

CARE Zimbabwe Takunda ARFY21 Narrative Report

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACHM	Africa Centre for Holistic Management
AGRITEX	Agricultural Technical and Extension Services
BFA	Barrier and Facilitator Analysis
BHA	Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
CAP	Community Action Plan
CELUCT	Chikukwa Ecological Land Use Community Trust
CLA	Collaboration Learning and Adaptation
CSB+	Corn-Soy Blend plus
CV	Community Vision
DFNC	District Food and Nutrition Committee
DMCs	Disaster Management Committees
EHT	Environmental Health Technicians
ENSURE	Enhancing Nutrition Stepping Up Resilience and Enterprises
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FY	Fiscal Year
IDEAL	Implementer-Led Design, Evidence, Analysis and Learning
IDI	In-Depth Interviews
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
IPA	Innovations for Poverty Action
IPC	Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Phase Classification
IPTT	Indicator Performance Tracking Table
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LEAP III	USAID Learning, Evaluation, and Analysis (LEAP III) Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MMCA	Make Me Change Agent
MoHCC	Ministry of Health and Child Welfare
MT	Metric Tonnes
PERSUAP	Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan
PORET	Participatory Organic Research Extension and Training
PRO-WASH	Practices, Research & Operations in Water, Sanitation & Hygiene
QUIPS	Qualitative Inquiry Planning Sheets
RCT	Randomized Control Trial
R&I	Refine and Implement
RFSA	Resilience and Food Security Activity
SBC	Social Behavior Change
SCALE	Strengthening Capacity in Agriculture Livelihoods and Environment
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STREAM	System for Tracking Results and Evidence for Adaptive Management
TIPS	Trials of Improved Practices
ToC	Theory of Change
TOT	Training of Trainers
TSURO	Towards Sustainable Use of Resources Organization
TVET	Technical Vocational Education Training
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

USD	United States Dollar
US	United States
VHW	Village Health Workers
VIDCO	Village Development Committee
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Associations
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WBA	Well Being Analysis
WPUC	Water Point User Committee
WQAP	Water Quality Assurance Plan
ZimVAC	Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee

1 Executive Summary

Takunda is a five-year Resilience Food Security Activity funded by USAID/BHA and implemented by a consortium¹ primed by CARE in Zimbabwe. The Activity started in October 2020 and its goal is sustainable, equitable, and resilient food, nutrition, and income security in targeted areas. The Activity focuses on Manicaland (Buhera and Mutare districts) and Masvingo (Chivi and Zaka districts) provinces. The Activity has a target of 301,636 vulnerable and food insecure women, men, and youth (young men and women) from extremely poor and chronically vulnerable households (HHs); HHs with adolescents, children, and women at risk of chronic and acute malnutrition.

This report covers results for FY21, the first implementation year of Takunda designed to focus on the refine and implement (R&I). The Activity engaged in start-up processes that included staff recruitments and office set up, an inception workshop led by USAID funded Program Cycle Support (PCS) mechanism, completing Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), Theory of Change reviews, Evidence Knowledge Gaps identification processes, development, and approval of studies Scope of Work (SOWs) and protocols. Takunda developed an R&I workplan and FY22 Pipeline Resources Estimate Proposal (PREP) which were approved by USAID. Takunda staff held planning meetings with Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) in readiness for the baseline evaluation. Takunda conducted stakeholder inception meetings in all the implementation districts, which resulted in the acceptance of and support for the Activity across all the targeted districts.

The Activity rolled out its community visioning (CV) process to 92 communities to generate community action plans through an inclusive process of prioritizing needs and aspirations. The community action plans have informed the Activity on existing structures, groups and other ongoing projects and established entry points for relevant interventions. One of the community visioning participants in Chivi district had this to say, *“We have seen many projects come and go but because they didn’t ask us, their projects came and went with them”, and “We know why the last poultry and water supply project failed, we can work with you to make sure it doesn’t happen again!”*.

Additionally, the Activity conducted a Well-Being Analysis (WBA) process in 170 communities (village clusters) to define vulnerability from a community perspective based on which individuals were ranked in the poor, middle- or upper-income groups. On completion of the WBA process, a household level census was conducted to collect individual household demographics and other characteristics needed for enrollment into interventions. By the end of the FY21, 28,611 households against a target of 48,826 were registered.

As mentioned above, Takunda identified a number knowledge gaps that needed to be filled in the R&I period. To this end, 12 Scopes of Work and protocols were developed including four priority studies: Gender Analysis, Social Behavior Change (SBC), Agricultural Value Chains, and Off-Farm Economic Opportunities and Labor Markets assessment. These studies commenced in FY21, but completion of field level data collection for the SBC study was not complete at the end of the year and

¹ The consortium members include Bulawayo Project Center, Environment Africa, FHI360, International Youth Foundation and Nutrition Action Zimbabwe

reporting was under way for all with a planned submission date of end of November 2021.

Takunda field level implementation was impacted by two COVID-19 national lockdowns, one from January to March 2021 and the second one from June to August 2021², that resulted in a slow pace of rolling out the CV, household census, scoping and functionality studies, and priority formative studies requiring one-on-one meetings and participants gatherings. Takunda staff continued to adapt to the situation and did more work remotely, especially in the designing of studies, holding smaller meetings and, in some cases, remote engagement with communities by phone.

The Activity received its first call forward of commodities for the supplementary feeding program in August 2021. By the end of September, Takunda had 865.7 MT of Corn-Soy Blend (CSB+) and 159.6 MT of vegetable oil in its Masvingo and Mutare warehouses. The Activity also received its procurement of IT equipment, twenty vehicles and twenty-four motorbikes.

Takunda responded to the delays, which held back all planned activities by almost two months, by adjusting the workplan timelines that BHA had approved. Throughout the year, Takunda staff continued to uphold COVID-19 standard operation procedures of maintaining social distance, temperature checks, using hand sanitizers, regular hand washing with running water and soap, and appropriate wearing of face masks. During community gatherings, Takunda staff provided handwashing facilities with running water, soap, and sanitizers to protect participants from COVID-19. A large proportion of Takunda staff have voluntarily taken the COVID-19 vaccination to protect themselves and targeted participants and their communities from the pandemic. Takunda, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Child Care extension staff (e.g., Village Health Workers (VHWs) and Environmental Health Technicians (EHTs)), conducted COVID-19 awareness and compliance sessions prior to any activity with the participants. Throughout FY21, the effects of COVID-19 and the national lockdowns in the country continued to erode incomes, which subsequently reduces household access to food and health services^{3,4} and social protection.^{5, 6}

The annual rate of inflation reported in Zimbabwe in October 2020 stood at 471%,⁷ this dropped to 162% in May 2021⁸ and further declined to 50% in August 2021.⁹ Despite the declining inflation rate, fuel prices and increasing parallel market rates increased consumer prices and subsequently reduced affordability of basic commodities, negatively impacting household livelihood options, food, and nutrition

2 <https://fews.net/southern-africa/zimbabwe/food-security-outlook/june-2021>

3 <https://fews.net/southern-africa/zimbabwe/food-security-outlook/june-2021>

4 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/zimbabwe/publication/zimbabwe-economic-update-covid-19-further-complicates-zimbabwe-s-economic-and-social-conditions>

5 <https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-economic-update-covid-19-further-complicates-zimbabwe-s-economic-and-social>

6 <https://fews.net/southern-africa/zimbabwe/food-security-outlook-update/august-2021>

7 <https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/food-security-situation-update-wfp-zimbabwe-november-2020>

8 <https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-food-security-and-markets-monitoring-report-may-2021>

9 <https://fews.net/southern-africa/zimbabwe/food-security-outlook-update/august-2021>

security.¹⁰ The country continued to experience a stable political climate and Takunda did not face any political interference during the fiscal year.

