



Investing in rural people



**Livestock for sustainable
development
in Zambia**





In Zambia, the IFAD-supported Enhanced Smallholder Livestock Investment Programme (E-SLIP) is set to improve rural incomes and household food and nutrition security.

It is empowering rural farming households by providing livestock, alongside training in livestock management and disease control interventions such as immunization against East Coast fever and contagious bovine pleuropneumonia.

Most of the farming households here have been impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. In response, IFAD's Rural Poor Stimulus Facility (RPSF) financed the COVID-19-Smart Livestock Production and Productivity Project (CSLP3), which was implemented by E-SLIP. This has helped poor people in many rural areas of the country to be more resilient to the effects of the pandemic, and they are rebuilding better.

At a total cost of US\$1.85 million, CSLP3 has reached 321,275 vulnerable rural farmers by providing livestock packages, access to market platforms, access to weather index-based livestock insurance, access to water, and other resources. We are now giving a voice to some of the beneficiaries to tell their own story.

Insurance to combat poverty

Shupe Mwale, 52 years old, is married with four children and lives in the village of Zenekeze in Lundazi District. She is a farmer and produces maize, sunflower and soya beans. She also has 10 cows (two males and eight females). Each day, she wakes up at 5 a.m. to farm and returns home at 5 p.m.. Shupe employs seven men to help her with the grazing of the cows. Before COVID-19, the main challenge she faced was climate change. With the arrival of early rains, Shupe and other farmers were not receiving seeds in time to plant, so they had less income.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, life was not easy; farmers were not able to get seeds and fertilizer because of restrictions on movement. Shupe continued farming, but yields were low. She used part of what was produced for her own consumption and gave another part to her workers, but she had no surplus to sell and was unable to pay them. Climate change had affected grazing conditions, which meant her cows were also suffering and getting sick. The IFAD-supported E-SLIP programme, through the RPSF, helped her to access the livestock insurance programme. She received compensation and was able to buy feed and medicines for her cows.





“Now my cows are healthy, and my ambition is to reach 20 cows before I start selling them to increase my income. Given the benefits of the insurance, now that the RPSF is coming to an end, I will continue paying the insurance premium on my own.”

Shupe Mwale



James Shumba is 45 years old and has seven children (five at school). He is a livestock farmer, and also farms maize, groundnut and sunflower. Grazing was becoming a challenge for him too as a result of climate change, and this in turn was having an impact on the health of his 15 cows. In December 2021, James was trained by E-SLIP in insurance. Then, through an RPSF grant, E-SLIP helped him to stipulate an insurance premium. Thanks to this premium, he was able to receive compensation of 370 Zambian Kwacha. He was also able to buy feed and medicines for his cows. Now he wants to invest in goats because they are more resistant to the changing grazing conditions.

“If I had not received the insurance compensation, I am sure all my cows would have died by now. I am aware that the RPSF is ending, but with the benefit of the insurance, I have already started saving to pay my own insurance premium.”

James Shumba







MINISTRY OF
FISHERIES AND LIVESTOCK

ENHANCED SMALLHOLDER LIVESTOCK INVESTMENT
E-SLIP
INCREASING INCOMES AND FOOD
SECURITY OF SMALLHOLDER
FARMERS THROUGH IMPROVED
LIVESTOCK PRODUCTIVITY



Livestock to improve nutrition and income

The Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock of Zambia is piloting rabbit production through E-SLIP as a means of generating income for poor households in rural areas. Before, rabbits had been kept as pets and were not for consumption. Women provided labour in livestock farming but did not benefit from the economic returns. The Ministry decided that raising rabbits could be a means of empowering women in decision-making and enabling them to participate in the household economy. In 2020, with the outbreak of COVID-19, it was established that through E-SLIP they would target women in the protection and prevention plan, in particular raising awareness so that they were able to comply with the COVID-19 protocol. The programme provided 200 women across the country with 2,000 rabbits to raise. And to help more women during the pandemic, with the RPSF grant, E-SLIP doubled the number of beneficiaries to 400. Each participant received two males and eight females. When the rabbits reproduced, the offspring were passed on to other women in their community.

“The RPSF grant started as protection and prevention and became a viable economic activity for women, the most vulnerable in their community. They are now livestock owners and can make decisions at household level.”

Johns Nyirongo

Livestock Production and Productivity National Coordinator at E-SLIP

Violet Banda, 43 years old, is a widow with six children (four at school). She lives in the village of Mukuaku in Chipata District. Before the project, she used to sell cakes, second-hand clothes and chicken. She also farmed groundnut to make peanut butter and sunflower to make cooking oil for her own consumption and sold very little. Her income was between 100 and 200 Zambian Kwacha. She sometimes could only afford one meal a day for her family, with little protein because they could only eat meat once a month.

In 2018, Violet joined her village's women's group and was able to benefit from the E-SLIP training in chicken and goat production. She received five goats (three females and two males). In February 2021, four goats died as a result of disease and she was left with only one female. COVID-19 restrictions prevented her from continuing with her business, and life became difficult for her and her children. Two months later, through the RPSF grant, E-SLIP was able to train her in raising rabbits, and provided her with three males and seven females to start her rabbit business. By October 2021, she had 26 rabbits and started selling the males. Both her economic and her nutritional situations have since improved. Now Violet and her family can afford three meals a day and they are very healthy.

