



NDA

National
Development
Agency



Ikhwezi vegetable and poultry farming

CLOSE – OUT EVALUATION REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2013



CLOSE-OUT EVALUATION ON IKWEZI VEGETABLE AND POULTRY FARMING

SUBMITTED BY:



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ngwazi Consulting wishes to thank the National Development Agency (NDA) management and staff and Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming (the Project). Specifically, Ngwazi Consulting wishes to thank Makhosazane Sambo of Ikhwezi Vegetable and poultry Farming for her unfailing assistance with the project visit including engaging in discussions as well as provision of detailed project information. Additionally, we would like to thank Simon Baloyi, Ntsako Tlakula and Kgoroshi Mogaladi (NDA) for their assistance with the provision of all documentation and other reports of the Project.

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this Closeout Evaluation is to assess the design, implementation and results of the project in order to determine its relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability in the context of its stated aims and objectives. This objective will be achieved through structured information sharing activities, replication of best practices and related capacity building activities among NDA supported projects. The evaluation gives recommendations to improve the potential of the Project to achieve expected outcomes and objectives.

Objective(s) of the evaluation

- The purpose of this evaluation is to provide a comprehensive performance overview of the entire project;
- Highlight the lessons learnt so that the conclusions and recommendations arrived at can assist the organisation in moving forward and be sustainable and;
- Also highlight project alignment with Municipality IDPs and relevant government sector departments' programmes.

Major evaluation questions

- Was the design of the project appropriate and effective to add value and improve lives of the project members and beneficiaries?
- Was the implementation appropriate and in response to project members and beneficiary needs?
- Were resources allocated to the project used for the agreed purposes that are in the project business plan?
- Where there was identified lack of capacity was there training carried out to capacitate project members to perform their functions?
- Has the project produced desired results?
- Is the project sustainable in the foreseeable future?

Major results or findings

The NDA granted funding to the Project to the tune of R 2 093 000. At the time of the evaluation visit, the Project had received all the tranches of the funding from the NDA and activities as envisaged in the application for funding were ongoing. From the studies of the NDA documents (monitoring reports) it was noted by the evaluators that the NDA's carried out monitoring and interventions during the Project funding cycle; it was however noted that a baseline study was not carried out prior to commencement of the funded Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming programme .

The following are the major results or finding of the evaluation:

- The Project members' knowledge for vegetable growing was significantly enhanced by the NDA funding and support programme. The Project produces green peas, cabbages, tomatoes, onions, spinach, beetroot, butternut, okra, lettuce, sugar beans, brinjol, chillies and green squash;
- The land utilisation has exceeded the planned 10 hectares in that the Project is currently productively utilising a total of 18 hectares of land;
- The food security and household income aspect has also been achieved through mass production and sales of vegetables to both the community and commercial market;
- The marketing capacity of the organisation has immensely improved and the fresh produce is being sold to the local community and commercial markets that include Woolworths, Spar, Lowveld Sugars, National Market, Johannesburg Market, Durban Market and the Department of Education (for feeding schemes);
- The Project generates sales of between R 80 000 – R 105 000 per month with expenses that are averaging between R 30 000 – R 35 000. This translates into a Profit of between R 50 000 – R 70 000 per month, a strong sign of Project sustainability likelihood post the NDA funding. the evaluation also assessed the Project as one that has huge potential to grow and benefit even more members of the community in income generation through employment and food security through

locally accessible fresh vegetables, hence becoming an ideal vehicle for poverty eradication in the area;

- The Nkomazi Municipality as part of its IDPs on sustainable development continues to give support to the Project on matters of land disputes and recently also intervened to assist the Project with the process of electricity installation;

Major recommendations to the program

An NDA intervention either in form of discussions with the Department of Agriculture or provision of resources will need to be explored to give the Project the nursery growing skill and knowledge in the vegetable growing business.

Currently the Project is generating a considerable profit from the current vegetable farming activities. A further intervention that the NDA can make is to mentor the Project in financial and budgetary planning so that the Project can plan adequately to save up enough funds for expansion into chicken farming. If the NDA is to advance further funding, it must this time make a lesser percentage than the one that the Project will make. This will be both a demonstration of the Project growth success and evidence of the impact of the NDA funding programme to the Project.

