



Takunda



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACHM	African Centre for Holistic Management
BHA	Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
BVIP	Blair Ventilated Improved Pit
CAP	Community Action Plan
CV	Community Visioning
DMC	Disaster Management Committee
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EMMP	Environmental Monitoring & Management Planning
FFBS	Farmer Field Business School
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HCD	Human Centered Design
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
IGA	Income Generating Activities
IKS	Indigenous Knowledge Systems
LOA	Length of Award
LSP	Local Service Provider
PIT	Project Implementing Teams
PSHEA	Protection from Sexual Harassment, Exploitation and Abuse
PSP	Participatory Scenario Planning
RD	Resilience Design
RFSA	Resilience and Food Security Activity
SAA	Social Analysis and Action
SAG	Sanitation Action Groups
SFP	Supplementary Feeding Program
SOP	Skills Outreach Program
STAgri	Shumba Tafari Agriculture
SUAP	Safer Use Action Plan
TVET	Technical Vocational Education Training
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Associations
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WQAP	Water Quality Assurance Plan
WRA	Women of Reproductive Age
ZWL	Zimbabwean Dollar

1 INTRODUCTION AND OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Takunda is a five-year Resilience Food Security Activity (RFSA) funded by USAID/BHA and implemented by a consortium¹ primed by CARE in Zimbabwe. The program started in October 2020 and continued implementation of interventions during the reporting period. Takunda aims to achieve sustainable, equitable, and resilient food, nutrition, and income security. The RFSA takes place in the Buhera and Mutare Districts (in Manicaland Province), as well as the Chivi and Zaka Districts (in Masvingo Province).

1.1 Operational Context

Zimbabwe is the only country in the Southern African Development Community region with the inflation rate above 50 percent and remains one of the highest globally.² In November 2022, the run-away inflation peaked to 255 percent, a fourfold increase compared to the 65 percent recorded in November 2021. This situation pushed the prices of basic commodities beyond the reach of many Zimbabweans, with most vulnerable households hardest hit. A recent labor survey³ (2022) indicated that the average monthly income of ZWL20,000 fell below the individual poverty line of ZWL21,454.60, indicating a challenge for most poor households in accessing basic food commodities, agricultural inputs, and fuel. In Takunda operational districts, the average to below average rainfall received during the reporting period (Buhera 327mm, Chivi 167mm, Mutare 64mm and Zaka 264mm) compounded the situation.

Moisture stress because of the dry spell experienced in mid-December led to the crop situation being fair to bad, however, livestock condition remained good due to improved pastures and access to water. La Nina models predicted a 50% probability of receiving normal to above-normal rainfall between January and March 2023⁴. Sufficient rains during this period may revive farmers' hopes for improved harvest.

Across Zimbabwe, including Takunda operational areas, poorer households are increasingly engaging in agricultural and off-farm labor activities with the start of the agricultural season.⁵ Labor rates are very low due to limited liquidity to pay in cash or kind, and poorer households are increasing their reliance on bartering for food, selling household assets and livestock, and petty trade.⁶ Youth unemployment also remains high, and Takunda is addressing this through Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET).

The period under review had no outbreaks of livestock diseases reported across all districts. Chivi district reported a dysentery outbreak. The outbreak affected 57 people that is, Male 1: Female 4 (under five years) and Male 18; Female 34 (above five years).⁷

All Takunda operational districts observed increased political activities as the country is gearing up for national harmonized general elections at the end of this year. In Buhera District, the charged political gatherings led to the temporal suspension of some

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

² <https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-food-security-and-markets-monitoring-report-november-2022>

³ <https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-food-security-and-markets-monitoring-report-november-2022>

⁴ <https://fews.net/southern-africa/zimbabwe>

⁵ <https://fews.net/southern-africa/zimbabwe/key-message-update/december-2022>

⁶ <https://fews.net/southern-africa/zimbabwe/key-message-update/december-2022>

⁷ District Health Information Office, Chivi Hospital.

Takunda activities with Resilience Design trainings and Supplementary Feeding food ration distributions being some of the program activities that were briefly halted out of abundance of caution. In Chivi, a few program activities gave way to political gatherings. Whilst the operational environment remains calm across all four Takunda Districts conflict sensitivity is being exercised to avoid incidences that may affect planned activities.

2 ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION

During the quarter under review, the program continued implementation of interventions with agricultural season sensitive activities prioritized. These included the Farmer field Business School (FFBS) trainings and monitoring, linkages with agricultural input suppliers and early warning advisories through participatory scenario planning (PSP). Project participants continued interacting and sharing messages (such as weather forecasts, health, hygiene, and gender) in the different established groups or platforms such as Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs), Care Groups, Men's fora, Disaster Management Committees (DMCs), and youth under TVETs. Local Service Providers (LSPs) and Takunda staff facilitated project participants interactions.

2.1 Community Engagement

The project facilitated the completion of community action plans in the four districts to inform development programming by other support or development organizations including Takunda. Based on the priorities of Community Action Plans, Takunda supports interventions focused on water provision for both drinking and productive use through drilling and rehabilitation of boreholes and construction of weir. During the community visioning process, drilling of boreholes ranked highest to be implemented and supported by the project. [To ensure continued functionality after rehabilitation or new drilling Takunda engaged existing or new water committees respectfully to identify past and potential challenges and formulate actions to ensure continued functionality.](#)

One satisfied woman from ward 28 in Buhera, Blandina Zata who resides in Dondoro village, had envisioned herself during the CV process starting a tailoring project which she turned into reality this quarter. She joined one of the VSLA groups in her village and by the end of the year she bought her sewing machine. She ventured in sewing apostolic sect garments for her community thereby realizing her dream. When engaged by Takunda staff, the woman provided the following feedback, “ndinotenda dzidziso yeTakunda kubvira pakugadzira muono wenzvimbo, ini ndakabva ndaitawo wangu muono wekutenga mucheni wangu wekusonesa”, literally translated to mean she is happy with Takunda initiatives that opened her eyes and enabled her to turn her dream into reality. In December on average, she was able to sale 9 hats per day at \$3 each getting profit of \$0.50 per hat. She is also designing 10 garments per day which she sells at \$10 each.

