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**ANNUAL RESULTS REPORT**

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Awardee Contact Name	Precious Mubanga, Program Management Officer
Awardee Contact Address	300 I Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002
Awardee Contact Telephone Number	(202) 572 6594
Awardee Contact Email Address	<a href="mailto:pmubanga@worldvision.org">pmubanga@worldvision.org</a>
Host Country Office Contact Name	Richard Ndou
Host Country Office Contact Telephone Number	+263 782 040 332
Host Country Office Contact Email Address	<a href="mailto:richard_ndou@wvi.org">richard_ndou@wvi.org</a>

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABBS	Annual Beneficiary Based Survey
CG	Care Groups
CGLs	Care Group Leaders
CU2	Children Under 2 Years
DMCs	Disaster Management Committees
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
ENSURE:	Enhancing Nutrition, Stepping Up Resilience and Enterprise
FDP	Food Distribution Point
FFA	Food for Assets
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
IR	Intermediate Results
LSA	Lean Season Assistance
MFs	Market Facilitators
MSD	Meteorological Services Department
PHHS	Post-Harvest Handling and Storage
PMG	Producer and Marketing Group
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SFP	Supplementary Feeding Program
ToC	Theory of Change
VHW	Village Health Workers
VS&L	Village Savings and Loans/Lending
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WV	World Vision
ZIMVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee

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## A. ARR NARRATIVE

### i. Interventions and Results

#### Introduction

The Enhancing Nutrition Stepping up Resilience and Enterprise (ENSURE) program is a USAID Food for Peace Title II Development Food Security Activity (DFSA) that began in June 2013 and will end in June 2018. The program is being implemented by a consortium of 4 organizations, World Vision Zimbabwe (WVZ), CARE, SNV, SAFIRE and ICRISAT as a service provider. The program is working to empower and capacitate 58,465 vulnerable rural households in 6 districts of Manicaland and Masvingo Provinces of Zimbabwe. Specifically, the program has three key strategic objectives; 1. To improve nutrition among women of reproductive age and children under the age of five, 2. To increase household income via improved agricultural production and marketing, and 3. To increase resilience to food insecurity of communities via improved disaster risk reduction and natural resource management with gender equity and women's empowerment and environmental stewardship as cross cutting themes. This annual report will provide details of program outcomes and process achievements in the period October 2016 to September 2017.

During the first quarter of FY17, the program focused on alleviating severe hunger as a result of the El Nino induced drought as well as preparations for the agricultural season. The food security situation was severe at the peak hunger period witnessed (November 2016 - March 2017). The ENSURE program responded with an emergency food provision Lean Season Assistance program (LSA) to address immediate food needs within the communities by distributing a protective ration to 315,775 vulnerable and food insecure people from 109 wards within the programs' same districts of operation.

The Zimbabwean economic outlook for 2017 began on a positive note, with improved performances in the mining and agriculture sectors forecasted to bring about a 2.7% growth in the economy<sup>1</sup>. The country however encountered the following macroeconomic challenges that significantly affected ENSURE program activities during the fiscal year. These include the following:

1. **Liquidity Crisis:** Shortages of cash have resulted in importers and commodity buyers buying the US dollar on the parallel market at a premium of between 20-30% using bond notes and as much as 50% for bank transfers. Farmers who accepted mobile transactions resorted to increasing prices to cover for the premium of retrieving the physical cash on the parallel market. As a result, prices of cattle increased from \$300 to \$450, goats from \$25 to \$35 and maize grain from \$3 to \$10 per bucket when using mobile money transactions. In response, the government crafted a financial inclusion strategy, introduced restrictive legislation as well as encouraged the use of mobile and plastic money, but the absence of supporting services in rural areas has hindered widespread adoption particularly in the program areas of operation.
2. **Inflation and price increases:** Zimbabwe's annual inflation for the month of June 2017 stood at 0.75% up from 0.27% in May. The increase in inflation had an impact

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank June Global Economic Prospects Report

on the gross margins of the ENSURE supported value chains as the cost of production was high for example, the sugar beans gross margin (Indicator 2.1.1). The impact on the other value chains was outweighed as a result of increased productivity but if it was a bad production year, the impact was going to be profound.

- 3. *Unavailability of credit and working capital:*** Bank lending has been limited due to government borrowing and issuance of discounted treasury bills and further worsened by limited deposits as accountholders cannot fully access their cash. This has resulted in the tightening of lending measures, a move that further excludes smallholder farmers. As a result, credit to the private sector and farmers remains limited to clients with limited risk and good credit ratings such as irrigation schemes. Consequently, only 365 ENSURE supported farmers (mostly in irrigation schemes and poultry production) could access US\$79,937.00 of loans (Indicator 2.1.3.4) constituting only 3% of farmers in the project's producer and marketing groups.

Nonetheless, the project's approaches proved relevant to the prevailing meteorological and economic situation. Communities found financial support, knowledge; risk sharing, motivation and social insurance within the program cohesive groups of praxis (producer and marketing groups, care groups, village savings and lending groups, resilience groups and men's fora). The project's focus on integration of the 3 strategic objectives benefited households towards growth as they slowly recovered from the effects of the previous droughts.

Good progress was noted during the period under review. Beneficiaries supported under SO1 demonstrated knowledge and ability to take advantage of high impact value chains and improve household consumption of nutritious foods. Both SO1 and SO3 beneficiaries expanded upon existing household adaptive capacities by integrating complimentary activities for Natural Resources and Management (NRM), Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and productive asset improvement.

Based on the 2017 ZIMVAC report, and in contrast to the food security situation in FY16, by the last quarter of FY17, a 266% increase in cereal production was recorded for 2017 as compared to 2016 nationally with Manicaland and Masvingo registering a 208% and 743% increases respectively. The ZimVAC Household Hunger Score forecasted that only 9% of households in Manicaland and 7.9% in Masvingo were likely to experience moderate to severe hunger until the end of the peak hunger period in April 2018. The quality of food consumed also slightly improved as measured by the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) which rose from 5.8 in 2016 to 6.1 in 2017 in Manicaland and from 5.4 to 5.8 in Masvingo<sup>2</sup>. Grain prices reduced from an average of \$8 per bucket to between \$5 and \$6 for maize, from \$8 to \$4 for sorghum and millet between April and August. There was however a sudden sharp increase (between 40% and 100%) in prices of basic food commodities such as cooking oil due to the cash shortages.

