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VIABLE SWEETPOTATO TECHNOLOGIES IN AFRICA (VISTA-Mozambique)

Year 3, Quarter 3 Progress Report

1 April–30 June 2017

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ACRONYMS

APE	Agente polivalente elementar
CBO	Community-based organizations
CHW	Community health worker
CIP	International Potato Center
DVM	Decentralized vine multiplier
HH	Household(s)
IIAM	Instituto de Investigação Agrária de Moçambique
MIYCN	Maternal, infant, and young child nutrition
n.a.	Not applicable
OFSP	Orange-fleshed sweetpotatoes
SDAE	District Services of Economics Activities
USG	United States Government
VAD	Vitamin A deficiency
VISTA	Viable Sweetpotato Technologies in Africa
WASH	Water, sanitation, and hygiene
Y3Q3	Third quarter of third VISTA project year

SUMMARY

This report summarizes the Year 3, Quarter 3 (henceforth referred to as Y3Q3) technical progress of implementing the Feed the Future Mozambique: Viable Sweetpotato Technologies in Africa (VISTA–Mozambique) project, from 1 April to 30 June 2017. VISTA–Mozambique is a $12,250,000, 7-year project (1 Oct. 2014–30 Sept. 2021) funded by the United States Agency for International Development. The project is led by the International Potato Center (CIP) and is implemented in collaboration with the following government partners: Mozambican Agrarian Research Institute (IIAM), District Services of Economics Activities, and District Services of Health and Women and Social Action, as well as by nongovernmental organizations, community-based organizations, and education and research institutions. Project activities are carried out in 11 districts of Nampula Province (Monapo, Meconta, Rapale, Murrupula, Moma, Larde, Angoche, Mogovolas, Nampula city, Mecuburi, and Malema) and 5 districts of Zambézia Province (Gilé, Alto Molocue, Gurué, Mocuba, and Nicoadala).

The report describes and discusses achievements against the targets set for Y3Q3. Numerous illustrious guests, including the Mozambique Minister of Agriculture and Nutrition Security, the governor of Nampula Province, the US Ambassador, the Director General of IIAM, as well as representatives of CIP's regional management, attended May's official launch of the expansion phase of the project. Also attending were the authorities of the 16 VISTA intervention districts and numerous project partners. News of the event was disseminated though Mozambican print, TV, and radio media, which has heightened awareness of VISTA in the country. Ten district-assigned field coordinators, who will be tasked to facilitate local project implementation, have been hired and will start work in the next quarter. VISTA has hired two additional drivers. Leaving the project were one newly hired nutritionist from VISTA, whose employment was not confirmed in his probationary period, as well as another nutritionist (due to maternity leave). Their departures left VISTA with only one staff nutritionist, thus presenting a challenge to the implementation of nutrition activities.

Despite staffing and other challenges described in the report, VISTA is on track in terms of its delivery of project outputs. The yearly targets for agricultural outputs have already been met and exceeded in Y3Q3. There was also good progress with nutrition targets; current projections suggest that these targets will be fully met in the next quarter.

The report presents a number of VISTA beneficiary testimonials that suggest that the availability of planting material and production of orange-fleshed sweetpotato, as well as related capacity building, can significantly improve the nutrition of poor rural people, and change their awareness of, and attitudes toward, the consumption of locally adapted nutritious foods. The report concludes with an outlook on VISTA plans for the next and final quarter of the third project year.

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

VISTA–Mozambique is a 7-year project (1 Oct. 2014–30 Sept. 2021) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It is being executed by the International Potato Center (CIP), in collaboration with government partners including the Mozambican Agrarian Research Institute (IIAM), the District Services of Economics Activities (SDAEs), and the District Services of Health and Women and Social Action, as well as by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and education and research institutions. Initially conceived for 3 years with activities in 6 districts, VISTA, after completing 2 project years, entered its current 5-year expansion phase in October 2016, in which VISTA has added 10 more districts to its intervention area.

The project is designed to expand the production and utilization of nutritious orange-fleshed sweetpotato (OFSP) in 11 districts of Nampula Province[1] and 5 districts of Zambézia Province.[2] VISTA is embedded within the Feed the Future program in Mozambique and contributes to key Feed the Future objectives in agriculture and nutrition, including increased and equitable growth in the agriculture sector, and improved consumption of vitamin A-rich foods by young children and pregnant and lactating women. VISTA monitors Feed the Future indicators for agricultural production, nutrition, incomes, and gender.

