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Central project evaluation

Promotion of the African Cashew Value Chain III (ComCashew)

Project number 2015.2165.7

Evaluation Report

On behalf of GIZ by Stefan Silvestrini (CEval GmbH) and Janis Wicke (CEval GmbH)

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Abbreviations

BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
FBO	Farmer-based organisation
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MF	Matching Fund
MTP	Master Training Programme
NDP	National Development Plan
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RCN	Raw Cashew Nuts
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals

The project at a glance

Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mozambique, Sierra Leone: Promotion of the African Cashew Value Chain III (ComCashew)

Project number	2015.2165.7
Creditor reporting system code(s)	31162 - Industrial crops/export crops
Project objective	In selected African countries, the competitiveness of the cashew value chain is enhanced.
Project term	1 May 2016–31 December 2021
Project value	EUR 36,190,000 ((including cofinancing by Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the European Union (EU): EUR 12,040,000)
Commissioning party	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Lead executing agency	Federal ministries in the partner countries: Benin: Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Burkina Faso: Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Water Resources, Côte d'Ivoire: Cotton and Cashew Council, Ghana: Ministry of Food and Agriculture; Mozambique: National Cashew Institute; Sierra Leone: Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security Regional partner: African Cashew Alliance
Implementing organisations (in the partner country)	Fair Match Support, Sustainable Nut Initiative, Olam Seco, Anatrans, Red River Foods, Ivoirienne de Noix de Cajou, Gebana AG, Tolaro, Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana, Benin National Institute of Agricultural Research, Environmental Institute for Agricultural Research Burkina Faso, National Forest Seeds Centre Burkina Faso, Union Régionale des Coopératives de Producteurs d'Anacarde de l'Atacora et de la Donga, Fédération Nationale des Producteurs d'Anacarde du Bénin, Emalink, Dedras, Chigata
Other development organisations involved	Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), EU Delegation to Ghana
Target group(s)	Cashew producers (mainly smallholders), cashew processors (including workers in the processing industry), professional associations, government organisations
Reporting year CPE	2021
Sample year CPE	2017

1 Evaluation objectives and questions

This chapter aims to describe the purpose of the evaluation, the standard evaluation criteria, and additional stakeholders' knowledge interests and evaluation questions.

1.1 Evaluation objectives

Central project evaluations of projects commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) fulfil three basic functions: they support evidence-based decisions, promote transparency and accountability, and foster organisational learning within the scope of contributing to effective knowledge management. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH structures the planning, implementation and use of evaluations so that the contribution the evaluation process and the evaluation findings make to these basic functions is optimised (GIZ, 2018a).

The evaluation was conducted at the end of the implementation term of the project. The project was initially intended to end on 31 December 2020. Due to delays and challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was extended for one year until the end of 2021. The evaluation started in September 2020 and the data was collected in May and June 2021. This is, therefore, the final evaluation.

The primary addressees of the evaluation are the responsible BMZ departments 101 (Trade Policy), 200 (Africa Policy and Initiatives) and 210 (Coordination of Operations in Africa), GIZ project and programme managers, and the GIZ Evaluation Unit. Other stakeholder groups were also involved in the project and may, therefore, benefit from the evaluation's findings. This is especially true of the project's political partners, in other words the ministries of agriculture and their departments in the six partner countries. For a full description of the stakeholders involved in the project, see Chapter 2.

The project is subject to a central project evaluation based on the Evaluations Unit's random sample. According to GIZ's M&E framework, the evaluation should assess the project on the basis of OECD/DAC criteria. In particular, it should inform BMZ, GIZ, the board and other stakeholders about the extent to which the project was relevant to its target groups, achieved its objectives, was implemented efficiently, had a significant impact, and how sustainable its impacts are likely to be at individual (such as the training of cashew farmers or processing specialists), institutional (such as the foundation of the Research and Development Network on Cashew in Africa (REDAA) or the Consultative International Cashew Council (CICC)) and system level (such as efficient supply chains). The evaluation should provide project staff and implementing partners with feedback on the validity of the project's results model, its underlying causal assumptions and recommendations for increasing the project's effectiveness and efficiency in its remaining implementing period and follow-up project, which is currently being prepared.

1.2 Evaluation questions

The project is assessed on the basis of standardised evaluation criteria and questions to ensure comparability by GIZ. This is based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria (updated 2020) for international cooperation and the evaluation criteria for German bilateral cooperation (in German): **relevance, coherence, efficiency**, **effectiveness**, **impact** and **sustainability**.

Specific assessment dimensions and analytical questions have been derived from this framework. These form the basis for all central project evaluations in GIZ and can be found in the **evaluation matrix** (Annex). In addition, contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its principles are taken into account as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender, the environment, conflict sensitivity and human rights. Also, aspects regarding the quality of implementation are included in all OECD/DAC criteria.

During the inception mission, project staff members formulated a range of issues and questions they wanted the evaluation to answer. Firstly, they wanted to learn more about the particular needs and demands of local partners and target groups with respect to the future design of follow-on projects. Secondly, they wanted the evaluation to identify the countries where the project could have the greatest impact, particularly in tackling poverty among farmers. Thirdly, they wanted to know where local political partners seek to collaborate with the project out of a genuine interest in the advancement of the cashew sector and where partners are instead using the project to further their own particular interests, which might not be in line with the project's objectives (INT_2 with GIZ). The first question was integrated into the data collection instruments and will be discussed in Section 5.2. Regarding the second question, GIZ decided not to ask the evaluation team for a comparative analysis of the project's impacts in the six countries due to limited resources. Consequently, this question was not addressed. The evaluation team was also unable to answer the third question, as the issue was considered too sensitive to be raised in interviews with political partners.

Table 1: Knowledge interests by main evaluation stakeholder groups

Evaluation stakeholder group	Knowledge interests in evaluation/additional evaluation questions	Relevant section in this report
GIZ	Needs and requirements of the target group regarding a follow-on project.	Included in Chapter 5.2 on **recommendations**

2 Object of the evaluation

This chapter aims to define the evaluation object, including the theory of change, and results hypotheses.

2.1 Definition of the evaluation object

The object of the evaluation is the regional project Promotion of the African Cashew Value Chain III (PN 2015.2165.7), known as ComCashew for short and hereinafter referred to as 'the project'. It was a technical cooperation measure that was originally scheduled to run from 1 May 2016 until 31 December 2020. BMZ extended the project until the end of 2021, and a new phase 4 is to be prepared for the period thereafter. The extension was mainly implemented to bridge the one-year gap between the end of phase 3 in 2020 and the anticipated start of phase 4 in 2022 in terms of keeping the project's staff and infrastructure and maintaining the links to the various national partner organisations. In accordance with the fifth change offer, the project's intervention strategy remained unchanged and only the targets of three outcome indicators (MZ-I.2, A.2, D.3) were increased to reflect the extended implementation period (GIZ 2020e, Int_37).

Previously, the project submitted four change offers to BMZ in the context of additional funds provided by the ministry and to implement further cofinancing with SECO and the EU Delegation to Ghana. The first change offer (October 2017) was approved to introduce cofinancing with SECO (EUR 3.94 million), to increase BMZ's funding by 2 million euros, to extend the project's implementation period to December 2020 (initially the project

implementation was due to end in December 2018) and to extend project activities to Sierra Leone (GIZ 2017d). The integration of Sierra Leone into the project framework had already been suggested in the project proposal in 2015 on the grounds that there is great potential for cashew production and poverty reduction in that country (GIZ_2015e). SECO intended to support the project's activities in the field of strengthening local processors and to promote an enabling legal and institutional environment for cashew processing in the partner countries. The change offer did not include any changes to the project's results framework or indicators.

The second change offer was approved to introduce cofinancing with the EU Delegation to Ghana (GIZ 2018b). The fund was provided within the framework of the delegation's Resilience Against Climate Change (REACH) project, which is co-implemented by ComCashew in north-west Ghana, focusing on cashew production only. REACH activities feature the development and piloting of climate-smart agriculture and agro-forestry approaches in the target region. New production methods are developed to increase the sustainability of cashew cultivation, reduce carbon emissions in the agricultural sector and contribute to farmers' adaption to climate change. After a pilot phase in north-west Ghana, the intention was that close collaboration with political partners would facilitate the integration of these climate-smart approaches into Ghana's Medium-Term Development Plan and the National Climate-Smart Agriculture and Food Security Action Plan to make a long-term contribution to the country's reduction of carbon emissions. Moreover, ComCashew planned to transfer the piloted approaches to other similar regions in ComCashew partner countries. In addition to the introduction of REACH, the second change offer was approved to introduce the African Cashew Alliance to the official partner structure of the project to meet the high demand for regional/international training activities (GIZ 2018b). The change offer introduced two new indicators to the results framework of the project: A.3: 'The number of farms that diversify their planting system through intercropping with food crops, in order to increase resilience, have increased' and '20 community action plans for the practical implementation of adaption to climate change are introduced in 14 districts in northern Ghana'. Due to limited available resources, the evaluation team did not examine the implementation and outcomes of the REACH component.

The third and fourth change offer where approved to increase BMZ's funding by 0.5 million euros (third change offer, September 2019) and 6 million euros (fourth change offer, December 2019) respectively. BMZ provided both additional funds to intensify the project's on-going activities to meet the constantly increasing demand of local partners (GIZ 2019e, GIZ 2019f). While the third change offer did not feature any changes to the results framework, the fourth change offer included increased targets for three of the outcome indicators (A.2, C.2 D.3).