Zimbabwe experienced a favorable rainy season, characterized by normal to above-normal rainfall, which led to a slightly improved food security situation with communities harvesting field crops such as maize, sweet potatoes, and beans, among other nutritious foods. However, despite this favorable rainy season experienced in FY21, income and food access remain constrained in the Southern and Western areas¹¹ where Takunda is operational, because of depressed income-earning activities. The Takunda Activity areas experienced stressed food insecurity (IPC Phase 2) for the third quarter of FY21, requiring humanitarian assistance.¹²

2 Theory of Change

Takunda, with support from PCS and BHA, reviewed and updated the Theory of Change (ToC) in December 2020 and further updated it in May 2021, supported by the USAID mission-based M&E Advisor. The Activity staff reviewed and updated the ToC based on literature and emerging learnings, especially from the community visioning action plans. During the ToC review process, Takunda managed to further clarify, simplify, and prioritize pathways. The reviewed and updated ToC informed the revisions to the Log Frame and adjustment of impact and performance indicators. These reviews were largely to enhance clarity and align the ToC to the Activity design, a more comprehensive review is planned for the period immediately after the culmination workshop to reflect the key findings and outputs of the R&I period.

3 Activity Interventions and Results

The Activity focus in FY21, in line with the Refine and Implement phase, was centered on revisiting the design and engaging with USAID, USAID-funded mechanisms, program staff, government, and communities to further refine and align Takunda ToC to the operational context and prioritized needs. To achieve this, the Activity staff embarked on twelve (12) priority, scoping and functionality studies, to fill key evidence and knowledge gaps identified during the inception workshop supported by PCS. Additionally, community-entry conversations were held with government and communities, paving way for the commencement of the census and CV activities.

Following the inception workshops, Takunda developed the R&I workplan that defined the activities and interventions implemented during the period under review. Additionally, because of the inception workshops, Takunda identified opportunities to work with USAID-funded technical mechanisms, including Strengthening Capacity in Agriculture, Livelihood and Environment (SCALE); Learning Evaluation and Analysis (LEAP III); Practices, Research and Operations in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (PRO-WASH); USAID Advancing Nutrition; and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to support in the design of interventions, trainings, analysis of study outputs and tracking progress of interventions. Many of the planned activities were delayed owing to the lockdowns, but significant efforts were made to recover

10 <https://fews.net/southern-africa/zimbabwe/food-security-outlook-update/august-2021>

11 <https://fews.net/southern-africa/zimbabwe/food-security-outlook/june-2021>

12 <https://fews.net/southern-africa/zimbabwe/food-security-outlook/june-2021>

lost time in August and September 2021 as the lockdown eased. Overall, 17% of planned interventions including studies were within a month of planned completion date while 22% of interventions were slightly delayed (two to three months). 61% of activities were significantly delayed beyond three months of the expected completion period (Annex 2- Tabular report on Takunda R&I workplan). The delayed activities include staff Training of Trainers (TOTs), setting up of pilots and some interventions such as establishing Village Savings and Loans Associations, care groups and farmer field business schools. After the government relaxed lockdown restrictions that allowed gatherings in September 2021, Takunda initiated some of the delayed activities starting with TOTs and thereafter rolling out interventions such as establishment of care groups and Village savings and loans groups. In conducting the TOTs, Takunda adopted a strategy of identifying modules that were critical for formulation of groups as opposed to a fully-fledged TOTs. By doing this Takunda will be able to cut back on the time spend on TOTs by half creating time to rollout interventions. Takunda will continue to employ this strategy to catch up on time lost during lockdowns. Secondly Takunda will engage USAID on progress of the workplan and review targets updating the same as needed. Whenever necessary virtual staff trainings will also continue to be implemented and where possible virtual monitoring of intervention will be tried.

The Activity developed SOWs and protocols for all R&I studies that BHA approved, and subsequently collected data for these studies. The conducted studies include the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE); Water Quality Assurance Plan (WQAP); Pesticide Evaluation Reports and Safer User Action Plan (PERSUAP); Community Visioning (CV) methodology pilot and roll-out; Gender Analysis; Off-Farm Opportunities, Capacities, Financial and Labor Market Assessment; Social Behavior Change Formative study; Agricultural Value Chain Study; and Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA), Care Group, and Water Point User Committees functionality studies as per the approved SOWs and protocols.

Takunda has adopted a Randomized Control Trial (RCT) methodology for tracking Activity impact. The process of setting up the RCT took some time and with about 200 (125 study and 75 control) village clusters earmarked for the study. To mitigate further delays and manage uncertainty for staff and communities, the Activity adopted a two-cohort approach categorizing intervention areas (village clusters). Takunda proposed to split the Activity to begin implementation in Cohort One with 250 non-study village clusters and delay implementation in Cohort Two with 241 village clusters (i.e., 125 Study village clusters + 116 non-study village clusters).

In adaptation to COVID-19 lockdowns, the Activity conducted some of the components of CV through WhatsApp, walking through the sections with identified community members. This led to the development and consolidation of some community action plans. In addition, to ensure effective participation of all groups of people, as a response to COVID-19 restrictions, Takunda decentralized the Wellbeing Analysis and Household Census activities to village cluster and village levels, respectively.

The Activity developed and submitted FY22 PREP (Pipeline Resource Estimate Proposal) documents including the budgets, PREP narrative, and the Marking and Branding Plan to BHA. BHA approved the FY22 PREP and associated documents. In addition to the PREP documents, Takunda submitted the Environmental Status Report as required prior to each PREP submission. In line with the Communication

Strategy, Takunda commenced work on developing an online presence anchored on the Activity specific webpage hosted by the CARE Zimbabwe webpage. The Activity was also exploring social media options and will be submitting these to BHA for approval as soon as feasibility is established.

Takunda received the first call forward commodities totaling 1,025MT out of 1,820MT expected (Table 1). The balance of CSB+ and vegetable oil is currently at Durban port, South Africa, and Takunda will receive them in first quarter of FY22 (Table 3). Takunda submitted a second call forward for 2,540MT CSB+ and 540MT Vegetable Oil and the consignment will arrive in January 2022.

Table 1. Commodities Call Forward

Commodity	Best Use by Date (BUBD)	Call Forward (in mt)	Cumulative Receipts on 25 September 2021	Losses (mt) in transit
Vegetable Oil	Sep-22	280	159.587	0.413
Corn-Soy Blend +	Nov-22	1,540	865.717	1.308
Total MT		1,820	1,025.304	1.721

The losses were established by comparing actual deliveries against the port out-turn report. The lost amount was values based on the Bill of Lading cost and freight cost and the amount deduced from the transporters invoice. The percentage loss was about 0.1 % of the total and will not have much impact the activity, especially because enrollment was still below the planned monthly recipients by the end of the September.