By the end of project Y2, VISTA had already reached 22,500 households (HH). A total of 80,000 HH will be added through the current project expansion, thus bringing the total number of direct beneficiary HH to at least 102,500 in 16 districts in Nampula and Zambezia provinces by 2021. In addition, 375,000 indirect beneficiary HH will access OFSP planting material, knowledge, and skills through farmer-to-farmer diffusion. Thus, project benefits will accrue to almost half a million HH, by both direct project intervention and spill-over effects.

VISTA has the following goals:

1. Increased production of OFSP among at least 102,500 direct and 375,000 indirect beneficiary HH through use of productive, locally adapted varieties, quality planting material, and sustainable agricultural practices. This will be achieved through (1) multiplication of planting materials of five improved OFSP varieties; (2) farmer-led varietal demonstrations; (3) marketing and distribution of quality planting materials of preferred varieties; (4) farmer training in sweetpotato agronomy and vine conservation technologies; and (5) operational studies to determine factors affecting production of OFSP among resource-poor HH.

2. Increased consumption of OFSP by children under 5 years of age and women in at least 102,500 beneficiary HH vulnerable to malnutrition. This will be achieved through (1) nutrition training of staff from government and NGOs, with a focus on micronutrient-rich foods; (2) nutrition education in at least 400 communities in target districts; (3) development and promotion of recipes for household-level OFSP utilization as a healthy food for all; and (4) broad education campaigns on nutrient-rich foods, including OFSP, through government health sector.

3. Increased agricultural incomes among at least 10,000 HH from sales of OFSP roots, vines, leaves, and processed products in local and urban markets and commercial processing. This will be achieved through (1) training farmers and traders for improved handling, packaging, and transport of fresh roots and leaves; (2)

[1] Angoche, Larde, Malema, Meconta, Mecuburi, Mogovolas, Moma, Monapo, Murrupula, Nampula city, and Rapale.

[2] Gilé, Alto Molocue, Gurué, Mocuba, and Nicoadala.

facilitation of OFSP market days (two per target districts) to increase visibility of OFSP and other nutritious foods grown locally; (3) production and promotion of OFSP puree for use in school and community demonstrations and educational activities; (4) technical and management support for use of OFSP puree in commercial food processing, specifically in local bakeries; and (5) demand creation and consumer awareness campaigns for healthier diets that include OFSP.

2. ACTIVITY PROGRESS AND RESULTS

2.1 Official Project Launch

On 8 May 2017, VISTA celebrated in its central office on the IIAM campus near Nampula the official project launch, which was attended by some 200 people. Honorary and special guests included the Mozambique Minister of Agriculture and Nutrition Security (Mr. José Pacheco); the governor of Nampula Province (Mr. Victor Borges); the US ambassador (Dr. Dean Pitman); the director general of IIAM (Dr. Olga Faftine); and CIP's regional director for Africa (Dr. Adiel Mbabu) (Fig. 1). Also attending were the SDAE directors of the 16 VISTA intervention districts of Nampula and Zambezia provinces; decentralized vine multipliers (DVMs); representatives of project beneficiaries; and representatives of print, TV, and radio media.

Figure 1. VISTA project launch, Nampula, 8 May 2017. Clockwise from upper left: Honorary guests arrive at VISTA premises; honorary guests listen to opening remarks by CIP's country director; US ambassador, governor of Nampula Province, and Minister of Agriculture and Nutrition Security (from left to right) inspecting nutrition exhibit; US ambassador handing over OFSP vines to farmer.

The group was welcomed by CIP country director, Dr. Maria Andrade, and a musical performance of the Força Nova Association, a VISTA partner organization from Monapo District, that praised the benefits of OFSP in their community. The honorary guests then proceeded to a ribbon-cutting ceremony inaugurating the VISTA office building recently rehabilitated with USAID funding, inspected VISTA premises, and listened to speeches. This was followed by a presentation of the CIP OFSP program leader, Dr. Simon Heck, to familiarize guests with the project and its significance.

The program concluded with guests being invited to participate in a guided tour of exhibition booths, which showcased the approach of the VISTA project, its activities and outputs. Exhibits covered OFSP agronomy and production, culinary uses and nutritional benefits of OFSP, and finally the processing and marketing of the crop. The tour also included the symbolic handing-over of OFSP vines to farmers by the US ambassador and the Minister of Agriculture and Nutrition Security.

