



ZAGP News

The Newsletter for the Zimbabwe Agricultural Growth Programme (ZAGP)

FINAL ISSUE: MARCH 2024

Farewell and Thank You: A Message from the ZAGP Team Leader



It gives me great pleasure to write to you our valued stakeholders. As we reach the conclusion of the Zimbabwe Agricultural Growth Programme (ZAGP), we would like to take this opportunity to thank all our partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries for their invaluable support and collaboration over the past four years.

ZAGP was launched in 2019 with the generous financial support of the European Union (EU) amounting to €40 million. The programme had an overarching objective to contribute to the development of a diversified and efficient agriculture sector that promotes inclusive green economic growth. The programme covered Zimbabwe's 10 provinces and focused on six livestock value chains: beef, dairy, poultry, goats, pigs, and support projects focusing on linking agricultural education, extension and research and animal health and food safety.

During the past four years, there have been remarkable achievements in livestock commercialisation, thanks to the strategic market-driven interventions of ZAGP. We are therefore taking stock of the successes of the life of the programme.

This will help the Government and development partners to plot the future path. I am personally and professionally proud that ZAGP articulated and

demonstrated its commitment to livestock commercialisation in Zimbabwe.

Some of the key achievements of the ZAGP include:

- Improving the productivity, quality, and market access of livestock producers through capacity building, extension services, input provision, infrastructure development, and market linkages.
- Strengthening the institutional and policy environment for the livestock sector through advocacy, coordination, and dialogue among public and private actors.
- Promoting innovation and research in the livestock sector through partnerships with academic and research institutions, as well as facilitating the adoption and scaling up of best practices and technologies.
- Enhancing the resilience and sustainability of the livestock sector through climate-smart interventions, natural resource management, and mitigation of animal diseases.
- Empowering women and youth in the livestock sector through gender-sensitive and youth-friendly approaches, as well as creating employment and income opportunities along the value chains.

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The programme commercialized smallholder livestock farming by increasing incomes and improving their food security and nutrition through hands-on agricultural training, technical assistance and farming as-a business.

Our partnership approach also gave us more capacity to meet with our constituents at the highest level, strengthening our relationship with the Government as it formulated the most effective policies for the good of its citizens and their livestock. The partners delivered the programme through six projects which included: Beef Enterprise Strengthening and Transformation (BEST), Transforming Zimbabwe's Animal Health and Food Safety Systems for the Future (SAFE), Transforming Zimbabwe's Dairy Value Chain for the Future (TranZDVC), Improving Poultry Value Chain (IPVC), Value Chain Alliance for Livestock Upgrading and Empowerment (VALUE) and Zimbabwe Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Services (ZAKIS).

Key lessons have emerged during the programme's lifespan and we hope these will provide pointers for future livestock interventions in the country. Showcasing our programme was a major objective. We have extensively documented the best practices, models, innovations and interventions that have achieved the highest impact.

It is our hope that these will provide the basis for scaling-up of these interventions by other development players and Government.

We would also like to acknowledge the invaluable guidance and oversight of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development

(MLAFWRD). We also wish to thank the European Union, our donor for its vital support and assistance throughout the years. We are proud and pleased that our partners and supporters are as engaged, committed and excited as we are.

While taking stock and celebrating our many successes, we are aware that there are still major challenges to be overcome. The Government, development and implementing partners, the private sector and local communities will achieve their targets if they work for a common goal. Also, the partners will now seek to extend their impact for livestock commercialisation by learning from past and current work, case studies and trying new ideas, technologies and approaches. As we bid farewell to the ZAGP, we hope that the programme's legacy will continue to inspire and benefit the livestock sector in Zimbabwe. We urge all the stakeholders to sustain the momentum and build on the achievements of the programme. We also encourage the dissemination and sharing of the lessons learned and best practices from the programme.

We are proud of what we have accomplished together and we are grateful for the opportunity to serve the livestock sector in Zimbabwe. We wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

Thank you and goodbye.

Munhamo Chisvo
Team Leader – Technical Assistance to ZAGP

TOWARDS GROWTH: PROJECT SUCCESSES TO DATE

Beef Enterprise Strengthening and Transformation (BEST)



In-situ grazing at the Balu Cattle Business Centre (CBC). The CBC ensures that beef farmers access high quality fodder.