As a result, 48 boreholes were drilled in four districts. Other priorities included youth empowerment through TVETs; improving good agricultural production (crop and

livestock) using FFBS; and improving household income through non-farm IGAs, and Savings for investment.

Other organizations, especially NGOs, also support communities' prioritized action plans especially on water provision and some income generating activities. In Zaka ward 34, based on Takunda CV processes other NGOs such as Caritas have supported communities' priorities.

To foster community cohesion, Takunda carried out training for transformation for local leaders in 23 of the planned 38 wards across the four districts and this fostered teamwork, providing 1958 leaders (993 M:965F) with knowledge and skills on conflict management and empowered them to drive development initiatives in their areas. Takunda's focus during the period under review was on capacitating project participants on improved land preparation practices and in Buhera this affected other activities including training for transformation hence reaching out only to three wards out of a planned 13.

In Buhera ward 31 Cluster four, the traditional leader for Manyere village led the community in establishing the Zunde raSabhuku⁸ program as a community safety net for households in need. Zunde raSabhuku is an established traditional national culture where community members collectively establish community cropfields whose proceeds are used to feed the needy in the community. In Chivi ward 31 Cluster E, communities are collaborating with Takunda in community garden clearing and road rehabilitation led by the local leadership.

Takunda piloted the community-led monitoring and evaluation approach in four wards, one from each district. This was done through training 60 project participants (23 Males: 37 Females) to conduct monitoring of their own community action plans from the CAPs. [This process was accepted and supported by local councillors and their ward development committees.](#) From the project review of CLME in the four pilot wards, three wards now have a community monitoring and evaluation plan with clear indicators, baseline values, and timeframe for monitoring. Takunda intends to scale up the community monitoring and evaluation system incrementally to allow for coaching, mentoring, and monitoring of established and trained committees. [During the trainings the program has been engaging committees to put in place measures to ensure continue functionality. Some CLME committees have organized themselves into VSLA groups to raise money for refreshments during their meetings, an indicator of sustainability and ownership. On the technical side, during post training reflections, committees indicated need some initial support, therefore Takunda is to provide monthly coaching and mentoring in the first 6 months after establishment.](#)

2.2 Income and Livelihoods

The key interventions prioritized during the reporting period as indicated by the participants during the CV process included increased crop and livestock production,

⁸ Zunde RaSabhuku is a community practice which is slowly dying because of limited leadership capacity among leaders responsible for leading the event and lack of community cohesion to engage in this practice aimed at caring for the less privileged people in the community. The training for transformation emphasis on community self-reliance triggered the community to resuscitate the initiative.

savings for investment and training for youth. Under Agriculture based livelihoods, the Activity focused on organization and capacity strengthening of producer farmers to engage with market systems, access to local, public and private extension services, availability and supply of quality, diversified crop and livestock inputs for vulnerable households, linkages of producer farmers and small business enterprises with business service providers, access to formal and non-formal financial institutions as sources of capital, and women and youth's access and control of productive assets. Non-Agricultural based livelihoods focused on technical skills and capacities relevant for engaging formal and informal enterprises.

2.2.1 Agriculture based livelihoods.

2.2.1.1 Farmer Field Business Schools

Organization and capacity of producer farmers to engage with market systems.

Takunda established 49 new FFBS sites out of a target of 85, with 1941 (689M; 1252F) new participants. This leads to a cumulative figure of 335 FFBS against the LOA target of 460. Currently, there are 12,972 farmers (4769M; 82034F) participating in FFBS. Male participation increased from 31.1 percent in the previous quarter to 36.8 percent. Takunda built the capacity of 164 FFBS Facilitators (165M; 99F) with knowledge and skills to conduct effective behavior change sessions with members. The Activity developed and pretested short, simple reference guides in Shona for their use during these sessions and shared environmental messages with the participants during the trainings to ensure that environmental safeguards can be included in the FFBS. In addition, Takunda finalized its Agriculture and Livestock Safer Use Action Plan and planned to roll out during the coming quarter to ensure the use of pesticides in such a way that does not harm human health and the environment. The high numbers of female participants reflect the important role women continue to play in agriculture. The numbers may also mean reduced mobility constraints for women due to localization and to the Takunda Social Analysis and Action (SAA) and Gender Based Violence (GBV) prevention and mitigation community dialogues that seek to address norms around meaningful participation. ARDA seeds, STAgri and Cashel Valley who are contractors for sunflower seed, chilies, and Michigan peas, respectively, continue to opt working with farmers organized in groups as they highlight its cost-effectiveness compared to working with individual farmers. In addition to resilience climate smart agriculture trainings offered to farmers, 353 participants (72M; 281F) trained on entrepreneurship to help them identify, choose viable businesses, and improve efficiency in their business management skills.

Access to local, public, and private extension services.