The project is embedded in the regional BMZ/GIZ development cooperation programme Broad-scale Promotion of Agricultural Value Chains in Africa (GIZ 2015d). The project has an overall budget of 36,190,000 euros from the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development with third-party contributions from the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (3,940,000 euros), the EU Delegation to Ghana (8,500,000 euros) and the Brazil-Ghana-Germany trilateral cooperation. The countries of implementation were Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mozambique and Sierra Leone (GIZ 2020a). Instead of implementing all activities in all partner countries equally on the same scale, the project followed a demand-based approach. This means that the focus of activities and resources shifted between the countries depending on the current demand and needs of local partner organisations. The evaluation covers all of the project's activities in the six partner countries.

The project builds on two predecessor projects implemented between April 2009 and April 2016. All three projects are based on a similar intervention logic, whereas the projects' objectives and indicators have undergone only minor changes and rearrangement over time (GIZ 2013, GIZ 2017c).

The broader framework context and the components of the current project are briefly outlined below. The cashew value chain offers producer countries in Africa interesting possibilities for creating employment, increasing income at enterprise and at national economic level, and for enhancing food security. Africa

accounts for 58% of the global production of raw cashew nuts (RCN), the bulk of which is produced by 1.4 million smallholder farmers. However, due to comparably low yields, limited processing capacities and limited work productivity, this potential has not yet been realised. The project focuses on using a multi-level approach to build a sustainable cashew value chain, to increase the competitiveness of African cashew production and processing and address different issues and target groups on four distinct levels. These are reflected in the four project components:

(1) supporting farmers through the development and distribution of improved planting material and through training and advice in good agricultural practices (GAP);
(2) advising processors of raw cashew nuts (RCN) and by-products on enhancing process efficiency;
(3) increasing business contacts and facilitating greater exchange between all stakeholders along the supply chain;
(4) supporting the national and regional framework by advising the ministries of agriculture and trade and intensifying regional exchange between all stakeholders.

Activities within the first two components focussed on training and capacity development, while measures in the second two components included support for the development of networks and linkages alongside the supply chain between producers, processors and international consumer goods companies. One of the project's important instruments for stimulating investments in research, in the training of farmers and in the improvement of the supply chain is the Matching Fund (GIZ 2015e, GIZ 2017a, GIZ 2017b, GIZ 2018, GIZ 2019c, GIZ 2020a). The Matching Fund is a public-private-partnership tool, which ComCashew uses to co-finance projects involving partner organisations and companies. The maximum contribution ComCashew makes to MF private projects is 40% of the total project budget. At least 60% of the budget must be funded by the company. For public institutions, ComCashew's share of the project budget can be up to 50%. Companies, government departments, research institutions and FBOs can apply for a Matching Fund grant by submitting a project proposal. The project concepts must fit into ComCashew's results framework. Approved MF projects are then implemented by the company/partner organisation. They submit a report to ComCashew on the project's progress twice a year. If required, ComCashew provides technical advice and support. In some cases, the NGO Fair Match Support participates in MF projects as a third party to provide technical advice and facilitate project implementation.

The project's target groups were cashew producers and processors. At the start of the project, 90% of the producers were poor smallholder farmers living below the poverty line. The group of processors is composed of businesses that process raw cashew nuts and its by-products, such as the cashew apple, which can be used to produce molasses or alcohol. Workers in the processing factories are included in the target group (GIZ 2015e, GIZ 2017b). Government institutions in the partner countries and their sectoral and regional sub-organisations and associations for agricultural value chains also belong to the target group. The project provides these institutions with advisory services on the development of a political framework that will enable the sustainable growth of the cashew sector (GIZ 2017a, 7). Since the project addresses all of them at output and outcome level, they all belong to the direct target groups. There are no other indirect target groups at impact level.

As a regional Africa project, the module did not provide for a lead project partner based on bilateral agreements. The partner in each project country was a national ministry responsible for the agricultural sector, hereinafter referred to as the 'political implementation partners'. In Benin, it was the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Elevage et de la Pêche [MAEP]); in Burkina Faso, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Water Resources (Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Hydraulique), and in Côte d'Ivoire, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural [MINAGR]). There were also agreements with the National Cashew Institute (Instituto de Formento de Caju [INCAJU]) in Mozambique, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) in Ghana, the Cotton and Cashew Council (Conseil du Coton et de l'Anacarde [CCA]) in Côte d'Ivoire and the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources in Burkina Faso. The partner institutions in Mozambique and Côte d'Ivoire are responsible

for the cashew sector (GIZ 2015e, GIZ 2017a, GIZ 2017b, GIZ 2018, GIZ 2019c, GIZ 2020a) and were commissioned by the respective ministries. A board of stakeholders oversaw project activities and assembled twice a year. Board members included international companies, such as buyers and retailers, NGOs and public institutions that contributed at least 1 million US dollars to the project through in-kind contributions or their participation in Matching Fund projects.[1] One regional and six national steering committees held an advisory function within the project governance structure. These committees comprised national and regional sectors, business and professional associations and other stakeholders.

Gender and the environment were regarded as crosscutting issues throughout the planning and implementation of the project.[2] A gender analysis was conducted and a respective gender strategy was developed during the planning phase. Outcome indicators were gender-sensitive and the project sought to give women access to training and capacity building (GIZ 2015b). Moreover, an environmental impact assessment was conducted prior to the implementation of the project (Nill 2015). The application of pesticides in the production sphere and the handling of the toxic nutshell liquid throughout the processing of RCN were identified as environmental risks that needed to be addressed in the capacity-building measures targeting farmers and processors. The project also contributed to climate change mitigation by supporting domestic processing. A life cycle assessment of the cashew sector, conducted in 2019, showed that domestic processing in African countries reduces carbon emissions compared with the shipping of RCN to Asia for processing (Te Pas, Caroline/Scholten Jasper 2020).

2.2 Results model including hypotheses

The project was based on a complex theory of change depicted in an overarching results model and a results matrix outlining one module objective and four outputs, each of which had several indicators (GIZ 2019d, GIZ 2020a). The module objective of the project was formulated as follows: ‘The competitiveness of the cashew value chain in selected African countries has increased’. It featured six module objective indicators, which measured the cashew farmers’ yield (MZ-I.1), the cashew processing volume in the partner countries (MZ-I.2), private and public investments in the improvement of the cashew value chain (MZ-I.3), the volume of RCN sourced directly from farmers (avoiding middlemen) (MZ-I.4), the number of jobs created in cashew production, processing and trade (MZ-I.5) and the amount of additional income generated for men and women working in cashew production and processing (MZ-I.6).

During the inception phase, the results model was updated and restructured together with the project staff. This was done because the original output targets and most of the respective indicators formulated in the project’s results matrix described the project’s outcomes rather than its outputs. During the revision of the results model, the evaluation team moved the four original output targets and most of the respective (original) output indicators to a newly established outcome level located below the module objective indicators (Outcome A, B, C and D). Because the project lacked targets and indicators at output level, the evaluation team developed appropriate outputs and indicators for each component together with the project staff. The revised results model is presented and discussed below. The shortcuts in brackets refer to the targets as depicted in the results model. When referring to outputs or outcomes below, the evaluation team always refers to the targets as they are displayed in the revised results model (Figure 1).

[1] During the implementation phase, the minimum contribution for new board members was increased to 2 million US dollars (GIZ 2019a). The current board members are: Kraft Heinz, Olam International, CARO Nut, the ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (Burkina Faso), Intersnack, IDH the sustainable trade initiative, Walmart, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (Ghana), the African Cashew Alliance, Red River, BMZ, Institute Amêndoas Mocambique, Le Conseil du Coton et de l’Anacarde (Côte d’Ivoire), the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (Swiss), GIZ, Nuts2, Fair Match Support, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (Sierra Leone), EU Delegation to Ghana.

[2] The relevant DAC and BMZ markers are: GG-1 (Gender equality), PD/GG-1 (Participatory development/Good governance), UR-1 (Environmental protection and resource conservation), TD-2 (Trade development), DES-1 (Combating desertification), KLM-1 (Climate change, greenhouse gas reduction), KLA-1 (Adaptation to climate change), BTR-1 (Biodiversity Convention), AO-1 (Poverty orientation), FS-1 (Peace and security) and LE-2 (Rural development and food security).

Below the module objective indicators, the revised results model is divided into four components that reflect distinct – yet in some respects interrelated – hypotheses (HA, HB, HC, HD). Each component also depicts an area or level of intervention: production (A), processing (B), supply chain linkages (C) and the broader political framework, which is also referred to as the sector organisation component (D). The hypothesis underlying each of the four components is briefly outlined below.

In the production component (component A), project activities focussed on training farmers and trainers in good agricultural practices (GAP). The training was provided by the agricultural departments of the respective governments and their extension officers with advise from ComCashew. In Benin and Burkina Faso, there are highly organised national FBOs, which also became leading providers of GAP training. In Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire and Mozambique, ComCashew also partnered with NGOs to provide GAP training. In addition, some processing companies also started training farmers within the framework of MF projects. In phases 1 and 2 of the project, the most important cashew-producing regions were selected on the basis of the number of farmers and total production. At present, all major production regions in the six partner countries are covered.[3] Moreover, in those countries where FBOs are not the main providers of GAP training, they provided the project with lists of farmers and training sites and formulated expressions of needs.