Major conclusions and implications

This Project can be used as a model for many of the similar projects funded in the province of Mpumalanga. The Project design and implementation was ambitious and considered the beneficiaries and community needs. The activities were clear and practical and represented a bold attempt by the Project members to create sustainable jobs through these activities. It has also clearly acted as a learning experience especially for the participants involved in its farming activities. Constant monitoring of the Project by the Development Manager in charge also gave substantial and critical guidance to both the management and participant of the Project.

Project's prospects for continuation and longevity of benefits after the cessation of the NDA support are high as demonstrated by the Project profitability and commitment of its members on developing the farming into a larger scale.

2. Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
2. Table of Contents	6
3. List of Tables	7
4. List of Figures.....	7
1. Background.....	8
2. Evaluation Aim and Objectives	10
3. Evaluation Methodology.....	11
4. Results.....	12
5. Discussion and Conclusions	19
6. Lesson Learned and Recommendations.....	22
7. References	25
8. Appendices	25

3. List of Tables

N/A

4. List of Figures

Figure I. Chillies Farming at Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming	14
Figure II. Green Peas Farming at Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming	15
Figure III. Cabbages Farming at Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming	16
Figure IV. Tomatoes Farming at Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming	17
Figure V. Harvested and Packaged Butternut at Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming	18
Figure VI. Top Women Award awarded to Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming	21

1. Background

Ikhwezi Vegetables and Poultry Farming Co-operative was formed in 1996. Initially Ikhwezi operated informally until the members decided to legally register the business as a co-operative in 2010. The business has been successfully registered under section 7 of the Co-operative Act, 2005 with registration number 2010 / 003007 / 24. In 2001 the project was funded with an amount of R50 000.00 by the Department of Social Development. These funds assisted in acquiring a three pistol engine and irrigation pipes. In 2006 another grant was received from the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration which helped in erecting the perimeter fence surrounding the farm. Since registration some of the members have attended training programmes in:

- Financial Management
- Management of Small Enterprises
- Business Planning
- Crop Production
- Pest Control Methods
- Poultry Production

The project is located in Sikhwahlane Village within Ward 16 of the Nkomazi Local Municipality of Ehlanzeni District in the Mpumalanga Province. The area forms part of the War on Poverty campaign. The project has been granted a right to occupy the land of about 18 hectares by the Matsamo Tribal Authority. The village is part of the Nkomazi region which is endowed with rich agricultural soil and vast area of land. Agriculture will therefore be pivotal in the IDP intervention to fight poverty in the area.

Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) is a process by which municipalities prepare 5-year strategic plans that are reviewed annually in consultation with communities and stakeholders. These plans adopt an implementation approach and seek to promote integration by balancing social, economic and ecological pillars of sustainability without compromising the institutional capacity required in the implementation, and by coordinating actions across sectors and spheres of government (*Nkomazi Municipality Integrated Development Plan - 2012/13*)

In its IDPs the Local Municipality aims at sustainable development for community projects like IKhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming.

Sustainable development _ Sustainable development is development that "... meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." (*Beckenstein et al, 1996:9.*)

The Nkomazi Municipality is 3240.42 km² in extent, which is 4.07% and 23% of the Mpumalanga Province and Ehlanzeni District Municipality land mass respectively. The Municipality is bounded by the Mozambique to the east, Swaziland to the south, Kruger National Park to the north, Umjindi Local Municipality to the south west and Mbombela Local Municipality from the northwest to west. (*Nkomazi Municipality Integrated Development Plan - 2012/13*)

2. Evaluation Aim and Objectives

The NDA's primary mandate is to contribute towards the eradication of poverty and its causes, by granting funds to civil society organisations for the purposes of implementing development projects of poor communities. Also for the purpose of strengthening the institutional capacity of other civil society organisations involved in direct service provision to poor communities.