The Beef Enterprise Strengthening and Transformation (BEST) project was implemented in five provinces and ten districts of Zimbabwe (Buhera, Chiredzi, Gokwe South, Kwekwe, Lupane, Makoni, Mt Darwin, Mwenezi, Shurugwi and Umguza districts).

World Vision (lead organisation) partnered with Livestock and Meat Advisory Council (LMAC), Sustainable Agriculture Technology (SAT), Welthungerhilfe (WHH), and Zimbabwe Agriculture Development Trust (ZADT).

The project sought to create a robust, competitive beef value chain that promotes trade, employment creation, food security and inclusive green economic growth. BEST partnered with the private sector through a cattle business centre (CBC) model.

Key project outcomes include:

- Increased production and productivity of an environmentally sustainable beef value chain;
- An enabling environment for a sustainable and inclusive beef value chain;
- Better functioning beef value chain for more decent jobs for farmers, youths and women;
- Beef value chain transformation for improved revenue and profits;
- Public Private Partnerships for accelerated and sustainable beef value chain development; and

- Embracing inclusive green economic growth for sustainable beef farming.

The key strategy for the project was establishment of Cattle Business Centres (CBCs) managed by the private sector. The CBCs act as livestock agribusiness hubs with supporting infrastructure, where farmers access extension, input and output marketing and financial services. Physical infrastructure constructed at the CBCs include solar powered boreholes, 60 head capacity feedlots, biogas digesters, storage rooms, offices, livestock input sales facilities among others. The CBC is also a centre of excellence for livestock training activities where good animal husbandry practices and all the innovations around livestock production are practiced and demonstrated for adoption and replication by the wider community of farmers.

The BEST project constructed 10 main and 48 satellite Cattle Business Centres across Zimbabwe's rural areas. Two of these have 50 hectare irrigated pastures under centre pivots.

Other interventions seek to enhance the policy environment to reduce compliance costs, by establishing District Beef Producers Associations contributing to the National Beef Producer Association and an online Livestock Information Management System. In addition, through the project, beef producers gained access to 50 genetically superior bulls across project areas.

TOWARDS GROWTH: PROJECT SUCCESSES TO DATE

Beef Enterprise Strengthening and Transformation (BEST)

BEST PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS



10 Cattle Business Centres
48 Satellite Cattle Business Centres



47,828 Farmers trained in good animal husbandry practices, feed formulation, output markets and Stockman Academy



8,411 Farmers reached with Kurima Mari Beef mobile app



342 Department of Veterinary Services Officers trained on Livestock Information Management System (LIMS)



50 Bulls distributed for breed improvement (5 per district). 650 cattle serviced and 145 calves born



600 Farmers accessed finance through the Feeder Finance for Pen Fattening Model



1,703 Fodder plots established in 10 districts



8 Beef Producer Associations established

TOTAL SALES USD 9.34 Million



Cattle auctions: **US\$3,074,000**



Veterinary Drug Sales: **US\$33,00**



Hay Bale Sales: **US\$104,000**



Direct Cattle Sales: **US\$5,341,500**



Hay Bale Sales: **US\$104,000**

SUCCESSFUL BEST PROJECT INTERVENTIONS TO BE PROMOTED AND UP-SCALED

- Training on farming as a business
- Facilitating cattle auctions and pen fattening cycles
- Breed improvement
- Fodder production
- Access to finance
- Promotion of domestic feed formulation (Urea treatment of Stover)
- Establishment of farmer organisations. Formal registration as cooperatives
- Promotion and adoption of climate smart technologies (biogas digesters, solar pumps and spray races)
- Pluralistic extension services incorporating private sector involvement

Inclusive Poultry Value Chain (IPVC)