Reflections from the ENSURE program show that sorghum is not a preferred commodity to use, as providing sorghum resulted in the delay in completion of works in some construction sites because workers did not accept it and as a result, workers did not fully participate in the construction activities. Some of the reasons highlighted for rejecting sorghum were milling losses and preference for more acceptable cereals, such as white sorghum or maize (the staple food). Therefore, Takunda proposed to shift from the planned use of sorghum in FY22 to cash for the Life of Award. Takunda proposed to shift 570 MT of sorghum valued at \$572,920 into cash for distribution in addition to the already programmed \$384,750 Cash for Assets. Takunda has adopted the cash for assets labour rate of \$0.60 per hour worked for four hours per day for 20 days (about three weeks) per month, for each worker (as recommended by the national cash working group) to calculate the all-cash. In the proposed cash for work modality remuneration, each beneficiary will receive \$48 per month. Supplementary beneficiaries' verifications are on-going with preparation to start distributions in October 2021.

3.1 Progress with R&I Interventions and Start-Up Studies

This subsection provides summary progress of community visioning and R&I studies.

3.1.1 Community Visioning

The Activity conducted two Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions for Takunda staff (29 F: 19 M) on Community Visioning (CV) in Wards 12 and 11 of Chivi and Mutare

Districts, respectively. The training consisted of theory and practical components to familiarize staff to the relevant concepts complemented by participants and community pause and reflection sessions. Following this, and based on feedback from the participants and communities, the Activity adjusted its manuals and started rolling out the CV processes in the village clusters¹³ in all areas. The trained staff have cumulatively facilitated the development of 92 Community Action Plans (CAPs) across the four districts against a target of 88 (Table 2).

Table 2. Community Action Plans developed as of 25 September 2021

District	Community Action Plans Developed	Y1 Target for Community Action Plans Developed	% Achieved
Buhera	36	22	163.6
Chivi	17	20	85
Mutare	17	24	70.8
Zaka	22	22	100
Totals	92	88	104.5

Notes

1. In Mutare, besides the COVID-19 lockdown, the mapping and reconfiguration of Village Clusters took a little time as these were not existent, resulting in unforeseen delays. The Village Cluster is the planning unit that Takunda uses for the community meetings in the implementation of the CV process.
2. On the other hand, Buhera over-achieved because the District Development Coordinator opened the operation space earlier than other districts towards the end of the COVID-19 lockdown period.

The interventions identified through the consolidated CAPs reflect various desired projects and livelihood options for different population subgroups by gender, sex, and age (e.g., elderly women, women of reproductive age, pregnant and lactating women, youth, elderly men, young men, persons with disabilities, and orphans). Takunda is analyzing the CAPs to guide its programming. Emerging preliminary results show the following as prioritized projects and or income generating activities across the Activity implementation locations:

1. Availability of safe and potable drinking water is a major priority area for most people in the district
2. Unmarried young females prefer vocational technical skills training in catering, dressing making, information technology, hair dressing, and SRHR
3. Unmarried young men prioritize vocational technical skills training in welding, motor mechanics, carpentry, and SRHR
4. Pregnant and/or lactating women and mothers with children under five prioritize floor polish, soap, and peanut butter making, second-hand clothes

¹³ Takunda considers the VIDCO or cluster of villages as the community.

- buying and selling, nutrition gardens, small livestock production, VLISA, clinics, SRHR, and field crops
5. Older females prefer boreholes, small livestock production, VLISA, and field crops
 6. Older men prefer weir dams, cattle production, roads, footbridges, boreholes, cattle fattening, electrification, field crops, and afforestation

3.1.2 *R&I Studies*

As detailed above, the Activity embarked on several studies to fill identified knowledge gaps. Table 3 show the progress with R&I studies, followed by brief details of selected studies and the emerging preliminary findings.

Table 3. Progress with R&I Priority Start-Up Studies

Priority Study	Status at End of September 2021
Initial Environmental Examination, Water Quality Assurance Plan (WQAP), and Fumigation Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP)	<p>Takunda conducted the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), Water Quality Assurance Plan (WQAP), and Fumigation Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP) in April and May 2021 in collaboration with Sun Mountain. Reports were submitted to BHA on 29 June 2021. BHA reviewed the reports and raised some issues that Takunda responded to by 30 September 2021.</p> <p>The IEE process resulted in the development of an Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) for Takunda, the implementation of which will ensure that the Activity mitigates all possible negative environmental impacts that may arise from activities across the three purpose areas.</p>
Gender Analysis	<p>Takunda developed the Gender Analysis SOW and BHA approved the SOW. BHA also approved the study consultant – Professor Sunungurai Chingarande. Takunda completed field data collection, data transcription, and a draft Gender Analysis report is currently under review.</p>
Off-Farm Opportunities, Capacities, Financial and Labor Market Assessment	<p>Takunda developed the study SOW and BHA approved the SOW. BHA also approved the corresponding consultant. Takunda contracted Khulani consultant to conduct the study. Takunda completed data collection in mid-September 2021 and the analysis is under way.</p>
SBC Formative Research Study	<p>BHA approved the Takunda developed SOW in March. Takunda engaged an international consultant (Dr Mary Packard-Winkler). The consultant with Takunda staff collected data for SBC study from 15 September to 8 October 2021.</p>

Agricultural Value Chain Analysis	Takunda developed the study SOW and BHA approved the SOW. Takunda with approval from BHA contracted Dev-Pact consultant to do the agricultural value chain study analysis. Data collection was completed in mid-September 2021 and the analysis is under way.
VSLA Functionality Review	Takunda conducted an inventory and assessment of functionality and challenges of existing VSLA groups in selected wards from all four districts. The process included development and approval of the concept note, training of staff, data collection, analysis, and reporting. The second draft of the report, with recommendations for Takunda Activity, is under review internally.
Care Group and Water User Committees Inventory and Functionality Review	Takunda conducted an inventory and assessment of the existence and functionality of existing Care groups and Water User Committees across all four districts. The process included development and approval of the concept note, training of staff, and data collection. Takunda is finalizing data analysis and report writing in FY22.
Village Agent Model vs Cluster Facilitator Model Pilot Test	Protocol developed, submitted, and approved by BHA. Roll out plan developed for implementation in FY22.
VSLA Only vs VSLA that Expands to Include Health and Agriculture	Protocol developed, submitted, and approved by BHA. Roll out plan for implementation in FY22 developed.
COVID-19 Impact Assessment	BHA approved the study protocol. Development of survey instruments completed; and data collection planned for FY22, Q1.
Agro-dealer Study	Protocol developed, submitted, and approved by BHA. Roll out plan for implementation in FY22.
Human-Centered Design Study on Attitudes and Access to Latrines	Takunda developed the design study and BHA approved the study during the fiscal year. Pro-WASH are supporting Takunda and are recruiting the consultant to support the work.
Resilience Designs	SOW developed; design study approved by BHA. SCALE is supporting Takunda in providing technical training and guidance on setting up of Resilience Designs demonstration sites.