To ensure that it meets its primary mandate in an effective and efficient manner, the NDA constantly craft its intervention so it can be more sustainable and have a greater impact in the lives of the poor. The NDA therefore continues to make funding decision based on research led information generated from the funded projects. Consequently project evaluation enables the Agency to develop best practices and deal with constraints accordingly.

The purpose of this Close-Out Evaluation is to provide a comprehensive performance overview of the entire Project; highlight the lessons learnt so that the conclusions and recommendations arrived at can assist the organisation in moving forward and be sustainable; and also highlight project alignment with Municipality IDPs and relevant government sector department's programmes . This objective will be achieved through structured information sharing activities, replication of best practices and related capacity building activities among NDA supported projects.

3. Evaluation Methodology

The Close-Out Evaluation has been undertaken through a combination of processes including a desk study, site visits and interviews with stakeholders. The methodology for the evaluation covered the following areas:

- Desk study review of all relevant Project documentation;
- An assessment of the performance of the Project against the set goals and objectives presented in the initial application document;
- Consultations with NDA Development Manager and NDA Research & Development Officials;
- A comprehensive briefing on Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming from the Project General Manager and other members;
- Site visits to farming land of the Project site and its adjacent areas;
- Interviews with stakeholders;
 - Local community members;
 - Interviews with individuals who are either affiliated with the Project in some way or who have or might be expected to be impacted by the project.

4. Results

The Ngwazi Consulting team visited the Project on 14th August 2013 at its location at Stand 78, Sikhwahlane 1341. The NDA granted funding to the Project to the tune of R 2 093 000. At the time of the evaluation visit, the Project had received all the tranches of the funding from the NDA and activities as envisaged in the application for funding were ongoing. From our studies of the NDA documents (monitoring reports) we noted the NDA's monitoring and interventions during the Project funding cycle; we however noted that a baseline study was not carried out prior to commencement of the Project.

The specific objectives of the Project according to the application for funding were as follows:

- To enhance vegetable growing knowledge and skills of the 9 members through training and access to information and extension services;
- To create jobs for 50 community members;
- To build and strengthen the capacity of the Co-op through access to farm inputs (including seeds and basic equipment);
- To maximize land utilization by expanding from 5 to 10 hectares;
- To improve the infrastructure facilities through the extension of the irrigation system;
- To improve food security and household income through vegetable production;
- To improve the quality and shelf life of the products through the establishment of packing and grading facilities;
- To improve the marketing capacity of the organization by selling fresh produce to the local and nearby markets.

During our evaluation process we observed the following key results from the Project objectives that were applied for:

- i. The Project members' knowledge for vegetable growing was significantly enhanced by the NDA funding and support programme. The Project produces green peas, cabbages, tomatoes, onions, spinach, beetroot, butternut, okra, lettuce, sugar beans, brinjal, chillies and green squash;



Figure 1: Chillies Farming at Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming Project



Figure II: Green Peas Farming at Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming Project



Figure III. Cabbages Farming at Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming Project



Figure IV. Tomatoes Farming at Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming Project



Figure V: Harvested and Packaged Butternut at Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming Project

- ii. A total of 50 community members work for the Project of which 37 are permanent employees whereas 13 are casual workers;
- iii. The capacity of the Co-op to access farm inputs including seeds has been improved evidenced by the farming activity levels witnessed during our review;
- iv. The land utilisation has exceeded the planned 10 hectares in that the Project is currently productively utilising a total of 18 hectares of land;
- v. Although there are delays in completing the cold rooms due to the death of a service provider that had been contracted and paid to complete the building, the Project has improve the infrastructure facilities on the farm that include cold rooms, irrigation system, parking and grading facilities;
- vi. The food security and household income aspect has also been achieved through mass production and sales of vegetables to both the community and commercial market;
- vii. The marketing capacity of the organisation has immensely improved and the fresh produce is being sold to the local and commercial markets that include Woolworths, Spar, Lowveld Sugars, National Market, Johannesburg Market, Durban Market and the Department of Education (for feeding schemes).

