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MOZAMBIQUE

SUCCESS STORY

Former Minefield becomes Soybean Farming Hub

Supplier of high-quality seeds is growing a soybean market in Zambezia province, Mozambique thanks to USAID support.



“The great impact is that today we can find farmers that can replicate this experience, and they have started their own business. They have purchased their own equipment and are using the same approach. Our approach promotes best practices that can be replicated and scaled elsewhere.”

- Bakir Lozane

When Bakir Lozane first worked the land in Alto Molocue in northern Mozambique, it was to clear mines sown over years of civil war. Today, Alto Molocue is home to 1,250-hectare Lozane Farms, one of the country’s biggest producers of high-quality seeds – particularly soybean seeds. With support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under Feed the Future, Lozane Farms is now a soybean production hub, buying from hundreds of surrounding smallholder farmers, while modeling best practices through demonstration plots and sharing them via radio.

Demand for soybeans in Mozambique is higher than current production, making it an ideal cash crop. The direct income it generates contributes to improved food security. To help Lozane Farms access improved agricultural inputs, USAID linked the producer to research organizations that supplied better soybean genetic material. In 2013, this assistance yielded 51,000 kg of seed for Lozane Farms, resulting in \$34,000 in sales and 800 tons of soybean grains. This year, Lozane expects to double production of seeds and the value of sales. In a country where many farmers recycle their seeds year after year – harvesting less and less as a result – a continuous source of high-quality seeds is the first step to a stable, growing soybean market.

But Bakir Lozane didn’t stop there. He went beyond his core seed production business to establish a buyer-supplier relationship with surrounding farmers. USAID and the local district government connected him with eight local farmers’ associations representing 297 farmers. By contracting with them, Lozane Farms is now a reliable buyer that pays an agreed-upon price, and a provider of inputs, credit, mechanized land preparation and other technical assistance.

This assistance includes demonstration plots that show local farmers how to increase soybean yields tenfold from original levels. In 2013, Lozane’s contracted farmers produced 268,800 kilograms of soybeans, generating \$134,400 in revenue directly to hundreds of growers. Lozane estimates its farmers will garner another \$162,987 in sales this year.

Lozane’s methods are now spreading beyond Alto Molocue, thanks to a community radio program that is raising awareness of good agricultural practices. Radio Comunitaria de Alto Molocue, funded by USAID under Feed the Future, broadcasts Lozane’s recommended best practices for growing soybean crops in the local language, prompting farmers from neighboring districts to seek high-quality seeds in Alto Molocue and request land preparation services for smallholders.

Telling Our Story

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