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**FY15 Q3 Quarterly Report**

**April – June 2015**  
**Resources to Improve Food Security in the Eastern DRC (RISE)**  
**“SIMAMA”**  
AID-FFP-A-11-00008



*Mama Leaders greeting the SIMAMA Team during a monitoring visit*

<b>COUNTRY CONTACT</b>	<b>HEADQUARTERS CONTACT</b>	<b>PROJECT SUMMARY</b>
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## **Executive Summary**

Mercy Corps, in partnership with Catholic Relief Services (CRS), is implementing the five-year SIMAMA/RISE program, aimed at ensuring that vulnerable households and communities in North Kivu build and sustain their food security. The program focuses on improving agricultural production, controlling and eradicating crop disease, increasing household incomes, and preventing childhood malnutrition. Activities specifically address the challenges that vulnerable households face regarding food availability, access, and utilization. SIMAMA aims to build communities' resilience to shocks by introducing and encouraging the adoption of sustainable household coping mechanisms, while being able to engage more efficiently in market activities. The program includes a substantial focus on good governance to ensure that the results achieved are sustainable. This report presents the achievements and challenges during the period of April to June 2015, which correspond to FY 2015, Quarter 3.

The overall implementation of the program activities went as expected during the quarter, and details for each specific component are provided in this report.

During the period, the IY5 PREP was revised at the invitation of USAID/FFP to incorporate into the program a fourth strategic objective, aiming at enhancing the food security of conflict-affected households in areas of relocation, return and re-integration. The PREP is still under review at FFP at the time of writing this report.

### **Security Update**

In the three health zones supported in Butembo (Musienene, Masereka and Kalunguta) the security situation has been stable and the program team was able to make progress on all scheduled program activities according to the detailed implementation plan.

In Birambizo, however, the security situation has deteriorated since December 2014, corresponding to the departure of military troops, which led to a drastic increase in criminality/banditry<sup>1</sup> in and around Katwe.

On June 26, Two Mercy Corps vehicles were attacked near our Katwe office, and three staff were wounded with machetes and transported to the local hospital before being evacuated to Goma. Following this incident, The RISE team worked with OCHA to develop an advocacy paper to the attention of the Congolese Government to raise the attention on the challenges that such an operating environment creates for both the humanitarian community and the population. While this incident disrupted program activities in Birambizo temporarily, activities have currently resumed (though program staff in the field are staying in other locations outside of Katwe).

Following this serious security incident, Mercy Corps and CRS decided to merge in the same office in Katwe to limit staff exposure to risk, as the CRS office is in a more secure, central location in Katwe. This move will require a quick upgrade of the CRS building (mainly carpentry work), but the cost will be absorbed by the savings made on rent and security fees at

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<sup>1</sup> On July 13, 2015, further to the murder of an individual in Katwe, the Katwe community, exacerbated by the lack of security, burned an IDP camp composed of 300 households. This demonstrates the persistent tensions between the Hutu, Hunde and Nande.

Mercy Corps current base. This decision was supported by Mercy Corps' Regional Security Advisor, who visited Mercy Corps DRC in July 2015 to assess the program security procedures and staff exposure to risks.

### **Learning Initiatives**

In April and May of 2015, the RISE team participated in a FANTA-led review of program planning and lessons learned on development programs in DRC. The RISE team submitted responses to questions related to SO1, SO2, SO3 and gender integration, and participated in telephone interviews to discuss our responses to questions relevant to the review.

Also, in June 2015, the RISE team participated by phone in a USAID research study led by Management Sciences International (MSI) on "crime, conflict and fragility" in North Kivu. Program staff shared their perspectives and analysis with researchers, and agreed that this topic is highly relevant to the operational reality of North Kivu province.

## **Strategic Objective 1: Agriculture and Livelihoods**

The reporting period corresponded to a peak for the agriculture season, with production growing in all Farmer Field Schools (FFS), among seed multipliers and in participants' homestead gardens. During the period, the SO1 Team conducted weekly monitoring of the crops to provide training and guidance to farmers. The program further strengthened its working relationships with government actors such as the Provincial ministry of Agriculture, and SIMAMA activities were presented to the Minister himself during a technical meeting organized by the Ministry.

### **Agriculture Production**

#### **Farmer Field Schools**

Early in Year 4, SIMAMA set up 350 Farmers Field School (FFS) mainly in villages where the SO2 component is implemented to expand its impact on agriculture production. On average 25 farmers compose an FFS. In total 8,217 farmers will have received the technical assistance of the program during the period. Observation is that women, who traditionally play an important role in agriculture, are actively participating in FFS.

During the previous quarter (January to March 2015) the FFS producing vegetable crops received several varieties of seeds for testing (carrots, onion, cabbage, pumpkins). The seeds distribution came along a series of training organized by the Agents Villageois Agricoles (AVA)<sup>2</sup>, to promote the adoption of good agricultural practice. Starting in April 2015, farmers

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<sup>2</sup> The AVA is a volunteer from the community contracted by SIMAMA to cascade in the FFS the trainings they received. AVA are educated and literate, in return of their services they receive a monthly stipend. An AVA supervise 4 FFS.

transplanted the seedlings from the FFS to their own fields or homestead gardens, where it will be harvested during the second half of July.

To ensure that the program is well on target to harvest a high quality vegetable crop, SIMAMA intensified the trainings during the period to increase FFS participants' knowledge in the areas of weeding and care of crops. A specific attention was also brought to harvesting techniques (adequate tools for harvesting, maturity detection of the production, and preparation of the storage sites).

FFS for banana cultivation based on community management of the BXW spread and started disseminating to smallholder farmers the healthy suckers issued from macropropagation then multiplication fields.

The FFS experience is a real success as reported by the farmers themselves, who confirm they gained new knowledge. Farmers mentioned they were keen on continuing the experience. Also, some farmers who did not participate in the FFS during the last season now request their admission to the next cycle of FFS that will start in September.

A lesson learned from the experience is that providing seeds to a group of farmers is much more efficient than providing seeds directly to farmers, since it creates a real motivation and team spirit. Grouping the production highlighted other benefits such as sharing knowledge, community watering or community safeguarding of the production, which result in saving time.

#### Crops diseases protection (banana and cassava)

The main activity during this quarter was the dissemination of disease-tolerant materials and seeds to final beneficiaries. Healthy cassava cuttings, maize seeds and banana suckers were distributed in 29 sites of the project (22 in Birambizo/ Bambu and 7 in Butembo). Among key results, it is also worth citing: the implementation of a campaign against the Banana Xanthomonas Wilt pandemic in Birambizo area. 21 healthy banana suckers production and multiplication fields are under certification from SENASEM and with the control of INERA.

Owing to proper management of CMD-tolerant varieties of cassava, and after certification by SENASEM, four cassava associations (out of 12 existing) are now entering commercialization through CIGs.

#### **Agriculture commercialization**

Security and stability are two critical factors for any investment and in the SIMAMA context for the success of the value chain component. Despite the alarming increase in violence and insecurity in the Rutshuru territory, stakeholders there (particularly the Common Interest

Groups) continued to participate in value chain activities (beans, onions and cassava) during the reporting period.

In Butembo, the program is making tremendous progresses on bringing farmers into market-led production. Three crops are specifically prevailing: potato, bean and onion. The tables on page seven provide the forecasts for the value chain production.

#### Seeds producers/multipliers (PM)

At the end of 2014, 26 local farmers were invited to join the program as seed producers/multipliers, including ten in Birambizo for bean seeds, ten in Butembo for bean seeds, and six in Butembo for potato seeds. Their primary role is the sustainable production and provision of high quality seeds to farmers (either individual farmers planting in their fields or Common Interest Groups). However to sustain the existence and development of the PM, the program connects them to the larger market composed of big buyers from the Kivus and cooperatives able to purchase large quantity of the seeds production. Most of the PMs have developed enough contacts to sell their entire first season harvest. During the next quarter, SIMAMA plans to buy some of the seeds production to assist the newly created CIG in acquiring their first seeds. This may be based on a loan system to assist CIGs with the startup funds necessary but to encourage continued commercial relationships between the CIGs and the PMs.

During the period, the 26 PMs continued to receive SIMAMA trainings in the relevant technical areas: site/land selection, seeds selection, agricultural calendar management, harvest techniques and post-harvest conservation (bean storage and drying), An initial training on transformation was as well initiated for PMs in Butembo, focusing on processing potatoes into chips. In August 2015, the 26 PM will receive a formal training on business plan preparation and monitoring to further develop their ability to engage into sustainable business. To this aim, SIMAMA has been developing a relationship with Coocenki, a network of cooperatives well established in Butembo.

In addition, 21 banana suckers multiplication associations, 12 mosaic disease- tolerant cassava varieties multipliers associations and 5 maize seeds producers continue to produce – under regular controls from SENASEM and INERA- seeds for local farmers.

#### Seed certification

The Service National des Semences (SENASEM) conducted a training addressing the production and multiplication of certified seeds according to the Congolese legislation. SENASEM as well conducted inspection visits on the PMs' fields to certify their production. The 26 potatoes and beans seed multiplication fields were inspected and 21 seeds production/multiplication fields were certified as aligned with the standards. The 5 sites not certified were facing infestation issues. The program team is still working to help the remaining five PMs obtain their certification, since being certified is a must for any seed producer.