Takunda continued to utilize the FFBS as participatory, women-focused approach that helps farmers build skills necessary to increase production (through access to extension services), and access markets and sell at competitive prices. The program trained 164 FFBS Facilitators (65M; 99F) as LSPs who will continue offering agriculture and market extension services beyond Takunda. The FFBS approach is gradually yielding results, as evidenced by 4,165 farmers (1200M; 2965F) who received training from the trained FFBS Facilitators at FFBS sites. The training

curriculum utilized by the FFBS included how to make and use an A-Frame for contour pegging, water harvesting, and livestock production. Monitoring, coaching, and mentoring of FFBS facilitators are planned to strengthen their capacities and sustain service delivery.

Private extension service providers participated during the quarter for instance, SEEDCO, a private seed producer, partnered with Takunda supported 98 lead farmers (55M; 43F) in participatory seed varietal performance evaluation demonstrations. ARDA Seeds, which contracted 83 farmers (50M; 33F) for sunflower seed production in the Marange irrigation scheme, is also providing similar extension support to contracted farmers, enhancing their technical skills for better management of the crops. The sunflower seed crop reached its physiological maturity stage and harvesting will commence during the next reporting quarter. Community level service provision increased women's access to agriculture information and extension support and equally contributed to reduced time constraints for women. Linking LSPs and program participants with the private sector will help providers self-regulate their activities and provide opportunities for sustained capacities, resources, and motivation.

Availability and supply of quality, diversified crop, and livestock inputs for vulnerable households.

ARDA Seeds contracted 33 Agents (15M; 18F) identified from VSLA and FFBS groups to sell agricultural inputs as part of the last-mile distribution approach to increasing availability and accessibility to agricultural inputs by farmers at community level. *Each agent signed a three-month contract (November 2022 to January 2023) with potential for extension based on performance, whatever seed was not sold would be sent back to ARDA seeds reducing any risk on the dealers having to hold on to stocks till the next season.* Input packages comprised of sorghum (Macia variety), biofortified vitamin A orange maize (ZS248A), high iron and high zinc NUA 45 sugar beans, and cowpeas (CBC2). Inclusion of biofortified seed varieties for maize (ZS248 variety) and beans (NUA45) high in vitamin A and iron respectively in the seeds that agents sold contributes towards addressing nutrition needs of families, particularly women and children. Vitamin A and iron are micronutrients often lacking in the diets of a majority of Zimbabwean children. Consuming biofortified crops varieties proves to contribute towards reversing and preventing micronutrient deficiencies.

According to the contractual agreement, each agent would get a commission of 15% of the total value of seeds sold. Each agent earned an average commission of US\$39, while the highest seller earned US\$130 (Chipo Bvunjenge of Zaka district), and the least got US\$2. It was good to see more women participating in this and for them to realize the highest income from the initiative. Evidence shows that women holding discretionary control over income are more likely to use the earnings towards household food and nutrition security than income controlled by men.

Both parties (ARDA Seeds and the agents) found the engagement worthwhile. One agent, Rumbidzai Muoni from Zaka Ward 24, was quote saying "Takunda helped us a lot as we never thought we could grab such opportunities that helped us to earn money. Farmers gave feedback that the seeds did not have problems of germination

and the orange maize variety was less attacked by the fall army worm". Never Tauya from ward 25 in Zaka indicated that he regrets ordering less quantities of seeds as he can't meet the demand especially when farmers saw good performance of the varieties in the field. Despite the success, it was noted during monitoring that sales did not move as per expectations especially during the first month of November 2022 since most farmers did not have enough money for purchases. Some waited for VSLA share out money to raise funds for seed purchases. ARDA Seeds testified Takunda helped them to reach out to some marginal areas which were difficult to reach and indicated their interest to continue the relationship with agents and farmers. They also indicated their intention in expanding to other areas with the same model.

Linkages of producer farmers and small business enterprises with business service providers.

Takunda engaged Cashel Valley Private Company for potential linkages with farmers regarding access to irrigation facilities for Michigan pea production on a contract farming basis. This gave farmers an opportunity to participate in producing high value crops, as well as enable them to access better paying markets. Another service provider, STAGri, contracted 22 farmers (13M; 9F) in Mutunha Irrigation scheme for chillies production. Takunda will now refocus on the engagement of livestock and dryland value chain actors for potential linkages with producer farmers. Takunda is also constantly monitoring how these contracts between private sector companies and farmers works to minimize chances of exploitation to farmers. Takunda conducted due diligence routines to potential contractors before connecting them to farmers. The program trained participants on business skills and contract management to strengthen their capacities when engaging various market actors and be able to economically manage their business enterprises.

2.2.1.2 Village Savings and Loans Associations

Access to formal and non -formal financial institutions as sources of capital.

Monitoring report of 242 VSLA groups indicated that 712 individuals (74M; 638F) accessed VSLA loans averaging \$34.00per month. Total loans for the quarter amounted to USD24,470. Participation of men in VSLA remained low. Nevertheless, their participation in other productive activities like FFBS with a composition of 3974 men and Resilience Designs (RD) comprising of 941 men proved encouraging. Field routine monitoring shows that most men support their wives with VSLA start-up capital. Others remained at home to take care of children as their wives take part in community VSLA activities. *"I am not a member of VSLA, but my wife is a member. She has contributed a lot towards family upkeep because of VSLA, so when their group is meeting, I remain at home to cook for the kids. I also support her with money for the VSLA activities".* Daniel Marange/Mutsago Mutare District Ward 10.

Takunda will continue to have a program-wide lens acknowledging the diverse household income streams families have, and where men and women feel comfortable and compelled to participate.

