



Kingdom of the Netherlands



spark

# MID-TERM EVALUATION REPORT

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## PROJECT:

THE FOOD SECURITY THROUGH AGRIBUSINESS IN SOUTH SUDAN PROJECT (SSADP II)”  
IMPLEMENTED IN YAMBIO, BOR AND TORIT COUNTIES IN SOUTH SUDAN

## FUNDED BY:

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) in South Sudan

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December 28, 2021  
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Hai Neem, Juba

BY

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## DISCLAIMER

*The report does not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of Cordaid South Sudan Correctness of the information presented herein is bound to the Mid-Term Evaluation outcomes of this report.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Thank you.

## LIST ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BDAs	Business Development Advisor
BPC	Business Plan Competition
BSC	Business Support Centre
BSO	Business Support Officer
BST	Business Skill Training
CMDRR	Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction
CRA	Conflict Risk Analysis
CRR	Conflict Risk Reduction
FEMA	Farmer Economic and Marketing association
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FSABSS	Food Security through Agribusiness in South Sudan
GoSS	Government of South Sudan
HH	Household
KII	Key Informant Interviews
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises – Existing Business
NGOs	Non-Government Organization
PDRA	Participatory Disaster Risks Assessment
RUFI	Rural Finance Initiative
SSAPU	South Sudan Agriculture Producers Union
SSP	South Sudan Pound
SSRA	Seed Security Resilience Assessment
STO	Star Trust Organization
VCA	Value Chain Assessment
VEMSA	Village Economic and Marketing Association
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
YWAE	Youth and Women Agri-Business Entrepreneurship
YWE	Youth & Women Enterprise-Start up Business

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The presented is the report of the Mid-Term evaluation's findings of "The Food Security through Agribusiness in South Sudan Project (SSADP II)" funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN), implemented by a consortium of Cordaid, SPARK and Agriterra. The Mid-Term Evaluation was conducted in the three counties of Bor, Torit and Yambio of Republic of South Sudan respectively. Q&A Management Consultancy Firm Ltd conducted the evaluation in December 2021 with support from Cordaid.

The goal of the project is "Improved food security, higher income and more employment for Farmer households in selected counties of South Sudan".

The major objective of this Mid-Term Evaluation was aimed to assess the entire performance of the project's inputs, outputs, outcomes, efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability. The evaluation also focused on lessons learnt and development recommendations to inform strategic adjustments to the action.

Whenever possible, the various data sources or collection methods were combined, analyzed, and compared in an objective manner, acknowledging possible biases and other methodological limitations, in order to build a comprehensive, credible and nuanced picture of the situation on ground.

A total of 1,074 households (661M; 413F) out of the originally planned 1,035 respondents were purposely selected for interview using a structured questionnaire, 343 HH (132M, 211F) were reached in Torit, 366 HH (265M, 101F) in Bor and 365 HH (185M, 180F) in Yambio. In addition, a total of 23 (22F, 1M) semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants that involved Agro Input Dealer, Ministry of Agriculture, Field Office Coordinator (Cordaid), Project Officer, Project Officer-Partner Organization, Groundnut processor, Poultry Feed Processor and Religious Leader.

Additionally, a total of 19 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) (56M, 51F) were conducted in the three counties with Farmer Economic and Marketing Association (FEMA), VEMSAs also known as Village Economy, Market & Social Association (VEMSA), Peace & CMDRR committees, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR/Resilience committees), Primary Cooperative Society members, Micro to Small Medium Enterprises (MSMES), Ground Nut Processor, Sorghum Processors, Purpose co-operative and Youth & Women Enterprise-Start up Business (YME).

### **Key Outcome Indicators Level Findings**

- There is 35% Mid-term finding on Enhanced DRR and trust in targeted communities compared to the baseline finding of 10%, this implies 24% improvement on Enhanced DRR and trust in targeted communities.
- There was a very low estimated effectiveness of 25% against the overall target on Continued Action Research Supporting Informed Decision Making as there were only 2 out of 8 Action Research (AR) carried out in 2019 and none in 2020.
- Majority (85%) of the survey respondents feel that they have improvement in availability and access of agricultural input (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, tools) in the past 12 months.
- Majority (84%) of the survey respondents ever received training services on the production of the crops that they grew as such good agricultural practices enhanced and extension services improved compared to the baseline finding of 10%, this implies 74% improvement.
- Majority of survey respondents of 69% said that they have adequate and relevant Market Information Accessible and Available for Farmers and Agri-businesses such as improved access to formal markets (each seller has a fixed location; order to attract buyers, formal sellers advertise their posted price and location) for their agricultural produce compared to the baseline finding of 56%, this implies 13% improvement in market information.
- About 27% of households earn average incomes of below 10,000 SSP/month and 48% reported incomes of between 10,000-30,000 SSP. However, only 7% and 6% of households had average monthly incomes of 40,000-50,000 SSP and above 50,000 SSP respectively. On income changes, 62% of households mentioned that their income increased now compared to before the project.
- 60% of the survey respondents believe that there is improved post-harvest handling and physical market infrastructure
- 61% of the respondents agreed that Market Linkages were Enhanced through Cooperatives/ Associations/ Farmer Organizations
- Respondents believe that 62% cooperatives have adequate organizational and financial management capacity
- 61% of the respondents agreed that Women, youth, MSMEs are capable and equipped with skills to start and grow their business compared to the baseline finding of 8%, this implies 53% improvement in skills to start and grow business.
- Only 35% of the respondents agreed that there is availability of and Access to Appropriate Financial Products and Services compared to the baseline finding of 9%, this implies 26% improvement in availability and accessibility of financial products.

## **Recommendations:**

- Support the construction of storage facilities and/or warehouses to reduce storage losses due to rodents, vermin and other pests as well as preserve seeds and ensure availability of good quality of seeds for local farmers.
- Conduct more training for small-scale producers (VEMSA, FEMA, processors, YWE) on improved production techniques, processing and marketing of farm produce. For VEMSA and FEMA, enhance their capacity in financial management, group management and dynamics, book keeping, developing group bylaws and group plans and for YWE there is need to train them; selecting an income generating activities, managing an income generating activities, marketing, costing, sales and profit and Recordkeeping.
- Capacitate the inputs suppliers through training and improved access to loans and credits to expand their businesses
- Strengthen the capacity of farmers in the communities' through equipping farmers with additional necessary farming skills and knowledge, particularly in farming as a family business as well as providing support in form of equipment/farm implement and machinery and inputs.
- Enhance timely planning and delivery of agriculture inputs (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, tools) to the beneficiaries and ensure strong partnership and collaboration with Government stakeholders and other partners.
- Revision of incentives payment to the government field staff and consider increasing the amount paid to field supervisory staff.
- For YWE, a different collateral should be identified for loans, instead of land because land belongs to the family and as such, no single individual can choose to use it as a collateral. Similarly, it's hard to obtain land titles. According to the youth, this requirement should either be waived off or replaced with a more realistic requirement, this they said could be discussed in dialogue with their chiefs.
- Train more farmer groups in value chains and value additions and provide value addition machinery/input and equipment to enhance food processing and marketing.

- Encourage and support more farmers to engage in poultry production as poultry production is a very lucrative business as the demand for poultry products exist within the larger trading centers and within the surrounding communities.
- Lobby with the relevant line Ministries and departments to engage the local leaders (landlords, chiefs, headmen etc.) to provide enough land to the farmers for commercial farming.
- Alternatively consider supporting farmer groups with agribusiness grants to facilitate renting of farmlands from the local leaders and landlords in the communities.
- Empower Cooperative Societies to expand market base and buy farm produces like maize, groundnuts etc. directly from the farmers but not through intermediary agents to increase farmer's profit margin.

# I INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## I.1 Introduction

Section one of this report provides an overview of Cordaid and partners and their activities its activities in South Sudan specifically while underlining the overall and specific objectives of the evaluation. This section goes on to highlight the background of the evaluation, description of the project, project background, goals (purpose) and objectives.

## I.2 Background and Description of the Project

“The Food Security Through Agribusiness in South Sudan Project (SSADP II)”, is a five-year project that runs from late 2018 to July 2023 funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN) in South Sudan. The overall goal of the project is to improve food security, income, and employment of 10,000 farmer households in selected counties based on the Making Markets Working for the Poor (M4P) approach and aims at enhancing food security, buying power, and employment position of vulnerable population in Yambio, Torit and Bor counties. It supports the strengthening of market functions and market players to make the local markets more inclusive and more enabling for agribusiness to thrive. Moreover, the project strives to increase farmers' and agribusiness' (MSMEs, Cooperative, and VEMSA) access to the organization, technology, markets, and finance.

The project is being implemented by a consortium of Cordaid, Agriterra, and SPARK organizations, with Cordaid as the lead consortium agency. The three agencies work in close collaboration with the relevant Line Ministries of the Government of South Sudan, and key stakeholders, including local and international NGOs, UN agencies, and the private sector.

Through this project, 10,000 farmers will directly benefit from increased production and productivity through Farmers Economy and Market Association (FEMA), 1000 youths & women and 750 MSMEs will benefit from Business Development Services, 230 Farmers Cooperatives, and 120 Village Economy, Market and Social Association (VEMSA) will directly benefit from Cooperative Development and VEMSA Development Support. Also, the project will create access to finance in partnership with Rural Finance Initiative (RUF) in a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) scheme for agribusiness development in the project target counties. The selected value chain includes Maize, Sorghum, Cassava, and Groundnuts.

## 2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE SURVEY

### 2.1 Introduction

This section covers the purpose of the evaluation and the scope in terms of geographic coverage and programmatic outlook looking at desired outcomes and outputs.

#### 2.1.1 Main Objective of the evaluation

The main purpose is aimed at evaluating the entire performance of the project's inputs, outputs, outcomes, efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability. The evaluation also focused on lessons learnt and development recommendations to inform strategic adjustments to the action.

The evaluation further helped identify innovative approaches to making markets work for the poor and how to strengthen the interventions to sustainable livelihoods in future.

The evaluation also assessed the project design, scope, implementation status, complementarity with other projects, services, and the capacity to achieve the expected outcomes. The consultants also collated and analyzed challenges faced, and best practices documented during implementation period, which will inform the proceeding implementation period (January 2022 – July 2023) of the project.

#### 2.1.2 The specific objectives of the evaluation include:

1. Measure the mid-term achievement of the project based on relevant indicators defined in the Log frame, with results stipulated in the full indicator table.
2. Based on the indicators captured, analyze the key success and constraint factors (both internal and external) for each outcome.
3. Analyze the project based on the evaluation criteria
4. Recommend on strategies and approaches for enhancing project impact.

### 2.2 Scope of the Survey

This evaluation focused on all the project outputs and outcomes of the project and recommendations based on the project implementation context in the three counties of Yambio, Bor and Torit of Republic of South Sudan.

## 3 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Approach

The evaluation information was collected using a mixed approach method, which included household interviews using questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions (FGD) community members and Key Informants Interviews (KII) with community members, local government authorities, women leaders, youth leaders, INGO and Religious and Community Leaders.

For the achievement of maximum participation of the groups examined, participatory projective techniques were employed, such techniques allowed a deeper exploration of participants' knowledge and needs, and ensured a greater sense of ownership of the evaluation process and consequently any associated future programming.

### 3.2 Pre-field activities (Inception Phase)

A comprehensive desk review was conducted at inception phase to understand the local dynamics and to provide a basic context and foundation for data collection and sample design. The results of this review contributed to the development of the Inception report including the data collection tools.

Inception meeting was conducted with Cordaid and partner staff in Yambio, Torit and Bor to discuss the Inception Report including the methodology, tools as well as identifying the targeted beneficiaries.

### 3.3 Data collection (Field Phase)

Before administering the questionnaire, the enumerators were trained to ensure that data collected was in line with Cordaid and partners requirements. The primary objective of the training was to enable enumerators to understand data collection methods/tools to ensure quality data collection, administer household questionnaire/data collection tablets and gain skills of conducting successful interviews as well as, raising their awareness on safe guarding principles including ethical issues in conducting research.

#### 3.3.1 Qualitative Methods

A comprehensive desk review was conducted to understand the local dynamics and to provide a basic context and foundation for data collection and sample design. The Evaluation Team reviewed and analysed several project documents including the project baseline report, project proposal, annual reports of 2019 and 2020, Gender Assessment Reports. Inception meeting report, and Log frame.

The results of this review contributed to the identification of potential key project stakeholders, as well as the analysis and:

- In addition, a total of 23 (22F, 1M) semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants that involved Agro Input Dealer, Ministry of Agriculture, Field Office Coordinator (Cordaid), Project Officer, Project Officer-Partner Organization, Groundnut processor, Poultry Feed Processor and Religious Leader.
- A total of 19 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with 107 (56M, 51F) participants were conducted in the three counties with Farmer Economic and Marketing Association (FEMA), Village Economy, Market & Social Association (VEMSA), Peace & CMDRR committees, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR/Resilience committees), Primary Cooperative Society members, Micro to Small Medium Enterprises (MSMES), Groundnut Processor, Sorghum Processors, Purpose co-operative and Youth & Women Enterprise-Start up Business (YME).

### 3.3.2 Quantitative Methods

Quantitative component of this survey involved a total 1,074 households (661M, 413F) out of the originally planned 1,035 respondents were purposely selected for interview using a structured questionnaire of 343 HH (132M, 211F) were reached in Torit, 366 HH (265M, 101F) in Bor and 365 HH (185M, 180F) in Yambio.

### 3.4 The study sample

Whereas an initial sample population size 1,035 HHs was determined using the National Bureau of Statistics population projection for 2020 with confidence level of 95% and 5% margin of error; a higher sample size of 1,074 HHs was achieved as a result of extended number of days in Yambio as relates to the contextual challenges.

The following formula suggested by Cochran (1963:75) was used to derive the sample size for the assessment to ensure a 95% confidence interval. The formula is as follows:



$$n_0 = \left[ \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2} \right] * deff$$

Where:

$n_0$  : Sample size,

$Z$ : Value corresponding to a given confidence level  
(1.96 for a confidence level of 95%-value commonly used),

$p$ : Estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population

$q$ : 1-p

$e$ : Desired level of precision (0.05)

deff. Design Effect, (1.5)

### 3.5 Data Quality Assurance

Cordaid supervised the evaluation process. Specifically, the team of consultants coordinated with the field team. While in the field, all enumerators were trained to assist in data collection. The enumerators sought permission (consent) to collect information and explained to respondents their right to withdraw or disengage at will and at any time during the interviews.

The questionnaire had a statement on how to address ethical considerations in the process of data collection, analysis and presentation. This included consideration for any risks related to the assessment and how these would be mitigated. Voluntary compliance from the respondents to participate in the assessment was also sought before they were requested to participate in the survey.

The consultants provided on-the ground quality assurance checks and oversight throughout data collection checking through all completed responses (on a daily basis) was done to address any inconsistencies in time, hence adding value to quality assurance. Before data analysis, data quality checks through synthesis and content analysis were carried out for consistency and correlation of internal logic between related variables.

### 3.6 Data Analysis and Reporting

All the HH information collected using Kobo platform<sup>1</sup> was edited to ensure correctness, accuracy and consistency as per the responses and observations made. These were discussed with the interviewers during a consolidation meeting prior to report writing. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

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<sup>1</sup> Kobo Toolbox is a free open-source tool for mobile data collection. It allows to collect data in the field using mobile devices such as mobile phones or tablets.

software was used for data analysis because it is fast, consistent, and able to handle many variables simultaneously. At bivariate level, descriptive statistics was used particularly to test relationship between dependent and independent variables.