Regarding multiplication of staple crops, SENASEM certified 5 maize, 12 cassava and 21 banana seed multiplication fields.

### Identification of the value chain actors

Four local transportation companies were identified - two in Butembo and two in Birambizo - to provide options to producers for exporting the production after harvest. Three rural cooperatives, Coocenki, SIDIP, LOFEPACO, were approached during the quarter and connections between them and the PM are being established, and the program also plans to connect CIGs with these cooperatives. In August, the program will organize an agriculture fair in Butembo with the relevant actors (buyers, cooperatives, agro-dealers, seed producers/multipliers, farmers from the CIG and local authorities (CARG)) to facilitate the networking between the actors, hence to promote the development of agriculture in North Kivu.

### Price information system

During the reporting period, SO1 and SO3 teams organized a training for the agents of the CARG/Chefferie in Butembo and Goma so that they understand their role in any value chain system and in particular within the context of the SIMAMA value chains. Price information systems were also debated with CARG, CIG members and PMs. During the next quarter, the program will avail at the level of local market place panels to communicate information relevant to commodity prices. The CARG agents will provide relevant information for the use of farmers, who will share the information among themselves. The program has also engaged discussions with CARGs to negotiate sales with exemptions for the first years of activity, until the producers have reached financial and commercial viability.

### Gender in CIG

The program conducted a gender survey to understand the gender implications in the value chain activities. The results of this survey show that women are very active in CIG activities (55% of CIG members are women) and commercialization is certainly a promising activity for women in North Kivu. However the survey reported a non-equitable control of the resources between men and women, so the program will continue to address this issue through sensitization and behavior change.

### Expected cash crop production

During the quarter, SIMAMA created 63 Common Interest Groups (CIG) oriented on beans, onion, potatoes and cassava markets. On average 25 farmers are active in a CIG; this make a total of 1575 farmers being motivated for commercialization. A barrier analysis was carried out

to understand the obstacles refraining suitable farmers to joining the CIG, and lack of trust between farmers was identified as a key barrier.

The table below illustrates the expected production at both FFS and PM levels:

<b>Birambizo</b>	<b>Onion expected profit</b>				
# Farmers Field schools	Total seeds received (Kg)	Area under cultivation (ha)	Expected crop (MT)	\$ value of the production	Destination
192	24	12.2	162.3	48,960	Post-harvest monitoring survey will indicate options in August 2015

<b>Birambizo</b>	<b>Beans expected profit</b>				
# seeds producers	Total seeds received (Kg)	Area under cultivation (ha)	Expected crop (MT)	\$ value of the production	Destination
10	657	10.33	8,264	16,528	Post-harvest monitoring survey will indicate options in August 2015

<b>BUTEMBO</b>	<b>Onion expected profit</b>				
# Farmers Field schools	Total seeds received (Kg)	Area under cultivation (ha)	Expected crop (MT)	\$ value of the production	Destination
30	1.8	1.4	14	7,609	Post-harvest monitoring survey will indicate options in August 2015

<b>BUTEMBO</b>	<b>Beans expected profit</b>				
# seeds producers	Total seeds received (Kg)	Area under cultivation (ha)	Expected crop (MT)	\$ value of the production	Destination
10	311	5.38	1,415	2,830	Post-harvest monitoring survey will indicate options in August 2015

<b>BUTEMBO</b>	<b>Potatoes expected profit</b>				
# seeds producers	Total seeds received (Kg)	Area under cultivation (ha)	Expected crop (MT)	\$ value of the production	Destination
6	7804.5	3.66	43,433	43,433	Post-harvest monitoring survey will indicate options in August 2015

### Livestock production

The activity has been delayed due to important challenges in the supply chain of rabbits and guinea pigs. SIMAMA signed an MOU with Vétérinaires Sans Frontières – Belgique VSF-B, who has a tremendous experience in small livestock production. In Butembo, during the next quarter the program will start the distribution of 3,000 rabbits to SO2 participants. VSF-B will provide the training for participants as well as the training for community veterinarians. Rabbits will be purchased from VSF-B Program participants residing in SIMAMA intervention areas.

In Birambizo, the program will purchase guinea pigs in villages within the Birambizo area to avoid the stress of long transport, which proved in the past to generate a too high mortality rate within the Guinea pigs. Sellers have already been identified.

#### Rural saving and loans

Since the inception of the program, 352 rural saving and loans groups were created, please see table below.

Areas	# groups	Average value of saving (\$)	Value of loans disbursed	% of individuals reimbursing loans on time
Birambizo	172 (SILC/CRS)	32	65	99%
Butembo	120 (VSLA/MC)	28,2	41,1	94%
Bwisha	60 (VSLA/MC)	41,4	45,6	60%

During the period 86 new SILC groups have been set up in Birambizo and received financial and group management skills. In Bwisha, the VSLA groups accomplished their third cycle. The groups are now sustainable and functioning with maturity; SIMAMA only provides a light monitoring to these groups. The 60 groups in Bwisha finished distributing their share and are currently starting a fourth cycle.

In respect with Butembo, the 120 VSLA groups completed their first cycle and shares were distributed to members with the guidance of the *Agents Villageois* (VA). It is expected that most of the groups will engage into a second cycle. During the past months, 24 new VSLA groups set up on their own by individuals replicating the successful experience of existing groups.

### **Strategic Objective 2: Nutrition**

SIMAMA continued to implement SO2 (Health and Nutrition) activities in the 33 health areas of the 4 targeted health zones during the quarter. The 4 health zones are Birambizo (19 health areas) and Bambu (10 health areas) in Rutshuru Territory, Kalunguta (2 health areas) in Beni Territory and Musienene (2 health areas) in Lubero Territory.

#### **Support for improved access to better quality health and nutrition services at community level**

RECOs and Mama/Papa Leaders continued to receive capacity building on various topics from the SO2 Team. This included refresher trainings on Essential Nutrition Action (ENA), Essential

Hygiene Actions (EHA), Pre Natal Care (PNC), Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI), gender, and positive masculinity.

Household visits increased in order to provide more in-depth support to households who have specific issues on health or nutrition (sick child, malnourished children). Both RECOs and Mama/Papa Leaders worked hard to reach more families. At the same time, they increased also community meetings and sessions for cooking demonstrations using locally available food.

Part of this is the use of local Corn Soy Blend (flour of maize and soya that SIMAMA introduced and is promoting in the targeted areas).

Finally, the SO2 team conducted two important campaigns during the quarter:

- A campaign to promote the GoDRC's 7 key family practices: optimal breastfeeding, adequate complimentary feeding depending on the age of the child, correct nutrition for women, correct feeding of sick children, promotion of iron-rich food consumption, fight against iodine deficiency and fight against Vitamin A deficiency.
- A campaign to promote key nutrition behaviors : feeding practices for pregnant women, diet diversification for women and diet diversification for children under 2.

### **Collaboration with Health Structures**

Over the reporting period, collaboration between the SIMAMA team and the Health Structures continued to improve. Together, SIMAMA and the BCZ at Health Zone level continue to train Health Agents on key health and nutrition topics (ENA, EHA, PNC, and IMCI) as well as on gender. SIMAMA also supported Health Zones by providing them supplementary key tools (growth sheets) in addition to the other materials provided last year (notably scales for weighing children). Joint Supervision visits continued during the quarter allowing the team to note the increased number of people coming to health centers, the lack of medicines in HCs, and the inclusion of some nutrition and health activities into routine activities for the Health agents.

Finally, SIMAMA is continuing its active participation in each Nutrition Cluster meetings held monthly in Goma. These meetings allow the program to improve coordination, share information and know what actions the cluster members are planning or implementing.

### **PM2A Food distribution**

Compared with last quarter, the third quarter of FY15 shows a continuous increase of the number of beneficiaries coming to collect their food in all 27 PM2A distribution sites of SIMAMA; in fact, total PM2A beneficiaries increased from 72% to 92% of the monthly targets this quarter. This can be attributed to additional effort to make distributions more regular and to sensitize and inform beneficiaries on distribution plans. Also, it's important to note that more and more beneficiaries graduate from the program. As of July 2015, no more pregnant women will be receiving rations and continued PM2A distributions will be targeting only children aged between 6-23 months.

Parallel to PM2A food distribution, SIMAMA is also introducing the use of local maize and soya flour to improve nutrition for pregnant and lactating women as well as children and is thus contributing to sustainable solutions for improved nutrition for children in the program area.

## **Promotion of food and dietary diversification**

Three important activities occurred during the quarter as related to improving dietary diversification for targeted beneficiaries and communities: vegetable gardening, soy production and small animal husbandry. In order to increase access to more nutritious food, SIMAMA worked with SO2 beneficiaries to set up community vegetable nurseries where they learn how to grow vegetables. Then, each participant was supported to plant their own garden at the household level. Carrots, onions, tomatoes, cabbage, amaranths and eggplants are among crops that are promoted. At the same time, the cultivation of soy is continuously promoted and supported to allow community members have access to high-protein value crops they can use to improve diets. Finally, SIMAMA completed the preparation phases of the introduction of small animal husbandry at the household level to increase availability of animal protein at home. Beneficiaries have been identified (using the SIMAMA database and adding filters to create a list of eligible households) and verified by communities.