5. Discussion and Conclusions

The evaluation team assessed the development and Implementation of the programmes at Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming to be progressing well according to the current plan and could be classified as an extremely successful Project. The classification here indicates that almost all aspects of the project implementation that were proposed have been achieved and there is visible growth and sustainability going forward. The Project team undertaking the work is considered to have the necessary expertise on both technical issues and project management skills. Our assessment is that the Project will continue to grow.

Other specific conclusion and discussion matters that we would like to bring to the attention of the NDA are as follows:

- a) The Project generates sales of between R 80 000 – R 105 000 per month with expenses that are averaging between R 30 000 – R 35 000. This translates into a Profit of between R 50 000 – R 70 000 per month, a strong sign of Project sustainability likelihood post the NDA funding. We also assessed the Project as one that has huge potential to grow and benefit even more members of the community in income generation through employment and food security through locally accessible fresh vegetables, hence becoming an ideal vehicle for poverty eradication in the area;
- b) Due to its continued success over a couple of years, the Project Managing Director Nomakhosazane Sambo received an award at the 10th Anniversary of the Top Women Awards;



Figure VI. Top Women Award awarded to Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming Project

- c) The Nkomazi Municipality as part of its IDPs on sustainable development continues to give support to the Project on matters of land disputes and recently also intervened to assist the Project with the process of electricity installation;
- d) The Department of Agriculture has seconded 15 graduates to the Project as part of an in-service assistance. These graduates work with small farmers and their co-ops that are also being mentored by the Project. They are assisting emerging farmers to learn on producing quality vegetables.
- e) Another highlight of the Project's accolades of success is the mentoring of small farmers in the area. SEDA sends through emerging farmers for mentoring by Ikhwezi Vegetable and Poultry Farming. So far 15 farmers are under the mentorship of the Project;
- f) Due to its exemplariness in implementation, we were informed that the president of the Republic of South Africa. President Jacob Zuma is due to visit the Project before the end of the year (2013);

With all the above mentioned successes, the Project is not completely without challenges, some of these are:

- They need to be trained on vegetable rotation in order to maximise the land fertility. Different crops have different nutrient requirements and affect soil balance differently. Some, like corn and tomatoes, are heavy feeders that quickly deplete soil nitrogen and phosphorus. Thus, if you plant corn in the same spot year after year that plot of soil will run low on nitrogen and phosphorus more quickly than other parts of the garden will. By changing the location of corn each year, you'll be able to renew the plot where it grew the preceding year, so the soil won't get out of balance. There are other crops that also use up nitrogen rapidly. They tend to be the leafy and fruiting crops, such as lettuce, cabbage, and tomatoes. In contrast, root vegetables and herbs are light feeders. Peas, beans, and other legumes add nitrogen to the soil but need lots of phosphorus – <http://www.organicgardening.com/learn-and-grow/crop-rotation> (c) 2013

- The prize escalation as recommended in the due diligence report was not taken into account during the approval of the funds and this did put some pressure on the budget of the Project;
- The buying of the nursery from third parties forms a large percentage of the expenses of the Project, there is a need to train the members on growing their own nursery as they do not possess the skills and knowledge to do so;
- The Project’s appetite for chicken farming is still high and they still need funding for chicken houses and initial stock;
- The Project is currently tied in a legal battle to recover monies paid to the service provider that died before completing the construction of the cold rooms;

6. Lesson Learned and Recommendations

This Project has met the key objectives presented in the Project application for funding. This is largely due to the positive and effective project management team that is executing the Project plus a well designed and specified project plan. We summarise the evaluation lessons learnt and recommendations below:

Lessons Learnt	Recommendation
<p>1. The Project design and implementation was ambitious and considered the beneficiaries and community needs. The activities were clear and practical and represented a bold attempt by its members to create sustainable jobs through the Project activities. These also clearly acted as a learning experience especially for the participants involved in the farming activities. Constant monitoring of the Project by the Development Manager in charge has given substantial and critical guidance to both the management and participant of the Project.</p>	<p>1. A baseline study of a project with this level of success would have added value for measuring improvement in the community and beneficiaries. The NDA should attempt to have baseline studies that would form a basis for measuring improvement especially on projects that include a broader base of the community.</p>