ComCashew also facilitated research into and the distribution of high-quality planting material (seedlings/saplings). The implementation partners for these tasks are public research institutes (research and development) and the departments of agriculture (distribution to farmers). Outputs that correspond to the activities of component A refer to trained farmers (O.A1) and the area of scion gardens producing improved planting material (O.A2). Activities are based on the underlying hypothesis (HA) that farmers who adopt GAP and have access to higher yielding planting material are more likely to increase their yield in terms of kg/ha and improve their kernel quality, thereby become more productive and efficient, which is the target of the component at outcome level (Outcome A). A higher yield may also correspond to an increasing income. Moreover, it is assumed that GAP are more labour intensive, which implies that the adoption of GAP by farmers results in additional working hours, which may result in the creation of additional jobs.

Component B focussed on cashew processing, the process of obtaining cashew kernels, which can be sold to consumers, from raw cashew nuts as harvested from the tree. It involves the following steps: cooking/roasting, shelling, drying, peeling, sorting/grading and packing (in that order). The degree of mechanisation varies greatly among processing companies in African countries. While a few larger companies have a high level of mechanisation, in many small factories, most of this work is still done by hand. Within the processing component (B), the project trained management staff in processing companies and provided technical assistance and business development services (including training on how to access finance) to processors. Training and advice for processors was provided directly by either project staff or external consultants and trainers directly engaged by ComCashew. The outputs of these activities resulted in processing companies and their staff receiving training and technical assistance in food safety, business plan development, access to finance and other processing-related topics. Another output of component B was the training materials provided to processors (O.B2). These activities were based on the underlying hypothesis (HB) that processors who have received training and have access to capital and know-how are likely to organise their business more efficiently, which may lead to decreasing costs per ton of cashew nuts processed and an increasing total amount of cashew nuts processed. This could make the processing sector more competitive (outcome B), thereby contributing to the overall project module objective. This could also result in the expansion of processing facilities, which would in turn generate new job opportunities and income.

Within the supply chain component (C), the activities of the project comprised the provision of advisory services on the establishment and intensification of business linkages between actors alongside the cashew value chain

[3] With the exception of Mozambique, where GAP training was only implemented in the Ampula province.

and with actors from other value chains. For example, ComCashew's staff brought together farmer-based organisations (FBOs) , processors and buyers or retailers to establish direct and traceable supply chains. Processors or buyers also engaged in MF projects providing GAP training for farmers or developing and introducing market information systems to increase traceability. The output of component C is the cashew stakeholder's links to new business partners. The activities are based on the underlying assumption (HC) that better connected and informed processors and traders are likely to intensify and better coordinate their business relations and are able to support the farmers linked to them to improve the quantity and quality of supply. This may result in an increase in direct sales of RCN from producers to processors circumventing middlemen and increasing traceability. In combination with more private investments, the intention is that this will increase the capacity and efficiency of the supply chain (outcome C).

Within sector organisation component (D), the activities of the project comprised the provision of advisory services for local industry associations along the value chain on the organisation of special interest groups and the development of business strategies. This component also included the provision of advisory services for government institutions on the creation of a favourable legal framework for the development of the cashew sector. This included topics such as tax and tariff policies or the funding of research on improved planting material and agricultural practices. Moreover, the project facilitated regional and international exchange between private and public actors in the sector by supporting the organisation of international fairs and conferences. Outputs covered the advisory services provided to local industry associations (O.D1) and to public partners (O.D2) as well as the organised exchange platforms and events (O.D3). The activities were based on the underlying assumption (HD) that consulting services may enable public actors to develop an improved cashew sector strategy. Sector strategies may create a framework that fosters the growth and competitiveness of the whole value chain in the region (module objective).

The four project components are not isolated but interlinked. The aim is that the result of component D, the creation of favourable legal and institutional framework for the cashew sector, will contribute to an increase in the productivity and efficiency of cashew production (Outcome A) and processing (Outcome B). Likewise, the aim is that the increase in the efficiency of the supply chain will benefit cashew producers and processors. Moreover, processors should benefit from increased production productivity because it contributes to a better RCN supply. For a discussion on the extent to which the four project components reinforce each other, see the section on relevance dimension 3 (p. 29).

The project's activities also feature the Master Training Programme (MTP) – a capacity-building programme that contributes to all four project components. The MTP was designed to be a practical training course that covers all relevant aspects of cashew production, processing and trade, such as GAP, improved planting material, processing technology, food safety, global market dynamics, supply chain management, certification and also cross-cutting issues such as gender, climate and soft skills such as personal development, leadership and communication. Stakeholders from all segments of the value chain, such as representatives of FBOs, staff working for processors, government officials or academics and researchers participate in the programme, and participants go through all components of the training regardless of their background. The aim of the MTP is, therefore, to broaden participants' perspectives, helping them to look beyond their own field of engagement and gain a better understanding of other segments of the value chain. The training is not institutionalised in a partner organisation but organised and financed by ComCashew. The trainers are often not university lecturers, but practitioners from partner organisations or private companies that give participants practical insights into their profession or field of expertise.

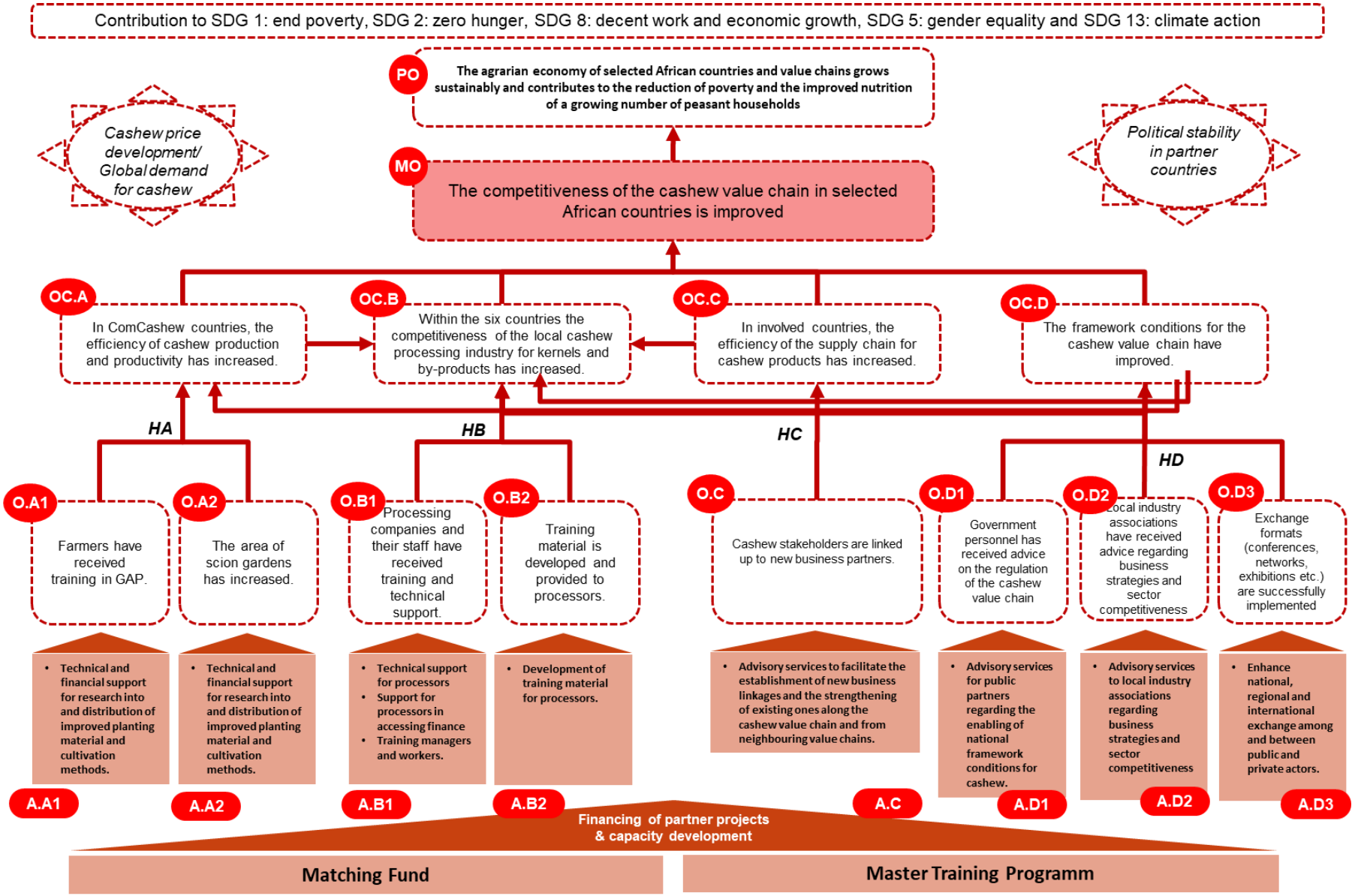
At impact level, the project contributed to the objective of the umbrella programme Broad-scale Promotion of Agricultural Value Chains in Africa, which was formulated as follows: 'the agrarian economy of selected African countries and value chains grow sustainably and contribute to the reduction of poverty and an improved nutrition of a growing number of peasant households'. The programme objective features three indicators. Two of them correspond to two of the project's module objective indicators:

Programme indicator 1: ‘The income of peasant households from the sale of products from the promoted value chains has increased’ (corresponds to the project’s module objective indicator 6 (MZ-I.6): ‘Providing an additional annual income of 30.2 million euros for men and 20.2 million euros for women from cashew production and processing’).
Programme indicator 2: ‘The number of job-equivalents created alongside the agrarian value chains has increased’ (corresponds to the project’s module objective indicator 5 (MZ-I.5): ‘The number of jobs in the production, processing, and trade of cashew products has increased by 10% (40% for women’).
Programme indicator 3: ‘The private sector, public partners and civil society institutions are increasingly implementing the promoted activities with their own funds’.