In Birambizo, local suppliers for guinea pigs have been identified. SIMAMA will proceed with the purchase of small lots since no big suppliers are available around Katwe. The experience from the past shows that the mortality rate is too high if guinea pigs are imported from Goma, due to the long transport and the lack of adaptation to the local climate of Birambizo.

In Butembo, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with Vétérinaires sans Frontières – Belgique, who operates in SIMAMA Health zones and who has a sound expertise in small animal husbandry in Butembo. Next quarter, SIMAMA will purchase the rabbits from VSF producers and distribute the animals to participating households.

### **Strategic Objective 3: Governance**

#### Road rehabilitation (FFA)

In Birambizo, 21 feeder roads under going rehabilitation (out of the 33 initiated by SO3) were completed and technically accepted by the Direction Provinciale des Voies de Déserte Agricole (DVDA), for a total length of about 155km. The completion and certification of the 12 remaining axes are on the agenda for next quarter, but three projects are currently on hold at the request of the authorities for security reasons.

It has to be noted that most of the roads that received SIMAMA's support were already existing access/feeder roads, abandoned due to insecurity in the past years. During monitoring visits organized with the local authorities, the program could observe that farming households are now resettling along the axes where they used to live in the past, close to their farming fields. They can now save up to two hours of walking every day, hence spend more time on farming and implementing the SO1 activities they learned in the FFS. Women interviewed reported that now motorbikes and tchukudu come to their areas, and as such getting agriculture production to market or sending someone sick to the doctor is much easier and cheaper than in the past.

Six new Road Maintenance Committees (4 in Kikuku and 2 in Bambu) were set up during the period. 60 committee members received practical and theoretical training from the DVDA to increase their skills on how to conduct regular road maintenance and technical standard in DRC. To date, 40 Road Maintenance Committees have been set up since the beginning of the Program.

### Fishponds construction (FFA)

Four fishponds were also completed during the period (out of a total of 7 initiated) and the procurement of young fishes started. A technical agreement with the Service National d'Aquaculture (SENAQUA) was recently signed, and the governmental agency will proceed to regular water quality analysis and technical controls of the infrastructures. The fishpond of Kibingu was ready for harvesting its fish, however due to recent surge of insecurity in and around Katwe/Bwalanda, the activity was postponed. The community of Kibingu wishes the program to provide guidance on how to manage the profits of the fish commercialization and invest into social activities. The program has thus planned to tailor a specific training on business planning which will be relevant to the six other fishpond management committees created.

### Tree nurseries

During the reporting period, SIMAMA closed three tree nurseries as expected in Bwalanda, Katwe and Kanaba. The total production in the farms is 57,170 tree seedlings, among which 20,299 Grevillea, 21,026 Eucalyptus and 15,845 Cedrela. The trees will be dedicated to reforestation and soil conservation activities with SO1 participants and road stabilization/protection with SO3 management committees.

### Support to CARGs

With the support of the provincial CARG, the CARGs of Bwito and Baswagha carried out 11 community awareness sessions on the role and attributions of the CARG. Targeted localities were Nyanzale, Kikuku, Bwalanda, Kibirizi, Kishishe, Bambo, Kabizi Katsuba (Birambizo) and Lukanga, Masereka, Luoto (Butembo). A total of 600 representatives of associations of producers, FFS and CIG, local authorities and structures involved in land tenure management benefited these activities. The purpose of these sessions was to inform the actors on the CARG's role in regards to land tenure, commercialization, and structuration/capacity building of small holder farmers.

In Butembo, the provincial CARG organized with SO1 and SO3 its quarterly meeting to the attention of 31 CARG agents from CARG Musienene, Rwenzori and Butembo. The CARG agents were trained on their role in supporting value chain activities. They now possess the necessary tools to collect information on prices and they commit to arrange meetings between buyers and producers.

### Land conflict management

Two training sessions on peaceful resolution of land conflicts were organized in Bwalanda and Kabizo to the attention of committee members in local structures managing local land disputes, and 79 individuals received training. In addition, the land tenure department of Butembo organized a training focusing on land acquisition and relevant regulations in which 30 individual members of local management structures active in conflicts resolution received capacity building.

Two workshops were held to further advance the development of the mapping of land tenure conflicts by type of conflicts in Maboya et Musienene (Butembo). The report will provide guidance to the stakeholders and the program for the formulation of an action plan for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, such as for instance between cattle herders and farmers.

#### Early Warning Systems – Response (EWS) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

During the quarter, six new DRR committees were set up in Kaghumo and Lukanga (Butembo) and Katwe, Kishishe, Kilama, Rwahurukene (Birambizo). Since the program started, 19 DRR committees set up are functioning. 88 members of different local committees or local authorities received capacity building on disaster risk management. Three new EWS-R committees were created in Birambizo. These entities are functional and elaborated their tools to collect information on risks and hazards.

Two communities supported by their DRR Committees initiated activities on their own during the period. The first one consisted of the rehabilitation of a bridge in Kabanda, the second one in the reforestation of a land to prevent landslide in Kirumba. In Butalungula and Bugina, village chiefs relayed to farmers the data collected through the EWS-R committees to prevent the expansion of the cassava mosaic disease.

#### Other Capacity building initiatives

SO3 organized a training on decentralization, local planning and public tender for governmental staff in Rutshuru. This training was organized in collaboration with the Provincial Division of Decentralization and benefited 49 staff.

Nineteen SO1 associations (FFS and small producers organizations) representing 312 individuals received capacity building on the topics of socio-organization and governance to support the shift from FFS to CIG.

In collaboration with SO2, 119 individuals from 8 “Comités de Santé” (CODESA) were trained by the Office of the Health zone in Birambizo on their role and missions. In Butembo, 18 “Comités de Santé” (CODESA) were also trained.

### **Gender**

During the reporting period (April – June 2015), the gender team worked on gender integration through the implementation of trainings for different target groups, the finalization of 2 research projects (VSLA and Common Interest Groups (CIG) and on the structuring of the BCC and gender approach to CIG implementation.

#### Training

During the reporting period, ten training sessions were conducted, addressing a total of 401 persons (214 men and 187 women) around 3 subjects: **female leadership**, which objectives were that 1) participants understand the main concepts related to female leadership in the framework of community development, 2) participants are able to adapt the acquired concepts to their context and take formal commitment toward visible and concrete changes in their environment. The later relates to **positive masculinity**, of which objectives are 1) participants understand the main concepts related to gender and positive masculinity and their impact on everyday life; 2) participants commit to share the knowledge acquired with the other members of their associations; and **gender**, which objectives are: 1) participants understand the main concepts related to gender and their application in the daily life of participants; 2) participants commit to share the newly acquired knowledge with the rest of their associations.

Each training module was adapted to the specific context of the target group, from governmental bodies (CARG, CLD) to CSOs (female and youth associations) to village agents responsible to replicate the trainings with their VLSA of reference. The table below gives a glance of the trainings delivered during the reporting period:

<b>Training session</b>	<b>Start date</b>	<b>End date</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>
Training of positive masculinity for Village Agents – Butembo	2 April 2015	03 April 2015	13	4
Training on female leadership for female associations – Rutshuru	20 April 2015	21 April 2015	32	17
Training on female leadership for female associations – Masereka	21 April 2015	22 April 2015	33	14
Training on female leadership for VSLA – Rutshuru	22 April 2015	23 April 2015	16	24
Training on gender and positive masculinity – CARG Rwenzori	23 April 2015	le 24 April 2015	20	4
Training on female leadership for 4 CLD Bukenye, Lubero	12 May 2015	13 May 2015	27	17
Training on female leadership for 4 CLD Lukanga, Lubero	14 May 2015	15 May 2015	24	12
Training on female leadership for 4 CLD Buiki, Beni	11 June 2015	12 June 2015	23	14
Training on female leadership for CARG Baswagha	16 June 2015	17 June 2015	18	14
Formation sur le genre et le leadership féminin aux représentants des associations féminines	25 June 2015	26 June 2015	5	31

## **Research**

During the reporting period, the gender team in collaboration with the M&E department finalized two important research studies that will inform the next operational steps for VSLA (and the new trend of male participation) and the gendered dimension of the value chain that will contribute to

the definition of the new Common Interest Groups. Both reports are attached to the present report.

### **Operational impact on CIG**

Following from the research on the value chain gender assessment, the team was able to determine men and women's roles and responsibilities for the interested crops. The evidence collected helped the elaboration of a sound strategy that involves men and women in the exact phases of the value chain with targeted training and capacity building opportunities. The assessment gave the opportunity to the SIMAMA SO1 manager and his team to allocate resources to the groups which could exploit them the most, maximizing the impact. Also, specific messages and sensitization campaigns were conceived in collaboration with the BCC team to ensure that all the concerned groups were reached.

### **Commodity Management**

During the reporting period, the commodity pipeline was revised to reflect SO4 needs and the decrease of attendance at the PM2A sites. Also, new transporters were selected after a bid process to dispatch the food commodities throughout Birambizo Health Zone.

Pending approval of the IY5 PREP, SIMAMA plans a final call forward in August 2015 to meet the program's food needs for SO3 and SO4 activities.

