BR) are prepared by the BH, and counter-signed by Programme Planning and Budget Officers in the Regional Office, by the Field Programme Officers in TCAP/HQ, and by the Central Accounting Reporting and Control Office in AF/HQ, this without requiring the LTU's formal approval. Thus, LTUs have no direct control on the budget, although good project management requires that consultations take place on major items of expenditures. Also, meeting the BH responsibility requires enough and competent human resources in the FAO Representation, who are often unavailable.
62. Overall, the TE considers that in the Project strategy, confusion was made between "project management", "national execution" and "mainstreaming the Project outputs and results". This led to an unmanageable set-up which affected eventually the whole pace of implementation. Also, it should have been acknowledged that management of an FAO project of this size required full time dedication and knowledge of FAO procedures and competence, but this was not ensured through the management set-up.
63. Equally, the ProDoc did not ensure that the thrust for capacity building could be properly implemented. Although short-term international and national consultants were foreseen in the overall picture, along with backstopping support from FAO, the NTTOs were the pivotal key element for the continuous capacity building of line ministries on a number of issues. However, no provision and safeguard was included in the ProDoc to ensure that their competence matched requirements or for closer supervision by FAO, also on managerial aspects.

4 Assessment of Project Implementation, Efficiency and Management

4.A Project Budget and Expenditure

64. The signed ProDoc indicated the following contributions to LFSNAC: BSF would commit US\$ 2,380,295; GRZ would commit US\$ 89,448 and FAO would commit US\$ 360,000. FAO's contribution took the form of the bridging TCP, through which the

⁴ Circular on Responsibilities and Relationships, FAO Headquarters and Decentralized Offices, August 2004

- ProDoc was formulated.
65. The ProDoc stated that over 30% of the donor's contribution should go to direct community interventions, and that US\$ 454,000 from the budget line Contracts, or 19.1% of overall project budget, was aimed again at direct community interventions. It was not stated what "direct community support" would include, nor was it clear if the two percentages (30% and 19.1%) were to be added. Common understanding at FAOR/PCU level was that about US\$ 500,000 was to be used for direct community support, including micro-projects, inputs, purchase of oil-palm seedlings, nutrition training, LoAs for Community Action Planning (CAPs), nutrition groups and Farmer Field Schools (FFS).
 66. The allocation of the ProDoc budget among the different lines was as follows: 28% to contracts, 15% to national staff salaries (professionals and General Service), 14% to General Operating Costs (8%) and Travel (6%), 10% to training activities (the ProDoc mentioned 6.2%), 10% to non-expendable equipment, 5% to consultants and 4% to technical backstopping. The BH considered that travel, equipment and training were grossly under-estimated.
 67. In mid-2005, Budget Revision B (BR B) showed a financial gap for 2005 work-plan of US\$ 300,000, and the overall budget increase was agreed by BSF. By adding a small budget left-over from IHFSAN, the BR C approved on 25 May 2006 indicates a total approved budget of US\$ 2,679,733. In May-June 2006, BR C was proposed and to FAO Finance (AFF), showing a balance of US\$ 640,007 for 2006 and 2007.
 68. The table below illustrates the variations of each budget line along the three Budget Revisions. The most consistent changes⁵ were huge increases in Salaries General Services and Expendable Procurement; substantive increases also occurred in Non-expendable Procurement, General Operating Expenses and Travel. On the other hand, initially planned delivery through Contracts (LoAs) and Technical Support Services decreased also to a good extent.

Account	Project Budget	BR A	BR B	BR C	BR C vs BR B	BR C vs Project Budget
5300 - Salaries Professionals	288,000	168,000	96,000	0		
5500 - Salaries General Services	74,400	43,400	54,200	180,554	233.1%	142.7%
5570 - Consultants	110,000	258,767	364,766	435,311	-5.5%	9.4%
5650 - Contracts	674,000	761,500	761,500	374,345	-50.8%	-44.5%
5660 - Locally contracted Labour		29,037	41,926	46,390	10.6%	59.8% (calculated on BR A)
5900 - Travel	152,056	121,333	181,377	245,643	35.4%	61.5%
5920 - Training	246,400	166,182	223,081	283,732	27.2%	15.2%
6000 - Expendable Procurement	20,000	62,011	65,011	135,863	109.0%	579.3%
6100 - Non Expendable Procurement	243,200	213,227	310,977	366,829	18.0%	50.8%

⁵ By analyzing the initial budget and the information provided by the BH, part of the increased expenditure was due to the following: salaries of six drivers who were initially supposed to be recruited by GRZ (US\$ 144,000); two extra vehicles (US\$ 77,000); V-sat mail system (US\$ 19,000).

6150 - Technical Support Services	104,400	100,936	91,336	75,097	-17.8%	-28.1%
6300 - General Operating Expenses	194,000	182,064	182,063	270,786	48.7%	39.6%
6150 - Support Costs	273,839	273,839	308,391	307,497	-0.3%	12.3%
Charge-out				-42,314		
Total	2,380,295	2,380,296	2,680,628	2,679,733		

69. A key issue in relation to the project budget was the important progressive appreciation of the ZKw against the US\$ since August 2005. Overall, the UN system reckons it to be about 27%. The most recent calculation (22 August) by the BH assessed as per the UN calculator on the difference of budget balances in BR B (June 2005) and BR C (May 2006), once detracted expenses in US\$ by HQ, indicates a real budget loss of US\$ 291,744⁶.
70. At the end of the TE mission the budget balance was reckoned to be in the range of US\$ 155,000. On 22 August, after a more careful analysis the BH informed the TE that the budget balance, including commitments, is US\$ 251,215.
71. The Contracts budget line includes LoAs. The PCU signed between April and August 2004, a total number of 27 LoAs: they were prepared by NTTOs, with basis on a standard format, to carry out activities as per the Plan of Action included in the ProDoc. LoAs were supposed to be cleared by the FAOR and the LTU. Most of the LoAs had duration of six to eight months. By the time of the TE (24 months later):
- one LoA was completed and last payment made;
 - one LoA was in stand-by because FAO procurement process for the radio was still incomplete,
 - one LoA was proposed for cancelling because of misappropriation of funds to dig a borehole;
 - one LoA was proposed for cancelling because the planned activity had been carried out otherwise;
 - four LoAs were considered for cancelling because planned work could never be completed;
 - nineteen LoAs were pending last payment/s: in a number of cases, implementing institutions still had to submit the final report and financial statements, to be cleared from LTU; in a few others, the LTU cannot clear the reports because unsatisfactory, meaning that these LoAs should also be proposed for cancelling.
72. With basis on the table provided by the FAOR to the TE, the total amount committed through the 27 LoAs was US\$ 383,000 (approx. 1.8 billion ZKw in 2004). Through authorized instalments so far, 65.1% of the total was disbursed. Considering the 6 LoAs already proposed for cancellation, about 11.4% of the initial total should still be disbursed⁷.

⁶ The TE could not obtain during its work in Zambia a clear and complete picture of the budget situation, which caused a huge amount of time being devoted to try to solve this issue. Eventually, the TE was told while preparing its extended summary, that the loss due to the appreciation of the ZKw was US\$ 460,000. The difference between the 2005 authorized budget increase and this figure, i.e. US\$ 160,000, was the only amount the donor seemed ready to take in consideration for further replenishment. Further, the budget balance at that time was in the order of US\$ 155,000. The TE thus decided to propose a realistic plan of work and a palatable request for budget increase.

⁷ The TE tentative calculation indicated that this amount would be US\$ 43,748 at 2004 value, but at present US\$-ZKw rate of exchange, this would correspond to approximately US\$ 60,000.

73. FAO accounts are regularly checked by a national auditor; LoAs were included in the auditors' revision from July 2005 onward. The lack of complete information however led the TE to recommend that all concerned (BH, Project, TCAP, RAF and AFF) joined information and produced an updated clear status of the Project funds. The TE was indeed provided very recently with new figures: the need for FAO parties to collaborate further and produce a new BR to accommodate the TE's recommendations which will be accepted by GRZ, the donor and FAO, still holds valid at the time of writing. The TE also recommends that a deadline be established for submitting all pending reports (suggested 15/8/2006), and four weeks be given to LTU for clearance. Immediately afterward, the procedure to close cancelled LoAs should be started.
74. GRZ's contribution was to be provided through staff time at Province and District level, and office accommodation. The contribution was inscribed in 2006 annual budget (2006 Yellow Book) and should be disbursed before the end of the third quarter of the current year through MACO profile, for a total amount of ZKw 312 million. In 2005, an allocation of ZKw 46 millions had already been paid, and was apparently used to pay for nurseries' staff. At present exchange rate, the two transfers correspond to the committed contribution. The TE was told by the Project Manager that the project had so far met running costs to be covered by GRZ contribution, out of its own budget, to pay for staff's lunches. This means that the presently available funds could be used to meet some of the project's outstanding financial commitments in national currency.
75. Last, replenishment of the FAO project account by the donor seems to have been slow since the beginning. Budget Revision A (BR A), dated September 2004, raised this issue, noting that contributions were lagging behind approved budget. This seems to have happened again in 2006. Responsibility to call for fund replenishment rests with the BH through TCAP.

