

NARRATIVE REPORT
Inception Phase
2022

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TRIDE

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ACOGENOKI	: Association Coopérative des Groupements d'Eleveurs du Nord-Kivu
ADPA	: coopérative D'Action pour le Développement des Paysans Agriculteurs
ARC	: Addressing Roots Causes of conflicts
AVEC	: Association Villageoise d'Epargne et de Crédit
BZ	: Buitenlandse Zaken
COAPAKA	: Coopérative Agricole Paysanne de Karuba
COAPKI	: Coopérative Agricole Paysanne de Kibati
CONAREF	: Commission Nationale de la Réforme Foncière
COOCAPA	: Coopérative des Cultivateurs pour l'Amélioration de la Production Agricole
COOPABA	: Coopérative Agricole pour la Commercialisation Performante des Aliments de Base
COOPADARU	: Coopérative Paysanne de Développement Agricole de Runingu
COOPAKIRU	: Coopérative des Producteurs Agricoles de Kinyandonyi en territoire de Rutshuru
COOPAMAK	: Coopérative Agricole Mashaka de Kilimonyo
COOPEC	: Coopérative d'Epargne et de Crédit
COOPRITU	: Coopérative des Producteurs du Riz Tuungane
COOSOPRODA	: Coopérative de Solidarité pour la Production des Denrées Alimentaires
DDR	: Désarmement, Démobilisation et Réintégration
DDRC-S	: Programme de Désarmement, Démobilisation, Relèvement Communautaire et Stabilisation
DRC	: Democratic Republic of Congo
DTL	: Deputy Team Leader
EKN	: Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherland
ETD	: Entité Territorial Décentralisé
FACT	: Farmers Advocacy And Consultation Tool
FCS	: Food Consumption Score
GIS	: Geographic Information System
IMFs	: Institution de Micro Finance
INRA	: Institut National de Recherches Agronomiques
IPA	: Inspection Provincial de l'Agriculture
IPDR	: Inspection Provincial de Développement Rural
IPEL	: Inspection Provinciale pèche et Elevage
IT	: Information Technology
IWRM	: Integrated Water Resource Management (GIRE)
LSC/CLS	: Local Security Committee/ Comité Local de Sécurité
LTP	: Land tenure Program (Programme Foncier)
M23	: Mouvement du 23 Mars
MEAL	: Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Leaning (M&E)
MT	: Management Team
MUSO	: Mutuelle de Solidarité
MyA	: Maji ya Amani
OCC	: Office Congolais de Contrôle
ONAPAC	: Office National des Produits agricoles du Congo
PAV/CAP	: Plan d'Action Villageois
PC	: Projet Coordinator
PDL/LDP	: Plan de Développement Local
PGBV	: Plan de Gestion du Bassin Versant
PI	: Paysan Innovateur
PIC	: Plan Intégré Communautaire
PIP	: Plan Intégrée du Paysan
PNC	: Police National Congolaise
SENASEM	: Service National de Semence

SPIF	: Stratégie Provincial d'Intervention Foncière
SSU	: Stabilization Support Unit
STCB	: Socio Thérapie à Base Communautaire
SWOT	: Strenghs, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threaths
TL	: Team Leader
TRIDE	: Transition Inclusive pour le Développement de l'Est de la RDC
UCADI	: Union Coopérative Agricole pour le Développement Intégral
UMVA	: Universal Methods of Value Access
UNEP	: United Nations Environment Program
VC	: Value Chain
W4V	: Water for Virunga
WUR	: Wageningen University and Research

1. INTRODUCTION

This inception report outlines the lessons learned and explains the changes made in the intervention logic, strategy and activity plan of the project document "Transition for inclusive development in Eastern DRC (TRIDE)" with regard to the realities encountered in the field during the first eight months of the project. This report also responds to the comments made by the donor when the funding agreement was signed.

During the inception phase, TRIDE established relationships with local authorities, conducted baseline studies (baseline assessment, agrarian and IWRM assessment, value chain analysis), conducted in-depth assessments of cooperatives and handed over activities of previous projects FARM, ARC, W4V and MyA. Workshops were organised with TRIDE staff, local authorities and beneficiaries' representatives. During these meetings the teams discussed the planned activities, stakeholders and expected results, taking into account the different contexts of the project.

This report will firstly in chapter two provide a brief overview of the project, its stakeholders and its aims. In chapter three it describes the activities and results of the inception phase. The fourth chapter zooms into the contextual changes in the target area and adjustments in the TRIDE strategy. The fifth section reflects on the comments of the Embassy at the time of signing of the grant agreement (annex 1 of the subsidy agreement). Chapter five is also available in French. Chapter six, seven and eight reflect on the communication strategy, the advocacy strategy and our vision on cooperation. Chapter nine gives a brief update on operations and chapter ten presents a summary of the baseline study.

In general, the inception phase studies confirmed that TRIDE's strategy to achieve the objective of inclusive development for food security and integrated water resources management is relevant and timely. The overall picture of the theory of change is still valid after the inception phase. However, the changing context, the analysis within the team and the lessons learned of previous projects informed some changes and a refinement of the strategy with corresponding activities and budgets (please refer to chapter 3).

2. TRIDE IN A NUTSHELL

The contextual analysis of the TRIDE project highlights four main factors that explain the agrarian crisis and food insecurity in the project area: patrimonial governance, manipulation of ethnicity, degradation of local ecosystems and constraints in the agricultural sector. The cumulative effects of these factors place small-scale rural producers in chronic food insecurity and in a situation of uncertainty in terms of the physical and legal security and their property.

2.1 Improving lives of the farm households

During the inception phase, it became clear that farmer households struggling to survive and whom are just below or above the subsistence level are the ultimate target group for TRIDE. This group must be reached with support and resources and ultimately benefit from the project's interventions. We felt that due to the multiplicity of local actors and stakeholders from civil society and government involved in the project, smallholder farm household was sometimes pushed to the background. We realised that there was a need to better understand this ultimate target group of peasant-farmers.

This group of peasant farmers is not homogeneous showing great differences in farming styles and poverty levels. In general, the situation in rural areas is difficult and for many the standard of living is limited to a mere survival level. Roughly one third to one half of the population lives below the subsistence level. These peasants are very poor and almost permanently food insecure while living in extremely vulnerable circumstances. 30-40% of the rural population live at the subsistence level and are more or less food secure and moderately vulnerable. The baseline study shows that only between 10 and 20% of the peasant and agricultural population producing beyond their survival needs and are food secure. The latter category produces a surplus for the market and are often members of producer organizations/cooperatives or run small agricultural enterprises.

TRIDE's primary focus is to improve the capacities of these three groups of smallholder farmers to organize their lives and. TRIDE's activities reaches out to the smallholder farmers that are currently just at or below subsistence level, to improve the production for food security and to sell their surplus on a market. The PIP (Integrated Farmer Plan) approach is designed for building self-confidence, knowledge and skills to come into action to change the farming practices. The G50 approach comes together with the PIP for access to finance, and other agricultural inputs and knowledge services that are otherwise out of reach of the smallholder. Large part of these farmers will access more land in concessions and with better production will move into food security and into surplus production with food products for the urban population.

Then there is a third group of smallholder farmers that is a step further and already producing a surplus TRIDE offers them further professionalization to become farmer entrepreneurs through the cooperatives.

The focus is on production for markets, but the team is aware that it is also possible to improve well-being without going through markets. Increased production, diversity of production and simple processing methods at home can improve living standards in places that are isolated from markets.

2.2 The peasant household as an agent in agrarian change

The project does see the farm household not only as the target group but also as the main actor in the inclusive transition process. How? The farm household as an agent of change is the essence of the PIP process. TRIDE starts and ends with the resources, strengths and ideas of the family members. The family makes their own context analysis and inventory of household resources and subsequently visualises a better future. This motivating vision is translated in a simple plan with steps to be implemented by the family itself. TRIDE experts facilitate a process of capacity development that will help the household move forward in their development process. PIP farmers' groups are established and strengthened, for example through short practical trainings on soil conservation, small animal husbandry or gardening. At the same time in the area G50 groups will start and supplying the information, links and support to development of the vision.

Later in the process, when the groups are established TRIDE offers support to organised farmers to address collective constraints to market access. Barriers are identified by the farmer groups who, with the support of experts, can develop proposals. Barriers and opportunities can be related to market access, access to land, knowledge, security, infrastructure. Some constraints can be dealt with in the local development committees or local security committees that are supported by TRIDE. If the activities require investment (repair of a canal, section of road, repair of a bridge) TRIDE has matching funds for the

priority initiatives in each village.

The investments should benefit the collectivity and are among others assessed considering the spatial unit of the watershed to emphasize the importance of collective sustainable management of shared natural resources. To this end, the PIP villages are selected upstream and downstream in the catchment to effectively address IWRM issues within the catchment boundaries.

3. SUMMARY OF THE INCEPTION PHASE

This chapter describes the activities of the inception phase. The inception phase broadly focused on four processes: 1) capitalization of previous experiences; 2) collect baseline data ; 3) internal organization and get buy in from the authorities in the project; and 4) start of activities.

3.1 Capitalization of previous experiences

- In August 2021, staff from TRIDE, W4V and MyA participated in a workshop on capitalising on lessons learned from the implementation of the PIP approach in South Kivu and North Kivu. This workshop held in Burundi under the facilitation of Dr. Aad Kessler (WUR).
- Accordingly, PIP and IWRM strategies were developed. The first tranche of PIP villages were confirmed and prepared for the PIP interventions. The contacts with W4V were established for a joint PIP- drinking water interventions.
- To finalize FARM/W4V and MyA various meetings were held: joint field visits, capitalisation workshops, transfer of documentation, transfer of contacts and files of local partners. All documents received during the handover were made available to staff and consultants in a shared folder by the ZOA manager. A major lesson was to start the fieldwork as soon as possible, working in close collaboration with local leaders.

3.2 Collect baseline data and confirmation of the intervention logic

- The following studies were conducted during the inception phase: Baseline study (annex 7), Value Chain study (annex 9) , Mapping of Financial Institutions (annex 8), Agrarian crises and Integrated Water Resources Management Study (draft) and a Political Economic Study (draft). (1) the study on the impact of taxation on the value chain will be conducted after the agricultural value chain, while the SWOT analysis will be conducted by VNG International staff by the end of April.
- The baseline study (see summary in chapter 10 and the full report in annex 7) to define the zero values for the target indicators with the monitoring framework.
- Agricultural cooperatives were identified and selected in the intervention area on the basis of the results of the analysis of promising value chains The study identified some crops to be supported towards value chains and market activities. In addition to these main crops, the project will support productive and innovative crops in the target area.
- Of the 15 cooperatives assessed, 14 have been selected for support under the project. The cooperatives that have been selected so far are the following: COOPAKIRU (Kinyandoni), COOPEC LA PEPINIERE (Kiwanja), ACOGENOKI (Goma-Masisi), COAPAKA (Karuba), COAPKI (Nyiragongo) for North Kivu and COOPADARU (Runingu), COOCAPA (Bwegera), COOPRITU (Sange), COOPABA (Sange), UCADI (Sange-Luvungi), COOPAMAK (Kilomoni), COOSOPRODA (Luberizi) and ADPA (Luvungi) for South Kivu.

Table 1 Selected key value chains per territory

Territories	Selected value chains
Rutshuru	maize, soya and sorghum
Masisi	potato and milk
Nyiragongo	potato and horticulture
Kalehe	Coffee and beans)
Uvira	rice, maize and milk

3.3 Inform authorities and getting them on board for the project

- On the 6th of October TRIDE was officially launched in Goma (see annex 5 for an article about the launch). The Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to DRC, Provincial authorities, local leaders, civil society representatives and other stakeholders were present. The project was introduced and strategic discussions were held.
- In January 2022, a workshop was held in Goma to introduce the TRIDE project and the governance approach to territorial administrators, chiefs and provincial government departments. This activity allowed participants to learn not only about the content of the project, but more importantly to comment on and learn about the different approaches of TRIDE. The opportunity was given to stakeholders to discuss the partnership framework between TRIDE, through VNG International, and the Decentralised Territorial Entities. This framework defines the commitments of state actors and the programme in the implementation of TRIDE in order to provide a solid basis for their engagement and to create a framework of accountability.
- At the national level, there were exchanges with the Minister of Planning and his staff on the participation and responsibility of the project. A draft proposal for a steering committee under the leadership of the Minister of Planning with the two provincial governors was developed.

3.4 Start of TRIDE Activities

- Since all the consortium partners have ongoing projects in the target area, the idea was that some activities could start during the inception phase already.
- At the beginning of February 2022, the first training sessions for members of local security committees were organized by the consortium, particularly in the territories of Uvira and Kalehe. This activity brought together the various technical services involved in security management at territorial level. The aim was first to train the members of the local security committees in the territories on the concepts of conducting shared security diagnoses and monitoring security incidents. This will enable the LSCs to carry out security diagnoses throughout the project's clusters.
- Several meetings with Cadasta Foundation for software plus service to manage land related information. Cadasta Foundation has shared a proposal (annex 19) that needs to be discussed and implemented. The Cadasta Foundation software allows integration of multiple information layers.
- In relation to the above TRIDE has been giving inputs to a concept note and participated in meetings for the development of a proposal related to landmapping of Land@scale.
- TRIDE contributed to the process of redefining the DRC's land policy at the invitation of the National Commission for Land Reform (CONAREF) (See the report of the validation of land policy in annex 15). Similarly, at the provincial level, TRIDE has seized the opportunity offered by the agricultural law to initiate the institutional development of the rural cadaster that will play a

decisive role in the negotiation of land use contracts between owners of large land concessions and vulnerable farmers.

- A joint monitoring mission/learning mission of one week in of the sister projects. For this joint monitoring mission the MADINI project implemented by International Alert was added to the previous projects. The main insight from the mission was to use the security committee meetings and the local development meetings to discuss the development/security issues related to the farmers and mines, another take-away of the mission was that there is an untapped market potential for selling agricultural products to the population around mining centers.
- A workplan for 2022 can be found in Annex 4.

4. GENERAL PROJECT UPDATE

The TRIDE project update addresses the project context, intervention area, theory of change, intervention strategy, conflict- and gender sensitivity, inclusiveness and sustainability of the project.

4.1 Context

4.1.1 Overview

Recent developments are unfortunately not reassuring regarding the political, economic and security conditions in which the TRIDE project will be implemented. Security conditions seem to worsen with many smaller and bigger violent events during the inception phase. The state of siege has been declared in North Kivu with an administrative regime of exception (a military administration) and restrictions on the exercise of public freedoms. The state of siege can, however, be seen as an opportunity in that it implies strong involvement of the national authorities in the security of the unstable provinces of Eastern DRC, namely North Kivu and Ituri.