#### CSB transfer to WFP - Uganda

Food for Peace is supporting the SIMAMA team in the transfer of 800 MT of excess CSB to WFP Uganda. This CSB has a best use by date of February 2016. To date, the commodities in question are still in Mercy Corps Goma warehouse awaiting transfer.

#### Office Congolais de Contrôle (OCC)

In an effort to have a more collaborative relationship with the institution and reduce the fees that are charged to SIMAMA when importing or analyzing the edibility of its food commodities, Mercy Corps signed a new MoU with the Office Congolais de Contrôle. In accordance with the new MoU, OCC will conduct in-country delivery surveys and take samples of commodities received as per bill of lading instead of sampling per truck. This negotiation will allow relevant savings on the program ITSH budget.

#### Commodities received during the quarter

The program received from the port of Dar Es Salaam a total of 497.325 MT of Corn Soya Blend between April and June 2015 as a part of a call forward submitted in the fourth quarter of FY2014.

Mercy Corps also submitted in June a call forward for 400 MT of Cornmeal and 120 MT of yellow peas expected to arrive in Goma in December 2015. This CF is part of the FY15 budget (PREP Year 4).

The first CF of FY15, which was expected in Dar Es Salaam in June 2015, is delayed due to vessel mechanical issues resulting in the vessel owner claiming general average. To ensure FFA distributions planned for August, Mercy Corps is considering the option of distributing CSB in lieu of Cornmeal, if this alternative is accepted by the communities.

#### Commodity diversion (fraud)

A fraud case of 723.6 kg of vegetable oil was discovered in June 2015 in the Mercy Corps warehouse in Goma, and FFP was notified of the loss. Mercy Corps is currently investigating to identify the circumstances of the fraud and, pending results of this evaluation, will take legal action as necessary..

In regards to the investigation of PM2A ghost beneficiaries, Mercy Corps and CRS are still working together on the clarification of pending questions. Mercy Corps has informed the OIG and a call was held during the reporting period between Mercy Corps and CRS' general counsel and the OIG.

#### Commodities distributed during the quarter

FFA activities were carried out during the months of April and May, while in June most of the completed projects were officially handed over to the local authorities.

The PM2A distributions continued in all of the 28 distribution sites in Birambizo. The number of food commodity recipients who actually received food during the quarter was less than planned: 17,183 actual beneficiaries were served per month on average compared to 26,166 projected. To address this situation, SIMAMA adjusted its LOA commodity pipeline, which led to a second excess of CSB of 530 MT along with 30MT of excess veg. oil.

#### **Direct distribution commodity stocks available in country during the quarter.**

Period (End of)	Corn Meal (MT)	Yellow Split Peas (MT)	Corn Soy Blend (MT)	Vegetable Oil (MT)	Total (MT)
15-Apr	196.23	62.09	2,255.22	229.51	2,743.04
15-May	15.28	7.85	2,503.16	205.59	2,731.88
15-Jun	15.28	7.85	2,394.28	194.41	2,611.82

#### **Total number of PM2A beneficiaries served and commodities distributed during the quarter.**

Period	Pregnant women and lactating mothers	Children under 2	Total beneficiaires served	Corn soy blend (MT)	Vegetable oil (MT)	Total (MT)

Apr-15	805	16,029	<b>16,834.00</b>	102.21	10.10	112.31
May-15	428	16,836	<b>17,264.00</b>	104.23	10.36	114.58
Jun-15	249	17,801	<b>18,050.00</b>	108.67	10.83	119.51
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>315.11</b>	<b>31.29</b>	<b>346.40</b>

**Total Food for Assets beneficiaries served and commodities distributed during the quarter.**

Period	Households reached	Vegetable oil (MT)	Split yellow peas (MT)	Cornmeal (MT)	Total (MT)
Apr-15	2,892	10.24	41.07	136.85	<b>188.15</b>
May-15	3876	13.55	54.24	180.95	<b>248.74</b>
Jun-15	280	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>23.79</b>	<b>95.30</b>	<b>317.80</b>	<b>436.89</b>

Description of Activities (CRS)	Achievement			Quantitative and Qualitative
	Achieved	On-Going	NA	Description
<b>SOI: Smallholder farming households in target areas have increased and diversified production and profit</b>				
<b>IR 1.1: Smallholder farming households adopt integrated and sustainable farming practices</b>				
1.1.1.1 Establish demonstration fields and test sites for seed multiplication.		X		Caritas set up 2 ha of primary multiplication fields of maize Mudishi 3 variety. One ha in Musienene and one ha Kalunguta. In Tongo, CEDERU installed 0.5ha of secondary multiplication fields for maize, Mudishi and distributed 100 kg of the same variety to targeted beneficiaries. (20 kg were distributed in Tongo/Bambu and 80 kg in Kalunguta/ Beni).
		X		CEDERU set up 1.5 ha of fields to multiply healthy banana suckers (0.25 ha in Tongo and 1,25 Ha in Kibututu) 162 small banana producers in Tongo/Bambu and Kibututu received 3000 banana suckers from CEDERU Caritas disseminated 2,450 suckers to 245 households in Bwalanda, Bambu, Kibirizi and Kyaghala. CEDERU distributed 250 kg of soya seeds to 50 HHs in Tongo.
		X		3 ha of secondary multiplication of cassava plants (1ha in Tongo/Bambu and 2 ha in Kalunguta) and 2.5 ha of tertiary multiplication (1,25 Ha in Tongo/Bambu and 1,25 ha in Kalunguta) have been set up by CEDERU with the involvement of local associations.
1.1.1.2 Facilitate the establishment of seed bulking plots linked to existing schemes, research organizations and seed companies			X	Mercy Corps' activity
1.1.1.3 Conduct formative research and analyze barriers that affect men and women's adoption of improved agriculture practices of targeted farmers in project area	X			Completed
1.1.1.4 Organize the dissemination of cuttings to the smallholders householders in linear meters		X		Caritas distributed 89, 700 meters of CMD tolerant cassava cuttings to 1,794 HHs in Birambizo and Bambu. CEDERU disseminated 4, 600 meters to 92 HHS in Kalunguta and Tongo.
1.1.1.5 Train community-based technical focal points		X		15 women and 21 men from farmer groups were trained on seed multiplication and the management of crop diseases in Kalunguta while 2 women and 8 men received the same trainings in Tongo.

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1.1.1.6. Conduct farmers exchange visits in the cassava, maize/Soybean and banana plots : # participating farmers		X		<p>CEDERU organized exchange visits for 208 members of banana FFS (77 in Kalunguta and 131 in Tongo) on BXW management.</p> <p>557 producers (333 in Birambizo/ Bambu and 167 in Butembo) shared experiences on cassava cuttings seed multiplication, BXW management and home gardening with the support from Caritas.</p> <p>In June 2015, 89 farmers from Tongo participated in exchange visits with other farmers supported by Mercy Corps.</p>
1.1.1.7 Establish on-farm trials and community site demonstration for locally available crops that are resilient to local conditions in collaboration with research organizations		X		<p>Caritas conducted 4 Quality Management Protocols (3 QMPs in Birambizo and 1 QMP in Kalunguta) in healthy cassava seed multiplication fields.</p> <p>CEDERU conducted 7 QMPs in Tongo.</p> <p>CEDERU continued to monitor the 2 Participatory Variety Selection (PVS) on cassava they installed in Tongo on October 2014.</p>
1.1.1.8 Train male and female farmers on the use of new varieties and crop disease and pest management techniques compatible with their farming practices		X		<p>Caritas conducted 4 QMPs (3 QMPs in Birambizo and 1 QMP in Kalunguta) in healthy cassava seed multiplication fields.</p> <p>CEDERU conducted 7 QMPs in Tongo.</p> <p>CEDERU continued to monitor the 2 PVS on cassava they installed in Tongo on October 2014.</p>
1.1.1.9 Train female care givers (SO2 beneficiaries) in small livestock, Soya Beans and vegetable production to support nutritional needs and income diversification among SO2 and the most vulnerable participant households			X	Planned to start in July 2015.
1.1.1.10 Integrate nutrition education within trainings of producers and extension services			X	Planned for Q4.
1.1.1.11 Conduct open field days and input fairs for wider dissemination of extension message and for promotion of the input supply side of the market in the target areas			X	Planned for August 2015
1.1.1.12. Develop bylaws with community stakeholders and relevant authorities to fight BXW - <b>link with SO3, BCC.</b>	X			Caritas worked with local stakeholders (farmers, local authorities, civil societies, banana sellers) in Birambizo and Bambu to develop guidelines with 8 specific rules to fight the BXW.
1.1.1.13. Organize campaign to fight BXW - <b>link with BCC, SO3.</b>	X			From May 29 to June 6, 2015, Caritas launched the campaign to sensitize communities against BXW in 16 sites of Birambizo / Bambu.