The qualitative data collected through open-ended questions in the questionnaires and interviews were categorized, summarized, organized and analyzed according to the themes mentioned in the ToR.

### **3.7 Study limitations**

- Long distances to the field sites during the data collection leading to under reached daily targets in some location as compared to nearby locations.
- Most people are displaced and homes are temporary given the constant relocation in search of drier land as a result of the flooding especially in Bor.
- There were high expectations from the FGD respondents as they expected some refreshments and most respondents thought the exercise was for relief distribution something the consultants managed after taking time to explain and manage beneficiary expectation
- The evaluation was conducted in December which has a lot of ongoing economic activities such as charcoal burning and cutting of thatching grass in the forests in which most HH heads get engaged. This meant that in some instances enumerators had to return at a later time to be able to interview the respondents in order to achieve the planned targets.
- Logistical challenges in some locations as the available vehicles had to be involved in series of project activities, meaning that in some instances data collection was delayed.

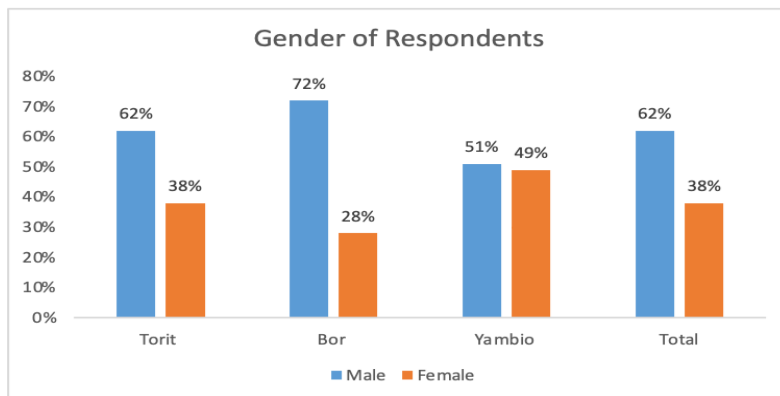
## 4 KEY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Introduction

This section presents findings of the evaluation and aims at understanding the relevance of the quality of design of the project, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. In addition to understanding the impact of the project, community perceptions, challenges and opportunities available to inform Cordaid and partners programming on poverty reduction and increased resilience among vulnerable and food insecure populations as a result of the subsequent discussion of conclusions, lessons learnt and recommendations.

### 4.2 Demographic Information

A total of 1,074 persons were interviewed in Torit, Bor and Yambio Counties; 413 (62% of the respondents were males and 38 % were females as shown below.



**Figure 1: Gender of Respondent**

On education, 39.7% of heads of households did not attend any formal education, while 29.1% and 14.8% had incomplete primary and complete primary respectively. On the other hand 7.4 % and 6.6% of heads of households had incomplete secondary and complete secondary respectively, whereas 1.5% of heads of households had vocational training and 0.6% with incomplete university. None of the heads of households completed university.

Forty-Five percent of heads of households were in the age bracket 18-40 years. About 31% and 36% of heads of households were between 18 - 30 year and 31 - 40 years old respectively, whereas 16% were in the age bracket 41-50 years. While only 5% were aged 51-60 years and 2% were above 60 years. As to marital status, 58% of households were married and none was divorced.

The primary occupation for 89% of households was farming (own land), while other minor activities including farming –rented (2%), agricultural day labor/contract labor, Bodaboda (Motorcycle), poultry and livestock rearing and regular salaried employment were among other forms of occupation for the respondents.

**Table 1: Primary occupation of the household head**

Primary occupation of the household head	Torit	Bor	Yambio	Total
Agricultural day labor/contract labor	0%	4%	0%	1%
Bodaboda (Bicycle)	1%	0%	0%	0%
Bodaboda (Motorcycle)	1%	1%	1%	1%
Farming (own land)	93%	84%	88%	89%
Farming (Rented)	1%	3%	0%	2%
Housework (child care, home care)	0%	0%	0%	0%
Non-agricultural day labor/contract labor	1%	0%	0%	0%
Other(specify)	0%	0%	0%	0%
Poultry and livestock rearing	0%	2%	0%	1%
Regular salaried employment	2%	2%	0%	1%
Student	1%	0%	0%	0%
Trader	0%	1%	0%	0%

The main income generating activity for 874 (81%) households is agriculture, followed by business for 103(4%) and wage/employment for 33 (3%) households as shown in the below Table. Of the households whose main activity is business, 13% are in Yambio County, while 7% of the total households engaged in wage /employment are in Bor County.

**Table 2: Main income generating activity (IGA)**

Main income generating activity (IGA)	Torit	Bor	Yambio	Total
Agriculture	73%	86%	85%	81%

Business	9%	7%	13%	10%
None	13%	0%	0%	4%
Other (Specify)	4%	0%	1%	2%
Wage/employment	2%	7%	1%	3%

About 27% of households earn average incomes of below 5,000 SSP/month and 48% reported incomes of between 10,000-30,000 SSP. However, only 7% and 6% of households had average monthly incomes of 40,000-50,000 SSP and above 50,000 SSP respectively. On income changes, 62% of households mentioned that their income increased now compared to before the project.

**Table 3: Average monthly income of household**

Average monthly income of household	Average monthly income SSP	Torit	Bor	Yambio	Total
Below 10,000 SSP	5,000.0	36%	21%	25%	27%
10,001 - 20,000 SSP	15,000.5	32%	16%	27%	25%
20,001 - 30,000 SSP	25,000.5	24%	31%	16%	23%
30,001 - 40,000 SSP	35,000.5	6%	14%	13%	11%
40,001 - 50,000 SSP	45,000.5	1%	8%	11%	7%
Above SSP 50,000	50,000.5	1%	9%	8%	6%

As shown in the table above, 25% of households earn average income of 15,000.5 SSP/month, 23 % earned 25,000.5 SSP/month and 11% earned 35,000.5 SSP/month, whereas 7% and 6% of households have monthly incomes of 45,000.5 SSP/day and over 50,000 SSP respectively. The average monthly incomes of 15,000.5 SSP and 25,000.5 for 25% and 23% of households are 23% below and 27% above the baseline average monthly household income of 19,591 SSP (USD 85.18) respectively. Similarly the average monthly income of 35,000.5 for 11% of household was 79% above the baseline average monthly household income of 19,591 SSP (USD 85.18). Thus 34% of households had average monthly incomes of

30,000.5 SSP which when compared to the baseline average monthly household income of 19,591 SSP indicate a 53% expansion of their income base and buying power.

### 4.3 Relevance

Globally the project embraced components of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly Goal 1, Goal 2, and Goal 4.

**SDG Goal 1: “End poverty in all its forms everywhere”** and its corresponding targets especially target 1.5: “By 2030, “build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters”.

**SDG Goal 2: “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”** and its corresponding targets especially targets 2.1: “By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round”. Target 2.3: “By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.”. Target 2.4: “By 2030, By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality”.

**SDG Goal 4: “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”** and its corresponding targets especially target 4: “By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship”.

In addition, the project was in line with objectives of the Sphere Standards and the minimum Standards of Education in Emergency (INEE) which highlights the need to provide education related to livelihoods and employment such as small business development, financial literacy, technical and vocational education and training to young men and women particularly those from vulnerable groups who do not complete formal school.

### **4.3.1 Alignment with government priorities**

The project is in line with the South Sudan Vision 2040 Strategic Goal (2) that seeks to build a prosperous, productive and innovative nation and some of the key objectives to address these challenges are: (a) to increase agricultural productivity to enhance food security; (b) to improve livestock and fish production; and (c) to promote sustainable environment.

The project is also in line with South Sudan Comprehensive Agriculture Master Plan 2015–2040 which is the first national agriculture development plan of South Sudan and includes a set of technical documents to guide the country to achieve agricultural transformation in 25 years. The Plan’s primary focus is to achieve the vision of “food security for all the people of the Republic of South Sudan, enjoying improved quality of life and environment”.

Likewise, the project is consistent with Partnership for Recovery and Resilience in South Sudan, which is a multi-actor and cross-sector collaboration initiative with UN agencies, donors and non-governmental partners to jointly reduce vulnerability and build resilience through addressing the Partnership’s four pillar objectives: 1) rebuild trust in people and institutions; 2) (re-)establish access to basic services; 3) restore and build productive capacities and economic opportunities, and 4) nurture effective partnerships.

The project is in line with the economic development objective of the Republic of South Sudan National Development Strategy (SSNDS) July 2018-June 2021 in particular, with the Economic Cluster Goal which is to improve food security and livelihoods, and revitalize the national economy. The strategy is to ensure “diversified private sector-led economic growth and sustainable development that improves livelihoods and reduces poverty”, and especially the natural resources sector objective which seeks “to ensure food security and improve livelihoods and income generation for the people of South Sudan, through sustainable use of natural resources and land management”.

### **4.3.2 Alignment with community needs/relevance to people’s priorities.**

According to a Senior Inspector in the State Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Bor, Jonglei State, the project has effectively addressed issues of the farmers and agribusiness including youth and women. He mentioned that various trainings have been given on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), the project is helping communities with equipment and most of the farmers are the women and they felt that the project really came to support them. The project supported farmers and agro-businesses, who received money under (SSADP II) who confirmed that their sales have increased hence, were able to raise capital.

Similarly, in the Senior Inspector in the MoAF mentioned that farmers were able to supply Bor market with vegetables such as Tomatoes, Okra, and Watermelon than before the project hence meeting market demand for fruits and vegetables. He also noted that the project had provided employment opportunities for community members allowing them to generate incomes to support their family needs such as school fees, medical bills, and food at home.

The Peace and CMDRR Committee in Torit County, Eastern Equatoria State, acknowledged that the project awakened their thinking as relates to hazard and risks mitigation with emphasis on drought, flood and conflicts resolution techniques. They also noted that the training was relevant, and this enhanced their ability to manage some of the risks such as conflicts, drought and unnecessary burning of the bush.

#### **4.3.3 Quality of Design.**

The Final Baseline Report for the South Sudan Agribusiness Development Programme II (SSADP II) of 2019 was a result of close collaboration between Cordaid South Sudan, Agriterra, SPARK and Pan African Research Service Limited (PARS). In November 2018, the consortium initiated a baseline survey in the Programme areas with the aim of setting baseline values for the outcome indicators against which the Programme progress will be monitored and evaluated.

The survey sought to generate adequate baseline information (quantitative and qualitative) on agricultural practices, production, productivity, the delivery of goods and services as well as on input/output markets, and the functioning of the target cooperatives and associations etc. Stakeholder and governance analysis was also done with an aim to obtain an up to-date picture of the situation including with regard to the refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). The survey was conducted in the counties of Yambio, Bor and Torit. The main Payams visited were Gangura, Banzungua and in Yambio County, Makuach, Anyidi, Baidit, Bor Town and Kolnyang in Bor County and Nyong, Bur, Kiyala, Himadong, Imurok, Ifwotu, Ikotos in Torit County.

The baseline aimed to cover the following key content; socio demographics in the counties, food security/nutrition status, overview of agricultural practices/value chains, extension services, cooperatives, markets, access to financial services and products, conflict disaster, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) analysis, stakeholder, and governance analysis as well as gender analysis.

The baseline report recommended that at the inception phase, the Programme must also get all the stakeholders on board including the Programme partners, community, farmer groups, cooperatives,



local NGOs, UN bodies, county and national government as well as the local leaders. Cohesion of all stakeholders will be vital in ensuring that the Programme objectives are met through partnerships and overall stakeholder oversight. This could be achieved through multi-stakeholder platforms and meetings as well as joining the stakeholder clusters existing in the counties, e.g. the food security cluster. The Programme's monitoring, evaluation and learning team should facilitate timely joint monitoring, learning and networking forums, document lessons learnt and develop effective systems of collecting and storing Programme data that will facilitate evaluation of the Programme. Risks such as Programme impact attrition, caused by other players in the development sector will be addressed easily through close monitoring, stakeholder analysis and effective dissemination of information. The consortium members should join food security clusters existing in the different counties.

The design of the project was based on the baseline study, which was conducted in the project locations. The detailed baseline survey and communities' needs helped Cordaid and its partners to identify appropriate and context specific and relevant interventions to address the identified needs.

The Final inception report for Food Security through Agribusiness in South Sudan (SSADP II) was released in February 2019. This report was intended to brief the Embassy on the key activities undertaken by implementing agencies (Cordaid, SPARK and Agriterra) from August 2018 to January 31, 2019 and to highlight suggested changes to the initial programme proposal.

During this period, the project finalized the following key inception phase activities: County selection and target groups selection criteria, updated the result chain framework, log frame and five years detail implementation plan. The project also developed implementation strategies and approaches, conducted the baseline survey and gender analysis, developed monitoring indicators, and gender action plan. Similarly, the project identified Value Chains and potential market outlets, including the input supply system and price trend of the selected sub sectors. Risk and context analysis developed Revolving Loan Fund Eligibility Criteria, office setup in the selected counties, staff recruitment and procurement of furniture, vehicles and motorbikes as well as identifying Farmer Field Schools, VEMSAs, Cooperatives, MSMEs and Finance Service Providers at County level.

#### 4.4 Efficiency

Evaluating efficiency of the project requires assessing how the project performs in terms of planned schedules and allocated budget by looking at how the project has been using resources effectively to deliver its target results and objectives. The efficiency parameter evaluates whether the targeted project outputs were achieved within budget and schedule. The efficiency with which the project was

implemented was generally high as indicated below with respect to planning, budgeting, monitoring and management of financial, human and other resources and all appropriate management tools were used.

#### 4.4.1 Implementation against the work plan schedules

**Table 4: Activities implemented with the different groups**

Beneficiary Groups	Types of activities implemented
FEMA	Best agricultural practices training, Loan for the Group, Seeds and Tools
MSMEs	Loan, Business plan training, agribusiness training and coaching's
VEMSA	Tools( saving Boxes, record books, individual saving book, calculators and the saving dishes and saving equipment's), Business training and saving skills
Farmers and Agribusiness	Trainings of best agronomic practices, seeds and tools, post-harvest, value addition training and marketing as well as Business plan writing. Some benefited from Loan from RUFI.

In Bor, the project started in April 2019 and the resources were adequate for the start-up, seeds such as sorghum and G/nuts were availed timely to the farmers. Farmer's field schools were established which we call as demo sites and the Staffs were deployed timely.

In Bor County, according to the Project Officer, the types of inputs and services that were provided to farmers' and agribusinesses (MSMEs, Cooperative, FEMA and VEMSA) were: capacity build on business skills and on farming as a business, coaching on governance, development of bylaws, establishment of Farmer Field Schools (FFSs) and training on GAP such as row planting techniques, post harvesting handling, pest and disease control skills and weed management. The inputs which are of acceptable quality were delivered to project site timely and they include; crops and vegetables seeds, farm tools, and start-up kits for VEMSA (box with padlocks and keys, counter books for record keeping and , bowel for counting money, pass book, ruler and calculator. At Yambio Field Office, The project started the actual operations in 2019 despite the challenge of transport at the beginning, but later 4 plus 2 more motor bikes were procured to facilitate field work.