4.B Activities and Outputs

4.B.1 Institution capacity building

76. Main activities carried out by LFSNAC under this chapter, through LoAs, consultancies and NTTO's work, were aimed at capacity building of District line sectors staff and of community level on Community Action Planning (CAP), on linking CAPs to decentralization policy, on Monitoring and Evaluation, on HIV/AIDS impact on Agriculture (see below). Activities also included implementing the CAPs and setting-up a Monitoring and Evaluation/Knowledge Management system for line ministries at the different levels.
77. The Community Action Planning process was started by IHFSAN as the key approach to bring together service providers and communities, to identify problems communities face, prioritise them and get organized, with local and external resources, to solve them. The LFSNAC ProDoc considered CAP as the cornerstone of work at community level, the process through which micro-projects would be identified to tackle first priority actions selected by the communities. IHFSAN had elaborated guidelines, which needed some further refinement and consolidation, particularly in the light of changing from a project initiative to a GRZ methodology. These were to be finalized upon IHFSAN experience, at the very beginning of project implementation by a consultant and the NTTO responsible for Institution Capacity Building. It took FAO more than one year to identify and recruit a suitable candidate, due to the difficulties in accessing quality consultants under the Organization's ceilings on consultant's fees. In between no

- progress was done on the subject by the PCU. District facilitation teams were eventually trained and CAPs carried out in 40 communities in November 2005.
78. The TE notes that GRZ had implemented a similar participatory appraisal system, called District Situational Analysis (DSA), with a more articulate range of tools than CAPs. Because of the Project delays in this component, DSAs were carried out before CAPs, and were used to prepare the six year (2006-2011) District Strategic Plans. The Project made no attempt apparently at integrating the two processes, building on respective strengths and integrating into the CAP guidelines tools which proved suitable to local social and cultural characteristics, through the DSA process.
 79. The TE analysed the CAP guidelines. The methodology proposed is a facilitation team-centered process (“*the traditional authority will hand over the stick to the facilitation team*”) wherein communities are consulted only to endorse formally, and possibly prioritise, a list of problems identified previously by the line ministries. This is contrary to the principle of CAPs as usually understood in development theory and practice, and to IHFSAN and LFSNAC embedded principle and objective of empowering the communities to take control over their own development, by leading the process of problem identification and prioritisation. This aspect is key, because the guidelines were intended to be a stand-alone reference document for adoption by GRZ institutions in Luapula, to be applied in all communities, irrespective of the concomitance or not of a DSA process. Thus, the TE considers these guidelines should not be proposed to GRZ as a Project output in their present form: rather, they should be completely revised, if adequate resources will be available, building also on DSA experience.
 80. As far as the TE could see, CAPs results are relatively uniform throughout all communities. To some extent, the TE acknowledges that problems may be similar across communities and there is little doubt that absence of water supply and low opportunities for income generation are widespread problems. However, the guidelines reinforce the technical top-down management of the process, by suggesting facilitation teams to identify before-hand what they think problems were. The TE felt to some extent that communities looked at CAPs as yet another exercise to go through, in the hope of receiving whatever financial and technical support the interlocutors could provide. Also, evidence from meetings with the communities and from the PCU, show that the CAPs were geared to identify one initiative out of the list of those eligible for funding, as mentioned in the Micro-projects Guidelines produced by LFSNAC (i.e. market stands, community information centre).
 81. Links between CAPs and decentralization policy could not be developed to the desirable extent, because Area Development Committees, the newly established and most decentralized entity responsible for development planning and implementation, were set-up so far only in Kawambwa District. Here in fact, the ADC were fully responsible for CAPs and micro-project appraisal.
 82. In relation to the Monitoring and Evaluation System⁸, District stakeholders told repeatedly the TE about the absence of support on this key point, how much that would have been instrumental at their level for harmonizing monitoring practices for different donors and interlocutors. Some interesting preparatory work on the on-going monitoring system in the Districts, was done by the Province Planning Unit. Initially the task was given to the same partner responsible for the repetition of the Baseline Survey. Problems and delays on this first task led to the decision to transfer the work on monitoring to the same national consultant, who had been involved in the elaboration of

⁸ Project Output 1.3 called for an effective project information/knowledge management system, to monitor project progress and share lessons with provincial, national and international stakeholders.

CAP guidelines. He was contracted for supporting the project on Information and Knowledge Management, including monitoring and evaluation, in the second half of 2005. The document prepared does not provide correct indicators of results, and impact and confuses outputs and targets with indicators. It suggests a few templates for reporting, which the TE considers should and could have been prepared by the responsible NTTTO at the very beginning of the project. Thus, the Project has made no progress on this sub-component.

4.B.2 Food Security

83. The food security component was implemented by MACO staff through fifteen Letters of Agreement between MACO and the Project. The Project supported the rehabilitation of four District fruit nurseries in the project area, dry season food production, Farmer Field Schools, demonstration on the use of treadle pumps and their free distribution, and the seed-multiplication component which had been initiated successfully by IFHSAN.

Support to nurseries

84. Support to nurseries for oil palms and other fruit-trees development began during IHFSAN, but they collapsed at the end of that project phase. Thus, LFSNAC set off to rehabilitate them, providing basic equipment and inputs for raising seedlings. Some marked improvement on the status of nurseries are visible now: the nurseries are raising lemon seedlings as rootstock for budding oranges and tangerines, other fruit trees including mangoes, papaya, jackfruit, guava, avocado pear and bananas. Seedlings were sold to the communities at commercial rates, and proceedings deposited into a separate account, but numbers of fruit trees raised are still too few to make the nurseries economically viable without the supporting income from the sales of oil palm seedlings.
85. The nurseries are located at Farmer Training Centres (FTCs) and are managed by the FTC staff. The Mbereshi fruit nursery is the best developed among the four nurseries in the Project area with a well managed mother orchard. The FTCs are eligible to receive financial support from GRZ under normal budgetary allocations, for maintenance and operations of the centres.
86. It was clear that the nursery staff have not yet come to grips with the marketing skills as they were still unable to make progress in increasing the production of the fruit trees that were in demand, and the nurseries in their present state are not equipped to run viably as a business venture. Their main activity is centred on the oil palm seedling management, but considering that hybrid oil palm pre germinated seed can only be purchased in Costa Rica, it remains to be seen whether the individual nurseries will be in a position to import more seedlings after the Project life.
87. The Project has produced through an LoA with ICMS, a business plan for Luapula District nurseries. Although the report is an interesting contribution for the development of oil palm, it unfortunately concentrated mostly on oil palm and failed to include the important role the other fruit trees and vegetables could play in ensuring the nurseries' sustainability. This in spite of the existing demand for fruit-trees and vegetables in the Districts and in the Province. For example, citrus seedlings are in high demand and oranges are said to be an important source of income for some families in the valley. Equally, there is a good demand for vegetable seedlings during the dry season. All these other opportunities, following the example of the nurseries in Lusaka and Copperbelt Provinces, should have featured in the overall business plan of the nurseries, to give a better idea whether the nurseries would be able to run on their own resources.

Oil Palm promotion

88. The Project imported in 2004 and 2005, a total number of 40,000 hybrid oil palm pre germinated seedlings and handed them to the nurseries, until they were ready to transplant after 18 months. Out of the two batches, 34,275 pre-germinated seedlings reached transplanting stage: approximately 50% of these should have been distributed to the vulnerable household free of charge, while the remainder was sold to the public at a price in the range of ZKw 9,000-10,000, depending on the individual nurseries.
89. FAO efforts on oil palm over more than a decade have generated eventually a lot of interest in and out of Luapula Province with talk of 600-950 ha of land being earmarked for oil palm out-grower schemes in Nchelenge. Meanwhile the oil-producing company Amanita has also started an ambitious programme that will establish an oil palm plantation on a total projected hectareage of 25,000, to be phased over 5 years in Mpika. The company has already planted 400 seedlings, received from FAO, on an experimental basis. This development has the potential to catalyse the national palm oil industry as most of the palm oil is imported from Malaysia. This would be an outlet for mopping the excess oil from Luapula in the future, but production would need to reach a minimum viable size to justify investment in the organization.
90. The vegetable oil and soap making plants in Ndola (on the Copperbelt) and Lusaka presently import crude palm stearin for industrial processing into vegetable oil and soap making. These are capable of offering a ready and sustainable market for the farmers. The production volumes would however, need to be high and consistent enough to influence their decision to source the palm oil locally. They would be keen to source this product locally if only quantities supplied would make economic sense. For example, Best Oil Products consumes between 300 and 450 MT of palm stearin per month that is imported from overseas suppliers, such as Malaysia at a landed cost of around US\$ 650 and US\$ 720/MT.
91. At the moment, very little of the presently produced palm oil is sold outside Luapula Province due to limited production, poor packaging, short shelf-life and lack of market information. The main challenges faced by the farmers and the overall concept of promoting palm oil production, seem to be the organization of production at a viable scale and the absence of an organised market. For commercial marketing of palm oil to be achieved, demand will need to be actively promoted.
92. The Project has helped stimulate some interest in the production of oil palm in Luapula, for its nutritional implications to the communities and its potential value as an income generating activity. This is more so, in view of the declining incomes accruing to the communities from the fish sector due to declining fish stocks in the lake, which was the main source of livelihood for the people in the valley. At this stage, other players need to be brought on board to develop this opportunity and explore further the commercialisation prospects. To commercialise the palm oil production more investment is required in oil palm tree numbers, management and processing capacity.