In conclusion, the program continued to actively collaborate with stakeholders in program activity implementation and monitoring across the 6 districts yielding positive results. To promote cross learning and build capacity of practitioners on gender integration, ENSURE facilitated a Gender Master Training for other USAID funded implementing partners in Zimbabwe. The workshop provided a platform for programmes to learn from each other and

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<sup>2</sup> ZIMVAC Survey May 2017

the program shared with all participants the gender field training manual. However, the restructuring of the Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanization and Irrigation Development has had fewer extension personnel at ward level. ENSURE will continue to strengthen community structures like market and cluster facilitators and lead farmers to ensure the sustainability of activities. The program will continue engaging with all levels of the relevant government departments to ensure vertical linkages are strengthened.

## **STRATEGIC Objective 1: Improved Nutrition among Women of Reproductive Age and Children Under Five (5)**

### **IR 1.1 – Consumption of Nutritious Food Improved**

ENSURE uses the first 1,000 Days of Life approach that recognizes the critical importance of ensuring good nutrition from conception to 24 months of age. Two key interventions used by SO1 to improve the consumption of nutritious foods among children under 2 years (CU2) and Women of Child Bearing Age (WCBA) are: 1) the provision of Supplementary Feeding Programme (SFP) rations and 2) the promotion of improved Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) and maternal feeding practices while addressing the underlying socio-cultural norms that are a barrier to the adoption and practice of optimal maternal and child feeding practices with both men and women.

During the period under review the SFP food rations were distributed to complement household food stocks to improve dietary diversity. A total of 43,254 beneficiaries received food rations this year. Of these, 12,832 were pregnant women, 4,343 were lactating women (Indicator 1.1.1.4) and 12,581 were boys while girls were 13,498 (Indicator 1.1.1.5). A total of 2,111.419MT of food rations were distributed in FY17. Of this, 1,623.021MT was Corn Soya Blend and 488.398MT was Vegetable Oil.

ENSURE continued with bi-monthly distributions which consequently addressed the time burden for women. This resulted in women having more time for child care and livelihood activities as they were not required to attend distributions every month. [To ensure that food lasts for the 2 months, SFP beneficiaries are sensitized on the importance of maintaining ration size to ensure that the food rations last for the required duration. Based on routine monitoring and community discussions, it was noted that some beneficiaries have devised means to ensure that the ration last for 2 months. They divide the ration into two and keep the portions separately. They also indicated that following the daily recommended measurements a ensure that the ration last for the required 2 months. However, a few beneficiaries mentioned that their ration runs out a week or two before the next distribution mainly due to intra-HH sharing. Community sensitization during pre-distribution address emphasizes the importance of feeding only the index person. The program has not received reports of increased cases of malnutrition in its operational areas. In order to validate information coming from routine monitoring, ENSURE proposed to conduct quarterly PDMs within the proposed cost extension period to assess utilization of rations.](#)

Based on the FY 16 Annual Beneficiary Based Survey (ABBS), which showed that only 16% (Indicator 1.1.1.1) of children 6-23 months were fed diversified diet, ENSURE stepped up efforts to promote dietary diversity among children using local foods. Cooking demonstrations were conducted during Care Group (CG) trainings and meetings, using the ENSURE recipe book. 160 male advocates and men's fora members also took part in the cooking demonstration enhancing their knowledge on locally available nutritious food as well

as acquiring skills to prepare complementary feeds which have been cited as a barrier to male participation in care giving. The FY 17 ABBS results showed an increase to 35% of the same indicator of beneficiary children 6–23 months of age who received foods from four (4) or more food groups. This increase was not only due to the good food production realized in the 2016/17 agricultural season but can also be attributed to the timely promotion of dietary diversity and gender dialogues that encouraged both men and women to be responsible for the provision and consumption of nutritious foods at household level. Foods such as small grains and legumes were readily available as these are some of the value chains being promoted by ENSURE. Fruits and vegetables were also available at household level as production levels increased in irrigation schemes and nutrition gardens.

In addition, the programme made efforts to train 189 producer and marketing groups in food processing, preservation and storage, increasing the availability of nutritious foods during the lean season, (surpassing the set target of 184). Some of the food items preserved include traditional vegetables (amaranth, black jack, pumpkin leaves, cowpea leaves, moringa) and other exotic vegetables. Legumes and seed such as roundnuts, cowpeas, pumpkin and water melon seeds were also preserved.

During the reporting period, 6,514 (1,842M: 4,672F) (Indicator 2.1.1.5) farmers were trained on post-harvest handling and storage processes. Furthermore, 5,063 farmers adopted postharvest handling and storage technologies (Indicator 2.1.1.4) according to the FY17 ABBS. It is important to note that although dietary diversity increased in FY 17, the target of 55% was not reached. Further analysis showed that most households had challenges accessing animal source foods such as milk, meat, and eggs for child feeding probably due to affordability and low availability at household level. The ABBS showed that these were the least consumed foods and this could be addressed by emphasizing the importance of consuming some of the products (eggs, milk and meat) of the small livestock value chains. Additionally, the program will modify and distribute training materials on small livestock production for program beneficiaries who are not in producer and marketing groups to enhance their capacity to produce goats and poultry. It is anticipated that this will increase production of small livestock leading to an increase in the availability and consumption of animal source foods at household level.

Given the low dietary diversity rates of 13%<sup>3</sup> in Zimbabwe, ENSURE realised that the FY 17 target may have been overstated, as ENSURE had assumed that a good season and intense messaging would push the percentage for adopters upwards.

To promote adoption of improved behaviours by resolving undesirable nutritional practices such as discarding colostrum, giving pre-lacteal feeds, denying children and women from consuming some nutritious foods and early introduction of complementary foods, the program embarked on the following activities:

- Rolled out new (CG) materials that use the Dialogue Counselling Process (DCP), to help Care Group Leaders (CGLs) easily identify barriers. New CG materials were developed using recommendations from the Barrier Analysis that was conducted in FY 14/15.
- Adjusted the ENSURE FY 17 behaviour promotion schedule to focus on dietary diversity for three additional months of April, July and August 2017, rather than the

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<sup>3</sup> ZimVAC Survey May 2017

initially planned two months of June and November. This was because of FY 16 ABBS results that showed low adoption rate of 16 percent.

- Intensified cooking demonstrations taking advantage of the good harvest to demonstrate how communities can use local food to prepare nutritious meals. Men also participated in cooking demonstrations. This contributed to an increase in the proportion of beneficiaries making joint decisions on consumption of nutritious foods.