The chronic **political** instability of the provincial institutions in South Kivu (Bureau of the Provincial Assembly and Provincial Government) is another source of uncertainty for TRIDE. Constantly threatened by motions of censure, the provincial government and the bureau of the provincial assembly are distracted from their responsibilities, their priorities being to preserve their positions in the state apparatus. Civil society pressure is also such that provincial and local authorities are repeatedly faced with popular demonstrations that could disrupt public order.

The **security situation** is becoming more complicated with the presence of armies from neighbouring countries: the Burundian army in South Kivu and the Ugandan army in North Kivu. Unfortunately, recent inter-community dialogues have not led to social armistices in the project area. The conflicting groups have not surrendered their weapons, despite the implementation of the DDR programme.

In 2021, there was an increase in conflict and a decrease in the sense of security. The **eruption of the volcano** destroyed many houses locally in the lava flow not far from Goma. This created a temporary exodus with logistical challenges.

The **covid 19 pandemic** led to additional measures by the Congolese government, including curfews and the reappearance of barriers on some roads in the project area in North and South Kivu provinces. These measures have led to restrictions and a slowdown in social and economic life. Tourism has been reduced

to zero and is unlikely to return to pre-crisis levels any time soon.

In South Kivu, these barriers were reinforced after the **armed attack** on the town of Bukavu on 2 December by a previously unknown armed group, the G64 or Wazalendo (nationalists). The management of this crisis revealed serious dysfunctions within the provincial security service. The next day, the situation was under control and things quickly returned to normal. Rumors of possible counterattacks persisted for a few days. It is questionable why this happened in Bukavu, a city considered to be relatively safe.

As a result of global developments, the war in Ukraine, the **economic situation** in the region is currently undergoing rapid change, which will inevitably impact on the TRIDE project. In particular, the rise in fuel prices and expected grain shortages will lead to an explosion in food prices, aggravate the imbalance in the terms of trade between urban and rural areas and increase household food insecurity due to the very high dependence on imports.

At the same time the international demand for **cobalt and other minerals** in Congo is rising. It is quite amazing to think that the global clean energy transition is only possible due to Congo's cobalt, which provides more than 60% of the world market. In 2021, a series of international studies and articles were published on mining in Congo and particularly the competition between the US and China over the minerals. Geopolitical interests, powerful international mafias and local middlemen thrive in the vacuum of state authority. A multiplicity of territories and smuggling corridors claimed by different groups are maintained by armed groups. Hence there is a direct link between the demand for minerals and violent power struggles around the access to the minerals. The mining royalties from the central level for local development are theoretically enough for ambitious investment programmes.

The prospect of pre- or post-election unrest in 2023 is, in fact, another cause for concern. The probable postponement of the electoral cycle risks dragging the entire country into a period of instability. The resurgence of inter-communal violence in particular is conceivable due to political manipulation during the electoral periods.

However, the new national land policy currently being adopted by the Congolese government is to be welcomed. This policy enshrines certain instruments provided for by TRIDE: Community Land Registers, Attestation of Customary Land Use (Titres fonciers coutumies) and provincial land intervention strategies. Similarly, we welcome the launch by the Congolese government of the DDRC-S programme, which will tackle the issue of militias and armed groups. These governance instruments are opportunities to create the conditions for the success of TRIDE.

4.1.2 Insecurity in several regions

While the DRC government has since signed agreements with Uganda and invited its army onto Congolese soil for joint operations against the ADF in the Beni region of North Kivu and in much of Ituri, several other waves of incursions by neighbouring armies or rebel troops have been reported in the small northern part of North Kivu province. For example, the M23 rebels, who have long taken refuge in Rwanda, make regular incursions into Rutshuru territory, carrying out targeted operations against Congolese regular forces in the villages of Runyonyi, Tshanzu, etc.

In the Ruzizi plain in South Kivu, the Burundian army has taken up positions in several villages on the high and middle plateaus of Uvira in pursuit of Burundian rebels from Red Tabara allied with several other local militias. Seen from this angle, several areas remain affected by insecurity, with a serious impact on the local context, against a backdrop of massive population displacement. For example, the localities of Bwegera in the Ruzizi plain chiefdom or the town of Uvira in South Kivu and several other villages in Rutshuru in North Kivu have received war-displaced people living in difficult conditions.

the situation in several areas of the project has deteriorated due to the emergence of new armed groups and new actors in the security sector. In the southern part of South Kivu province, in addition to large-scale military operations by Congolese forces against local armed groups in the chiefdoms of Bafuliiru and the Ruzizi plain, the Burundian army launched parallel operations against foreign armed groups that drove thousands of peasants off the land, emptying several villages that now resemble ghost entities. In the Kalehe highlands, inter-communal conflicts between Hutus and Batembo of the Mubuku group have also led to population displacement. In North Kivu, the reported return of M23 elements has paralysed agricultural activities in several villages in Rutshuru. In both provinces, access to the Ruzizi plain and the Goma-Rutshuru road remained very limited due to attacks by kidnappers. This contextual situation has led to a new situation in the relations between the communities and the stability of the population. As a result, it was impossible to discuss the more structural dimensions of the conflicts and security problems with the actors, as the context in which they operate is characterised by war. In these areas, data collection on the SWOT analysis of existing conflict resolution mechanisms could not evolve as the project had planned.

4.1.3 The physical inaccessibility of certain areas

While the action of armed groups reduces the accessibility of certain project areas, it should be noted that the quality of the road infrastructure does not facilitate the agricultultural usef certain areas. In periods of heavy rain, areas such as Kalima in the Buhavu chiefdom or Buloho are difficult to access. Motorbikes are the only means of transport. This reality is also observed on the RN2 along the coastal part of Lake Kivu. Regions such as central Masisi and Kitshanga also show a greater deterioration of the road infrastructure. While the national roads present a rather bleak picture, the agricultural feeder roads are not left behind. Farmers continue to struggle to transport their produce. The security situation has had an impact on the initial schedule of activities, as some field missions have taken longer than expected and others have been cancelled. The programme plans to make the teams more mobile by adapting to the means of transport available in the region.

4.1.4 State of Siege

In North Kivu, the state of siege has generated an atypical mode of operation for the state apparatus. In the absence of a provincial government and a provincial assembly, the programme does not seem to have any interlocutors likely to give credibility to the various approaches implemented. For example, how can the agricultural cadaster framework be addressed in the absence of a ministry in charge of agriculture, or how can a provincial legislative framework be envisaged when the provincial assembly is not in place? Even if the principle of continuity of public action is the rule, there are doubts about the durability of certain actions carried out by governors and military administrators in the context of the state of siege. For example, the administrators of the military territories lack a certain capacity to deal with issues related to the functioning of the ETDs, agriculture, integrated water resource management, or land issues. At the provincial level, the same is true, with the sector divisions becoming the usual interlocutors for dealing with more technical issues.

4.1.5 Political conflicts

While North Kivu is heavily affected by the state of siege, in South Kivu it is the inter-institutional conflicts that have weakened the state's action. The tug of war between the provincial government and the provincial assembly has not made the task any easier. With a government subject to a motion of no confidence and a governor detained for three months in Kinshasa, it has been difficult for the programme to work with the interim government officials, who are often restricted in their actions. This situation has repercussions in some other entities that are managed by interims, such as the Territory of Uvira and several other groups. This situation deprives the programme of interlocutors on the ground and necessitates a reconfiguration of the original programmatic aspirations.

4.1.6 Power conflicts at the head of customary entities

Contradictions between the provincial executive and the army led to a change in the leadership of the 33rd military region and the PNC provincial commissariat in South Kivu. As South Kivu province was threatened by armed groups, the political crisis at the top of the province led to open conflict between the provincial assembly and the provincial government, resulting in a cacophony between these provincial institutions. While the leaders were all recalled to Kinshasa, the province was run for several months by a series of interim officials with very limited executive powers.

Several customary entities are affected by power conflicts, leading to a vacuum at the top of certain entities or to the eviction of leading authorities. The case of the Ruzizi plain in South Kivu is very illustrative. In this chiefdom, the power of the chief of the chiefdom is strongly contested by rival communities, who consequently install chiefs at the head of certain groups and villages, thus creating administrative acts that are sometimes ignored by the higher authorities. In the Groupement de Buzi , land and succession disputes have virtually paralysed government activities. To deal with this, the provincial government has installed heads of administrative jurisdictions to fill the administrative vacuum. In North Kivu, the military government maintained the existing administrative framework with the involvement of delegated officials.

It does not need explanation that improving the lives of people under these conflictive circumstances is a challenge. TRIDE is situated in this complex and often violent context. TRIDE is assumed to bring relief to the people involved int the project activities while offering alternative development paths based on the management of the natural resources for agricultural production and local economic development.

4.2 AREA OF INTERVENTION

The intervention area was confirmed during the inception phase (annex 20). By definition, the TRIDE intervention area is difficult and conflict-ridden with regular travel restrictions. Only a few locations in Rutshuru and Masisi and Kalehe are considered too difficult to enter during prolonged periods, either for security or infrastructural reasons. The analysis may change as the security situation changes. The Luberisi area remains the focus of activities linked with the cooperatives for a follow-up effort to the development of the irrigation system and PIP. Kagondo was added to the intervention area of TRIDE. The first tranche of 38 villages for PIP implementation are selected.

Maji ya Amani, FARM and W4V already invested a lot in the people in certain clusters. Continuation of

activities with the same groups within TRIDE is justified to consolidate success or to capitalize on the previous work in going deeper into the marketing. For example, Maji ya Amani has invested already sufficiently in the Luberizi cluster but from the viewpoint of continuity of development, TRIDE will support certain activities for scaling up and especially the marketing of the products since that is determining the success of the investment for the target group. Indeed, after the rehabilitation of hydro-agricultural infrastructures, Luberizi has become a large rice production basin, and on the basis of this opportunity, access to markets is necessary to improve their income.

However, in view of the investments already made in Luberizi, it is not appropriate to concentrate much effort in this area to avoid the risk of creating wait-and-see attitude in the communities and misinterpretation by other villages. Hence, the minimum intervention concerns market access, scaling up of the PIP approach to neighbouring villages and governance.

TRIDE believes it is necessary to direct other actions towards the Kagando grouping. The orientation of the actions in the Kagando groupement is in line with the vision of scaling up the lessons learned from Maji ya Amani in the Ruzizi Plain Chiefdom through the Kagando groupement in order to bring about a growth movement in the whole Ruzizi Plain Chiefdom.

The grouping of Kigoma has become inaccessible due to the evolution of the security situation. Indeed, the presence of the Burundian army in several villages located in the high and middle plateaus of Uvira in pursuit of the Burundian rebels Red Tabara allied with several other local militias, leads to movements of local militias. This makes the Groupement de Kigoma a stronghold of armed and sometimes opposing groups, which increases the risk of confrontation at any moment because these opposing militias are also always on the move in the same groupement. This is why TRIDE has chosen not to focus its actions in the Kigoma groupement.

The selection of watersheds is not yet effective as the Agrarian and IWRM study has not yet been finalised. However, to allow the continuation of PIP activities, we have made a pre-selection of PIP villages based on the PIP criteria. The results of the Agrarian-IWRM study will enable the pre-selection of catchments in which IWRM efforts will be focused. Based on these two shortlists and by combining the criteria of each shortlist, we will select the catchments for IWRM intervention with at least 2-3 PIP villages participating per catchment. This is also the first aspect of PIP-IWRM integration.

4.3 STRATEGY

The intervention strategy of TRIDE is based on the PIP (Integrated Farmer Plan) approach for a radical change towards resilience-based management, coupled with approaches facilitating smallholder farmers access to land in concessions, the integrated water resources management approach to improve land productivity and reduce the negative impacts of poorly managed water on ecosystems, the G50 approach to financial inclusion and better access to information, services, inputs and markets for small-scale farmers and the cooperative/agricultural value chain approach for farmers already generating marketable surpluses. All this coupled with a governance approach to improve service delivery by (local) state authorities and to reduce bottlenecks that prevent value chain actors from improving their income in the intervention area.

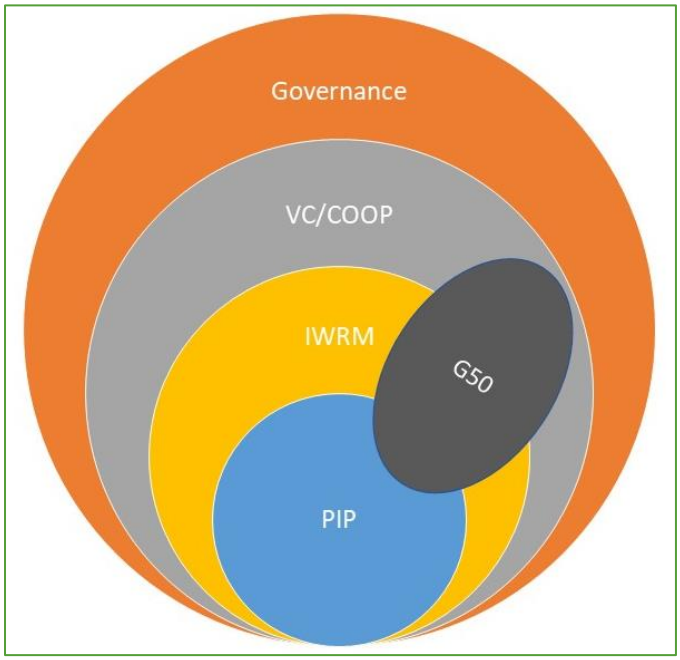


Figure 1 the TRIDEs thematic areas around and related to farm household at the centre of PIP

The project document has been enriched with the recasting of outcome 1, which currently focuses on the following aspects: support for the development of the SPIF, the establishment of agricultural cadastres, the negotiation of long-term sharecropping contracts in concessions, the development of agricultural concessions for better use.

In its support to national policy processes, TRIDE focuses on "farmer-friendly" land policy and land reform. TRIDE experts work in the interest of and alongside smallholder farmers to achieve favourable policy changes. Innovative farmers selected and trained under the project will be supported to become the voice of farmers in local development forums at the cluster and higher levels. The aim is to show how small-scale farmers can improve the well-being of the population and contribute to local economic development. The same goes for job creation, food security and how small-scale farmers play a role in sustainable natural resource management within the watershed. The fact that Congo is at the same time implementing a more export-oriented capitalist agricultural development path should not be an obstacle but a stimulus.

Below we reflect on the strategies presented in the proposal document and provide more detail on our approach, considerations and alterations in the strategies. All proposed changes are adjusted in the Monitoring Framework (annex 3).