The types of inputs and services that were provided to farmers and agribusiness (MSMEs, Cooperatives, FEMA and VEMSA includes, quality maize, groundnut, assorted vegetable seeds, farming tools, VEMSA tool kits, Access to loan from RUFU, grants to MSMEs, Value addition machines to Coops, Joint warehouse construction, renovation of 6 existing stores to Coops, construction of CMDRR wells and various trainings on good agronomic practices, post-harvest handling, Business skills trainings, Covid-19 control measures to CMDRR groups. The inputs were of good quality and were verified by State Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (SMOAF) and were delivered to project site timely.

#### **4.4.2 Quality of project management/Project Coordination**

The project overall coordination is led by Cordaid, through a Project Coordination Team comprising a Senior Project Manager, Micro-finance Specialist and Agronomist & Value chain (AVC) Specialist, Senior Finance Controller and MEAL Manager based in Juba with frequent travel to the field as well as full time field office coordinators in Yambio, Torit and Bor.

Cordaid South Sudan Country Director is the Project Owner, Senior Project manager is the Project Lead and focal point of the consortium. The project is governed and coordinated by a Steering Committee (SC), Project Working Group Team (PWGT) and Technical Team (TT). The Steering Committee (SC) comprises of two levels of membership – decision making and non-voting members from Consortium Partners including EKN and Global Office. Cordaid South Sudan Country Director is the chair and project owner. The SC is the highest decision maker of the project that approves and endorses project annual plans and budgets. In addition, the SC guides, follows and ensures the project is following the Donor requirements, GoSS and contract terms signed among consortium partners. The project enhances team integration and communication, timely IATI reporting as well as following common project approaches and meet twice a year.

The Project Working Group Team (PWGT) consists of the Senior Project Manager, Micro-finance Specialist, Agronomist & Value Chain Specialist, and Resilience and Livelihood Programme Manager from Cordaid and Project Coordinator from SPARK and Business Advisor from Agriterra. The Senior Project Manager is the Chair and project leader. The PWGT prepares annual detail implementation plan, annual budget, implementation modalities, strategies, reporting, communication, capacity building and county level staff integration and coordination and ensures that they are adhered to, in addition to coordinating the running of the project.

The Technical Team (TT) comprises the Field Office Coordinator, Project Officer, Extension Workers, and Finance & Admin Officer (Representing Cordaid); SSAPU Field Facilitators (Representing Agriterra); Business Support Officer (Representing SPARK) and Local Partners Project Officer. TT is the formal technical team in the target counties who are mandated with implementation of the day-to-day activities of the project. The TT prepares county level monthly detail implementation plan with required budget and support. The Field Office Coordinator is the focal point of the consortium at State and County levels.

#### 4.4.3 Coordination with other programmes

In an interview with a project Officer in Torit, he mentioned that "... the project is coordinating well with other partners working in the food security sector such as Care International, Caritas Luxemburg, Global aim, VSF Germany, Caritas Switzerland , Base net, AVSI and Welt hunger." He continued to say that "...coordination is done within the FSL cluster with coordination meetings chaired by UNFAO and we ensure that the project is represented in all the coordination meetings".

In a KII with the NGO partner in Torit County, Eastern Equatoria State, he said, the lead agency for FSL is CORDAID and the role of the relevant Ministries is to support and ensure smooth project implementation as well as provide security updates on all the project implementation areas.

Cordaid works with Rural Development Action Aid (RDAA), Church & Development (C&D) and Global Aim as implementing partners in Bor, Yambio and Torit respectively, whereas Agriterra and South Sudan Agricultural Producers Union (SSAPU) is linked to support cooperatives in South Sudan (any activity in South Sudan of Agriterra and SSAPU is linked) and SPARK has engaged the South-Sudanese consultancy firm Agro-Premium Premium Agro-Consult for agri-business development. Cordaid is the main International partner of Rural Finance Institution (RUFII), and in the SSADP II, but RUFII has also linkages with SPARK and Agriterra.

In Yambio, there are organizations working in Food Security and Livelihoods, Income Generating and Job creation for agribusiness such as World Vision, Star Trust Organization (STO) and other UN agencies such as FAO and WFP. The coordination with other development actors in FSL, Health and Nutrition, is said to be effective with all the required mechanisms in place. These include the monthly FSL cluster meetings held in collaboration with the SMOAF, FSL joint field visits by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to project sites, evaluation of SSADP II project during different trainings/workshops held with relevant Government stakeholders have all been key in ensuring smooth project implementation.

Additionally, the KII with the NGO partner in Torit County, Eastern Equatorial state, revealed that the work of the consortium members had contributed a lot to the current successes so far achieved. He however noted that coverage of the project coverage is very limited and this was causing conflict among beneficiary groups and those who did not benefit.

#### **4.4.4 Coordination with government and communities**

The project has been implemented in close collaboration with the relevant Line Ministries of the Government of South Sudan, and key stakeholders, including Local and International NGOs, UN agencies, and the private sector. Besides the three international partners, there are a number of local implementing partners involved. Each international and local implementing partner is responsible for a specific aspect (and approach) of the SSADP II.

County level, Food Security and Livelihood quarterly cluster meetings is chaired by the Director at the County Department of Agriculture. The Food Security & Livelihood National Sub-Cluster at the State is an important avenue for institutions doing Food Security & Livelihood activities to share their contributions allowing partners to leverage resources, this meeting is held monthly at the end of each month.

The Inception phase report additionally, analyzed major agribusiness impediments focusing on selected subsector Value chains, VEMSAs and Cooperatives. It also looked into the developed action research questions and identified key capacity building training materials including analyzing key stakeholders at County and National level and developed partnership with key stakeholders such as UNDP, WFP and FAO and conducted Project Launch event at National Level that involved Relevant line Ministries.

The County Department of Agriculture in the State Ministry of Agriculture in Torit County, Eastern Equatorial State has good working relationship with SSADP II) In an interview with the project staff, the officer mentioned that "...we have had scheduled coordination meetings especially the FSL Cluster meetings that is held monthly." He continued to say that "...the meetings have greatly improved the effectiveness of the project and enhanced project's ability to address real challenges facing the communities as relates to food security". He also noted that, the level of participation of the State Ministry at the community level was minimal making it challenging to identify gaps though the government lens. He did however appreciate government's role in ensuring availability of Extension Workers for the project, establishment of the seed laboratory for testing seed viability.

According to the Project Staff in Yambio, there is positive cooperation and coordination with State Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry/ Cooperative Development and Rural Development, RRC and County Department of Agriculture.

According to the Director General (DG) in the State Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Natural Resources in Yambio, the factors influencing achievement of objectives are; the very good relationship with the government and the implementing partners, trust among the Implementing Partners, Government and Beneficiaries and the excellent communication among them. He continued to say, “.....if you have good communication with partners, beneficiaries and government, the project will succeed and you will have no reasons to fail”.

Other factors that positively affected the project implementation were good cooperation with the local leaders, chiefs, headmen and sub-chiefs, elders, the local government and the County Agriculture Department, the support of the community and the farmers (groups and cooperatives) and the willingness and commitment to engage in agribusiness and the availability of labor for the farming activities in the communities.

He continued to mention potential barriers that might have affected implementation of project activities such as insecurity in some parts of the Yambio County, poor road networks and road condition and limited number of Extension Workers and extension services for the farmers in the communities. He also mentioned the challenges with logistics and transportation, poor access to markets and very low buying prices for farm produce both at the farm gates, and markets which potentially affects the project given that farmers may become demotivated as a result of reduced incomes from the sale of their.

Chiefs were also involved in the selection of the beneficiaries highlighting a community-centered approach, which made the whole work easy.

#### **4.4.5 Risk management**

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 did unfortunately have a negative impact on the delivery of project targets and goals. Through mitigation measures, the impact was reduced as much as possible. With a significant time left before the project end date, it is anticipated that, the project will be able to catch up and implement outstanding activities in the coming period in order to achieve most of the project’s targets and objectives.

**Table 5: Table: Risk Management**

S/N	Risk Management	Risk mitigation measures
1	Insecurity and armed conflicts in some parts of the Yambio County particularly in RI-Rangu, Nadengere	Some activities were redirected to other safer Payam. Keeping track of security situation updates by UNMISS and UNDSS in the State
2	Challenges with logistics and transportation exacerbated by the poor road networks and road condition, thus project sites inaccessible to project staff during the raining season especially in Torit and Yambio Counties. According to Eden Multi-Purpose Cooperative in Yambio, they face problems in getting agro-inputs into the State due to poor roads infrastructure and high cost of transport, poor storage facilities at the farmers' level and spoilage of crops due to poor post-harvest handling techniques among the communities,	<p>Preposition essential project inputs to target locations, before the peak of the raining season.</p> <p>Provide technical advice to farmers and cooperatives on construction of improved storage facilities and on how to manage the stores to prevent damage and spoilage to stored produce</p> <p>Refresher training to farmers and cooperatives and other common interest groups on improved post-harvest handling techniques</p>
3	Limited number of Extension Workers and extension services for the farmers in the communities especially in Yambio County	The State Ministry of Agriculture to recruit and deploy more extension workers at the Payam level. Whereas CORAID and partners to consider increasing the cash remuneration to the extension workers when carrying outreach extension services to farmers.
4	Slow approval of the business plans by most of implementing partners thus few farmers and business got timely loans	<p>Coraid and implementing partners to expedite the approval of business plans developed by farmers and businesses</p> <p>Coraid and partners to conduct refresher training for farmers and business on development of business plans</p>

5	Drought affected the success of the Food Security through Agribusiness in South Sudan (SSADP II) project in Torit County. Crops were damaged by the prolonged dry spell.	Coraid and partner to procure and introduce drought tolerant maize and sorghum and other crop varieties  Consider focusing extension efforts on root crops such as cassava and sweet potatoes in Torit and Bor Counties; these crops are drought resistant
6	In Bor County, flood destroyed crops of members in the farms and due to insecurity (related to cattle raiding and child abduction people) within the state especially for farms that are far away from villages, farmers work under fear of been attacked and/or killed, This is compounded by the high cost of land clearance and fencing the farms. Crops are destroyed by domestic animals in unfenced fields.	Introduce saline tolerant varieties if cereals and legumes  Assist farmers and common interest groups involved in farming activities to construct earth bunds and dykes to protect crop fields from flood waters.  Consider linking the farmers and cooperatives to WFP food for asset program for land clearance and construction of flood bunds
7	According to Eden Multi-Purpose Cooperative in Yambio, the main problems in selling seeds are the delay in buying by the customers e.g. World Food Programme (WFP) and PG3 Logistics and the lack of seeds treatment chemicals and the lack of seeds branding and packaging materials.	Coraid and partners to lobby with WFP and PG3 Logistics to streamline the procedure for purchase of crops seeds (maize and sorghum) from farmers and cooperatives  Coraid and partners to consider procurement and provision of seed treatment chemicals to farmers and cooperatives to ensure good quality of seeds.
8	On access to finance, the problems are high interest rates i.e. 25% at RUFI and ii) short grace period i.e. one month. A Youth and Women Enterprise (YWE) in Bor County cited the slow methods of processing the	Coraid and partners to lobby with finance services providers to streamline the procedure for processing and disbursement of loans to farmers and businesses.



	loan meant to support farmers and too many requirements needed to obtain the loan for example documents needed, security and guarantees. As a result very few beneficiaries accessing loans.	Train farmers and businesses on the procedures for application of loans and on the documentation, collateral and guarantees required by financial institutions and financial services providers
9	There are also problems that are related to fees and taxes include multiple taxing agencies/institutions and high tax rates in external markets.	Lobby with the relevant State/County authorities to consider reducing and or streamlining the tax regimes for cooperatives and other common interest groups supported by the project.
10	Problems in relation to government policies are mainly; i) monetary and price regulation policies that are detrimental to businesses, ii) unfair cancelation of certificates of registration for business entities, iii) high cost of cooperative registration. For example, 30,000 SSP for local farmers is a problem.	Coraid and partners to lobby with the relevant state/county authorities to consider reducing the high cost for registration of cooperatives
11	COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, was a major challenge, jeopardizing implementation of project activities and the achievement of project targets. In Yambio, Covid-19 pandemic restrictions hindered the coming of farmers together to share their experiences compared to before and this contributed to some delays in implementing project activities	FEMA/Coop group members followed the precautionary measures of COVID-19 such as limiting the number of persons attending a meeting, wearing face mask and regular washing of hands with soap and water while continuing with farming activities.  Sensitize the communities and beneficiaries on COVID 19 and its impact on health of individuals and community members and on how to protect self as well as on avoiding the spread of the virus to others.  Intensifying awareness on infection control

		measures and providing relevant information on prevention and access to vaccination centres by implementing partners involved in the project implementation and engagement with communities.
12	Infestation of the crops by fall armyworm in Yambio County. Similarly in Tori County there were incidences of unspecified pests and diseases on sorghum and maize crops	Refresher training on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and diseases control to farmers, cooperatives and other common interest groups engaged in farming

In Torit, one of the project staff noted that some factors such as availability of farmlands and good response from the community actually influenced and contributed to the achievements of some project results.

In Bor, the project’s major outputs were achieved, and this achievement is attributed to factors such as government support, which the project officer in his interview described as “support which was to the fullest possible extent”. In addition he cited the community’s flexibility to adapt to the projects requirements given that traditionally they are farmers and Bor has very fertile soil that supports agricultural activities very well. Similarly the ready availability of market for the farm products in Bor because of the dense population hence high demand for farm/food crops.

In Yambio, the major factors that influenced the achievement of the objectives were attributed to the ownership of the project by beneficiaries/stakeholders, access to vast fertile land, availability of loans for cooperatives and progressive farmers. In addition, a series of trainings on good agronomic practices, post-harvest handling trainings and Business plans skills trainings were provided for the beneficiaries in addition to the good security in Yambio County.

It is important to note that, COVID-19 remains a major challenge, jeopardizing implementation of project activities; however, the project was flexible enough and adapts mechanisms that encourage business continuity as well as protecting beneficiaries and their families from contracting the deadly virus.

A senior Inspector of Agriculture, indicated that, other factors that contributed to the achievement of the project results were “...organizing beneficiary groups to co-operatives and farmer groups hence making facilitation of work easy. In addition capacity building interventions were provided by many NGOs through agricultural related trainings including Farmers Field Schools (FFS) and on site field visits”. He continued to add that, “...Bor has fertile soils and this supports any agriculture intervention”.

