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About PROSAN

PROSAN is a 5 year Food and Nutrition Security Programme (2012 - 2017) that was implemented in the Funhalouro and Homoíne districts of the Inhambane Province in southern Mozambique. PROSAN has six components: conservation agriculture, Farmer Field Schools (FFS) extension model, improved chicken health, Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA), gender and nutrition. PROSAN also works with farmers to promote the production of the drought-resistant cashew nut as an alternative source of income, helping them become more resilient to climate change.

The project is supported by the Government of Ireland, through the Irish Aid programme. PROSAN works with more than 5000 families, 69 per cent of which are women. The programme focused on women who are socially, economically and politically excluded; they are highly dependent on natural resources and are more likely to experience food and nutritional insecurity.

The Embassy of Ireland has also funded the Massinga initiative on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), which aims to reduce the levels of gender based violence, and empower women to deal with natural disasters and climate change.
Foreword

This booklet is a collection of 37 of human interest stories involving PROSAN beneficiaries: they come from vulnerable households and are amongst the poorest and most marginalised families in the world. The stories aim to share the results and impacts achieved through PROSAN interventions. The Inhambane province, in which the project is implemented, is situated in the southern region of Mozambique with 1,377,908 inhabitants, more than 75,000 people of which are severely food insecure.

ACRONYMS

PROSAN - Food and Nutrition Security Programme
VSLA - Village Savings & Loans Association
FFS - Farmer Field School
AC - Conservation Agriculture
DUAT - Land use license
GBV - Gender-Based Violence
OMM - Mozambican Women Organization
DRM - Disaster Risk Management
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INGC - National Institute of Disaster Management
INAS - Instituto Nacional de Acção Social
VLO - is an association created by the VLSA members in Homoine district
FARE - Economic Rehabilitation Support Fund
ITF - Input Trade Fairs
SEED - Sustainable and Effective Economic Development
When a simple ID changes the course of your life

Samuel Raimundo doesn’t know his exact age, but he knows perfectly the challenges that life can bring to the most vulnerable people living in communities heavily affected by poverty. Such is the case of the Nhalisseque community, Manhiça Locality, in the Funhalouro district.

Estimates are that Samuel is 49 years old. The challenges he has faced in those years are etched onto his face. Samuel is blind and therefore dependent on a guide to move. He is the head of a large household comprised of 12 people, including 8 children, his wife and his mother. All of them are living in extreme poverty. Further exacerbating their situation is the fact that one of the children is physically and mentally disabled and his elderly mother also has a physical disability.

The family has no regular source of income. Their survival is based on agricultural activities but due to drought, the challenges for obtaining food have worsened and food aid has been the only hope for this family. In an act of desperation, Samuel sold some of his chickens in order to travel to the headquarters of the Funhalouro district hoping to obtain an identification document so that he can access the government’s social protection services. However, he faced so many challenges and bureaucratic obstacles that, eventually, Samuel gave up midway through the process of trying to secure his ID. As a result, he couldn’t claim the benefits from social protection services offered by government, which he is eligible for due to his disability. Samuel was not the only one in the family without the ID. His wife, Lidia Geraldo is 42 years old and had never had an ID either.

Through the intervention of the PROSAN, funded by Irish Aid, Samuel and his wife managed to get the precious document that would change their lives forever.

“...My salvation came by CARE. They came to help me get the ID when I least expected. I was afraid to travel because I was afraid of suffering an accident and no one would know who I am. But now I can travel to various locations and visit my family...”

Similarly, Lidia Geraldo emphasized the importance of having access to obtaining identification, facilitated through CARE, as they were able to access to social protection services:

“...After receiving the ID with the help of CARE we were visited by INAS staff and my family then began to receive food assistance because we had the ID needed...”

Having a form of identification significantly contributes to the improvement of living conditions for others in the local communities as well. In the Mucuine Locality, Funhalouro district, we find another example. Hilário Julio is a 53 years old farmer and father of 10 children. He says that since 2012, he wanted to apply for the district development funds but without an ID it was impossible. Hilario said:

“...the cost to obtain the ID is not possible for everyone and my family had difficulties, but with the ID campaign, promoted by PROSAN, I was able to realize my dream of many years: get the ID and compete for funds and open a Bank account...”
Amid the hardships of drought, PROSAN has been offering rural populations with low incomes access to a system of savings and loans. Village Savings and Loan (VSL) groups have been formed, with a particular emphasis on encouraging participation from female members of the community to join and play a leadership role in the groups.

Marcelino Eduardo Nhamuave, 40 years old, is married and the father of 6 children, 4 of which live with him while the other 2 to reside with his ex-wife. Ezertina Julio Maculuve, 34 years old, is a single mother of two. Both Marcelino and Ezertina are unemployed and members of the Vukane VSL Group, from the 7 de Setembro Community, Chinjinguire Locality, Homoine District, where PROSAN has been working and assisted with the establishment of the groups. Vukane Group began saving and giving loans to members in September 2015 and then in May 2016 it did the first share-out distribution. After doing it once, the group decided to start a second cycle of saving and loans, functioning independently from PROSAN.

Marcelino says: "Because I have a very low educational level and did not have the opportunity to have access formal employment, I decided to make goods out of metal to sell. I've done this since 2008 as the main source of income for the support of my family.

But the irregularity of income from sales of the goods I manufacture made it difficult to manage and keep the business running. It has been very helpful to get access to loans from the group. Interest rates are low. I have managed to make timely repayments on the installments of loans, have regular savings and most importantly make a profit to support the family and still guarantee the purchase of other necessary material for my work. For each zinc plate, a basic material for my production, I spend between 300.00 to 350.00 MZN. I can get profits ranging from 500.00 to 1,000.00 MZN with the sale of cans, buckets, watering cans, bowls, strainers, guttering and other materials."

Ezertina is also benefiting: "Since I lost my husband in 2010, I was obliged to take action to take care of myself and the one son we had at the time. Influenced by my friends, I started a small business selling used clothing at the market in Homoine Village. I travel regularly to Maputo to buy clothing bales for resale, which is not easy since I live alone with my two children. At times, I have not had a steady income which it affects the business and ultimately, our survival. Since I joined the Vukan Group, and took a loan of 2,000.00 meticais which was fairly easy to access and which I could afford without too much pressure, it was possible to stabilize my business. I’m keeping the savings and the profits have allowed me to better care ..."
of my children and invest the improvement of my household. With the results of the first share-out I was able to buy 8 zinc sheets for about 3,000.00 MZN and establish a water connection for 3,600.00 MZN, in addition to purchasing other miscellaneous goods for my home. Having realized these advantages, I am now part of 2 groups and I look to the future with great hope. Through my participation in these two groups to which I belong, I have plans to build an improved house of wood and zinc.

Cashew trees: a means to improve families’ lives in drought stricken areas

Gilda is proud of her cashew trees. If there is a widely available tree in Inhambane province in southern Mozambique, it is the cashew tree. It is a key source of income for many rural families so improving productivity is essential to help poor households increase their meagre income.