3.1.2.1 Gender Analysis

Following the Gender, Youth and Social Dynamics consultation workshop facilitated by BHA in December 2020, Takunda conducted a Gender Analysis in the three districts of Chivi, Zaka and Mutare. The overall objective of the study was to identify gender gaps; and potential risks and opportunities for women, men, female youth, and male youth disaggregated by sex, age, and life stage. The study purposively sampled two wards in each district. Takunda officers (11 F; 5 M), led by two independent consultants and supported by Takunda Gender Lead and CARE USA Gender Advisor, conducted the gender Analysis. Takunda concluded the field data

collection with a one-day reflection session to identify key findings and emerging issues and learnings across the entire Gender Analysis process.

According to the preliminary Gender Analysis and findings from community visioning, we have learned that women and youth continue to face structural challenges and barriers to meaningful engagement in economic development and realization of their aspirations. For example, women fear the accumulation of productive assets due to inheritance issues; and the marginalization and exclusion of youth, especially young women from community projects and decision-making structures are still widespread. Examples of emerging and potential interventions for Takunda to promote include: (i) working with communities (women, men, youth, and traditional/religious leaders) to identify and address social norms and gender barriers that hinder/limit women's and youth's meaningful engagement in socio-economic development work; and (ii) creating spaces to support social behavior change and achieve equitable participation in decision making, access to, and control of assets and resources.

3.1.2.2 Off-farm Opportunities, Capacities, Financial and Labor Market Assessment

During the R&I year, Takunda developed the Off-Farm Opportunities, Capacities, Financial and Labor Market Assessment SOW and BHA approved it. Takunda contracted Khulani Development Trust following BHA approval. The Activity designed the study to assess off-farm and non-farm livelihood opportunities for young women and men (15 - 35years), adolescence girls and boys (10 - 18years). Takunda conducted the enumerator training from the 30th of August to the 3rd of September 2021, followed by data collection from 6 to 17 September 2021 by 18 (13F; 5 M) Takunda staff. Data analysis is currently underway, and a draft report is expected in the first quarter of FY22. The study will identify emerging employment trends, high-growth sectors for Takunda participants (especially the youth employment and entrepreneurial activities), labor shortage, employment gaps, and skills deficits in Mutare, Buhera, Chivi and Zaka. Mutare District faced challenges with one group in particular, the apostolic sect. Takunda conducted interviews with young women under the watchful eye of the elderly men and senior wives. Takunda will develop strategies to engage this group and ensure their inclusion in positive youth development. Some key insights show that young people prefer projects that they do alone without the elders/adults. They feel adults do not understand their priorities and aspirations. The young people prefer projects with shorter turnover periods, quick cash inflows, and opportunities for skills development. In agriculture, they prefer horticulture and small livestock production as they have shorter gestation periods compared to field crops and cattle and thus ensures quick income generation.

3.1.2.3 Social Behavior Change (SBC) Formative Study

Takunda developed the SBC Formative Research study with technical oversight from FHI 360, using information gathered from the knowledge and evidence gap identification process conducted during the inception workshops. BHA reviewed and approved the Scope of Work on March 2021. Twenty Takunda staff (11 F; 9 M), under the leadership of four female supervisors and led by an international consultant, conducted the SBC Formative Research study. The study used Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Barrier and Facilitator Analysis (BFAs) and Trials of improved Practices (TIPs) for collecting data. Data collection training took place from 6 to 10 September 2021, immediately followed by

concurrent data collection in all four Activity districts. The behaviors assessed were: Inter-cropping by households, production of small grains (sorghum or millets) by households, use of soil cover or mulching by farmers, use of improved animal breeds by farmers, safe disposal of feces from children under 5 years by mothers or primary care givers, and household construction of improved latrine by male or female household heads. The TIPs methodology tried out the following three behaviors:

1. Complementary Feeding – achieving optimal dietary diversity for children aged 6-23 months, with caregivers of children aged 6-23 months
2. Dietary Diversity for Women – achieving Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women of Reproductive Age, with adolescent girls and women aged 15-49 years
3. Handwashing with soap – washing hands at critical times, with mothers or primary caregivers for children under 5

The study also purposively sampled participants from the Apostolic Faith Sect (various sects) in Mutare and Zaka districts and poor and vulnerable households in Buhera and Chivi. Other community members were also included in the FGDs and BFAs. Data collection was still ongoing at the end of the Fiscal Year.

3.1.2.4 Agricultural Value Chain Analysis

Takunda contracted a local consulting firm to conduct the Agricultural Value Chain Analysis. The purpose of the study was to fill key evidence and knowledge gaps within the Takunda ToC around crop and livestock preferences and viability for men and women; understanding the current market systems as well as the constraints and opportunities that exists within specific value chains. Takunda conducted the study following the approval of the scope of work and consultant by BHA. The consultants worked with Takunda staff as enumerators. The team collected gross margin analysis data from prioritized value chains of groundnuts, cowpeas, pearl millet, maize, finger millet, sorghum, sesame, goats, and indigenous chickens. Takunda plans to share these with LEAP III for participant financial analysis.

Preliminary results show that there are some variations that exist between adult men and women, and young men and women, in-terms of crop and livestock preferences. Adult men preferred mostly maize and cattle while adult women favor sorghum, millet, groundnuts, goats, and chickens. The younger married men and women preferred round nuts, groundnuts, sorghum, tomatoes, goats, and chickens. Young women preferred these crops and livestock as they believe these provide them with much-needed nutrients, income, and control unlike others where men dominate. Sesame and garlic also came up as emerging new crops preferred by young and adult men, especially in Zaka. Takunda will examine these emerging value chains to explore opportunities and potential in these value chains.

Most people faced challenges, like limited access to inputs, finance, high input prices, and low income and employment opportunities, due to COVID-19 restrictions. Additionally, due to social norms limiting interactions between young married women and males outside of their households, women have poor access to extension services as they are barred from attending meetings held by male extension workers. Generally, married youths are more knowledgeable and actively participate in community activities including development interventions than unmarried ones.

Takunda can deliberately target female farmer field school facilitators to provide extension services as part of local systems' strengthening.

3.1.2.5 VSLA Functionality

Following some of the information from CV community action plans, Takunda conducted a VSLA functionality review in 11 wards of Takunda operational districts consisting of Chivi (4), Zaka (1), Buhera (3) and Mutare (3). The purpose of the review was to get a deeper understanding of the current situation with regards to the VSLAs instituted in previous programs. The process would serve Takunda to understand key drivers for sustained operations as well as for failed groups, which would provide further guidance on the best strategies to strengthen and or support them in the Takunda program. A total of 286 VSLA groups and Takunda will complete the VSLA functionality review documentation in November 2021.

Preliminary findings from the mapping exercise showed that 154 groups are still in existence and functioning across the districts. It was noted that community based facilitators continued to provide technical assistance in the form of coaching and mentorship on a voluntary basis. Some of the factors that contributed to the limitation in growth as well as dysfunction of some groups included group level governance issues, mistrust among members, poor record keeping, limited financial management skills, poor fund utilization, and limited options around income generating activities (IGAs).