## 4.5 Effectiveness

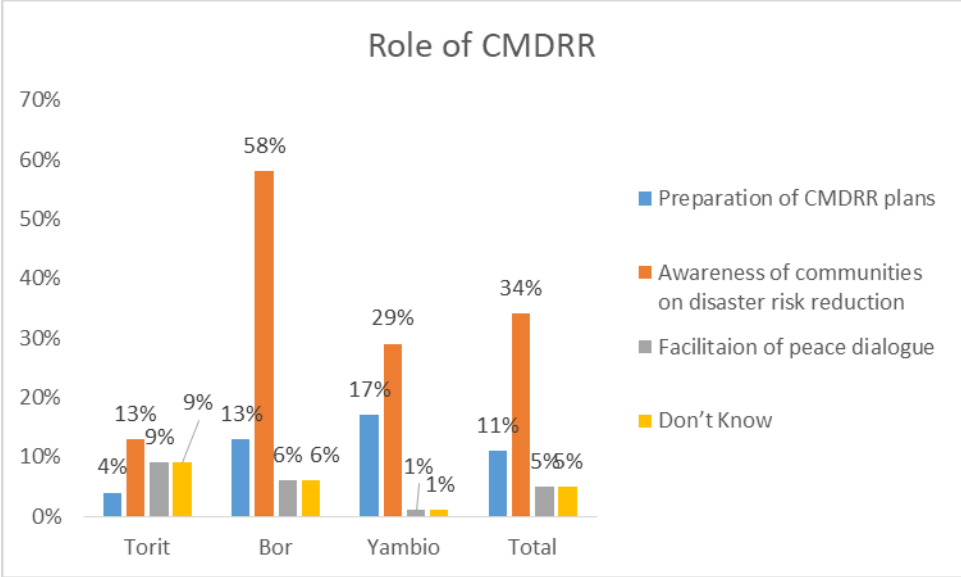
This section looks at the Food Security through Agribusiness in South Sudan Project (SSADP II)” effectiveness in terms of the extent to which planned activities and resulting outputs and outcomes (short term impacts/ immediate effects) were achieved

### 4.5.0 Progress in achievement of Outcome Indicators

**Outcome A: Farmers and Agri-businesses more resilient to shocks and hazards – both natural and conflict**

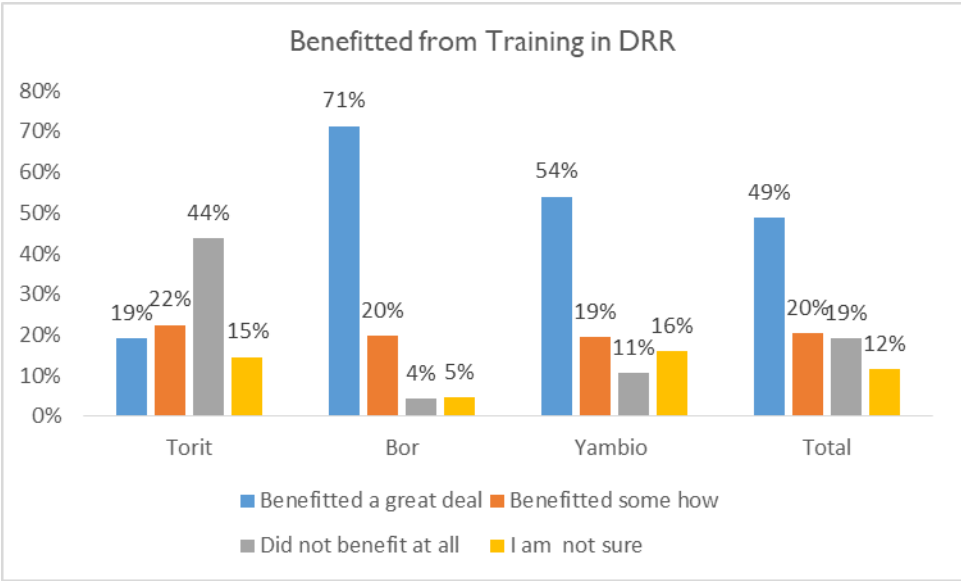
#### 4.5.1 Outcome Indicator AI: Enhanced DRR and trust in targeted communities

The presence of CMDRR Committee in their locations was mentioned by 51% of the respondents with a higher percentage of 78% in Bor County. On the activities of the CMDRR, 34% and 11% of respondents mentioned awareness of communities on disaster risk reduction and preparation of CMDRR plans. In general, there is 35% Mid-Term finding on Enhanced DRR and trust in targeted communities compared to the baseline finding of 10%, this implies 24% improvement on Enhanced DRR and trust in targeted communities and this could be attributed to the Peace and CMDRR dialogue conducted by committees with neighbouring community as well as Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction Plans & Peace Dialogues Operational by the project.



**Figure 2: Role of DRR**

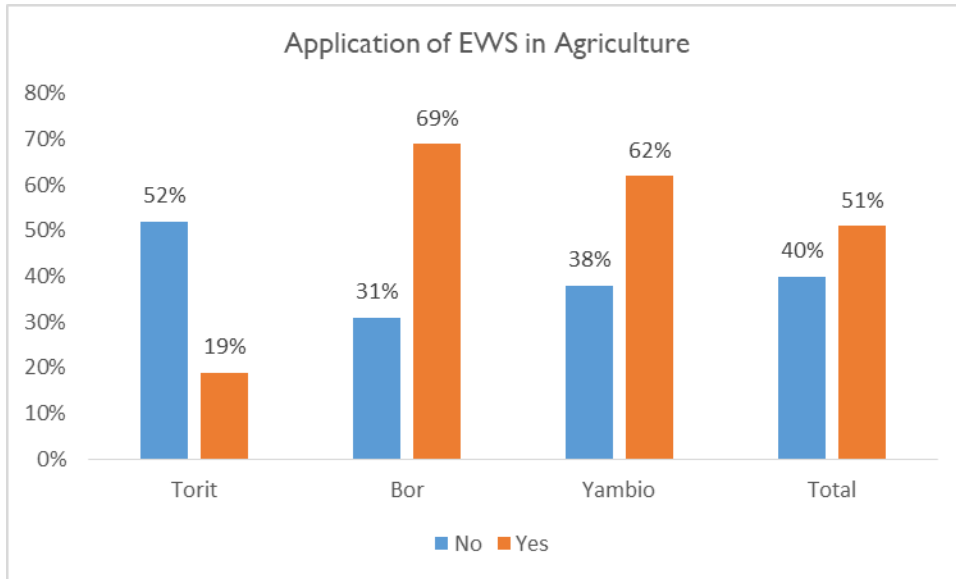
Majority of the total respondents of 49% either benefitted a great deal or benefitted somehow from the training on hazards and risks, disaster preparedness, prevention and coping with the highest percentage in Bor followed by Yambio and Torit, this implies enhanced DRR and trust in targeted communities



**Figure 3: Benefitted from Training in DRR**

About 51% of total households applied the early warning system (EWS) in agriculture compared to only 17% in the baseline. Households received early warning information on early and late rains, drought and

flooding, disease and pests outbreaks, prices and fire outbreaks. The objective of people-centered early warning systems is to empower individuals and communities threatened by hazards to act in sufficient time and in an appropriate manner to reduce the possibility of personal injury, loss of life and damage to property and the environment.



**Figure 4: Application of EWS in Agriculture**

When asked about the Peace and CMDRR/DRR committees, the FGD group in Torit revealed that the committee was formed in **2019** with nine (9) members, comprised of 4 females and 5 males to manage risks such as conflicts, hunger, drought and floods that affect their livelihoods. It was also revealed that the committee members received awareness on hazards and risks with emphasis on drought, flood and conflict management, which they said, enhanced their ability to manage some risks such as bush burning and community conflicts. Additionally, the FGD also revealed that communities had reduced on unnecessary bush burning uncontrolled bush burning with the knowledge that these bad practices lead to destruction of trees, crops and the ecosystem at large.

An elderly man in the same FGD said that “...the training empowered us as elders to resolve conflicts among communities, for example the Lopit and the Bira tribes used to fight a lot but after the training we started engaging both tribes in dialogues and this has brought peace, they can now live together in harmony, thanks to the project”.

The same FGD revealed that, to enhance sustainability of results especially peace and harmony among the communities, the community leaders are willing to mobilize support through partnerships to establish a Police station and fencing of the water point to void unnecessary conflicts around the water point”.

In Bor, the FGD with the Peace & CMDRR committee in Kolnyang, one respondent had this to say, “...we used to migrate away during the drought season but after the training we now farm along the river banks and do watering of crops which has improved our livelihoods at household level”. Another female respondent said that “... we never knew that agriculture can be practiced as a business in addition to subsistence forming, I am earning money from agriculture now”. She said with a beaming smile.

Similarly, another respondent in the same FGD mentioned that “...we had a lot of problems between farmers and cattle keepers, and with the training we are able to dialogue and resolve these conflicts, particularly the training on conflict resolution conducted by Cordaid has brought peace and communities are able to focus on positive aspects that enhance their co-existence”

When asked about hazards affecting them, the respondents mentioned COVID-19, fall army worm and flooding as the most common hazards in their areas; whereas Bor suffered and is still suffering from the impact of prolonged flooding, the most common hazard in Yambio is said to be the fall army worm. Other hazards such as conflicts (Cattle rustling, child abduction, and sub national violence) though cut across all the assessed areas have scored relatively low, but may have prolonged effects on the communities

The interview with the Peace and CMDRR Committee in Torit County, revealed that, the training on hazard and risk mitigation was very relevant to their situation in a way that, they were able to solve some cases of conflict in the community and the warring parties are now able to live in harmony in the community with one another. One respondent also had this to say, “.....the knowledge we acquired changed our lives in a meaningful way, because we became champions of risk management in our communities and we are able to prevent the community from unnecessary actions including deforestation”.

One particular youth member cited that, he was invited to a radio station 90.5 Green FM to raise awareness to the community of Torit on disaster management and that was only possible because of the knowledge he acquired from the project. They also said that from the knowledge they acquired, they

were able to prevent the community from unnecessary bush burning which could result in destruction of trees, crops and ecosystem. The Peace and CMDRR Committees were able to conduct dialogue with the neighboring communities. One particular elderly man mentioned that he was able to mediate conflict and antagonist relationship between the Lopit and the Bira tribe of Eastern Equatoria State. He continued to mention that, "...through the knowledge we acquired from the project, we were able to dialogue between the two communities with the help of a particular peace building NGO and now the two communities are living in harmony".

Others members also said that they facilitated dialogue and reconciliation between families in the communities especially in cases of girl elopement, which often causes conflict and even at times death, as such in order to solve such cases, dialogue remains key in resolving of such conflicts.

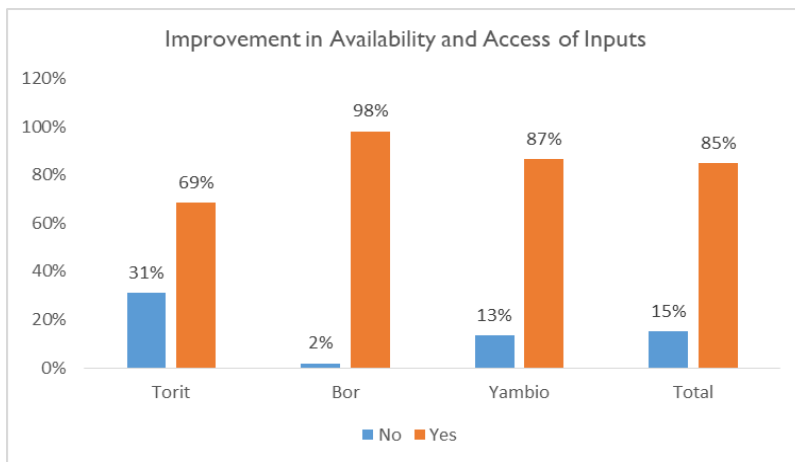
However, In a FGD with group of peace and CMDRR committee In Torit County, the respondents lamented that they faced challenges in conducting their duties in the villages due to Covid-19 restriction/protocols as relates to public gathering. Another female member said that, "...we don't have any means of transport to facilitate our movements especially if conflict is happening far away from our location". Another serious challenge which they said affected their work relates to mobilisation for the peace dialogues. A female committee member said that "...in every dialogue, people expect to eat and if the families are poor, they refer the burden to the group". Another particular male youth said that, "...some conflicts are deeply rooted into cultural believes, values, and as such become extremely challenging to resolve".

#### **4.5.2 Outcome Indicator A2: Continued Action Research Supporting Informed Decision Making**

According to the findings of the mid-term evaluation only 25% (1) of the overall target of 4 lessons learnt were incorporated in Project Implementation through evidence-based action research. Continued Action Research Supporting Informed Decision Making. The Action Research (AR) planned for the year 2019, changed into a medium- and long-term outcomes indicator Study because of COVID-19 travel restrictions. An external professional consultant from the Netherlands was recruited to lead and conduct the study. The objective of the outcome survey was to provide insightful information of the project achievements in relations to the medium and long-term outcomes.

### 4.5.3 Medium Term Outcome B1: Availability of and Access to Agricultural Inputs (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, tools) ensured

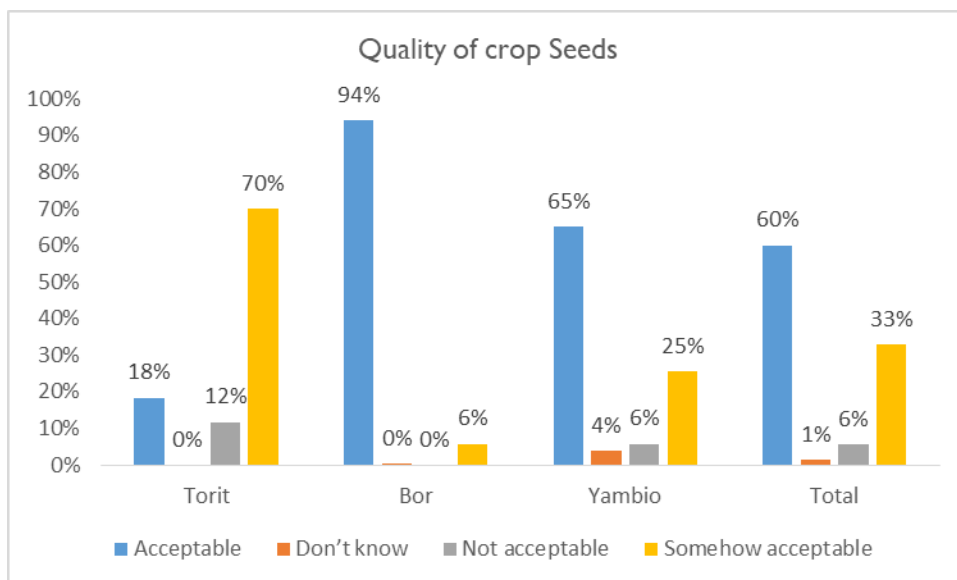
When asked whether the HHs agreed that they have improvement in availability and access of agricultural input in the past 12 months, 85% of the total respondents said yes with the highest percentage in Bor at 98% followed by Yambio at 87% and Torit at 69%. This could be attributed to the distribution channels established for agricultural production operational for farmers up to the village level, total value of inputs increased (seeds, HST, fertilizer and tools) supplied to the farmers by private input suppliers through different channels and Agro input dealers established by the project.



**Figure 5: Improvement in Availability and Access of Inputs**

Plurality of total respondents of 60% mentioned that the seeds distributed are of acceptable quality, with the highest percentage in Bor at 94%, followed by Yambio at 65% and surprisingly, only 18% of the total respondents in Torit believe that the seeds are of acceptable quality.





**Figure 6: Quality of Crops Seeds**

On the production of seeds and planting materials, about 87% of households received training from the project on improved seed production; 98% of households in Bor and 93% in Yambio County. The production of improved maize and groundnuts seeds were reported by 54% and 47% of farmers respectively, whereas 37% produced improved sorghum seeds and only 5% mentioned the production of improved cassava stalks.

Similarly, 92% of the total respondents are fully satisfied, moderately satisfied and a little satisfied with the seeds they received from the project with the highest level of fully satisfied in Bor at 72%.