As Gilda recollects “Until 1987, we could harvest up to 7 cans, but then everything changed. We could no longer have a good production. We all know that the cashew tree helps improve our living conditions. With cashews, we pay school for our children and buy food. Fortunately, with the adoption of new techniques the results are visible and we can eliminate some problems resulting from the lack of rain”. She is one of many beneficiaries of the Sustainable and Effective Economic Development (SEED) and PROSAN, Care International projects funded by Irish Aid.

The drop in rainfall to nearly half caused by the El Niño phenomenon has placed an additional burden on poor rural families in 2016. However cashew trees are significantly more resistant to drought and cashew nuts have multiple uses so even though farming fields may be lost, cashews can still bring in a much needed income.

Organized in groups called "Pomar Escola" (Orchard Schools), communities learn various techniques to maximize the potential gains from cashews, from new plantings to management and commercialization.

“I did pruning and started doing the chemical treatment of my cashew trees, and the results are amazing: I had never seen so much production. Since the war period our cashew trees did not produce much, but this year the results are amazing” says 39 years old Maria José, from the Tihane Group.
Agricultural input trade fairs: Providing a quick response to drought

2015 brought many challenges to Mozambique as its rural population depends largely on sustenance farming to survive and the global El Niño phenomenon began changing weather conditions which impact agricultural productivity. The southern part of the country is the most affected, having received less than 50% of normal rainfall.

Funhalouro and Homoíne districts in Inhambane province are two of the most drought affected areas. Some wells dried up while others turned salty/brackish. Families lost not one but two or more planting seasons during the year leaving them with little or no food, let alone seeds to plant again.

Affected households reduced their daily food consumption, from 3 to 2 times a day. They relied increasingly on alternative means of consumption such as harvesting wild fruits, selling household assets (chickens, livestock) and migrating to find water sources.

Irish Aid joined efforts with Care International to quickly respond to this crisis in coordination with the Provincial Government of Inhambane through Input Trade Fairs (ITF). The fairs were about ensuring that smallholder farmers experiencing drought, whose food and seed stocks were depleted, were able to access the necessary inputs for the next agricultural season. No seeds to plant, no food to harvest.

Four thousand smallholders were assisted through a voucher system. A renewed hope came over them as they gained access to peanuts, sorghum, cowpea, machetes and hoes. Assistance also included the training of community volunteers to identify malnutrition and provide nutritional counselling for families.

The Drought Response, through Input Trade Fairs and with €200,000 of funding from Irish Aid, was coordinated to take advantage of rainfall at the end of 2015, increasing the possibility of successful planting of short cycle, drought tolerant crops. As harvest season approaches one can see that the fields are green and thriving, therefore giving families have a living chance.

The Input Trade Fair was a six month project implemented in Inhambane province in 2015, during the worst drought that left almost two million people in need of assistance after two consecutive failed rainy seasons.
How Funhalouro and Homoine residents are coping with drought caused by El Niño

Cashew value chain is a coping strategy to respond to food insecurity in Funhalouro and Homoine districts

The current drought is having serious impacts on many key livelihood factors in both districts. Families lose the agricultural production in their fields completely. Water scarcity is exacerbated and despair dominates the families who fear for the survival of their animals.

"It does not rain here, everything is dry and dying! We cannot produce in our fields, and only those who have some money can buy some food. It's a real dilemma for most of our families."

Says Leonardo Sumbane, 66 years old, cashew producer from Funhalouro.
Drought and food insecurity coping mechanisms: the case of the cashew

The versatility of the cashew crop, and the adoption of new cashew management techniques, has contributed to increase the capacity of families to respond to drought. Cashew has been significantly more resistant and have multiple applications.

Besides the cashew nuts (which can be both consumed by local families and sold processed or in raw form), cashew offers pulp (fruit) with which families produce cashew juice and alcoholic drinks for consumption and sale.

Organized in groups called "Pomar Escola" (Orchard Schools), and assisted by the Food and Nutrition Security Programme (PROSAN) funded by Irish Aid, communities are learning various techniques to maximize the potential gains from cashews, from new plantings to commercialization.

And with the adoption of the techniques, communities begin to see the results of their efforts, as Maria Jose (39 years old – from Tihane Group) describes, comparing past production, with the current situation:

"I did prunings and I started doing the chemical treatment of my cashew trees, and the results are amazing: I had never seen so much production. Since the war period our cashew trees did not produce, but this year the results are amazing."

In many communities, the cashew trees began to flower so early (when compared to previous periods), that households put all hope in the cashew to galvanize their lives.

For cashew producers trained and equipped by PROSAN, cashew production has been crucial for their families who depend on land and natural resources. The marketing of cashew nuts and alcohol are the main sources of income for families that have cashew trees. As Regina Rafael (PROSAN Producer) says:

"... many families get something to eat through the cashews, and commercialization as a group has been helping the most disadvantaged without the minimum conditions to transport production to buyers ..."
Elisa Mazive is a small-scale farmer from a small community called Culuvalala in Manhiça village, Funhalouro District, one of the districts most affected by severe droughts caused by the El Niño phenomenon in the Inhambane Province. Like all farmers in rural areas, she does subsistence agriculture and has limited options for crops to grow due to the agro-climatic conditions in that region, which reduces the access and availability of a variety of food during the year that would otherwise ensure food and nutritional security for the family.

Elisa participated in programs promoted by CARE and implementing partners to learn of new techniques for food conservation and processing for foods she didn’t know were edible. This includes some native fruits that can guarantee food reserves in those critical months of food shortages.

“All my life I have taken this weed (moguda) out of the field and used it to feed the pigs because I never imagined that it could be edible. I was impressed with the various forms of preparation of Moguda (Baldroega) that I have learned, ranging from eating it as a salads or cooking with vegetable.”
Baldroega is a weed that can be grown and consumed as a salad, in soups or part of a curry. It is rich in Omega 3 and Vitamin A, B, C and E. It is also rich in Iron, Calcium, Potassium and Magnesium. In Mozambique, Funhalouro district specifically, Baldroega is commonly used to feed pigs and most people do not know its benefit to human health.

“I will share experience with my relatives and neighbors because we usually have long periods of starvation during drought periods. Now I realize why pigs are so healthy,” says Elisa Mazive, from Funhalouro.

Farmers are producing varieties of beans in their fields, including pigeon peas.

Photo: © CARE / Morgana Wingard
Community involvement to ensure success in the challenge of climate change in Petane D Community, Inhamúsua, Homoine District

The Farmers from the Petane D community have been standing out from the other farmers because of their efforts and engagement in the activities of Conservation Agriculture under the PROSAN program implemented by CARE and in partnership with Mahlahle. Groups of farmers are being trained on Conservation Agriculture techniques and introduction of crop varieties which are drought tolerant using the “Farmer Field School (FFS)” approach. Techniques are learned and then replicated in their own fields. The Txuvukelane group was created in July 2015 with 23 women and 7 men.