3.1.2.6 CARE Group Functionality

Takunda staff conducted a Care Group Functionality review during the reporting period, aimed at determining care groups' coverage (and/or that of similar groups with the same purpose), the configurations of these groups, their level of functionality, and the factors that influence functionality across the four districts. The exercise will also determine the entry point Takunda will use during the establishment/strengthening of care groups.

Preliminary data analysis showed that Mutare District has the biggest number of existing and functional groups. These are linked to the recently concluded Livelihood and Food Security Program funded by the UK Government, which operated in 27 of the 36 wards in the district. Of these 27 wards, 23 are in the Takunda operational area. During implementation, Takunda will work closely with Ward Food and Nutrition Security Committees (WFNSCs), which consist of various government extensionists at ward level. These committees are responsible for the day-to-day management of Care Group activities. Takunda will enhance their governance and accountability capacities with the aim of fostering sustainability of Care Group structures, activities, and benefits. During this reporting period, Takunda conducted an inventory of these ward-level committees to determine their existence and level of functionality covering all 92 wards of operation. Takunda will analyze the inventory data in FY22.

3.1.2.7 Water Point Inventory

One of Takunda's interventions is to promote access to safe drinking through water point rehabilitation, piped water scheme installation, and strengthening of water point governance. In FY21 Takunda conducted a Water Point Inventory in tandem with the Care Group functionality study. The data collection exercise was completed by the end of September and data analysis is planned for October. Preliminary results show that waterpoint committees exist though they are only partially functional. The Water

point committees need strengthening. There is no evidence of user fee collection and communities rely on aid or District Development Fund for operation and maintenance. All water points have access to the service of a trained Village Pump Minders, although some of them do not have tool kits.

3.2 Monitoring and Evaluation System Setup

During the reporting period, Takunda worked on validating data for the targeted geographic operational areas of Activity and consolidated ward, villages, and village cluster data. These data formed the basis for sampling for the Randomized Control Trial (RCT), an evaluation methodology that the Takunda Activity will use to assess its impact. Takunda actively engaged with the BHA and Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), a consulting firm leading the baseline study. To date, key milestones related to the baseline preparations include:

1. Agreement on the phased randomized research design at village cluster level. This will allow for gradual entry into RCT treatment clusters as soon as baseline data collection is completed to avoid delays in Activity implementation in those areas.
2. The sampling of RCT and non RCT participating village clusters. Out of 566 village clusters, 75 are in the control arm, 75 in the treatment arm, and 50 clusters in micro experiments.
3. Shared beneficiary targeting proxy variables and Wellbeing Analysis worksheets for extremely poor, chronically poor, and better off households for clusters reached to date.
4. Agreement on areas for the micro experiments: (1) Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) Vs Soft Skills (2) program transfers covering Supplementary feeding; (3) Cash for Assets; (4) and Irrigation Schemes

Despite the agreement, IPA is yet to finalize Institutional Review Board submissions, study indicators, and study tools. The baseline is running behind schedule and according to IPA the data collection will start in FY22.

The Activity developed a multi-stage targeting strategy to validate the well-being status of targeted participants through the Well-Being Analysis, Household Census, and verifications where both communities and stakeholders participated in the processes. Takunda will use this data to reduce exclusion/inclusion errors when targeting for interventions during implementation. As a result, the Activity has captured detailed household profiles for 28,611 households out of a target of 48,826 households in 170 village clusters that participated in the WBA process. Takunda plans to reach more participants in FY22 to meet Supplemental Feeding Program (SFP) targets by (a) combining well-being analysis and census on the same day to reduce the number of meetings a household must attend in a short space of time which could be causing fatigue and low attendances, (b) increasing mop up activities after first round of census, (c) conducting SFP pre-distribution meetings and conduct census for households with potential SFP beneficiaries but have not been reached with census, and (d) continuing to use the community assembly approach which leads to wider coverage and reach compared to door to door approach which is time consuming and has coverage.

Takunda expects to complete the household census exercise in non-RCT clusters in December 2021. Household data collected includes demographics, livestock and property ownership, access to shelter, water, and sanitation, health, and nutrition

status, livelihoods activities and income levels, and participation in community groups. Key findings show:

- a. The major source of inputs for farmers is the Presidential inputs scheme, posing a risk of over-reliance on one system in the event it ceases or collapses. Takunda will need to strengthen the local agro-input supply system.
- b. High number of households without access to basic sanitation and handwashing stations presents an opportunity for WASH interventions.
- c. The community considers various factors in defining vulnerability and does not place much emphasis on the type of shelter at the homestead. Thus, vulnerability and well-being are contextual and multi-faceted and participatory approaches in targeting are necessary.
- d. Ownership of assets like solar panels and cell phones is high and there is potential for mass extension methods especially in the COVID-19 context.
- e. The number of youth resident in the wards is encouraging, calling for robust youth engagement strategies to ensure their participation in development programs. Currently, their participation is low.
- f. Within the 28,611 households reached through the Household Census, 8,498 members are pregnant and lactating women and children 6-23 months. These are Supplementary Feeding program potential beneficiaries. This number is lower than the planned figures. Takunda will continue to monitor the enrolment numbers against the monthly target of 51,352 beneficiaries. This will inform decisions on whether to revise down the LOA beneficiary target and tonnage call forwards for the coming years.

Takunda staff (8 M; 8 F) took part in the BHA-led M&E Workshop. The objective of the workshop was to orient Takunda staff with the BHA M&E guidelines. This kicked off the development of the activity's M&E plan. During the workshop, the team, with the participation of the Technical and M&E staff, explored the revised ToC to identify how Takunda will measure its outputs and outcomes. As a result, the Activity identified 111 quantitative and eight (08) qualitative annual indicators for tracking (including gender, environment, and governance-related indicators).

Following this, the Activity developed Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) and Qualitative Inquiry Planning Sheets (QUIPS) that provide indicator definitions and data measurement notes to ensure standardized understanding and monitoring of the indicators. The qualitative indicators will measure barriers to adoption of improved nutrition practices and improved agricultural practices, utilization of maternal, newborn and child health services, behaviour change around WASH, equitable management, and access to productive resources. The Activity will use an annual participant-based survey and routine monitoring to track progress on the BHA and custom annual performance monitoring indicators.

In preparation for reporting, Takunda worked on the Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT), setting annual and LOA targets. Takunda used the award's resource allocation, evaluations of previous programs, assessed the current context, and data from other secondary sources (such as Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) and Demographic Household Survey) to inform the targets. The BHA M&E Specialist and Activity Manager provided technical support during ToC review, PIRS, and QUIPS development, as well as during target setting.

Takunda uses System for Tracking Results and Evidence for Adaptive Management (STREAM) as the main repository of the project data, allowing seamless import and consolidation of monitoring data into IPTT and other annual report (AR) required deliverables. The database currently houses data from Household Census (profiling) and enrolled Supplementary Feeding Beneficiaries. The Census, Survey, Commodities, Enrolment and Distribution modules are already functional, though the process is still ongoing to set up the other modules such as the Group Management, Complaints and Feedback, Training/Events, Reporting and IPTT Modules.