Crop recommendation booklets

93. The vegetable production booklets have adequate technical information to address needs of extension staff and farmers. Overall, they are concise, technically sound and should turn out to be very useful. The basic information needed to manage a crop is included and is clearly projected in the booklets sub-headings. On pest management, regular scouting is mentioned in the rape, melon, cabbage and Chinese cabbage booklets but not in the others booklets. The impression created is that the aspect of regular scouting, as a

- pest management practice is not adequately projected to emphasise its importance.
94. This is an important pest management practice that extension staff and farmers need to know and use for early pest detection and control. However, it is worth noting that the booklets have incorporated some natural products like ash, neem and chillie extract for pest control. The other commonly used indigenous remedies such as nicotine and tephrosia extracts could have been included or mentioned to broaden the range of options.
 95. Overall, the IPM approach was not adequately addressed, either in these booklets, or in the FFS. Attention was nevertheless given to environmental issues in the ProDoc and in an early workshop on FFS (2002), and it would have made a lot of sense considering that the farmers being addressed are resource poor, and may not readily afford the recommended chemical pesticides in the booklets. Unfortunately to the detriment of the component, the NTTTO responsible for it did not seem aware of any of these practices.

Farmer Field Schools

96. The Farmer Field School approach was used by the project to provide technical information to the communities. The project facilitated the training of 5 core trainers who later trained 27 agricultural extension staff in the FFS methodology. The trained agricultural extension staff then trained 40 community groups in the Farmer Field School approach, with the project support through LoAs signed with the participating DACOs in the four Project Districts. Inputs were provided to trained groups, to be used for experiential learning in their group plot. Most of the communities carried out their learning process through home gardens. The bulk of the proceeds from these gardens was or will be sold, while part of it was given out to vulnerable people in the community.
97. It was clear during the process of discussions with the FFS groups that the concept was not well mastered, or not understood at all (e.g. Lengwe FFS). The period of interaction with the trainers may not have been enough for the extension agents and farmers, to appreciate fully the concept. Given its complexity, in depth revisiting and longer exposure to the process and backstopping look necessary.
98. Last, a couple of groups set up Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools: in these, Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) participated and learnt some skills in gardening under the guidance of adults. This programme was able to provide a forum where the young children could learn the life skills from adults. This was a positive approach to the needs of children who have no parents or close relatives to provide parental guidance through life.

4.B.3 Nutrition Action and Communication component

99. The focus of this component was to address and strengthen dietary habits by means of strengthening the delivery of services in the field of nutrition, promoting good dietary practices, health and sanitation at household/community level, schools and mass communication (radio, leaflets). In general this component was well developed, and it succeeded in building upon and consolidating IHFSAN activities.
100. At District level, the Education/Communication Task Force teams from the four line ministries (Health, Agriculture, Education and Community Development) were sensitised and trained to integrate nutrition education/communication activities in their work-plan and budgets. As far the TE could observe, there was a reasonable understanding of the different causes of malnutrition and the need to tackle them through a multi disciplinary approach. This looks like a good project achievement. The

teams were also instrumental in the CAPs implementation. Despite the high rates of malnutrition in the Province, nutritional status of under-fives was the key issue only in one of the funded micro-projects stemming out of the CAP process. The Project assisted them by training a Community Nutrition Promoter (CNP) and by providing seeds for a vegetable garden (apparently too small to create a surplus for sale). The TE encountered several communities with the request for improved water supply or sanitation as micro-projects, but apart from one case, these were not granted.

Community Nutrition Promoters

101. IHFSAN project had introduced in Luapula Province the training of Community Nutrition Promoters (CNP) to target malnutrition- affected households with nutrition education and advice and support on food production. Training included as well community-based growth monitoring and nutrition counselling. LFSNA continued and consolidated the the approach, by training 46 CNPs. These Promoters are members of rural communities, thus they are closer to end-users than any other out-reach system by the Ministry of Health. Every month, under-fives are weighted by the CNPs. In case of insufficient growth of the children, parents/caretakers are counselled on appropriate feeding practices and sanitary practices. The counselling consists of home visits and cooking demonstrations based on the Trials for Improved Feeding Practices (TIPS) guidelines promoted by the Project. Families are assisted for four months, or until the child develops well. Caretakers involved in learning on infant feeding and weaning practices with locally available foods for their own infants are later used to counsel other families with malnourished infants, through a peer-to-peer system of knowledge transfer. This has allowed the formation of Nutrition groups, which may have been supported further by the Project through the micro-projects. Data collected during the community based growth monitoring and nutrition promotion are sent to the Ministry of Health at District level to be incorporated into the national statistics. The appreciation of the community for this activity was also mentioned in the Beneficiary Impact Assessment (see below).
102. CNPs were instrumental in TIPS to test the recipes developed. A booklet on Complementary Feeding for distribution to health workers and CNPs was produced, still awaiting the final clearance of the Ministry of Health and the National Committee on Infant and Young Child Feeding. The publication is now scheduled for 2007: depending on both approval by GRZ and financial assistance for printing from UNICEF. The TIPS methodology seems to be widely used by CNPs to promote better feeding/weaning practices.

Support to Radio Yangeni

103. This activity had been initiated during IHFSAN, but the whole concept was consolidated only under LFSNAC. Unfortunately, implementation has been hugely delayed due to procurement and technical issues. Some key equipment was still missing at the time of the TE, although the Radio had complied with all its commitments. Up to date, Radio Yangeni is still not able to broadcast beyond the near vicinity of Mansa. One training course for radio programmers and procedures was conducted and four District communication teams were trained and received the necessary equipment to make radio programmes. Production has started and programmes are aired on a limited basis through ZNBC (unclear reception in a number of locations) and Radio Yangeni with the help of the NAIS. Scripts were developed to guide the development of the programmes. Currently two programmes are broadcasted, one for children on food and

- nutrition issues and one for adults.
104. Forty listener groups were established already, also thanks to the distribution of solar/wind-up radios provided by FAO/JICA project, who are currently listening to ZNBC broadcasts. Radio listener groups were considered in the different communities as an important source to receive information on agriculture and nutrition, but it is almost impossible at the moment to assess any potential impact, due to the poor reception of ZNBC.
 105. The sustainability of the radio broadcasts on food and nutrition security was raised in a meeting with the Manager of the radio station (Father Chansa): he confirmed that the Diocese will be able to cover the annual fee for the hook-up to the satellite. With the trained District communication teams (one refresher training is still pending under the LoA and this will take place when all equipment will be installed), it should be feasible to develop programmes on food and nutrition. A Memorandum of Understanding still has to be finalized to ensure that Radio Yangeni will proceed with radio programmes on food and nutrition after the end of the project.

Support to HIV/AIDS affected households

106. The ProDoc devoted quite some attention towards mainstreaming HIV/AIDS and the need for appropriate programmes to mitigate its impact. Nutrition was identified to have a key role to improve the quality of life of the patients and to halt further diffusion. The TE could not find much evidence of promotion of nutritional care for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). A survey has been done on the Impact of HIV/AIDS on Agricultural Production and Food Security in Luapula Province. This recognised the different CBOs supporting PLWHA, but did not give suggestions on how to strengthen those groups (including Junior Farmer Field Schools) which are a traditional part of the support system for vulnerable households. During the training of CBOs on HIV/AIDS impact mitigation strategies, the topic “nutrition and PLWHA” was included. The training took place in June 2006, hence it was not possible to assess yet to what extent this information will be translated into actions by CBOs.