Together they decided to open a second field with the same dimensions 50mX50m to increase the learning area for the members of the group.

The community leader (Herculano Mahungo), as an active member of the community, realized the benefits of the initiative during the 2015/2016 agricultural campaign and has granted a new field with a total area of 31,250 square meters (1250mx25m) which was then prepared by them (taking in account the preservation of existing forest species) and distributed into 25 individual fields, each one with the dimension of 50mX25m.

“Taking part in the group activities granted me and my family access to new growing techniques and crop seeds that are drought resistant. It rains very little but with the little rain we managed to have crops grow and develop rapidly because the seeds are suitable for this climate. Seeds such as Cow peas (Nhembá beans or Vigna unguiculata) and Lab-Lab have been used since December 2016, unlike the seeds we had locally that usually took too long to harvest.”, says Teresa Cumbe.
According to Sérgio Carlos, the extension supporter from Homoine who assists the group:

“It is always a pleasure to work with this group because they actively participate in all activities, are very interactive and, for the most part, they volunteer their time for any agricultural practice. Each member easily applies the techniques taught because they believe in their effectiveness and recognize its advantages over the traditional growing practices. The new seed varieties were also well adopted, especially for Lab Lab which became a success case not only within the group but also in the entire community. This can be seen in any farmer field and intrigues other in the community who are not apart of this group to attend the regular meetings so that they can also learn new production methods.”

Farmers have are improving their conservation Agriculture through the application of planting in rows.

Photo: © CARE / Décio Fernando
Farmer Field Schools as a learning source for the improvement of production in family subsistence agriculture

Jossias Manuel Mutuque has been a member of the Farmer Field School since 2014, at the Huoko Muchavacude Group, located in the Muchavacude Village, Funhalouro District. The group consists of 30 members (63% are women), where he actively participated in the sessions of Conservation Agriculture techniques learning which included introduction of drought-tolerant seed varieties.

As the FFS is a learning group and due to knowledge and adopting of practices acquired, he has been selected to receive other producers for inter-district experience exchange sessions held under PROSAN.

“I work with my family in an area of about 5 hectares, where we produce food for our family consisting of 8 members, 3 of which are women. Before this program we practiced agriculture using traditional practices until in 2014 where we participated in the project and learned new techniques of farming through conservation agriculture. In recent years, rainfall has adversely affected agricultural production and harvests have dropped considerably.”

According to Mr. Jossias Mutuque, the improvement in production generated by cereals (maize and sorghum) and beans, created another problem related to the conservation and processing of production in order to conserve food for longer, avoiding damage caused by bug attacks. At present production is stored in different types of barns and drums.
From traditional agriculture to conservation agriculture: learning and obtaining knowledge to cope climate change

Mr. Armando Aminosse Pululo has been a member of the Vuneka Farmer Field School since 2015. Located in Pululo A, Mavume locality in the district of Funhalouro, it is a group of 30 members (of which 20 are women). Additionally, he is participating actively in the farmer field school sessions of learning and exchange. He learned improved techniques including mixed intercropping system under conservation agriculture based on green manure cover crops, introduction of improved short cycle crops and drought tolerant crops.

"Since we depend only on agriculture for our subsistence, my family has an area of about 4 hectares where my wife, four grandchildren and I work the land to produce food with traditional farming methods." Mr. Aminosse Pululo explained that the situation of extreme drought experienced in the region has considerably affected agricultural production due to lack of rainfall, a situation that made worse by caused by the El Niño phenomenon.

"During the 2015/2016 cropping season, we have produced only 2 20kg cans of cowpea and 1.5 cans of maize already threshed using traditional agriculture. We participated in the farmer field sessions before applying it in our fields. We faced many difficulties to have food on our table. Analyzing the situation we had decided to adopt the techniques promoted in the farmer field schools which are doing well in our field during the present cropping season (2016/2017) taking advantage of kits of seeds distributed to farmers by the project, including 3 Kg of short cycle variety of cowpea, 1 Kg of yoke bean and 2 Kg of sorghum".

According to Mr. Armando Aminosse Pululo, "even though the rains started to fall late, in November 2016, for the present cropping season, the first results are quite satisfactory, we were able to harvest about 400 Kg of Short-cycle of threshed cowpea and a 200 liter drum of maize, also threshed." Other crops such as yoke bean and sorghum are still in the field and he expects to harvest at least about 50 Kg even in the current situation of being seriously affected by floods and cyclone Dineo. Cyclone Dineo hit the coast of Inhambane province in the south of Mozambique on the night of Wednesday February 15th 2017. But by far the storm’s most devastating consequence was the destruction of more than 29,000 hectares of maize, cassava, beans, and peanuts, the first harvest for two years. More than 135,000 fruit trees – a key source of nutrition and income – were also destroyed.
Lab-Lab: a new crop for the community which has become a solution to the food insecurity of many households in the community of Petane

The need to generate sufficient food to meet the basic food and nutrition needs of households in Petane community, in the locality of Inhamússua, Homoine district is a serious challenge. Households are struggling throughout both the province and the country in the current context of climate change and its harmful effects on farming.

At a time when rains are scarce, to mitigate the effects of climate changes on farming and to ensure the availability of food throughout the entire year, the Food and Nutrition Security Programme (PROSAN), which is coordinated by CARE and implemented in partnership with Mahlahle and Rede HOPEM, is introducing farmers to new production techniques and a variety of seed, some of which are new in the community and drought-resistant. In its implementation they ensure that the different necessities among members of the household is taken into account.

Because one of the main dilemmas faced by lack of rains and the related loss of production in the fields is food scarcity, the introduction of new crops that are drought resistant and “short cycle” has been extremely critical to bridge the immediate food needs of PROSAN participants.

One of the crops that has been well received by participants is Lab-Lab. Its leaves have excellent taste and it grows rapidly, which ensures its continuous availability for food. It also acts as a green maure cover crop; through intercropping it benefit other crops such as cowpea and maize.

“My participation as volunteer in the Farmer’s Field School of the Group Txuwukelane from the Petane community has been very critical to the improved production in my field, because through practical experiences with other farmers and with the support of the promoter and the extensionist we can exchange experience and learn new Conservation Farming skills such as planting in rows, minimal tillage mulching inter cropping, consorting, green fertilizer and the introduction of new crops that are drought resistant and have a higher nutrition contente. This is very helpful in the drought situation that we have been experiencing in recent years.”

(Mertina Notiço, participant of CF-PROSAN, in Homoine)
Once the extensionist told us that the Lab-Lab leaves were edible, we collectively decided to try, using the same usual recipe to prepare cowpea, as both resemble each other. We were extremely happy with the excellent taste of the Lab-Lab leaves which also carry the advantage of having a very short time to cook compared to cowpea. Furthermore, because the leaves are plenty they are available for any one at any time to harvest and take home for household consumption. I loved so much this crop that I decided to take some and plant in my field to ensure that they fertilize the soils, the leaves are available to feed myself and my household and also to show my neighbours their importance.