In FY 17, ENSURE continued to support health workers, Village Health Workers (VHWs) and CGLs in promoting both gender sensitive and nutritional behaviour change through the CG activities. 104 % of FY17 target was met. CGLs and Care Group Clients participated in CG activities through 5,260 CGs (162% of FY17 target). Most behaviours selected for progress analysis during the FY17 ABBS conducted in August 2017 showed positive results. The following are a few of the successful results:

- 97% (Indicator 1.1.1.3), of beneficiary women consumed iron rich foods against the FY17 target of 100%.
- 79% (Indicator 1.1.3.1), of ENSURE beneficiary mothers or caregivers received at least 3 of the 5 targeted support activities to improve the consumption of nutritious food compared to the FY 17 target of 60%.
- 84 % (Indicator 1.2.1.7), of beneficiary households were storing water in safe storage containers compared to the FY17 target of 70%.
- 82% (Indicator 1.1.3.2), of beneficiary women in union living together, made joint decisions over consumption of nutritious foods, compared to the FY 17 target of 50%.
- 46% (Indicator 1.1.3.2), of beneficiary women in union living apart, made sole decisions over consumption of nutritious foods, compared to FY 17 target of 50%.

The ABBS also highlighted some indicators that did not performing as expected. As an example, the percentage of beneficiary children 6-23 months that received minimum meal frequency was low at 40%, (Indicator 1.1.1.2) compared to the FY17 target of 60%. Secondly, fewer people were attending child, health and nutrition trainings; 56,916 against a target of 77,882, giving a percentage achievement of 73%, (Indicator 1.1.2.2). This had a bearing on the achievement of most behaviours promoted through the CGs. Participants feedback indicated that mothers/caregivers were occupied by agricultural activities given the good season despite the support they received from the other family members. This reduced numbers of mothers/caregivers participating in CG trainings and sessions resulting in poor child feeding practices. In response, ENSURE plans to encourage CGLs to meet with their clients during non-farming days.

**Based on the Theory of Change**, ENSURE recognizes the need to work with men to transform some of the socio-cultural norms and practices that are a barrier to the adoption of behaviours being promoted under SO1. A total of 9,411 men were trained in child health and nutrition, an achievement of 410 % (Indicator 1.1.2.2.) and 9,409 men (141% achievement) (Indicator 1.1.3.3.) **were trained on equitable participation and decision making in household consumption of nutritious foods.** These participants attended Social Analysis for Action (SAA) trainings, dialogues, male advocate trainings, men's fora dialogues, and gender trainings. The dialogues created space for communities to transform some of the cultural and social norms that hinder the adoption of behaviours associated with the proper consumption of nutritious foods at household level. The following gender indicators showed positive results according to the FY17 ABBS;



- Increase in joint decision making for people in union living together from 30% in FY16 to 82%, (Indicator 1.1.3.2) in FY17. This most likely contributed to the increase that was observed in dietary diversity for CU2
- The proportion of men accompanying their spouses for ANC increased from 55% in FY16 to 67% in FY17, (Indicator 1.1.3.1). This also probably contributed to improved gender relations at HH level and reduction in gender based violence, validating claims from the men's fora participants that they no longer abuse their spouses and are supportive of their pregnant partners. [Anecdotal information collected from women during routine monitoring confirms that cases of Gender Based Violence have decreased. Additionally, traditional leaders, who are mandated to deal with domestic disputes have also indicated that they are receiving fewer reports of GBV within their respective areas.](#)
- An increase in the number of beneficiary mothers or caregivers received at least 3 of the 5 targeted support activities to improve the consumption of nutritious food from 60% in FY 16 to 80% in FY17.

### IR 1.2 – Prevalence of Diarrhoea in Children Under Five Reduced

Good water, sanitation and hygiene practices are essential for the survival and development of children. To improve water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) conditions, ENSURE focused on activities which addressed the three WASH components; 1) Provision of safe drinking water 2) Basic sanitation facilities and 3) Promotion of hygiene practices. Most of these activities are driven through the CG approach.

To increase access to drinking water, the ENSURE program through Food for Assets (FFA) planned to establish 11 community deep wells in FY17 to provide safe drinking water to households. A total of 615 people (303M: 312F – Indicator 1.2.1.5), against a target of 2,550 gained access to basic drinking water services, a 24% achievement. ENSURE had carried over 12 deep wells from FY16 that needed to be completed in FY17 that required blasting as they had encountered hard rocks. An effort by the program to find experienced and affordable registered contractors for deep well blasting proved futile. In the face of this challenge, ENSURE will facilitate filling up of the dry wells to prevent accidents to the local community and animals. ENSURE also learnt that reaching the water table in regions 4 and 5 of the country is very difficult as the water table is very low and can seldom be accessed through manual excavation methods. Further to this, [the program will intensify engagement with WASH partners including Government departments responsible for provision of safe drinking water who also have the capacity to drill new boreholes as well as rehabilitate existing boreholes.](#)

The number of people gaining access to a basic sanitation service as a result of USG assistance was high (2,702 against FY17 target of 2,000), a 135% achievement, (Indicator 1.2.1.10). Likely reasons for this high achievement are (a) an increased number of sanitation focused Participatory Health and Hygiene Education sessions (PHHE), (b) training of VS&L participants on WASH resulting in the increased desire to construct own latrines and (c) peer to peer support through care groups which encouraged members to construct their own latrines in line with their community expected roles. In addition, the high achievement on own latrine construction is attributed to government's strategy of using low cost materials for the superstructure and one bag of cement for pit lining and slab construction, making latrine construction more affordable.

The coverage of beneficiary households with a hand washing facility with a cleansing agent and clean water at/by the latrine was low, at 18% (Indicator 1.2.1.8) against an FY17 target of 30%. Reasons cited by households for failure to have functional tippy taps are; i) unwillingness to use ash as an alternative to soap, ii) lack of soap, iii) lack of water to fill the containers regularly and iv) the fact that the tippy taps were prone to destruction by animals if not protected. ENSURE has prioritized to conduct an informative study in FY18 on the factors that hinder sustainable use of the tippy tap - findings of which will be used to inform community messages to promote adoption. Zimbabwe as a nation can also benefit from this study as this indicator performance is generally low (16% as indicated by the ZimVAC May 2017).

The FY 17 ABBS showed that 84% against a target of 70% of beneficiary households stored drinking water in safe storage containers. This represents an increase of 22% from FY16. The increase is attributed to the availability and affordability of the promoted storage containers on the local market, (jerry can with narrow outlet, buckets with lids, bucket/jerry can with spigot).