2.2 Project Management

2.2.1 Staff recruitment

In Y3Q3, following USAID's approval for the payment of import taxes for four project vehicles to liberate them from the current government embargo, and thus with the prospect of enhanced mobility for field work, we held interviews to recruit 10 field coordinators and two drivers. The field coordinators will (1) lead project activities at the district level; (2) liaise with partners; (3) support data collection; (4) support DVMs, OFSP growers, and extension workers; (5) support training and awareness-building events; and (6) identify marketing and OFSP business opportunities for VISTA beneficiaries. While reporting to a VISTA agronomist, field coordinators are also expected to cover the nutrition and marketing components of the project.

The job vacancies for field coordinators and drivers were advertised on the CIP online recruitment platform and via the *Jornal Notícias*, a national Mozambican newspaper. Twenty-seven candidates applied for the job of field coordinator, of whom 3 were female. There were nine male applicants for the driver position; seven were invited for an interview. For the field coordinator position, we invited 22 promising candidates (19 male, 3 female). Fifteen showed up for the interview set for 16–17 May 2017. The interviews consisted of two exams: a 90-min written exam in the morning session that tested relevant technical skills, and a 45-min oral exam in the afternoon that explored communication and behavioral qualities. Candidates for the driver position took a driving test.

CIP recruitment guidelines were strictly followed. For the coordinator positions, the interview panel included the VISTA administrator in his HR capacity and two agronomists; for the driver positions, one of the agronomists was replaced by a VISTA driver. Questions were standardized and answers scored by the interview panel members. A final report was filed that described and compared the performances of candidates for each position and that provided the rationale for the recruitment recommendation to CIP management. The report is available for audit purposes.

Of the 12 newly hired staff, only 2 are women, further exacerbating their under-representation in VISTA staff. This comes despite CIP's best efforts to encourage women in job announcements to apply and a conscious effort by interview panels to pay special attention to the applications of promising female candidates. Unfortunately, females made up only a fraction of the total pool of applicants, possibly reflecting the numerical dominance of males amongst agronomists and drivers in Mozambique. The new staff will join VISTA in August 2017.

2.2.2 Office setup

Alto Molocue Office: As planned for this quarter, we identified a residential building in Molocue for rental to house the VISTA staff based there and serving Zambezia Province. Limited repair work has started in order to rehabilitate the building, which will become available in August and provide space for up to 10 staff. The current hosting arrangement at SDAE in Alto Molocue will be discontinued for lack of space.

2.2.3 Procurement of project assets

VISTA sought and obtained permission from USAID to pay the import taxes for four 4-wheel-drive vehicles that had been imported in February from Japan but have not been cleared for import tax exemption. At the time this report was written, VISTA expects the Mozambican Ministry of Finance to process our request for tax payment in order to release the embargoed vehicles.

Quotations for the purchase of several capital items have been obtained and are being processed. These include a generator for CIP to operate during the frequent power outages in Nampula, five motorbikes, and 10 computers for use by the newly hired field coordinators.

2.3 VISTA Events and Capacity Building

2.3.1 VISTA participation in partner events

VISTA attended a meeting organized by USAID on partner integration on 8 June. The purpose of the meeting was to identify USAID-funded projects working in the same districts and to create a platform to improve project synergies and implementation strategies. The meeting was held at the Nampula Office of the Maternal and Child Survival Program, and was also attended by Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance, World Food Program, Program for Appropriate Technology in Health, the United Nations Children's Fund, and Save the Children. It was agreed that the group would engage in a mapping exercise to identify those localities within districts where at least two USAID-funded projects are operating. VISTA made available to USAID a list of its 498 intervention communities. On the basis of the mapping exercise, partners will identify the districts where collaboration between projects promises the highest impact.

2.3.2 Nutrition training

Dr. Robert Ackatia-Armah, CIP regional nutritionist, trained VISTA nutrition staff and public health professionals from 19 to 22 June (Fig. 2). The training focused on standardizing nutrition materials; targeting nutrition messages to particular groups; basics of counseling; training techniques; importance of the first "1,000 days" in the life of a child; and agriculture-based nutrition intervention. This intensive training aimed at ensuring consistent and effective delivery of nutrition messages. The training has been attended by nurses, health promoters, and nutrition focal points coming from the districts of Murrupula (12 participants), Meconta (2), Monapo (3), and Rapale (4) districts—all in Nampula Province. Of the 21 participants trained, 14 (67%) were females.