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1.1.2.1 Conduct training of trainers for Government extension officers on sustainable control of Banana Xanthomonas Wilt (BXW) and Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD)	X			Caritas trained 25 agronomists from the Bwito chefferie on their role in the fight against BXW on June 2015. 19 local authorities and community leaders in Tongo were trained by CEDERU on seed multiplication and on crop diseases management.
1.1.2.2 Test new disease resistant varieties using trial systems under output 1.1.1 guided by participatory variety selection practices.		X		Caritas continued to monitor the 6 PVS in Birambizo (4 trials), Musienene (1 trial) and Kalunguta (1 trial).
1.1.2.3 Train male and female farmers using the Farmer Field School Approach on Integrated Pest Management (IPM), the use of bio-pesticides and traditional disease and pest management practices		X		Caritas and CEDERU continued to support existing FFS.
1.1.2.4 Train male and female farmers, based on Farmer Field School Approach and using local technical focal points, on Conservation Agriculture practices				8 PVS in the SIMAMA zone Birambizo (4 trials), Musienene (1 trial) and Kalunguta (1 trial) with Caritas and 2 PVS with CEDERU in Tongo.
<b>IR 1.2 Male and female smallholder farmers and other targeted value chain actors improve their practices along the selected value chains</b>				
1.2.1.1 Conduct a detailed value chain analysis and market research for selected commodities (crops and animal)	X			Mercy Corps' activity
1.2.1.2 Sensitize producers on new opportunities using profitability (Gross Margin) analyses.		X		After sensitization, 4 cassava farmer associations in Birambizo joined the CIG to begin the commercialization process for cassava.
1.2.1.3 Train producer groups, SO2 beneficiary households, and other selected market actors on improved post-harvest preparation and handling, storage and value-adding processes (including sorting, cleaning, chipping and drying) to maintain nutrient content and respond to market demand as identified in 1.2.1.1.			X	Planned for Q4.

1.2.1.4 Select and structure local associations to form gender equitable Producer Groups (PGs) and strengthen their governance			X	The project has changed the approach from a dedicated approach to advocate for better gender equity to one that relies more on the project-wide gender training. Therefore, we will not structure the associations to form gender equitable entity, we are training them on gender sensitivity and they will reorganize themselves later.
1.2.2.2 Provide training opportunities to selected producer groups and VSLAs in improved business capacity (including financial skills) and governance (linkage to SO3)			X	86 new SILC groups have been set up and received financial and group management skills.
<b>IR 1.3 Male and female smallholder farmers and other targeted value chain actors create an enabling business environment</b>				
1.3.1.1 Support Local Development Committees (LDCs) to identify priority infrastructure projects			X	Mercy Corps' activity
1.3.1.2 Support the LDCs to implement sustainable priority and market-access supporting infrastructure actions through Food for Assets activities			X	Mercy Corps' activity
1.3..1 Develop a sustainable market information systems based on results of feasibility study			X	Mercy Corps' activity
1.3.3.1 Facilitate the formation and development of Village Savings and Lending Groups (VSLA)			X	The 17 Caritas SILC field agents (future Private Service Provider or PSP) continued to support the existing 86 SILC groups and created 75 new ones in Birambizo/ Bambu. CEDERU's 5 SILC field agents created 11 new SILC groups in Tongo during the quarter. The SILC Field Agents has received the second set of training to become PSP. The last set is planned on August after which they will be certified.
1.3.3.2. Facilitate the establishment of private services providers for VSLA sustainability			X	Planned for August 2015.

Description of Activities	Achievement			Quantitative and Qualitative
	Achieved	On-Going	No	Description
<b>SO1: Smallholder farming households in target areas have increased and diversified production and profit</b>				
<b>IR 1.1: Smallholder farming households adopt integrated and sustainable farming practices</b>				
1.1.1.1 Establish demonstration fields and test sites for seed multiplication.	X			192 FFS set up by Mercy Corps in Birambizo with an average area of 1 ha and 120 FFs in Butembo with an average area of 1.17 ha are cultivating red and white onion, carrots, tomatoes, cabbages and pumpkins. 14.5 ha of fortified bean multiplication fields under cultivation (4.17 ha in Masereka and Musienene Health zones for ten producers and 10.33ha in Birambizo pour ten producer/multipliers). 3.66 ha of seed multiplication fields for potatos are under cultivation for six producers in Masereka Health zone.
1.1.1.2 Facilitate the establishment of seed bulking plots linked to existing schemes, research organizations and seed companies		X		SENASEM inspected the 26 seed multiplication fields and certified 21. Certified fields will receive their official certification during the July harvest Mercy Corps initiated a collaboration between the program and CAPSA, a governemtal entity specialized in the production of potatos
1.1.3 Conduct formative research and analyze barriers that affect men and women's adoption of improved agriculture practices of targeted farmers in project area	X			Completed
1.1.1.4 Create or modify training material to address identified barriers to adoption of improved agricultural practices			X	Planned for the next quarter
1.1.1.5 Train community-based technical focal points	X			67 AVA (19 in Butembo et 48 in Katwé) received a 2-day training with a focus given on cultural techniques and production of bio pesticides. The training reached 14 women and 53 men
1.1.1.6 Establish on-farm trials and community site demonstration for locally available crops that are resilient to local conditions in collaboration with research organizations			X	SIMAMA will proceed to the purchase of soy seeds during the next quarter
1.1.1.7 Train male and female farmers on the use of new varieties and crop, disease and pest management techniques	X			5,904 producers (3,264 in Birambizo and 2,640 in Butembo) received training on land selection, seedlings planting, how to prepare a nursery, planting techniques, watering, crops rotation and association

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compatible with their farming practices				
1.1.1.8 Train female care givers (SO2 beneficiaries) in small livestock, Soya Beans and vegetable production to support nutritional needs and income diversification among SO2 and the most vulnerable participant households			X	An MOU was signed in July between Mercy Corps and VSF/Belgique (Vétérinaire sans frontières) for the provision of rabbits to SO2 beneficiaries in Butembo. The MOU includes as well the transfer of technical capacities to the beneficiaries and training of community vets. Guinea pigs breeders were as well indentified in Birambizo. Mercy Corps will proceed with the purchase during the next quarter.
1.1.1.9 Integrate nutrition education within trainings of producers and extension services			X	To implement with SO2
1.1.1.10 Conduct open field days and input fairs for wider dissemination of extension message and for promotion of the input supply side of the market in the target areas			X	1,723 producers participated in exchange visits among farmers within the FFS in Birambizo (1097 women and 626 men) An agricultural seeds fair is planned for the next quarter
1.1.2.1 Conduct training of trainers for government extension officers on sustainable control of Banana Xanthomonas Wilt (BXW) and Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD)				CRS activity
1.1.2.2 Test new disease resistant varieties using trial systems under output 1.1.1 guided by participatory variety selection practices.				CRS activity
1.1.2.3 Train male and female farmers using the Farmer Field School Approach on Integrated Pest Management (IPM), the use of bio-pesticides and traditional disease and pest management practices	X			68 AVA (48 in Birambizo and 20 in Butembo) and 6 CARG agents provided training to 5,904 producers on liquid compost preparation and soils conservation techniques
1.1.2.4 Train male and female farmers, based on Farmer Field School Approach and using local technical focal points, on Conservation Agriculture practices	X			24 seed producers/multipliers received training on production techniques, post harvet handling for bean onion and potato

<b>IR 1.2 Male and female smallholder farmers and other targeted value chain actors improve their practices along the selected value chains</b>				
1.2.1.1 Conduct a detailed value chain analysis and market research for selected commodities (crops and animal)	X			Completed
1.2.1.2 Sensitize producers on new opportunities using profitability (Gross Margin) analyses.		X		Mercy Corps sensitized 5,382 producers (2400 in Butembo and 2,982 in Birambizo) on outcome opportunities for the bean, onion and potato selected value chain. The purpose of the sensitization was to reach farmers within the FFS to orient them toward the CIGs
1.2.1.3 Train producer groups, SO2 beneficiary households, and other selected market actors on improved post-harvest preparation and handling, storage and value-adding processes (including sorting, cleaning, chipping and drying) to maintain nutrient content and respond to market demand as identified in 1.2.1.1.		X		Mercy Corps developed a training modul on the post harvest handling of crops selected for the value chains. Seven SO1 staff received training in Butembo in order to cascade the training to CIG members. The training focuses on: harvest, drying, conservation and storage of beans, onions and potato. 300 Pics bags will be made available for the storage of beans during the next quarter.
1.2.1.4 Select and structure local associations to form gender equitable Producer Groups (PGs) and strengthen their governance	X			Mercy Corps conducted a gender research at FFS level, which assisted for the creation of gender sensitive CIGs 63 CIG have been created (29 in Butembo and 34 in Birambizo) during the quarter to commercialize the production of beans, potatoes and onions.
1.2.2.2 Provide training opportunities to selected producer groups and VSLAs in improved business capacity (including financial skills) and governance (linkage to SO3)		X		During the period, the program developed a training module on good governance to assist structuring CIGs and promoting the right leadership attitude 22 potential buyers for potatoes, beans and onions were identified (11 in Butembo and 11 in Rustshuru); they will visit the productions areas during July and prepare a purchase plan. A value chain training was organized for CARG members of Beni, Lubero, Rutshuru, Walikale, Masisi et Nyiragongo ainsides des villes de Beni, Butembo et Goma to explain them the commercialization networks of the agriculture productions in North Kivu.
<b>IR 1.3 Male and female smallholder farmers and other targeted value chain actors create an enabling business environment</b>				
1.3.1.1 Support Local Development Committees (LDCs) to identify priority		X		In Birambizo Mercy Corps identified eight new feeder road rehabilitation projects in coordination with the LDCs and communities

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infrastructure projects				
1.3.1.2 Support the LDCs to implement sustainable priority and market-access supporting infrastructure actions through Food for Assets activities		X		21 feeder roads were completed and certified by the DVDA during the quarter. The SO3 team is working closely with the Congolese authorities for the technical acceptance of the twelve remaining road infrastructures
1.3.2.1 Develop a sustainable market information systems based on results of feasibility study		X		CARG members of Beni, Lubero et Rutshuru committed to play an active role in the implementation of a price information system for the agriculture production. During the next quarter SIMAMA will avail panels that will be erected at the local market places. Farmers will be able to consult accurate price and better negotiate their sales
1.3.3.1 Facilitate the formation and development of Village Savings and Lending Groups (VSLA)		X		In Butembo, 120 VSLA groups were trained on module 7 "election, independence and sharing of dividends". the training benefited 2,826 participants among which, 2,236 females. 2,826 members among which, 2,236 females and 590 males from 96 VSLA groups received training on entrepreneurship.
1.3.3.2. Facilitate the establishment of private services providers for VSLA sustainability			X	The Agents villageois received the program's attention to initiate support to newly created VSLA groups. It is expected that if an AV assists 25 VSLA groups and sell his services he can sustainably his activity .