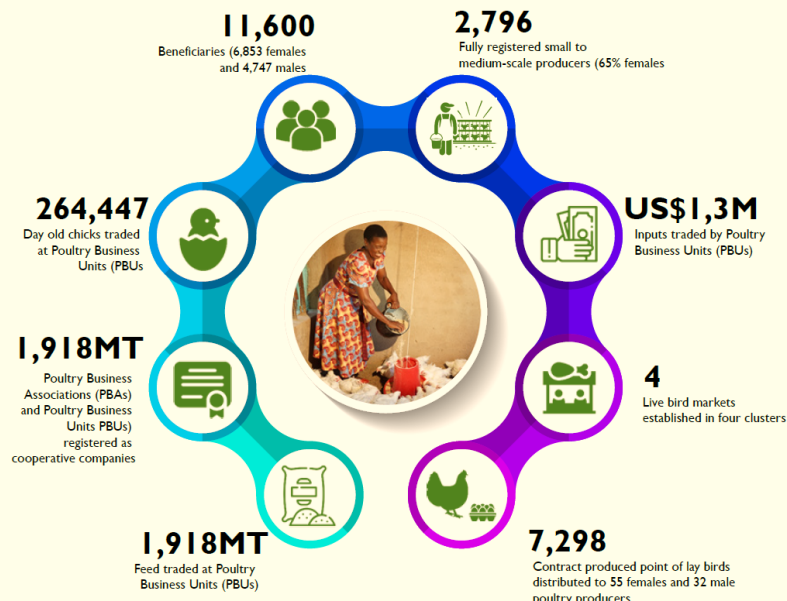
The Inclusive Poultry Value Chain (IPVC) project aimed at benefiting small to medium scale poultry producers (SMPs) by improving value chain social, environmental and economic performance at all levels as well as engaging private sector integrators.

The IPVC project contributed towards increasing the profitability of SMPs through adoption of cost reduction strategies in the poultry meat and table eggs value chain. The IPVC promoted organizational development of poultry Small and Medium Producers (SMPs) and Poultry Business Associations (PBAs).

Poultry Business Units (PBUs) were established in five peri-urban area clusters namely Bulawayo, Gweru, Harare, Masvingo and Mutare. The SMPs in the five different clusters have Poultry Business Units serving as administration and coordinating entities for collective action.

The PBUs allow poultry farmer groups to benefit from economies of scale and scope, allowing them to more easily and profitably access extension, inputs, regulatory, financial and marketing services. The PBUs negotiate bulk purchases of day-old chicks and feed for SMPs, which helps with four key value propositions: lowering production costs, increasing income, leveraging service and providing services such as training and provision of poultry farming information.

IPVC managed to develop productive capacity of over 11,000 small scale poultry producers and helped organize 3,135 of these into poultry business associations which operate cooperative companies. The cooperative companies provide poultry value chain services in the form of credit finance, feed, day old chicks (DOCs) and output markets to members.



Transforming Zimbabwe's Animal Health and Food Safety for the Future (SAFE)



Anchor Animal Health Management Centres (AAHMC) are offering expanded veterinary services to the farmers through Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements.

The Transforming Zimbabwe's Animal Health and Food Safety for the Future (SAFE) project was implemented through the Department of Veterinary Services (DVS), in the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural as well as the Department of Environmental Health Services (DEH) and the Government Analyst Laboratory (GAL) both under the Ministry of Health and Child Care. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), as an executing agency, provided technical guidance and management of the fund received from EU.

The SAFE project contributed to the key outcomes of ZAGP on increased production and productivity of the livestock sector, livestock products and better access to markets. The SAFE project covered 30 selected rural districts, eight provinces and 18 ports of entry in Zimbabwe.

The overall objective of the project was to transform Zimbabwe's animal health and, sanitary and phyto-sanitary/food safety systems.

This was delivered through four key outputs;

- Strengthened animal health and food safety policy and regulatory frameworks;
- Strengthened livestock and food safety Information Management Systems for disease surveillance and control;
- Strengthened capacity of public and private sector players in animal health and food safety; and
- Establishment of functional multi-stakeholder platforms for coordination, collaboration, advocacy and support for efficient revenue generation and utilization of regulatory bodies.

The SAFE project achieved all its four outputs. Policies and regulatory framework to support animal health and SPS/food safety services for improved productivity and food safety strengthened were reviewed.

SAFE successfully revised the Animal Health Act, Veterinary Surgeons Act, Public Health Act (food safety), and in addition strategic documents were produced among them were the food recall regulations, Integrated Ticks and Tick-Borne Disease, Food Safety, Animal disease surveillance, Food Establishment Health Guidelines, and a National Animal Research Ethics Committee was established.