With the money she is earning from her rabbit business, she would like to invest in other livestock, such as chickens, and position herself in the livestock business in the village. She is now the Chair of the Women's Facilitator Group, which has 25 members. To diversify their income, the group members have begun a savings scheme and are also making uniforms for school students.

“Thanks to RPSF, I gained my dignity as a widow and I have also gained hope.”





“I even put on weight,” said Violet. “The nurse of the village told me that the rabbit meat is really nutritious, and she often comes and buys rabbits from me.”

Violet Banda





Edina Musowe is 52 years old and a mother of seven, with 16 grandchildren. She also takes care of her 92-year-old mother. Divorced, she is the head of her household. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she could not farm maize, groundnut and sunflower as she had done before. She had also raised goats but could not sell them because they were too expensive and people had little money due to the COVID-19 restrictions. To feed her family, she took on work cleaning houses. But her life was still miserable.

In October 2021, E-SLIP, again through the RPSF, provided her with two chickens, which are easy to raise and sell quickly. Today, she has more than 26 chickens. She sells them and also uses their excrement to fertilize her vegetable garden. Her living conditions are improving. With the money she makes from her chicken business, she can now feed her family again and send 10 of her grandchildren to school.

“If I hadn’t received help from the RPSF, my life would still be miserable because I lost everything during COVID-19,” said Edina. “Now, my entire household can eat chicken, vegetables and eggs. Our nutrition and health conditions have improved.”

“If I hadn’t received help from the RPSF, my life would still be miserable because I lost everything during COVID-19.”

Edina and members of her household

Vaccination for sustainable livestock

At one time, East Coast fever, or cattle disease, would destroy the entire livestock of small-scale pastoralists. Although the Governments of Zambia and Belgium had developed a vaccine to immunize cattle in the early 1990s, many small-scale pastoralists could not afford the cost (180 Zambian Kwacha per cow).

In 2016, E-SLIP started supporting pastoralists in the immunization of their cattle with a subsidy of 140 Zambian Kwacha per cow, and the farmers paying the remainder. In a bid to avoid cattle losses for the farmers as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, E-SLIP, through the RPSF-financed COVID-19-Smart Livestock Production and Productivity Project, intensified the vaccination programme to reduce cattle disease in the rural area.





Mabvuto Zulu is 52 years old and the father of six children. He lives in Kawaza village. Before joining the immunization programmes, his cows were dying as a result of disease and could not reproduce. He had just four males and five females. In 2017, he came across E-SLIP through the veterinary service. Today, the mortality of his cows is low, and he now has 30 cows. He also uses his cows on his farm as he does not own a tractor. Their excrement is put to use as a fertilizer to produce soya beans, white maize and groundnut. His productivity has increased drastically. He now has enough money to send his son to the University of Nkrumah, where he is studying biology and chemistry. Mabvuto is able to pay 30,000 Zambian Kwacha every year without problem. His household's nutrition has also improved. Previously, they would have just one meal a day, but now they can afford three meals a day and more.

“I am getting so much benefit from the livestock business that even if E-SLIP closes, I am ready to pay from my own pocket to immunize my cows. So I'm grateful to IFAD and the Government of Zambia for the support I am receiving through E-SLIP,” said Mabvuto.

“My message to fellow farmers who are not in this immunization programme is to join. My cattle are increasing and have become my bank. When I have a problem, I sell a cow and get money.”

Mabvuto Zulu



Access to water is key for rural development

Through the RPSF grant, E-SLIP has made water available for the rural population and their livestock by building seven multifunctioning boreholes in Chongwe, Monze and Rufunsa. This has reduced the time women spend collecting water. Before, they would have to walk long distances. But now there are many water points near the villages. Women also use the water for their vegetable gardens.

Richard J. Mabena, District Commissioner of Rufunsa, advised the villagers that now they have drinking water and water to grow vegetables, they should build a couple of ponds near the water points for aquaculture.

“With fish, you can improve your nutrition by increasing protein in your diet.”

District Commissioner Mabena to the population of Shatubi village







Eunice Mwape is 26 years old and the mother of four children. She used to travel far to garden because there was not enough water near her village of Shatubi. She would leave home early in the morning to collect water and tend to the vegetable garden, and would return home only in the evening. This meant she had less time for her family and the productivity from her garden was low. The women of the community also used to send their children long distances, across dangerous roads, to collect water. They would worry until the children returned home. Now, thanks to E-SLIP, Eunice has water close to her house. She can garden near her home and is able to grow more vegetables. She can also ask her children to pick vegetables for cooking from the garden near her home.






“I cook vegetables for my children and our household’s nutrition has improved drastically. I also sell vegetables to my neighbour,” said Eunice. “Now, from my vegetable business, I have more money to send my children to school.”

“Now, from my vegetable business, I have more money to send my children to school.”

Eunice Mwape



International Fund for Agricultural Development
Via Paolo di Dono, 44 - 00142 Rome, Italy
Tel: +39 06 54591 - Fax: +39 06 5043463
Email: ifad@ifad.org
www.ifad.org

 facebook.com/ifad
 instagram.com/ifadnews
 linkedin.com/company/ifad
 twitter.com/ifad
 youtube.com/user/ifadTV

All pictures: David F. Paqui
Text: David F. Paqui and Barbara Bellogini