Nutrition Education in Basic Schools

107. The Nutrition Education in Basic Schools (NEBS) programme started in March 2000 with the TCP/ZAM/8923 project (Nutrition Education in Primary Schools in Zambia), and was incorporated in LFSNAC. The school nutrition education component is led by the Curriculum Development Centre of MoE in collaboration with the National Food and Nutrition Commission (NFNC). It aims to integrate food and nutrition issues within the basic school curriculum and providing class materials for Grade 2, 4 and 6 (pupil’s book and teacher’s book) and a training for the teachers and headmasters on how to use the materials developed. The Grade 2 books were printed in 2006 with financial assistance of UNICEF. Teachers and headmasters are trained on how to use the materials in an interactive way. The launching of the Grade 2 set of material and programme was done by the Minister of Education. From the ministerial side there is a great interest in the materials, however there is no evidence yet of a financial commitment toward up-scaling at national level.
108. The training for Grade 2 is a great success: it is set-up in a very interactive way and parents do play a role in the learning process. In schools where it was field tested, pupils, teachers and headmasters were equally enthusiastic. Positive results are visible already in the pilot schools, where children bring “healthy” snacks to school (roasted cassava, groundnuts etc.) which are shared during the break periods. Another impact of

- the training was washing hands after use of the latrines. In all schools visited, water was available to wash hands.
109. The finalisation of Grade 4 educational material (pupils and teachers books) and the teachers' training is still outstanding, as well as the complete development for Grade 6, for which only a draft outline exists so far.
 110. During discussions with the NFNC, it emerged that there full consensus on the need for a baseline study on the current knowledge available in schools concerning food, nutrition and sanitation was difficult to reach, and some steps seem to have been solved. The TE team considers it necessary to have a baseline to measure future outcome and impact, but provisions for it should be made within MoH regular budget 2007.
 111. Furthermore, it appeared that all commitments from UNICEF towards assisting in the printing of the materials, were only verbal agreements. Staff turn-over obviously represented a problem: a written MoU should be drawn with UNICEF concerning the finalisation of the educational materials.

4.B.4 *Micro-projects*

112. As already mentioned, micro-projects were supposed to be the main tool to improve food security and alleviate poverty in the communities, and had to be identified through CAPs. Micro-projects Guidelines were prepared in early 2005, by revising existing guidelines and adapt them to be mainstreamed within District level institutions, through a backstopping mission from FAO HQ (AGSF), an international consultant and the contribution of the NTTO for the Food Security component. The document is poor, all the more so considering the amount of resources invested and the role micro-projects should have played within LFSNAC: it is a copy-and-paste version of other micro-projects guidelines produced by projects all over the world, still contains mistakes and internal contradictions in the text, and does not bring any specific added value for the Luapula context.
113. Each community where a CAP would be implemented, was entitled in principle to have one micro-project funded. These were to be selected first by a District-level committee, then forwarded to the PCU and to the FAOR in Lusaka for funding. The TE's understanding was that the PCU was supposed to appraise the selected proposal, in technical, feasibility and sustainability terms, possibly going back to the communities to discuss and verify key aspects. This was not however the NTTO's understanding of his role, and nobody from the PCU appraised technically and economically the micro-projects, nor apparently ensured any monitoring during implementation.
114. Due to budget constraints only 31 micro-projects were financed, in a rush because running out of time, most of them with groups set-up by IHFSAN, in March-April 2006. More specifically:
 - Nineteen micro-projects concern vegetable and home garden productions, often through a FFS approach, including two Junior Farmer Field Schools: these are quite easy to implement, did not require heavy investment and preparation, participants were usually already acquainted with cultivation practices. Weakness are the type of cropping practices suggested by extension agents, with heavy use of chemical inputs and no attempt at organic or IPM type of practices; also, the quantity of inputs in some cases does not seem to allow a reasonable surplus production to invest in new inputs, reducing feasibility to one single cropping season. These micro-projects were often complemented with the distribution of treadle pumps, which are considered an efficient tool, though nobody among the groups the TE met, stated to be ready to buy one on his/her own or as a group. However, it looks like other farmers were ready to do so and

other pumps are being ordered. Also oil-palm seedlings were distributed free, apparently not even upon request by group members.

- Three micro-projects promoted small livestock: two were for pig-raising and the TE did not visit any. The third initiative, with a school, aimed at broiler production. Data made available to the TE during its visit, indicate doubtful cost-benefit analysis and unclear use of income, if any.
 - Nine micro-projects were used to fund infrastructure, including a bridge, a few water wells, canal lining, storage construction, etc. The TE visited three of these: i) one canal lining, serving a group and a nursery, stemmed from a conflict over the use of a stream. It is still under construction, though quite advanced, and participants from both sides are very confident about the solution found; ii) another canal-lining had been badly designed and had to be completed with a work at the spring which raised costs. Large patches of land are already under cultivation with horticultural crops and aquaculture is being developed as well, with a Peace Corps Volunteer; and iii) the third implies construction of three concrete reservoirs and installation of a diesel pump in an area flooded regularly six months per year, by the lake side. Its technical and economic feasibility looks very doubtful, apart from the fact that farmers are already growing vegetable on the same area, making quite good profit. The TE challenges thus the whole initiative, all the more so when considering that these crops are grown on a wetland: it would have been much more useful to introduce environment-friendly cropping practices. Further, the community had among its priorities a drinking water supply, asked by the women, but apparently men preferred to go for the irrigation scheme. It is likely that a more appropriate and cost-effective solution for improving water control in the flooded area could have been proposed, allowing part of the funds to be used to meet the water supply request.
115. All these micro-projects were on-going at the time of the ET. The slowest seemed to be the pig-raising ones, but Project's contribution should be completed quite soon. No explanations were provided to community groups which went through the CAP process and were left out with any micro-projects, causing resentment and tensions between neighbouring groups.
 116. In most cases, micro-projects may meet some of the concerned groups' problems, but the identification and selection process was very weak and apart from a couple of cases directly seen or reported, ownership by the groups is not very strong. Overall, all initiatives are missed opportunities to introduce concepts of technical, economic and environmental sustainability, as well as concepts of saving and credit.
 117. In one or two cases group members stated to be from vulnerable households themselves; more frequently, they stated to use the produce of the activity to support vulnerable households. The TE did not have the means to verify this, nor the Beneficiary Impact Assessment provided evidence in this respect. It might indeed be worth exploring with a more focused assessment, to what extent this is true. Also, from the stand-point of public institutions like the ministries of Health and Community Development it would be interesting to assess the cost-effectiveness of this indirect outreach approach based on support (inputs) provided through traditional safety-nets.
 118. Other activities included: i) studies to assess identifying business opportunities and relevant stakeholders' and dissemination workshops; ii) demonstrations of palm-oil wet-flushing extractors; iii) training of trainers on small enterprise development from the Livelihood Diversification and Enterprise Development (LDED) FAO/DFID programme; iv) analysis of oil-palm marketing opportunities. The TE did not see any

result stemming out of these activities.

4.B.5 Monitoring system

119. The project had virtually no formal monitoring system for assessing progress of field activities and PCU work. Although six-monthly progress reports were prepared, the TE had no evidence of records of field visits, quantitative targets set in NTTOs' work, indicators of any sort, etc. Reasons for this are not clear, though it is likely this was mostly due to the mentioned weak management and confused reporting lines. On the other hand, the project has invested resources and made valuable efforts toward assessing change in Luapula Valley on food and nutrition security, empowerment of communities, access to resources, etc.
120. In 1998, a baseline survey was carried out by FASAZ for IHFSAN. This confirmed some of the assumptions of the project and provided a base of data against which it was possible to assess changes over time. A repetition of the baseline was foreseen for LFSNAC, and a LoA was signed in September 2004 with FASAZ again. The National Food and Nutrition Commission had also an advisory role to play on the collection and analysis of anthropometrics information, but this was not done to the desirable extent. The field work was carried out in the first half of 2005, which means that no changes due to LFSNAC could be captured. Approximately one third of data were lost due to loss of a suitcase, and anthropometrical data were not collected according to standard rules. A draft report was forwarded to FAO in December 2005, and further field work requested to complete the missing information. FASAZ was not available to do so, but integrated comments as far as possible and presented FAO with what they considered their final report. The last instalment of the LoA (25%) was not paid.
121. The TE received the final draft from FASAZ itself, when back in Lusaka. The report provides useful information, as it compares results from the two baseline surveys, and is complete for two out of four Districts. Key results indicate that participation in IHFSAN was beneficial to households in terms of access to means of production (vegetable gardens and oil palms) and to the status of membership organizations within the communities.
122. A Beneficiary Impact Assessment was carried out in May 2006, as a preparatory work for the TE. The study used a qualitative approach, through focus-groups and key informants. Overall, conclusions on the results of project activities are positive. Interestingly, the study points out the need for micro-finance institutions and a more business-oriented approach to develop agriculture. The study could be used as a basis to develop more in-depth analysis, for example on the impact of Community Nutrition Promoters and the like.
123. In conclusion, a few of these positive changes can be imputed to the two projects, although population benefiting is still limited in numbers and there is not much evidence that non-participating population is experiencing any advantage.

4.C Government Support

124. GRZ was supposed to be heavily involved in LFSNAC implementation, given the Project's thrust to sustainability and consolidation of results. This happened to some extent: for example, efforts were made toward nurseries long-term sustainability by having them located at Farmers' Training Centres. Commitments entered through LoAs to implement Project activities were not met fully and activities lagged behind, for

various reasons.