To ensure access to sustainable and safe drinking water 598 against a target of 570 representing a 105% achievement, Water User Associations (WUAs) were trained on operation and maintenance of water points as well as gender. The incorporation of a gender module into these trainings was meant to foster committee members' appreciation of the different needs of men and women so as to enable them to be cognisant of these when making decisions (multi water use). The gender training included the following topics- household decision making, gender division of labour, control over resources, gender based violence and participation and decision making in the community. The percentage of women participating in (WUAs) increased from 57% in FY16 to 61% in FY17 a possible indication of increased confidence in women's leadership within the communities. This is likely because women are the main users of the water points and they tend to manage them well. However, the FY17 target of 70% could not be met. The FY17 target (65% - Indicator 1.2.2.1) for the percentage of women in (WUAs) leadership roles was not achieved, but remained at 58%, similar to the FY16 achievement. Participants and stakeholder feedback showed that no new elections had been held, thus the proportion of women leaders in (WUAs) was maintained. The program will continue to influence inclusion of more women into these committees. The transformative approach adopted by ENSURE is also resulting in the change of social perceptions where reproductive women have been solely responsible for fetching water, men and other family members are increasingly assisting with this activity (81 % against a 60% achievement in FY17-Indicator 1.1.31.)

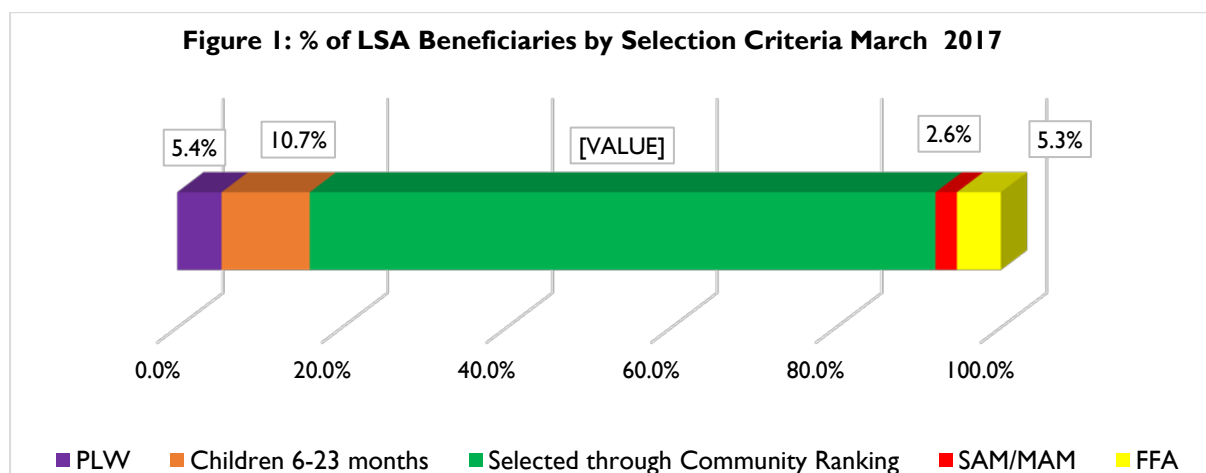
### **ENSURE Cost Modification - El Niño Drought Response Lean Season Assistance**

#### **SIR LSA 1: Increasing food availability to El Niño affected communities via food distributions**

The Lean Season Assistance was initiated to alleviate the effects of the droughts that had affected the communities for two consecutive years. The response followed a declaration that food insecurity had reached alarming levels that was declared by the State President as a Food Insecurity disaster in February 2016. The May 2016 ZIMVAC report indicated that high proportions of the population were food insecure and required assistance. The ENSURE LSA began in August 2016 and planned to feed at least 52% of the estimated food insecure individuals in the six districts as guided by the ZIMVAC reports. The main objective of the LSA was to protect the nutrition and FFA activity gains made since project inception and

provide a food security ration to other non-ENSURE wards. The LSA protective ration consisted of 7.5kg sorghum, 1kg lentils and 0.9kg vegetable oil per person per month, capping at 5 people per HH. In line with the LSA objectives the following selection criteria was used to identify vulnerable households and individuals for the LSA.

1. All households already in the supplementary feeding programme from the 66 ENSURE wards.
2. All households with malnourished Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) measurement of <12.5mm) children under the age of five years in the LSA operating areas.
3. All households with an FFA worker participating in the creation of ENSURE supported community assets.
4. Food security, income and HH type indicator as determined by the community.



The eight-month long drought response project was a success reaching a total of 315,802 (137,593 M: 178,209 F) (100.7%) beneficiaries against a target of 313,475 people during the period January to March 2017. A total of 16,248MT of sorghum, pulses and vegetable oil against a target of 15,641MT translating to a 104% achievement was distributed. The LSA food rations were for many, the main source of food especially during the peak of the hunger season (January to March 2017). The response improved HH food security and reduced vulnerabilities that had been created by two consecutive years of drought. This allowed the community to continue with their normal developmental as well as livelihood activities. The ENSURE FFA works continued according to plan as the workers also received the LSA ration in addition to the FFA workers ration. Other ENSURE activities including CG sessions, VS&L meetings, PMG also continued.

ENSURE proceeded to conduct a Real Time Evaluation at the end of the response which also showed that the LSA was a success. The evaluation results indicated that during the peak of the lean season (January - March 2017), food assistance was found to be the main source of food among the beneficiary households (50.4%). The number of beneficiary households with little/no hunger progressively increased from 34.6% in October 2016 to 66.8% in March 2017. Further, LSA activities reduced the tendency of communities to adopt negative coping strategies. The number of respondents who adopted negative coping strategies such as selling of assets to buy food decreased from 33% in October 2016 to 18% in March 2017. Also, the project managed to improve the nutritional status of the community, particularly in the children as well as the social cohesion because the LSA project was being implemented together with the community members. (Source-LSA RTE report.)