Figure 2. CIP nutritionist, Dr. Ackatia-Armah, trains VISTA staff and health professional from Nampula Province.

2.3.3 VISTA exhibition at Lurio University graduation ceremony

VISTA displayed project activities to more than 300 Lurio University students during the annual graduation ceremony in Nampula City on 29 June 2017. The objective of the exhibition was to enhance awareness of VISTA and the opportunities it provides as an employer and host of thesis projects. College students, government officials, research institutes, and partners participated. During the event, VISTA DVMs introduced OFSP to participants and sold approximately 100 kg of OFSP roots for 25 Met/kg. VISTA agronomist Valdemar Bechane and IIAM nutritionist Sara Chicra explained OFSP agronomy, nutritional value, and the project activities.

2.3.4 Training of enumerators

From 12 to 16 June, VISTA trained 31 enumerators (7 from Zambezia, 24 from Nampula provinces) for its baseline survey. Enumerators are temporarily hired data collectors who help regular VISTA staff to assemble data from randomly selected beneficiary and non-intervention HH using data collection tools (e.g., paper-based questionnaires or computer-assisted personal interview tablets). Depending on their availability, enumerators may also be hired for the midterm and endline surveys. Enumerators were selected based on their CVs and relevant experience, and were screened by the VISTA monitoring and evaluation assistant.

Training of enumerators is crucial to collect quality data. Much of the training emphasized enhancing enumerators' understanding of questionnaire variables and how to elicit truthful information from respondents. They were also trained in all the modules of the survey tools, including basics of CSpro (Census and Survey Program) and data collection techniques.

A letter of agreement was signed between the VISTA project and enumerators stipulating mutual responsibilities and payment for the days they will be working on the survey.

As this report was written, enumerators, in collaboration with regular staff, have started travelling to all VISTA intervention sites and are collecting data on VISTA beneficiaries who have received planting materials and from control HH.

2.4 Agricultural Activities

Achievements under VISTA Objective 1: Increased production of OFSP among at least 102,500 direct and 375,000 indirect beneficiary HH through use of productive, locally adapted varieties, quality planting material, and sustainable agricultural practices.

Outputs relative to indicator **EG: 3-1**: Number of households benefitting directly from USG intervention.

Table 1 presents cumulative figures for the first three quarters of project year 3 with regard to the distribution of OFSP vines to beneficiaries. In Zambezia Province, VISTA reached 7,934 beneficiaries, with Alto Molocue and Gurué districts accounting for 84% of beneficiaries of the total for the province. The number of HH in Mocuba and Gilé districts accounted for 15% and 1% of the Zambezia's total, respectively. Such low percentages in particular districts result from a combination of such factors as (1) difficult access, (2) late onset of VISTA activities, and (3) the fact that in Y3Q3 VISTA has not yet had its field coordinators in place (they joined VISTA staff in August 2017). In Nampula Province, with 8,526 beneficiaries, Monapo and Meconta districts accounted for roughly two thirds of the province. The total number of beneficiaries in both provinces was 16,460, exceeding the target of 15,000 by 10%. This overachievement is due to the fact that during some distribution events more farmers showed up than expected, thus illustrating the local demand for OFSP vines. VISTA did not turn away interested farmers, and the unforeseen demand could be met since VISTA produces vines in excess as a safety margin. Moreover, taking advantage of the good rains early in this quarter, the project worked very hard in Y3Q3 to achieve the annual target.

Some DVMs were established in Y3Q3, and since many of them were not yet ready to distribute vines themselves, VISTA used mass distribution activities to deliver vines to beneficiaries. Even though VISTA has met annual targets for vine distribution at the aggregate level, the project will strive to distribute OFSP vines in each district to at least 1,000 HH in the current project year, if need be through the mass distribution approach.

Outputs relative to indicator **EG 3.2-18**: Number of hectares of land under improved technologies or management practices.

As seen in Table 1, in both provinces (Nampula and Zambezia), some 132 t of vines have been distributed in project year 3 to date. This quantity of vines has enabled the planting of OFSP vines on 165 ha. It is important to note that although we have registered both the number of recipients of vines and the weight of vines (8 kg/beneficiary HH), the area is calculated based on the assumption that vines were planted according to VISTA best agronomic practices. On the basis of field observations confirming that beneficiaries generally adhere to recommended planting practices, we conclude that a planting area of 165 ha is indeed realistic. This area represents an overachievement of 10% of the target (150 ha)—for the same reasons as those explained under the previous indicator.