3.3 Institutional Strengthening and Local Capacity Building

Takunda, through the CV process, noted that Disaster Management Committees (DMCs) are not common in the communities, especially in Mutare District and in those wards in which the ENSURE project was not operating. The Water Point User Committees (WPUCs) are in place but are not functional, and men occupy most decision-making positions within these committees. Takunda will analyze and address the identified weaknesses in the DMCs and WPUCs during the implementation process to strengthen and sustain them. The Takunda district staff sensitized and trained village heads, village secretaries, health workers, ward councilors, government stakeholders (including DFNC), and community members on the CV process and facilitation to ensure ownership and sustainability during and post-project period. Takunda engaged different stakeholders (Annex 3) for participation during the CV process and the different studies. Takunda selected and trained Local Facilitators from different clusters in each district to conduct the CV with constant technical backstopping from program technical staff. Local facilitators are individuals drawn from community and understands local norms and cultures. The trained Local Facilitators successfully conducted the CV process with the support of Takunda staff and will continuously be utilized to conduct the CV and monitoring of the developed community action plans. This empowers the local communities to own the processes.

3.4 Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing

Takunda collaborated with various key stakeholders and programs during FY21 to ensure appropriate synergies, layering, and sequencing of activities (Annex 1). Takunda continued collaboration with USAID funding mechanisms (Annex 2) (e.g., USAID Advancing Nutrition, SCALE, ProWASH, IDEAL and NASA) on various technical components of the priority studies during the reporting year. Takunda and USAID staff conducted a joint monitoring visit in June 2021 to Wards 23 and 27 of Mutare and Zaka Districts, respectively. The team also inspected the readiness of Mutare and Masvingo warehouses to receive commodities. The monitoring team managed to interact with the different socio-economic groups while conducting the CV processes. Three Takunda Technical staff members, along with USAID, participated in a learning tour of the Africa Centre for Holistic Management's (ACHM) Dimbangombe Learning Site in Victoria Falls to learn about holistic land management which systematically uses livestock to graze and defecate in degraded land and watersheds thereby loosening and fertilizing the soil and restoring biodiversity. Based on the key learnings from the visit. Takunda will engage communities with larger numbers of livestock to consider piloting the use of overnight movable livestock kraals in crop fields to improve soil fertility and restore degraded lands. Takunda will integrate this practice with household level watershed resilience designs that the activity has started implementing. The CLA and M&E Leads

participated in monthly and Strategic Learning and Knowledge Working Group meetings, Monitoring and Evaluation meetings to learn and share knowledge and good practices with other USAID funded RFSAs globally. Takunda staff (1 F; 2 M) conducted a five-day learning visit in September 2021 to PORET, TSURO and CELUCT in Chimanimani District and Muonde Trust in Zvishavane District to learn about resilience designs for smallholder farming systems.

Takunda conducted a virtual pause and reflect session in August 2021 to learn about the emerging findings from the Gender, VSLA, Care group and functionality studies and their emerging implications for programming. Eighty Takunda program staff participated in the learning event. Takunda conducted a virtual staff orientation attended by 40 newly recruited staff in April 2021 and a follow-on all staff orientation and team building exercise is planned for November 2021. Takunda developed the Activity Learning Plan as part of the PREP and BHA has approved it. The Activity developed the Knowledge Management and Learning Framework, and Collaboration, Learning and Adaptation plans which are undergoing internal review and updating.

3.5 Sustainability and Exit Strategy

Takunda's sustainability approach revolves around community engagement, empowerment, and building and strengthening of local service providers, among other components. Takunda district staff sensitized local authorities, services, stakeholders, and communities on the CV process and facilitation to ensure ownership and sustainability during and post project period. Takunda engaged and oriented different stakeholders during CV and R&I studies to cultivate Activity awareness and initiate ownership. The VSLA study's preliminary findings show existence of community-based facilitators and Takunda needs to refine, support and or build their capacity through technical backstopping. Takunda is refining its sustainability approach, framework and exit strategies for completion in FY22.

3.6 Capacity Development

The following staff capacity development activities were implemented to enhance their implementation skills and attitudes for better impact.

3.6.1 Social Analysis and Action Orientation

The Takunda Gender Team, with support from CARE USA Gender Advisors, provided an introductory virtual orientation session to Takunda management (PMU, Purpose Managers, Field Supervisors, Advisors, and Technical Specialists), on the Social Analysis and Action (SAA) methodology which is central and foundational to the achievement of positive norm change in Takunda. The objective of the session was to familiarize staff with the SAA approach, exploring possibilities of integrating and applying the model across all purpose areas including related cross-cutting themes (SBC/CV and youth). This precedes the full SAA Training of Trainers scheduled for FY22. Takunda trained 39 staff (31 F; 8 M).

3.6.2 Make Me a Change Agent Training

Takunda partnered with USAID SCALE and PRO-WASH to conduct an online Make Me a Change Agent (MMCA)¹⁴ training session for Takunda project staff. MMCA training is meant to build and strengthen the capacity of staff in adult education, social and behaviour change, and facilitation skills to facilitate change in project

¹⁴ <https://www.fsnnetwork.org/resource/MMCA>

communities. The trainers conducted an initial 2.5-hour session on 5th May 2021, jointly with Amalima Loko, with participation of 38 Takunda staff members (20 M; 18 F), consisting of mostly field officers. This introductory session aimed to strengthen key skills of field staff in effective communication, showing empathy and respect, was identified as useful for staff when interacting with communities during data collection for the formative studies during the Refine and Implement (R&I) year. Following this training, Takunda developed and administered an online SBC capacity assessment for all Takunda staff tool to assess capacities in SBC Activity design, implementation and monitoring, and identification of gaps requiring in-depth training. Takunda also developed a joint Scope of Work with SCALE and PRO-WASH for full MMCA Training of Trainers planned for November 2021, targeting 20 Takunda staff (14 F; 6 M), consisting of mostly managers, supervisors, and specialists. Takunda will use results of the SBC capacity assessment and preliminary findings from the SBC Formative research and other R&I studies to fine tune the MMCA sessions.

3.6.3 Introduction to Positive Youth Development (PYD)

Takunda Youth Specialist facilitated Positive Youth Development training to 64 program staff on the 25th of August 2021. The objective of the virtual meeting was to introduce the framework to the Takunda team. Takunda is planning a follow-on 2-day full training in November to equip all PMU, Purpose Managers, and Specialists for youth integration as they draft interventions for young men and women under Takunda. After the training Youth Programming Assessment Tool (YPAT) used to identify areas for improvement in Takunda youth integration.

3.6.4 Passport to Success (PTS) Life Skills

The Activity delivered PTS Training of Trainers (ToT) to ten Takunda officers (8 F; 2 M) and three Takunda PMU Leads (2 M:1 F) to equip the officers to deliver life skills to adolescents and young men and women in Takunda and select the most relevant modules for the participants. PTS Master Trainers accredited by IYF led the trainings. Throughout the four-day training, effective training methodologies were not only discussed but also demonstrated and identified as methodologies participants should incorporate when they conduct trainings. The most tangible demonstration of the PTS training methodology occurred on day two, when two life skills lessons were fully demonstrated for participants. Participants played the role of youth while the Master Trainer facilitated a full life skills lesson demonstrating the four-part structure that composes each lesson: generating interest, sharing information, group activity and personal application. The participants had an opportunity to present on the third and fourth day and coaches offered feedback. The TOT participants managed to provisionally identify the most relevant modules during the training. The preliminary modules identified include substance abuse, effective study habits, responsibility, healthy, conflict management, career guidance and community service learning. Findings from the on-going priority studies will inform the final module selection.