## **Challenges and Solutions**

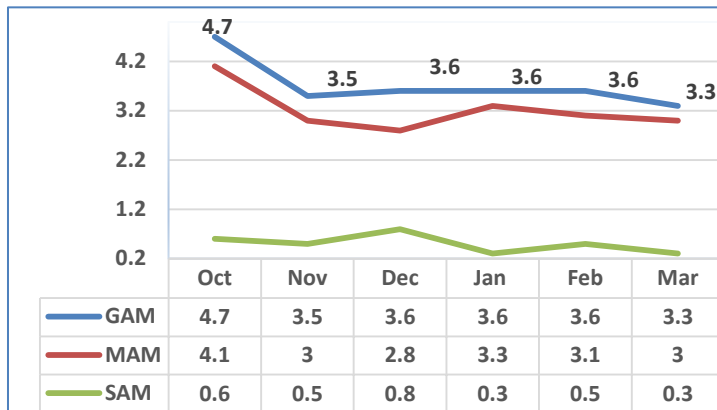
- Delays in commencing the response activities reduced the total quantity of food distributed during the life of the project hence some LSA food commodities were not [distributed for the LSA activity. These were later used in the](#) regular DFSA program. The delay was caused by numerous discussions with stakeholders at inception. These meetings were on ward allocations between the LSA and Government drought response project which was being implemented through Ministry of Social Welfare. Based on our beneficiary registrations, which categorized beneficiaries according to their wealth, WV was able to target the most vulnerable embers of the community and the government target those who were not in our registers but in the same wards.
- Continuous rainfall affected the accessibility of some FDPs leading to beneficiaries having to travel longer distances to the nearest FDP or postponement of distributions to a later date.
- Feedback from recipients indicated that the ration of 7.5kg sorghum was not sufficient for the whole month due to milling losses. Recommendations for the traditional 10kg were made for future programming. According to the Post Distribution Monitoring in the first quarter, on average sorghum lasted 14 days whilst vegetable oil lasted 16 days and lentils lasted 12 days. A 0.03 % and 3.2% increase in number of days rations lasted was noted in the second quarter for sorghum and vegetable oil respectively possibly due to availability of field crops. In response, beneficiaries adopted different coping mechanisms to manage the inadequate rations and these included food rationing (11.3%) such as limiting portion sizes, reducing number of meals eaten daily and food seeking (22.7%) such as borrowing from friends and relatives, relying on less expensive or less preferred foods and purchasing/borrowing food on credit.

## **SIR LSA 2: Increasing Acute Malnutrition Active Case Finding through Nutrition surveillance**

Nutrition surveillance consisted of Active Case Finding for children with acute malnutrition using Mid-Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) and Sentinel Sites Surveillance. Active case finding was done at Food Distribution Points (FDP) as the LSA food rations were being distributed, while the nutrition surveillance was done in selected villages across the ENSURE operational areas. VHW and Care Group Leaders played an important role in mobilizing communities for these activities as well as taking the measurements and recording them. Identified cases of Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) were referred to the nearest health facility for further management. Children who required Vitamin A supplements were referred to the nearest Health Facility (HF) for further management.

A total of 49,660 (24,378 Boys: 25,282 Girls) children were screened for acute malnutrition using MUAC from October 2016 to March 2017. 1,633 (590 Boys: 1,043 Girls) (3.3%) of these children had Moderate Acute Malnutrition while 231 (78 Boys: 153 Girls) (0.4%) children had Severe Acute Malnutrition. All children with SAM were referred to the nearest health facility for further management. A total of 1,864 (688 boys and 1196 girls) (3.7%) children had Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM). The Vitamin A status of children was checked against the Child Health Cards (CHC) and a total of 7,246 (14.6%) children were referred for Vitamin A supplements. Of these, 3,181 were boys while 4,065 were girls.

The line graph below shows that GAM was higher at the beginning of the FY in October but decreased and tapered off as the program progressed and the LSA coverage increased. Both GAM and SAM remained lower than the emergency threshold.



**Figure 2: Acute Malnutrition (MUAC) October 2016 – March 2017**

The sentinel surveillance was conducted in 60 villages which were randomly selected in the 6 ENSURE wards. A total of 2,103 children were assessed during this exercise. 1,038 were boys (49%) while 1,065 were girls.

Figure 3 below shows that the prevalence of acute malnutrition was not significantly different between the boys and girls in the ENSURE area compared to national level data. This was attributed to the gender initiative in ENSURE.

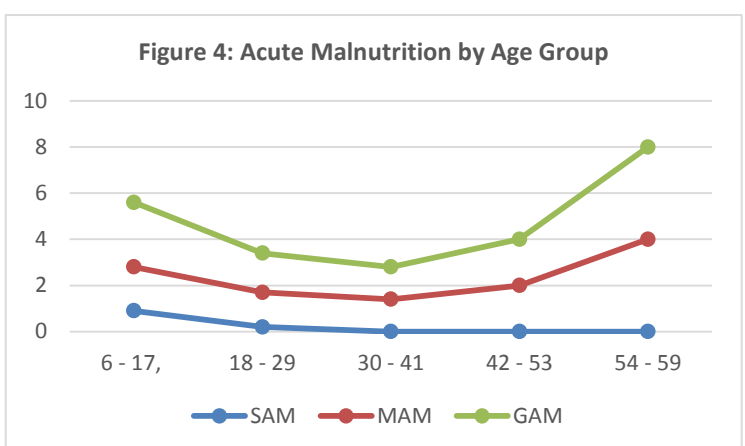
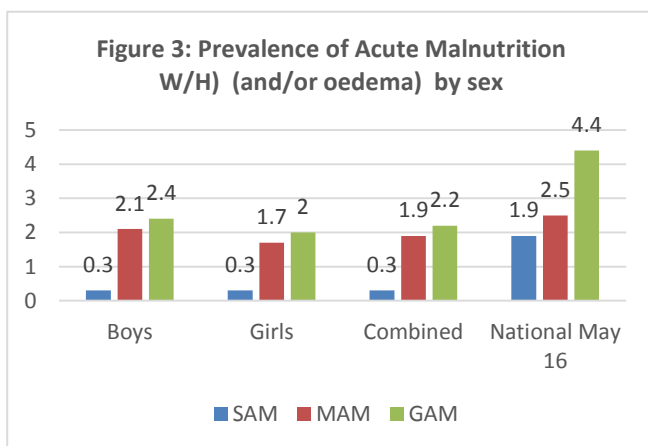


Figure 4 above shows the GAM levels by age group. The results show GAM was higher in older children than the younger ones. It is important to note that most of the younger children were still getting nutritional support from ENSURE and were also from HHs participating in the CGs, PMG and VS&L. The graph also shows that malnutrition was high at the beginning of complementary feeding due to inadequate nutrient intake and increased diseases like diarrhoea due to poor WASH.

During the FY 2016 lean season, the overall prevalence of stunting was 25%, moderate stunting and severe stunting were 18.5% and 6.5% respectively. The stunting level recorded in the ENSURE operational areas are similar (26.6%) to what was recorded in the May 2016 ZIMVAC Assessment. This LSA nutrition data demonstrates that the LSA was a success as it maintained the levels of malnutrition among children under 5 years and prevented further deterioration of the nutrition situation.

The main challenge noted during LSA nutrition surveillance was that mothers/caregivers were not willing to bring their children who are under the age of 5 years for monthly

screenings at the various FDPs citing inconveniences in carrying these children and the rations as well as the long distances travelled to these sites. To counter this, VHWs were requested to follow up on defaulters and take their anthropometric measurements at their homes.

## **Strategic Objective 2: Household Income Increased**

SO2 supports activities that enable households to improve productivity and increase income. Participants are engaged in a sequenced progression to economic empowerment by improving income generation, greater financial sustainability, and increased market integration through improved marketing skills and access to markets along selected value chains. Intermediate Result (IR) 2.1 supports activities to increase and preserve assets as an important contributor to resilience.