<p>2. The strong linkages that the Project made with stakeholders such as the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Administration, Mpumalanga Agri Skills, Nkomazi Local Municipality, SEDA, Johannesburg Fresh Produce Market, Durban Market, Lowveld Sugars, Woolworths, Spar and indeed its own community played a major role in most of the Project success.</p>	<p>2. As part of each funded project's design and implementation, identification and collaboration plans with all relevant stakeholders should form a base for implementation roll out.</p>
<p>3. The buying of the nursery from third parties forms a large percentage of the expenses of the Project, there is need to train the members to be able to grow their own nursery as they currently do not possess the skills and knowledge to do so. Ability to grow own nursery would create more employment in the Project, improve skills as well as cut on costs of buying developed nurseries.</p>	<p>3. An NDA intervention either in form of discussions with the Department of Agriculture or provision of resources will need to be explored to give the Project this much needed skill and knowledge in the vegetable growing business.</p>
<p>4. Crop rotation is a key element in maximising nutritional value of the land for the crops. The Project needs to be trained on vegetable rotation in order to maximise the land fertility. Different crops have different nutrient requirements and affect soil balance differently. Some, like corn and tomatoes, are heavy feeders that quickly deplete soil nitrogen and phosphorus. Thus, if you plant corn in the same spot year after year that plot of soil will run low on nitrogen and phosphorus more quickly than other parts of the garden will. By changing the location of corn each year, you'll be able to renew the plot where it grew the preceding year, so the soil won't get out of balance. There are other crops that also use up nitrogen rapidly. They tend to be the leafy and fruiting crops, such as lettuce, cabbage, and tomatoes. In contrast, root vegetables and herbs are light</p>	<p>4. Same with the above recommendation</p>

<p>feeders. Peas, beans, and other legumes add nitrogen to the soil but need lots of phosphorus</p>	
<p>5. The Project’s appetite for chicken farming is still high and they still need funding for chicken houses and initial stock. This expansion would enhance the Project sustainability as well as improve the impact that Project is having in poverty alleviation in the community.</p>	<p>5. Currently the Project is generating a considerable profit from the current vegetable farming activities. The Intervention that the NDA can make is to mentor the Project in financial and budgetary planning so that the Project can plan adequately to save up enough funds for expansion into chicken farming. If the NDA is to advance further funding, it must this time make a lesser percentage than the one that the Project will make. This will be both a demonstration of the Project growth and evidence of the impact of the NDA programme to fund this Project.</p>
<p>6. The Project has had a very considerable effect in terms of jobs created and safeguarded for the participants and also enjoys community support. There are particularly strong effects in relation to jobs safeguarded. The land provided is sufficient for a long sustainable period of farming.</p>	<p>6. This Project can be used as a model for many of the similar projects funded in the province of Mpumalanga.</p>

7. References

1. *Nkomazi Municipality Integrated Development Plan - 2012/13*
2. *Beckenstein et al, 1996:9*
3. <http://www.organicgardening.com/learn-and-grow/crop-rotation> - (C) 2013

8. Appendices

This is the scope of the assignment that was used as a guide in discussion and reviews on this closeout evaluation of the Project.

THE SCOPE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The scope of the evaluation will be focused on the operational module and structure put in place to execute the project(s) and the project(s) in its entirety. The audience for the evaluation will also include Development Managers from the NDA, Provincial Managers of the NDA, Management of the NDA, Project Staff and their Management and other relevant stakeholders. The source data will be collected both as primary and secondary data and it will be sourced from project reports, Project monitoring reports and interviews with relevant people working with the project and any other institutions that contributed to the objectives of the project in line with the Grants Agreement

This evaluation being a closeout evaluation, the following key evaluation issues (i.e. relevance, appropriateness, effectiveness and result achieved, efficiency, project management and co-ordination and sustainability) which are relevant to the project will form the structure of the evaluation approach.

Relevance – the extent to which the project(s) design, implementation and monitoring conforms to the needs and priorities of project members and beneficiaries. Key questions around this issue should include: was the design appropriate and effective? Was the implementation appropriate and relevant to project members and respond to beneficiary needs? etc.