VSLA continued to play a pivotal role as a source of capital financing for participants to start small income-generating activities.

Jane Goliath, a VSLA participant, operated a tuck-shop in her village in Buhera using a VSLA loan. Fadzai Nyabeze (Mutare ward 10) managed to single-handedly take care of 13 children with 12 of them going to school. Her husband is in prison, and she also takes care of his deceased brothers' children. Mary Muchangani from Zaka Ward 8 joined a VSLA group in April 2022 in which members initially saved USD2 per month which went up to USD5 per member. She engaged in a retailing business where she sells children's underwear, ladies' sandals, plasticware, matemba fish and earns net profit of USD40 per month. Her personal initial investment was USD60, then on two occasions she loaned USD60 and USD30 from the group. She uses profits to purchase food and other household commodities including soap.

To date, there are 9,418 VSLA participants (1812M: 7606F). Of these, 1600 are youths aged 15-29 years and 7818 are 30+ years old.

There are differences in borrowing patterns between men and women. Men mainly borrow money for investing in agricultural production while women borrow for starting or expanding off/non-farm IGAs. [There was no borrowing from the social fund. Routine monitoring visits revealed few participants obtaining loans for payment of medical bills, however, Takunda encourages VSLA participants to use group funds for investment purposes and set aside a separate social fund to cater for emergencies and social activities.](#) Participants however indicated that VSLA loans are not enough to expand existing IGAs or to enable them to engage in meaningful IGAs that bring more earnings. Takunda managed to engage four financial institutions including Zimbabwe Women's Bank, Ecobank, Old Mutual and Agribank to discuss potential support to women, men and youth working with Takunda. The banks promised to support Takunda participants with loans and grants. [Takunda is tracking participant support from financial institutions, in the quarter reported, there was no financial support given to participants.](#)

[Takunda will build the capacity of participants through trainings on Financial Literacy, Entrepreneurship, and business skills management to equip them with business acumen, negotiation skills and the ability to present their proposals to potential financiers. Takunda will continue to scan for Financial Service Providers \(FSPs\) that have products suitable for the program participants and engage the FSPs to align their products to the needs of the participants. The program would also like to see organic growth so that program participants only stretch out to these institutions after gaining financial discipline from smaller amounts borrowed by VSLAs and doing smaller IGAs first to show ability to manage and expand before reaching to formal sector.](#)

Women and Youth's access and control of productive assets.

The VSLA intervention continued to assist women and youth in acquiring productive assets such as farming inputs, goats, indigenous chickens, solar-powered water

pumps and home improvement gadgets. The solar pumps that were purchased cost \$45 each. The money came from VSLA share out \$45 each. When VSLA members start a new saving cycle, each member sets out his/ her own specific objective through the cycle. For this group, 7 out of 11 VSLA members used their share out money to buy small solar powered pumps for irrigation. These assets facilitate increased productivity in their IGAs and contribute to their improved resilience. Mandichera group in Buhera bought goats for 21 members, 100kgs maize seed and 10 bags of fertilizer. During the quarter, a total of 15 women and one man acquired assets valued at US\$2,641. Of this, US\$2,527 for the women and US\$114.00 for the man. This could be attributed to community SAA dialogues conducted at FFBS and VSLA platforms seeking to address norms around control and ownership of productive assets and resources. While the Activity noted increased joint control of productive assets by both women and men, men retained overall control of high valued assets like scotch carts, cattle, and ploughs. Takunda acknowledges that behaviour change is a process, and the program will continue to engage communities on SAA conversations with the intent to achieve equitable behaviours between men and women.

2.2.2 Non-Agricultural based livelihoods

2.2.2.1 Technical and Vocational Education Training

Technical skills and capacities relevant for engaging formal and informal enterprises.

Takunda rolled out community and mobile training cohorts' models through Skills Outreach Program (SOP) and Master craftsmen. This is meant to respond to the needs of the young men and women excluded from enrolling at TVET centers since these centers cannot provide boarding services to disabled and breastfeeding mothers. Takunda engaged four government TVET centers together with 49 private businesses (Master craftsmen, including tailors, motor mechanics, carpenters, welders, builders, electricians, bakers, and a beauty salon), as training service providers.

633 young men and women (301M; 332F) against a target of 915 enrolled for TVETs, SOP and Master craftsmen. Of these, 355 students (201M; 154F) enrolled for technical skills training at TVET centers, 75 students (27M; 48F) enrolled for SOP and 203 students (73M; 130F) for Master Craftsmen. This leads to a cumulative total of 941 young men and women trained through Takunda's interventions.

Students on industrial attachment are already utilizing skills acquired from TVET training, with some excelling in their jobs.

A female solar installation student (Priscila Nyanya aged 28, from Zaka) attached at FARMTECH power supply company in Chiredzi is earning US\$100 per month. A student (Patrick Bereredzo aged 21, from Zaka) doing metal fabrication at Hippo Estates is also doing well and the company requested for four more students from the current cohort.

Industrial-related work attachments allowed students to develop practical on-the-job skills as well as gain the necessary work experience that will assist them in being relevant professionals upon course completion.

Through training at Marange VTC and exposure during attachment, Christian Mandirawe, a student in hotel and catering, started his own cake business enabling him to contribute to household needs such as food through earnings from his business. Acquisition of vocational skills by youth enabled some young mothers to contribute to household income. Students such as Brenda Nyambawaro, Prudence Maringa, Marvelous Marovha and Chipo Rikitwa in Buhera, Ward 17, sewed school uniforms and other garment products, selling to locals, and earning money to supplement household income as well as caring of their children.