125. GRZ financial commitment to project implementation had not been disbursed yet by the time of the TE, but it was included in 2006 fiscal year budget, as mentioned above.
126. Some ministries were very active at Province level in picking up Project activities and contributing to their progress, namely CNP and nutrition education materials. This happened as well in the case of FFS, aimed at mainstreaming the approach into extension methods. In this case however, unfortunately gaps occurred in the training process and the Project was unable to compensate for this weakness and strengthen capacities further.

4.D Project Management

127. It is shared opinion among stakeholders in Zambia and the TE, that the original organizational set-up proposed for the Project could not work properly. The double role the NPC was supposed to play, the split lines of command and responsibilities of NTTOs toward NPC and FAO, the loose authority of the NPC on the NTTOs: all elements were there to lead to confused leadership and guidance. Indeed, considerable confusion if not conflict hampered daily management of Project activities throughout.
128. The NPC role was eventually given by GRZ to the then-incumbent Province Agriculture Coordinator (PACO); this choice stressed MACO's ownership of the Project, possibly affecting to some extent its coordinating and promoting scope. Moreover, during the selection process strong preference was given to recruit for the NTTO posts, staff from the same Luapula Province and District line ministries offices, they had to strengthen in technical and managerial aspects. The TE observes that either these staff were already capable to implement what the Project was proposing, thus the Project was redundant, or they were not capable, so they could not improve their peers' capacities. Somehow, this was not considered an issue by the selection panel which included FAO and no initial provisions were made to train the NTTOs on managerial issues, apart from training on computer skills.
129. Weaknesses in management and confusion in roles and responsibilities were noted quite early on, by an LTU backstopping mission in May 2004. These were strongly reiterated by a second mission in November 2004. The second mission coincided with the first meeting of the Project Task Force. The latter raised suggestions about how to improve the system, and repeated them in the minutes of its second meeting, in June 2005. In August 2005, the Back-to-Office Report of a FAOR mission to the Project site, accompanied by a confidential report, raised again the attention of the LTU on the matter.
130. Later correspondence available indicates divergent visions about the causes of the Project managerial problems between the LTU and FAOR, in spite of information being available at LTU level about the issues at stake. A stale-mate resulted, which was unblocked only in January 2006 when a temporary solution was eventually agreed, by assigning an interim Project Manager initially based in Lusaka and since March 2006, in Mansa. This arrangement helped in smoothing relations between the PCU and the NPC. However, it was implemented far too late to make up for the time lost during the previous two years in terms of achievement of results.
131. The NPTF members tended to appreciate the functioning of that body and overall, those met by the TE had a good understanding of the Project's strengths and weaknesses. Some among them also acknowledged that major decisions had to be taken elsewhere, though they tried to take actions within their authority.

132. Overall throughout Project life, agreement between FAOR and LTU on Project management, including budget use, was not straightforward. A number of factors may have contributed to this, among which a different understanding of rules, roles and responsibilities, and different appreciation of available competences. The end result was lack of managerial guidance, absence of decisions made, dragging on of problems and overall waste of resources.
133. Last but not least, the LoAs were very complex and completely unrealistic in terms of necessary organizational capacities; most of them also required at least three times as much to accomplish foreseen activities. In addition, NTTOs did not understand their role and responsibility in following up their implementation, which led to further delays and low quality results. The approval procedures of reports, to allow disbursement of subsequent instalments, were considered unanimously too lengthy. The TE could not understand where main delays occurred: there is evidence that NTTOs did not grasp well the procedures and contributed to late forwarding of reports to FAOR and LTU, but late clearance in HQ may also have played a role.

4.E *Technical and Operational Backstopping*

134. The ProDoc foresaw 16 backstopping missions from HQ and Regional/Sub-regional Offices for Africa. The budget shows that not all of them were carried out. The TE asked the PCU at the beginning of its mission, to prepare a complete list of all missions but did not receive anything. Thus, only a partial analysis was possible.
135. One mission took place from RAF/Operations at the end of 2003: among other activities, guidance was provided to the NPC about rules and procedures. It does not look like this was very effective, possibly because of the NPC's heavy workload when the Project started a few months later.
136. The LTU devoted a substantive amount of resources to support the Project on the nutrition component, with both its own staff and international consultants. The training abroad for the NTTO also stemmed from a specific LTU commitment. All of this was undoubtedly instrumental to achieve present positive results.
137. A fair amount of backstopping from other technical units was also provided to the Food Security component: for example, the NTTO appreciated the support received on business development, though no follow-up happened. Admittedly, this is a brand-new field of activity which would have required many more resources to reach some result. As mentioned above, support was also provided on micro-project guidelines.
138. On the other hand, no technical backstopping or international support was given to the Institutions component.
139. Interestingly, one NGO and one consulting firm who collaborated with LFSNAC through LoA to carry out studies, stated that the support provided by the project LTU on their work was greatly enriching and useful, this both at the moment of formulating ToRs and at finalizing respective reports. In these cases, the relationship was direct between LTU and contracted party.

5 Assessment of Results and Effectiveness

5.A *Effects and Impact*

140. Effects and impact have been analysed against the evaluation questions raised in the

Terms of Reference of the TE, with the exception of natural resources management, dealt with under “environmental impact”.

Consolidating the achievements of the predecessor project GCP/ZAM/052/BEL in improving nutrition and household food security in Luapula

Enhancing the capacity of local institutions for implementation using locally available resources and building on past experiences.

141. LFSNAC was funded with the overarching aim of ensuring the sustainability of promising initiatives started under IHFSAN. This did not happen, with the exception of the Nutrition component. To a large extent, in particular for key issues such as CAPs and micro-projects, the PCU approach was to start everything again. This delayed project implementation, did not bring any added value in quality of outputs and prevented consolidating results and ensuring their sustainability.
142. The BSF request to formulate a new project with a new ProDoc may have contributed to loose momentum. However, two out of three NTTOs had been collaborating with IHFSAN as line-ministries staff and all of them, including the NPC, were involved in LFSNAC formulation. This should have helped continuity and building upon previous experience.
143. The TE considers that another possible cause may have been the project set-up with dispersed lines of command and responsibilities. This is discussed further below.

Improving institutional capacity for community-based food security and nutrition interventions, including aligning service delivery with community priorities through action plans and strengthening capacity for community-based project planning and management

144. The Institution Capacity Building Component has attained some results at the institutional level, namely improving skills toward more integrated and holistic planning, in particular in relation to mainstreaming nutrition concerns in non health sectors. Also the theme HIV/AIDS may have found some place, although no action had taken place yet and existing plans did not seem to meet real circumstances and needs of affected people.
145. Project outputs in relation to CAPs and participatory process were produced late and were of very poor quality. There was no evidence that the LFSNAC CAP exercises empowered any of the community groups where they were carried out.

Improving access to nutritious foods among food insecure households through increased food production and purchases through the development of income generation and marketing opportunities and improving and diversifying food production through home gardening, dry-season food production, and small livestock rearing

146. Micro-projects were supposed to be the key element of this component. Their late implementation and their limitations in number and scope, including technical feasibility for a few of them and economic sustainability for others, have curtailed any potential they could have to improve food production and income.
147. Positive project outputs were the production of extension material on a number of crops and the production of oil palm seedlings for sale to local farmers who may invest in the crop. However: i) extension material was produced too late to allow any assessment of results; ii) the nurseries are unlikely to be sustainable from a managerial point of view; iii) the role of oil palm in addressing food insecurity for vulnerable households is questionable.
148. The private farmers’ investment in oil palms is still at a too early and small stage, to

permit any assessment of actual and potential results, or perspectives. On the other hand, 15 years of work on this crop has triggered wide ranging interest, which may in the medium to long term bring positive benefits to the populations in Luapula Province.

149. The introduction of Farmer Field Schools, although a step ahead in comparison to the previous extension system based on oral messages, is far from the intended concept of FFS. On the other hand, Junior and Adult Farmer Field and Life Schools present an interesting entry point to reach out to the vulnerable in a cost effective way, which may well deserve more attention by GRZ.

Improving knowledge on food, health and nutrition among food insecure households, including those affected by HIV/AIDS, and positively change attitudes and behaviours related to health, care and diets

150. At the institutional level, awareness about the importance of nutrition within the food security and development discourse was raised, and line ministries concerned have mainstreamed to some extent nutrition within their planning, although this has not resulted yet in fully integrated applied action. At community level, the support provided through Community Nutrition Promoters, Nutrition Groups, Community Based Growth Monitoring cannot be linked yet to quantitatively measurable impact on the nutritional status of children, but it bears promising results.
151. The innovative approach adopted in the preparation of the nutrition education material for Grade 2 in Primary Schools has proved to be an excellent means to reach out at children, parents and teachers on a wide range of issues. The challenge lies still ahead of finalizing similar material for Grade 4 and elaborating material for Grade 6, wherein wider issues of livelihoods have to be included.
152. The decision to invest important resources in the use of a local radio broadcasting station, to diffuse nutrition and food security related messages, has still not proved its potential value because of late implementation of the installation process. A focused commitment by stakeholders in the Province will be necessary, to ensure that expected returns in terms of awareness and knowledge diffused, can be reaped in the future.