Table 1 also shows progress relative to the VISTA internal work plan: The number of DVMs largely met the expectation (97%), while the area on which DVMs planted OFSP vines for further distribution to beneficiaries in their village was 19 ha, or 32% higher than what was planned. This is because we aggressively worked with our "veteran" DVMs to expand the area under vine multiplication in order to meet the annual target for vine supply and as insurance to compensate a potential shortfall of vine supply from newly established DVMs.

Notice that the area under OFSP vine multiplication and the number of beneficiary HH who received 8 kg of vines each vary greatly between districts. As explained in the technical report for Y3Q2, this variation is a function of the time DVMs have been working with VISTA and the production skills they have acquired that translate into area productivity. Those expansion districts where VISTA has only recently started to operate lag behind in terms of both the number of active DVMs and the number of beneficiaries and OFSP area.

Table 1. Number of DVMs, area under vine multiplication, and number of beneficiary HH who received OFSP vines, quantity of vines produced, and area planted to OFSP by district (Jan. 2017–June 2017)

District	No. of DVMs	Area by DVMs (ha)	No. of Beneficiaries	Quantity of Vines (kg)	Area Planted (ha)
Alto Molocue	12	2.9	3,511	28,088	35.1
Gurué	11	2.2	3,179	25,432	31.8
Gilé	3	0.5	69	552	0.7
Mocuba	3	0.6	1,175	9,400	11.8
Total Zambezia	**29**	**6.2**	**7,934**	**63,472**	**79.4**
Murrupula	6	2.6	749	5,992	7.5
Monapo	10	2.9	1,688	13,504	16.9
Meconta	11	3.0	4,052	32,416	40.5
Rapale	5	1.3	788	6,304	7.9
Nampula City	4	1.2	164	1,312	1.6
Malema	3	1.1	571	4,568	5.7
Mogovolas	2	0.6	514	4,112	5.1
Total Nampula	**41**	**13**	**8,526**	**68,208**	**85**
Grand total	**70**	**19**	**16,460**	**131,680**	**165**
Annual target	72	14.4	15,000	120,000	150
Percent of target	97%	132%	110%	110%	110%

2.5 Nutrition Activities

Achievements under VISTA Objective 2: Increased consumption of OFSP by children under 5 years of age and women in at least 102,500 beneficiary HH vulnerable to vitamin A deficiency (VAD) and other forms of malnutrition.

Outputs relative to indicator HL.9-4 Number of individuals receiving nutrition-related professional training (RAA) through USG-supported programs

The current status of progress with the capacity building of nutrition-related professional training is shown in Table 2, which compiles the numbers of individuals who have received VISTA nutrition training by the end of Y3Q3. The data are from 9 out of the 11 districts where VISTA is currently active. In the 2 districts of Nicoadala and Nampula City, nutrition activities have not yet started because of the lack of support from district authorities (as described in the Y3Q2 report). Remedial action has been taken, and we expect that we will overcome the current bureaucratic hindrances. Nutrition activities are expected to start in Y3Q4. (Note, however, that agricultural activities are in full swing in Nampula City.)

Table 2 shows the number of nurses, promoters, and animators who have been trained in project year 3 by the end of Y3Q3. Between January and June 2017, the project trained 64 nurses and 63 health promoters, who in turn trained 427 community health workers (CHWs). This corresponds to 76%, 75%, and 43% of the annual target, respectively. The topics covered during the nutrition training sessions included (1) importance of mother and child-feeding during pregnancy; (2) postnatal and antenatal counseling; (3) the first 1,000 days of a child's life; and (4) balanced diet, complementary feeding, and dietary diversity. We anticipate that by the end of year 3, we will achieve or exceed the yearly targets for these indicators. To achieve these targets, we will focus on activities in districts where training has not yet started or is lagging.