The project developed and updated livestock information management system (LIMS) and trained the users, in addition the LIMS was integrated with System for Information Laboratory (SILAB). Port Health Information Management System and National Food Safety Information Management System were upgraded although user trainings were not done. These applications would provide catalytic support to animal and public health, diseases surveillance and control, food safety and quality, livestock productivity and market access.

The project strengthened the public and private sector capacity for implementing animal health and SPS/food safety systems that comply with international standards. The Government Laboratory Analyst (GAL) and the Central Veterinary Laboratory (CVL) plus three provincial veterinary laboratories were equipped, their staff trained and the Standard Operational Practices (SOPs) were revised resulting in the GAL and CVL accredited with ISO 17025:2017.

The DVS was equipped and capacitated to produce theileria vaccine which is still under trials but is critical for the protection of cattle against tick-borne diseases, in addition the other vaccines are also under production. The project strengthened and capacitated 26 Anchor Animal Health Management Centres (AAHMC) and 16 of them are offering expanded veterinary services to the farmers through a Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement.

Transforming Zimbabwe's Animal Health and Food Safety for the Future (SAFE)

SAFE PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Strengthened Animal Health and Food Safety Policy and Regulatory Frameworks



National Integrated Ticks and Tick-borne disease strategy 2022/30 adopted and support to implementation on-going.



- National Food Safety 2022/26 Strategy adopted and support to implementation on-going.
- Food Establishment Health Guidelines formulated and adopted for use.
- Food Recall regulations formulated and awaiting gazetting, Animal Health Act - and Veterinary Surgeons Act Regulations.
- Four new additional tests introduced for salmonella, Ecoli, aflatoxin B1 and listeria in provinces and at ports of entry.

Digitalization of National Animal Health and Food Safety Information Systems



- Livestock Information Management Systems (LIMS- disease reporting modules),
- National Food Safety and Port Health Information Management Systems.



Strengthened capacity of public and private sector players in animal health and food safety CVL capacitated to produce Theileriosis vaccine – **138,000** doses produced to date.



26 Anchor Animal Health Management Centres (AAMHCs) equipped and private sector players engaged using Joint Venture Agreements for improved animal health service delivery.

Strengthened Capacity of Public and Private Sector Players in Animal Health and Food Safety



Central Veterinary Laboratory (CVL) and Government Analyst Laboratory (GAL) accredited for ISO 17025:2017



Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) and the Department of Veterinary Services (DVS) reviewed and under use.



- Curriculum reviews completed and under implementation (Mazowe Veterinary College and Food Inspectors (Environmental Health Technicians).
- 305 Technicians out of a target 281 trained and gained knowledge on Risk Analysis.

PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS

- Support to completion of vaccine registration processes and development of business model for vaccine production
- DVS support to PPP arrangements – consider grants for supporting small to medium sized agro-dealers for stocking of vet inputs at upgraded AAHMCs
- Upscaling of the AHMC PPP model
- Support to implementation of the National Food Safety Strategy, SOPs training rollout for DEH
- Support to implementation of the National Animal Disease surveillance plan
- Food establishment health guidelines – support to awareness raising

Transforming Zimbabwe's Dairy Value Chain for the Future (TranZDVC)



The Transforming Zimbabwe's Dairy Value Chain for the Future (TranZDVC) project aimed to develop a resilient and competitive dairy value chain (DVC), premised on improved productivity and profitability, inclusive green economic growth, access to innovative finance in the dairy value chain (DVC).

Implemented by a consortium consisting of We Effect, in partnership with Zimbabwe Association of Dairy Farmers (ZADF), Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU), Dairy Services and Zimbabwe Dairy Industry Trust (ZDIT), the project unpacked matching grants for large and medium-scale processors and farmers to purchase productive assets; supported out grower schemes; up-scaled milk collection centres and aggregation; provisioned in-calf dairy heifers and semen to dairy farmers for breeding.

The TranZDVC project further aimed to improve the DVC through inclusive profitability and economic performance underpinned by viable business models, social performance through inclusive targeting and environmental performance through climate smart technologies driven by renewable energy. The overarching approach was to strengthen linkages between production, processing, and financing to create an enabling environment for inclusive performance management.

Underpinned by leveraging business models at established dairy hubs to strengthen service provision at Milk Collection Centres (MCC), and milk bulking points, the project also aimed to improve milk aggregation and bulking. TranZDVC forged new markets; value addition; improved access to innovative finance; training (and credit) and capacity building and business support services by leveraging on linkages with private sector dairy integrators e.g., DenDairy, Nestle Zimbabwe and ProDairy. This was also underpinned by organising farmers (farmer groups), compliance with practical quality assurance and delivery of pluralistic extension services.