4.3.1 Outcome 1: Access to land

Smallholder farmers have very small holdings and limited access to land[1] The baseline study reveals that 26% of farmers do not own land and thus depend on rented land for their farming activities. 30% of the farmers possess less than 0.25 ha. Many have only a small plot for housing and a small area for gardening. Hence, to step up agricultural production, farmers look at accessing land from land concessions. Most the lease contracts with the concessions are seasonal, i.e. less than 6 months. Since access to/use of land is the basis for agricultural development, TRIDE developed the land component in some detail during the inception phase.

In the first outcome, TRIDE realised that the ambition to boost land regrouping was too ambitious. It is therefore replaced by improving land management, which is linked to soil and water conservation methods and landscape protection, such as promotion of agroforestry.

The future of LTP is uncertain. This deprives TRIDE of important complementary activities without which outcome 1 will not be attained. Since land stands at the basis of the intervention logic the discontinuation of LTP also jeopardize outcome 2 and 3. LTP addresses the land issue in the same area as TRIDE's intervention from a legal point of view, while TRIDE addresses the same issue from an productive economic point of view; but both have a common objective of improving access to land for the poor peasantry. The redistribution to landless farmers of concessions reclaimed by the state following the inventory of concessions carried out by the LTP project was an opportunity to reduce the food insecurity of the beneficiary rural households to whom TRIDE would apply the PIP approach. Moreover, the unrecovered concessions would now be known and their holders identified, thus allowing the latter to be sensitized on the benefits of concession management and contract farming.

Advocacy for agricultural policy change is at risk, as this activity is budgeted for by LTP. Lessons learned from PIPs and IWRM were to feed into this advocacy, which was then to be carried out jointly. The securing of tenure in PIP villages, through group titles and community land registers, will also not be achieved, leaving innovative farmers in situations of uncertainty that could jeopardise the successful outcome of PIPs.

If by the end of March there is no clear perspective on the future of LTP TRIDE will have to adapt its strategy regarding to access to land and particularly the concessions. In general, TRIDE does not favour the option to absorb the LTP activities within TRIDE, since the legal aspects are considered very delicate and can constitute an extra security risk for the staff involved.

4.3.2 Outcome 2: Resilient farming and Integrated water resources management

The discussion during the start-up phase repeatedly led to the concept of well-being. Improved well-being can be as important as economic development for expressing improved living conditions. When the farmers present the PIP vision their plans often include elements of home improvement, and sometimes also beautiful plants around the house. This means that people seek to improve their lives in more than one dimension. One of the main outcomes mentioned by PIP farmers is that they value the feeling of being in control of their lives. In this sense, food security goes beyond caloric intake and includes the nutritive value, a diverse "*menu du jour''*. Therefore, nutrition is added and integrated into the activities

[1] The overall average area farmed by the smallholder is 0.76 ha, (31.8% has Less than 0.25 ha. 26.1% has between 0.25-0.5 ha ,13% has between 0.5-0.75 ha., 5.3% between 0.75-1 ha. 16,4% between 1-2 ha et 7,5 2-5 ha or more 7.5%) of which 0.37 ha is rented land (Source: baseline study TRIDE, 2022)

and a goal related to the facilitation of the IWRM-PIP approach. Increasing the diversity of crops and fruits in the production system is promoted in relation to the agroecology and permaculture concept. The PIP extensionist promote the maintenance of a vegetable garden around the house with a minimum of 7 vegetables and fruits. Therefore, the success of the implementation of permaculture homesteads will be in indication of nutrition. This indicator will be measured through surveys and case studies during the implementation of the project.
TRIDE has a small fund to tackle infrastructural constraints. A quick survey showed that the needs for small repairs to infrastructure are considerable and in many cases can make a difference in access to markets (concept note for small infrastructures fund in annex 13).

The partner Auxfin will introduce the G50 approach[2] to the PIP for access to finance, and other agricultural inputs and knowledge services that are otherwise out of reach of the smallholder. Large part of the farmers in TRIDE will access more land in concessions and with better production will move into food security and into surplus production with food products for the urban population.

The baseline study showed that the vast majority of the project's beneficiary populations (84.8% of farmers) are not members of cooperatives, and have difficulty accessing certain services and formal credit. The baseline study suggested that these beneficiary populations be organized into solidarity groups. While finding this recommendation relevant, the project realized that the integration of the G50 approach into the project would address this issue. In fact, the structuring of beneficiaries/small producers into G50s allows members to access not only information on access to inputs and the market for their products, but also access to formal credit, while preparing them to be mature enough to join existing cooperatives or to form their own formal cooperatives as planned to be supported by the project through its partner AGRITERRA.

Community Based Social Therapy (CBST)[3] is used to deal with traumas in the village and is integrated in a "light" way across the PIP-GIRE facilitation process. For this purpose the field staff will be trained on CBST besides using their experience from the previous projects. Based on the diagnosis and the level of trauma experienced, a proposal will be developed for a CBST process implemented by a local partner organization. Thus, the "full" CBST will be added in intervention areas where trauma is identified as a major constraint to community development.

4.3.3 Outcome 3: Local economy is revitalized through inclusive development and profitable value chains and the market system

Activities were added to link the cooperatives with the PIP villages. Activities will also be added to work on solutions for the target group outside the cooperatives. Cooperative- and market experts will discuss with PIP facilitators how to improve the production, processing and marketing of agricultural products.

The institutionalisation of PIP and IWRM approaches with the objective of their sustainability is one of the major ambitions pursued by the project. For this, TRIDE proposes to work with the local state institutions and services in the villages, in particular the agricultural monitors available at the village level. The

[2] G50 consists of organising groups of maximum 50 neighbouring households around a tablet, governed by 3 self-elected and representative leaders, considering age and gender. Through the tablet the groups are connected to the UMVA platform. The Universal Method of Value Access (UMVA) provides online access to a local bank account, but also other services such as the ordering of inputs and the access to output markets. The Community Activation Program provides solutions for self-development in different fields.
[3] Community-based sociotherapy is the methodical management of stimulating and hindering behaviours within a social gathering.

different plans (PIP, PIC, PAV) will contribute to the improved management of natural resources, of landscape and will be aligned and harmonized with the watershed management plans and the PDL (Plans de Dévéloppement Local). The G50 platform (Universal Methods of Value Access, UMVA in short) is a tool that will more innovation in smallholder farming. This IT tool supports the organisation of farmers' groups by offering access to agricultural inputs, finance and information services on health and other issues.

The holistic practices of agroecology and permaculture are combined with the economic goal of production. This to better suit the household survival strategy of spreading of risks through diversity. The practices include:

- Food diversity for food and nutritional security (home garden with minimum 7 species).
- Associated production such as water, soil, light; (e.g coffee with beans and maize);
- Soil fertility management based on crop rotation and preferably natural fertilizers ;
- Reduction of soil erosion ;
- Use of compost for increasing organic material in the soil;
- Motivating local biodiversity in production system;

4.4 CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

TRIDE is based on the assumption that its interventions will have better results if a conflict-sensitive approach is followed. Conflict sensitivity has been adopted as a cross-cutting value om TRIDE (see annex 11 for a conflict sensitivity report for the plaine de Rusizi). Conflict sensitivity means being aware that the interaction of the project with the context can influence conflicts. It therefore aims to make staff aware of how the project's actions can reinforce existing power inequalities. And that is really the last thing one would want: to reinforce the status quo of existing elites. This is a challenge because elites often dominate different areas of society, whether in politics, business or civil society. TRIDE analyses the situation of formal and informal leadership and sensitivities at local level.

It is about understanding the tensions between groups and leaders in the intervention area in order to anticipate and adapt the interaction and avoid aggravating the conflict. This requires constant monitoring and analysis of developments. TRIDE staff will implement a coaching and training programme to become more effective in mitigating risks and developing strategies around sensitivities. TRIDE staff will continue to train themselves to read the context to identify threats and opportunities and continually translate this into concrete conflict-sensitive actions.

TRIDE has invested in conflict sensitivity training for its experts and has started to analyse conflicts in the areas of intervention in depth (annex 11) . Each work area has its own ethnic and historical problems and requires different mitigation actions. For each intervention area an action plan will be developed with monitoring indicators and actions. However, in-depth analysis is not appropriate for operational staff. It takes too much time and resources that could be used for the target group. A balance still needs to be found so as not to get stuck in analysis paralysis. Especially since under the circumstances there is no ‘good’ solution, it is rather a matter of constantly manoeuvring between obstacles while avoiding head-on collisions.

4.5 INCLUSIVITY and GENDER SENSITIVITY

Inclusive governance framework can only exist with a structured and professional civil society. For this reason, the project strengthens civil society actors in the agricultural, land and integrated water resources management dimensions. Support civil society for mobilisation and advocacy actions and the empowerment of communities and for a favourable regulatory framework.

TRIDE is already developing relationships with authorities at all levels: village, group, chiefdom, territory, province and national. ZOA works more but not exclusively with the village and cluster level. VNG International works mainly with government institutions and departments at local, provincial and national level. Thus, TRIDE, mainly through VNG International, will strengthen its capacity to provide substantial support to programme activities that are developed at the village level and with value chain actors. Although strengthened, TRIDE is not expected to provide direct funding to these implementing partners. TRIDE will support the activities of the national authorities agreed in the joint action plans.

Especially in these difficult circumstances, people want to be heard and seen. This is exactly what TRIDEs "Inclusive" means: it gives everyone a voice in local development. If people feel that they are taken seriously and are part of the process, they will also assume their role and contribute. TRIDE, in line with its promise to be truly inclusive, includes different socio-economic groups and ethnic cultural minorities in the PIP and G50 groups in a meaningful way.

The NGOs, the consortium partners included,are still mainly man driven and man oriented. TRIDE's will be challenged. with regard to the inclusiveness of women, girls and youth. Thus, in all TRIDE components, particular attention will be paid to get women actively on board as well as the youth. PIP will select for example woman innovative farmers and form PIP G50 groups with women farmers.

TRIDE will make sure that any meetings give space for women to participate in the discussions and given opportunities to present their views. And in the facilitation the voice of women should be heard, respected and used. The accountability meeting at intervillage or groupement level

With the community we will look at the contribution of women to farming and about the position of women in the development process, this to influence the way of thinking about men and women.

4.6 SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability based on ownership, capacity development and institutionalization. In the past, several conflict transformation mechanisms were put in place as a result of multiple processes in the project area leading to action plans to address the conflicts. These plans were mostly not subsequently implemented, creating a crisis of confidence between the parties to the conflicts and the organisations that led the conflict transformation processes. Similarly, in several conflict transformation processes, state actors were forgotten, even though they were both major actors in the conflicts and providers of responses that should have helped ease tensions in the project areas. This is why TRIDE will rework the different conflict transformation mechanisms with stakeholders, with a strong involvement of government actors, in order to build an innovative model based on a long-term vision to underpin the different agreements that will be signed between the parties to the conflicts. This will lead to more sustainable interventions.

At another level, the different action plans defined in the form of previous agreements between the stakeholders be capitalised in the implementation of TRIDE in order to give credibility to the different processes and approaches that have been used by the actors. In this respect, the different projects supported by the SSU need to be refocused in the Ruzizi plain, the coastal area of Kalehe and the areas around Kitshanga. For this, new actors will be identified and linked to new political and economic dynamics at local, national and regional levels. Thus, the new alliances between actors must be taken into account and inspire new approaches to deal with these conflicts. Furthermore, the mechanism put in place by the Congolese government constitutes a great opportunity insofar as the PDDRC-S will be capitalised by TRIDE.

The sustainability of development actions in Integrated Natural Resource Management suffers from a lack of a supportive environment. The IWRM implementation survey questionnaire for the DRC shows that the environment is not conducive to the implementation of IWRM in the DRC. It is obvious that in such a situation, TRIDE's actions would not be as sustainable. It is for this reason that TRIDE proposes to improve the environment for the implementation of IWRM by playing on two frameworks, notably (1) on the legal framework through advocacy for the elaboration, adoption and popularisation of laws, regulatory texts and service notes and (2) on the institutional level through the application of the institutional framework, specifically the installation and operationalisation of state services at the local level. Thus, TRIDE aims to make IWRM actions and responses sustainable by making the environment conducive to IWRM implementation and by institutionalising IWRM.

The actions around the value chains will be oriented towards market actors with entrepreneurial and self-organised ideas from the grassroots community. Business viability analyses of the actors to be supported in the value chains will be organised to ensure sustainability beyond the project's actions.

4.7 THEORY OF CHANGE. INTEGRATION OF COMPONENTS AND ACTORS AROUND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Improving the lives of the rural population is the goal. TRIDE's mission is to w address the constraints and opportunities hampering this. The analysis and solutions are local and specific. Constraints and opportunities can be technical, infrastructural, knowledge-based or governance-related. In many cases, they are parallel actions in different areas and the exact actions cannot be known in advance.

This introduces the other main idea gained during the inception phase concerning the implementation of a holistic and integrated project like TRIDE. The implication of an integrated project is the multiplicity of connections between factors and actors between components and levels of society. Therefore, to succeed, TRIDE will have to open up the silos of disciplines. Experts will build bridges between organisations and groups, and link the field level to the policy level. The experts will place their own activity and contribution in a larger context where many small contributions lead to the goal. Project staff take joint responsibility for the final outcome. If something does not work, this should be recognised early on so that other activities or modalities can be pursued. This process of interdisciplinary work will be facilitated by regular team meetings where staff members can learn about each other's work. These meetings are an opportunity to build links between experts and create joint learning. Joint field visits are another activity to create a common understanding. Social responsibility events are another way of

making the links between areas of expertise visible and stimulating creative thinking about integrated solutions.

TRIDE seeks to achieve sustainable changes in people's behaviour, the enabling environment and, ultimately, people's living conditions in rural areas. It is about changing attitudes, knowledge and skills or, in other words, developing the capacities of farmers and public and private service providers in agricultural production, processing, marketing and markets.

Intrinsic motivation is the cornerstone of the PIP approach. This means that people do not participate in the project to please donors or managers. Project beneficiaries do not have a wait-and-see attitude and do not expect external solutions. No, TRIDE beneficiaries take responsibility as individuals and as families to bring about change. They are active participants who take their own development actions based on a vision for the future. They do this for themselves, for their neighbours and for their village. The responsibility of PIP farmers is paramount to community members and local stakeholders. Compliance within TRIDE is due to a genuine sense of responsibility on the part of the participants, not fear of a police entity and reprisals. Community-led total sanitation is a methodology based on a similar intrinsic motivation to change hygiene behaviour, which is successful. The PIP mindset will also be promoted among other project stakeholders. It is planned in 2022 to develop a PIP module for cooperatives.

In its ambition for sustainable transformation, TRIDE links changes at the local level to the policy levels. All activities are developed within the framework of provincial development programmes coordinated with the ministry-level expert and their staff at lower administrative levels down to the village-level monitors. This applies to all project components.