**Table 6: Level of satisfaction with the seeds you received from the project**

Level of satisfaction	Torit	Bor	Yambio	Total
A little satisfied	9%	0%	6%	5%
Don't know	0%	0%	1%	0%
Fully satisfied	13%	72%	46%	44%
Moderately satisfied	71%	27%	34%	43%
Neutral	3%	1%	10%	5%
Totally unsatisfied	5%	0%	3%	2%

Majority of total respondents of 91% received hoes, 46% received maloda, 50% planting rope, 75% rake and 36% tape measure with only 54% of the total respondents fully satisfied with the quality of the tools,

**Table 7: Tools received from the SSADP II project**

Tools received from the SSADP II	Torit	Bor	Yambio	Total
Hoes	91%	98%	85%	91%
Maloda	28%	84%	26%	46%
Planting rope	53%	47%	50%	50%
Rake	70%	89%	66%	75%
Tape Measure	38%	33%	36%	36%

According to a FDG with a FEMA in Yambio County, each group received production kits comprising of 750kgs of maize, assorted farm tools (5 hoes, 3 machetes, 3 rakes etc.) and record book. They received training on deep ploughing at least 40” and on how to identify and control Fall army worms by disinfection /fumigation of crops with help of locally available insecticides/pesticides (such as Neem and other local plant extracts), land preparation, planting and weeding and harvesting.

The group utilized the knowledge and skills acquired and applied it in the farming activities. Hence, there were increased yields and harvests. “...we gained more knowledge and skills which helped us improve on our farming practices, this has led to better harvests”. Said a female member hence further confirming the relevance of the trainings as well as level of satisfaction.

On trainings, an average 83% of respondents said that they received training services/technical advice on the production of the crops that they produced; 357 (98%) of households in Bor, 344 (94%) in Yambio and 192 (56%) in Torit County.

**Table 8: Training Received**

Received nay training on the crops you produced	County							
	Torit		Bor		Yambio		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
No	151	44%	9	2%	21	6%	181	17%
Yes	192	56%	357	98%	344	94%	893	83%

The training on climate smart agricultural practices included; reduced destruction of forest (no cutting of big trees), no unnecessary bush burning, and afforestation, regulated grass cutting and other building materials in the forests. “.....we learned a lot from the farmers’ field school” said a female group member. We learned some basic agronomic practices such as planting, weeding, row planting, post-harvest handling, pests and diseases control etc., said Chairperson-Farmer Economic and Marketing Association.

The FGD with FEMA in Bor County confirmed that they received training on good agricultural practices as well as on farming as a business, resulting into higher sales due to the linkage to the market. They also mentioned that, the initial challenges of post-harvest and storage losses were resolved with the availability of plastic sheets and sacks from Cordaid during training sessions. According to FEMA group, their food security situation has improved since then as they can now afford three meals a day in comparison to only one before the project. A youth respondent in the same FGD had this to say “...the project has enabled us to diversify our livelihoods, for example, I was able to buy cows from the money I got from crop production, now I own cows which I didn’t have before”. Similarly, other members of the group were also proud to shout that they too bought cows from the sale of their crops.

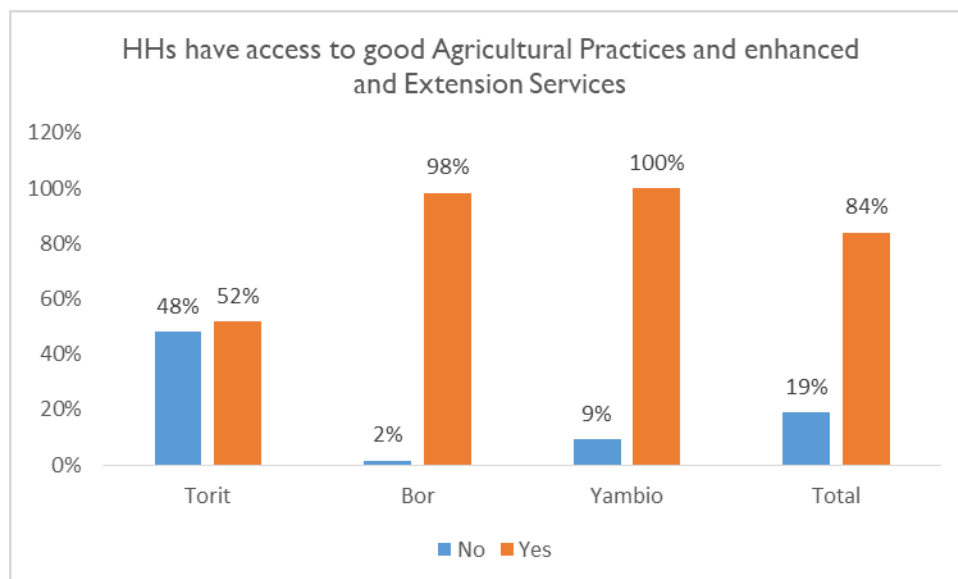
Director General in the State Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Environment (SMAF&E) in Yambio mentioned during a KIII that, they received seed testing equipment from the SSADP II and a place was allocated by the State Ministry for the seed testing facility. The seed testing facility will be set up as soon as possible now that the equipment is available. Training of the technical personnel and management of the facility will be coordinated with the partners.

The KII with the Officer at the County Agricultural Department in Torit revealed a good working relationship between Cordaid and the CAD. The Officer had this to say “... I am very aware of the project and we have been working hand in hand with the project staff, as government we are happy as the project established a local seed testing facility in the County and this has eased assessing the quality of seeds”. He continued to say that “...I personally used the facility to conduct seed testing for sorghum, maize, groundnuts and simsim but I was not able to issue certification as the government lacks the certificates”.

In, Bor County, according to Senior Inspector of Agriculture in the State Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Cordaid establish seed testing facility in the Ministry but it is incomplete, though the house structure was raised in 2021.

#### 4.5.4 Outcome Indicator B2: Good Agricultural Practices Enhanced and Extension Services Improved.

The evaluation found that, 84 %, of households or any members of the household had access to training on good Agricultural Practices and enhanced and Extension Services compared to baseline finding of 10%, this implies 74% improvement, this could be attributed to the interventions of the project



**Figure 7: Access to good agricultural practices**

The maize yield improved from 53% to 55% between seasons one and two, equally there was improvement in yield of sorghum from 23% to 25% between the two seasons, however, the yields of groundnuts reduced from 23% in season one to only 10% in season two. Equally cassava yield reduced from 2% to 1% between the two seasons

**Table 9: Crop yields**

Season 1	Torit (Yields=MT)		% crop yield	Bor (Yields=MT)		% crop yield	Yambio (Yields=MT)		% crop yield	Total Yields in MT	
	Maize	4494	4	14%	32860	33	11%	415297	415	77%	453
Sorghum	8385	8	27%	182200	182	63%	6881	7	1%	197	23%
Groundnuts	17395	17	65%	71604	72	28%	106938	107	85%	196	23%
Cassava	821	1	3%	1000	1	0%	11921	12	2%	14	2%
Season 2	Torit (Yields=MT)		% crop yield	Bor (Yields=MT)		% crop yield	Yambio (Yields=MT)		% crop yield	Total Yields in MT	
Maize	1653	1.7	12%	43470	43	14%	432095	432	91%	477	55%

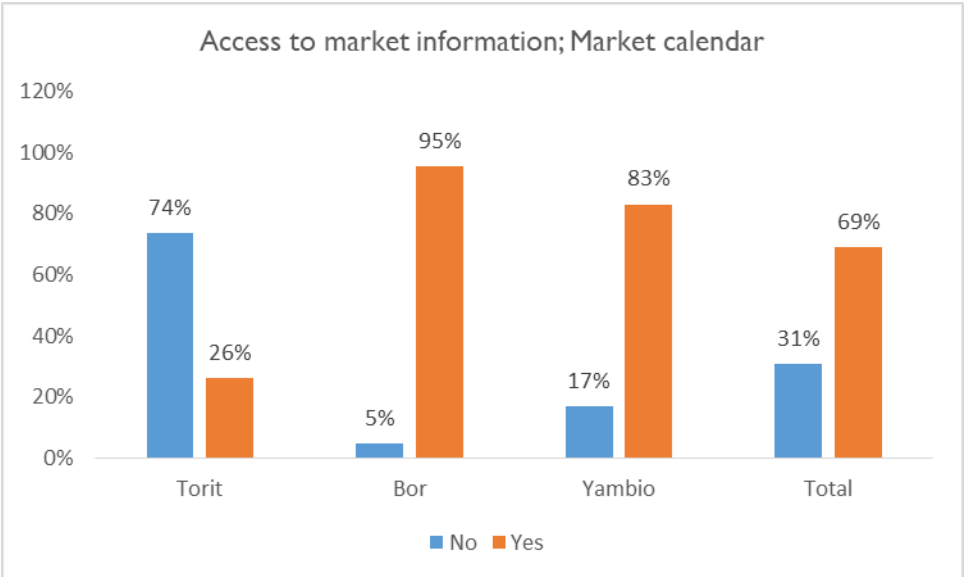
Sorghum	3950	4.0	29%	206390	206	68%	4260	4	1%	215	25%
Groundnuts	7481	7.5	55%	51871	52	17%	30944	31	7%	90	10%
Cassava	463	0.5	3%	2500	3	1%	5362	5	1%	8	1%

The findings above were confirmed during a FGD with members of MSMEs in Bor where the members said that, they received training from Cordaid and partners on good agricultural practices. A male member mentioned that “...initially we did not know about smart agricultural practices but after the training, we learnt how rows and crop spacing can improve agricultural yields, thanks to Cordaid for the training”. Surprisingly the FEMA group in Torit, Nyong said that they did not receive any training on climate change adaptation and resilience in past 12 months

When asked about the level of satisfaction assess regarding knowledge and skills they obtained from the training provided, a male respondent in the same FGD had this to say “...we truly appreciate the knowledge and skills we have obtained from the trainings, imagine our crops have a very high probability of yielding as compared to before when we used the old broadcasting method”. Another female respondent added that “...even our profit margin from the sales of crops has greatly increased”.

#### **4.5.5 Outcome Indicator CI: Adequate and relevant Market Information Accessible and Available for Farmers and Agri-businesses**

When asked whether the respondents have access to market information; Market calendar (shows which inputs and which products are in the market before and after harvest). 69% of the total respondents said yes compared to the baseline finding of 56%, this implies 13% improvement market information. With the highest percentage in Bor at 95% followed by Yambio at 83% with Torit only at 26%. This could be attributed to the project activities such as; market and cropping calendars finished and linked to app/market data base, market messages and cropping calendars shared by extension workers and market messages and cropping calendars broadcasted through local radios.



**Figure 8: Access to market information (Market Calendar)**

The above finding is consistent with findings from the FGD in Nyong Torit where the group was asked about access to agribusiness information in the past 12 months. The FGD members in Nyong Payam mentioned that they didn't have access to agribusiness information in the past 12 months". A female member in the same FGD had this to say "...information is key for agribusiness to prosper and in the absence of information we have not been able to achieve our objectives, I hope that going forward the project can assist in ensuring that we have the required information to help guide our businesses". However, the story was different for MSME in Bor who confirmed that unlike other beneficiaries in

Torit, they had access to information on seed crops, availability of inputs and their prices, which is very critical for business and this helped them to adjust prices their selling prices accordingly hence making good profits from sales.

On access to markets, 60% of respondents said that they have access to formal<sup>2</sup> markets and that the major market outlets for their crops were local market at 44% and NGOs and local market at 12%. Access to formal markets were higher in Bor County than in Torit and Yambio Counties as shown in the below Table. Similarly local markets (84%) and NGOs and local markets (30%) were the main outlets for farmers in Yambio compared to the situation for farmers in Torit and Bor. Whereas, Cooperative Society and local market were major market for about 8% of farmers in Bor County.

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**Table 10: The major outlet for the crops you produced and sold**

The major outlet for the crops	Torit	Bor	Yambio	Total
Local market	29%	18%	84%	44%
Cooperative Society and local market	3%	8%	2%	4%
Did not sell	13%	7%	1%	7%
NGO and Local market	0%	5%	30%	12%

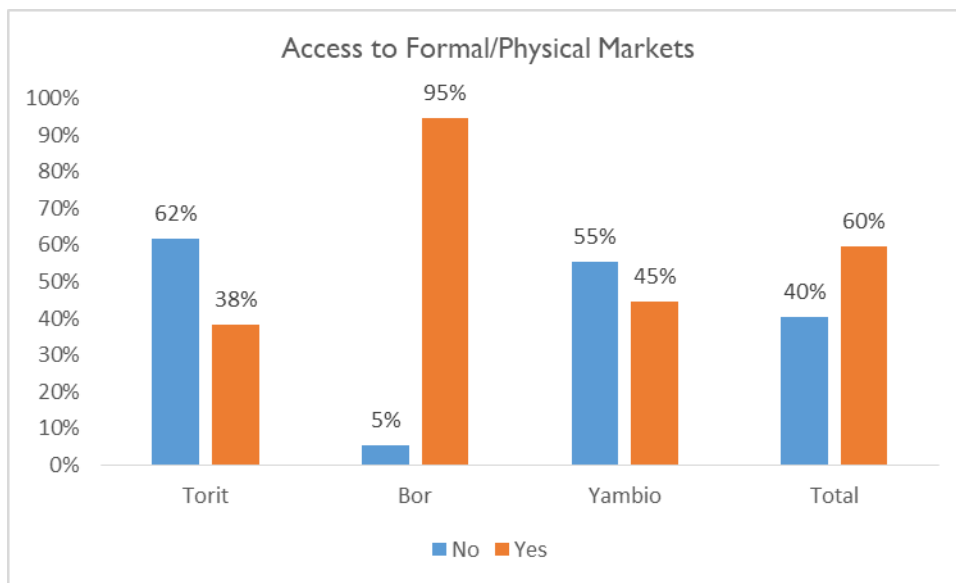
On pricing, 84% of respondents said that they are the ones who determine prices of their produce and that the decision to sell the product is made by the him/she/respondent at 41% followed by Partner/Spouse (26%) and self and partner/spouse jointly at 20%.

<sup>2</sup> In formal markets, we assume sellers can publicly advertise their prices and locations, whereas in informal markets, sellers need to trade through bilateral bargaining so as to remain anonymous from the taxing authority.

During a FGD with members of MSMEs in Bor County, it was revealed that the members visit the market to obtain information about cropping calendars and in Radio Jonglei there is a programme organised by Cordaid under (SSADP II) which broadcasts market information on how to make market work for the poor.

### 5.5.6 Outcome Indicator C2: Improved post-harvest handling and physical market infrastructure

When asked the respondents have improved access to formal markets (each seller has a fixed location; order to attract buyers, formal sellers advertise their posted price and location) for your agricultural produce, 60% of the total respondents said yes with 40% having no access to physical market infrastructure with the highest percentage of no access to markets infrastructure in Torit at 62% followed by Yambio at 55%. Bor has a poor access to market with only 5% having to access to physical markets.