TRANZDVC PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS



- **5,200** (2 000 men and 2 000 women) new dairy farming households
- **530** smallholder milk producers
- **192** medium and large-scale dairy farmers and
- **14,000** employees of dairy enterprises in the DVC
- **34** (6 large-scale and 28 small-scale processors)
- **35** existing Milk collection centres (MCCs) and **20** new MCCs



Importation of **500** in-calf heifers and distribution to **282** smallholder dairy farmers across Zimbabwe. The Jersey and Friesian breed currently produce more than **25** litres per cow per day.



12 Biogas digesters commissioned
24 solar powered tricycles procured and **10** solar powered cooling tanks procured

Transforming Zimbabwe's Dairy Value Chain for the Future (TranZDVC)

TRANZDVC PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS



6,000 sexed semen straws distributed against a target of **4,000**



Reduce cost of feed through on farm feed production. Percentage of cost of feed versus Total Variable Costs reduced from **79%** to **54%**



Dairy Electronic database developed in collaboration with the Government. The system is efficiently recording and sharing accurate dairy data



Cost of compliance reduced from **US\$79/cow/year** to less than **US\$60/cow/per**



US\$2,000,000 worth of grants disbursed to date under the Matching Grants Facility for capital investments in productive assets and infrastructure targeting small to large-scale farmers, processors and milk collection



Dairy Strategic and Investment Plan developed. The strategic plan compliments the Zimbabwe Government's livestock growth implementation strategy (2020-2025).

PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING

Effective pluralistic extension is critical for adoption

The project implemented a multi-actor and multi-pronged approach to provision of extension services, as well as training of extension staff in new areas such as artificial insemination, fodder production, technical bulletins, electronic database, demo plots, exchange and learning visits, training of trainers and lead farmer training. This multi-pronged approach was sustainable as well applying business principles in the DVC.

On-farm fodder production is key

The project carried out robust promotion of on-farm feed production using demonstration and seed multiplication plots, while creating linkages with input suppliers such as Klein Karoo. This resulted in local fodder banks that can be utilised by farmers' post-project. Capacity building on fodder processing, preservation and utilisation potentially involved non-cattle owners and women/youth to engage with the project, thus creating employment.

Matching grants finance and heifer scheme hold promise

Tripartite arrangements that facilitate access to finance without the need for collateral could be a viable option. Innovative financing models such as the MGF and heifer scheme enabled new entrants into the dairy sector, as well as ownership of dairy cattle and assets by women, although this was supported by a strong gender inclusion component. While key successes were recorded, the countrywide approach of the project spread the impact of the project thin. A focus on a lower scale may be key.

Value Chain Alliance for Livestock Upgrading and Empowerment (VALUE)



The VALUE project aimed to create a sustainable and inclusive value chain for pork and goat production

The Value Chain Alliance for Livestock Upgrading and Empowering (VALUE) project spearheaded the commercialization of the goat value chain (GVC) and pork value chain (PVC) in twenty districts of Zimbabwe.

VALUE was implemented by a consortium consisting of Action Aid Zimbabwe, in partnership with COSV, Mercy Corps, Shamiso Farm, Zvikomborero Farm, Michview Farm and Braford Farming.

The project implemented from 2019 to 2023 in 20 districts, was a response to the challenges that have characterized both the pork and goat value chains of low-quality breeds, high mortality, weak market linkages, high cost of feeds and inadequate knowledge and skills for animal husbandry. Out of the 20 districts, 12 focused on goats while the remaining eight focused on pigs. These were selected to feed into the country's main transportation corridors, strategically providing meat and meat products to key consumer markets in Harare and Bulawayo.

The project encompassed various components, including capacity building, farmer groups strengthening, market linkages, infrastructure development, and policy advocacy.

Through a collaborative and holistic approach, the program aimed to address key challenges faced by

smallholder farmers and create a sustainable and inclusive value chain for pork and goat production.

Overall, the project empowered smallholder goat and pork farmers, improving productivity, and promoting sustainable practices.