Takunda observed that enrollment of young women in male dominated trades like motor mechanic remained low. Moving forward, the program will deliberately target these young women with activities to increase their awareness in this area, through SAA dialogues and social and behaviour change activities for identifying barriers to women enrolling in these and mitigation measures.

2.2.2.2 Life Skills

Financial literacy, numeracy, and life skills.

Takunda trained a total of 2603 youth (1134M; 1469F) against a quarterly target of 1280 through integration of recreational activities and ball game competitions by ward facilitators to generate interest amongst young people. Participation of Life Skills participants in ward and district events such as the International Rural Women's Day, 16 Days of Activism Against GBV, performing skits and poems motivated young people to participate in life skills sessions. Takunda utilized multiple mobilization methods such as Youth Coordinators, VSLA and FFBS platforms that also contributed to the over achievement. Utilizing ward-based facilitators as local trainers contributed to an improved outreach to youth. Following these trainings, participation of young people in diversified income generating activities increased, enhanced personal competencies, and improved agency and community engagement, as observed during field routine monitoring visits and post-training reflection feedback. Maina Chiravigwa (30) from ward 19 Chivi narrated that life

skills sessions equipped her with time management skills, negotiation skills, enterprise, and family life balance. Maina said *“I am now able to manage taking care of children, household chores and my small business effectively due to life skills sessions”* Her husband, Believe Kwangware, reported that improved communication and conflict management exerted by his wife improved their relationship and mutual understanding as he realized the need to plan together with his wife as her poultry business is contributing to the household income. These improvements in communication by young couples are key in reducing incidents of GBV. Life skills such as creative and initiative thinking are helping young women to be self-reliant in raising business start-up capital by participating in VSLA and other sources. Nelia Chipinge (24) from Chivi narrated that the topic of creative thinking for entrepreneurs challenged her to look around her community and identify available income-generation opportunities to leverage. Nelia said, *“I realized that I could raise capital to start my business by selling by-products from Amarula fruits instead of waiting for assistants from well-wishers”*. Nelia sold Amarula by-products for US\$45 and financed her business of selling perfumes to buy 50 perfumes for \$45,00 and her projected gross profit from the first batch is \$150.00.

2.3 Nutrition and Health

Under this purpose, the program supported the establishment of Care Groups and training of Lead Mothers, Lead Elderly Women, and Male Gender Champions on the Care Group Approach, SAA, and male engagement. In addition, Takunda distributed Corn Soya blend and vegetable oil to pregnant and lactating women and children 6-23 months. Takunda facilitated the rehabilitation of community boreholes and conducted WASH messaging in various platforms which resulted in communities constructing latrines and hygiene enabling facilities (double pot racks, tippy taps, rubbish pits).

2.3.1 Maternal Child Health and Nutrition

The focus during this period highlighted the establishment and training of Care Group LSPs (Lead Mothers, Lead Elderly Women and Male Champions). Takunda established 478 Neighbor Women, 143 Elderly Women, and 232 Men’s groups. During the reporting period, Takunda trained 709 Lead Mothers, 295 Lead Elderly Women and 317 Male Gender Champions.

During the trainings, men exhibited an improved interest in health and nutrition issues after a deeper dive and reflection on harmful norms that hinder adoption of recommended health and nutrition behaviors. Examples of norms discussed included inequitable decision making on household income, household chores that overwhelm women and deter them from practicing appropriate breastfeeding and complementary feeding behaviors. Most men indicated that previously they had limited involvement in activities aimed at improving the health and nutrition of children and women and they made commitments to contribute to improved health and nutrition status of Women of Reproductive Age (WRA) and children under two years through ensuring that women have a say on the use of household income to increase consumption of an adequate diet.

One headman in Buhera ward 22 at Mavhaire business center during the training said: *“Takunda you are doing well because you are involving men, elderly women, and us community & religious leaders, in nutrition and health sessions. Most of the undesirable practices that we used to do was due to inadequate knowledge”*. The Activity noted interest in the group of community leaders, men, and elderly women about some of the practices (e.g., treating sunken fontanel, and colic) they do in their community that hinder appropriate infant and young child feeding. They acknowledged their roles and responsibilities in supporting women with household chores including fetching water, fetching firewood, gardening activities and at times cooking for the children. This is meant to create adequate time for women to provide optimal childcare. Elderly women embraced new knowledge regarding maternal and childcare during Care Group trainings. They indicated willingness to adopt new practices, and shared commitment to refrain from harmful health and nutrition practices once performed on women and children. These include the scrubbing of the newborn’s upper palate to push back the fallen fontanel, giving pre-lacteal feeds to new-born babies, early introduction of solids, early stoppage of breastfeeding, use of local concoctions in the treatment of childhood illnesses, enforcing food taboos and overloading WRA with household chores. This change in attitude is expected to contribute to the adoption of recommended health and nutrition behaviors promoted by Takunda.

The Activity also noted interest from Neighbor Women to participate in other Takunda activities in addition to Care Group sessions. Of the registered participants 55% and 20% of the neighbor women joined the VSLAs and related enterprises and FFBSs respectively. A case in point is Evelyn Ndemene, of Tashinga Care Group, Hazvinavarwi village, ward 12, Buhera district, a member of a VSLA group who started a poultry project. Another case is of Shamiso Mushami, a Lead Mother of Budiro group who ventured in poultry and gardening in addition to the VSLA. The story of Maina who participated in the life skills sessions and improved her interpersonal skills reflects the integration between Care Groups and youth. Neighbor Women realize that adoption of behaviors is not easy without involving themselves in complementary activities aimed at improving household income and food security. Some of the activities they are taking part in include VSLAs and FFBSs.