3.6.5 Staff Training on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse (PSHEA)

Takunda is committed to creating a safe health work environment for staff and the communities where it operates. As part of risk mitigation, prevention, and response to sexual exploitation, harassment, and abuse at the workplace, the activity facilitated an online CARE PSHEA training for all Takunda staff. A total of 107 (52 F; 55 M) staff members completed the online course.

4 Environment Integration

Takunda integrated environmental risk analysis through conducting the Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), the Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan (PERSUAP), and Water Quality Assurance Plan (WQAP) early in the project. These processes are meant to identify any foreseeable effects on the environment; and to develop and implement relevant mitigation mechanisms to protect the environment from identified potential adverse effects. Takunda conducted the processes with the assistance of an international environmental contractor, Sun Mountain, working closely with Takunda staff. Takunda produced the Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP) and the Climate Risk Management Plan (CRMP) for use throughout the life of Takunda to ensure environmental safeguarding and climate risk protection. A training manual, which includes much of the information in the EMMP and CRMP, has been developed for training communities on sustainable environmental and climate risk management practices.

The IEE, PERSUAP and WQAP processes involved collection of data from key stakeholders, and the use of that data to develop plans for environmental safeguarding. For the IEE, project beneficiaries provided information on the status of environmental resources in the project areas through focus group discussions. A total of approximately 30 women, 30 men, and 30 youths participated in the FGDs. Takunda also interviewed key stakeholders working in the project areas (EMA, Forestry Commission, Zimbabwe National Parks, AGRITEX, RDCs), academic institutions (Africa University, Great Zimbabwe University and Zimbabwe Open University), and six different NGOs to get their perspectives on environmental management issues in the project areas.

For the PERSUAP, Takunda interviewed agricultural experts (AGRITEX, Grain Marketing Board, Africa University, Great Zimbabwe University, and Zimbabwe Open University), to get their perspectives on pests and pest management practices in the project areas. Takunda also assessed the capacities of potential Fumigation Service Providers to provide such services in an environmentally sound manner. For the WQAP, Takunda interviewed 20 Water Point Committee members (one member from each of five water point committees per district) to get information on water quality management practices in their respective areas; as well as key informants (DDF, ZINWA, RDCs and Ministry of Health and Child Care) who gave their perspectives on water quality management issues in the project areas. Takunda also assessed the capacities of local laboratories (district hospitals in the project areas, Africa University, and EMA Laboratory) to analyse water samples.

5 Gender Integration

Findings of the Gender Analysis will inform adjustments to the gender strategy, action plan, and gender pathways in the Theory of Change. While preliminary findings point to opportunities and entry points to support equitable behaviours, some findings also indicate gender and generational inequality with serious implications for income generation, food security and nutrition. The population groups most negatively impacted by discriminatory gender norms include women in general, young married women, adolescent girls, and other female and male youth including persons with disabilities. For example, i) Young and old women continue to face extreme time poverty due to the expansion of their roles through NGOs and government gender equality community work that also target

women for empowerment initiatives; ii) structural and systemic challenges limit women and young people's access to adequate financial support (e.g., lack of collateral) and economic instability has caused some financial institutions to allocate loans to young people that cannot sustain a viable economic activity. The loans were to a tune of ZWL1000, 00 (\$10 USD) at the point of data collection and are provided by Empower Bank and Women's Bank. The study identified opportunities available to address gender issues, the players to collaborate and partner with in implementing coordinated gender transformative approaches. The period also saw Takunda facilitating gender integration in different formative stages of the Scope of Work, tools development and data collection, towards an informed gender integration design across sectors.

The formative studies and community visioning are assessing the situation of young people, identifying barriers and opportunities, social norms that impact young men and women to participate in community development, skills building, social norms that impact young people, power dynamics, perceptions of youth that influence youth access to resources, and how communities treat them. Preliminary results show that the participation of young people is low and there is need to stimulate interest for the young people to participate. Having a safe space for youth-only activities and for young people to contribute to the community are critical for positive youth outcomes in Takunda.

6 Market, Local Regional and International Procurement (LRIP) and Modality Actuals

Takunda received the first call forward commodities totaling 1,025MT out of 1,820MT expected. The balance of CSB+ and vegetable oil is currently at Durban port, South Africa, and Takunda will receive them in first quarter of FY22. Takunda submitted a second call forward for 2,540MT CSB+ and 540MT Vegetable Oil and the consignment will arrive in January 2022

7 Implementation Quality and Challenges

Takunda has managed to successfully conduct R&I start-up studies and activities in FY21. The following are some of the drivers for success:

- Close relationship with government stakeholders - Takunda has continued to develop relationships with local leaders and government stakeholders which has ensured peaceful co-existence of Takunda interventions with other community activities, including political campaigns.
- Continuous technical backstopping, peer reviewing, and support from CARE HQ, FHI360, IYF HQ, BHA local mission and Washington as well as USAID funded technical support mechanisms. This helped in incorporating and including appropriate and relevant research questions and research designs for each study.
- Weekly PMU meetings to provide strategic direction to Takunda and harmonize and sequence interventions.

- Pause and reflect sessions after each study and activity to identify areas for improvement and adaptive management.

8 Resilience Food Security Activities Responding to Emergency Needs

The Activity did not respond to any emergency needs during the reporting period.

9 Challenges, Successes, and Lessons Learned

In FY21 the Takunda Activity faced the challenges covered in the executive summary, the most significant of which was the COVID-19 lockdowns and their impact on slowing down activity implementation. Table 2 shows the challenges faced by the Activity and steps taken (or in the process of being taken) to address them.

Table 4. Challenges and Responses

Challenge/Issue	Response/Status
Mobility restrictions due to COVID-19 lockdown that impacted start-up preparatory works such as regular interaction with key government officials and physical inspections of vendors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takunda continued to identify opportunities to engage with key government officials when time and space allowed. These include small gatherings with 2-5 persons for face-to-face conversations and the use of phone, email, and printed communication. <p>Takunda instituted the following adaptations during the year to ensure continuity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During FY21, Takunda responded to the COVID-19 national lockdown by suspending interventions that required community gatherings. Staff now use virtual meetings and communication technologies to protect participants and staff from the pandemic.
At the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions by the government of Zimbabwe, there was competition for officers to conduct studies, census, and CV process within Takunda to meet the deadlines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takunda, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Child Care extension staff, continued to conduct awareness sessions on the COVID-19 pandemic prior to any activity in the community. In addition, Takunda started training community CV facilitators to allow for the holding of smaller gatherings, with physical and virtual supervision from Takunda staff as a COVID-19 risk management measure. During the lockdown period Takunda started using WhatsApp, SMS, or voice calls to coach, mentor, and backstop CV facilitators and CAP writers. • The household census, previously done at the village level, was done door-to-door to ensure compliance with COVID-19 protocols and to reduce gatherings and maintain social distancing.
Unavailability and low participation of young unmarried women and men in	Takunda has started using multiple strategies to mobilize youth – through youth officers, village heads and their parents. The Activity also engaged young people at places they frequent, such as shopping centres.