### **IR 2.1 – Agricultural Productivity and Production Increased**

There was an increase in the yield of sorghum, groundnuts and sugar beans in FY17 in comparison to FY16. Yield data was collected from 191 sorghum farmers, 494 groundnut farmers and 969 sugar bean farmers. The table below shows a comparison of yield between FY16 and FY17.

<i>Crop</i>	<i>FY17 National Average</i>	<i>ENSURE FY16 Yield (t/ha)</i>	<i>ENSURE FY17 Yield (t/ha)</i>	<i>% increase</i>
<b>Sorghum</b>	0.57	0.20	1.27	532
<b>Groundnuts</b>	0.58	0.35	0.74	110
<b>Sugar beans</b>	1.68	1.23	1.46	18

The yields for the ENSURE supported producer and marketing groups are above the national average which is based on the 2017 Second Round Crop and Livestock Assessment released on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 2017. This increase in yields can be attributed to the good agricultural season and the adoption of improved agricultural practices by farmers. According to the 2017 ABBS, 4,492 out of a target of 5,625 farmers applied crop genetics technologies while 3,918 out of a target of 4,260 farmers applied soil related fertility and conservation technologies (Indicator 2.1.1.4).

In FY17, ENSURE increased the number of lead farmers from 856 (382M: 474F) to 876 (390M: 486F) to improve extension service coverage. As a result, 5,762(1,945M: 3,817F) out of a target of 5,060 producer group farmers received training in short-term agricultural sector productivity (Indicator 2.1.1.8). The improved coverage possibly contributed to the increased adoption of good agricultural practices as highlighted above. The lead farmer approach was confirmed to be effective by a study conducted by World Vision with support from Technical and Operational Performance Support (TOPS) in March 2017. The link to the report is <https://www.worldvision.org/demos>.

ENSURE trained 6,514 (1,842M: 4,672F) farmers out of a target of 7,200 in post-harvest handling and storage to minimise post-harvest losses following the good harvests (Indicator 2.1.1.5). As a result of the training, 5,063 of the farmers applied PHHS technologies, leading to a reduction in yield losses. The use of metal silos and improved granaries were however,



the least adopted technologies due to a high initial capital investment requirement. The program continues to encourage farmers to adopt cheaper options such as grain bags.

In livestock, 4,650 farmers against a target of 2,031 adopted and practiced good livestock management (Indicator 2.1.1.4). This over achievement can be attributed to the increased demand for goats and indigenous poultry by Zimbabwean consumers following a ban on the importation of poultry and poultry products in June 2017 by the government and a general increase in indigenous foods. Poultry and goats are also proving to be value chains of choice for the women in the communities, since these contribute more to the immediate nutrition outcomes and according to the Zimbabwe customs, men generally prefer larger livestock. The FY17 ABBS showed that 1,464 females against 689 males and 3,417 females against 1,169 males sold goats and poultry respectively in 2017. This increase in poultry stock possibly led to the increased availability of animal source protein and dietary diversity for the households as indicated in the SO1 achievements.

### IR 2.2 Increased Revenue from Targeted Value Chains

The FY17 ABBS reported that 76% of the beneficiary households out of a target of 65% confirmed having received marketing information (Indicator 2.2.2.3). A total of 7,010 (1,461M: 5,549F) farmers used the information received from the various sources (Esoko messages, market facilitators, lead farmers and extension agents) to market their produce (Indicator 2.2.1.1). This achievement was enhanced by deliberate efforts of the program to increase the number of community market facilitators (MFs) from one to two per ward and the conscious inclusion of women as market facilitators (77F: 50M). ENSURE endeavors to address challenges being faced by women when marketing their produce as identified during the Gender Analysis Report of 2014 by enrolling more women than men as Market Facilitators (MF)s.

Equipped with market information disseminated by MFs, farmers sold their produce, increasing the net revenues for goats, poultry, groundnuts/roundnuts and sorghum value chains in comparison to the FY16 achievements. At household level net revenue went up by 200% for goats, 95% for poultry, 23% groundnuts/roundnuts and 500% sorghum. This increase can be attributed to better gross margins as a result of increased demand, reduced cost of production mainly for livestock and adoption of good agricultural practices.

The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) launched a five-year National Financial Inclusion strategy in March 2016. The strategy sought to increase the overall access of affordable and appropriate formal financial services within the country from 69% in 2014 to 90% by 2020. In a bid to contribute to the success of this RBZ strategy, ENSURE linked 592 (239M: 353F) farmers and 32 (21M: 11F) agro dealers to formal financial institutions and input suppliers. The total value of loans as a result of this linkage for ENSURE supported value chains amounted to \$111,380.00 against a target of \$160 000.00 (Indicator 2.1.3.4). These loans increased local access to inputs, especially sugar beans resulting in improved production and productivity. The financial linkages also benefitted 134 farmers outside of the ENSURE supported producer groups who accessed \$33,915.00 worth of loans for sugar beans and poultry production. ENSURE supported agro dealers were also assisted in accessing consignment stock for maize worth \$168,009.00 from seed companies. This is a clear indication of the positive spill over effects and impact the program is making on non-target farmers and non-target value chains. Complimentary to the formal loans, VS&L also greatly contributed as a source of funding for inputs both for the value chains and other income

generating activities (IGAs). A total of 16,285 farmers (1,942M: 14,343F) accessed loans from VS&L (Indicator 2.1.3.2) amounting to \$382,351.00 while dividends of \$151,922.00 also supported investments (SAVIX 30/09/17)

### IR 2.3 Percentage Increase of Household Income from Economic Enterprises

In the first two years of implementation, ENSURE hypothesised that the selected five value chains (groundnuts/roundnuts, sugar beans, sorghum, goats and indigenous poultry) would have high impact and high return on investment for the rural smallholder farmers. Data from Annual Monitoring Surveys conducted in FY14 and FY15 showed that farmers had diversified into other on and off farm activities in response to the drought. Revisions to the strategic approach of the program were undertaken, and approved by Food for Peace (FFP), to include this market systems approach. To this end, in FY 17, the program crafted an additional indicator to capture household income from other economic enterprises by VS&L clients and producer farmers. The FY17 annual survey results show a positive achievement in the income from these on and off farm enterprises. Currently 9,525 VS&L clients and producer farmers realized \$2,599,025.00 against a target of 2,075,458.10 from economic enterprises such as crop and livestock production (excluding the 5 value chains being promoted by the project) and marketing and trading.