Reaching out to the intended target beneficiaries

Enhancing the targeting and effectiveness of interventions through the introduction of a participatory planning and action approach increasing flexibility, responsibility and institutional capacity in terms of management capacity and resource allocation.

153. Evidence available indicates that a good number of the 31 groups benefiting of micro-projects either include vulnerable households among their members, or may provide assistance with the produce of the micro-project, to vulnerable households. A case in point, the JFFLS micro-project was specifically structured to support orphan children, through both food provision and leaning skills. On the other hand, other micro-projects were clearly jeopardized by more influential groups or persons in the community, and benefits will not trickle further down.
154. The TE considers that the work of CNP is most likely to benefit vulnerable households as well: the availability at village level of skills in primary health care and nutrition, should benefit also those who could not reach the nearby health post for various reasons. The same could hold valid in the case of primary school nutrition education material, although this will depend on the capacity of poorer families to send their children to school.
155. There is no evidence that participatory approaches for planning and action, were mainstreamed into the working methods of Province and District level line ministries.

Service providers do not seem to have improved their capacity to adopt a participatory approach wherein the communities hold the stick and decide what their priorities are, so that a consequent action can be taken by the service providers.

5.B Sustainability and Environmental Impact of Results

156. In terms of institutional sustainability, the TE had evidence at District level of change occurring in the vision and possibly working method of line ministries sector staff. The decentralization process and the focus on ADC will require further efforts in this sense and the capacities build by the Project will prove their worth.
157. The official launch of Grade 2 Nutrition Education material is too recent to allow any further diffusion beyond Luapula Province. The TE did not have encouraging signs from the central level of the Ministry of Education in this respect. The TE considers that unless FAO and UNICEF engage further in a strong advocacy work on this aspect, it is unlikely there will be any up-scaling of the work done by the Project.
158. At community level, a few solid groups were created by IHFSAN and still exist. More recent ones are still too young to prove their strength.
159. No efforts were made to ensure economic sustainability of micro-projects, in spite of an international consultancy on marketing and micro-business orientation. The support provided to the nurseries did not allow them to become sustainable enterprises, although the Project has produced an interesting proposal for their transformation into viable productive entities. Promotion of oil-palm may be an economically sustainable venture on a commercial scale, but the scale of investment and commitment required does not make it a viable cash crop for vulnerable and small farmers.
160. Environmental sustainability was not taken in consideration at all by any of the stakeholders in the project. Micro-projects and FFS have ignored all principles of Integrated Pest Management and low-inputs use agriculture. In consideration of the particular environment of the Luapula Valley, the large wetland areas and the tangible effects of excessive exploitation of the main resource base, fresh-water fisheries, this was a major weakness.

5.C Gender Equity in Project Implementation and Results

161. The foreseen focus of the Project on vulnerable households, which should include among others women headed-households, seems to have automatically removed attention from gender issues. To the TE mission's knowledge, no specific training was carried out on gender issues, nor any of the guidelines produced and made available to the TE, made any specific mention to gender issues. The TE saw no evidence either of gender equity being a preoccupation for public institutions in their work, which may have influenced the PCU attention on this aspect.
162. The absence of a specific focus on gender in the project may have been partly due as well to the thrust of nutrition-related activities: these were obviously addressed to women, although also men were trained as CNP widening thus the scope of action of this function. Therefore, women as first responsible for children's and family nutrition, have benefited directly and indirectly to a large extent of Project support through CNPs, breast-feeding groups, TIPS, etc.
163. In most community groups, women seem to play an active role, although there were no cases of female presidents of these groups, to the TE knowledge. It was also evident in a few micro-projects that male preferences were given priority in the CAPs, when

selecting actions to be financed through the micro-projects. The TE noted already the burden palm-oil processing represents, a typical female activity: the Project proposed some more efficient technology, but these are not appropriate to the present limited production, not even at community level. Consequently, the promotion of oil palms has actually represented an increased work-load for women, who however seem to be able to control the proceedings from the sale of the oil, at least to some extent.

5.D Cost-effectiveness

164. The donor and GRZ had apparently insisted at the moment of Project formulation, on the use of national consultants to improve their capacities and as a cost-saving measure. The cost-saving perspective may have led to loose sight of the fact that capacity building is a resource-intensive activity, and adequate provisions in different forms should be made for it to achieve expected results. It is not a chance that the only successful component, nutrition, achieved most of its targets also thanks to an important investment in terms of backstopping and international technical assistance, plus one training abroad for the responsible NTTO. He acknowledged indeed that experience as a key factor contributing to his present competences. Priority to cost-saving may have been thus one of the causes of the poor cost-effectiveness of LFSNAC, although not the only one.
165. Even taking into account the gross under-estimation of necessary budget to implement planned activities and the budget erosion due to ZKw appreciation, the project budget was spent producing very few outputs, a number of them below acceptable quality, a far cry from the expected end-of-project situation envisaged in the ProDoc. The TE considers that the weak management the Project has suffered from since inception, was also the main cause for poor cost-effectiveness.

5.E Major factors affecting project results

166. Overall, the Project has suffered from unrealistic organizational set-up, conflicting visions about its thrust and management strategy among stakeholders, lack of guidance and low professional competence. The appreciation of the ZKw further affected project budget resources.
167. The legitimate national strive to attain the HIPC completion point forced heavy curtailing of all government expenditures, for both capital and recurrent budgets. This affected LFSNAC at three levels: i) previously existing government programmes, e.g. ZAMSIF, RIF and Constituency Development Fund phased out; ii) all line ministries suffered severe cuts in their budget, thus affecting recruitment of staff to fill in vacant posts, the delivery of regular programmes, the availability of cash flow to carry on activities foreseen by the Letters of Agreement (LoAs); and iii) GRZ could meet its financial commitments to the Project only in the second half of 2006.
168. The slow implementation of the Decentralisation Policy affected LFSNAC implementation: structures at District level were not solid enough, and the Area level was created during Project's life. Moreover, because of the financial limitation mentioned above, the policy progress could not be matched by lack of resources at District and Area level.

6 Conclusions and Recommendations

6.A Conclusions

169. IHFSAN project started a development process in Luapula Valley and created expectations among the population in the communities concerned. LFSNAC was funded to build upon those achievements, consolidate and ensure their sustainability. This happened to a good extent in relation to improving awareness and knowledge about nutrition security, at different levels. Some progress was also reached in relation to mainstreaming a more holistic vision in the work of District level line ministries. There is no evidence of consolidation and sustainability for the other components and sub-components.
170. Reasons for these shortcomings are several, mostly stemming from a misconceived institutional set-up and unrealistic assessment of necessary competences and resources, including finance. These intrinsic weaknesses were magnified by heavy and cumbersome procedures for project management and lack of GRZ resources to complement Project support.
171. The budget has been heavily overspent, one year before NTE date. However, most project activities are heavily lagging behind schedule, and little has actually been achieved in terms of micro-projects and direct support to the communities. There was no monitoring system in place to help steering PCU activities and disbursement at field level, effectively. The TE was not provided with complete information on the financial status of the project.
172. Against this picture, the TE could only propose two different scenarios for the Project exit strategy.⁹
- iii. The first scenario asks for the donor to increase its contribution to the project budget, to compensate for the appreciation of the Kwacha. The donor already contributed US\$ 300,000 in 2005, above the initial budget. Thus, a further contribution of US\$ 160,000 US\$, to be confirmed after a more detailed account revision, would allow a reduced PCU, composed by the NTTTO nutrition, the incumbent Project Manager, a car and a driver, to complete over 10 months, a few key activities. These would be as follows, in order of priority, along with final project report writing and closing progressively all LoAs:
- finalizing work on Radio Yangeni, including physical installation, fact-sheets and refreshment training (LoA), etc. (estimated budget US\$ 40,000);
 - finalize, including approval by Curriculum Commission, the Nutrition Education material for Grade 4, train teachers in the four Districts according to MoE standard training procedures, identify partner for printing (estimated budget US\$ 60,000), carry out the baseline survey;
 - prepare and finalize, including approval by Curriculum Commission, the Nutrition education material for Grade 6, train teachers in the four Districts according to MoE standard training procedures, identify partner for printing (estimated budget US\$ 120,000); the pre-condition for starting this activity would be the signature of an MoU with UNICEF, through which collaboration would be ensured and a detailed time-table for activities to be carried out;
 - assess the state of diffusion and impact of Community Nutrition Promoter, prepare a case study showing results, impact, strengths and lessons learnt;
 - assess the potential outreach capacity toward the vulnerable of Junior and Adult

⁹ The Preliminary Extended Summary presented at the TPR on July 14, suggested three scenarios. Discussion in that occasion, led the TE to propose that first scenario, as a recommendation to all stakeholders.