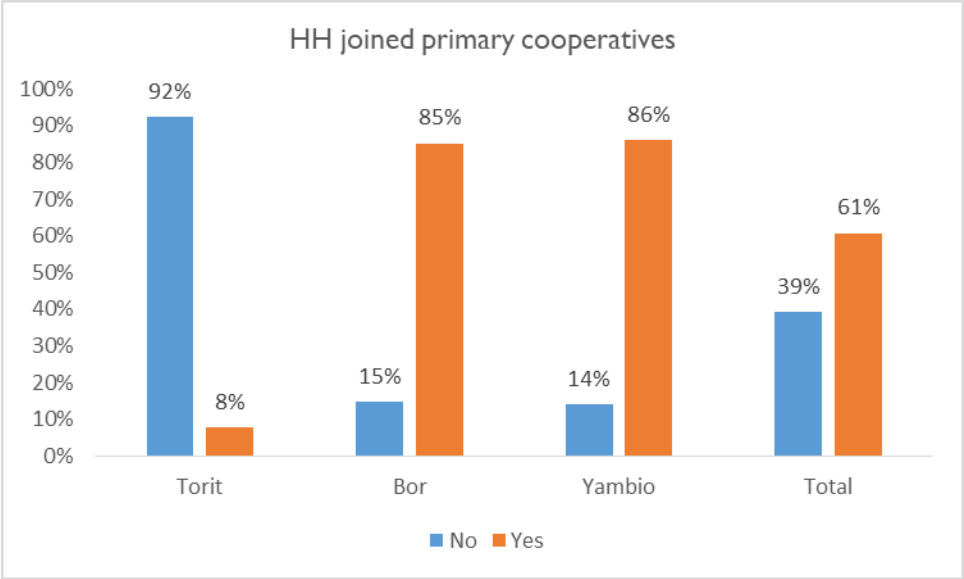


**Figure 9: Access to formal/Physical Markets**

### 4.5.7 Outcome Indicator C3: Market Linkages Enhanced through Cooperatives/ Associations/ Farmer Organizations

The evaluation found that, 61% of the survey respondents joined primary cooperatives with the highest percentages in Yambio and Bor at 86% and 85% respectively. This could be attributed to farmer who have access to services provided by ALOs/ extension workers and Value Chains actors linked with each other by the project.





**Figure 10: HHs who joined Cooperatives**

Majority of the survey respondents of 76% either benefited a great deal or somehow from being a member of the primary cooperative with only 16% of the respondents mentioning that they did not benefit from being a member of primary cooperatives.

**Table 11: Benefitted from being a member of the primary Cooperative**

Benefitted	Torit	Bor	Yambio	Total
Benefitted a great deal	20%	77%	76%	58%
Benefitted some how	22%	16%	15%	18%
Did not benefit at all	41%	4%	4%	16%
I am not sure	16%	3%	5%	8%

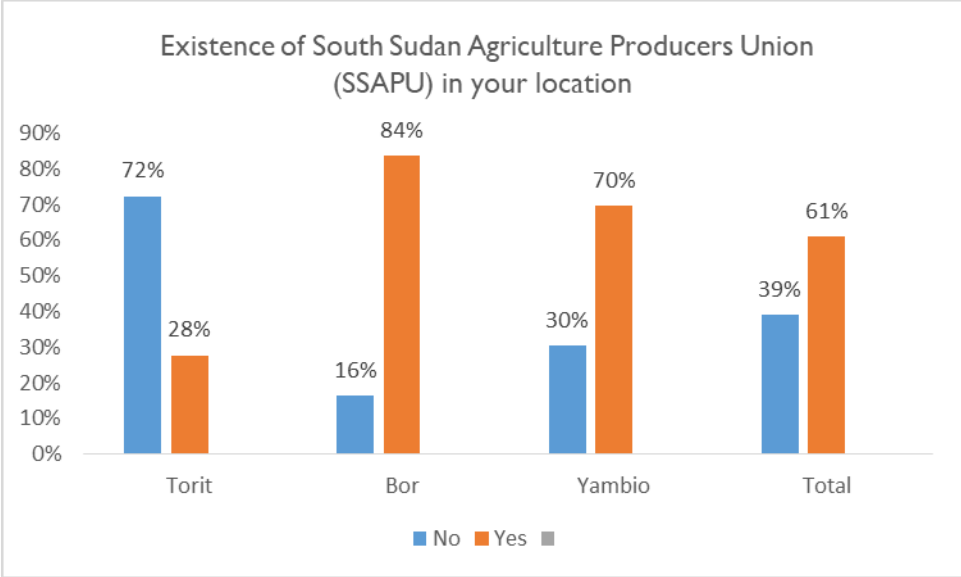
In terms of challenges, the FGD with the Cooperative Society members revealed that, "... they lacked storage facilities for members to store their produce, inadequate transport from the farm to the store and to the market, bad relationship between the cooperative and the government, insecurity as a result of the communal conflicts, price fluctuations, natural disasters such as the weather change, late supply of seeds by the partners, weed such as striker destroys crops such as sorghum, roaming animals destroying crops and finally, farmers don't have grants to support them".

Similarly, the KII with the Field Office Coordinator for SSADP II in Torit agreed with the above findings noting that many aspects of the project had not worked well. He attributed these short falls to the following

- Expression of interest for grant allocation was challenged because business entrepreneurs in Torit said the requirements for qualification were too stringent and many could not qualify within the short time of period required.
- The Grant allocation to VEMSAs meant to kick start savings and borrowings was delayed because the business plans developed by VEMSAs have not been processed.
- The project had intended to use PICs bags as post-harvest technologies (PHH) for use by farmers, however, but this was not rolled out in the Counties.
- The Peer to peer revolving fund for VEMSAs, FEMAs and Cooperatives were not initiated and rolled out in the County for these groups.
- The construction and renovation of stores/warehouses for Cooperatives were not done, as costs for construction and renovation were higher than the planned budget.
- Cordaid could not work with a partner in 2020 and 2021 due to irregularities in accountability and quality of work, hence slowing down work among other challenges.

In the same KII, the Project staff revealed that the prospects for improvement remain high if the above hiccups are resolved. He continued to say that "...a lot can be done to improve the project if the current trained staff can be maintained noting the high attrition of staff from the project, increase the number of extension workers and project offices to 8 from 2 including providing support for staff during outreaches". Others mentioned include; Increase the quantities of seeds for farmers from one feddans to two feddans, provision of more trainings and refresher trainings for staffs in the field as well as Increase remunerations for staffs and Cordaid to work with a local partner to accelerate results.

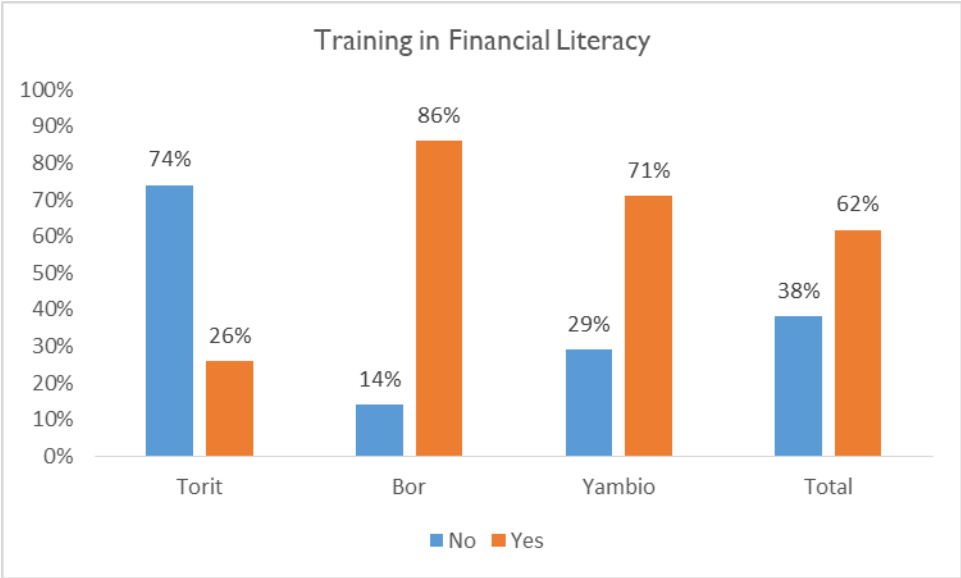
When further asked whether the respondents are aware of the existence of South Sudan Agriculture Producers Union (SSAPU) in your location, 61% of the total respondents said yes with the highest percentage in Bor at 84% followed by Yambio at 70% and only 28% in Torit and 60% of the total respondents agreed that their household was reached by services provided by SSAPU to the farmers in your location.



**Figure 11: Existence of SSAPU**

**4.5.8 Outcome Indicator DI: Cooperatives have adequate organizational and financial management capacity**

When asked whether the HHs received any training in financial literacy over the past 12 months, 62% of the respondents said yes and 40% mentioned that the training was either very effective or effective in improving their ability to manage the income and expense of their business. This could be attributed to cooperatives which have improved FHC scores and cooperatives with positive cost-benefit analysis.



**Figure 12: Training in Financial Literacy**

**Table 12: The training improve your ability to manage the income and expense of your business**

The training improve your ability	Torit	Bor	Yambio	Total
Average	20%	17%	29%	22%
Effective	15%	49%	32%	32%
Not effective	57%	5%	19%	26%
Not effective at all	8%	7%	2%	5%
Very Effective	1%	21%	18%	14%

The MSME's in Bor were trained on how to keep records and coached on how to farm as a business. According to the MSMEs member, the group had received training on Resilience Business Development Services (RBDS), which includes training and coaching from the project on how to care for customers. In addition, they learnt how they can save money from the business as well as on how to keep records. They were also happy to learn that farming can be done as a business with a multiplier factor in elevating hunger hence community remaining food secure.

They also mentioned that they were trained on business plan writing hence they now are able to write fundable business plans; the MSMES developed a 5 years business plan, which according to them is not a common case with most business within Bor town. According to the MSMES member, they received training on Financial Management, which is helping them to keep financial records. In addition, they got skills on leadership management hence giving direction for the organisation as well as got linked to other market actors in the chain of production. The MSMEs received an amount of 500,000 SSP from RUFU under the SSADP II project to enable them start their activities.

Juoman United Cooperative in Bor County according to the members during a FGD benefitted from the SSAPU in the following ways; they received training on Financial Management, got skills on leadership management and through SSAPU they got linked to market. In addition, the primary cooperative received plastic sheets and sacks for packing farm products. Some of the other items they received from SSAPU were a box that contain record book, pass book, calculator, ruler and a plate. The cooperative had access to the services of ALOs/Extension workers through the training on financial management and on GAP such as timely weeding, pest and disease control. According to the members, the financial management training helped them to maintain the books of account, prepare record keeping, recovery

of loan, and ascertain profit per member at the end of accounting period. They confirmed that their sale increased due to the linkage through SSAPU to the market and that their problem of postharvest storage losses was resolved, in particular because of plastic sheets and sacks they received from SSAPU.

According to members of a Primary Cooperative Society in Yambio, they benefited from the services of SAAPU in the following ways: accessed a 6-months loan of 400,000 SSP from Rural Financial Initiative (RUFII) at an interest rate of 8% i.e. 32,000 SSP and in the process too, the cooperative leadership was strengthened and empowered. The cooperative invested this loan in crop production and was able to produce 50 bags of maize and 60 bags of groundnuts of 100 kg each. The members said that they made some savings from sales of produce and from the businesses of the cooperative.

The members of Juoman United Cooperative in Bor County identified the following as the major challenges: wild animals and birds that destroy crops in the field during the formation period, limited plastic sheets as these were only distributed once in a year hence not enough. Drought which affected the whole of Jonglei State was another challenge and the farms were not fenced hence exposing the crops to danger of destruction by domestic animals. There was also the problem of floods that destroyed crops and rendered many people homeless and this was compounded by insecurity where farmers feel very unsafe in their farms for the fear of being abducted or killed by rouge elements from Pibor County.

In a focus group discussion with VEMSA group in Torit County, they said that, the challenges were; the constant absenteeism of some group members from group activities, with the reason that they have failed to raise the savings required, similarly, there are too many funerals colliding with the dates for group activities diverting group members' attention to social events.

The challenges mentioned by VEMSA in Yambio during a FDG were: crop pests and diseases, lack of pesticides and protective wears such as gumboots, raincoats etc., inadequate hand tools, and late distribution of inputs like seeds to the farmers. For example, maize and groundnuts seeds were distributed late to farmers. It was also noted that very few members were selected for trainings, thus creating distrust among the groups. Poor roads and access to markets by farmers, lack of improved storage facilities for farm produce in the community and the lack of access to farming loans in addition to lack of basic services such as school and health care in the community.

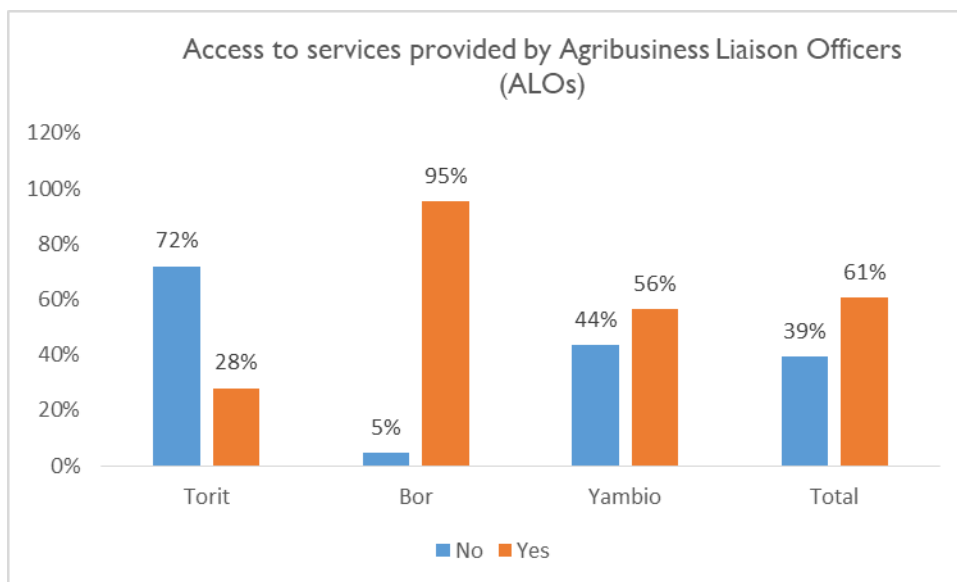
The members of a FEMA in Bor County, Jonglei State identified the following as the major difficulties they encountered: wild animals and birds destroy crops in the fields, farms are very far from water

points hence making vegetable production very difficult especially during drought season. The absence of fencing around farms has exposed crops to damage by domestic animals in addition to insecurity in some areas due to tribal conflicts. They also mentioned floods that destroyed both crops homes rendering many families homeless without food. Absence of ready market for their products noting that they still had unsold sorghum grains in the stores from the previous harvest. In relation to the factors that contributed to proper implementation of the project were, the group mentioned; the provision of several trainings by the project including the provision of value addition machines, and the training for processing groups.

According to the FEMA members in Yambio County, difficulties encountered in the past 12 months were the constraints in transportation of produce from the farm to the household due to bad road conditions, snake bites in the farmlands and destruction of crops for example groundnuts by insects/pests. They also noted the low price of farm produce on the local markets, losses due to low pricing of maize grains and high cost of production as well as transportation to markets. Others included restricted access to the trainings, which were conducted by Cordaid where they noted that only 15 males and 10 females were trained. They mentioned the lack of exchange visits both within the county, state to enhance knowledge and experiences sharing.

#### **4.5.9 Outcome Indicator D2: Women, youth, MSMEs are capable and equipped with skills to start and grow their business**

Majority of 61% of the respondents had access to services provided by Agribusiness Liaison Officers (ALOs)/ extension workers in their HHs compared to the baseline finding of 8%, this implies 53% improvement in skills to start and grow business.



**Figure 13: Access to services provided by ALOs**

When further asked about the extent to which they have benefitted from the services provided by Agribusiness Liaison Officers (ALOs)/ extension workers, 51% mentioned that they benefitted a great deal, 18% somehow benefitted and 20% did not benefit at all.