Participating in VSLAs triggers most women to venture into IGAs. Their interest in food production is focused on small livestock production, especially poultry, gardening, groundnut, and Bambara nut production. These initiatives create a conducive environment for the adoption of improved health and nutrition behaviors. Shamiso, the Lead Mother, said, *“Kubva zvakawana ruzivo kubva ku Takunda, ndakupa mwana wangu four-star diet, uye ndakuchengeta huku nekurima zvirimwa zvakasiyana siyana, ndoona kuti stunting ndaionera iyi”*, translating to: After having a training with Takunda, I now give a four-star diet to my child, and I have ventured into poultry as well as cultivating diverse crops. I think I’m overcoming stunting. Care Group trainings also shared environmental messages with participants to raise awareness on the importance of protecting the environment during activities such as establishment of nutrition

gardens. Takunda will continue to reinforce sector integration to ensure project participants are provided with maximum benefit from the activity.

2.3.2 Commodities and Supplementary Feeding Program

The Bi-monthly Supplementary Feeding Program (SFP) rations reached a total of 13198 pregnant mothers, 4070 lactating mothers, 13609 boys and 13879 girls aged 6-23 months. Cumulatively, 44756 beneficiaries received 374.160MT of CSB and 67.348MT Vegetable Oil, representing a 94% reach against the planned 400MT CSB and 72MT Vegetable Oil in the quarter.

Procurement challenges in the US resulted in a delay in the Takunda Call forward submitted in August 2022. The estimated time of arrival of the consignment was 25 January 2022. The shipment is now expected mid- March 2023. The effect of this delay is that Takunda will not reach all 40000 targeted participants with bi-monthly rations in Q2, along with the Activity proposing to distribute one-month rations to all the SFP participants and continue with bi-monthly rations from the March to April 2023 distribution cycle. Takunda loaned to Amalima Loko, a sister activity operating in Matebeland in Zimbabwe, 160MT of CSB to alleviate the delay in arrival of CF commodities. The program agreed to the loan based on the 25 January expected arrival of CF commodities. Amalima Loko will repay Takunda directly from Durban port upon arrival of the consignment in mid-March 2023. [Takunda does not anticipate any negative consequences resulting from this 30-day disruption in the distribution cycle as this has been clarified with the government officials and communities.](#)

2.3.3 Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

The quarter under review saw a steady increase in the construction of hygiene-enabling facilities at household level - pot rakes, handwashing facilities, and rubbish pits, indicating behavior adoption emanating from promotion activities taking place in FFBS, Neighbor Women's Groups, VSLAs and youth groups. Takunda led triggering sessions and WASH promotion activities across all interventions resulting in construction of 58 latrines independently by households against a target of 960 indicating a 6 percent achievement. Takunda trained 48 individual LSPs as latrine builders, against a target of 50, indicating a 96 percent achievement, and triggered 20 villages against a target of 40, indicating 50 percent achievement.

Latrine construction slowed down at the onset of the rain season. Structural barriers such as lack of income continued to hinder latrine construction for some resource constrained households, and lack of resources limited adoption of the behavior of safe disposal of human feces through latrines. To work around this, some households in Zaka Ward 27 constructed temporary latrines or are alternatively using their neighbors' latrines as their way of adopting the eradicate Open Defecation behavior. Moving forward, these households will need support to start IGAs that will help them generate the necessary income to build the minimum upgradable Blair Ventilated Improved Pit (BVIP). [Takunda will link these households to income promoting activities and VSLAs so they learn about savings, financial and business skills, to enable them to start IGAs that could help them generate income to build or upgrade their latrines.](#)

Takunda will also continue to explore their barriers to see the best ways of working around them. The HCD study showed that people did not understand the (BVIP) latrine design and the concept of UBVIP to BVIP. Working with communities through a revised training for Sanitation Action Groups (SAGs) will help people understand that they can safely dispose their feces in upgradable BVIP latrines which can be upgraded as resources become available. The need for stronger hand-washing facilities other than tippy-taps is becoming more apparent. One household in Zaka Ward 17 testified that they constructed a handwashing station (Tip-Tappy) after triggering but could not sustain it. Takunda will work with communities to design a sustainable alternative.

Rehabilitation of boreholes improved access to safe drinking water. Progress with strengthening water user committees lagged. The Activity planned for Takunda to strengthen these committees in operations and management after rehabilitating the boreholes. In the process, Takunda discovered that some boreholes remained non-functional for as long as 10 years, despite the existence of these committees. This revealed the need for a more strategic approach towards strengthening water user committees in a manner that will ensure that they take the full responsibility of ensuring continued functionality of the rehabilitated water point. Moving forward, Takunda will engage water user committees before rehabilitating water points to get their commitment to ensure continued functioning and community contributions towards repairs and routine servicing and replacement of parts before breakdowns. Village Pump Minders will be identified and capacitated to provide this support which helps build demand led WASH, which applies viable business models in Zimbabwe. Similarly, using findings⁹ from the Human Centered Design (HCD) for Sustainable Latrine Construction and use Study, Takunda will now train latrine builders as latrine promoters who can promote the approved BVIP amongst households in their communities. These service providers will go beyond working as just contractors to promoting BVIP latrines and encouraging new householders to build latrines and those with latrines not meeting the BVP standards to upgrade. The program will also capacitate SAGs to serve as honest brokers¹⁰ in the process. The Activity already developed revised training guides for the latrine builders and SAG trainings as part of the HCD study.