The ENSURE Agriculture and Livelihoods Manager helped launch the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the “Integrating Extremely Poor Producers into Markets Field Guide” together with Dr. Beth Dunford, the Assistant to the Administrator for the USAID Bureau of Food Security and the Deputy Coordinator for Feed the Future. The Field Guide is available on Agrilinks at: <https://agrilinks.org/post/integrating-extremely-poor-producers-markets-field-guide-fourth-edition> ENSURE is featured extensively in the Field Guide.

ENSURE is also highlighted in the “Value chain development with the extremely poor: evidence and lessons from CARE, Save the Children, and World Vision” This journal article is available at: [http://www.developmentbookshelf.com/doi/pdf/10.3362/1755-1986.16-00024?utm\\_source=Practical%20Action%20Publishing&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=8403720\\_EDM%20Special%20Issue&utm\\_content=fcart2&dm\\_i=10U,504CO,3IRTGV,J2COE,1](http://www.developmentbookshelf.com/doi/pdf/10.3362/1755-1986.16-00024?utm_source=Practical%20Action%20Publishing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=8403720_EDM%20Special%20Issue&utm_content=fcart2&dm_i=10U,504CO,3IRTGV,J2COE,1)

## **Strategic Objective 3: Resilience to Food Insecurity of Communities Improved**

### IR 3.1 Community Disaster Management and Preparedness Capacities Improved

As per the ENSURE theory of change, the program expects communities to be more resilient if it supports activities to improve community development of context-driven systems, tools, and strategies to strengthen risk analysis, preparedness, mitigation, and management of disasters. The focus relies upon community members (both men and women), local leadership, and relevant government officials at ward level being engaged in a participatory process of orientation to the key concepts of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Resilience and utilization of early warning systems (EWS).

Intensive risk awareness and information dissemination, flood risk management was scaled up in response to the La Niña predictions. This resulted in the increase in percentage of men and women reporting receiving risk and early warning information from 50% in FY16 to 77% in FY17 against a target of 70 % (Indicator 3.1.1). The main reasons attributed to this



success are: (a) continued collaborations with government line ministries and departments at district level and resilience committees at ward level in developing and implementing ward level EW plans (b) awareness trainings on flood risk management (c) dissemination of flood alerts and precautionary measures through the CPU and MSD using different platforms.

During the reporting period, the program engaged Zimbabwe Republic Police (Sub-aqua Unit) in conducting trainings within the communities on rescue operations to floods and the general management of surface water bodies in the flood prone wards reaching 3,965 (1,673M: 2,292F) focal point persons. The focal point persons acted as champions to create water hazard awareness in their respective villages in responding to the drowning cases that had been reported in Chipinge, Chivi and Bikita districts.

The established Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) scaled up the early warning messaging at public meetings, LSA and FFA food distribution points, thus directly conveying disaster risk information on floods, rainfall, pests and diseases to over 20,053 households and 8,405 school going children. The existence of trained ward level focal point persons in the flood prone areas made disaster response easier where the committees worked with the district civil protection committees in collaboration with the Red Cross Society in responding to the cyclone-induced floods. The DMC also worked closely with the local health facilities to encourage people to go for malaria testing and treatment to reduce the effects related to water based diseases at household level.

Results from the FY17 ABBS showed that there were 45 out of a targeted 66 wards with early warning and response systems (EWRSs) that were working effectively, indicator (3.1.1.1) The 21 wards that fell short, faced challenges in risk communication networks and had disaster risk reduction committees that required further strengthening and needed to be linked to the civil protection committee for support. 77.4% of community members interviewed confirmed to have received risk and early-warning information because of their linkage with the Meteorological Services Department (MSD).

Annual routine monitoring showed that there was an increase in both women and men taking part in DRR, activities such as early warning and risk communication. The number of women in leadership and decision-making positions was 387 against a target of 310 in FY17. There were equally positive trends in the number of males taking up such roles from 349 in FY16 to 540 in FY17 (indicator 3.1.2.1.) There was an increase of both men and women in the committees was due upward revision of committee membership to improve ward level coverage and reduce walking distances. This was to allow members more time for execution of their monitoring duties apart from just meetings and other committee activities. To strengthen women's participation in these committees a women empowerment training for leaders was held, which enabled women leaders to interact with established female leaders in their communities.

### IR 3.2 Access to and Management of Disaster Risk and Mitigation Assets Improved

The program recognises that households (HHs) can only be resilient in the face of a climate related shock, when their individual and community assets remain stable. In FY17, 16 irrigation schemes with 1,284 (601M: 683F) plot holders were completed to enable communities to produce food outside the rainy season. The area under irrigation also increased from 492.2ha in FY16 to 534ha in FY17. This will inevitably contribute to increased availability of nutritious food at household level.

Iron and vitamin rich crops are being harvested in ENSURE established gardens due to increased awareness on production and consumption of nutritious foods, as well as access to

pieces of land by women. The FY17 ABBS recorded 97% of beneficiary women consuming iron rich foods against a 100% target (Indicator 1.1.1.3).

In contrast to the FY16 season where most of the established weir dams failed to harvest water, FY17 had 80% of the established weirs filled with water irrigating a total of 534ha. Through routine field visits and constant engagements with beneficiaries it was observed that catchment areas and dams had huge potential for fish production, beekeeping and fruit tree production that would add more benefits to these established assets. The project has engaged communities in capacity building in apiculture, aquaculture and fruit tree production. In this reporting period, communities have managed to stock approximately 7,350 fingerlings in 7 weirs. [The remaining 20% of the dams did not fill up for the following reasons:](#)

1. [Some of the dams were still under construction during the rainy season and could not fill up with substantial amounts of water to support irrigation activities.](#)
2. [The other dams that had been completed did not hold water for long due to the following reasons:](#)
  - [They were in their first season of water harvesting and the infiltration rates were very high especially in the driest areas which resulted in heavy water losses due to seepage.](#)
  - [Most dams are constructed in the dry season on non-perennial streams, and the little rainfall received in those areas could not provide constant recharge to the dams hence failure to support any community activities.](#)

It is worth noting that the programs asset creation activities were negatively affected by floods leading to 4 weirs being filled with silt and the water conveyance systems to the fields being destroyed. In a bid to revive these assets, the ENSURE team worked jointly with the local community, local government departments as well as the established resilience committees to [strengthen catchment areas, provide labour and to modify the dams into diversion structures.](#) This was possible because all the dams were on perennial streams and water extraction points were moved from the bottom of the weir to the top part. WV inserted a 50cm-1m pipe from the top part of the wall to create a sump. The pipe was then connected to the main water delivery line. [Since water inflows are regular and dependable on these perennial water sources, it was easy for water to flow into the piping from that elevated position then gravitates towards the agricultural land, positioned at a lower topographical position.](#) This effectively means that the silted weirs raised the riverbed level to a higher level which still enabled the water extraction from that higher point. The systems have now been restored back to use, however for sustainability purposes the communities are now being assisted in developing maintenance funds for general operations and maintenance of these assets. The possible funding sources include VS&L and producer and marketing group proceeds.