Table 2. Number of individuals who have received nutrition-related professional training by VISTA by the end of Y3Q3

District	No. of Nurses	No. of Promoters	No. of Animators	No. of Focal Points	Total
Alto Molocue	6	8	0	2	16
Gurué	7	5	0	2	14
Gilé	6	6	0	1	13
Mocuba	5	0	0	1	6
Total Zambezia	**24**	**19**	**0**	**6**	**49**
Murrupula	4	9	125	0	138
Monapo	7	6	94	3	110
Meconta	8	14	64	3	89
Rapale	6	7	50	2	65
Nampula City	0	0	0	0	0
Malema	8	8	94	3	113
Mogovolas	7	0	0	3	10
Total Nampula	**40**	**44**	**427**	**14**	**525**
Grand total	**64**	**63**	**427**	**20**	**574**
Annual target	84	84	990	n.a.	n.a.
% Achieved	76%	75%	43%	n.a.	n.a.

Outputs relative to indicator HL. 9-1: Number of children under 5 (0–59 months) reached by USG-supported program

VISTA follows the Mozambique Ministry of Health extension system to reach the communities at village level. Nutrition activities are progressing as per the work plan in most of the districts where the project was operating. The first phase of training of nurses, promoters, and animators is almost completed (except in the few districts not yet currently implementing nutrition activities). Nutrition training is directed at nurses, nutrition focal points, and health promoters selected from public hospitals. The target for Y3 is to train 84 promoters, each of whom trains an average of seven animators or CHWs. Each CHW, in turn, oversees training of 15–20 families in their communities, depending on the district's population density.

VISTA's direct training intervention is limited to the promoters, since providing training directly to animators or even beneficiaries would be beyond the scope of VISTA and its staff capacity. However, it is important for VISTA to supervise or verify to what extent training skills and messages have enabled promoters, and how effectively they pass these skills on to animators, who in turn train beneficiaries. This supervision is conducted at events in which a VISTA nutritionist evaluates the acquired nutrition knowledge of animators supervised by a particular promoter, then discusses and clarifies training content that has not been fully assimilated. VISTA's objective is to reach all promoters and their animators at supervision events.

Table 3 shows the supervision progress of a selection of 16 promoters in three districts of Nampula Province. They trained 304 animators, who in turn trained 5,859 families. These included 900 pregnant and 2,900 lactating women, potentially benefitting some 9,000 children under 5 and another 4,700 children under 2. Most of VISTA's nutrition activities picked up late in project year 3 and were concentrated in Y3Q3, which explains the large number of children reached in Y3Q3. In the first two quarters of project year 3, VISTA had focused on the identification of health centers and the training of nurses and promoters. Only after promoters were trained could they in turn train the animators, which reached out to families and their children.

The supervision is a useful exercise to also emphasize recommended nutritional practices that are frequently not being observed by beneficiaries—for example, recommendations to follow through with breastfeeding in the first 2 years of an infant's life, the need for smaller time intervals between meals provided to children, and others. Such insights inform the design of the training modules for promoters.

Table 3. Supervision of training capacity of promoters and number of beneficiaries reached

District	No. of CHWs	No of Families	Women		No. of Children <5		No. of Children <2	
			Pregnant	Lactating	Female	Male	Female	Male
Malema	90	1,840	311	801	1,508	1,065	712	602
Monapo	94	1,902	226	912	1,724	1,288	826	657
Murrupula	120	2,117	344	1,175	1,858	1,670	1,079	886
Total	**304**	**5,859**	**881**	**2,888**	**5,090**	**4,023**	**2,617**	**2,145**

2.6 Marketing Activities

Outputs relative to indicator EG.3.2-19: Value of smallholder incremental sales generated with USG assistance (thousands of USD)

Table 4 provides detail at the district level for the revenue of DVMs generated through the sales of OFSP planting material, which includes the subsidy of 38 Mt/8 kg of vines paid through VISTA. Revenue reported in Table 4 does not include sales generated through mass distribution nor DVM sales of OFSP vines to their neighbors, NGOs, and government institutions.

Table 4. Beneficiary income generated through the sales of OFSP vines

District	Sales Value (Meticais)	Sales Value (USD)
Alto Molocoue	126,996	2,048
Gurué	116,470	1,879
Mucuba	27,170	438
Murrupula	12,844	207
Monapo	76,988	1,242
Meconta	148,276	2,392
Rapale	18,544	299
Malema	10,564	170
Total sales values	**537,852**	**8,675**

3. CHALLENGES AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

3.1 Capacity Building of Staff

In the recruitment of field coordinators, each of whom will be assigned to a particular district and will assist with the implementation of field activities, we could not attract candidates with sufficient professional experience required for the job. Yet with no alternative source of applicants, we had to work with the best candidates available on the local labor market, irrespective of limitations. And although all candidates recommended for recruitment are formally qualified for the job, and rigorous criteria had been employed in their selection, it became apparent during the interview that most candidates have a limited understanding of the issues they will be facing in the field, both in theoretical and practical terms. For the field coordinators to become operational at the field level, they will receive an intensive 2-week training once they report for work in August. VISTA agronomists and nutritionists will introduce them to district authorities and stakeholders and accompany them on their first missions. The need to train field coordinators further may emerge in the future.