- Farmer Field Schools, prepare a case study showing potential for results and impact and perspectives for further support and consolidation;
 - re-visit the CAP guidelines and refresh District and Sub-District staff capacity on CAP process, to make the process truly participatory and community-led.
- iv. The second scenario, within present budget balance, requires immediate phasing out of project activities and PCU, handing over to GRZ of equipment, closing of LoAs and termination of the project in three months time. If any budget will be available, priority should be given to complete work on Radio Yangeni and completion of Grade 4 manual.

6.B Recommendations

173. Recommendations are addressed to each stakeholder, for ease of reference.

To all Stakeholders

174. The TE notes that in Luapula Valley huge gaps still exist in the capacities of local institutions to be effective service providers for the local communities and contribute to local sustainable development. Weaknesses include among others, capacities and skills on participatory processes, Farmers Field and Life Schools, monitoring and evaluation, economic and technical feasibility of micro-projects, small scale irrigation, Integrated Pest Management, etc. The Government of the Republic of Zambia could include these in its priority list, to discuss with its partners interested to work in this area of the country. The recently started area-based project funded by Finland, could be the first opportunity. BSF and FAO, each according to its own mandate and role, could further assist the GRZ in its efforts.

To the Government of Zambia

175. The TE strongly recommends that GRZ contribution to the project, already included in the Yellow Book and profiles for MACO in 2006, be used in close coordination with the FAOR and the Project, to close the LoAs still pending.
176. The TE strongly recommends the Ministry of Education to mainstream Nutrition Education into its curriculum countrywide, by diffusing the manual/s produced by LFSNAC.
177. The TE strongly recommends the Ministry of Health to invest in the role of Community Nutrition Promoter, who can play a key role in a very cost-effective way, to improve the nutritional status of rural communities.
178. The TE recommends MACO to strengthen the production of fruit-tree seedlings, apart from oil palms, due to the potential and high demand in the area for these.
179. The TE recommends MACO to pursue the development of oil palm as a commercial enterprise, ensuring that benefits of this venture may accrue to small-holders under any feasible scheme, e.g. out-growers schemes

To the Belgian Survival Fund

180. The TE suggests that in the case of a second project phase to consolidate previous

results and activities, continuity of operations is granted under an addendum to the first ProDoc, so as to avoid disruptions in project achievements and spirit.

181. The TE notes that principles of cost-effectiveness, rather than cost saving, should be applied in relation to human resources. Also, capacity building is a resource-intensive activity, and adequate provisions in different forms should be made for it to achieve expected results.

To FAO

182. FAO should improve the quality of the project documents it formulates, by paying more attention to operational aspects and institutional frameworks. More realistic assessment should be made of competences available at local and national level and of necessary financial resources. Adequate measures and safeguards should be introduced for ensuring that high quality staff, national and international as per requirements, are recruited, together with annual performance appraisal of project and FAOR staff. Further, adequate backstopping measures should be taken on administrative and operational issues as well.
183. FAO should develop more effective tools than present LoA, to collaborate with partner institutions. These should allow smooth implementation while making adequate provision for monitoring activities. The suggestions formulated in Mozambique for the adoption of a revised format of LoA would be a good such example.
184. FAO should fine-tune roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in field project management - BH, Programme Planning and Budget officers, Field Programme Officers and Central Accounting Reporting and Control Office, LTU, other technical units in the Task Force - to clarify the scope of action, authority and level of accountability of each of them. Clear, feasible levels of responsibility and smooth management should be the guiding principles in this process.
185. FAO in Zambia should take up the role of honest broker and promoter of coordination and exchange at national level, among different stakeholders on oil-palm development. The business plan for nurseries produced under the Project can be a starting point for further discussion and identification of partners.
186. FAO in Zambia, building on the experience of LFSNAC, should take a leading advocacy role in relation to the promotion of nutrition education and related matters.
187. FAO in Zambia should invest efforts in building capacities on Farmers Field Schools, respecting the true concept of the approach and integrating into it life-skills for adults and youth.

To the Project, including Budget Holder and Leading Technical Unit

188. The TE strongly recommends that the deadline of 15 August be set for all pending reports on LoAs by respective Implementing Institutions, to be forwarded to the PCU for technical and financial clearance. If by that date, reports will still be missing, the LoA will be considered closed and no further payment will be made to the Implementing Institution. Reports received by August 15, should be cleared by September 15. If clearances cannot be issued because of non-compliance with LoA, the LoA will be cancelled. Procedures should be started immediately afterward, to cancel the unsatisfactory LoAs.
189. Should this case exist, the TE strongly recommends that all pending technical and financial clearances for LoA reports already forwarded to the LTU be given by 15

August.

190. The TE appreciates the efforts by the FAOR during its work, to provide as much information as possible on the budget situation. In consideration of the complexity of the issue, and of the lack of complete information, the TE strongly recommends that all concerned (BH, Project, and AFF) join information and produce an updated clear status of the Project funds. This will be key to inform the donor on the actual impact of the ZKw appreciation on the Project budget and to allow producing a Budget Revision including the selected activities for completion. If the parties will be unable by the end of August 2006 to produce such budget status report, the TE recommends that an external audit be organized.
191. The TE recommends that immediate action be taken on the irrigation micro-project outside Nchelenge town, to revise it from a technical point of view.
192. The TE recommends that the Project Manager interacts with the Finnish Team in Luapula, to allow them to build upon the experience of LFSNAC, in particular in relation to oil-palm production.

7 Lessons learnt

193. Capacity building requires important investments in people and time, which should be guided by a principle of cost-effectiveness, not by cost saving concerns.
194. Constructive team work becomes imperative in a multi-function and multi-disciplinary environment, whereby the outstanding competences of each can be used at best. However, team building is an objective which requires high transaction costs: adequate measures have to be taken to ensure it may develop.
195. Whenever the executing agency is not a government agency, mainstreaming a project outputs and results should not be confused with mainstreaming the project management itself. A project document should state clearly if it aims at improving people's livelihoods, at building capacity of public agencies in development management, or at mainstreaming in the working practice of national institutions improved techniques and methodologies to better fulfil their mandate. Adequate provisions should be made accordingly.
196. Complex projects need competent and fully dedicated staff to manage them. Disregarding this aspect risks jeopardizing the success of the overall initiative, with full waste of resources made available.

Annex I

Terms of Reference for the Tripartite Evaluation of GCP/ZAM/059/BEL

1 PROJECT DETAILS

Project Code and Title: GCP/ZAM/059/BEL Luapula Food Security, Nutrition Action and Communication Project

Executing agency: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Government Implementing Agencies:

At National level: Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives

At Provincial and

District Levels: Office of the Permanent Secretary of Luapula Province

Collaborating Government

Agencies: Ministries of Health, of Education and of Community Development, National Food and Nutrition Commission

Donor: Belgian Survival Fund

Starting date: 01 September 2003

Finishing date: 31 August 2007

Budget: original US\$ 2,380,295.
after 2005 budget revision: US\$ 2,680,629.

Government Contribution: US\$ 89,448.

2 BACKGROUND

The project is a follow-up phase of project GCP/ZAM/052/BEL. It aims at consolidating the achievements of the first phase in terms of improving household food security and nutrition in Luapula valley and expanding the projects interventions from the valley area to cover the four target districts entirely. The project's objectives are centred on institutional capacity building, increasing access to nutritious foods and income generation among vulnerable groups, enhancing knowledge and promoting behaviour change related to key food, nutrition and health issues. More specifically, the project objectives were as follows:

To strengthen the capacity of the District and Sub-District institutions to the extent that they will have adopted a participatory and integrated programme approach towards the improvement of Nutrition and household food security situation in the District by 2006.

To increase access to a variety of nutritious foods and generate income, among the poor and vulnerable groups, including those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, through improved production, agro-processing, small enterprise/product development and marketing.

To ensure communities, households and school children's knowledge on important food, nutrition and health issues and promote positive attitudes and behavioural changes that result

in improved diet quality, adequate nutritional intakes and better dietary utilisation

The project targets the Districts of Mwense, Kawambwa, Nchelenge and Chiengi and is coordinated at that level by the District Development Co-coordinating Committees. The project target beneficiaries include those population groups who are most vulnerable to chronic household food insecurity and malnutrition, including those affected by HIV/AIDS; households headed by women, grandparents or children; large families and those who are caring for orphans. Particularly vulnerable people include orphans, people who are chronically ill and those living with HIV/AIDS, the elderly and the disabled. They are assisted through a range of direct grass-roots based interventions. The nutritionally most vulnerable groups, from a life cycle perspective include infants and children, children of weaning age, and pregnant and lactating women. The Project assists them through nutrition and health education and other targeted activities.