community visioning, formative studies and start up activities.	
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Successes

Notwithstanding the above challenges:

- Takunda successfully conducted the R&I inception workshop and associated consultations (gender, community engagement, M&E) and was able to identify, contextualize, and prioritize Evidence Knowledge Gaps for the formative studies and pilots.
- Takunda successfully developed the Scopes of Work for the four priority studies (gender, agricultural value chains, social behavior change, and off-farm) which were approved by BHA and their associated consultancies. Takunda completed data collection of the four priority studies amid the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, Takunda developed protocols for COVID-19 and agro-dealer pilots which were approved by BHA.
- As part of staff capacity development, all the formative studies and inventories and other start-up processes, including community visioning, were successfully done by Takunda staff.
- Takunda developed the Year 1 Workplan and F22 PREP that BHA approved.
- Takunda successfully conducted well-attended community and stakeholder engagement meetings in the four districts.
- Successfully collaborated with USAID funding mechanisms (Annex 2) on different technical backstopping of Takunda studies and activities.

Lessons Learned

During the implementation, the staff also learned several lessons that will be critical in Activity implementation; these included:

- Having a draft GA SoW in place prior to GYSD consultation helped to facilitate in-depth, meaningful discussions with BHA geared towards coming up with concrete actions to improve the draft SoW. Resultantly, based on learnings from GYSD, Takunda updated the SoW and completed the approval process more expediently.
- The district inception meetings presented an opportunity for Takunda to get ideas, thoughts, and recommendations from government officials which has initiated the refine and implement process. The district government officials emphasized the need for Takunda interventions to be tailor made to communities' aspirations for sustainability, and sustainability should be from Activity start and throughout the life of the award.
- Takunda noted that the participation of all representatives from each population subgroup in the community visioning process is crucial for process ownership and the inclusion of the subgroup's priorities in the CAP.
- Active participation of sub population groups improves with age. The 50+ age groups have been able to formulate their aspirations with little support as opposed to other subpopulation groups during community visioning processes. The 50+ age groups have a long history of working with

development partners.

- Unmarried young people are largely excluded from community development activities by both the community and development partners. They feel that they can only participate once they are married. Relatedly, Takunda struggled to mobilize youth participation in community visioning and formative research. Takunda learned that it needed to mobilize young people through their parents, village leaders and public youth officers. In addition, the activity learned it needed to meet young people where they gather, places such as shopping centers, to recruit youth participants more effectively. As a result, Takunda plans to work through schools to reach adolescents. Takunda will provide life skills training, nutrition, and wash messaging to adolescents through in-school clubs that include health clubs, disability clubs, junior farmer clubs, and career guidance clubs, among others.

10 Annexes

Annex 1. Government Officials and Other Stakeholder Engagements in FY21.

Stakeholder	Engagements
Provincial Development Coordinators (PDC) and District Development Coordinator (DDC)	The DDC's office participated in village mobilizations and presided over the CV process. Village heads participated in mobilization, presided over the CV process, and the stamping of community action plans that were produced. Takunda, USAID, and research consultants made courtesy calls to the Provincial Development Coordinators (PDC) in Manicaland and Masvingo provinces and the respective District Development Coordinator (DDC)'s in Mutare and Zaka.
Rural District Councils	Councilors participated regularly in all activities through mobilizations, stamping of produced CAPs, and notifications letters. They presided over the well-being, CV process, and other project activities. Participated in IEE, all priority and functionality studies as Key Informants.
Environmental Management Agency (EMA)	Participated in IEE, all priority and functionality studies as Key Informants.
Forestry Commission	
Ministry of Youth	Participated in mobilizations, well-being, CV process, and all the four priority studies.
Ministry of Health	Environmental Health Technicians and Village health workers presided over the COVID-19 awareness, ensuring proper masking, and sanitizing of community members during the conducting of the well-being and CV process. Participated in IEE, all priority and functionality studies as Key Informants.
Ministry of Women Affairs	Participated in well-being analysis and CV process facilitation. Participated in IEE, all four priority and functionality studies as Key Informants.
Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education	Participated in the CV process facilitation and mapping of schools in the Takunda wards of operation. Provision of CAP consolidation venues.
Grain Marketing Board	Participated in IEE, all four priority and functionality studies as Key Informants.

Ministry of Agriculture	<p>Participated in well-being analysis and CV facilitation. Participated in IEE, all four priority and functionality studies as Key Informants.</p> <p>The Government of Zimbabwe through the Ministry of Agriculture is distributing agriculture inputs to communal farmers across the country to support conservation agriculture (Pfumvudza/Intwasa) program. The targeted farmers are also supported with agricultural extension by extension agents. Takunda will leverage on Pfumvudza program by complimenting it through introducing soil and water conservation structures like ungraded or dead-level contours, infiltration pits to help increase soil water availability within the Pfumvudza plots. However, distribution of free inputs by government is likely to negatively affect Takunda's market system development activities especially on private sector engagement for inputs. Free inputs are not only unsustainable but also disrupts the market.</p>
Universities - University of Zimbabwe, Great Zimbabwe, Africa University and Zimbabwe Open University	Participated in the IEE study.
FARM	Takunda continued to collaborate with FARM looking at geographic overlaps as well as technical coordination. By the time of reporting Takunda held conversations with FARM mostly on technical interventions and Randomized Control Trial (RCT) performance evaluation that Takunda has agreed with USAID. On RCT, the aim of this discussion was to alert FARM on the selected study location so that FARM would consent not to have interventions in these areas of which FARM agreed with this. The conversations are continuing with an agreement on quarterly update meetings between the two programs.

Annex 2. Summary of Areas of Engagement for Takunda with USAID Mechanisms during the year

USAID / Mechanism	Brief Notes on Takunda Engagement	Period of Engagement
SCALE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff training to build negotiation, facilitation, and communication skills using the Making Me a 	Year 1/2

	<p>Change Agent (MMCA) Training. All Takunda activities aim to promote behavior change from current practices to improved promoted practices / behaviors. Building skills to appropriately engage communities in this is therefore essential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture and Natural Resources Management through training on resilient designs for watershed/landscape designs for both micro and macro catchments 	
LEAP III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LEAP III technical support is mostly targeting Agriculture and Livelihoods pillar (Purpose 1). The initial engagement is envisioned on providing technical support on financial viability or analysis of Takunda prioritized value chains for on, off, and non-farm; and could train staff on approaches to social and financial analysis of prioritized value chains. • Could identify areas of financial analysis for the enriched foods assessments. 	Year 1
Advancing Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support in developing both a market-based model for producing enriched foods, as well as learning focused on promoting consumption of micronutrients in low-income settings. 	Year 1/2
PRO-WASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the design and implementation of a Human Centered design for latrine use and access. • Training Takunda staff on MMCA. 	Year 1/2
IDEAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting the monthly Strategic Learning and Knowledge Working Group for all RFSA's funded by BHA globally. The Takunda CLA Lead participates in these meetings. • Takunda Community Visioning Lead made a presentation on the Takunda community engagement process, focusing on lessons and experiences. 	Year 1/2