A second activity is to change the way LDPs of ETDs are formulated. More practical plans oriented towards internal actors are needed, (in the past they were oriented towards technical and financial partners and not very accessible to local people). TRIDE will strive to make the content of the LDP more accessible to local actors and to provide a version that is more malleable by communities. In this respect, the P DL will play a mobilising role for the communities by ensuring that a shared vision of development is fostered between the ETDs and their populations. Thus, the LDP will be a source of inspiration for the communities in the elaboration of the PIP, ICP and CAP. As the LDP is a tool for use by Local Development Committees, some of the facilitators of these committees could possibly play the role of sensitisers within the teams in charge of disseminating the PIPs.

In its support to national policy processes, TRIDE focuses on "farmer-friendly" land policy and land reform. TRIDE experts work in the interest of and alongside smallholder farmers to achieve favourable policy changes. Innovative farmers selected and trained under the project will be supported to become the voice of farmers in local development forums at the cluster and higher levels. The aim is to show how small-scale farmers can improve the welfare of the population and contribute to local economic development. The same goes for job creation, food security and how small-scale farmers play a role in the sustainable management of natural resources within the watershed. The fact that Congo is at the same time implementing a more export-oriented capitalist agricultural development path should not be an obstacle but a stimulus.

5. RESPONSES TO ANNEX 1 OF THE SUBSIDY AGREEMENT

5.1 Outcome 1 (land)

Annex 1, Observation 5: While land tenure gets quite a bit of attention in output 1.1, land access seems to be underemphasised. Please consider this when working out the details for outcome 1 in the inception phase.

TRIDE , unlike the Land Tenure Project (LTP), addresses the economic and programmatic aspects of the use of land resources with a double focus: i) the promotion of negotiated access to land in concession[4] in favour of landless farmers, and ii) the development of provincial land intervention strategies. TRIDE plans to work products that are at the heart of the land governance process. The activities include the operationalisation of the agricultural cadastre, the availability of the standard sharecropping contracts, the standard concession development plan, and the development of the SPIF.

In this perspective, the governance component of the TRIDE project will integrate the following dimensions in its activity plan (the detailed steps are presented in annex 24)

- Agricultural land registry: Ensure the monitoring of practices on the fringes of the law and provide advisory support for the agricultural land registry at both provincial and local levels. The operationalisation will make it possible to resolve the land conflicts that are legion on agricultural land, to secure it and thus allow innovative farmers to realise their dreams in complete security.
- Standard sharecropping contract: Organise workshops for the appropriation of tools for improving access to land and expedite the preparation of regulatory acts instituting standard sharecropping contracts and standard concession management plans
- SPIF: Assist in setting up the institutional framework for the launch of SPIF, provide methodological support and lobbying for consensus to be reached on land identification through, for example, group forums, and convert land use plans into regulatory acts

The implementation of the agricultural cadastre in the TRIDE target territories is identified as the basic condition for achieving these results. A draft decree on the creation, organisation and functioning of the agricultural cadastre in the provinces of North and South Kivu was drawn up during the inception phase and submitted to the Governor of South Kivu as a first step. Lobbying for the signing of the decree is underway.

The importance of the work with land goes beyond the level of the Provinces. TRIDE will use the lessons learned from the experience of developing SPIFs in North and South Kivu for scaling up to the national level. TRIDEs experience can become a show case for adopting a decentralised approach in the development of the National Land Plan and the National Land Use Plan.

[4] The agrarian structures in the TRIDE project areas are, in fact, characterised by a great imbalance in spatial occupation. Access to land is the major challenge for the majority of farmers in the territories of Masisi and Kalehe. The land is held by a small number of people consisting of military officers, large commercial concessionaires, political elites controlling private plantations, ex-rebels, large and generally influential farmers, churches and customary authorities. This land is sometimes accessible to smallholders on a seasonal lease basis, with the concessionaire having a monopoly on setting the conditions of access. In terms of estimated land occupation and use, 50% of Masisi's land is used for livestock, 30% for agriculture and 20% for market gardening[4] .

5.2 Outcome 2 (IWRM)

Annex 1. ***Observation 6:*** *The main constraints on the agricultural and water sectors mentioned on page 9-10 are mostly technical in nature. There are however also key constraints related to conflict and security (harassment, illegal taxation, GBV, armed groups, etc.) that need to be considered. A technical approach by the project will not solve the issues at stake.*

Indeed, the project area is permanently in a climate of conflict, insecurity, presence of armed groups and military is overwhelming. This impacts in one way or another the agriculture and water sectors and degradation of the environment. These impacts include:

1. In a conflictual environment, farmers are unable to collaborate in the collective management of water resources at the basin level: transit is hampered, and people communicate less.
2. The presence of non-state armed groups and insecurity increase the concentration of populations on land close to settlements. This high pressure on land, water and related resources leads to (1) colonisation of unappropriated land, (2) resource degradation, depletion of environmental reserves, and even of land for crops or grazing;
3. Pressure on resources such as forests and other natural resources in areas controlled by armed groups (excessive and abusive exploitation in charcoal production);
4. Massive and forced displacement of populations which accelerates the degradation of natural resources (water, land and forests) and creates conflicts with host communities.

What will be done? TRIDE aims to address the 'soft' constraints that hamper the agricultural and water sector by expanding on the collaboration with the local authorities on the Local Development Plans (LDPs) at Cheffery level and safety action plans at Territory- and at Cheffery level. The LDPs include elements which will improve social cohesion and links between and within communities, potentially leading to less conflicts in the region. Within the framework of TRIDE, the different LDPs will have to be aligned with the development vision of the Provinces by involving the technicians of the planning divisions in their elaboration process.

In the end, the provinces will issue compliance notices attesting to the alignment of these tools with provincial development policies. A second level of difficulty is that the LDPs of the ETDs are sufficiently elaborate and appear to be more oriented towards external actors, particularly technical and financial partners, and the content does not appear to be very accessible to local populations. TRIDE, while encouraging the mobilising factor of external actors in order to capitalise on resources and align the different interventions, will work to make the content of the LDPs more local and more malleable for the communities.

From this point of view, the LDPs mobilise the communities around a shared development vision between the ETDs and their populations. Thus, the LDPs will be a source of inspiration for communities in the elaboration of PIPs, ICPs and CAPs. As the LDP is a tool for use by Local Development Committees, some of the facilitators of these committees could possibly play the role of sensitisers within the teams in charge of the extension of the PIP. From this point of view, the alignment between these tools could be found in

the implementation and operationalisation phase And existing agreements will be considered to monitor their implementation for example the PDDRCS: Demobilisation, Disarmament, Community Rehabilitation and Stabilisation Programme).

Annex 1. ***Observation 7:*** *The proposed PIP approach starts with individual households, then communities, and if there is sufficient coverage plans at larger levels (hillside, etc.) can be made. While experience elsewhere has indeed shown that starting with enthusiastic households is key to the spread of responsible farm management within rural communities, IWRM is about addressing issues within catchment areas (such as dry season flow in rivers and wells, erosion/sedimentation, and flooding). This requires an approach at catchment level. The link between PIP and IWRM is not clear enough yet. For combining the two, it will be good if selection of initial households for PIP can be clustered within targeted catchment areas. This can be at the scale of the Tenge Tenge catchment area (where MyA works): streams that flow into Lake Kivu, the Rusizi plain or the Rift Valley in North Kivu. At this point in time, it may not be necessary to focus on larger-scale IWRM (although if the work in multiple catchment areas expands, it might be useful to discuss things at a higher level of integration).*

TRIDE promotes resilient farming systems by strengthening integrated water resources management. Accompanying small-scale farmers in an agro-ecological and IWRM transition process therefore requires a holistic approach that goes well beyond a "top-down" learning of agronomic techniques. In the provinces of South and North Kivu, TRIDE has chosen to base its intervention on two methodological approaches that are considered complementary:

- The "Integrated Farmer's Plan" (PIP); and
- Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).

Beyond the interest of each of these two approaches, it is their articulation that, in our opinion, proves to be a relevant choice. In particular, it is to create or strengthen the social dynamics in which we can anchor an agroecological transition movement carried by peasant communities. To do this, three reasons encourage the articulation of these two approaches, namely methodological coherence, complementarity and mutual enrichment.

TRIDE has a twofold objective in this Outcome which is (1) on the one hand, to promote resilient smallholder farming systems through the PIP approach, and (2) on the other hand, to improve local resource management (at basin level) to make these systems sustainable. It is in this sense that the idea is to run the two approaches in parallel to involve more community members in the desired change process from the outset, as IWRM issues are not restricted to PIP households.

Links PIP- IWRM: PIP and IWRM are 'participatory' methodologies. These two "bottom-up" approaches place the farmer supported by TRIDE in a position of actor. Thus, combining and articulating these two approaches increases methodological coherence and strengthens community awareness, on the one hand through PIP self-help sensitisation, and on the other hand through knowledge of the state of their local resources (watershed) and the design of the vision for managing these resources at the local level.

Complementarity: Beyond the common characteristics, the combination of PIP and IWRM is also justified through their complementarity. Focusing on different but complementary dimensions, their combination

introduces a more holistic change. The focus of the PIP is more on households and family farms. However, this family dimension allows for the inclusion of youth and women as well as introducing the idea of integration and positive interactions that exist on a family farm. The IWRM approach, on the other hand, emphasises the importance of community responsibility for resource management in order to improve resource productivity and ensure resource sustainability, with the focus on the watershed.

Mutual enrichment: At end, the combination of PIP and IWRM will result in an improved version of each methodology on its own. Indeed, the PIP, by bringing a vision of desired change down to the landscape level, provides a framework within which IWRM can take place. IWRM thus becomes a motivated action: "We are looking at IWRM because we want to find solutions to a problem that is affecting our livelihoods and their productivity". In this way, there is an opportunity to take advantage of the dynamic process of IWRM to address not only the problem but also to improve the resources available to the basin.

Thus, to materialize this association between the two approaches, TRIDE intends not only to implement them simultaneously but also to connect them in the different steps according to the following scheme (see also the figure):

1. **Selection of PIP villages vs. catchment areas:** Correlate watershed selection with PIP implementation villages. In order to maximize the effects of this combination, it will be necessary for the PIP households (already motivated) to influence other community members through their actions and results. Thus, each targeted watershed will have at least 2 or 3 PIP villages at the start of the project;
2. **Organisation of IWRM and development:** the structuring of watershed management bodies will be based on PIP households. Indeed, experience (MyA) has shown that the Farmer Innovator can be the catalyst for change in the village and lead to collective action. Thus, to influence the different (LDP and Watershed Management Plan), TRIDE will integrate the PIPs (PIs), either by targeting certain actors (if already organised) or by focusing the criteria on the PIP in the management of the watershed and its development;
3. **The different plans PIP, PDL and the PGBV:** Indeed, in the sense of continuity and complementarity, the different plans developed by the project support should contribute to the PDL. It is the latter that the VGBP will be based on to specifically address IWRM issues. The different PIP plans (PIP, PIC, PAV) should contribute to the improvement of landscapes and the use of natural resources, in particular water;
4. **Private farms and community spaces:** with PIP activities, the small farms of the IPs will be a motivation for other farmers in the area. TRIDE is counting on this 'PULL' aspect that these farms can exert on other farmers. In this way, it can reach the basin level;
5. **Complementarity of actions:** Since the two approaches are complementary, it will be wise to implement them simultaneously. Thus, the PIP will launch its actions from the PIs in the project villages. On these same farmers will start sensitizations on IWRM in order to highlight the major specific problems of the villages related to IWRM. Problems beyond the capacity of the communities will be supported to help the community in their resolution.

Annex 1. ***Observation 8:*** *While malnutrition is mentioned in the proposal, it is not clear how this will be addressed in the proposed activities under both outcome 2 and 3. Could you please elaborate how the*

project aims to contribute to reduced malnutrition? If nutrition is explicitly included, a separate output (and related indicator) may be useful to consider.

The project focuses on food security in relation to the availability, access and stable use of food by households. PIP households improve their knowledge of wise use of food and drinking water. The team considers that the nutritious value of food is important for health and the well-being in general. Hence, nutrition is kept in the proposal and specific activities will be integrated:

- Act 2.2.1 Sensitize PIP farmers on permaculture to improve household nutritional conditions (vegetable gardens, diversity 7 crops minimum , vegetables, minimum protein intake per day, etc.).
- Act 2.2.2 Identify gaps in PIP households' knowledge of nutrition
- Act 2.2.3 Organise nutrition awareness sessions for PIP farmers based on the identified gaps

Annex 1. Observation 9: *Téchnical advice on PIP and irrigation: while WUR has very relevant specific expertise on PIP, its expertise on irrigation is not unique. Besides, ability to travel to the project areas is key. Please follow proper procurement procedures for selecting experts.*

Noted. During 2022 support from Wageningen is planned for the adaptation of the PIP approach to the Congo context, the updating of the PIP manual as well as the design of PIP modules for cooperatives and for the disabled.

For the irrigation- IWRM expert the experience says it will be difficult to find a local expert.

5.3 Outcome 3 (economic revitalization)

Annex 1. ***Observation 10:*** *Outcome 3 and its underlying outputs are focused on increased production and access to finance. It is not clear what will be done on improving the quality of produce to become more competitive in the local or regional market*

The results of the baseline study reveal that improved crop yields in TRIDE areas would depend on the interaction between good seed variety, good cultivation practices, profitability and the environment. Therefore, in the framework of this project, beyond the approaches popularised in the field, small-scale farmers will be supported in agricultural entrepreneurship. In addition to the support in good practices, they will be supported in the cost-benefit analysis of their specialisation crops for the market. In addition, they will be supported in organising the production of rotation or association crops as appropriate to cover the consumption needs in their households.

The baseline study revealed that several projects have popularised the use of good agricultural practices in the project area. However, the level of adoption of practices still needs to be improved.

To ensure the adoption of good farming practices, the approach that will be used is the "model farmer" approach. Through this approach, farmers who have adopted good farming practices or who have become professional in production will be identified in the production basins on the basis of well-defined criteria. Producers will be identified by the cooperative's agronomist around the model producer in order to learn and draw lessons from the adoption of good practices. The farmers will capitalise on good farming or breeding practices while also learning from the failures and challenges of their colleagues. A model farmer

will supervise 7 to 15 producers around his farm. Coaching will be organised by the agronomists to follow the peer farmers in replicating good farming practices on their farms. This is a producer-to-producer learning approach that promotes the exchange of experience and the capitalisation of good practices.

For all the sectors identified, the project will list all the good cultivation practices to be developed, including the trajectory for the organisation of field days. Training and exchange of experience will be organised according to the cycle of the crops developed.