NGOs and community support staff at district and provincial levels are involved in capacity building activities. The targeting and effectiveness of interventions is enhanced through the introduction of an integrated and participatory planning and action approach increasing flexibility, responsibility and institutional capacity in terms of management capacity and resource allocation, as well as enhancing synergy and impact from organizations working together across sectoral boundaries.

3 PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS

Full details on results for specific objectives and outputs are available from the project's progress reports.

4 PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

As the project has passed mid-term, the evaluation is intended to provide the government, FAO and the donor with information on the relevance of the project, on the efficiency of the project implementation, on the efficacy, impact and sustainability of the results accomplished, and with recommendations on eventual steps necessary to consolidate progress and ensure achievement of objectives. The mission will be preceded by a beneficiary assessment of community members and their perception of project activities. The salient issues brought out through the beneficiary assessment will be analysed more in depth by the evaluation itself.

5 SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The Evaluation mission will assess the:

- Relevance of the project to national development priorities and needs.
- Clarity and realism of the project's development and immediate objectives, including specification of targets and identification of beneficiaries and prospects for sustainability.
- Quality, clarity and adequacy of project design including the following:
- Clarity and logical consistency between, inputs, activities, outputs and progress towards achievement of objectives (quality, quantity, and the time-frame);

- Realism and clarity in the specification of prior obligations and prerequisites (assumptions and risks);
- Realism and clarity of external institutional relationships, and in the managerial and institutional framework for implementation of work plans;
- Likely cost-effectiveness of the project design and implementation.
- Efficiency and adequacy of project implementation including:
 - Timely availability of funds for FAO and GRZ budgets.
 - Quality and timeliness of input delivery by both FAO and GRZ;
 - Managerial, coordination and work efficiency;
 - Follow-up on the recommendations and decisions of the various tripartite review meetings;
 - Implementation difficulties;
 - Adequacy of monitoring and reporting;
 - Extent of GRZ support and commitment;
 - Quality and quantity of administrative and technical support by FAO.
- Special attention should be given to the strategy, management and sustainability of the Project Grant Fund as an instrument for supporting the activities that are promoted under Outputs 2.2 to 2.5.
- Progress towards project results, including a full and systematic assessment of outputs produced to-date (quantity and quality as compared with work plan and progress towards achieving immediate objectives). The evaluation mission will review the status and quality of work on the following:
- Integrating nutrition and household food security aims and considerations in relevant stakeholder programmes and policies, ensuring that the nutritionally vulnerable are properly targeted.
- Ensuring full community participation in problem identification, planning, implementation and monitoring of project activities.
- Promoting gender-sensitive approaches in project implementation and into work approaches of the line departments at District level.
- More specifically, the evaluation will assess progress achieved towards:
 - Consolidating the achievements of the predecessor project GCP/ZAM/052/BEL in improving nutrition and household food security in Luapula
 - Improving institutional capacity for community-based food security and nutrition interventions, including aligning service delivery with community priorities through action plans and strengthening capacity for community-based project planning and management
 - Improving access to nutritious foods among food insecure households through increased food production and purchases through the development of income generation and marketing opportunities and improving and diversifying food production through home gardening, dry-season food production, and small livestock rearing
 - Improving knowledge on food, health and nutrition among food insecure households, including those affected by HIV/AIDS, and positively change attitudes and behaviours related to health, care and diets
- Reaching out to the intended target beneficiaries, including:
 - Those population groups who are most vulnerable to chronic household food

- insecurity and malnutrition, including those affected by HIV/AIDS; households headed by women, grandparents or children; large families and those who are caring for orphans. Particularly vulnerable people include orphans, people who are chronically ill and those living with HIV/AIDS, the elderly and the disabled
- The nutritionally most vulnerable groups, from a life cycle perspective include infants and children, children of weaning age, and pregnant and lactating women
 - NGOs and community support staff at district and provincial levels who are expected to indirectly benefit through their involvement in capacity building activities
 - Enhancing the targeting and effectiveness of interventions through the introduction of a participatory planning and action approach increasing flexibility, responsibility and institutional capacity in terms of management capacity and resource allocation.
- Enhancing the capacity of local institutions for implementation using locally available resources and building on past experiences. The role of the project as a funding mechanism was intended to be limited and access to locally available funding mechanisms, whether informal or institutional was to be exploited to the maximum. In terms of more specific technical areas, this implies that by the end of the project:
 - the district nurseries operate on a commercial or non-profit basis
 - the radio station covers all expenses for programming, training and maintenance
 - agricultural extension makes use of self-financing farmer field schools
 - poor people access financial resources through the pooling of local resources and in savings and lending groups
 - local civil society organisations working on HIV/AIDS have acquired the capacity to tap into established funding mechanisms to support their outreach programmes
 - the school nutrition education strategy has moved from the pilot-testing phase into the full integration of nutrition education in the official curriculum
 - farmers have adopted integrated production and protection management techniques (IPPM) resulting in reduced application of pesticides and chemicals and maximise the use and conservation of existing natural resources
 - The sustainable management of natural resources.
 - The prospects for sustaining the results of the project by the beneficiaries, government and other institutions after the termination of the project. The evaluation mission should examine in particular the following:
 - Institutional and organizational arrangements put in place and support towards organizational capacity building to ensure that community participation will be part of an integral service delivery strategy of local Ministries and Organizations. In particular, the continuation of the Community Action Planning and the active participation of all community support services in these grass-roots activities;
 - Level of development of Community Groups in relation to sustaining project supported activities without external (e.g. GRZ and FAO) support;
 - Capacity of government and other institutions to sustain provision of support to Community Groups from their own resources after termination of project support;
 - Commitment and willingness for host institution to continue providing support to community groups after termination of project support.

- The cost-effectiveness of the project.

Based on the above analysis the evaluation mission will draw specific conclusions and make proposals for any necessary further action by GRZ, FAO and BSF to ensure sustainable development. The mission will also identify the need for any additional assistance that was not foreseen at the start of the project, and that will be required if project outputs and objectives are to be sustained. The mission will draw attention to any lessons of general interest. Any proposal for further assistance should include precise specification of objectives and the major suggested outputs and inputs.

6 COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION

The mission will comprise of the following persons:

- Team Leader (FAO), specialist in evaluation, community participation and development;
- Representative nominated by GRZ, specialist in agronomy, horticulture and participatory extension.
- Community Nutrition specialist - with experience in food-based nutrition programmes, community nutrition education and training, and community empowerment for nutrition improvement (BSF).
- Team leader of the preceding Beneficiary Assessment Mission (BAM).

Gender issues will be considered by the Community Nutrition Specialist and the GRZ nominated representative with input from the team leader of the preceding BAM.

All team members should have experience of evaluation and participatory methodologies. They should also be able to undertake multi-disciplinary work and be familiar with concepts of household food security and nutrition. They should also be familiar with gender issues and have working experience in Africa.

Team members should be independent and thus have no previous direct involvement with the project either with regard to its formulation, implementation or backstopping.

7 ITINERARY AND TENTATIVE TIMETABLE FOR THE MISSION

The mission will take place over a period of three weeks. A Beneficiary Assessment Survey is currently on-going and a draft report will be ready by end of May 2006.

The Team Leader will be technically briefed by the various FAO units involved in the project (nutrition, industrial oil crops, horticulture, micro-finance, communication, post-harvest and food technology, gender). The team will travel to Lusaka, Zambia in June/July 2006 where the Team Leader and the consultant nominated by the donor will join the Government representative and the BAM Team Leader for a briefing session with project management and the FAOR and the main implementing ministry (MACO).

The team will then travel to Luapula and spend two weeks in the field carrying out a participatory evaluation. The mission will return to Lusaka where it will meet with representatives of other development agencies, and debrief with the FAO Representative. The mission should not attempt to cover every project site but rather aim at getting a more in-depth view of a representative sample of locations.

8 CONSULTATIONS

The mission will maintain close liaison with the Representatives of the donor and FAO and the concerned national agencies, as well as with national and international project staff. Although the mission should feel free to discuss with the authorities concerned anything relevant to its assignment, it is not authorised to make any commitments on behalf of the Government, the donor, or FAO.

9 REPORTING

The mission is fully responsible for its independent report, which may not necessarily reflect the views of the Government, the donor or FAO. The report will be written in conformity with the Guidelines of FAO Evaluation Service.

The report will be completed, to the extent possible, in the country and the findings and recommendations fully discussed with all concerned parties and wherever possible consensus achieved with all stakeholders.

The mission will also complete the FAO Project Evaluation Questionnaire.

The mission leader bears responsibility for finalising the report, which will be submitted to FAO within two weeks of mission completion. FAO will submit the report to the Government and the donor together with its comments.