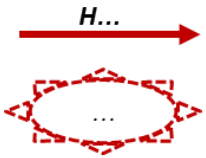
The fact that two of the module objective indicators are identical to two programme indicators mirrors the lack of a clear system boundary. In fact, the project has not defined a sphere of responsibility and has set some of its module objective indicators at impact rather than at outcome level. For instance, indicators do not measure the increase in yield and processing volume of farmers and processors directly trained or supported by the project but of all cashew farmers and processors in the six intervention countries. Implications of the missing system boundary for the achievability of the results and their attribution to the projects interventions are further discussed in the section on relevance dimension 3 on p. 299.

By supporting cashew farmers and the creation of jobs and additional income in cashew production, processing and trade, the project seeks to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG 1 (end poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger) and SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth). The project also recognises the cross-cutting issues of SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 13 (climate action). Gender equality is promoted through disaggregated module objective indicators: the project aims to generate 20.2 million euros additional income for woman (MZ-I.6). Moreover, MZ-I.5 indicates that the intention is that 40% of the jobs created should be jobs for woman. A contribution to climate change mitigation is also foreseen: the aim is that the diversification of local agricultural systems by planting cashews will increase carbon stocks and climate change resilience (GIZ 2017b, p. 9).

Figure 1: Current results model (January 2021), adapted during evaluation *(mandatory*

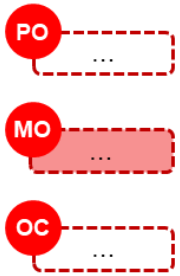


Caption:



Causal hypothesis

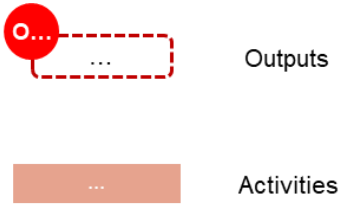
External Factors



Programme objective

Module objective

Outcomes



Outputs

Activities

3 Evaluability and evaluation process

This chapter aims to clarify the availability and quality of data and the process of the evaluation.

3.1 Evaluability: data availability and quality

This section covers the following aspects:

- availability of essential documents,
- monitoring and baseline data including partner data, and
- secondary data.

Availability of essential documents

All central documents were made available to the evaluation team. The only document missing during the inception phase, the Excel-sheet assigning working months of staff to outputs, was provided during the evaluation mission. The evaluators concluded that the documents were complete, comprehensive and of sufficient quality.

Monitoring and baseline data including partner data

The project features a complex **monitoring system comprising 21 indicators.** As already mentioned in Chapter 2, not all indicators were located at the right results level. Thus, in the context of the revision of the results model, the evaluation team relocated most of the output indicators to the outcome level to complement the assessment of effectiveness (contribution analysis) as they do not depict direct project outputs, but rather outcomes at a higher results level. Subsequently the evaluation team developed a number of genuine output indicators to measure the direct results of the project activities and adjusted them together with the project staff to make sure that they covered the activities appropriately (see results model, Section 2.2). No target values were available for these newly established output indicators. Consequently, the project's achievements on the output level can only be assessed qualitatively.

In the context of the project's outcomes, a detailed discussion of the quality of the module objective indicators and the underlying data will follow in Section 4.2. However, some **general introductory notes on the data and the calculation of indicator values** are included here. The data underlying the project's monitoring system stems from a variety of different sources. The project's M&E unit uses an Excel sheet to compile and aggregate data for all indicators from the various internal and external sources. It is referred to as the **M&E master tool** in this report. The central data source informing the indicators of the production component is the **yield survey** the project conducted to collect quantitative data from cashew farmers. The survey was conducted by the political partners in each partner country. Data was collected at two points: in 2015 and in 2019.[4] In general, the survey targeted not only farmers trained by the project and its partners, but also untrained farmers. Moreover, the samples are supposed to represent the development of average yields of cashew farmers at national level. The survey was not used to make a systematic comparison between trained and untrained farmers. Instead, the reported figures always include both groups. To increase ownership, the

[4] The project intended to conduct a third round of data collection in 2020. Due to Covid-19 constraints, however, this was only done in Ghana and Benin. Due to differences in sampling approaches, the project did not include the 2020 data in the calculation of monitoring figures. It is not, therefore, part of the analysis of this evaluation.

project did not introduce a uniform sampling approach, but left the political partners to choose and design the sampling. Some partners had already set up monitoring systems for other crops and wanted to align the sampling with their own system (Int_38). This led to the problem that the sampling, the circumstances of the data collection and the methodology behind the calculation of the average yield figures reported for the indicators differ between the six partner countries and are not documented in a transparent manner (Int_3, 13). Moreover, there are concerns that some of the political partners used sampling in a way that facilitates more favourable outcomes (for example by choosing rather productive regions or leaving out less productive ones) (Int_13). While the raw data of the yield survey is available in principle, the evaluation team was not commissioned by GIZ to conduct an in-depth secondary analysis. The evaluation can, therefore, only draw on the figures presented in the master tool. While the project circumvented distortions due to different methods of calculation for the yield figures officially reported by the partners by recalculating these figures from the raw data, potential inconsistencies due to differing sampling approaches persist and cannot be controlled ex-post.

With respect to the processing indicators, while the national processing volume of RCN is based on reliable official statistics provided by processing associations, governments and export data, other indicators such as processing cost and capacity utilisation lack a transparent sampling method or data base, but are rather estimates based on interviews with processors or associations. Regarding the data underlying the indicators of the other project components, the M&E unit of the project refers to MF reports and other partner data. Indicators have been included in the contribution analysis where indicated.

For some of the indicators, data sources, sampling or calculation/aggregation formulas have been changed between the 2015 baseline, the formulation of the target values and the current status figures, which makes it difficult to compare them. Further difficulties in the interpretation and validation of the monitoring data arose from the formulas/method behind the calculation of the values of indicators. For some of the module objective indicators such as jobs (MZ-5) and income (MZ-I-6), the project extrapolated country means from the survey data and multiplied it by numbers from other data sources to calculate baseline, target and current status values (for a more detailed discussion, see Section 4.2). Income and jobs are presented as total values (for example, total number of jobs created/total volume of income created), despite the fact that they are calculated from means of mixed data sources.

Because resources were limited, it was not possible for the evaluation team to conduct a comprehensive examination, assessment and recalculation of all of the monitoring system's data sources and calculation methods. The team opted instead for a critical discussion of the six module objective indicators, focusing on the central premises such as the underlying basic assumptions/theoretical foundation and obvious methodological strengths and weaknesses regarding data collection and aggregation (see Section 4.2). The other outcome indicators (formerly output indicators) were not used to assess whether the module objective was achieved. However, those with reliable data sources were included in the contribution analysis.

Regarding the **baseline data,** the evaluation team notes that the project's interventions relating to these indicators have been implemented since the beginning of Phase 1 in 2009. Consequently, 2015 figures do not reflect baseline data in the sense of a counterfactual comparison. While 2009 figures are available for most of the indicators, the evaluation team was not commissioned to include them in the analysis. Therefore, the contribution analysis (Section 4.3) could only be conducted on the basis of the qualitative data derived from stakeholder interviews and the data from processors and FBOs gathered in online surveys conducted by the evaluation team.

Secondary data

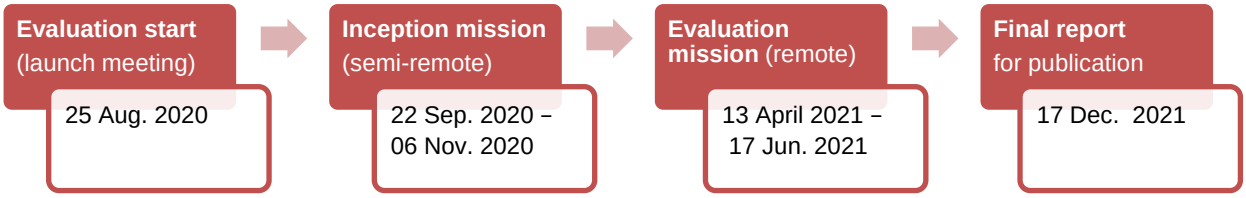
An external consultancy (Te Pas/Scholten 2020) was tasked with conducting a life cycle assessment of cashew production and processing. The study was included in the assessment. Further secondary data, which was collected within the project's monitoring framework, are discussed in the respective section above.

3.2 Evaluation process

This section covers the following aspects:

- milestones of the evaluation process,
- involvement of stakeholders,
- selection of interviewees,
- data analysis process,
- roles of international and local evaluators,
- (semi-)remote evaluation (if applicable) and
- context and conflict sensitivity within the evaluation process (if applicable).