Description of Activities	Achievement			Quantitative and Qualitative Description
	Achieved	On-going	No	
<b>SO2 Improved nutritional status among pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 in target areas</b>				
<b>IR 2.1: Pregnant and lactating women and caregivers of children under 5 increase their utilization of counseling and health services in accordance with GODRC standards.</b>				
<b>Output 2.1.1.: Trained and equipped health providers deliver quality IMCI, pre- and post-natal services, and counseling on ENAs and hygiene</b>				
2.1.1.1 Train health care providers and community volunteers in health and nutrition.		X		37 health agents (9 for Butembo and 28 for Birambizo) trained on IMCI, ENA, PNV, and BCC techniques.
2.1.1.2 Conduct refresher trainings for health care providers and community volunteers in health and nutrition.	X			899 ML/PL and RECOs refreshed on C-IMCI, IYCF/ENA, EHA. Among them 370 Reco (80 for Butembo and 290 Birambizo / Bambo) and 529 ML/PL (449 Birambizo and 80 Butembo)
2.1.1.3 Conduct joint supervision and quality monitoring visits with the government to health centers in project area.	X			12 joint supervision visits conducted with ECZ and PRONANUT/DS in the 4ZS (1 visit/ ZS/months).
2.1.1.4 Advocate to key stakeholders and project catchment areas to ensure adequate provision of medication and supplies	X			CRS participated in the 3 Nutrition Cluster meetings in which participants discussed priorities, alerts, gaps and also MYAP progress.
<b>Output 2.1.2.: Pregnant and lactating women and caregivers of children under 5 improve knowledge, awareness, and perceptions of appropriate care-seeking behavior.</b>				
2.1.2.1 Conduct formative research and analyze barriers that affect timely care seeking behaviors of population in project area.	X			2 focus group discussion (FGD) on CPN4 conducted on April and May in Bulindi and Birundule. 28 Mama Leaders and Papa Leaders were therefore trained on communication and negotiation techniques to promote adoption of positive practices and CPN4 attendance.
2.1.2.2 Create or modify campaign materials to address identified barriers to timely care seeking behaviors			X	The Swahili version for CPN messages as well as 800 posters on CPN4 will be produced in July 2015
2.1.2.3 Implement SBCC campaign focusing on key messages on timely access and utilization of services, targeting men and women strategically.	X			MLs set up a detailed plan for targeted HH visits and conducted intensive campaign on key family practices using the 6 local radio stations and HCs.
<b>Output 2.1.3.: Improved timely detection of moderate acute malnutrition among children under 5.</b>				

2.1.3.1 Provide tools and follow-up training to community volunteers monitoring of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM)	X			RECOs diagnosed and referred to HCs 9,860 cases of moderate malnutrition (501 of them were admitted into the “programme de prise en charge” in Birambizo / Bambu HZs.
2.1.3.2 Establish accountability mechanisms for households to ensure government implementation of CMAM services	X			5 Health Centers (HC) in Bambu are supported by Johanniter to run the PCIMA (prise en charge intégrée de la malnutrition aigüe). 4 HC in Birambizo supported by SCF and Caritas Goma. Most of the malnourished children are referred there.
2.1.3.3 Monitor the quality of community volunteers and government’s growth monitoring activities among children under 5			X	Growth monitoring data is collected by Health Zones per semester. Therefore, we need to wait for the figures to be available by end of July 2015.
2.1.3.4 Advocate to key stakeholders in project catchment area to ensure adequate coverage of CMAM services	X			SIMAMA reported during the Nutrition Cluster Meetings the gaps and alerts in the targeted zone. Owing to that, SCI started to train health agents working in 4 Health Areas on PCIMA and Integrated PSV (Kikuku, Bwalanda, Singa, and Kyaghala).
<b>IR2.2: Pregnant and lactating women and caregivers of children under 5 adopt key preventive nutrition and health behaviors.</b>				
<b>Output 2.2.1.: Pregnant and lactating women and caregivers of children under 5 improve knowledge of GoDRC and locally-appropriate preventive practices for select maternal and child illnesses</b>				
2.2.1.1 Produce and promote use of fuel-efficient cooking stoves to reduce indoor air pollution contributing to Acute Respiratory Infections.			X	After further consideration, SIMAMA will forgo this activity to focus more on hygiene behaviors and preventative health practices.
2.2.1.2 Train communities in the construction and usage of low-cost appropriate household tools (such as tippy taps or drying racks for dishes) to reduce the risk of hygiene related diseases and contaminants	X			SIMAMA field team conducted demonstrations on hand-washing and set up of tippy taps in 3 sites (Bwalanda, Kibirizi Bambu). Additional 122 HHs have now installed tippy taps at home.
2.2.1.3 Train community volunteers in essential health and hygiene behaviours to encourage the uptake of positive health behaviours.			X	449 ML/PL received refresher trainings on EHA and setting up tippy taps.
2.2.1.4 RECOs promote the GoDRC’s key family health practices in the community	X			RECOs conducted 3,568 HHV in the 33 Health Areas of SIMAMA to promote EBF and key family health practices.
<b>Output 2.2.2 : Pregnant and lactating women and caregivers of children under 5 improve knowledge of Essential Nutrition Actions</b>				
2.2.2.1 Conduct formative research			X	Planned for August 2015.

and analyze barriers that affect the uptake of key ENAs of population in project area				
2.2.2.2 Develop a SBCC campaign based on the results of the formative research			X	Waiting for the barrier analysis to be completed.
2.2.2.3 Develop IEC materials for adoption of Essential Nutrition Actions			X	After barrier analysis.
2.2.2.4 Recruit a network of committed Mother Leaders to support the target population in adopting positive nutrition behaviours	X			For the ML/PLs who left the program for various reasons, SIMAMA recruited 36 new ML and 44 PL to replace them.
2.2.2.5 Train Mother Leaders in Essential Nutrition Actions to encourage the uptake of positive nutrition behaviours	X			529 ML and 75PL were refreshed on ENA/ IYCF and EHA.
2.2.2.6 Form Mother Support Groups using a network of Mother Leaders to reinforce positive infant and young child feeding practices through group education			X	136 neighborhood groups set up.
2.2.2.7 Mother Leaders carry out targeted home visits using IEC support materials	X			ML/PLs conducted 12,011 HHVs during the period to support targeted families on health and nutrition education.
2.2.2.8 Pilot Father Leader and Father Support Groups to increase integration of men into family health and nutrition issues			X	Among 80 newly recruited community health volunteers, 44 of them were PLs and 36 MLs.
<b>IR 2.3 Pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 consume a diet in accordance with national GODRC guidelines.</b>				
<b>Output 2.3.1.: USAID Title II PM2A rations distributed by the project are appropriately consumed by eligible pregnant and lactating women and children 6-23 months.</b>				
2.3.1.1 Distribution of PM2A ration commodities to eligible women and children	X			3 distributions conducted using iPads in 26 out of 27 sites .
2.3.1.2 Monitor exclusive consumption of PM2A ration among eligible participants through post-monitoring distribution surveys	X			3 PDMs conducted on April, May and June.
2.3.1.3 Conduct formative research to identify barriers and enablers to consumption of PM2A ration among eligible participants.	X			5 focus groups discussions performed during the quarter in the following sites: Tongo, Rusekera. Kamena, Kikuku et Kibingu.