Cooperative agronomists and agri-models will be capacitated on techniques to disseminate knowledge to farmers for learning and large-scale adoption.

For greater effectiveness in agricultural practices, the project will support soil analyses (pH, N, P and K) in the various production basins in order to suggest soil amendment formulas for soil productivity. These soil analyses will be organised in laboratories with sufficient technical capacity in the country or in regional countries close to the TRIDE intervention zone, such as Uganda, Rwanda or Burundi.

The quality of products intended for the market is an important factor in competitiveness, in this case in the liberalised market where competition is high, in the face of the multiplicity of individual producers and sellers seeking a market, the presence of imported products. Particular attention will be paid to the quality standards of products that meet the needs and requirements of buyers/consumers.

The project will support the process of quality certification by authorised local services (OCC, ONAPAC, IPAPEL) and the certification of certain export products (Organic, Fairtrade, UTZ), such as coffee, in order to increase the added value of these products and to increase the profitability of the farmers thanks to the quality bonuses to be retroceded to the producers in proportion to the quantities delivered to the cooperatives. In addition to upstream quality control (supply of good quality inputs), product competitiveness will also be improved by improving product presentation, packaging, meeting consumer requirements (which will be analysed through market studies), etc.

Annex 1. ***Observation 11****: Besides improving access to finance, reducing risk also needs to be considered. Reluctance to invest often has to do with limited ability to accept risks (because people cannot afford losing their land and other assets), and apart from financial risks the security and climate risks are very real in the targeted area. Things like insurance could help, but also practices that minimise risk (this is an important linkage between outcome 2 and outcome 3).*

Traditionally farmers are risk averse. The farming practices are mixed, based on multi crops exactly to spread the risks. However, to grow and move out of the vulnerability zone a farmer needs to take measured risks. TRIDEs agroecological and permaculture orientation provides skills to improve the production without increasing risks. From a more secure basis the farmer can than make room for experimentation and take risk as an entrepreneur.

Indeed, the idea of developing agricultural insurance does not lend itself to the DRC context with the level of risk mitigation in agriculture remaining too low and the absence of adequate institutions. The project will examine the possibilities of providing crop and weather information. In order to facilitate access to

credit for small-scale producers whose risk management is insufficient, Agriterra will encourage financial institutions, in particular COOPECs, to develop solidarity group credit. It allows for necessary innovation without exposing the individuals to too high risks.

Practical advice will be given to farmers on a good analysis and evaluation of profitability for the formulation of the credit application.

The G50 approach coupled with the PIP approach gives farmers another channel to access inputs and finance.

Annex 1. Observation 12: *The project document states that for subsistence farmers, food production is low. This means that value chain interventions may not have a very straightforward contribution to household food security for households at or below subsistence level. Please consider the linkages between household economies, food security and market production for different categories of households (and thus the linkages between PIP interventions and outcome 3).*

It would be better to qualify the generalization that "food production is low". In the TRIDE project area, there are several categories of farmers: (i) farmers living above the poverty line based on the food consumption score (19%), (ii) farmers living at the limit of the survival line according to SCA (33%) and (iii) those living below the poverty line (48%) (Baseline report TRIDE, 2022). Similarly, in terms of area cultivated per household, farmers cultivating more than one and a half hectares of land represent about 20%, those cultivating less than 0.5 hectares about 55% and the rest between 0.5 and 1 hectare. As for cooperatives, only about 16% of farmers are members of these structures through which they market the surplus of their production.

Based on this information, it appears that households with more land (> 1.5 ha) live above the poverty line and have a marketable surplus. It must be observed that smaller farmer also sometimes sell products to local markets but does not provide regular income. The acreage for marketable surplus can be less with a more intensive agriculture and depending on the crop and location.

Annex 1. Observation 13. *An analysis of local markets and longer-distance value chains does not seem to have been conducted yet. Please include this in the inception phase.*

At this stage, we have carried out value chain analyses and identified promising commodities, based on profitability and conflict sensitive criteria. It is important to note that the value chain analysis already incorporates aspects of local, regional and international markets for the selected crops. We plan to carry out specific market analyses for the selected commodities during the first half of 2022.

Annex 1. Observation 14. *It is essential for all stakeholders in the project (especially the consortium members) to understand that input supply or market linkages will only work if the environment is sufficiently enabling. This means that the market assessment must consider factors such as insecurity, tracasserie, etc.*

The team is aware that it is exactly because of deficiencies in the enabling environment that the potential of agricultural markets are not realized. In theory Congo is the richest country of the world and in theory North and South Kivu could be (again) the bread basket and producing fruits and vegetables, meat and dairy, coffee and other products for Kinshasa and beyond. The team is continuously exploring the room of manoevre to take away barriers, simplify rules and procedures etc to improve the enabling environment especially for more local market solutions.

However, it must be clear that solving the governance crisis in a more structural way is a bridge too far for TRIDE. The situation of ingovernance is heavily influenced by big international interests and related powers that meet in this part of Congo. To work on this needs concerted action of the international community.

Annex 1. Observation : The project document states that for subsistence farmers, food production is low. This means that value chain interventions may not have a very straightforward contribution to household food security for households at or below subsistence level. Please consider the linkages between household economies, food security and market production for different categories of households (and thus the linkages between PIP interventions and outcome 3).

The levels of intervention and PIP, PIC and cooperative approaches will be oriented towards a specific target of project beneficiaries. If for the PIP-PIC the target is centered on subsistence farming households, the targets for market access activities are farmers who produce the surplus to sell, beyond subsistence production. Food security issues will first be addressed within households. In addition to the focus on marketing for value chain activities, households will be educated by their producer organizations on food sufficiency before any products are put on the market. Rotational crops will be popularized for household consumption.

Beyond the security dimensions (mentioned in point 6), there is the poor business climate reflected in the administrative red tape (including the multiplicity of services involved in the circuit) and a complex taxation system. The consequence is that the small producer has difficulty accessing the market and does not see his business prosper.
TRIDE proposes to work on improving the business climate through several mechanisms:

Improving service provision : TRIDE works directly with government departments and entities at different levels to improve the quality of service delivery in support of land tenure (e.g. agricultural cadastre), agriculture, integrated water resources management, etc. It will support these departments in the development of management tools, performance indicators to ensure that small-scale producers benefit fully from the services they receive. The aim will be to support these services in the development of management tools and performance indicators so that small-scale producers can benefit fully from the services they are entitled to. At the same time, the role of the services involved at different levels in the management of production, transport, processing and taxation must be reduced and clarified.

Improving the legal and regulatory framework : Small producers and cooperatives often find themselves faced with either a multiplicity of texts that are difficult to interpret or outright legal loopholes that are open to multiple interpretations. This situation exposes their business to a very high risk. The TRIDE programme will assist the various stakeholders in analysing the legal texts that have an impact on the business climate, in particular the various tax and even customs regimes. The aim will be to find together, authorities and small producers, a clarification on the existing texts and the need to initiate new ones that

can meet the needs of small agricultural producers and cooperatives in order to facilitate their access to the market.

Sharing information : The programme will ensure that key information on the business climate is shared widely. This information will primarily be the popularisation of legal and regulatory texts that directly affect their business. This could include procedures as well as competencies of services that interfere with their business.

*Consultation framework :*The TRIDE project will facilitate several spaces for dialogue between state services and small-scale producers. At the local level, these consultation frameworks will integrate the participatory budgeting processes that involve the regular holding of group and chiefdom forums. At the provincial level, the consultation framework will involve the provincial services and certain deconcentrated services dependent on the central government. These dialogue spaces will allow small producers and cooperatives to discuss directly with the services involved in their affairs to find solutions to administrative and fiscal

Annex 1, Observation 15: *Mining and charcoal form key sources of income in the area. In order to compete with these relatively hiqh-income sectors (with their political and criminal aspects) and wean people away from these sectors, interventions in value chains need to be sufficiently interesting. Please elaborate more on this in the inception phase.*

Those interested in mining and charcoal often need to earn income in a short period of time. However, Value chains related to horticulture have a quick pay off.

The links with mining and charcoal are also point for joint analysis and discussion with the Local Development Committees and security committees. TRIDE want to identify possible positive trade-offs between the economy of mines and charcoal and the smallholder famers. For example, in a discussion about the settlements around mines it was observed that these mining centres have an unmet demand for vegetables and fruits and food in general. Via the mining monitoring committee is might be possible to set up a commercialization line from a group of farmers.

The grant for innovative ideas in agricultural value chains around mining settlements and protected areas. The connection of the productive units thus launched with informal (AVEC) and/or formal (Banks, Coopec and MFIs) financial institutions.

Annex 1. Observation 16*: It is good that activities focused on entrepreneurship are targeted at young people and women, but the primary criterion should be that selected people have a clear entrepreneurial spirit.*

Yes, we completely agree with this observation. Without entrepreneurial spirit the activities will not succeed and the project will not reach the desired results. Thus, the people selected for these activities are preferably (young) women and young men who show an intrinsic interest in starting a business, demonstrate their own initiatives and are active in agriculture.

Annex 1. Observation 17. *Output 3.6 talks of matching grants. Experience with MyA has made the embassy quite reluctant with regard to this kind of grants. Please justify why credit is not more logical.*

Innovation and investing is seen as a risk for the people living on the edge of survival since a wrong decision can mean loss of the little they possess and more suffering. The matching grant will be directed at innovative entrepreneurs with a strong motivation and certain level of capacity. These innovative investments will likely trigger other actors in value chains as investments are not yet considered in the financial products of banks and MFIs operating in the area. Finance related to working capital will be directed towards banks.

Annex 1 Observation 18: *Output 3.7 talks about encouraging villages without markets to set up markets. Please explain this more. While some financial support may be justified, note that there are many constructed marketplaces that are not in use*.

Our action will not consist in building rural markets without taking into account the need expressed by the farmers. Beforehand, a good analysis of the local context will have to be carried out, focusing on the reasons for the absence of a market in the communities concerned. For those communities where the relevance of the local market will be justified, it will then be sensitised to create the market. Support for the development or construction of the market could be sought from the project only if needed.

In the same vein as in outcome 2.4, if it turns out that the market is one of the main barriers, according to the vision of the village, the farmers will be encouraged to build one, and then the project could coordinate with other structures with funds for this purpose and possibly contribute.

At the local level, interventions related to security aspects affecting the agricultural value chain will be based on the security action plans developed under the ESPER project. While ESPER intervenes at the higher level of territories, TRIDE will focus on the more specific dimensions affecting the agricultural value chain. For example, TRIDE will act on the more focused Local Security Committees (LSCs) at Group and Chiefdom level to address security issues more locally.

Intervention of more localised LSCs will be done in close collaboration with local civil societies in order to find local solutions to local problems. The interaction around concrete business challenges will make local authorities more responsible for security issues. Issues that go beyond their spheres of influence will gradually rise to the territorial, provincial and even national level in a perspective of interconnection with the ESPER programme. It is in this dimension that problems related to barriers, administrative problems related to certain state services that provide services to small producers, physical security of people, conflicts affecting communities, etc. will be addressed.

5.4 MEAL

Annex 1. Observation 19: *Please review the set of indicators, and as much as possible use indicators from BZ's results frameworks for food and nutrition security and water.*

The list of indicators has been revised and reduced. Among the indicators a list of reduced key indicators has been selected to make it more manageable. The non key indicators will be measured when time and resources are available. EKN guidelines have been taken into account, in particular the indicators that can be measured with a single tool such as a household questionnaire. There were added (4 + 1 proposed). Some indicators were reformulated and simplified or replaced by some more realistic in terms of cost-effectiveness in their measurement.

It is realized that some quantitative indicators have little value without explanatory context and qualitative information. For example an indicator of number of meetings or number of decisions influenced. The experiences will necessarily have to be documented in the form of case studies with an analysis of the decisions and its real effect. Otherwise the quantitative indicator will be rather empty information.

For nutrition we realized that the support package within TRIDE includes recommendations for homegardens with a crop diversity. Through a case study this practice plus changes in the diet can be investigated and documented.

"The number of indicators (11 outcome, 23 output, 6 security-related) is quite high. This increases the risk that part of the indicators end up not being monitored adequately. As the M&E framework is reviewed in the inception phase, please look at possibilities for simplification. It may also be possible to find multiple indicators that can be measured with a single tool (for example a household survey, observation, or formal government statistics). It may not be meaningful to report on outcome indicators every year."

As part of the M&E framework, the frequency of collection to measure and report on change has been reviewed. The outcome indicators will be measured at the beginning, mid-term and end of the project.

In terms of disaggregation, the main criteria used are gender, age group (to highlight youth), geographical area (village or cluster). It is important to note that, in view of the conflict sensitivity aspect, the disaggregation of indicators by ethnicity was not emphasised. However, the consortium agreed that ethnic inclusiveness will be a requirement in all project activities.

Annex 1. Observation 22) *It would be good if data could be gee-located, and if data can be recorded at provincial level. This will make coordination with government and other interventions easier. Besides, geo-location will make management of the project (from a landscape perspective) easier.*

The baseline study is georeferenced. The profile of the IT officer has been adjusted to cover also the GIS expertise required in TRIDE. The GIS expert will work closely with the MEAL to have a monitoring system that is linked to location.

TRIDE aims to have a monitoring system that bring together all information in one central place managed by a MEAL expert. Moreover, IES as part of the baseline study has drafted a proposal for an integral system for project data management (to be finished by end of March 2022).
Cadasta Foundation has a proposal to manage the land information in combination of other features of the project (Annex 15). A contract with Cadasta Foundation is being elaborated for the licence of the

system plus support with the implementation.

Annex 1. Observation 23. *For some outputs and outcomes it may take longer to result in measurable change than for others. Please set realistic targets in time.*

Noted. Adjustment made in this sense.

5.5 GOVERNANCE

Annex 1 Observation 24: *The proposed (revised) internal governance structure remains quite complex and top heavy, with a Project Management Team (9 people in DRC plus the content experts), a technical and operational group, and a strategic group. In total (not including the content experts), this involves some 14 people, and carries the risk of ambiguities in responsibilities. Please review this and come up with a light and practical structure.*

The internal governance structure was revised. TRIDE is managed by a project management team (PMT) consisting of the TL and DTL of ZOA, one PCs of VNGI and one PC of Agriterra. Together they will take the strategic and important operational decisions. (see red box below)

There is one strategy groups comprised of the leadership of the consortium partners in Congo and in the Netherlands. They will meet every six weeks for guidance, monitoring and improved coherence between the implementing partners.