Figure 2: Milestones of the evaluation process



Involvement of stakeholders

The evaluation team consulted the project staff several times to revise the results model, to discuss the project's M&E data and to formulate additional evaluation questions. The project staff also reviewed the data collection instruments of the two surveys and the list of stakeholders for participation in interviews. A launch meeting was held with project staff in January 2020 to discuss the organisation of data collection. In addition, intermediate findings were discussed and validated with project staff during a debriefing workshop in July 2020. The perspectives of all relevant stakeholder groups were obtained in remote interviews during the evaluation phase.

Selection of interviewees

Several interviews were conducted with the head of the project, the M&E manager and the heads of the four project components. Other interview partners were selected with a view to covering all relevant partner organisations, political partners and research institutes. In addition, one representative of the national association of cashew processors in each of the intervention countries was interviewed. The evaluation team worked closely with project staff to select board members for interviews to ensure that the organisations that were most involved in the project's activities, accompanied the project for a longer period of time or represent important stakeholder groups were interviewed. FBOs were not interviewed because they were already covered by the online survey and access to interview partners was deemed difficult. Not all selected interview partners/organisations responded to the evaluators' interview requests, which explains the difference between the total number of organisations selected for interview and the actual number of interviews conducted. A total of 38 interviews was conducted.

Table 2: List of evaluation stakeholders and selected participants

Organisation/company/ target group	Overall number of persons involved in evaluation (including gender disaggregation)	No. of interview participants	No. of focus group participants	No. of workshop participants	No. of survey participants
Donors	1 (m)	1 (m)			
BMZ					
GIZ	6 (f), 2 (m)	6 (f), 2 (m)			
GIZ project team					
Political Partners	2 (f), 3 (m)	2 (f), 3 (m)			
Conseil burkinabé de l'anacarde Burkina Faso, Le Conseil do Coton et de l'Ancarde Côte d'Ivoire, Ministry of Food and Agriculture Ghana, Instituto Amêndoas Mocambique					
Processor Associations	1 (f), 3 (m)	1 (f), 3 (m)			
Groupement des Industriels du Cajou de Cote d'Ivoire, National Association of Cashew Processors Burkina Faso (ANTA-BF), Association of Cashew Processors Ghana (ACPG), Council of Cashew processors Benin (CNTC)					
Research institutes	3 (m)	3 (m)			
Institut de l'Environnement et de Recherches Agricoles (INERA), Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana (CRIG), Institut national de recherche agricole du Bénin (INRAB)					
Board members/regional sector organisations	8 (m)	8 (m)			
Sustainable Nut Initiative, Nuts 2, Intersnack, Fair Match Support, African Cashew Alliance, Consultative International Cashew Council, Olam International, Red River					
Consultants/NGOs	1 (f), 1 (m)	1 (f), 1 (m)			
Processors	15	1 (m)			15
FBO	17				17
Note: f = female; m = male; n = non-binary					

Online surveys

The evaluation team conducted two semi-standardised online surveys of processors and FBOs, thereby covering the project's two central target groups. The questionnaires combined closed single and multiple-choice questions and six-point rating scales with a range of open questions where participants could type their answers into open text boxes. For the interpretation of the outcomes of the FBO survey, it is important to take into account that the survey did not target farmers directly. Instead, one representative of the FBO answered the questionnaire on behalf of all farmers in his/her cooperative. For both surveys, questions did not collect quantitative data on the project's indicators, but were designed to include the target groups qualitative perspective on the impacts of the project's activities. Results were used to test the plausibility of the project's result hypothesis, to assess the project's relevance for the target groups and to get feedback on future needs and requirements for the follow-on project.

The project team and the political partners provided contact details for all the processors and FBOs they have worked with or know. No sample was drawn, but the questionnaire was sent to all processors and FBOs with available contact details. The survey was sent to 56 processors, which is the majority of processing companies operating in four of the six partner countries. Two countries were excluded from the survey: Sierra Leone, because there are no processing companies operating in the country, and Mozambique, because the project did not work with processors there. The FBO survey was sent to 50 FBOs with an available e-mail address or phone number. Sierra Leone and Mozambique were excluded here too because the project did not work with FBOs there. Fifteen processors and 17 FBOs answered the questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 27% and 34%, respectively. The 17 FBOs represent approximately 109,000 farmers. However, the number of farmers represented varies among the responding representatives. Consequently, outcomes are not representative of the basic population of farmers in statistical terms. Instead, they reflect the observations of FBO leaders or representatives. Due to the rather small sample size, the findings were interpreted with caution. Nevertheless, the results provided some interesting insights into the perspective of the target groups.

Data analysis process

Interview protocols were assessed, applying qualitative content analysis using the software MaxQDA®. Survey data was analysed using descriptive statistical methods and the software SPSS®. Due to the small size of the samples and the design of the questions, no inferential statistical methods were applied. Survey findings referred to in this report are visualised using bar charts (see Figures 1–13). Numbers in the bars refer to the total number of cases. Due to the small number of cases, no percentage figures are shown. The share of cases is indicated by the percentages displayed in the bottom line.

Findings from all data sources – interviews, survey, monitoring data, secondary data, documents – have been used for triangulation to assess the project's performance against the OECD/DAC criteria. Expert triangulation was conducted between the two evaluators to crosscheck methodology, data collection instruments and the interpretation of findings.

Remote evaluation

The evaluation was implemented as a remote evaluation. Due to the current global pandemic, travelling between countries and within countries was restricted. The international evaluators were not able to travel to the project regions. The implementation as a semi-remote evaluation together with a local evaluator was not considered feasible because the local evaluator would not have been able to travel between the six African countries or to travel to meet interview partners within the countries. For these reasons, the evaluation was conducted remotely by a team of two international evaluators. All interviews were conducted remotely via web-based communication services. The surveys with MF partners, board members, processors and FBOs were implemented online using the software SoSciSurvey®.

4 Assessment according to OECD/DAC criteria

4.1 Impact and sustainability of predecessor projects

In principle, monitoring data was available for Phases 1 and 2 of the project. However, the GIZ evaluation unit decided to not include the 2010 baseline data in the analysis of this evaluation due to constraints in available resources. A detailed analysis of the impact and sustainability of predecessor projects based on the monitoring data and the respective achievements of target indicators is, therefore, outside the scope of this evaluation and was not conducted. There are a number of other reasons why a separate and comprehensive analysis of the predecessor projects was not deemed favourable. Firstly, it is not possible to attribute results and impacts solely to one of the three phases of the project. All three phases build on the same intervention logic and indicators. Most of the project activities were started in the first phase in 2009 and have been continuously implemented ever since. Consequently, the results we observe today are not only results of the current project but are inextricably linked to the activities and outputs of the predecessor projects. The evaluation team observed that the project staff, stakeholders and partners often mix up the three project phases when talking about the project's activities, results and impacts. The assessment of the results and impacts of the current project cannot, therefore, be separated from the predecessor projects in many respects. Secondly, an assessment of the sustainability of the results of the predecessor projects is limited by the fact that most of the activities were continued in the most recent phase until today. Consequently, the observation that those results stayed stable or were exceeded since the end of the predecessor projects does not say much about their sustainability as such, but reflects the ongoing implementation of project activities. As a result, the impact and sustainability of the predecessor projects is reflected in the results, impacts and sustainability of the current project, which is the main subject of this evaluation. No separate discussion of the predecessor projects is conducted here.

4.2 Relevance

This section analyses and assesses the relevance of the project.

Summarising assessment and rating of relevance

Table 3: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: relevance

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Relevance	Alignment with policies and priorities	30 out of 30 points
	Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders	30 out of 30 points
	Appropriateness of the design*	15 out of 20 points
	Adaptability – response to change	17 out of 20 points
Relevance total score and rating		Score: **92 out of 100 points** Rating: **Level 1: highly successful**

According to the document analysis conducted by the evaluation team, the project is very much in line with the national development plans of the partner countries, with the BMZ regional strategy for Africa and the 2030

Agenda (dimension 1). Findings from the interviews and the online survey of processors and FBOs also indicate that the project's activities and objectives are highly relevant for the different target groups (dimension 2). The assessment indicates that the project design is comprehensive, consistent and ambitious for creating macro-level developmental change and that the underlying results hypotheses are plausible. However, the objectives and indicators are set at a results level that describes impacts rather than outcomes, which limits the attribution of observed changes to the direct interventions of the project (dimension 3). The assessment indicates that the project's response to the COVID-19 crisis as an external shock to the whole value chain was fast and appropriate to a changing environment, even though it was limited to processors only (dimension 4).

In total, the relevance of the project is rated as Level 1: highly successful, with 92 out of 100 points.

Analysis and assessment of relevance

Relevance – Dimension 1: Alignment with policies and priorities

The alignment of the project concept with the strategic reference frameworks was assessed on the basis of a document analysis examining the coherence and complementarity of its objectives with national development plans (NDP) and strategic papers in the six partner countries, the BMZ regional strategy 'Marshallplan mit Afrika' (English: Marshall Plan with Africa) and the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The subsidiarity/complementarity with partner efforts is assessed on the basis of interviews with those partners.

Six documents in particular provided information for assessing the project objectives' coherence with national frameworks and development strategies: (1) Plan National de Développement 2018–2025 Benin, (2) Plan National de Développement Économique et Social (PNDES) 2016–2020 Burkina Faso, (3) Plan National de Développement PND 2016–2020 Côte d'Ivoire, (4) Ghana's 2019 SDGs Budget Report, (5), Estratégia Nacional de Desenvolvimento (2015–2035) Mozambique, (6) Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019–2023.