2.4 Disaster Risk Reduction & Resilience Building

Takunda continued to address priorities identified by program participants through the CV processes, with the main one being limited access to water for crop production, livestock watering and household use due to erratic rainfall. The Activity also prioritized RD approach for smallholder farmers and PSP as activities that would quickly respond to these community needs as the participants awaited the onset of the rain and agricultural season. Takunda also conducted Gendered Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis trainings in response to demand from communities in Chivi District. Men, women, and youth articulated their constraints, capacities, specific needs, and priorities, leading to the development of an action plan capturing the voices of all. For

⁹ https://www.fsnnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/STC_PRO-WASH_HCDLearningBrief_final.pdf

¹⁰ Defined here to mean a neutral party who works to ensure honest and mutual benefits of both the community and the latrine builders. In this case SAGs will ensure latrine builders do a good job and do not overcharge the communities but get enough remuneration from their trade to remain in business, while promoting increased standard latrine construction in the communities they work. In the same vein, communities will pay latrine builders accordingly and collaborate with them to build and use latrines.

instance, in ward 28, youth highlighted the challenge of drug abuse and the action plan captured youth targeted trainings on substance abuse, with rehabilitation cases handed over for referrals.

2.4.1 Resilience Designs for Smallholder Farmers

The Activity trained 3,353 farmers (941M; 2,412F) in RD for water conservation and soil fertility management. Only 24 percent of the trained farmers across all four Takunda districts so far initiated implementation of the technologies despite their appreciation of the potential results RD can bring. This is partly due to the delayed rains which made it difficult for potential adopters to work the compacted dry soil. Considering these challenges, some farmers in Buhera District (Ward 18, Cluster 3) at Budiro FFBS hosted by Beny Taruona, came up with innovations that include the use of ox-drawn ploughs for loosening the soil, and working in groups during establishment of the soil and water conservation structures. This innovation is an indication of communities' ways of overcoming barriers affecting behavior adoption, in this case labor constraints and difficult conditions because of late rains. Teamwork and use of ox-drawn ploughs proved effective in strengthening group cohesion and reducing women's time poverty on the RD sites. This allowed time for women to participate in related socio-economic activities like cash for assets, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Natural Resource Management. In the next quarter, Takunda will strengthen monitoring and technical support to the trained participants so that knowledge gained is fully translated to full implementation, and additional barriers to adoption of these useful behaviors are identified and addressed. The use of RD approach is already yielding positive results for early adopters as shown by healthy crop stands in RD plots compared to wilting plants in areas where RD is still to be adopted. This continued to drive community demand for RD trainings. Learning from these early adopters will assist in improving self-efficacy for those yet to, which will hopefully increase behavior adoption.

2.4.2 Participatory Scenario Planning

Takunda to-date reached 1,859 participants (668M; 1,191F) in 24 communities out of the targeted 92 communities through PSP for the purposes of enhancing household and community preparedness for hazards and disaster risks, informing decision making around livelihoods options by farmers especially women since they constitute most trained participants. Localized PSP sessions with support from the DMCs, community weather forecasters and agriculture extension services improved access to climate and weather information by farmers and this helped determine their cropping calendars. The PSP sessions also allowed the participants to discuss their indigenous knowledge system based seasonal forecasts and identified converging zones with seasonal rainfall forecast for the 2022/2023 season from the Meteorological Services Department. The participants recognized the need to consider both indigenous knowledge systems and the scientific climate and weather information systems in making their decisions. Community weather forecasters in Chivi and Zaka Districts reported that these sessions have increased utilization of weather information for decision-making, with crop diversification by farmers being influenced by PSP advisories and knowledge gained from DRR training sessions. These reports indicate progress towards adoption of behaviors for dealing with climate change. The program will continue to support and

monitor community level PSP sessions and enhance their capacity to utilize the available climate information services, address barriers to application of climate information in household and community planning, and implementation of plans and co-develop their localized forecasts for informed climate smart livelihood options.

2.4.3 Creation of infrastructure to support agriculture production.

Takunda continued to support the establishment of solar powered boreholes across all operational districts, and the construction of Mambwende-Tsvazvivi Weir in ward 29 of Zaka District as multiple use systems. Solar powered boreholes to be used for household water, irrigated agriculture, and livestock watering, whilst the weir for irrigated agriculture and livestock watering. The Activity has so far drilled **48 boreholes this quarter** out of the targeted 82. **Installation of the solar powered water pumping system will be done in quarter two, and commissioning of the assets will follow once completed to allow for community water provisioning.**

Women participation at borehole assets is higher. Takunda supported women's active participation in asset creation since they mostly bear the burden of fetching water to enhance sustainability of such water points.

Takunda established two Project Implementing Teams (PITs) constituting seven men and seven women, with one woman being the chairperson for one of the weir construction projects. The PIT leads the day-to-day asset construction activities at the sites and is transformed into the Asset Management Committee once construction is completed. Women representation in key leadership positions granted women a voice where their priorities are heard--for example, in making suggestions on starting time for construction works, taking into consideration their role on family care activities.