Based on the FY17 annual survey results the percentage of households having access to one of the four measures for disaster risk reduction (Watershed Management, Conservation Plans, Assets and multi-user scheme plans) exceeded the target (indicator 3.2.1) which is 99% against a target of 80%. The reasons attributed to this include: (a) adoption of VS&L as a cross cutting activity, helped beneficiaries recognise the value and benefits of each activity (b) high level awareness on the La Niña and the predicted flooding.

The number of women in leadership roles and decision making related to disaster mitigation assets, increased from 209 in FY16 to 239 in FY17 against a target of 200 (Indicator 3.2.3.1). However, participation of women was maintained at 53% for both FY16 and FY17. This was

because both men and women appreciated the need for equity in participation and decision making on asset management as a result of the ENSURE gender trainings.

The results of the FY17 ABBS showed that 62 out of the 66 ESCs were functional and able to engage communities in conserving the environment (Indicator 3.2.4.1) The 4 that did not satisfactorily meet the criteria for functionality were the immature groups in need of further strengthening. The program will work with the local authorities to provide continuous mentoring and guidance to these committees for improved functionality.

**Direct Participating HH by Sector Table**

The table below summaries the total unique and direct participating households of the program reached in FY17 totalling 75,612 households.

As indicated in the introduction, annual monitoring shows that the project’s focus on integration across interventions is benefiting households. A total of 9,844 households participated in multiple interventions from different sectors. 1,496 households were involved in SO1 (Health and Nutrition) as well as SO3 (DRR) interventions. 4,504 households were involved in SO1 and SO2 (Increasing household income) interventions. 1,998 households were involved in SO2 and SO3 (DRR) interventions, while 1,846 households participated in all three program interventions, SO1, SO2 and SO3.

The number of direct participating households under SO1 that do not have integration with other SO activities was 38,354. This number is high because young mothers are not taking part in VS&L and Producer and Marketing Group activities citing lack of resources (land and financial). Within SO2 only, there were 25,355 participating households while SO3 only had 2,058. To further support the integration of the program’s strategic objectives, the project will facilitate participation of young mothers and young fathers in the program to take up activities in multiple interventions.

	<b>Total unique and direct participating Households</b>	<b>SO/P 1only</b>	<b>SO/P 1&amp;2</b>	<b>SO/P 2 only</b>	<b>SO/P 2&amp;3</b>	<b>SO/P 3 only</b>	<b>SO/P 1&amp;3</b>	<b>SO/P 1,2 &amp;3</b>
HHs	75612	38354	4504	25355	1998	2058	1496	1846

**ii. Challenges, Successes and Lessons Learned**

<i>Challenge</i>	<i>Action Taken</i>
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<p>Producer and marketing groups and VS&amp;L clients were being affected by the liquidity crisis as they preferred cash based transactions to electronic transactions because of the poor network coverage, absence of banking services and point of sale machines in the rural areas</p> <p>Four of the weir dams were heavily silted due to the La Nina induced flooding</p>	<p>First, the project had stepped up financial literacy training to producer and marketing farmers and continues to promote the adoption of mobile banking platforms such as Eco Cash and Tele-Cash which have a wider coverage in communal areas. The program had some of its VS&amp;L clients already using e-mkando (mobile VS&amp;L platform) as a platform for their savings and lending. The program continued to engage with mobile cellular companies to increase coverage in areas.</p> <p>Secondly some producer and marketing groups working with National Organic Produce had personal debit cards from Met Bank which they were using to buy inputs.</p> <p>ENSURE partnered with local councils and communities to rehabilitate the weir dams. In a bid to revive these assets, ENSURE modified the four dams by constructing diversion structures. This was possible because all the dams were on perennial streams and water extraction points were moved from the bottom of the weir to the top part (diversion structure). Since water inflows are regular and dependable on these perennial water sources, it was easy for water to flow into the piping from that elevated position then gravitate to the agricultural land, positioned at a lower topographical position. This effectively means that the silted weirs raised the riverbed level to a higher level which still enabled the water extraction from that higher point. These assets are now fully functional.</p>
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<i>Lesson Learnt</i>	<i>Action Plan</i>
<p>The program realized that beneficiary households overlap, for S01, S02 and S03 integration is progressing at a slow pace. There were some beneficiaries who missed valuable information coming from other SOs that they were not participating in. For example, care group leaders and clients who were not</p>	<p>To further support the integration of the program's strategic objectives, the project will facilitate participation of young mothers and young fathers in the program to take up activities in multiple interventions. The project will distribute local food production fact sheets that have been developed to all project participants so that production of</p>

<p>part of producer and marketing groups did not have access to food production information. This hindered the adoption of behaviours that rely on household availability of food i.e. dietary diversity for children 6-23 months.</p>	<p>locally nutritious foods is improved that will contribute to dietary diversity.</p>
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**iii. Conclusion**

The ENSURE Program has impacted communities in a positive way and FY17 was a particularly good year as food availability increased due to better rains, adoption of improved farming technologies and household resilience. Resilience, stability and sustainability of the activities undertaken during this reporting period underpins ENSURE’s strategic objectives, proving that the Theory of Change (ToC) is succeeding. ENSURE recognizes gender inequity as a critical factor that negatively impacts food security, and that has a bearing to (a) improved household nutrition (b) increase in household income and (c) improved community resilience. The program through Social Analysis and Action, Gender dialogues and Women’s Empowerment, is working with communities to transform gendered power relations, socio-cultural norms, practices and structures. This has contributed to improvements in the availability and consumption of nutritious foods. Increase in adoption of Health and Nutrition behaviours, has also been noticed along with improved men’s and women’s access to and control over productive agricultural and financial resources and improved participation, leadership and decision-making related to risk management practices and disaster mitigation assets for men and women. These changes are likely to improve nutrition status, increase household income and improve household and community resilience.

In the light of the above, ENSURE proposes a slight modification to its Theory of Change. The VS&L component of our ToC is not only a foundation for SO2 but for all the SOs. Therefore, this should be a cross cutting intervention as it funds all the program elements. The program will continue to implement climate risk management to enhance communities’ capacities to identify, assess and monitor disaster risks that may erode the gains made so that early warning and response mechanisms become entrenched within their livelihoods systems. In addition, the program will strengthen its behavior change strategies to improve on adoption of some the behaviors that were below target.