The project objectives within the sphere of cashew production are increasing the competitiveness of cashew farmers indicated by the increase of yield and kernel quality. The project's activities focused on the training of farmers in GAP and the research and distribution of improved kernel quality. These objectives and project interventions demonstrated a high level of coherence with the development plans of the respective six countries. The NDPs of Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Mozambique include targets for the increase in yield of agricultural production as follows: In Benin, the promotion of flagship agricultural sectors such as cashew nuts is a core feature of the NDP (1). In Côte d'Ivoire, an increased yield is to be reached through the modernisation of agriculture (3). In Mozambique, the development of agricultural research that adapts agricultural techniques and technologies to the specificities of the soil and climatic conditions of the country and the dissemination of modern production methods and the diffusion of appropriate technologies are highlighted (5). For Burkina Faso, the document cites improving agricultural productivity as one of the major challenges facing the agricultural production sub-sector (2). In Ghana, agriculture and rural development is a key focus area. Moreover, the improvement of production efficiency and yield is one of its policy objectives (4). In Sierra Leone, one of the key targets is to achieve 90% food self-sufficiency by 2023 by improving the productivity and commercialisation of the agricultural sector (6).

The project's objective to increase the competitiveness of in-country processing, indicated by increasing processing volume, also demonstrated a high level of coherence with the development plans of Ghana, Mozambique and Sierra Leone. In Mozambique, for instance, one of the NDP's strategies for the development of priority areas is the transformation of agriculture, which includes encouraging the processing of agricultural production in its place of origin to add value to the product and, in this way, to increase the producers' income (5). In Sierra Leone's NDP too, the focus on agricultural development includes a focus on increasing the in-country processing of agricultural commodities (6). The project's module objectives also comprise the creation

of jobs and additional income for rural populations. This target also demonstrates a high level of coherence with the six NDPs of the partner countries, as they all feature the creation of jobs and additional income as core targets (1-6). In conclusion, the evaluation team considers it evident that the project concept was very much in line with the objectives of the NDPs and that it directly supported the governments' efforts in the respective countries by working towards some of its specific objectives and key targets.

The central BMZ strategy for development projects in African countries is outlined in the paper 'Afrika und Europa – Neue Partnerschaft für Entwicklung, Frieden und Zukunft' (BMZ 2017, English: Africa and Europe – New Partnership for Development, Peace and Future). This so-called 'Marshallplan mit Afrika' is guided by the concepts of inclusive growth and sustainable development. Agricultural development, food supply, economic growth and job creation are among its core objectives. ComCashew's results framework – with its focus on helping farmers to increase agricultural productivity and supporting in-country processing connected to the creation of jobs and income – was very much in line with these targets. The project also helped improve economic policy frameworks and promote the development of local value chains, which are clear strategies of the BMZ paper. The project's embeddedness in the framework of the umbrella programme entitled Broad-scale Promotion of Agricultural Value Chains in Africa also demonstrated a high degree of coherence with BMZ's development strategy.

The project concept also demonstrated a high level of coherence with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. Through its support for cashew farmers and the creation of jobs and additional income in cashew production, processing and trade, the project sought to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals: SDG 1 (end poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger) and SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth). The project also recognised the cross-cutting issues of SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 13 (climate action). Gender equality was reflected by disaggregated module objective indicators: the project aimed to generate 20.2 million euros additional income for woman (MZ-I.6). Moreover, MZ-I.5 indicates that the intention is that 40% of jobs created will be jobs for woman. A contribution to climate change mitigation is also outlined, as the aim is that the diversification of local agricultural systems with cashew plantings will increase carbon stocks and climate change resilience (GIZ 2017b, p. 9).

Interviews with the ministries of agriculture and their departments for tree crops or cashew in particular also indicated that the project concept complemented their own efforts to promote the cashew value chain. Most of the project's interventions – such as the training of farmers or the distribution of planting material – were developed and implemented through the infrastructure and personnel of those partners. Political partners also received support in the field of creating enabling policy frameworks for the development of the cashew processing sector through extensive capacity building and technical advice (Int_21, 22, 29, 30, 31, 33). The alignment of the project concept with the needs and capacities of partners is discussed in more detail in the section on dimension 2 below.

Relevance dimension 1 – Alignment with policies and priorities – scores **30 out of 30 points.**

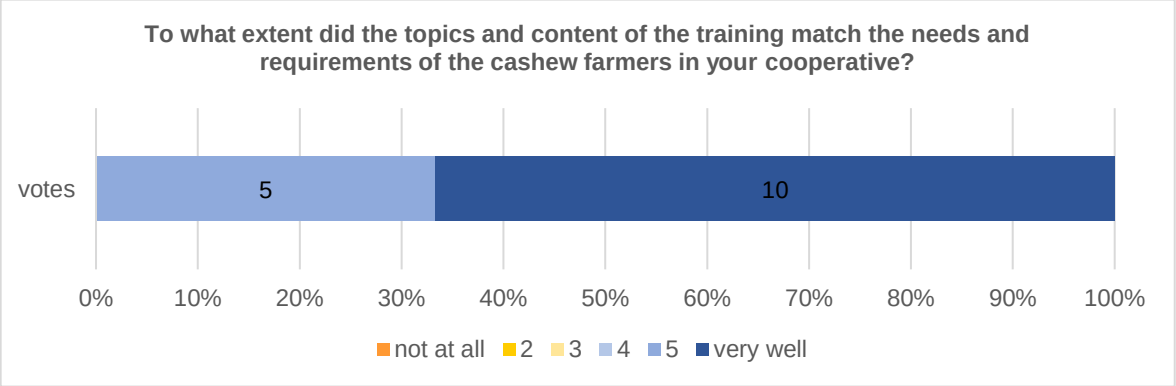
Relevance – Dimension 2: Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders

The project had three major target groups: cashew farmers, processors and political institutions in the six partner countries. This section assesses whether the project's activities, outputs and targets were in line with the requirements of these target groups. The analysis is based on the survey of FBOs and processors and by interviews with processing associations, the project staff, research associations and political partners.

According to the project's description of the target group (GIZ 2017b, p. 4 f.), cashew in Africa is produced by 1.5 million farmers of which 90% are poor smallholders. Due to the lack of knowledge about GAP and the

distribution of high-yielding planting material, the yield of African smallholders lags far behind farmers in Vietnam or India (300-500 kg/ha in Africa compared to 1,200 kg/ha in Vietnam/India)[5]. According to the project, training in GAP and the development and supply of high-quality planting material completely meet the needs of producers to increase quantity and quality of yield (GIZ 2015e, GIZ 2017b). This appraisal is confirmed by the data collected throughout the evaluation process. All FBO representatives who answered the relevant question in the online survey confirmed that the topics and content of the GAP training met the needs and requirements of the farmers in their cooperative (see Figure 3). This finding is backed up by answers to another question in the survey that asked about the biggest challenges facing cashew farmers in the last five years. These answers showed that the project activities were largely geared towards addressing the challenges FBO representatives listed in an open text box. The most frequently listed challenges were to increase the productivity/yield of the cashew fields and to improve nut quality. Both were core features of the GAP training as well as the target of research into and distribution of improved cashew planting material – both of which were facilitated by the project (see Figure 1 results model). The findings of the survey were also supplemented by interviews with stakeholders. For example, research institutes stated that farmer and FBO demand for improved planting material is particularly high (INT_20, 27, 32). On the basis of the assessment, the overall alignment of the project's interventions and targets with the needs and capacities of farmers is considered high.

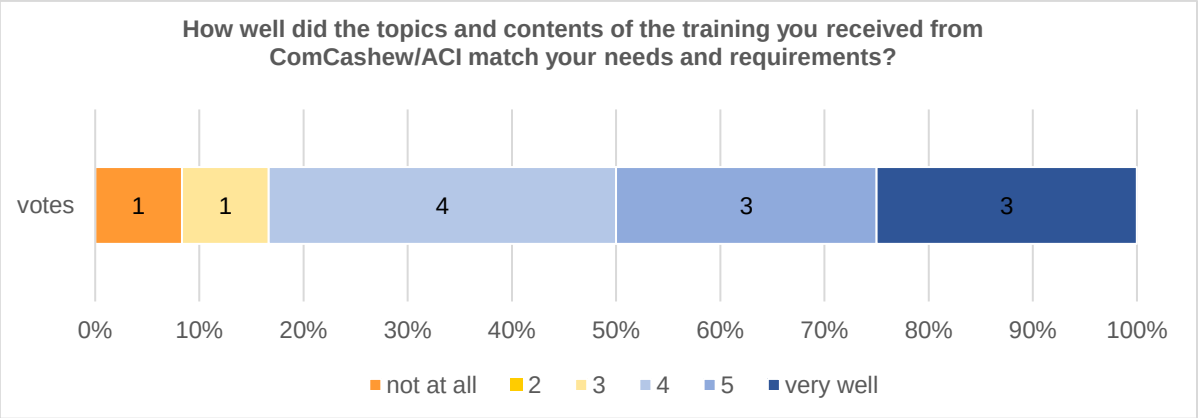
Figure 3: Relevance of GAP training (Source: FBO survey)



The group of processors comprises businesses buying and processing cashew nuts and their by-products. According to the project's analysis, the cashew-processing industry in Africa lacks sufficient financing, technology and human capacity to compete with their counterparts in Vietnam and India. Because of this, only 10% of Africa's production of RCN is processed in the producing countries, while 90% is shipped to Asia, missing out on considerable potential for income generation and job creation through the processing of cashew nuts (GIZ 2017b, p. 5). The project states to match processors' various needs with capacity-building measures and consulting services in the fields of financing, management, technical advice, food hygiene and access to international markets (GIZ 2015e, GIZ 2017b). This appraisal is largely confirmed by the following data collected by the evaluation team: the majority of companies surveyed (10 out of 12) stated that the topics and content of the training they received from the project match their requirements 'rather well' to 'very well' (Figure 4). Moreover, processing associations stated in the interviews that they were repeatedly consulted about processors' needs and requirements and that the project adjusted the training content accordingly (Int_23, 34, 35). The assessment indicates that the overall alignment of the project's interventions and targets with the needs and capacities of processors is high.