**Table 13: Extent have you benefitted from the services provided by Agribusiness Liaison Officers (ALOs)/ extension workers.**

Extent have you benefitted	Torit	Bor	Yambio	Total
Benefitted a great deal	19%	80%	50%	51%
Benefitted some how	23%	17%	13%	18%
Did not benefit at all	44%	3%	15%	20%
I am not sure	14%	0%	22%	12%

Majority of 62% of the respondents believed that their income changed now compared to one year before, this could be attributed to the various interventions of the project.

**Table 14: Income change now compared to before the project**

Income change	Torit	Bor	Yambio	Total
Don't know	37%	9%	7%	0%

Income decreased	40%	70%	75%	17%
Increased income	23%	20%	18%	62%
No income change	1%	1%	0%	20%
Not applicable	37%	9%	7%	1%
Don't know	40%	70%	75%	0%

Similarly, the interview with the Liason officer in Torit County, Eastern Equatorial State, noted that beneficiaries were gaining a lot from the project. He said that "... in his interaction with the beneficiaries, many of them were able to confirm that their incomes had increased and now were able to afford other needs such as soap, salt, sugar, and other necessities including using part of the income to pay school fees. Buying clothes and changing diet for their families. He continued to say that "... one day I met a man who said he was from the market to buy fish for his family from the income he got form his business, the man was happy that he could now afford other foods for his family other than vegetables alone, and this made me proud".

According to FGD with a group of groundnut processors in Bor county, the participants said that they received training on improved groundnut production, value addition and preservation practices, as well as in business management, financial record keeping and entrepreneurship. According to them, the training was timely and it is one thing that most farmers would always like. They were also trained on GAP such as; post harvesting handling, pest and disease control skills, integrated pest management and weeds control. They said that. They also received training on loan management policies and in value addition. On benefits from the project, the groundnuts processor said that, they were empowered on how they could manage their finance and how to add value to the groundnuts. They were also trained on integrated pest management.

Members of the Village Economy, Market and Social Association (VEMSA) in Yambio, said that they are engaged in savings or pooling of fund in the past 12 months. The 15 members are involved in pooling of resources to support each other. Each member contributes 300 SSP in a period of a week and gets 4,500 SSP from this pool fund. VEMSA members also got involved in farming activities, engaged in growing maize and groundnuts; they produced 15 bags and 5 bags of maize and groundnuts (100 kg/bag) respectively. However, within the past 12 months, VEMSA didn't sell in the market. "...we are looking



for good market price before selling our produces” said the Chairperson of the VEMSA in Yambio County”.

However, a poultry producer in Torit County, Eastern Equatoria State said that, COVID- 19 interrupted the business since the day old chicks and feeds and other materials like the drugs, vaccine, drinkers are all imported from Uganda, and with the lock down it become increasingly challenges to access these inputs. He also continued to say that “...when I have no money, it becomes difficult to acquire the ingredients in addition to the prices being very high as a result of the high taxes imposed on me”.

He also talked about the high cost of transportation as a result of the poor road network and hence the maize and fish used as ingredients in feed formulation which could be got cheaper end up being very expensive due to elevated transport costs.

The Family Sorghum Processor in Bor, mentioned that they do not have means of transport and this is a very big challenge for them. To the tax authorities in the Town Council they pay a monthly fee of 2,000 SSP. Other challenges faced include the high cost of maintaining the grinding machine and insecurity. Machine maintenance is too costly for the members and as a result, at times you find expenses are more than the income. Floods destroyed all crops and very many people remained homeless and there is no ready market for their products and noted the presence of plenty of unsold sorghum in the stores.

Similarly, according to Eden Multi-Purpose Cooperative, the main problems in selling seeds are the delay in buying by the customers e.g. World Food Programme (WFP) and PG3 Logistics, the humanitarian distribution of seeds to farmers by United Nations-Food and Agricultural Organization (UN-FAO), lack of seed treatment chemicals and the lack of seed branding and packaging materials. The problems in getting agro-inputs include, transportation (poor roads infrastructure and high cost of transport), poor storage facilities at the farmers’ level and spoilage of crops due to poor post-harvest handling techniques among the communities.

There are also problems that are related to fees and taxes including multiple taxing agencies/institutions and high tax rates in external markets. On access to finance, the problems are high interest rates i.e. 25% at RUFU and ii) short grace period i.e. one month. The following are the problems related to the currency exchange and access to hard currency: i) high exchange rates in the parallel markets, ii) inaccessibility to hard currency in the financial institutions like banks, iii) low price for local produces, and iv) highly priced imported products into the country. With the government relations, the problems are mainly; i) monetary and price regulation policies, ii) unfair cancelation of certificates of registration

for business entities, iii) high cost of cooperative registration. For example, 30,000 SSP for local farmers is a problem.

#### **4.5.10 Outcome Indicator D3: Availability of and Access to Appropriate Financial Products and Services Ensured**

The evaluation found that only 35% of the survey respondents have access to and received an appropriate loan product and financial services in the past 12 months compared to the baseline finding of 9%, this implies 26% improvement in availability and accessibility of financial products and the major source of the loan was VEMSA at 11% only followed by RUFU and relatives all at 6% respectively. This could be attributed to agri-businesses owners who have access to and received an appropriate loan products and financial services target farmers and agri-business representatives' financial literacy enhanced.

Mandor VEMSA in Bor County was established in 2018 with a membership of 40 (11 males and 29 females). According to the members, their leaders received training on food security under SSADP11 and the training was categorised based on the position held by the members in the group. The areas covered in the training included: procedures of issuing loan, training on record keeping especially book keeping. The VEMSA members were also trained on the rules and regulations and funding procedures. According to the group members they received crop seeds (sorghum), tools and equipment (wheelbarrow, machetes (Panga), hoes, watering cans, rakes and they were of acceptable quality. In addition, the group received VEMSA inputs for record keeping (books, ruler, calculator, and basin for counting moneybox).

The group members had access to ALOs/Extension workers: they were trained on financial management, on how to manage the loan and on how to engage in farming as a business. The VEMSA members received training on Resilience Business Development Services (RBDS), which includes training, and coaching from the project on how to care for the customers, how you can save from the business and on how to keep records as well as how to farm as a business.

According to the VEMSA members, 4 persons received training and found it beneficial in running their business. The training on financial management is now helping them to keep financial records, they got skills on leadership management hence giving direction for the organisation and they got linked to market and to other market players. The VEMSA members said that they had low savings before the training unlike now where they have observed a steadily increase in their savings in the past 12 months. The minimum amount of savings is 2,200 SSP per each member but the members can pay more than

that amount is they wish too. Some of the income generating activities started by members through the loans include: groundnut processing, tea selling and general merchandise. The members said that all their businesses are doing well.

The major reasons for not taking loans cited by the respondents are; lack of collateral at 25%, lack of knowledge about loans at 20%, lack of required documentation at 16% and the lender was not satisfied with the intended use at 4%.

**Table 15: Reason for not taking the loan**

Reasons for not taking the loan	Torit	Bor	Yambio	Total
I couldn't provide the needed documentation	27%	7%	16%	16%
I didn't have the needed collateral	28%	16%	32%	25%
I don't know	40%	7%	15%	20%
The lender was not satisfied with the intended use	2%	5%	3%	4%

The above finding was corroborated when the evaluation found that only 52% of the survey respondents have access to information from a functional Business Support Ecosystem the past 12 months and only 54% of the respondents are aware of the existence of a functional Business Support Ecosystem established in their location.

According to FGD with a group of YWE, in Bor County, the group received money and they used the money to purchase farm tools, vegetables seeds, fertilizers, hose pipes both inlet and out let. Members received training on vegetable production, nursery bed preparation and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and fertilizer application and business management/record keeping. One member of the group mentioned that, "...due to the material support and training we received, the performance of the business has improve, our sales increased and we were able to repay the loan out of the money we got from the farm and that our livelihood have equally improved".

One of the members said that, "...we have more competitive advantage over those who did not get the fund under Spark from RUFU". According to the members the loan was not enough because they applied for 2 million and were given only given 1million. For those who received the money, they are able to supply Bor market with vegetables such as tomatoes, okra, and water melon and YWE now provides

employment opportunities to community members, improved their livelihoods thus enabling them to support the family needs such as school fees, medical bills, food at home. Most importantly, they are now farming as a business.

However, VEMSA in Torit County in Eastern Equatoria State with 30 members comprised of only females said that, they received materials such as the metallic box, pass and counter books, 3 padlock and bowl but with no financial support from the project. They said the material support was relevant to their needs. Unfortunately, they said they never received training from the project on business skill and entrepreneurship nor on financial literacy in the past 12 months.

The same group lamented that they never received any training on climate change adaptation and resilience nor trained or coached on gender and women empowerment in the past 12 months. On savings, the members said that they have just started saving since it's a new group that was established in 2021 therefore, the accumulated saving from the VEMSA have not been put into use-they have not even started distributing the loans. The group has created a social fund whereby the members pay 200 SSP every two weeks meaning a member pays 400 SSP per month. In addition, members contribute 1,000 SSP every month to the VEMSA savings account. When asked for the purpose of the social fund, they said that, it is meant to support members who enter a social issue such as losing a loved one. Another member also added that, when a member is sick and has no means of treatment, they can also borrow from the social fund and support with the member.

MSMS members complained of not receiving loan from RUFU, pest and diseases affected the crops in the field and the poor access to market due to bad roads.

A groundnut processor in Bor mentioned that, "...I needed the loan so badly to expend my business and I applied for it several times but never succeeded with RUFU". He lamented that he never received any material support or any grants for his business from the project.

Similarly, the challenges mentioned by Mandor VEMSA in Bor County were: the inability of accessing loan to supplement the little they have and that the monthly contribution from members is very small. The destruction to crops by animals and the constant flooding has made the situation worse. They also talked about poor access to markets due to bad roads. A FGD with VEMSA in Yambio also revealed poor market demand due to inadequate buyers, low demand for fruits, groundnuts and post-harvest losses.

In addition, the Youth and Women Enterprise (YWE) members identified the following as the major challenges faced in conducting the business of YWE in Bor County; slow methods of processing the loan meant to support farmers and too many requirements needed to obtain the loan for example documents needed, security and guarantees. Floods destroyed crops of members and insecurity within the State especially for farms that are far away from villages. This, they said was further compounded by the high cost of land clearance and fencing of the farms.

#### 4.6 Impact

The project revealed a huge medium term impact, in the longer term the project is expected to contribute to poverty reduction and increased resilience among vulnerable, food insecure populations in Bor, Yambio and Torit. Besides, the benefits of the project are expected to be sustained by the beneficiaries even after the end of the project.

A male groundnuts processor in Torit County, Eastern Equatoria State said that, he received training on improved groundnuts production, value addition and preservation practices, business management, financial record keeping, and entrepreneurship from the SSADP II project. He acquired knowledge on record keeping and he was able to evaluate his business, he also acquired knowledge on GAP which enabled him to prevent damages during storage due to insect, rats and other losses resulting from bad storage.

In a KII interview with a poultry producer in Torit County, he said that he received financial support in form of loans; a grant of about 550,000 SSP from RUFU. The poultry producer was able to realize profits, which he used to pay his children's' school fees. On technical backstopping, he said that they went through business skills component and he develop a business plan and started the business. SPARK organized the training and it was only done once. Accordingly, he was able develop business plan by himself through the knowledge and skill he acquired through training he received. The producer grinds maize, mixes with fish (daga fish) and uses it to feed his poultry though he doesn't produce poultry feeds for the market due to the costs associated with feed production.

The Family Mirror Sorghum Processors in Bor County was formed in 2021, according to them, one member was sent for training on how to manage business and record keeping; she acquired skills on how to calculate the profit and on how to re-invest the profit back to the business. According to group members, they received a grinding mill from Cordaid under (SSADP II) and that the machine is really very relevant to them. They received regular technical backstopping from the project (Cordaid) on sorghum production, value addition and preservation; they were also trained on value addition and how

to preserve the grinded floor, and pack it. Due to the training, they received on how to operate and maintain the machine, as well as on customer care services, they said, their sales increased. They are now self-reliant and have competitive advantage over those we have not being supported by Cordaid under (SSADP II).

The Paramount Chief in Yambio County said, "...truly my people have benefited from this project, the trainings provided to them with knowledge and skills has made them to grow more food for their families and as well are able to sale the excess food to generate an income". The chief continued to mention that, "...the beneficiaries got farming skills on how to plant vegetables, skills to manage conflicts etc." He added that "...there are more benefits, my people have now engaged in trading in the market which they used not to do before the project and can now see money".

Similarly, in a KII with a religious leader in Torit County, who joined the FEMA group and became the chairperson of the group, said he benefited a lot from the distribution of the seeds, tools and training offered that greatly improved his skill and knowledge.

A member of YWE in Bor County said that those who received the money were able to supply Bor market with vegetables such as tomatoes, okra and water melons.

In Yambio County, FEMA members have learned the basic agronomic practices; planting, weeding, harvesting, post-harvest handling, storage, pests control, correct spacing a few to mention, "...these skills and knowledge have been put into practice in our farming activities", said a female member. The harvests have also improved as most farmers did realize better harvest than in the previous years.

Similarly, a FGD with FEMA in Torit County mentioned that, they were trained on how to plant crops in rows, they saw a great difference in the yields compared to the old broadcasting farming practices. They mentioned that they also benefited from the seeds, tools and knowledge they got from the project.

In Bor County, the involvement in YWE provided employment opportunity to community members and that their livelihoods have changed in a positive way in that they are able to support the family needs such as school fees, medical bills, food at home. According to the members, they are now farming as a business.

In Yambio County, the farmers were trained on climate smart agricultural practices including, reduced destruction of forest (no cutting of big trees), no unnecessary bush burning, and afforestation, and

regulated grass cutting and other building materials in the forests. According to the FEMA members, the application of climate smart agricultural practices has led to improvement in rainfall

#### **4.7 Sustainability**

To the ordinary people/target beneficiary, sustainability is viewed as continuity of service provision and enjoyment of results even in the absence of donor support. This comes with commitment to sustain results through their contributions and commitment from government. However, in a broader sense, sustainability involves a number of inter-related factors, the most important of which are; sustainability/permanence of institutional arrangement and enabling policy environment, sense of ownership of institutions tasked with operation and maintenance in this case the County authorities, capacity of institutions, cost, sources of funding and affordability and other enabling factors (e.g. environmental sustainability, gender, human rights).

##### **4.7.1 Institutional sustainability:**

CMDRR were formed and supported by the FSABSS. The committees were trained and acquainted to lead and facilitate the Participatory Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA) with the community to identify common disaster and risks and to raise community awareness on DRR and to develop Community Led Action Planning (CLAP) with coping and mitigation measures. The capacity building intervention is a major aspect of sustainability for the CMDRR as the right knowledge, skills and attitudes are in position to continue facilitating PDRA with the communities and assist in developing CLAP.

The market-oriented extension services were provided for FEMA members through Farmer-to-Farmer Extension (F2FE) and radio talk show including MyCoop, governance, leadership and action plan preparation training changed farmers' attitude to be business oriented. The established demo sites under FEMA served as learning centers for knowledge sharing and co-learning on GAP, IPM and PHH for target farmers through learning by doing and contributed to demonstrate improved agriculture practices, technologies and to promote climate smart agriculture. The harvesting data collected from farmers groups formed in 2019 revealed that the project contribution is still sustainable.