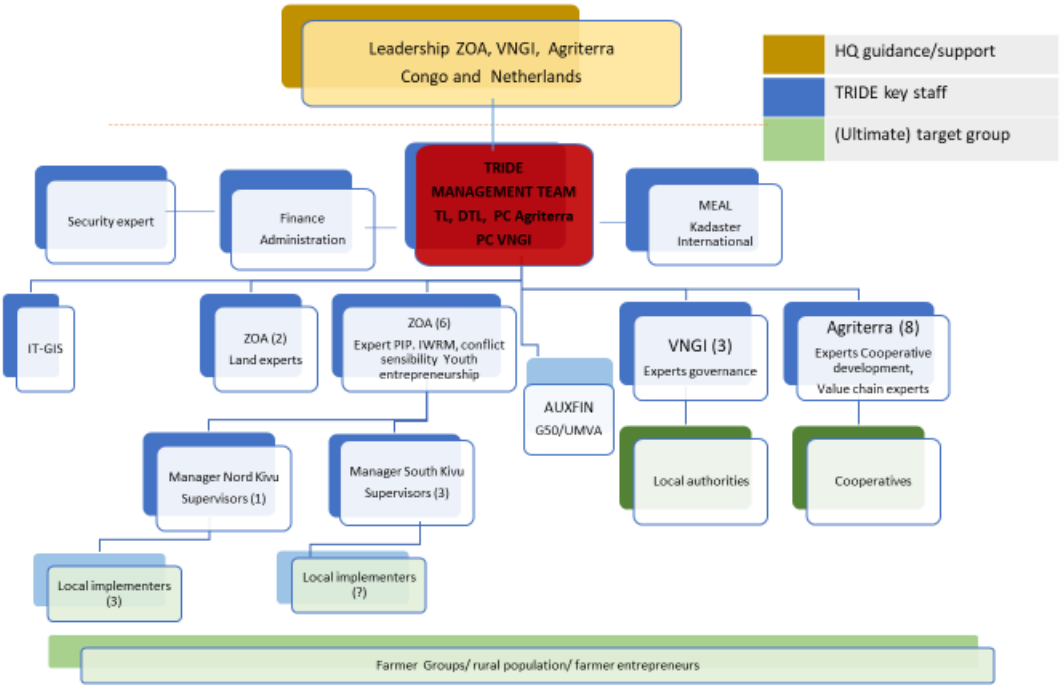


Figure 2 Organigramme TRIDE

The Steering Group for TRIDE and LTP is being set up in coordination with the Minister of Plan in Kinshasa

and the Provincial Governments. The proposal contains technical monitoring committees for North and South Kivu consisting of representatives of the relevant sector Ministries and representatives of civil society. If the uncertain situation of LTP continues beyond March TRIDE will have to set up an steering committee for TRIDE only.

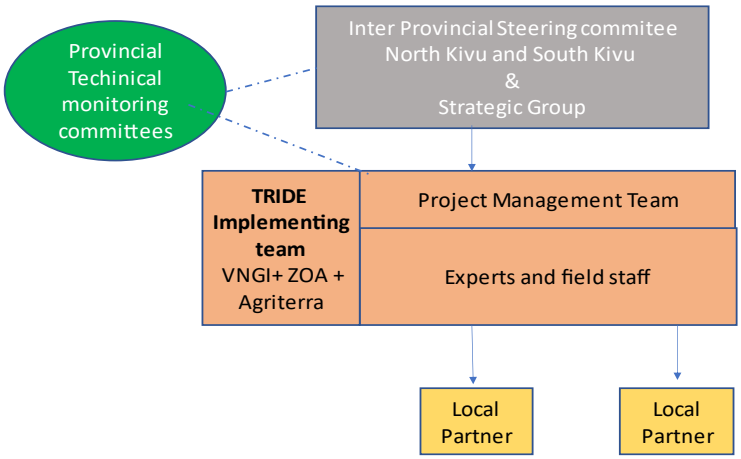


Figure 3 Basic Governance Structure TRIDE

Annex 1. Observation 25: *A very broad collaboration is foreseen with many government institutions, but at the same time there is some lack of clarity on why they all play a role. This might end up requiring a lot of capacity from the consortium. Please clarify this.*

Due to the integral character of TRIDE and the links between local and provincial level there are many players involved. Linking these actors will be a big part of the programme of TRIDE. The actors will come together in the fora at Groupement level, and in the local development committees at Cheffery level. Coordination/ accountability meetings will also be held at Cheffery level with the participation of the Territorial Administrators. So for example we have seen that Innovative farmers and local leaders have to be more involved in the governance mechanisms of security, development and monitoring (of mines) committees. These spaces are for joint understanding of local development challenges and together solve the the barriers, taxes and security that hampers productive and economic activities. The farmer representatives advocate for their issues in these local committees and it allows the governments to connect their actions to the needs on the ground.

Annex 1. Observation 26: *It is good that the project pays a lot of attention to the ETDs, Chefferies. Given the limited resources that these ETDs have available, how will the project link capacity strengthening to better functioning of the ETDs? To what extent will ETDs play a role in selection of communities and beneficiaries?*

Security and conflict sensitivity are major long-term issues. The resources and expertise devoted to security in eastern Congo may have prevented further escalation and more serious human rights

violations, but they have not structurally improved the situation.

The fact that past assistance and approaches have not worked is at least an invitation to be creative and open to innovative approaches. There are coordination platforms, security services and security information centres. But the question remains: do they solve the problems? Sometimes one can also ask whether they solve the real problems? Parroting among experts and certain taboos seem very persistent.

5.6 RISK MANAGEMENT

Annex 1 Observation 27: *The consortium organised a (very useful!) workshop in Goma about the determinants of the agricultural crisis. Based on this analysis, the project document has singled out a number of these issues that the project will focus on. The limitation makes sense, simply because it is impossible to do everything. However, what are the risks involved in the project not dealing with the other issues? Please make this more explicit in the risk section of the project document.*

Our risk assessment is regularly updated and the consortium is fully aware that it cannot cover all determinants influencing agricultural production. Therefore, TRIDE will actively add the issues that are not covered by the project to the advocacy agenda, and other actors (state actors or non-state actors) will be motivated to cover these matters. Coordination is key, and the consortium will ensure that sufficient effort is put into solid coordination and communication.

While not addressing these issues directly, TRIDE will nonetheless have influence on the issues through advocacy that may curb these trends. Actions by other actors will be identified as preconditions or necessary steps in the process of TRIDE implementation, So these issues will become part of the governance agenda informed by the needs of the farmer groups and cooperatives. The success of the PIP approach, the profitability and inclusiveness of value chains due to the improved security environment, the rationalisation of land governance through SPIFs and the conclusion of long-term sharecropping contracts with concessionaires may lead to a critical mass for change. A movement so to speak of PIP farmers and young people interested in agricultural activity, the stabilisation of rural households, the revival of the associative dynamics around value chains and, ultimately, a significant modification of urban-rural relations.

TRIDE will define a communication strategy with the overall objective of contributing to the understanding of the legal, social, economic and political mechanisms for improving land governance, IWRM and value chains in the project area, and more specifically to

1. To contribute to better information related to the TRIDE project;
2. To build ownership among all stakeholders of the themes that are the subject of the implementation of this project;
3. Promote knowledge on the production-reproduction processes of the agrarian crisis and food insecurity to all stakeholders

Among other elements of the communication strategy, TRIDE will from the start of the implementation phase to promote:

- partnerships through collaboration agreements with private sector and media partners;
- synergies between the different actors working at local, provincial and national levels;

- exchange of information within the framework of this project with the key actors in the areas where the project is implemented;
- Promote innovative and appropriate forms of communication;

Annex 1 Observation 28: *Related to the point above, the project document highlights the importance of structural change at political level for increasing the effectiveness of development interventions. To what extent will the effectiveness of the TRIDE consortium be limited in the same sense?*

The team leader and deputy team leader were received in audience by the Minister of Land Affairs on Friday 19 November 2021. After presenting the "Transition for the Integrated Development of Eastern DRC" (TRIDE) project, requests were made to the Minister for political support for the implementation of the programme. Among other programme activities, the mission highlighted the following activities that require the support and guidance of the Ministry of Land Affairs:

1. Support to the provinces for the development of provincial land intervention strategies;
2. Land inventory and identification of rural and urban-rural land for agriculture;
3. The legal review of concessions ;
4. The negotiation and formalisation of sharecropping contracts between concessionaires and farmers
5. Watershed management in the project target areas.

It was recognised that these activities could not be carried out without the strong involvement of the Ministry of Land Affairs, which fully shares the ambition of the TRIDE programme to improve access to land for small-scale farmers in eastern DRC. However, according to the Minister, conflicts of competence are to be feared, particularly with the ministries in charge of land management, urban planning, agriculture and the environment.

After affirming his support for the TRIDE programme and recognising the sensitivity of the problems raised, the Minister recommended that the mission propose a note that he could submit to the Council of Ministers. He also expressed the need for pragmatic reflection on the conversion of "titles" resulting from local land practices and on the dematerialisation/digitisation of land and property titles in general.

TRIDE, through the DTL, supported the National Commission on Land Reform (CONAREF) in the finalisation of the national land policy document which sets out the strategic axes of future government interventions in land matters. The land policy sets out the principles that will guide the changes to be made at the legislative and operational levels, i.e. in terms of normative choices, choice of institutional framework, land action tools and priority actions. The opportunity of this meeting made it possible to include the development of provincial land intervention strategies in the strategic axes of the national land policy.

TRIDE's expertise is now being sought to pilot the second stage of the land reform roadmap, namely the revision of the land law and harmonisation of legal texts in the land and related sectors. A project launch was carried out at the beginning of the implementation.

Annex 1. Observation 29: *Another important context factor is the poor state of the road network. How will the project deal with this? (probably mostly through engagement with other actors active in the road*

sector)

Agricultural feeder roads are in poor condition. These roads are the responsibility of the ETDs and need to be maintained to support the opening up of agricultural production areas and facilitate physical access to markets. In this vision TRIDE will support the participatory budgeting process in the ETDs with a focus on investments in the maintenance of agricultural feeder roads. At the same time, the Local Development Committees accompanied by TRIDE will play a role in mobilizing community members in community work to support Chiefdom initiatives in the maintenance of feeder roads. At another level, the ETDs will learn from each other's good practices on the maintenance of agricultural feeder roads through public-private partnership as is the case in Bahunde Chiefdom through the management of certain taxes by private individuals.

During the inception phase a quick scoping survey was done to get an idea of the needs for small infrastructural investments. The result is a proposal (annex…). TRIDE is basically a capacity development project and currently does not have substantial funding for infrastructural investments. It is the concluded that TRIDE would substantially gain in impact if it would be combined with an investment fund for solving infrastructural bottlenecks. There are no projects that cover the small infrastructural investments needed for road repair, small scale irrigation rehabilitation, catchment protection.

Annex 1. Observation 30: *Please elaborate how the risk of elite capture will be minimised. It is clear that there are factors not addressed by TRIDE that may limit its effects. This is the case in particular with the prevalence of the mining economy and the professional exodus that it entails. This process is becoming more radical, through the rural exodus and its corollaries (urban unemployment and the hypertrophy of the informal sector), due to the unfavourable urban-rural relations for the local economy, the persistence of armed groups and the mass poverty affecting the peasantry in the project's intervention zone.*

Buy-in from political elites is necessary and elite capture to some extend is unavoidable. The project needs the elites to use their influence for the smooth implementation of the project to serve the collective interest. However, the project must limit the influence of the elites it is to service their own or of a groups benefit to not lose credibility.

TRIDE believes that it takes good communication, transparency, participation, accountability to limit elite capture. Through conflict sensitivity TRIDE will be more aware and know more about the powerplay and will already be designing activities to reach more people in a balanced way. Communication about the goals, activities and results in a transparent way will make it more difficult to use the project for eht benefit of a small group. TRIDE implements the accountability mechanisms at the administration of Groupement level. In these events, every body will see what has been done what are the costs and the results. So every stakeholder will be hold accountable for the project.

5.7 Other issues explored during the context analysis

5.7.1 URBAN-RURAL RELATIONS

Governance-related activities will form the basis for agricultural value chain activities. Thus, at the local level, interventions related to security aspects affecting the agricultural value chain will be based on the security action plans developed under the ESPER project. While ESPER intervenes at the higher level of

territories, TRIDE will focus on the more specific dimensions affecting the agricultural value chain. For example, TRIDE will act on the more focused Local Security Committees at the Groupement and Chiefdom level to address security issues more locally. This more localised LSC intervention will work closely with local civil societies to find local solutions to local problems. These mechanisms will make local authorities more responsible for security issues. Issues that go beyond their spheres of influence will gradually rise to the territorial, provincial and even national level in a perspective of interconnection with the ESPER programme. It is in this dimension that problems related to barriers, administrative problems related to certain state services that provide services to small producers, physical security of people, conflicts affecting communities, etc. will be addressed.

The issue of taxation will be addressed in a specific and highly structured way according to agricultural commodities and value chains, from chiefdoms and provinces to the national level. TRIDE will create spaces for dialogue between small-scale producers, cooperatives, technical services and financial authorities in order to clarify the modes and methods of tax collection, to negotiate tax rates as well as the taxes to be activated.

Overall, TRIDE will establish a mechanism to monitor the functioning of government services in order to assess the quality of services provided to cooperatives and small-scale producers. In this regard, issues related to the behaviour of service providers, corruption and other forms of harassment that are not directly addressed in the security action plans will be addressed.

5.7.2 SERVICE DELIVERY AROUND VALUE CHAINS: INFORMATION AND PROBLEM SOLVING

Under TRIDE, VNG International will work with the local security committees at the level of the clusters selected for programme implementation to find local solutions to local problems. The actions of these actors involved in the security sector will focus on addressing the problems affecting the agricultural value chain at the local level. Thus through the CLS, indicators in terms of service delivery will be developed with each member service. From this point of view, outputs will be periodically evaluated on the basis of decisions taken by the CLS and implemented by the security services.

Security services and value chains : Small-scale producers and cooperative members will participate in extended security meetings, group forums and popular expression forums. These spaces will allow small-scale producers and local authorities to better map the security issues affecting the agricultural value chain. In the small-scale security meetings, security officials will make decisions based on the information gathered in the participatory sessions. The services will then be made responsible for implementation according to their areas of competence. Issues related to corruption, harassment, barriers, taxation, etc. will be addressed. Subsequent evaluations will follow the same pattern, and finally, the spaces for dialogue between the authorities and small-scale producers will serve as frameworks to ensure accountability. Further on, community satisfaction surveys through the community score card will make it possible to record the level of satisfaction of small-scale agricultural producers.