It is worth mentioning that in their own initiative the members of the FFS group “Txuwukelane” 30 volunteer members are registered (of which 6 are males and 24 females) and are directly assisted by one promoter who lives in the community and one extensionist from Mahlahle. The Txuwukelane group has decided to increase its working area from the recommended standard plot size so now the group is working in two fields.

“It has been an honour for me, a great honour to learn and share experiences on improving farming production by engaging with this group and the extensionist who works with us. I am also so happy that the participants are embracing the FFS and are practicing the skills and planting the crops we use in FFS to solve the food security problem that is affecting our community in their own gardens”.

(Rabeca Zaqueu, participant CF-PROSAN, in Homoine)

Farmers have been able to identify the best varieties of crops suitable for their areas.

Photo: © CARE / Dércio Fernando
Self-help groups; a platform for managing climate change risks and shocks

Ezertina Julio Maculuve is a 34 years old widow and a mother of two. She runs a small business selling used clothing on the market in Homoine Village. She was struggling with fluctuating incomes in her business, until she joined VSLA (Village Saving Loans Association). She took a loan of 2,000.00 meticais which was fairly easy to access and that could afford to pay back without too much pressure. She has managed to stabilize her business and the profits help her to invest and take care of her family. She has been able to buy 8 zinc sheets for about 3,000.00 MZN and establish a water connection for 3,600.00 MZN to address water insecurity she and her family previously faced. Her future plans are to build an improved house of wood and zinc; a reality that is now possible thanks to her membership in VSLA.

“I have been making metal fabrication since 2008 which has been the main source of income for the support of my family. However, the income was irregular and business was not good. VSLA has been helpful in terms of accessing loans with low interest which I have used to invest in my business. For each zinc plate, the base material for my productions, I spend between 300.00 to 350.00 MZN. I am now getting profits ranging from 500.00 to 1,000.00 MZN with the sale of cans, buckets, watering cans, bowls, strain-ers, guttering and other materials.”
Promoting conservation agriculture to address climate change impacts

The PROSAN programme, implemented by CARE, has been promoting conservation agriculture in the Petane D Community, Inhamússua, Homoine District. Groups of farmers are trained on Conservation Agriculture techniques and are introduced to crop varieties which are drought tolerant using the “Farmer Field School (FFS)” approach. The acquired farming techniques are replicated in their own fields. The Txuvukelane group, comprised of 23 women and 7 men opened demonstration fields to increase learning for the group members. The community leader (Herculano Mahungo), an active member of the community, realized the benefits of the initiative during the 2015/2016 agricultural campaign and has granted a new field with total area of 31,250 square meters (1250mx25m). This field was then prepared by the group and was distributed into 25 individual fields, each one with the dimension of 50mX25m.

"Taking part in the group activities granted me and my family access to new growing techniques and seeds that are drought resistant. We get very little rain but we have managed to grow quickly maturing crops which are suitable for this climate. We have been consuming seeds such as Cow peas (Nhembu beans or Vigna unguiculata) and Lab-Lab since December 2016, unlike the seeds we had locally that usually took too long to harvest, and could not survive with reduction in rains.”

Said Teresa Fernando Cumbe, Group member, from Homoine district.

According Sérgio Carlos, the extension worker who supports the group, farmers are very keen on taking up new farming methods and they adhere to all instructions. They are willing to ensuring that learning happens and different agricultural practices are replicated. Farmers recognize the advantages of new farming methods over the traditional farming practices, which have been challenged by current climate change trends. The new seed varieties were well adopted and the entire community has been engaged in the learning process. Group members showed interest in taking part in the meetings so that they could also learn new agriculture techniques from the farmer field school members. Overall, the project has also benefited non group members and has capacity for continued scale up to manage climate risks and increase nutrition and food security.
The discovery of the drought-resistant vegetables that was usually used to feed pigs

Elisa Mazive is a small-scale farmer from a small community called Culuvalala in Manhiça village, Funhalouro District, one of the districts most affected by severe droughts caused by the El Niño phenomenon in the Inhambane Province.

Like the majority of women in rural areas, she does subsistence agriculture and has limited options of crops to grow due to the agro-climatic conditions in the region. These conditions reduce access and availability of food variety throughout the year, needed for food and nutritional security for the family.

As Elisa reports, she participated in programs promoted by CARE and partners and learned new techniques for food conservation and processing of foods which she did not know were edible. This includes some native fruits that can guarantee food stocks in those months which are critical in terms of food shortages:

“All my life I have taken this weed out of the field to feed the pigs because I never imagined that it could be edible. I was impressed with the various forms of preparation of Moguda (Baldroega) that I have learned, from salads to cooking with Moringa.”

Baldroega is a weed that can be grown and consumed in a salad, in soups or as part of a curry. It is rich in Omega 3 and Vitamin A, B, C and E. It is also rich in Iron, Calcium, Potassium and Magnesium.

In Mozambique, in the Funhalouro district specifically, Baldroega is commonly used to feed pigs and most people do not know its benefit to human health:

“I will share my experience with my relatives and neighbors because we usually have long periods of starvation without food at home. Now I realize why pigs are so healthy.”
Promoters engaged in associativism as a mechanism to overcome the challenge of sustainability

In Homoíne District, there are a number of credit and savings programs that have been funded since early 2007, by CARE and other organizations, including VLO, PROSAN VSLA (Village Savings and Loans Associations), FARE (Government Economic Rehabilitation Support Fund) and others. The programs constantly face sustainability issues when the projects come to an end. Due to this, a group of community savings and loans promoters from PROSAN, assisted by KUKULA, decided to join forces and create their own association in order to be self-sufficient and thus reduce dependency on funding, therefore ensuring continuity of the activities regardless of support from different projects.

One of the major challenges faced by the promoters to continue and/or expand the activities was the availability of the savings kits to distribute to the groups. The saving kits were usually purchased at a subsidized price by the projects. Consequently, every time a project came to an end, they faced problems like difficulties in accessing sites to purchase savings kits (which obliged them to find alternatives such as recording the movements on notebooks or A4 sheets, which in turn endangers the ACPE norms). These challenges also include group members abandoning the association due to the lack of trust, and therefore the promoters also were demotivated. In addition, they used personal bank accounts to deposit the money of the group.

“APROPEC is an association created by the promoters of VSLA from Homoíne, with 18 members (4 men and 14 women), in 2016, and legalized in early 2017. The association aims: to continue the activities left in the project implementation and promote other activities for the development of communities (creation of new groups, local acquisition of Kits and their accessories, etc.); to guarantee economic empowerment of families and communities in need by promoting savings and credit groups; to promote farming and gender equity in access to services and natural resources; and to ensure its institutional and organizational development.

We are proud that this is the first association of this type in Inhambane Province and we already have a space for operation and are working to raise funds for the building of our office.