2.3.1.4 Develop and disseminate key messages to ensure participants understand the importance of consumption of PM2A ration exclusively by PLW and children 6-23 months	X			SIMAMA implemented 3 campaigns related to the PM2A program, with a communication plan for before, during and after distribution. The team used 6 local radio stations, 29 town criers, and the ML/PL.
<b>Output 2.3.2.: Pregnant and lactating women and caregivers of children under 5 access adequate, locally produced micronutrient-rich foods.</b>				
2.3.2.1 Community volunteers support household gardening to produce micronutrient-rich vegetables, legumes and grains through subsidies for seeds to PM2A participants, prioritizing households with undernourished children. (Link to 1.1.1.7)		X		SIMAMA set up 6 nurseries where PM2A beneficiaries came to learn how to set up vegetable gardening. They will then receive seedlings from the nurseries and plant them in their own home garden from July 2015.
2.3.2.2. Support rabbit and guinea pig breeding among women in households with pregnant and lactating women and children under five. (Link to 1.1.1.7)		X		Beneficiaries and suppliers are identified. Purchase and distributions are planned from July 15, 2015.
2.3.2.3 Develop and disseminate key messages on the process of transforming locally produced corn and soy beans into “home-made” corn-soy blend		X		The nutrition team has started promoting the use of local maize and soya flours during cooking demonstrations. Key messages related to them were disseminated according to a specific communication plan.
<b>Output 2.3.3.: Pregnant and lactating women and caregivers of children under 5 know how to prepare micronutrient-rich foods.</b>				
2.3.3.1 Collect and promote locally appropriate recipes that meet the nutritional needs of pregnant and lactating women and young children	X			The team promoted 3 recipes during the quarter : -Porridge with 2 cereals + 1 pulse and palm oil (maize, sorghum and soya). - Porridge with 1 cereal +1 pulse (maize and soya) and palm oil. - Balanced diet using local food (cereal, pulses, vegetables, tubers, roots and palm oil)
2.3.3.2 Culinary demonstrations carried out by Mother Leaders to promote healthy foods for children 6-59 months, including “home-made” corn soy blend porridge made with commodities as well as locally grown maize and soy	X			1,362 cooking demonstration sessions using local foods conducted in Birambizo and Butembo.

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2.3.3.3 Culinary demonstrations carried out with producer organizations to promote household consumption of diverse micronutrient-rich foods			X	Planned for July 2015
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Description of Activities	Achievement			Quantitative and Qualitative Description
	Achieved	On-going	No	
<b>SO3 - Strengthened community governance of food security in target areas</b>				
<b>IR 3.1: Local Leaders, Local Development Committees, civil society, and government service providers collaborate to maintain accountability and transparency in regards to community food security concerns</b>				
3.1.1.1 Reconstitute the Local Development Committees (LDCs) in line with Decentralization Laws	X			Completed
3.1.1.2 Train LDCs on decentralization and elaboration of Local Development Plans and inclusion of gender and vulnerable populations when prioritizing and designing projects.		X		In collaboration with Ministry of Decentralization, SIMAMA organized a training session for local authorities, LDCs and Civil Society in Rutshuru on Decentralization, Elaboration of Local development Plans : 49 participants trained.
3.1.1.3 Support LDCs and other community structures in the development of local development plans (focused on sustainability of SO1 and SO2 priorities and on reduction risks to food security of natural or man-made disasters).	X			Completed
3.1.1.4 Support LDCs to implement and monitor FFA projects in accordance with the plans identified		X		Six news maintenance committees established in Birambizo (4 in Kikuku, and 2 in Bambou) and received technical training on Road standard. In total, 60 Committee members trained.  47 LDCs members (Kishishe, Kilama, Bambo and Bugina) trained on organizational management and Good governance to ensure effective monitoring and implementation of local community projects.
3.1.1.5 Support the LDCs to hold tenders for association projects that address the food security action plans (which should address sustainability of SO1 and SO2 priorities) and/or the needs of women and youth or other vulnerable groups		X		There was a delay in the selection of 15 new FFA projects. 8 projects were identified and approved; 7 projects proposed by the communities were rejected by SO3 for environmental considerations during the IEE review. The selection process of local associations with the LDCs will be done after the environmental assessment to be completed by end of July 2015.

3.1.1.6 Provide training and resources to implement micro-projects to associations that are selected through a clear and transparent LDC tendering process			X	Planned after selection process of local associations
3.1.1.7 Train beneficiary associations on gender approach for inclusive participation and increased female leadership		X		3 training sessions organized on “Gender approach - Leadership and Self-confidence” for Female Associations, VSLA group, CDC members in Rutshuru and Masereka (Butembo). In total, 136 participants trained (89F and 47 M )
3.1.2.1 Support LDCs and local chiefs to establish processes for posting public notices		X		In Birambizo, SO3 continue to sensitize and support the participation of LCDs on monitoring of the implementation of FFW activities, on selecting, validating and publishing systematically to the public the lists of FFA beneficiaries to ensure equity and transparency at community level.
3.1.2.2 Promote Social accountability through Community Score Cards related FFA implementation			X	According the DIP revised, the priority of SIMAMA concerning the local accountability on FFA projects will focus on Post Distribution Monitoring.
3.1.3.1 Conduct training for the local counterparts of the CARG on the management of land conflict		X		Two training sessions on land conflict resolution held in Bwalanda and Kabizo (Birambizo), 70 CARG members and local structures operating on land conflict management.
3.1.3.2 Organize a series of dialogues with male and female community leaders and stakeholders on local strategies aimed at improving access to land		X		Two workshops focused on land conflict mapping and identification of land disputes were completed in Maboya and Musienene (Butembo).
3.1.3.3 Conduct a review of the types of land conflicts and the frequency and consequences that emerge over the course of a year and hold a meeting with the chefferie CARG and chefferie authorities to develop an action plan		X		A draft report on types of conflicts and mapping of land disputes developed with communities in Butembo.
3.1.4.1 Support the constitution of Local DRR and EWS-R sub-committees within the LDCs		X		Three new EWS- R sub committees established in the localities of Butalongola, Katsuba and Bushuli (Birambizo).
3.1.4.2 Organize cascade trainings on disaster risk reduction and EWS-R		X		Two training sessions on DRR and EWS-R conducted during this period for DRR Committees, CDCs, and local authorities In total, <b>88</b> participants

				trained (53 in Birambizo and 35 in Butembo)
3.1.4.3 Organize workshop to help community develop DRR and EWS-R plans for responding to food security shocks		X		Six workshops were conducted to help community on developing DRR plans for 5 localities in Birambizo (Kabanda, Kibirizi, Byanderema, Butare, Kishishe) and in Lukanga, Butembo
3.1.4.4 Establish mechanism and procedures for identifying a way to review the effects of the shock and the preparedness of communities to identify future mitigation measures			X	NA for this period
<b>IR3.2: Communities reinforce linkages with territory and provincial food security structures</b>				
3.2.1.1 Conduct needs identification and capacity assessment of CARGs	X			Completed
3.2.1.2 Support CARGs at community level on development of action plan	X			Completed
3.2.1.3 Provide CARGs with processes and skills required for advocacy/lobbying and conflict resolution		X		NA for this period
3.2.2.1 Provide small grants for CARGs' information sharing activities at Provincial and local level			X	No small grants will be allowed for CARG. The CARGs activities (training, workshop, monitoring visit) are funded and managed directly by Mercy Corps.
3.2.2.2 Sensitize communities regarding the role and responsibilities of CARGs		X		11 community sensitization workshop regarding the roles and missions of CARGs (land tenure, organizational and management support for Small Producers associations, value chain actions) were conducted by CARG Bwito and Baswagha with the support of provincial CARG.
3.2.2.3 Sponsor CARG visits to constituent communities and other initiatives aimed at planning and information-sharing		X		Two monitoring visits conducted by the Coordinator of Provincial CARG with the support of SIMAMA in Birambizo and Butembo. The objective of these visits was to monitor the implementation of action plans of CARG Bwito, Rwenzori and Baswagha and to share information regarding the advocacy campaign and actions conducted by locally CARG.

<p>3.2.3.1 Organize CARG quarterly workshops aimed at fostering links between territory and provincial stakeholders and discuss on food security concerns</p>		<p>X</p>		<p>Quarterly workshop for CARG was organized in Butembo on June 15, conducted by Provincial CARG: <b>31</b> participants attended. CARG members benefited during this workshop capacity reinforcement on the value chain and commercialization.</p>
<p>3.2.3.2 Support the wide dissemination of provincial agriculture development strategies</p>		<p>X</p>		<p>During the monitoring and Awareness campaign visit conducted by Provincial CARG in 11 localities of Birambizo and Butembo, the provincial strategies for agriculture was shared to 600 small farmers associations, civil society and local authorities' representatives.</p>
<p>3.2.3.3 Support joint monitoring of market trends and its implications on food security</p>		<p>X</p>		<p>For CARG Bwito, a meeting focusing on commercialization, market and price monitoring between the CARG, CLD and small farmers groups was organized.</p>
<p>3.2.3.4 Hold a final meeting with the CARGs to review the systems in place and the challenges to identify realistic priorities and appropriate mechanisms for CARGs to function at community and at chefferie and territory level</p>			<p>X</p>	<p>Planned for IY5</p>



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## SUCCESS STORY

### **Mama Leaders: Helping women raise healthy children**

SIMAMA is an integrated, multi-sectoral program aiming at reducing food insecurity in Eastern DRC. One of these sectors is the reduction of chronic malnutrition among children under 5.



Picture 1: Mrs Jeanne shares information during a meeting on breastfeeding techniques and benefits.