Cordaid as part of RBDC provided Community-Based Enterprise Development (C-BED) training for representative of Cooperatives on basic business skill and bankable business plan. During the training, the trainees were coached and mentored on business plan preparation and dynamics of cost-benefit analysis. The capacity building interventions for the Cooperatives in a major aspect of sustainability which will enable the Cooperative manage their own affairs in the remaining project life for the social and economic benefits of members. Agriterra has started the restructuring of the cooperatives to form

Unions, and this will increase the ability of the cooperatives to do aggregation at scale, support internal capital formation and plan investment in value addition that will enable the activities to be carried beyond the life of the project.

The amount of loan revolved and mobilised saving by VEMSAs will ensure the results of Access to finance will be sustainable. It is expected that the social and economic status of the FEMA members will significantly improve due to their involvement with the Common Interest Group enterprise- thus enabling them have sustainable livelihoods.

The VEMSA members received training on Resilience Business Development Services (RBDS) which includes training and coaching from the project on how to care for the customers, how you can save from the business and on how to keep records and how to farm as a business. The material support and skills acquired by members on financial management, customer care and leadership management are a form of investment for the VEMSA enabling them to sustainably manage the Association and its finances more effectively overtime.

Some of the income generating activities started by members of a VEMSA in Bor through the loans include: groundnut processing, tea selling and general merchandise. The expected accumulated savings of the members will to a large extent cushion the borrowing requirements of the VEMSA members, this is a major aspect of sustainability for the VEMSA group in the targeted locations.

However, there is the need to continuously build the capacities of the VEMSA to ensure sustainability of their enterprises. The government will have to find ways to provide refresher training and technical backstopping to the members of VEMSA on business management skills and entrepreneurship skills. The government could consider facilitating linking the VEMSA to micro-credit institutions to complement their expected increased needs for borrowed capital by members, especially for larger business undertakings.

The capacity building interventions by the project and the linking of the MSMEs with RUF1 is an important aspect of sustainability for the MSME

In each county the project operationalized and made available the Business Support Centre (BSC) in the project coordination offices in Bor, Torit and Yambio with qualified Business Support Officers (BSO) and the required equipment (such as Laptops) for agribusinesses to visit and seek information and for entrepreneurs to write their business plan.



The BSOs run training on Business Start-up Acceleration (BSA), Business Skill Training (BSTs) for MSMEs and coordinate the ongoing coaching and mentoring of start-ups and MSMEs, these centers are now available for young entrepreneurs to visit and seek information, which can support them to join the programme or receive support in their own business.

SPARK developed two more new technical training manuals to fill knowledge shortfalls of BDAs, YWE and MSMEs skills on basic vegetable production, safe use and handling of agro-chemicals including integrated pest management for vegetable production. It is believed that, the BSC will continue to support developing a database on Value Chain, Entrepreneur and Agribusiness in a sustainable manner.

The presence of Microfinance services providers such as RUFI in the communities enable low-income and poor individuals/households to access loans, save money and obtain other financial services for use in small businesses. The availability of microfinance services provision in a particular location is a form of capital asset/investment; the accumulated savings of RUFI can be tapped by small business for expansion of IGAs to ensure diversified and sustainable livelihoods.

SSAPU Field Facilitators (FFs) and Extension Workers trained Cooperative members directly and through radio talk show supplemented with demonstration on demo plots which belongs to a member of the cooperative or a block farm for the cooperative established for knowledge purposes. As the SSAPU Field Facilitators and Extension Workers have direct link with primary cooperative societies in target and non-target sites, they will continue to train farmers/cooperatives on good agricultural practices.

Also, the SSPU is a vital institution that provides cooperatives and other community based groups with knowledge and skills on improved farming practices and cooperative development and management.

Agriterra has started the restructuring of the cooperatives to form cooperative unions; it is believed that, this will increase the ability of the cooperatives to do aggregation at scale, support internal capital formation and plan investment in value addition that will enable the activities to be carried beyond the life of the project.

The Business Development Advisor trained, coached and mentors YWE on business skill and bankable business plan preparation. The capacity building for the YWE is an important aspect of sustainability for the continued function of the project beyond the project life.

Cordaid and the partners are implementing all the project activities in close collaboration with the State Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Environment. The SMAF&E provides Extension Workers to support the implementation of the project in the communities, the technical personnel of the Ministries are also involved in this project which is a good sustainability plan.

The Extension Workers are improving the skills as they facilitate trainings and provide extension services to the farmers, which is likely to continue even after the end of the project period.

The involvement of the Ministry staff in training and outreach extension services to farmers and the provision of the seed testing equipment are important aspects of sustainability of the project since, the extension staff acquired the knowledge, attitudes and technical skills from the trainings and workshop. However, there are no technical personnel trained to work with the seeds testing equipment. There is the need for Cordaid and partners and other development actors to continue providing material, financial and technical backstopping to ensure sustainability of extension services delivery and seeds testing facilities.

Working with local partners such as national NGOs, RUFU, SSAPU and Premium Agro Consult and building their capacity to be a strategic partner will increase the project outreach and ensure the sustainability and scale up of the results even after the end of project life.

A sorghum grain processor in Bor County received grinding mill from Cordaid under (SSADP II) and members of the group were trained on business management and on record keeping. The grinding mill is a very expensive capital item that was provided by the project and together with the soft components in the form of training constitutes an important aspect of sustainability for the sorghum enterprise.

The FEMA groups received material support inform of inputs like seeds (maize, groundnuts and sorghum, etc.), and tools (hoes, axes, machetes and rakes, tape measure and wheelbarrow), record books and plastic sheets. FEMA members have learned the basic agronomic practices; planting, weeding, harvesting, post-harvest handling, storage, pests control, correct spacing, etc. These skills and knowledge have been put into practice, and farmers have adopted in their farming system.

A poultry producer in Torit received the training on improved feed processing, preservation and storage practice including financial record keeping and entrepreneurship from spark and Niras, the entrepreneur he is already managing his poultry business without any problem since he was equipped with the knowledge of the financial recording and entrepreneurship

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A poultry producer in Torit received the training on improved feed processing, preservation and storage practice including financial record keeping and entrepreneurship from spark and Niras, the entrepreneur he is already managing his poultry business without any problem since he was equipped with the knowledge of financial recording and entrepreneurship.

## 5 LESSONS LEARNT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Lessons Learnt.

In the following sections, we discuss the main lessons drawn from the project evaluation as below:

- Trainings are key for knowledge enhancement as noted, the farmers in the targeted communities have benefited in the trainings and have acquired sufficient knowledge and skills in farming and agribusiness.

- The value addition machines and equipment have encouraged more farmers to engage in Agribusinesses given that the machines have transformed produces into better products hence attracting better prices leading to increased levels of income for the farmers.
- It is important to note that, support and financing of women groups, enterprises, and entrepreneurs contributes to women empowerment and promotes young women's involvement in Agribusinesses.
- Making market to work for the poor worked very well as now evident with the increased number of poor farmers dominating the market in Bor. They are supplying the market and selling a variety of vegetables such as tomatoes, okra, watermelon and this has made many poor farmers more self-reliant than before.
- The project has capacitated the farmers with improved farming skills and increased access to productive inputs, for example in Bor, the project supported farmers are supplying the market and selling a variety of vegetables such as tomatoes, okra, watermelon and this has made many poor farmers more self-reliant than before.
- Farmers supported by the project show readiness to save and invest. VEMSA members supported in late 2020 mobilized significant sum of money as their saving and contributed for social fund which strengthen their solidarity. This is very innovative and encouraging and a leaf for other groups to learn from.
- Farmer Field Schools (FFSs) are a good way to encourage adaptation of new agricultural technology. As seen, more than **75 percent** of farmers confirmed to have adopted new agricultural technology such as row planting of sorghum, groundnut, maize, which they said contributed a lot to improving their yields.
- Knowledge and skills in value addition, market price determination among others are key in enhancing better market and product value for farmers.
- Ownership remains key for building blocks towards sustainability. This further enhances better partnership and Coordination with the stakeholder. A good example is Yambio where Cooperatives feel more empowered to do things for themselves like following up, negotiating and acquiring the registration certificates from Ministry of Cooperative at reduced costs.

- Cooperation and effective coordination with local government and community leaderships greatly contributes to project success, as is the case with this project.
- The government staff continued to assist the project in facilitating extension services to target farmers, though with more support they would have done more. This too applies to Extension Workers package (toolbox) i.e. protective wears like gumboots, raincoats, water proof bags, measuring tapes etc. that are essential for delivery of extension services . Hoping that as a lesson learned, this shall be addressed in the remaining life of the project.
- The project has learnt that members of cooperatives have increased confidence when they are well represented; female and youth show more interest in cooperatives when they are represented in the leadership.
- The establishment of the SSAPU was an important platform that enabled collaboration among and between primary cooperatives, hence having their commercial, social, technical and governance concerns and interest addressed by the project. We have realized that many trained farmer groups are progressing into primary cooperative societies.
- Farmers and cooperatives are capable of managing farming as a business as well as borrow and pay loan if the RLF scheme is in line with their demand and if they get appropriate advice on agribusiness development.
- Farmers supported by the project show readiness to save and invest. VEMSA members supported in late 2020 mobilized significant sum of money as their saving which boosted their accumulated capital and enhanced their solidarity. This is very innovative and encouraging and a leaf for other groups to learn from.
- Even though there was restriction due to COVID-19, through the F2FE approach the project managed to reach farmers on GAP, PHH and VADD & Marketing. In addition to 2020 targets, through radio talk show, demo plots and extension aid materials were farmers supported. This highlights the benefits of flexibility and adaptability in the face of disaster and other challenging contexts.
- Teamwork and more meetings and collaborations by the consortium members and the relevant stakeholders are factors, which contributed to the success of the project interventions, hence emphasis need to be made in building reliable innovative teams.

## 5.2 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations to Cordaid/partners and other stakeholders;

- The project will have to find ways to provide refresher training and technical backstopping to the members of VEMSAs on business management skills and entrepreneurship skills. The project could consider facilitating the linking the VEMSAs to micro-credit institutions to complement their expected increased needs for borrowed capital by members, especially for larger business undertakings.
- CORAID and partners and other development actors will be required to provide continuous technical backstopping to the CMDRR to sustain their acuties and outputs including community awareness on DRR and CLAP during market days, community gatherings and religious occasions. The Committees will need external material and financial support to enable them facilitate the implementation and monitoring the DRR action plans, thus enabling the communities to have more resilient livelihoods.
- Currently there are no technical personnel trained to work with the seeds testing equipment, hence, the need for Cordaid and partners and other development actors to continue providing material, financial and technical backstopping to ensure sustainability of extension service delivery and functionality of the seed testing facilities.
- The various groups and stakeholders will be encouraged to adopt best practices that will foster natural resource management and conflict resolution that will ensure sustained utilization of resources.
- Improve access to monetary and finance services for business (poultry, sorghum and groundnuts processors, MSMEs and YWE) in the targets locations in Torit, Bor and Yambio Counties.
- Support the construction of storage facilities and/or warehouses to improve the quality of seeds produced by local farmers. This can be done hand in hand with communities in addition to encouraging community contribution in the form of labour and local materials.
- Conduct more training for small-scale producers (VEMSA, FEMA, processors, YWE) in value chain and value addition and processing of farm produce.

- Strengthen the capacity of farmers in the communities, equip farmers with necessary farming skills and knowledge and particularly farming as business.
- Timely planning and delivery of services to the beneficiaries and ensure strong partnership and collaboration with Government stakeholders and other partners.
- Revision of incentives payment to the government field staff and consider increasing the amount paid to field supervisory staff.
- Alternative collateral should be identified for loans, instead of land because land belongs to families and hence does not favor the youths. Similarly, it is difficult to get land titles which is part of the requirement during submission of request for loans. This can be done in consultation of chiefs who can guide in finding acceptable alternatives for the collateral.
- Train more farmer groups in value chains and value additions and provide value addition machinery, equipment and input to enhance food processing and marketing.
- Consider conducting field exchange visits with other farmers in the state and if possible across other boarder countries to promote learning from experience of others.
- Encourage and support more farmers to engage in poultry production, as poultry is very lucrative business given the demand for meat and eggs in the larger trading centers and beyond the Counties and State.
- Lobby with the relevant line ministries and departments to engage the local leaders (landlords, chiefs, headmen etc.) so as to provide enough land to the farmers for commercial farming. Alternatively consider supporting farmer groups with agribusiness grants to facilitate renting of farmlands from the local leaders and landlords in the communities.
- Farm produce buying Agencies like WFP should buy maize and other produces directly from farmers rather than through intermediaries such NGOs to empower the producers economically and socially.
- Empower Cooperative Societies expand market base and buy farm produces like maize, groundnuts etc. directly from the farmers but not through intermediary agents

- Establish a Cooperative Union to regulate farm produce prices in the County Markets and in the communities.
- Refresher training and/or short course for public Extension Workers on agronomy, horticulture (fruits & vegetables) growing poultry, and on improved animal husbandry (especially for poultry and small ruminants -goats and sheep)
- Train the recipients of value addition machines on maintenance and sustainability of the machinery and equipment. Similarly train at least 2 technical personnel and 3 support staff of the State Ministry of Agriculture in the three targeted Counties to run the seeds testing facility.
- Provide Internet services to the State Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Environment (SMAF&E) and/or the State Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry for better communication and coordination of project activities with partners.
- Train more Extension Workers to increase extension service delivery for farmers and cooperative societies in the communities.
- Construct a training hall in the State Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Environment so that other trainings can be facilitated in the Ministry premises. This is a form of building institutional capacity towards sustainability.
- Support vegetable growing farmers in the community, train them on nursery seedbed establishment and management and provide vegetable seeds such as cabbages, onions, eggplants, tomatoes, okra and watermelon etc.
- Renovate the property allotted for the establishment of the seed testing facilities in the targeted Counties.

### 5.3 Conclusions

There is need to support private input suppliers to enable them procure and supply seeds, HST, Fertilizers and tools to farmers and enable the targeted farmers to produce improved seeds. In addition the project has to expedite the training of government staff to manage the local seed testing facilities and support them to become operational before the first planting season in 2022.



Farmers had access to services provided by ALOs/ extension workers, however, there was a wide gap in the number of value chain actors linked with each other; only 18 out of 60 have been linked with each other. The project has to take necessary steps and measures to link about 50% of the remaining more value chain actors with each other at least by the first quarter of 2022.

Therefore, the project is advised to consolidate the gains made in the first two years by building the capacity of FEMA/FFS on good and climate smart agricultural practices, and supporting the SSAPU to provide effective extension services to farmers and increasing the number of primary cooperative joining the SSAPU, put more effort to complete the remaining targets of 18 market and cropping calendars that have to be linked to app/market data base in 2021, Cooperatives and MSMEs operators have yet to be trained and coached to increase their entrepreneurial and business skills in the remaining project period.

Only 33% of youth and/or women-led businesses have started new businesses, only 4% of youth and/or women-led businesses have grown/expand their businesses and, 14% of youth and/or women-led businesses demonstrated sustainable performance, at least 143 of youth and/or women-led businesses have started new businesses; 36 of youth and/or women-led businesses have grown/expand their businesses and; 182 youth and/or women-led businesses demonstrated sustainable performance by the first quarter of 2022.

## 6.0 ANNEXES

**Annex 1: Summary of findings for project outcome level indicators**

**Annex 2: Summary of achievement of outputs**

**Annex 3: Analysed quantitative data**

**Annex 4: Data collection tools**

**Annex 5: Raw Kobo data**