Said Moises Andela, president of APROPEC, from Homoíne (continues on page 24)
APROPEC entered into a memorandum of understanding with KUKULA, with the aim of financially linking the groups assisted by the promoters with the formal banks, including a financial compensation for the promoter and the association for each connected group, amounting to 1,250.00 MZM (25 members x 50.00 MZM) and 2,500.00 MZM (25 members x 100.00 MZM) respectively. The association already has a bank account where its funds are deposited and is currently awaiting for the publication of its legalization in the Boletim da República.

Through this community service activity in financial linkage and through other links (like sale of savings kits, sale of pesticides for cashew tree pulverization, cashew nut marketing, etc.), APROPEC has been looking for more opportunities for sustainability, and with the raised funds, it intends to develop various achievements for the group as well as for the members.

Promoting women leadership and economic empowerment

Ms. Anastácia Ernesto Gomes, 43 years old, is a single woman living in the rural town of Mbone, Funhalouro District with four children, two of which are female, and two young grandchildren. She has been forced to increase her efforts to care for her family since she was abandoned by her husband in 2008 and started receiving support from Government through INAS (National Institute of Social Action), as well as keeping small animals mainly goats and chickens.
“My life has always been a battle since I lost my husband and I have been forced to feed my four children with a challenge of less income each year, because of the scarcity of rains. The situation was further aggravated in 2016, when I had to look after my grandchildren, after my eldest daughter lost her life. Fortunately the children were registered at INAS and benefit from the formal social protection service through the financial subsidy that is far below the needs of the family.

PROSAN represented a very great change in my life, hope and support, with all the problems that I have experienced. Leading groups with many participants in the communities, where leadership role is always associated with man was a huge challenge. This situation made me discover unknown mobilization and conflicts solving skills and became an inspiration to both men and women.”

Through invitations from friends and neighbors, she joined PROSAN’s CA (Conservation Agriculture) group in her community. Due to her skills and efforts, she was selected as Community CA facilitator (promoter) and later Cashew group promoter, currently leading three PROSAN groups (two CA and one Cashew group) with more than 60 people, as well as was involved in savings and credit group promoted by CARE under PROSAN.

Anastacia is an example of perseverance, as she takes care of her family despite the challenges. She leads the CA and Cashew groups, which are comprised of men and women in her community and she is also a member of the GBV Prevention Committee. She confessed that has been a victim of gender bias and discriminatory attitudes in her community, and was associated with the use of black magic to persuade the families that she supports. This situation caused frustration and bad feelings, but she did not give up, motivated by the results achieved and constant request from the communities.

Improving life conditions and leadership skills

In the village of Guija, locality of Nhaulane, district of Homoíne, resides the leader of the 3rd step, Mrs. Marcela Alberto. Mrs. Alberto was born on September 6, 1966 and is a divorced mother of eight children, of which four are girls. Besides her children she is also responsible for nine grandchildren with whom she resides.

In spite of joining to the PROSAN in 2015, Ms. Marcela had already heard about the project and immediately participated in the components of Conservation Agriculture (CA) and Cashew, and latter on in 2016 she integrated the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) component, locally designated as Xitique. Her group is called ZAMA ZAMA, which translated from the local language Xitsua meaning "attempts".

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"I have always been a woman who has suffered and struggled. I rely on the agriculture income for mine and my family’s survival but in the last three years, because of the drought, production has dropped and consequently the income as well. Prior to joining the project, the cashew nut production in my farm was too little. This situation improved when I joined the group, the production increased dramatically in quantity and quality due to the training I received on the management of cashew production and the sales. Therefore, from the cashew nut production, profits rose and I was able to save. The money quickly multiplied and it allowed me to think about concrete projects that would not be feasible before...mine and my family’s lives have improved, thanks to the savings I have been able to make.

In the past Mrs. Marcela lived in a insecure fragile house built with grass, straw and small shrubs. Over time, she was able to build a more resistant and comfortable house, called "Mukuko" in local language, which is a house made of concrete, zinc sheets, & corrugated tin sheets. The materials used to build the new house were 22 corrugated metal sheets, 8 bags of cement and cinder blocks. The blocks and cement are used for the house’s foundation and the metal sheets are used for the walls and the ceiling. In addition to the material listed above wooden planks and nails were also used.

I am very proud because I was the first woman in my village to build a strong and improved house like this, while feeding and taking care of 17, who are under my responsibility. For ages, this village considered women incapable. These days, I am a role model to many families, people are getting inspired to build homes like mine. Thanks to Care I had the opportunity to show the community my real value."
Attending on CARE’s activities “improved my leadership skills and as result I was elected a member of the advisory council of my village.” Before joining PROSAN, Ms. Marcela was already leader of the 3rd step (a designation attributed to heads of ten households or families), but during this time didn’t see herself as capable as men, not as dynamic or confident.

“I embraced the idea that only men can be leaders, believing that women are weak and rely on male support. In the meetings I was quiet even if I had good ideas. Things changed when I learned about transformative leadership, gender and the role of women in the society. My ideas, beliefs and convictions changed and now I understand that everyone, men and women, can contribute to improve and the development of families and communities.”

Participation in the PROSAN groups, exchanging experiences with other members (interaction with male leaders) and participation in the reflective and educative groups on gender relations using the “man in the kitchen,” tool guided by Mrs. Adélia Maela who is a community activist trained by HOPEM and CARE, helped to challenge the prejudices and taboos practiced in the local tradition.

“Working with CARE gave me the opportunity to show my value as a woman, mother and person, which allowed me to be elected as a member of the advisory council at the level of my village and as a representative of my village on the advisory council at the Nhoulane locality level, which among other topics focused on health and nutrition.”

Transformation of masculinities: from simple man in the kitchen to task sharing

Mr. Simões Maela, 44 years old, is married to Mrs. Beatriz Massinga, 37 years old. Both were born in and are residents of the village of Guija, locality of Nhoulane, district of Homoíne. They have 5 children, 2 of which are girls. Their eldest son is 17 years old and attends secondary school at a High School in the city of Maxixe, which is around 50 km away.

Mr. Simões belongs to the Conservation Agriculture (CA) group named “Guenta Guenta” while his wife belongs to the Cashew and VSLA (Village Saving Loans Association) groups, where she has been a member since early 2016. Recognizing the needs of their family, they chose to enroll themselves to the PROSAN groups as a way of better to cope with their vulnerable condition.

Before the drought Mrs. Beatriz had good production as result of low-agricultural technology adoption and the introduction of Lab lab, a bean crop tolerant to drought.

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"I really enjoy being part of these groups as they are great initiatives and allow me to learn a lot about so many different things."

When I first joined the “man in the kitchen” program, I found it very strange to see the leaders and other influential men cooking in the presence of other men and some women. My wife was watching me and laughing since I had never cooked at home, it was my first time. When we got home I was still doubtful however in the following days I started doing small household chores. Today I cook and bathe the children, but I need some time to do so in the presence of friends and family.

My husband cooks when I am too busy or sick and this is a very big help for me especially because it did not happen before. The only challenge we still have onward is learning to cope with social pressure, especially my mother-in-laws, who still find it strange to see a man cook.” Said Mrs. Maela’s husband.