TRIDE will work directly with government services at local, provincial and national levels. The aim is that these institutions and services will not only provide quality information to the beneficiaries of the project, namely smallholder farmers and agricultural cooperatives, but also quality services. These services are of several kinds:

Security: The TRIDE project will ensure that the security services provide quality services to the communities. At this stage, the following aspects will be addressed (1) securing agricultural production areas with a dissuasive and reactive presence of civil, police and military authorities (2) lifting of paying barriers (3) control of actions by security agents (4) establishment of channels of recourse and complaints (administrative and judicial) to combat harassment, etc.

Administration : TRIDE will ensure that the administrative services are operational and accessible to small-scale farmers and cooperatives in order to facilitate their procedures and receive the necessary support and advice with regard to the competencies of each service. It will also

Technical: TRIDE will support technical services to deliver services to communities. For example, ETDs will activate agricultural monitors to provide advisory support to small-scale producers and cooperatives. The coordinating role of the agricultural monitors and possibly veterinarians will fall to the Territorial Inspectors of Agriculture at both Territorial and provincial levels.

TRIDE promotes the scaling up of proven concepts for smallholder farmers. For example, with Auxfin, TRIDE will use a method to make information and communication technologies useful to smallholders. TRIDE does not support experimental innovation as it is considered too risky for the target group of vulnerable farmers.

Similarly, a results-based financing consultant has been identified who, during 2022, will carry out a diagnosis of where to include the results-based financing mechanism. This mechanism is specifically intended for collaboration with national institutions. The consultant will analyse the whole project to determine where RBF principles can add value.

6. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

The objectives of TRIDE's communication and visibility plan (annex 12) are to disseminate the programme's activities and results among internal and external stakeholders, to share the stories of beneficiaries and to give significant visibility to the commitment of the donor and the organisations, particularly in the context of food security and integrated water resources management. The plan will also raise awareness of the importance of smallholder farmers as drivers of sustainable development. The plan also ensures internal communication among multiple stakeholders, thereby strengthening the coordinated and coherent implementation of activities, and places particular emphasis on information management as a means to support accurate and timely communication and reporting.

All communication and visibility products prepared in the framework of the implementation of the Programme will contain the logo of the Government of Congo and the logo of the project as well as the participating institutions, if any. The donor's logo must be placed next to the Government of Congo when it comes to official activities with government authorities and must be mentioned in publications funded under the project.

7. ADVOCACY

An advocacy guideline Influencing decisions in political, economic and social institutions is important for

reaching a larger number of people and for the institutionalisation of the project results. TRIDE experts help the target group and its stakeholders to translate the project's lessons into policy messages. This will enable evidence-based policy influencing practice.

Because authorities can be part of the problem, a situation-specific communication and advocacy strategy will be developed to minimize their negative influence. Accountability mechanisms will also be enshrined in the letter of understanding with the provincial authorities and in the partnership frameworks to make local authorities accountable to the project. TRIDE will furthermore value a socio-institutional approach to conflict transformation for local authorities because they are both sources of the problem and part of the solution.

Analysis on harassment is being carried out; the findings are not yet available. These will be used to inform communication and advocacy.

Farm leaders have a strong case to propose: they represent farmers. They come to voice the feelings, concerns, interests and opinions of the grass-root members of their organizations. Within TRIDE, local, provincial and national farmer organizations will be involved in addressing the challenges regarding production and business. The FACT, 'Farmers Advocacy and Consultation Tool' is the method to be used to support farm leaders to build on the opinions of their farming membership, to construct focused advocacy issues and construct sound proposals. ESPER works with local security committees at the Territory level and undertakes major advocacy actions at the provincial and national level while TRIDE will work with the local security committees at the purely local level, especially at the Chiefdom and Groupement level, and will focus thematically on security issues affecting the agricultural value chain as well as on IWRM activities

8. COORDINATION

8.1 Coordination with local government

The project will work with a number of government institutions in an accountability approach without making them dependent on the programme, which would seriously impact on the sustainability of results. In this respect, the programme will support the ETDs and the Province in the process of elaborating their budgets, providing advice on maximising revenues and allocating operating budgets at the level of the services and more specifically to those that support the programme. This will be reflected in both the letters of agreement with the Provincial Governments and the partnership frameworks with the ETDs.

Service	Reason for involvement
Grouping	The Groups as a basic entity will be involved because the Group leaders are the authorities closest to the small producers. They are the first to receive the grievances of the communities and have a good grasp of the local context. They coordinate the local security services, especially the police, interact with the army and manage the agricultural monitors and monitor the performance of the tax agents on a daily basis. It is at the level of the Groupements des Groupements that citizens' spaces are organised at the Groupement level. The chiefdoms rely on the Groupements to implement their programmes

Chiefdom	ETDs play a key role in the backbone of local governance with regard to the competences devolved to them by law in the context of decentralisation. They are the first governmental link for the provision of services to communities in various sectors including agriculture and environment, which are decentralised competences. Because of their administrative and financial autonomy, they are the first point of contact for small producers and cooperatives. These entities manage taxation at the local level and have a direct impact on the business of programme beneficiaries. The customary authorities at this stage have major responsibilities over the so-called local community lands and as such will play a major role in the implementation and operationalisation of the customary cadastre
Territory	The Territory is an administrative body that coordinates and drives government action at the local level. The territory therefore manages all the technical services likely to provide services to small producers and cooperatives It is also the Territory that coordinates all security matters at the local level by directly managing the police, military, migration and intelligence. The role of the Territory administrators will be very crucial in the provision of security services. The agricultural cadastre will be directly under the supervision of the Territory Administrator, who is the direct representative of the Governor of the Province.
The province	The Provinces will have a supervisory role in the implementation of the programme. Not only as a service provider, but also and above all given the fiscal weight that this entity has. Its interaction with small-scale producers should help improve the business climate.
Security services	The security services are considered the primary providers of security at all levels. They are coordinated by the heads of the entities. Beyond the role they are recognised for, they are often accused of being the source of all kinds of harassment and even of being the perpetrators of exactions against small producers. As such, they are an important target for the
The financial authorities	The financial authorities are the ones in charge of maximising revenue at the chiefdom, provincial and national levels. They are often known for their unorthodox methods of collecting taxes. It is at their level that issues of corruption are often raised. The project will interact with them on issues relating to taxation
The Inspectorate of Agriculture, the Inspectorate of Rural Development, the Environment and the National Office of Rural Hydraulics,	Are mostly service providers at the level of small producers and cooperatives in their areas of expertise. They will be invited to participate in activities and to present the national policies and Provincial plans. They will be kept on board for cross-learning with the ultimate goal to support the services providers with the good examples for improved
The agricultural cadaster and the real estate title services	Mapping landuse and landuse potential. The agricultural cadaster will be facilitating the rent agreements between the landowner and the smallholder farmers.
National, CONAREF,	They are in charge of the elaboration of a new land policy. Through this link the project results and lessons can reach and influence national level policy development. The Land expert will be one of the lead advisors in this process.

8.1.1 ***Participation of ETDs and capacity strengthening***

It is clear that the project has a strong focus on ETDs. These entities are the main service providers at the lowest level and at this stage offer an opportunity for communities to take full responsibility for their

development. However, these entities experimenting with decentralisation show flaws at several levels, including those related to their functioning. These shortcomings are related to the lack of qualified personnel, handling of administrative tools, weak management capacity, etc. TRIDE proposes to strengthen the functional capacities of the ETDs by building the capacities of the personnel in order to make the main services operational, by providing these services with management tools. In this vision TRIDE will support DTEs in the process of budgeting and revenue maximisation to enable them to have financial resources to meet their needs. Further TRIDE proposes to group DTEs into a cooperative format (union of municipalities) capable of engaging in discussions and advocacy with provincial and national governments to recover retrocessions from the national and provincial levels and thus replenish their coffers

8.2 COORDINATION OF THE CONSORTIUM

8.2.1 Programmatic and operational flexibility

Although the target group is clearly defined, the situation of each village and each group is different in terms of the productive environment and the relationship with markets. The obstacles are not the same for a group of irrigated farmers in the plain as for a community near the national park or the landless in Masisi. The interventions are therefore also different.

One conclusion from the initial phase is that the integral approach and programmatic flexibility of the project design requires flexible and tailored responses from the consortium partners. It requires an open attitude from partner organisations to adapt to emerging agendas. It requires experts to step out of their silos and look over the fence to see what the other expert is doing.

Each partner brings in another organisational culture and other ways of working, even the way of communication and use of language is quite different. The project will build a new hybrid culture as a blend of the organizational cultures. Most important however, is that each expert is interested in and understand the basics of the other project components and the work of the other experts. Only then we can work in unison to achieve the project goal. In addition, it is necessary to actively develop links and opportunities between the project components to create synergy and value, on the interception and where components and disciplines meet. TRIDE provides time for coordination, exchange and learning between partner organisations (joint activities) and regular meetings with sister projects.

8.2.2 Coordination with other actors

By the time the TRIDE concept was born at the 2019 Bukavu Land Conference, it was clear that to have a real impact, concerted action between actors and themes was needed. Access to land and land rights only makes sense if there is a plan for land management and improved agricultural practices and if there are markets to sell the surplus. Also, local economic development will not happen without a secure enabling environment. This resulted in three related projects: Land Tenure Project for land rights, TRIDE for land improvement and markets, and ESPER for security and governance at provincial and territorial levels. Each project then proposed consortia with complementary expertise (see Annex 14 for the framework of collaboration).

During the inception phase of TRIDE, it became clear that concerted action by implementing organisations needed to be better embedded in the national development framework consisting of laws, institutions

and plans. Even though the national governance is severely handicapped by all the opposing forces, the conclusion was to further strengthen the links between TRIDE and the government, at national level (land, agriculture), provincial level spatial planning (SPIF, Agricultural Cadaster) and local development planning (linking security and development plans with farmers' agendas).

9. OPERATIONS UPDATES

Most staff positions have been filled (see annex 10 for the team position and the ToR of the key staff). Some recruitment was rather late due to the fact that the selected staff was still engaged in other activities. The expectation is that the experienced staff can make up for the lost time once they are in place. The selection procedure for the conflict sensitivity expert, security expert and youth entrepreneurship is ongoing. For RBF a consultant will be hired for a diagnosis of the potential of RBF throughout TRIDE. The consultant report will guide the way forward for RBF including the staff requirement.

Field offices and local implementers

Local implementers are foreseen under outcome one and outcome two. The selection procedure has started of local implementer of the implementation of PIP-GIRE in the areas of high security risk in Rutshuru and Masisi. Other local implementers will be identified and defined during the RBF diagnostics and as for the Community Based Social Therapy, according to the real needs encountered in the field. TRIDE has the intention to work wherever possible to work through local organizations in line with the localization agenda.

Assets

The office in Goma was installed and fully equipped.
List of Farm assets can be found in annex 25.

Risk management system

Risk management is becoming more and more important. Time will be invested within the TRIDE team and with the sister projects to jointly analyse the context and the risks and subsequently design risk mitigating strategies/ activities.

Procurement

The consortium partners are obliged to pass a due diligence check. When they pass it means their procedures fulfil the requirements and are accepted in the consortium and by the donor. However, the partner organizations are encouraged to follow the ZOA procurement guidelines. The Due Diligence of Agriterra is pending and will be organized before June 2022.

Budgeting procedures

ZOA has implemented its ERP system and all data has been migrated from the old to the new system. It will take some time for the administration to get used to the new system. A standard budget format is designed and shared with the consortium partners for budgeting process. The format and the procedures are in the TRIDE Financial Guidelines. The financial guidelines contain also other financial and narrative planning and reporting formats to be used by the TRIDE partners. As described in the Grant Decision ZOA is the end responsible for budgeting and reporting towards the donor.

Conflict sensitivity, programming implications & risks

Conflict sensitivity has been identified as a relative weakness of the NGOs working in the Great Lakes Programme. Pole institute in Goma has been contracted by the donor to train and support TRIDE with the mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity. End 2021 one conflict sensitivity training was held and the methodology was applied in an analysis and plan for one working area (annex 11). This support in conflict sensitivity will continue. The conflict sensitivity will be multidimensional and covering: conflicts arising from being an NGO, gender based violence, dealing with the criminal elements in society, and conflicts within the team and consortium. The planning is to start in March 2022. The project document was updated with more up-to date conflict sensitivity analyses.

Security analysis and implications

A security assessment of the TRIDE intervention areas was conducted and the ZOA Congo security guidelines were updated accordingly. The security guidelines can be found in annex 16

10 SUMMARY OF THE TRIDE PROJECT BASELINE STUDY

The baseline study examined the situation in the TRIDE intervention areas with regard to access to land, food security, nutrition, integrated water management, value chains, cooperative development, social support, access to finance and governance, which are the strategic axes of the TRIDE project. The study was an opportunity to refine the project's performance indicators. It provided a picture of the agrarian landscape, the condition of small-scale producers and the functioning of production systems for survival and economic development in 5 territories in North Kivu (Masisi, Nyiragongo, Rutshuru) and South Kivu (Kalehe, Uvira).

The study shows that most small-scale farmers (88%) are permanent residents in their area and their main activity is farming. However, agricultural yields are low as a result of several factors linked to economic and structural factors. Access to land, which is the factor of production, is difficult for small producers in the target areas because of the monopolisation of arable land by large concessionaires[5] . Therefore, in order to survive, small farmers have to access land by various means, including renting. Of the total declared area farmed on average by the small-scale farmer (0.76ha), 0.37ha, or 48.7%, is rented land. However, not only does the rental price seem to be high ($261/ha/season), but also the duration is short (seasonal, 3-4 months) and the smallholder tenant is not secure (unwritten contract, non-compliance with agreed clauses, no guarantee of contract renewal, ...). Not only does this context prejudice the already disadvantaged peasant in his access to land ownership, but he also lives in a poverty maintained by structural and conjunctural factors leading him to low agricultural exploitation and productivity.

Of the small-scale agricultural production achieved, one part is used for survival (consumption) and the

[5] [5] This study estimates that of the 100% of land in the study territories, 18% of the land would be returned to the peasantry, 36% is occupied by parks and nature reserves and 46% is privately owned by large concessionaires

other for sale, mainly on the local market. The smallholders encountered in this study live below the poverty line estimated at 0.49USD; this demonstrates a high level of poverty compared to the 1.9USD per day threshold required by the World Bank for rural households. Moreover, the large proportion of households (47.92%) fall into the poor class of the food consumption score.

In the TRIDE project areas, the average household size is 7 persons per household. Calculated as a proportion of food and non-food expenditure (proxy variables), the average monthly household income in the areas is USD 104. The poverty line is estimated at USD 0.49 per person per day, which shows the most severe level of poverty compared to the World Bank's requirement of USD 1.9 per day for rural households. With regard to food security, the food consumption score (FCS) reveals that only 18.75% of households surveyed are in the acceptable class, 33.33% in the borderline class and 47.92% in the poor class. The majority of households are food insecure, and resort to different coping strategies, as shown by the results of the coping strategy index (SSI): 10.94% of households surveyed are non-vulnerable, 35.68% are at risk of vulnerability, 23.70% are moderately vulnerable, and 29.69% are extremely vulnerable.