[5] Soil and climate (particularly rainfall) also play a significant role in these differences.

Figure 4: Relevance for processors (Source: processor survey)



The political institutions and their sub-organisations, which are responsible for agriculture and industry development in the partner countries, are referred to as a third target group. In all countries, the leading political institutions dealing with the cashew value chain are the ministries of agriculture as listed in Section 2.1. According to the project staff (INT_2 with GIZ), before the first predecessor project began, not many government organisations were aware that cashew is a lucrative crop with high economic potential. Consequently, the project identified a strong need for awareness-raising and advisory services for government institutions regarding the creation of a favourable legal environment for the sustainable growth of the sector including the development of a national cashew sector strategy. Moreover, the sector is not yet well structured, and government and private sector association interventions often appear uncoordinated (GIZ 2015e, p. 5). For this reason, the project sought to match the needs of the target group with its current activities, supporting sector organisation and coordination and facilitating the development of strong networks between all relevant stakeholders in the sector. Moreover, the project provided consultancy services to government organisations on the creation of a sector-friendly legal environment (GIZ 2015e, GIZ 2017b). This appraisal was confirmed in interviews by political partners. They stated that project staff had always worked closely with them to establish what the political partners needed and provided tailor-made consultancy and support (Int_22, 30, 31, 33). Moreover, the organisation of and contribution to national and international conferences, fairs and working groups as well as the Master Training Programme were considered a highly relevant contribution to the creation of platforms for exchange and collaboration between different actors within the value chain. This was not only considered relevant for the political partners, but also for processors and board members, among them international buyers of cashew nuts (Int_6, 7, 12, 14, 15, 29-31, 33, 35). Overall, the assessment indicates that alignment of the project's intervention with the needs and requirements of political partners and board members was high.

Referring to the Leave No One Behind principle of the 2030 Agenda and the recognition of disadvantaged population groups in the project context, most of the cashew farmers who benefitted from GAP training and improved planting material are poor smallholders. There is also no significant education barrier for the access to jobs in cashew-processing factories because at least part of the work is unskilled labour. This means that poorly educated, predominantly disadvantaged population groups can find jobs in cashew processing (Int_18, 29, 35).

The project put further emphasis on the integration of the particular needs of women into the project concept. A gender analysis was conducted in 2015 to inform the planning of the current project phase (GIZ 2015b). The access of woman to land is limited in the intervention countries and their representation among farmers is low. However, women do participate in farming activities to different degrees (ibid, GIZ 2021). The project therefore sought to encourage the participation of women in GAP training by a setting a minimum quota of 10% woman among participants (INT_17 with GIZ). To provide women with additional income opportunities and further strengthen their communities and households, the project also conducted training programmes for women in

the field of intercropping and the use of other by-products such as the processing of the cashew apple or bee-keeping for honey production (ibid., GIZ 2021, INT_17). Regarding the processing component, women make up a high share of the workforce in cashew-processing factories. This means that women also benefitted from new jobs created in processing, which is the main target of the processing component (GIZ 2017b). To increase the awareness of gender issues among different stakeholders in the value chain, gender was included as a topic in the Master Training Programme (MTP, Int_26).

The indicators of the project were disaggregated by gender to monitor the extent to which women benefitted from project outcomes. In most cases, however, the data underlying the indicators could not be disaggregated by gender, and the figures for men and women were based on estimates derived from theoretical assumptions or empirical observations. The number of jobs in processing, for instance, was calculated from the total volume of RCN processing within a country. It was then assumed that 80% of these jobs are done by women. It must also be said, however, that collecting disaggregated primary data – for instance, exact employment figures – needs a lot more resources and may exceed the means and the scope of the project. Overall, the assessment indicates that the integration of gender issues into the project concept was adequate.

Relevance dimension 2 – Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders – scores **30 out of 30 points.**

Relevance – Dimension 3: Appropriateness of the design

The appropriateness of the project design was assessed on the basis of the quality of its results model and the plausibility of its inherent causal hypotheses, the adequacy of the instruments, activities and outputs for achieving the project's objectives and the extent to which external factors and conditions were adequately considered. Data from the producer and processor surveys and from the interviews were used to supplement the analysis.

The results model and its underlying project concept as depicted and discussed in Section 2.2 are regarded as a holistic and ambitious approach to initiating and sustaining macro-economic development in the six partner countries. Four distinct yet interrelated project components reflect the four central results hypotheses of the project. The assessment indicates that these hypotheses are, in general, plausible. Their plausibility is reflected and confirmed by stakeholders and target groups (for details, see Section 4.2, contribution analysis). There is little doubt among FBOs, researchers and political partners, for instance, that the adaptation of GAP and the use of improved planting material by farmers has the potential to contribute to a higher yield, higher income and a better livelihood for famers and their families (processor survey, Int_20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, 33). The instruments the project is applying, such as GAP training, the financing of research into improved planting material, the training of processing company staff , the advisory services to processors, governments and international buyers and the financing of pilot projects linking up processors and farmers are largely considered suitable for creating impacts in the respective target dimensions (ibid.).

In addition, the project concept draws its particular strength and its ambition to achieve macro-level economic impact from the interaction of the activities and results of the four project components. The evaluation team found clear evidence that the activities and outcomes of the four components have the potential to reinforce each other and may, therefore, contribute to a macro-level transition of the cashew sector in West-African countries. Local processing companies, for instance, highly appreciate the training of farmers and the distribution of improved planting material, as production and supply are two sides of the same coin. It is not only the farmers themselves who benefit from an increased quality and quantity of their yield through achieving a higher income. Processors also benefit from the improved quality and quantity of RCN supply (Int_25, 29, 31, 34, 35; processor survey). Moreover, both processors and farmers benefit from a direct supply chain. While processors need a reliable supply base (in terms of quantity and quality), which is more likely to be created by

strong relations to FBOs, farmers may benefit from the GAP training and technical support provided by processors through MF projects. Connecting processors (and ultimately farmers through tractability systems) to international buyers may also improve their access to international markets, which is a prerequisite for the substantial growth of the processing sector. In addition, both processors and farmers benefit from improved conditions in terms of tax, subsidies, price policies and infrastructure that can only be improved by governments. Moreover, increasing the volume of in-country processing contributes to countries' trade balance, thereby creating incentives for governments to further engage in the support of the sector (Int_31 with political partner). From a counterfactual point of few, providing only training and advisory services to processors may not have brought about change as long as the development of processing is limited by the (low) quality and quantity of RCN available and by hampering and constraining legal and political framework.

However, the macro-level change of production, processing and trade patterns and political conditions in six countries and beyond (such as international markets) may only happen in the long term and requires many resources. While most of the project's instruments and activities are regarded as adequate for creating outcomes that are in line with the project objectives, it is questionable whether their scale is at present sufficient to create the aspired transition of the whole sector within the implementation period of the project. However, the module objective indicators (and also some of the initial output indicators, which were moved to the outcome level in the context of the evaluation), refer to a high impact level. They therefore monitor macro-economic change rather than results at the level of the target groups that have received direct training or support from the project. For instance, yield (MZ-I.1) and the volume of RCN processed (MZ-I.2) were not measured for the groups of farmers or processors directly trained but for all farmers and processors in the intervention countries. Changes in indicators such as income, jobs and, again, volume of RCN processed in a country also depend on and are influenced by many other (economic) developments and factors that are outside the scope of the project and cannot be influenced by it. Three problems arise from this observation: Firstly, there is a high risk of the whole project not achieving these indicators due to external risks and influences. Secondly, the time frame for project phase 3 (and probably also phase 4) may be too short to measure this macro-economic impact. Thirdly, the attribution of observed changes at impact level to the respective project activities may be difficult as there are confounding factors and alternative explanations for them. As a result, the contribution analysis may not be sufficient to establish an empirically grounded causal link between the project activities and the changes in the respective indicators.

These problems are also reflected and underscored by the fact that the project has not formulated a clear sphere of responsibility. Following the results model, the project virtually sees itself as responsible up to the highest possible impact level. Moreover, the project concept lacked clear output targets and relevant output indicators as the initial outputs captured changes at outcome or even impact level. Because of this, the project did not set targets at output level and did not monitor the outputs of its activities in a consistent way, making an assessment of the achievements at output level difficult. This is particularly the case when it comes to evaluating efficiency as it implies assessing budget spending patterns in relation to outputs. Nevertheless, the shortcomings in the designed intervention logic should not be used as an argument against such a holistic intervention approach. However, to measure the more short-term and direct effects of the project's activities, module objective indicators should instead capture results at direct target group level.