Breaking the cycle of poverty in households: Story of an elderly woman head of the household

Mrs. Olga Zacaria Nhavene is a 65 years old widow and the head of 10 households. She was born in and is a resident of Giju village, locality of Nhaulane, district of Homoïne. She is the mother of six children, of which three are girls. The children are already grown and some live in South Africa, and never returned home to take care of the children they left with their mother (her grandchildren). Currently, Mrs. Olga takes care of 13 grandchildren.
I prefer to sleep hungry to make sure that my grandchildren’s school expenses are paid. I know what it means to study. I cannot condemn my grandchildren to poverty and suffering forever.” said Mrs. Olga, who commented that at her age it should be difficult to take care of the grandchildren without the support she gets on PROSAN’s groups.

With old age, Mrs. Olga’s daily routine is dominated by the struggle for her own survival and that of her grandchildren as well, most of them are still in school. Her entry into PROSAN has provided her with the opportunity to share experiences and learn new alternatives on generating and diversifying income. She is an active woman participating in three PROSAN’s groups namely: CA, Cashew and VSLA (Village Saving Loans Association). With the generated income she covers school expenses of three grandchildren who are attending technical courses (two in the provincial capital - Inhambane and another in the district of Chókwe). She can afford to buy clothes and other small basic things for grandchildren.

Mrs. Olga holds 4th grade of education from the old colonial system. She recognizes that the only way to break the cycle of poverty is through education. For this reason, despite her advanced years, she is committed to doing everything she can to see that her grandchildren receive a proper education and maybe one day they can take care of her.

Olga is one of the few women to realize that education is a long-term investment. She stresses that her participation in dialogues where her and the community reflect of woman empowerment in PROSAN, has greatly helped to solidify this thinking.

“Many families prefer to lead children to actions that generate immediate income (farm, cutting and sale of firewood, cuttings, cattle grazing or even premature marriage), but I know this does not guarantee a good education and a sustained well-being in adulthood.”

Second opportunity to live: women economic and social empowerment

Mrs. Albertina Eugélio Mazive was born in 1964 in the town of Guija, locality of Nhaulane, district of Homoíne, where she currently resides. She has seven children, two of them are girls. She was previously married in the district of Panda with a miner who had more than 4 wives and in 2003 expelled her and their seven children from the home.

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As the mother of seven children, the suffering that she experienced was so great that for years and she was regretting to herself all the nights instead of sleeping. Her means of feeding the children consisted of small scale farming and selling firewood. In 2005 she sold cassava, cowpeas and other farm products which allowed her to enroll the two youngest children in school and to pay the passports fees of her two oldest children in order for them to work in South Africa, she believed in improving the family condition through remittance. During this period, she was fortunate to receive mother-relative assistance in building a house for her and the children. With this, her dignity slowly started to reappear with a roof over their heads.

"In 2014 my life began changing when I joined the PROSAN group, in the CA component. Because of my dedication I was chosen to preside over the group, in where I learned many things about life such as techniques that I had not heard before and with that, was able to improve my income and productivity on the farm. I sold a lot of products the following year and then I started saving in one of the PROSAN VSLA (Village Saving Loans Association) groups. With the money I received, I was able to buy 30 corrugated metal sheets to put a new roof on my house, school uniforms for my children, food for my family and some other basic goods to give my children and grandchildren. During the same year I joined the cashew group where I was able to make more money allowing me to buy cement and to pay the builders. Today my progress and development have piqued interest in the community as I can say that my life took a turn in the right direction when I joined the PROSAN.

Preventing GBV through rights awareness

Ms. Tereza Ricardo is 43 years old, who was married and lives in the village of Massalane, Manhiça, Funhalouro district. She is the mother of four children and four grandchildren. For years she was the victim of domestic violence, living in a situation where her alcoholic husband would return home and demand some money made from selling cashews to buy alcohol.

"My husband beat me so much, especially when he knew I had money from cashew sales. He wanted all the money to go drinking and he obliged to give him the. Before entering in the project in my village it was said that men can not do the "jobs of women", but with the intervention of CARE and the active participation of the men in our community, we women are more..."
In the year 2015 Mrs. Tereza joined the AC and cashew group. In this period, during the reflections in the group discussions with HOPEM, an implementing partner, women began slowly controlling their assets and began thinking about what to do with their income. “Today when we sell our cashews we can sit and discuss what to do with our money. One part goes towards the purchase of our children’s uniform, another goes to buy food, another one for plates and household goods, and another we keep for emergency matters. I feel proud, HOPEM is transforming my husbands in a better men and the old negative beliefs that existed are beginning to be questioned.”

“My husband did not stop drinking but now he has control when. with my consent he takes a small part of the money to buy drink but a good thing is that he no longer drinks out of the house. he drinks at home and sometimes with me, which he did not do in the past .”

Vitória Wilson, 35 years old, is a married mother of six children, four of which are girls. She was born in the village of Bulanguete 2, Manhiça, in the district of Funhalouro.

She joined PROSAN in July 2015 in the component of cashew where she learned about the integrated management of cashew trees, resulting in increased cashew production. In the following year, the productivity increased from two to seven 25 liters, representing an increase of 350%. The production of these additional five cans resulted in 8,900 meticais of profit. This money enabled the family to greatly improve their nutrition, something that was previously unthinkable due to low productivity and weak knowledge on using locally available products.

“We have managed to guarantee at least two quality meals a day for our children, for us PROSAN is our salvation . When I had the cashew nut I was able to talk to my husband and we came up with the idea to divide our production between sales and our family’s consumption. After selling the cashew I told my husband about the profits and together we decided to buy chicken

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for reproduction. From the chicken I was able to feed the eggs to the children and now they are more resistant to diseases than before. Through the action of HOPEM and Masse sunkukates we have been made aware that children need more eggs than adults because they are still growing. The project has been able to break the food taboo that children and pregnant women cannot eat eggs and because of this our children eat eggs and are growing up healthy.

The participation in the cashew group and the treatment of chickens has diversified the sources of a family’s income, providing a strategy to face the drought that currently plagues that village. Chickens are not only used for consumption but also for sale. By joining the proceeds from the sale of cashews, families are able to compensate the poor production they face in the fields, where seeds do not even germinate because of poor soil conditions caused by the drought.

Photo: © CARE / Paula Castro

Overcoming economic barriers: Entrepreneurial couple and inspiration for other families

Elisa António, 24 years old, lives in the village of Mbone, Mucuine locality, Funhalouro district, is married and is a mother of three children.

“I am happy with PROSAN. I joined the CARE’s savings group with some previous experience of this type of activity, which allowed to capitalize the learning from the trainings and dynamics to which I was exposed within the project.”
I am able to save money and with the saved money we were able to improve our living conditions through the resale of some basic necessity products and my husband’s incomes made through his individual business ventures. Here in the village of Mbone we have encouraged other young couples to save in order to have valuable things in their lives.