Effectiveness – the extent to which the project(s) intervention has achieved its objective: key questions around this issue must include, were project members and beneficiaries livelihood improved by the project(s)? Were resources allocated to the project used in a manner that maximises the outputs and outcomes of the project(s)?

Efficiency– the extent to which resources invested in the intervention can be justified by its results, taking alternatives into account. Key questions must include, were resources allocated to the project(s) use for the agreed purposes in the project plan? Where project staff capacitated or trained to perform their functions? Was the training conducted produce and change in staff performance? Were there any mechanisms and systems to manage resources such as finance, human resources and other material resources provided to the project by the NDA?

Impact– the totality of effects of project(s) intervention (positive and negative, intended and unintended) achieved during and after the implementation of the project or programme. Key questions to be answered by the evaluation may include: has the project(s) produced desired effect, if yes, why? If not, why not?

Sustainability– the continuation and longevity of benefits from the project(s) after the cessation of NDA support to the project. Are there indications that the project(s) can sustain themselves without NDA funding?

The evaluation must provide findings and insights on what worked well and what did not work well with the project. It must provide discussion, conclusion and recommendations on how the project can be improved in the future. (see attached outline of the report structure)

1. Overall Project Performance.

- 1.1. Key aspects of how a project is operating;
- 1.2. Whether pre-specified objectives are being attained;
- 1.3. Identification of failures to produce project outputs;
- 1.4. Monitor service quality;

Identify areas that need urgent attention or potential risks that could negatively impact on the success of the project



NDA

National
Development
Agency

LIMPOPO

Albatross Centre - Suite 8
19 Market Street
Polokwane
0700

Tel: 015 291 2492
Reception Ext (2201)
Fax: 015 295 7586
Email: limpopoprovince@nda.org.za

KWAZULU NATAL

Suite 1202
Nedbank Centre
303 Smith Street
Durban Club Place
DURBAN
4001

Tel: 031 305 5542
Fax: 031 305 5140
Email: kznprovince@nda.org.za

GAUTENG

10th Floor, Braamfontein Centre
23 Jorissen Street
Braamfontein

Tel: 011 339 6410
Fax: 011 339 6410
Email: gautengprovince@nda.org.za

EASTERN CAPE

The Ridge Building
Ground Floor,
3 Berea Terrace
Berea
East London
5214

Tel: 043 721 1226/7
Fax: 043 721 2096
Email: ecprovince@nda.org.za

NORTH WEST

Office 0113A
First Floor
West Gallery Megacity
Mmabatho
2735

PO Box 6118
Mmabatho
2735

Tel: 018 392 6892
Fax: 018 392 5432
Email: northwesternprovince@nda.org.za

WESTERN CAPE

The Chambers Building
2nd Floor
50 Keerom Street
Cape Town
8001

Tel: 021 422 5175
Fax: 021 422 5180 EXT: 2002
Email: westerncapeprovince@nda.org.za

FREE STATE

Quantum Building
Office No 209 - 2nd Floor
172 Zastron Street
Bloemfontein
9300

Postnet Suite 131
Private Bag X 01
Brandhof
9324

Tel: 051 430 2024
Fax: 051 430 3376
Email: freestateprovince@nda.org.za

MPUMALANGA

Ground floor
Biwater Building Office 103
16 Branders Street
Nelspruit
1200

Tel: 013 755 1478 / 013 755 3777
Fax: 013 753 2244
Email:
mpumalangaprovince@nda.org.za

NORTHERN CAPE

13 Dalham Road
Kimberley
8301

PO BOX 390
Kimberley
8300

Tel: 053 831 4828/9
053 831 4831
053 832 3365
Fax: 053 831 4824
Email: northerncapeprovince@nda.org.za



NDA

National
Development
Agency

NATIONAL HEAD OFFICE

2nd Floor – Grosvenor Corner
195 Jan Smuts & 7th Avenue
Parktown North
Johannesburg
2193

P.O. Box 31959
Braamfontein
2017

Tel: (011) 018 5500
Web: www.nda.org.za
Email: info@nda.org.za



social development

Department
Social Development
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



sassa

SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY



NDA

National
Development
Agency