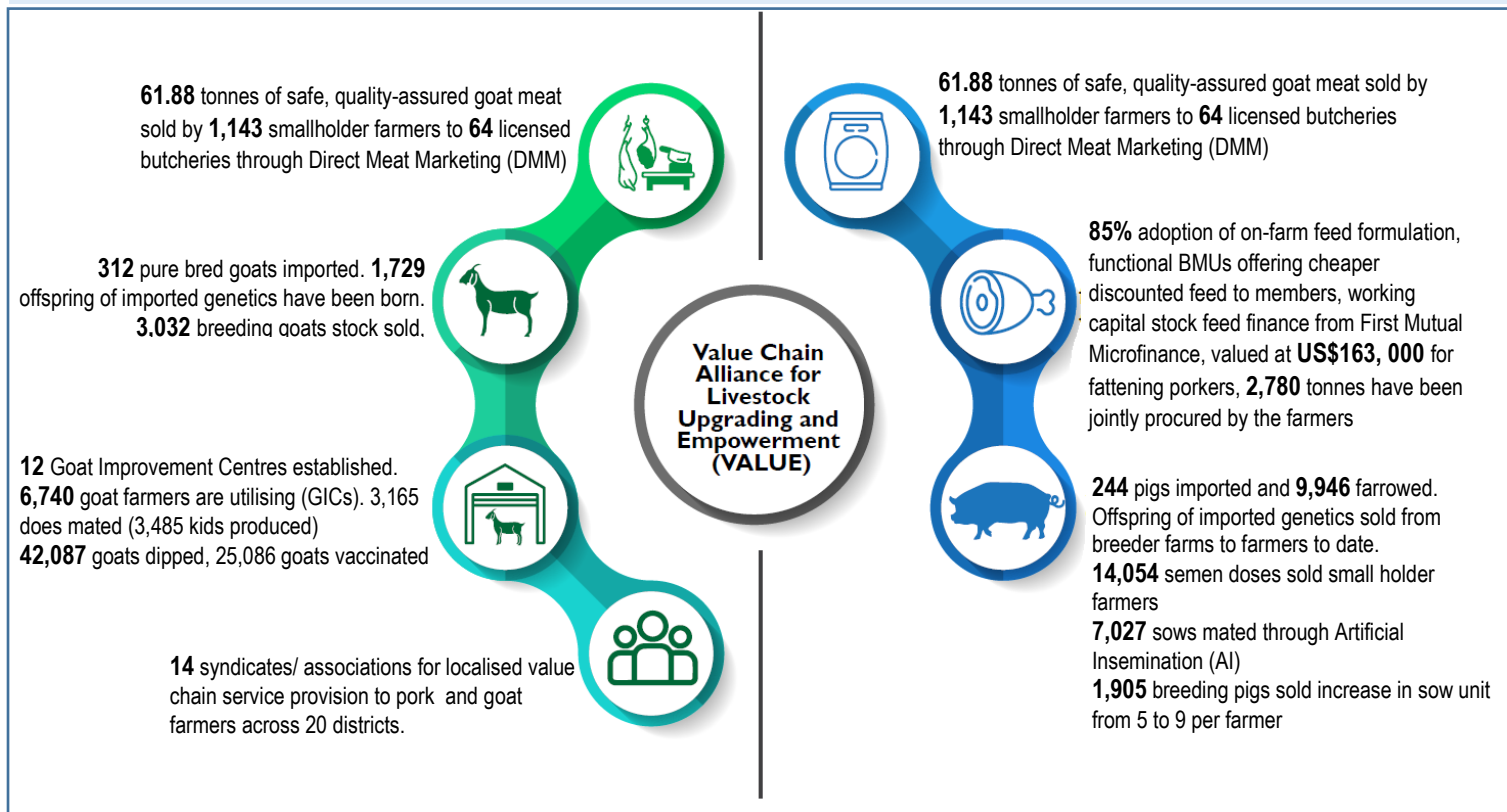
Through capacity building, market linkages, infrastructure development, and policy advocacy, the project created a thriving and inclusive value chain that enhanced the competitiveness of smallholder farmers and contributed to their economic and social upliftment, while at the same time improving product availability to abattoirs and final consumers of pork and goat meat.