With the amount received from our savings we have managed to buy school supplies for the children, food and have improved our house. We bought two motorcycles, a plot of land in the village of Funhalouro and my husband did the traditional presentation ceremony (traditional marriage) with my parents. Everything was due to the savings. I would like this project continuing to raise awareness into communities, especially in the most remote areas.

Cashew processing improving family life

Ácina Carlos is 59 years old, single, and lives with her 7 children in the 25 de Setembro Village, Mucuine Locality, Funhalouro District.

The project’s arrival in her village allowed men and women to learn and adopt integrated cashew management skills and learning techniques of how to improve cashew processing, resulting in improved sales.

"In my case, I sell cashew nut locally and also in the city of Maxixe where I can sell them at a higher price than here. When our customers come to buy chew nut from here the price is relatively low price that does not make up for the investment done.

With this cashew business, I have been able to buy goats for breeding and have improved drastically my source of income which has enabled me to support my children’s studies. The district of Funhalouro has recently suffered from major drought and famine. However, with the PROSAN intervention we developed skills to cope with the climate change impact since we learned low cost techniques that allow us to produce and process cashew with quality through integrated cashew tree management so that the community is better prepared. From the savings program harmful male behavior reduced because we are not so dependent economically on them."
In the town of Bulanguete, locality of Manhiça, district of Funhalouro, lives Sistoria Carlos, 33 years old, married with three children. The couple makes their livelihood on the selling of the products they produce, including cashew nut, beans and some maize, from their small farm patch.

Funhalouro is located in an arid to semiarid zone in the south of the country. The food crisis in the district of Funhalouro in northern Inhambane province has caused the poor agricultural production during the last agrarian campaign, exacerbated by the severe drought which challenges families to find solutions to climate change.

The effects of climate change are still being felt and the National Institute for Disaster Management (INGC) predicts that the situation will continue until the year 2017. Faced with the situation of droughts and food insecurity, PROSAN has intervened in a holistic way, assisting the most vulnerable groups.

"Since I started participating in the savings and loans group, my family’s life has improved. The money we save is prioritized to purchase food and pay for the expenses of school uniforms and material, as well as the school fees for the children who study outside the district of Funhalouro. This was not possible before."

Even in the face of the difficulties experienced by the family, they manage to pay for the studies of their oldest son, who studies 60 kilometers from their home, through the income generated by the work performed and participation in the VSLA (Village Saving Loans Association) group. Due to the distance and difficulty of transportation the family decided to arrange a house for their son to be close to the school. Every month the parents send a food basket and school supplies to their son while he is away from home.
In the village of Fanha-Fanha, locality of Nhaulane, district of Homoíne lives Mrs. Faustiana Januário, 64 years old, married with four children. She has belonged to the AC group named Kuzuanana since 2015 where she participates alongside her husband. During her time in the group she benefited from the Identification Card (ID) campaign and participated in gender and nutrition reflective groups promoted and established by PROSAN.

As a beneficiary of the cooking demonstrations facilitated by HOPEM and the educational sessions on nutrition carried out by the Massungukates under nutritional screening campaign, she realized the importance of approaching a health unit to interact with the professionals to get assistance. In the hospital she found out that due to malnutrition, her body was swollen and she suffered from overall poor health. Seven months later, her health has considerably improved.

"Prior to PROSAN’s intervention I would never see my husband getting involved in domestic matters,, whenever my husband wanted to help with housework, I have been stopping him as I did not feel comfortable seeing him do those chores but once we began with the project my vision changed:"

I have felt some positive changes in my marriage as my husband has become involved in sharing the burden of burden of doing the household chores with me. When we return from the farm he does not leave me overloaded with all of the work to do alone.

He now helps in fetching the water as well as sweeping the yard. Even with the presence of a visitor, we both carry out the household chores without fear.

I was given the opportunity to learn how to make healthy recipes such as potatoes enriched with products from our fields as well as new ways to prepare and consume leaves of plants that I previously though were inedible such as moringa and baldroega.

Engaged man: Sharing housework without prejudice

Ernesto Carlos Manhice, 32 years old, is a married father of five children, of which three are girls and was born and resides in the town of Mapoca, locality of Manhiça, district of Funhalouro. He joined the PROSAN cashew group called Zama-Zama in 2014.

Years ago, in Mapoca village men had as primary responsibility taking care of the cattle, helping in the field, making

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decision on behalf of the family. In other words, the man was the one who provided. When men came back from the fields they would enjoy a long rest while the woman took care of the household chores, without rest, despite her and her husband having awoken at the same time that morning. The following year, with the intervention of the project namely the creation of educational and reflective groups, Mr. Ernesto transformed himself and developed a new set of values and beliefs and, step by step, began sharing chores at home without any fear or shame.

“My wife is just like me, she gets tired too. When I first began to change my behavior and attitude I received a lot of criticism and pressure from my friends and family, but I was aware that it was important for me to change and also for me to make them change, since then I have not received any more criticism.”

Shortening distances: Relieving overloads of household chores and the water search

Quitéria Manuel Ngove, 33, lives in the village of Muchavacude, Mucuine, and is mother of two children, one of which is a girl. She has been divorced since 2006. In 2015 she joined to Conservation Agriculture of PROSAN. Once she obtained a 6th grade education, she was appointed secretary and clerk of the group.

"Because of the project I have learned many techniques which increased both my production and productivity. I sold beans, corn and vegetables, and managed to buy a donkey worth 17,000,00 meticais. The donkey serves as a means of transport, especially in the search for water over long distances. I was also able to buy school supplies, uniforms, new clothes and improve the nutrition of my family. All of this I owe to the opportunity to be part of the PROSAN group."

Funhalouro does not have rivers therefore water is found in reservoirs, cisterns and home wells. However, due to the current drought that affects the district, water is increasingly scarce and the scarcity only increases as both people and animals end up using the same water sources for consumption. Women and children are always the most heavily burdened in the search for water as they are the ones who are expected to go and search for water. On average women walk almost four hours in the search for water in those communities where water sources distant. For large families it can often mean going to the water source several times a day.

VSLA promoting financial education

Alfredo Romeu, 38 years old, father of six children, of which three are girls, was born and resides in Mavume. He joined the VSLA group called Tana Kwatsi in 2015, and is currently saving 250 meticais per week from the sale of firewood, charcoal and traditional drinks.
Annually he receives 12,000 meticais from his savings in the group as well as any additional amount he receives from his participation in the loans program of his group. With the money received thus far he has been able to buy corrugated zinc sheets to put a new roof on his house, school uniforms for his children and was even able to save a portion for next year’s budget.

"Before I entered the group I always had money, but it was always used to family emergencies. In the first year it was difficult to maintain the monthly deposits, but I then got used to it. I suffered discrimination by my friends, as most of them considered savings to be a female activity. My life has changed a lot and other men admire my decision and have also even started to save money."