For Mrs. Jeanne Nyirambibi attributes her young daughter's good health to the SIMAMA project. When asked how the project benefited her family, she could not help but joyfully share the story of giving birth to the latest of her seven children. *"I had not previously given birth to any of my children in a health center, let alone the health center right next to my home. Because of SIMAMA's nutritionists, I learned this was a good practice and gave birth to my most recent child here (at the health center)."*

Jeanne recently became a *Mama Leader* (ML). Because of her credibility and background as a good community member, other women look up and listen to her. As a ML, her job is to positively influence opinions of women. She encourages them to adopt practices essential to

the good health and nutrition of themselves, newborns and children under five years of age.

When asked about the changes influenced by SIMAMA in her village, Jeanne notes social mobilization and the willingness of mothers to pay attention to her positive health messages. *"They trust me, and through me they now understood the importance of childbirth in health facility."*

Most community members remember their young children suffering from multiple health problems before the SIMAMA project commenced in 2011. *"Before, nearly all my children were malnourished and had diarrhea"* expressed one session attendant. *"Our salvation is USAID"* she adds.

*"Before SIMAMA, we were giving water to children a few minutes after birth thinking it could prevent hunger. Before... almost all my children were underweight,"* adds another woman. *"Exclusive breastfeeding was not a regular practice during the first six months, but now, it is becoming more and more normal as we understand the benefits."* Esperance Musababera, head of the ML, spreads the message that mothers who are reluctant to adopt this change expose their newborns to severe diarrhea and other child related illnesses.

Statistically, those who attended four antenatal visits have gone from 37.6% in 2012 to 65% in 2014. The average birth weight for babies delivered at project health centers is significantly above a healthy threshold at 7.7 lbs.

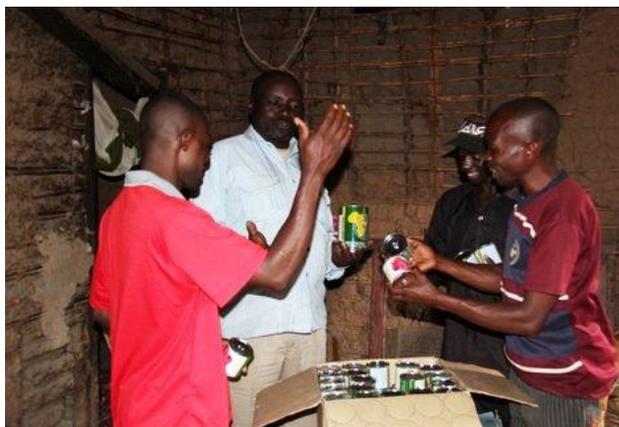
The Resources to Improve Food Security in Eastern DRC (RISE or SIMAMA) project, implemented by a consortium led by Mercy Corps, is a five year USAID/ Office of Food for Peace-funded multi-year assistance program (MYAP) with an overall program goal to reduce food insecurity among vulnerable populations in North Kivu. Mercy Corps' principal international partner is Catholic Relief Services (CRS) with its implementing partners, Caritas and CEDERU.



## SUCCESS STORY

### Sustainable onion production with Daniel Musubaho Kulu “Musu” in Kirima

SIMAMA is an integrated, multi-sectoral program aiming to reduce food insecurity in Eastern DRC. One of these sectors is increasing and diversifying both production and profit for small holder farmers.



Picture 2: Musu validating onion seeds with his partners.

Daniel Musubaho Kulu is known in his village as “Musu”. This community agent (AVA) is happy to see a longtime dream coming true. On a Friday in February 2015, he walked around his Kirima village telling people onion seeds had finally arrived. As a teenager, he had the desire to grow onions. He was inspired by a church elder’s success with the crop. Onions are a rare commodity in the village, and the elder was the first known person to grow them. This man was able to sell his onions both locally and in Goma, establishing a stable source of income for his family.

Onion crops are rare in the Kirima area because most farmers (erroneously) believe their land is

not fit for the crop. Therefore, they are scarce and expensive in village markets. In the past, people had to go to Kirumba, Rubare and Goma to buy them.

Since February 2015, SIMAMA’s agronomists have facilitated the introduction of onions in Kirima. Today, the harvest is bountiful and Musu is happy with his advocacy. *“In the beginning, the project promoted only the cultivation of beans, but I suggested onions in order to make more money. In addition to crops for household consumption, it is good to have money making crops.”*

Participants agreed that the onion production project was successful. Initial participants want to continue. In addition several new individuals are interested in this or similar projects. Despite multiple sellers entering the market, demand is still high.

Musu anticipated potential conflict among community members if every individual did not have an equal opportunity to participate. He took the lead in ensuring equitable seed distribution; a step he says helped reduce jealousy and theft.

As the project moves forward, new onion farmers are considering future challenges and thinking about solutions. For example, it is not easy to get high quality onion seeds locally. With the continued support and integration of the project with the work of SIMAMA’s agriculture experts, it will be possible to both obtain more seeds and for new farmers to learn how to produce some onions only for their seeds.



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## SUCCESS STORY

### HOVINA: Preserving social harmony in Bambo

SIMAMA is an integrated, multi-sectoral program aiming to reduce food insecurity in Eastern DRC. One of these sectors is ensuring that farmers access land to produce food.



Picture 3: HOVINA's executive members

The Hommes Visionnaires pour la Nature (HOVINA) Club in Bambo is a bastion for peaceful resolution of land conflicts.

On a Thursday afternoon in July, an elderly widow looked hopeful with her eyes pointed toward the members of HOVINA in a meeting. In the back of her mind was the land boundary dispute she was having with her neighbor. "I was up all night because of this issue. None of my children wanted to get involved. HOVINA, was my last resort" she explained in a broken voice. This is the usual mood at HOVINA's office every Monday and Thursday.

The group is quite busy dealing with the ever-growing land conflicts in the area. In the past, land was acquired through donation, legacy or

trade (often chickens, goats or jerry cans of local beer). Contracts were verbal. There were no official marked or recorded boundaries. Owners did not have land titles.

This system has caused numerous conflicts since the late 1990s. Land boundaries and ownership were at the heart of most disputes. These rifts lead to quarrels, altercations, and even deaths. HOVINA operated during this time; Club Secretary Roger Kandukula recalls, "Many conflicts exceeded our capacity. We just ran out of ideas for resolving conflicts of opposing parties".

In June 2015, HOVINA members were trained on alternative land conflict management and mediation mechanisms facilitated by SIMAMA's good governance agents. Topics included types of conflict, importance of land, typology and types of people, and conflict resolution procedures.

Now, after listening to each party, HOVINA staff carefully analyzes the problem at hand, then calls upon experts (traditional chiefs, elders, and teachers) to inform their decision. According to an Itongo resident who clashed with his brother over land inheritance, the process is working.

*"My brother and I would have killed one another had it not been for HOVINA's work!"*

HOVINA club leader, Patient Tuyisenge, says "in the past, mitigations were full of error and confusion. We were focusing on the conflict rather than the heart of the issue. Following SIMAMA's training, we learned about our potential in the conflict mitigation process. The effect can be seen right down to the way our staff is working with each other".

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## SUCCESS STORY

### SIMAMA's Food For Assets (FFA): Bringing access to remote areas

SIMAMA aspires to improve the living conditions of 60,000 vulnerable households living in the region of North Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In a post-conflict environment where the state is in disarray, the capacity of rural communities to independently take charge of creating the services they need is an imperative



Picture 4: Food for Work workers in the maintenance of the feeder road linking Mulimbi and Rusekera villages.

Every Tuesday and Friday, the Mulimbi-Rusekera feeder road is crowded with local workers, most of them women. *"We let our husbands deal with the sale of agricultural products before joining us in the maintenance work for this feeder road. An access route that allows trucks to carry our crops to the market directly from the fields,"* says Masika Muhemeri, wife of the local Chief.

This is one the grassroots initiative supported by SIMAMA. *"This USAID-funded project has helped reopen agricultural roads so our villages didn't vanish from the map! Now that our contract with Mercy Corps is coming to an end, we have decided to continue this and other infrastructure projects that benefit the entire community"* says Mrs Ngoma Kasongo, Leader of one of the maintenance teams.

Safari Bandoraho is happily surprised to see Mercy Corps' vehicles on the road. *"Thanks to SIMAMA, we understand that we cannot expect everything from the national government. We know that we, as a community, can help end the isolation of our village and easily sell our crops."*

The reopening and maintenance of feeder roads such as the one linking the villages of Mulimbi and Rusekera has brought not only new financial opportunities, but also literally saved lives. *"Kitwayovu villagers have been physically isolated for years. As they were far away from a health center, sick people were often transported on people's backs,"* one worker explained. *"One day, late in the night, I suddenly got sick and could not walk. Because the road was in good shape, I phoned a moto-taxi driver. He took me directly to Mulimbi hospital, located more than 6km from my home."* Just one year ago, motorcycles and vehicles in the area could not reach villages. But now, with USAID funding for rehabilitation of this feeder road, pregnant women in labor can reach the hospital in a record time.

This is just one example of many Mercy Corps' Food for Assets (FFA) projects that allow communities to empower themselves using better access to markets and health centers. The process starts with the communities identifying priority needs, and then submitting it to the FFA Governance Group at the community level. This committee then takes the lead in assigning work. In return for their labor, participants receive rations from SIMAMA to help them meet family needs while contributing to projects that provide community assets for lasting agricultural productivity, market access and income generation.

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