3.2 Staff Departures

The employment of the senior VISTA nutritionist, who had reported in late March 2017, could unfortunately not be confirmed during his probationary period and he has since left the project in Y3Q3. Another (junior) nutritionist, who had joined VISTA also in March, took 2 months of maternity leave. Thus, in Y3Q3, VISTA continued to be severely understaffed in terms of nutrition personnel. We sought to mitigate the effect of these departures by temporarily contracting the services of a consultant, Ms. Sara Chicra, an IIAM nutritionist based in Nampula City, who has played a crucial role in helping us to meet project targets for the quarter.

4. SUCCESS STORIES

Beneficiary testimonies: After receiving the 2-day training by a senior CIP nutritionist, Cecilia da Rosa Bernardo, a nurse from Murririmue Health Center, Mogovolas District, Nampula Province, complimented the training. She thought that the concept of integrated agriculture–nutrition interventions was new to her. Also, she stated that she had underestimated the importance of emphasizing nutrition interventions during the "first 1,000 days" of a child's life (starting from inception to the age of 2 years). She appreciated the recommendations about feeding practices and food diversification, particularly during pregnancy and lactation. She said, "Mothers need to get adequate food to meet their energy and nutrient needs, so as to protect themselves, and their infants from illnesses. Before this training, I was not aware of the exceptional nutritional benefits of sweetpotatoes, particularly of OFSP. The training has transformed my perceptions of the potential of nutritious food to further the health of my family and has increased my confidence about the nutritional value of foods that we normally eat and that tends to be unknown amongst our people."

Patricia Alberto, a VISTA beneficiary farmer in Rapale District, Nampula Province, was one of the first recipients of OFSP vines in Rapale. She reported that during Ramadan, she likes to eat sweetpotatoes because it is one of the few fresh foods available in the dry season, when other crops have already been harvested. Prior to receiving the vines, she was unaware of OFSP, and when she heard that these are good for her and

her child's health, she came early in the morning to the locality's DVM and picked up planting material. She was hopeful that, as explained by an extension agent, OFSP will give higher yields and mature as early as 3 months after planting as compared with the local varieties of white-fleshed sweetpotatoes, which take 5–6 months to mature.

Another farmer, Elias Jose, also from Rapale District, provided this account of his seeing OFSP for the first time in the market place of Murrupula: "The deep orange color attracted me, but my search for planting material was to no avail. Only this year, our agricultural extension officer told me that I can get the vines from multipliers in my own community, which I did. I also had heard on the radio a song about orange sweetpotatoes and that they were rich in vitamins, which is important for the health of my wife and my newborn child. Now I planted the variety, and I am hoping they grow well!"

6. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

Indicator/Issue	Activity	Location	Target Quarter
Objective 1: Increased production of OFSP among at least 102,500 direct and 375,000 indirect beneficiary HH through use of productive, locally adapted varieties, quality planting material, and sustainable agricultural practices			
EG:3-1: Number of households benefiting directly from USG intervention	Identifying, registering, and disseminating vines to direct beneficiary farmers	Mogovolas, Nampula City, Rapale, Murrupula, Malema, Gilé, and Nicoadala	3,320
EG.3.2-1: Number of individuals who have received USG-supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	Short-term training for beneficiary farmers on OFSP production by DVMs, field coordinators, and CIP agronomist	Mogovolas, Nampula City, Rapale, Murrupula, Malema, Gilé, and Nicoadala	3,320
EG.3.2-17: Number of farmers and others who have applied improved technologies or practices with USG assistance	DVMs implementing improved agricultural practices (Triple S and net tunnel)	Monapo, Mecconta, Mogovolas, Nampula City, Rapale, Murrupula, Malema, Gilé, Molocue, Gurué, Mocuba, and Nicoadala	10
	Beneficiary farmers planting OFSP distributed by DVMs and CIP supported vine multipliers	Monapo, Mecconta, Mogovolas, Nampula City, Rapale, Murrupula, Malema, Gilé, Molocue, Gurué, Mocuba, and Nicoadala	3,320
EG.3.2-18: Number of hectares of land under improved technologies or management practices with USG assistance	Sweetpotato area measurements on DVM plots	Monapo, Mecconta, Mogovolas, Nampula City, Rapale, Murrupula, Malema, Gilé, Molocue, Gurué, Mocuba, and Nicoadala	70
EG.3.2-17: Number of farmers and others who have applied improved technologies or practices with USG assistance	Farmer-led varietal demonstrations (Mother–Baby Trial methodology)	Monapo, Malema, and Gurué	300
Objective 2: Increased consumption of OFSP by children under 5 years of age and women in at least 102,500 beneficiary HH vulnerable to VAD and other forms of malnutrition			
HL.9-4: Number of individuals receiving nutrition-related professional training through USG-supported programs	Training nurses selected from health centers	Monapo, Mecconta, Mogovolas, Nampula City, Rapale, Murrupula, Malema, Gilé, Molocue, Gurué, Mocuba, and Nicoadala	10
	Training agentes polivalente elementar (APEs) on the six modules of the nutrition component	Monapo, Mecconta, Mogovolas, Nampula City, Rapale, Murrupula, Malema, Gilé, Molocue, Gurué, Mocuba, and Nicoadala	10
	Training of CHWs by APEs	Monapo, Mecconta, Mogovolas, Nampula City, Rapale, Murrupula, Malema, Gilé, Molocue, Gurué, Mocuba, and Nicoadala	452
	Training of households by ACEs	Monapo, Mecconta, Mogovolas, Nampula City, Rapale, Murrupula, Malema, Gilé, Molocue, Gurué, Mocuba, and Nicoadala	9,149
HL.9-1: Number of children under 5 (0–59 months) reached by nutrition-specific interventions through USG-supported programs	Promote key evidence and messages (maternal, infant, and young child nutrition [MIYCN]; cooking demos; dietary diversification; and water, sanitation, and hygiene [WASH]) at community level on collaboration by APEs and ACES	Monapo, Mecconta, Mogovolas, Nampula City, Rapale, Murrupula, Malema, Gilé, Molocue, Gurué, Mocuba, and Nicoadala	8,947
HL.9-2: Number of children under 2 (0–23 months) reached with community-level nutrition interventions through USG-supported programs	Promote key evidence and messages (MIYCN, cooking demonstration, dietary diversification, and WASH) at community level on collaboration by APEs and ACEs	Monapo, Mecconta, Mogovolas, Nampula City, Rapale, Murrupula, Malema, Gilé, Molocue, Gurué, Mocuba and Nicoadala	2,800

Objective 3: Increased agricultural incomes among at least 10,000 HH from sales of OFSP roots in local and urban markets, including fresh root and leaf markets, institutional markets, and commercial processing			
EG.3.2-20: Number of for-profit private enterprises, producer organizations, water user associations, women's groups, trade and business associations and community-based organizations (CBOs) that applied improved organization-level technologies or management practices with USG assistance	Identifying for-profit–private enterprises and CBOs, train them on OFSP production techniques, and supply quality planting material	Gurué, Alte Molocue, Mocuba, Monapo, Meconta, Rapale, and Murrupula	5
	Train groups and other processors to add OFSP into their processed products and ensure that the product development cycle ensures that commercially viable products are developed	Gurué, Alte Molocue, Mocuba, Monapo, Meconta, Rapale, and Murrupula	5
EG.3-6: Farmer's gross margin per hectare, per animal per cage obtained with USG assistance	Conducting market study	Gurué, Alte Molocue, Mocuba, Monapo, Meconta, Rapale, and Murrupula	$460/ha
	Farmer training in harvesting and bulking strategies and techniques and postharvest handling.	Gurué, Molocue, Mocuba, Monapo, Meconta, Rapale, and Murrupula	$132,251
	Facilitation of supply chains for OFSP processing by private sector food processors	Gurué, Alte Molocue, Mocuba, Monapo, Meconta, Rapale, and Murrupula	
	Support to marketing of OFSP planting materials by commercial multipliers and DVMs	Gurué, Molocue, Mocuba, Monapo, Meconta, Rapale, and Murrupula	

7. FINANCIAL REPORT

A detailed financial report (most recent pipeline report) will be sent as a separate file.

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