As Takunda ensures that its infrastructure investments are environmentally compliant, the program revised the Environmental Monitoring & Management Planning (EMMP) for Zaka Ward 29 Weir (Mambwende Tsvazvivi) factoring in BHA input. BHA subsequently approved the EMMP in December 2022. Takunda co-prepared a site-specific EMMP for the irrigation garden in Masvaure Village of Ward 25 in Mutare District, together with relevant community members. **The EMMP was developed to guide community members to protect their environment during the establishment and operation of the garden. Assets listed in the IEE as requiring site-specific EMMPs are weirs and any access roads to assets which may be rehabilitated.**

The program also hosted participants from the USAID environmental compliance training in October at its proposed weir sites in Buhera and Mutare, which served as practical field learning sites during the training. The program immensely benefitted from the input of other participants on how to incorporate environment safeguards at these infrastructure sites. The interactions with other participants further emphasized the need to consider the social aspects as key components of the overall environmental safeguarding processes. Takunda also learned that information on compliance activities in other projects can be easily accessed from the USAID environmental compliance database previously closed to the public but is now open access. This helps Takunda to

improve implementation of some compliance activities as the program draws lessons from other projects.

3 LESSONS LEARNED

Lesson Learned	Action to be Taken
Takunda noted an increased interest by contractors to engage farmers in non-promoted value chains like sunflower seed, chillies and Michigan peas.	Takunda is going to explore other non-promoted value chains instead of limiting farmers to the seven selected value chains.
Where life skills have been rolled out first, youth participation is high in other Takunda interventions like VSLA.	Takunda will layer life skills activities first to increase youth participation in other sector interventions.
Working with local village agents as last-mile agro-dealers and private input dealers brings multiple benefits to the community and individuals. This is based on the evidence from identified village agents who are selling seeds on behalf of ARDA Seeds.	Takunda will upscale this model since it enabled farmers to access seeds at relatively lower prices.
Establishment of water-access related infrastructure as part of the resilience building strategy enhances community participation in project activities, as evidenced by the increased participation after borehole drilling in Ward 8, Buhera District.	Takunda will integrate infrastructure investments with capacity building in relevant soft skills to ensure sustainable outcomes.

4 PERFORMANCE CHALLENGES

Performance Challenges	Mitigation Measures
The government asked Takunda to hold off on engaging leaders of the Johanne Marange Apostolic church, as part of implementing the program's Apostolic Church engagement strategy until it provides further guidance	Takunda will continue to engage Apostolic Church leaders through different behavior change platforms that are already being implemented while awaiting government go ahead on conducting community dialogues with these leaders.
Youth mobility: Some young people who were offered TVET Training vacancies were no longer available at the time of training roll-out due to high mobility.	Takunda will shorten gap between orientation recruitment to participation in the program. Career guidance will also be intensified.
Some training centers do not have adequate, relevant modern tools and machinery especially for SOP and this	Takunda removed such courses from SOP so that they can be done through center based TVET.

Performance Challenges	Mitigation Measures
affected the quality of trainings especially the Motor Mechanic course.	
Financial service providers are still reluctant to advance loans to Takunda participants.	Takunda is exploring models of engagement including developing group models that increase capacities and trust by lenders.
The Activity noted low community participation, activity disruptions, postponement, and cancellation of events due to political events, MOHCC National Immunization Days, funerals, and the Lean season distributions. Takunda took advantage of the periods and areas with no political/MOHCC events for activity implementation.	Districts continued to share plans with Takunda and requested for plans from stakeholders – continue dialoguing for any changes in plans. During immunization days, Takunda focused on activities that did not require the participation of village health workers.

5 PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

Table 4. Plans for Quarter two of Fiscal Year 2023

PLANNED ACTIVITIES	MONTH: 2023
4 Horizontal stakeholder district engagements	
Roll Out of the Community Score Card in Zaka District	February
Conduct training of Community animal health workers on the FFBS model including livestock production practices and technologies	March
Conduct (FFBS/ RD) Field days	Feb-March
Monitor, coach, and mentor FFBS Facilitators	Jan-March
Conduct life skills training for youth	February-March
Establish livestock demonstration	February to March
Train FFBS Facilitators	January
Monitor, coach and mentor crops and livestock producers including community seed multiplication groups	January to March
Conduct entrepreneurship training to men, women, and youth	January- March
Pilot ICT extension model	March
Training of trainers for 10 Takunda key staff on value addition, preservation and bio-fortification technologies, and post-harvest handling and storage conducted	March
Conduct skills Outreach Training targeting youth and women	January-March

PLANNED ACTIVITIES	MONTH: 2023
Facilitate apprenticeship (Master Craftsmen) targeting youth	January-March
Gender Outcome Mapping data collection	February-March
SAA training for community male and female gender champions	January-March
International Women's Day Commemorations	March
Conduct GCVCA, CBNRM, and RD training	Jan-March
Roll out of Enriched Porridges production	March
Care Group Leaders registration, training, and monitoring	Jan- March
CFA establishment (weirs and solar-powered gardens) and monitoring	Jan-March
Latrine construction and Monitoring	Jan - March
Borehole rehabilitation and Monitoring	Jan - March
Commence the collection and analysis of water samples from drilled and rehabilitated boreholes	January
Environmental monitoring and reporting	Feb – March
Training Agricultural officers on the Agriculture and Livestock Safer Use Action Plan (SUAP)	February
Launch the Integrated Waste Management Plan for Takunda	February
Conduct Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Survey to monitor progress with behavioral objectives set in the Takunda SBC Strategy.	February 2023
Conduct a service provider behavior change session for all staff	February
Conflict Sensitivity Approaches training	February

6 ANNEXES

Annex 1. CARE Zimbabwe _Takunda_FY22Q2_IPTT

The IPPTT is attached as a separate document.

Annex 2. Takunda Humanitarian Stories

Attached as a separate document.

Annex 3. Outcomes Of Trainings by Interventions

Attached as a separate document.