Women's leadership challenging gender stereotypes in local leadership bodies (Local Advisory Councils)

Virginia Januário Mucanze is a divorced 48-year-old woman from the Massinga district, who has been living for 19 years in Culualala Village, Manhiça, Funhalouro District. She is the head of a household with eight members: daughters, nephews and grandchildren. She holds 7th grade of primary level of education and gets her income from the agriculture. To add to benefits she has reaped during the implementation of PROSAN, Ms. Virginia Mucanze was one of the 250 people selected in the districts of Homoine and Funhalouro due to their vulnerability yet active and exemplary role played throughout the implementation of the project.

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To Receive Land Titles (DUATs) is a way to reduce the levels of GBV both at home and in the community and is a way of guaranteeing security and the right to use land, which is where the production of cashew comes from, one of the greatest sources of income and subsistence for families.

“With all that happened in my life, the frustration and anguish I felt, I even wanted to commit suicide but I did not do that because of the suffering my daughters would go through. Then I held my head up and decided to leave my district and to go on living in another place far from my roots and family. I moved to Manhiça Village, in Funhalouro District, where I initially developed a small business of resale of coconut and fruits to ensure our survival.”

“After her ex-husband of the first marriage (with whom she had a daughter who is currently 30 years old) emigrated to South Africa in search of better living conditions, and married another woman and never returned, she was eventually sent away from the house where she lived with his family. Faced with this situation, Virginia started a new relationship with another man (a primary school teacher) in Massinga District, and they had a daughter who is currently 13 years old. After a few years, this man also separated from her and sent her away from the house built by both of them, claiming that Virginia had evil spirits. Later, he married a colleague.

In order to overcome the challenge of a difficult and uncertain life, Virginia got involved in different activities in her community, where she participated in several meetings of local groups, including church and women’s groups, in search for new opportunities that would improve her life conditions.

Although she has a chronic illness (including asthma and severe stomach aches), Virginia is a woman with many social responsibilities, which includes caring for her family, where she has been facilitating the process of involving leading women in decision-making forums. She has noticed that the level of women’s participation and speech increased considerably. Currently, she supports her family through agriculture (applying the techniques learned at the FFS), from the income obtained from cashew production, animal farming, and participation in the savings and credit activities promoted by PROSAN.

As a woman and activist in the family and in the community, Virginia has inspired many female victims of abuse who have been denied their rights because of economic dependence or local beliefs. She has encouraged women to conquer their place in society through campaigns to prevent premature marriages, combat domestic violence, and provide residential areas for female victims of Gender-Based Violence. According to her, many more women tend to consolidate their place in society despite the strong social norms that reinforce difference of opportunities between men and women.
Arneta Macuácua, 55 years old, lives in the Matingana, Massinga district, and is a mother of 9 children (8 women). Although married to a healer, a symbol of power at the local level, she manages to be more influential than her husband and exercises her leadership without interference at home and in the community. In addition to social obligations as a family matriarch, she is also a member of the Mozambican Women’s Organization (OMM) and community leader. In order to have an idea of how difficult it is to be a woman leader, besides having to deal with harmful rooted hegemonic masculinities, small proportion of the few compared to men, she can impose herself at community level, faithfully passing women’s agendas.

For her survival, she relies on the practice of agriculture (cereals, legumes and oilseeds) and commercialization of coconut, one of the income crops of the region. However, due to the impact of climate change (severe drought, El Niño effects, and the tropical cyclone Dineo that hit the province in 2017) the production has reduced drastically putting uncertainty in the subsistence of the household. In view of this, she has been carrying out small businesses and has the support of her husband.

“In 2016, just because I bravely supported a family to report to the police a case of GBV (Gender Based Violence) that culminated in the death of the victim (woman) occurred at the level of my community, I began suffering persecution and successive threats, even my house was vandalized and I was threatened to death. The accused was tried and convicted, but after a few months he was released on bail”.

“...for not accepting acts of violence practiced mostly against women in my community I almost died, but thank God I survived. I’m glad to know that I can make a difference. I will continue to fight against GBV and the well-being of other women, especially the younger ones. I am part of a village saving loans group (VSLA). Initially I thought that the group was just for saving income and getting loans, but I was wrong; at the VSLA group I learn new things, we exchange life experiences about violence, and with the income we can meet some of our needs such as school uniforms and school materials mostly for families on need, improving our homes, and developing small businesses. Honestly, I never thought before that the scarcity of food and water because of the impact of climate change would create more conflict and violence within the family".
Ms. Arneta is a highly mobilized and influential woman at community level and has benefited from several training sessions under the GBV and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) initiative in Massinga, Inhambane province. This training is targeted at influential people in the community such as community leaders and local communicators. The trainings include aspects on gender, masculinities, GBV prevention and any other type of abuse against women and girls linked to disaster risk management.

Through her involvement in this initiative, it was possible to capitalize local synergies, integrate gender into and Local Committees for Disaster Risk Management and into the VSLA (Village Saving Loans Association) groups. In her own words, Ms. Arneta affirms that ‘participating in training, community educative and reflective dialogues and gender mapping and analysis, contributed to a deep understanding of GBV matters on people’s life, and especially as a leader learning how to proceed and manage follow-up cases dealt at family spheres, those that are channelled to the police and to courts but where the outcomes are unknown.

The Gender and Disaster Risk Management initiative implemented in the province of Inhambane is a partner-

ship between Care International and the National Institute for Disaster Risk Management (INGC) with support from the Embassy of Ireland in Mozambique. The initiative is implemented with assistance from Men for Change Network (HOPEM), Tsinela Association, Mahlahle Association and the District Services for Women and Social Action (SDMAS).

This initiative contributes to PROSAN’s objective 3 (‘Strengthen the capacity of marginalized women and families to exercise control over their productive assets and the revenues they generate’) and aims to reduce levels of gender-based violence through the building of capacity of women and girls to deal effectively with natural disasters and climate change. The initiative is implementing some of the recommendations from the study ‘Hope dries up? Women and girls coping with drought and climate change in Mozambique’ carried out by Care in 2016, and is in line with the Government’s strategic priorities contained in the Strategic Government Plan on Gender by the National Institute for Disaster Risk Management (2016-20).

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Ms. Arneta is a highly mobilized and influential woman at community level and has benefited from several training sessions under the GBV and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) initiative in Massinga, Inhambane province. This training is targeted at influential people in the community such as community leaders and local communicators. The trainings include aspects on gender, masculinities, GBV prevention and any other type of abuse against women and girls linked to disaster risk management.

Through her involvement in this initiative, it was possible to capitalize local synergies, integrate gender into and Local Committees for Disaster Risk Management and into the VSLA (Village Saving Loans Association) groups. In her own words, Ms. Arneta affirms that ‘participating in training, community educative and reflective dialogues and gender mapping and analysis, contributed to a deep understanding of GBV matters on people’s life, and especially as a leader learning how to proceed and manage follow-up cases dealt at family spheres, those that are channelled to the police and to courts but where the outcomes are unknown.

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