The VALUE project achieved its specific objectives:

- Improving production and organizational efficiencies and market competitiveness in the commercial supply of safe, quality-assured pork and goat livestock and meat products from environmentally sustainable pork and goat VCs.
- Enhancing the domestic agribusiness environment through stakeholder organizational development and capacity building for strategic planning and evidence-based policy dialogue with the government to get the national policy and regulatory frameworks right for the growth and development of the livestock and meat industry.

Value Chain Alliance for Livestock Upgrading and Empowerment (VALUE)

VALUE PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS



PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING

- **Providing policy support and an enabling environment.** This includes developing review and develop favourable policies and regulations related to livestock production, processing and marketing, and trade. For example, goat strategy, AI protocols, reviewing grain movement restriction for livestock farmers, prizing model for farmers buying feed material from Grain Marketing Board (GMB).
- **Investments in infrastructure development.** Theseis includes improving road networks, cold storage facilities, processing facilities, and market infrastructure. Adequate infrastructure will facilitate the smooth flow of products, reduce marketing costs/losses, and enhance market access for producers.
- **Prioritizing capacity building initiatives for stakeholders** involved in the pork and goat value chains. This includes key refresher training of staff on updating them on modern value chain specific production practices.
- **Facilitating access to affordable financing options for farmers,** processors, and other actors in the value chain. This can be achieved through the provision of targeted

credit schemes, grants, and financial support programs. Database created should guide on credit referencing.

- **Support value chain specific research and development initiatives.** This includes funding research projects on breed improvement, animal nutrition, disease management, and market trends. Research findings can inform evidence-based interventions, promote innovation, and enhance the overall performance of the value chain.
- **Facilitation of market linkages by establishing platforms** where producers can directly connect with processors, retailers, and consumers. Capacitation of Government staff on marketing is key to continue cushion farmers technical knowhow.
- **Collaboration through multi-stakeholder platforms.** This includes establishing multi-stakeholder platforms where government agencies, farmers' associations, processors, traders, research institutions, and development partners can come together to share information, exchange experiences, and collectively address challenges.

Zimbabwe Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Services (ZAKIS)

The Zimbabwe Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Services (ZAKIS) project was established on the agricultural centres of excellence model to address the knowledge transfer gap and silos which were existing among the three pillars of agricultural research, education, and extension. The project sought to harmonise the three pillars to improve agricultural efficiency and knowledge dissemination to farmers thereby contributing to improved food production leading to poverty reduction in the country.

ZAKIS aimed to create an enabling environment where agricultural research, education, and extension interface to create an integrated, dynamic, market-oriented, and farmer-centric agricultural knowledge and innovation services system that meets the needs of modern agriculture in Zimbabwe.

ZAKIS PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS



2 Agriculture Centres of Excellence (ACEs) established at Chibero College of Agriculture and Matopos Research Institute. **4** District Agriculture Centres of Excellence operational in Chegutu, Insiza, Mhondoro-Ngezi and Matobo districts.



18 Ward Information Centres for effective and integrated agriculture extension, research and education.



In-service Training App launched (100% utilization). **7,136** extension officers have registered and are utilizing the app. **68,053** enrolled on the training app.



66,494 users and **9,563** downloads on the ZimAgriHub online digital library.



10 Private Public Partnership arrangements at the ACEs with private sector companies including Mukushi Seeds, SeedCo, Fish Feeds, National Foods, OrganoComplex, Superfert amongst others.



8 colleges and **1,046** college students using the revised agriculture education curriculum that was adopted by The Ministry of Agriculture. This led to the setting up of the Zimbabwe On-line Agriculture College. www.agricultureonline.agriculture.ac.zw

PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

- Institutionalization arrangement of Centres of Excellence within Chibero College of Agriculture and Matopos Research Station.
- Integration of ACE interventions into college and research station operations
- Dedicated personnel to run the ACEs.
- Formalisation of advisory boards at ACEs and Agriculture Colleges.
- Building on the iterative institutional development processes towards the full development of the ACEs in the past five years.
- Initiating directorate level interlinkages between Research – Extension and Education and cascading these to lower levels.
- Completion of the 73 modules under the revised curriculum that are at various stages of completion.
- In service training of agricultural college lecturers in response to the findings of the capacity assessments.
- Scheduled systematic curriculum review.
- Handover/ continuity of arrangements of digital platforms to the Ministry of ICT