With regard to the mode of land acquisition, in the project areas, there are 5 modes: inheritance, purchase, lease for a fee (sharecropping, tenant farming), transfer or donation against a customary fee, and lease for free. Several authors (ASP & Life Peace Institute, 2017; UN-HABITAT, 2020; EurAc, 2017) note that these modes of acquisition have an impact on the mode of exploitation of the land and consequently on agricultural yield. Depending on their status with regard to the land occupied or exploited, most small-scale producers are either owners or co-owners (62%). The high proportion of co-owners[6] is observed in Rutshuru (73%), Nyiragongo (67%) and Uvira (63%). Masisi (61%) and Kalehe (50%) come last. Tenants only represent 26% overall, i.e. 37% in Masisi, 36% in Kalehe, 22% in Uvira, 17% in Rutshuru and 17% in Nyiragongo.

Land grabbing by large concessionaires, the relocation of smallholders during the extension of parks (Kahuzi Biega and Virunga), insufficient financial means, insecurity, harassment and kidnappings along the way and in cultivable areas, and the failure to adapt the price to the fertility of the soil are among the major reasons why smallholders do not have access to land. According to this study, a household has an average of 2 fields, 1 of which is rented. The study showed that the household only manages to exploit one of its fields.

In the different survey areas, the overall average area farmed by smallholders is 0.76 ha (less than 0.25 ha: 31.8%, between 0.25-0.5 ha: 26.1%, between 0.5-0.75 ha: 13%, between 0.75-1 ha 5.3%, between 1-2 ha: 16.4%, 2-5 ha or more: 7.5%), of which 0.37 ha is rented land. The rental price of land seems to be exorbitant. The average price is $261/ha/season, with Masisi: $487.5 (coefficient of variation (cv) 32%), Kalehe: $237.5 (cv 79%), Nyiragongo: $200 (cv 0%), Uvira: $200 (cv 85%), Rutshuru: $180 (cv 16%).

Of all the respondents, not one stated that they had a land lease contract with a concessionaire for 5 years or more. Most arable land lease contracts are seasonal (3-4 months) and their renewal depends more on the temperament and financial means offered to the manager than on the respect of the agreed clauses (even in case of a written contract). There are several types of contracts (verbal and written), as one might

[6] Jointly owned land refers to land occupied at the same time by a person with one or more members of the community or his/her family or with his/her spouse for those under the matrimonial regime of universal community of property.

expect, but not all of them provide the same benefits or security. In the informal system, verbal contracts, such as the Kalinzi (the customary royalty grant), provide a little more security to the beneficiary as long as the beneficiary pays the required royalty. Nevertheless, the case under review of the relationship between large concessionaires and small-scale farmers shows that it is always preferable to have a written contract, as it provides security to both parties.

The study shows that agroecological practices are used by small-scale producers. However, their use remains low. Out of 768 respondents, 18% (6% in Masisi, 23% in Nyiragongo, 30% in Rutshuru, 19% in Kalehe and 22% in Uvira), declared that they use at least two agroecological practices. These are used either for water management; soil and crop protection; protection against insects; and landscape management. The use of one or the other water management practice depends on the type of landform but also on the main crops in production. The study shows that the use of piping (57%) as a water management practice is more widely used in almost all the territories with a high use in Kalehe (80%) and Nyiragongo (77%).

The channelling of water prevents rainwater from overflowing into the field and reduces the effects of erosion. This allows this practice to be applied both in mountainous areas and in plains.

Composting is the most common soil fertilisation practice in the zones. In Rutshuru territory, more than half (51%) of the respondents use this practice; followed by the use of manure (36%) and crop rotation (33%) are recognized as fertilization practices.

While only 6% of the respondents use erosion control practices, the study reveals that 53.1% of farmers reported that they have experienced soil degradation due to erosion. These results corroborate those found by *UNEP*(2020) which found that there is a low application of IWRM in DRC (32%). According to the report, this overall level of IWRM implementation derives from 4 dimensions, namely: enabling environment[7] (36%), institutional capacity and participation[8] (40%), management instruments[9] (26%) and financing[10] (27%). Also, based on the qualitative data, it is worth noting that the level of knowledge of IWRM elements is low among several of the government departments surveyed in this evaluation.

Local varieties from last season's harvest, purchase of seed from the local market and from other farmers are the main sources of seed for the farming population in TRIDE areas. For cash crops such as coffee, there are local nurseries from which planting materials are obtained. Some nurseries have been in existence since colonial times, while others are gradually being established to meet the needs of coffee planting.

The seed industry in North and South Kivu provinces is composed of two parallel systems: the informal sector and the formal sector. The formal sector focuses on the selection and evaluation of improved varieties, the production and sale of certified seeds, which is the exclusive domain of the Institut National

[7] This refers to the Policies, Projects and Laws that govern IWRM.
[8] This refers to the capacity, participation and coordination of various political, social, economic and administrative institutions and other stakeholder groups that contribute to implementation, and their role in IWRM.
[9] These refer to the tools and activities that enable decision-makers and users to monitor and manage water resources and ecosystems and to make rational and informed choices between different actions.
[10] This refers to Budgets and revenues collected for IWRM and water resources infrastructure (excluding drinking water supply and sanitation).

d'Études et Recherches Agronomiques (INERA). The seeds are certified by the National Seed Service (SENASEM).

Even if agriculture seems to be less profitable according to several small-scale producers interviewed, **65.2%** still want to stay in farming. Farmers who wish to do something else accuse agriculture of not being a profitable activity: expensive labour, low crop yields, difficult access to markets, very demanding in terms of energy and time, infertility of the soil, lack of cultivable land, unavailability of seeds, plant diseases and other hazards, etc.

The study found that **73.8% of** respondents stated that their current crop yields have decreased compared to the previous year. The major constraints contributing to this decrease in crop yields and limiting smallholder farmers to benefit from their activity are: difficult access to land, use of traditional/rudimentary farming practices, declining soil fertility[11] , degeneration of local varieties, climatic disturbances, lack of capital to finance farming activities, etc.

In the survey areas, the study identified about **75 production basins[12]** where small-scale producers carry out their agricultural activities (12 in Masisi, 9 in Nyiragongo, 5 in Rutshuru in North Kivu and 27 in Kalehe and 21 in Uvira in South Kivu). The assessment notes that **63%** of farming households sell part of their harvest to generate household income.

In the various survey areas, agricultural products are generally sold on the local market (**91.2%)**, with access to this market being considered easy overall (**59.8%**). There are also those who sell their products in their fields (**4.9%**), even before production, to meet vital needs for lack of other alternatives. The producers interviewed showed that they have difficulty accessing urban and regional markets, mainly because of constraints linked to the lack of information on prices on more remunerative markets, insecurity in the cultivable areas, bad road infrastructure and transport costs.

In the project areas, in contrast to group sales, which are mainly practised or facilitated by cooperatives (**4.1% of respondents**), individual sales are more widespread (**94.4%**): 90.1% in Bafuliru, 95.2% in Bashali, 97% in Buhavu, 100% in Bahunde, 96.4% in Bukumu, 98.4% in Buloho, 90.2% in Bwisha and 90.5% in the Ruzizi Plain. This clearly reflects the low membership of small-scale producers in agricultural cooperatives. Indeed, out of 768 respondents, **84.8%** versus 15.2% stated that they are not members of agricultural cooperatives.

It should be noted that locally there are initiatives to transform agricultural production. Two categories of processors were identified in the study areas: service-providing processors[13] and processor-traders[14] . The assessment notes that few banks, credit unions and microfinance institutions have specific credit lines for agriculture in their portfolio. As a result, smallholder farmers do not use banking services and/or prefer informal credit from AVEC, MUSO, CECI, ... Out of 768 respondents, while **9.4%** stated that they had access to formal loans, **29%** showed that they had access to informal loans. This difference visibly reflects the alternative solution that the inclusive finance approach (AVEC, MUSO, CECI), although informal, would play in accessing credit in rural areas, specifically in remote areas, where there are no formal banking

[11] As a result of overexploitation of land, poor agricultural practices, etc., the number of people living in these areas is increasing.
[12] For this study, the production basins indicate the areas declared by small-scale farmers as being the most productive for the main crops in the different study areas
[13] These receive agricultural products from producers, collectors and traders for processing
[14] They buy the agricultural products from the producers or collectors and then process them before sale.

institutions. Moreover, **40%** of all respondents showed that they are members of a savings and credit structure.

Most of the participants in the focus groups pointed out that local authorities are absent in supporting small farmers, not only in securing and governing land, but also in producing and processing agricultural products for sustainable agriculture. In land management, local authorities are said to be responsible for identity-based and community-based land conflicts. In addition, some authorities harass and extort farmers by imposing exorbitant and illegal taxes, which pushes large concessionaires to increase land rental prices.

Confidence in the future stability of the survey areas is also low. Indeed, only **24%** of the 768 respondents (21% of women and 29% of men) feel optimistic or very optimistic about the future stability of their areas. This perception is 52% in Buhavu, 9% in Bashali, 13% in Buhavu, 26% in Bahunde, 15% in Bukumu, 32% in Buloho, 14% in Bwisha and 35% in the Ruzizi Plain. These results are worrying and prove that the inhabitants seem to have lost confidence in the State's ability to play its regalian role of providing security for its citizens and their property. It is therefore important that the authority of the state be re-established to allow citizens to feel secure, to farm their fields and to access lucrative markets.

The perception that local authorities defend the interests and opinions of their constituents is also low. Nevertheless, the results show that the population finds that the authorities closer to them (village chiefs) with whom they live defend their interests and opinions better than the authorities further away: **49%** for the authorities at the territorial level, **46%** for the chiefs' office and **50%** for the village chiefs. Even in the focus groups, the feeling of representativeness and trust was more pronounced among local chiefs who were closer to the population (village chiefs, group chiefs, sub-village chiefs, capitas and agricultural monitors). These results speak volumes in justifying and advocating for decentralisation.

In view of the above findings, various recommendations were made by the evaluation team and the participants in this study for an efficient and effective implementation of the TRIDE project.

With regard to secure access to land, as this has an impact on the way the land is used, secure and long-term access would therefore have an impact. It is therefore necessary to :

- Support **small producers** in securing their land in view of the recurrent land conflicts in the areas through :

- The popularisation of the contents and fees for obtaining land documents
- Advocacy for the reduction of the cost of obtaining documents at the level of the cadastral services,
- Advocacy with large concessionaires for 'win-win' land development with longer and more secure contracts, and more advantageous cost and lease terms for smallholder tenants,

- Institutional support **for cadastral services and offices**:

- In strengthening the capacity of service provision through the training of land brigades
- Support for the installation of cadastres in the project areas;

- Strategies for improving value chains

Institutional

- Capacity building (human, technical, financial and operational) of value chain support services (SENASEM, IPA, IPEL, IPDR)
- Advocacy for the creation of an enabling environment for the development of value chains (removal of tariff barriers, illegal taxes, popularisation of price nomenclatures, securing territories; etc.)

Value chains

- Capacity building (human, technical) of VC actors
- Production support (supply of inputs, training and support for the adoption of agroecological and good agricultural practices, etc.)
- Structuring of farmers' organisations and/or creation of rural micro-enterprises
- Youth engagement in agribusiness,
- Construction/rehabilitation of rural infrastructure (feeder roads, input shops, product storage and conservation complexes, etc.)
- Investment in cash crop certification to help cooperatives access the various services of certification bodies (training, loans, etc.) and international markets.
- Strengthening the resilience of VC actors to shocks and natural disasters and promoting the village savings and credit association approach, connecting small-scale agricultural producers to financial actors,
- Improving the competitiveness of local products through good post-harvest management and packaging;

Improve conditions for sustainable and secure market access by small-scale producers

- **Carry out a systemic analysis of the factors of market change** and identify the areas of support to be provided to some (large concessionaires) and others (small-scale producers) with a view to better implementation of the contractualisation model (access to inputs, access to financing, etc.).

- **Advocacy for adapting the conditions of access to land and inputs to the economic living conditions of the population**: by decreasing the rental price, increasing the area rented by small producers; encouraging agro-dealers to provide inputs at reasonable prices to small producers; etc.

- **Establishing contract farming** for access to stable and remunerative markets: Strengthening the links between small-scale producers and large concessionaires through a model of contracting by concessionaires would be a practice that can help ensure that everyone benefits.
  In fact, beyond the leasing of fields, it would be useful for TRIDE to sensitise the large concessionaires to take initiatives that allow them to include small producers in the market and also to encourage maximum exploitation of their concessions. Draw inspiration from the contractualisation model developed by ELAN DRC in Katanga (Mbeko Shamba, SEK, etc.)
- Linking different VC actors: dealers, MFIs/Banks, input suppliers, etc. At the level of small-scale producers, organise them **into solidarity groups in the manner of Dimitra clubs** (see FAO) in order to

encourage permanent dialogue between and within the groups. In particular, with a view to resolving conflicts between small producers and large dealers.

- Implementation of a technology-based market information system.

11 ANNEXES:

Annex 1. UPDATED PROJECT DOCUMENT

Annex 2. UPDATED GLOBAL BUDGET

Annex 3. M&E FRAMEWORK

Annex 4. WORKPLAN 2022 and BUDGET

Annex 5. ARTICLE ON TRIDE LAUNCH 6 OCT 2021

Annex 6. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Annex 7. BASELINE REPORT

Annex 8. FINANCIAL INSTITUTION MAPPING

Annex 9. VALUE CHAIN ANALYSIS REPORT

Annex 10. TEAM COMPOSITION + TORS KEY STAFF

Annex 11. CONFLICT SENSIBILITY REPORT

Annex 12. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Annex 13. CONCEPT NOTE PROPOSAL INFRASTRUCTURES

Annex 14. COLLABORATION WITH SISTER PROJECTS (ESPER, LTP)

Annex 15. REPORT OF THE NATIONAL LAND POLICY VALIDATION EVENT HELD IN KINSHASA

Annex 16. UPDATED SECURITY PLAN

Annex 17. AUXFIN G50 APPROACH

Annex 18. AUXFIN G50 PROPOSAL

Annex 19. CADASTA FOUNDATION PROPOSAL

Annex 20. INTERVENTION AREA

Annex 21. LETTRE D'ENTENTE (MoU)

Annex 22. CADRE DE PARTENARIAT AVEC LES ETD

Annex 23. SUMMARY AGRARIAN AND IWRM STUDY

Annex 24. ACTIVITY PLAN LAND COMPONENT

Annex 25. LIST HANDOVER ASSETS FARM