The project implemented a number of measures to deal with the complexity of conditions and to identify and react to changes in circumstances. Firstly, it organised board meetings with all members of the board twice a year to discuss the project's progress, current challenges and focus areas for the upcoming period. Those board meetings were prepared and informed by a series of pre-interviews with board members to collect feedback on the current situation within the four project components and to get their perspective on what would be required for the future. Secondly, during phases 1 and 2, the project organised annual strategic workshops with the local partners in each of the project countries to align implementation with their requirements and needs. Since partner countries have their own cashew strategies and departments that are responsible for the development of the sector, they organised the strategic workshops. ComCashew supported these workshops

by providing input and technical support at the partners' request and planned activities based on the requirements formulated by them. Thirdly, to put the collaboration with partners and stakeholders on a formal basis, the project concluded memorandums of understanding with each board member and political partner (Int_1-5 with GIZ)[6]. Overall, the assessment indicates that the steering structure of the project was comprehensive and appropriate for dealing with the complex multi-level conditions and stakeholder setting.

The project proposal outlined a number of risks or changes in conditions in the proposal, which could hamper implementation or jeopardise the achievement of the project's results. Firstly, falling market prices for cashew kernels on the world market could undermine incentives for local in-country processing and put processors at risk of making losses. Secondly, in terms of the political environment, the project acknowledges that its own influence is limited and that the intervention depends heavily on the willingness of governments to collaborate. Changes in the political framework of partner countries may challenge successful collaboration. A lack of cooperation between the partner countries may also undermine the project's efforts, for example if governments restrict the trade of RCN to neighbouring countries (GIZ 2017b, p. 21). An environmental impact assessment (Nill 2015) outlining measures to cope with the risks associated with agrochemicals and the toxic nutshell liquid as well as a document outlining the risks of child labour (GIZ undated) supplemented the projects assessment of risks. Changes in general conditions and their implications were also discussed at the bi-annual board meetings (Int_37, see footnote 3).

The evaluation team concludes that while the project design is considered comprehensive, consistent and ambitious for the creation of macro-level developmental change and while the underlying results hypothesis is plausible, the project lacked an appropriate sphere of responsibility and attributable module objective indicators. Relevance dimension 3 – Appropriateness of the design – scores **15 out of 20 points.**

Relevance – Dimension 4: Adaptability – response to change

The adequacy of the project's response to changes in the operating environment was assessed on the basis of change offers to BMZ and the minutes and pre-readers of the ComCashew board meetings. Furthermore, interviews with political partners, board members and research institutes as well as data from the processor survey supplemented the analysis.

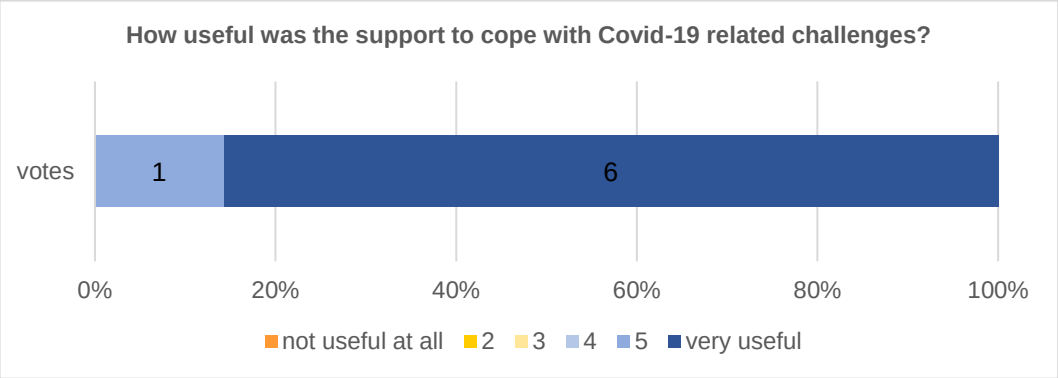
Major challenges arose with the changing operating environment caused by the emerging COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020. All levels of the value chain were affected by lockdowns and international travel restrictions. As buyers were unable to travel, some farmers could not sell their yield – a problem that was exacerbated by a lack of adequate storage facilities. A slowdown in trade and the absence of international buyers also affected processors' RCN supply and the sale of kernels. Moreover, local processors had to temporarily close down or run at low capacity due to lockdowns and social distancing requirements in the processing plants. Hygiene measures such as the obligation to provide workers with protective equipment or sanitisers generated additional costs for them (Int_20, 22, 24, 27, 29, 31, 35; processor survey; GIZ 2020c). COVID-19 also affected the implementation of MF projects. Due to travel restrictions and social distancing requirements, it was temporarily impossible to provide GAP training for farmers or collect data for the trials on improved planting material (Int_27, 32, 24, 20).

The project reacted to the crisis by redirecting 600,000 euros from the BMZ and SECO budget to directly help partners mitigate the effects of the pandemic. Processors and partners engaged in MF projects in particular were provided with masks and other sanitary materials, food for workers, hand-washing stations, medical personnel, tables, health and hygiene posters and bikes for staff transportation. These support measures

[6] Pre-readings, presentations and minutes of board meetings and strategic planning workshops with partners as well as memorandums of understanding were made available to the evaluators. Due to the large number of documents, they are only cited under references if the evaluation report refers to their particular content (for example, GIZ 2020c).

enabled some of the processors to continue operations (GIZ 2020c; processor survey; Int_12, 22, 23, 29, 35). 50% of the processors who participated in the survey benefitted from at least one of the aforementioned supportive measures. One processor stated that it submitted to the project a request for COVID-19-related support but did not get a response. Two others indicated that they were not offered support (processor survey). That being said, the majority of processors who received support from the project considered that it had been very helpful in allowing them to cope with COVID-19-related challenges (see **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.**). Two of the processing associations also highlighted the usefulness of the support (Int_23, 35).

Figure 5: Feedback from processors on COVID-19-related support (Source: FBO survey)



Regarding the rating of dimension 4, three points are deducted because FBOs and research institutes did not receive COVID-19-related support from the project. However, in view of the fact that processors were worst affected by the crisis and that a shutdown of processing facilities would have seen thousands of workers lose their income source, it is reasonable that the project concentrated its COVID-19 response resources on them. Although not all processors could be reached, the assessment concludes that this was a relevant and effective response to the crisis, given the short time frame and the scope and resources of the project. Moreover, COVID-19 has revealed the weakness of long and complex supply chains, thereby highlighting the relevance of the overall project concept: by strengthening in-country processing as well as direct supply chains and strong relationships between farmers and processors, the project contributed to the resilience of the sector against future crisis.

Relevance dimension 4 – Adaptability – response to change – scores **17 out of 20 points.**

4.3 Effectiveness

This section analyses and assesses the effectiveness of the project. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the GIZ project evaluation matrix (see Annex 1).

Summarising assessment and rating of effectiveness

Table 4: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: effectiveness

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Effectiveness	Achievement of the (intended) objectives	25 out of 40 points
	Contribution to achievement of objectives	35 out of 40 points
	Unintended results	17 out of 20 points
Overall score and rating		Score: **77 out of 100 points** Rating**: Level 3: moderately successful**

The project indicators, underlying monitoring data and the calculation method for figures highlighted a range of methodological constraints and shortcomings. In conclusion, the set of indicators and reported figures were not sufficient to capture the achievement of the project's module objective. The evaluation team supplemented the indicators with the qualitative findings from stakeholder interviews and from the processor and FBO surveys. While the evaluation team found it plausible that the module objective was achieved to a certain extent, there was no clear picture of the quantitative achievements as predefined by the indicators. This is why 15 points were deducted from the score of dimension 1. According to the assessment of dimension 2, three impact hypotheses were confirmed whereas one hypothesis was only partly confirmed due to an attribution gap between the project's intervention (training and support of selected processors) and the respective outcome indicator capturing national processing volume, which is influenced by external factors such as market dynamics. Regarding dimension 3, the evaluation team examined child labour and the adverse effect of agrochemicals as potentially negative unintended results but came to the conclusion that their negative impact was rather low. Moreover, the assessment indicated that the project's response to actual risks (such as falling cashew nut prices) and occupational safety issues was appropriate. However, the project does not monitor unintended results in a systematic way.

In total, the effectiveness of the project is rated Level 3: moderately successful, with 72 out of 100 points.

Analysis and assessment of effectiveness

Effectiveness – Dimension 1: Achievement of the (intended) objectives

The module objective 'The competitiveness of the cashew value chain in selected African countries has increased' was measured against six module objective indicators (MZ-I.1 – MZ-I.6) as presented in the table on p. 34. These indicators, the underlying monitoring data and the calculation method of figures highlighted a range of methodological constraints and shortcomings, which are discussed in the indicator table and the paragraphs below. The evaluation team came to the conclusion that the set of indicators and reported figures did not reflect the achievement of the module objective very well and were not sufficient for an assessment of the effectiveness of the project under dimension 1. As a result, the assessment of the achievement of the project's module objective was supplemented by the findings from the processor and FBO surveys and stakeholder interviews, in places where the monitoring data showed major shortcomings.

Table 5: Assessment of the project's module objective indicators

Project's objective indicator according to the (last change) offer	**Assessment according to SMART* criteria**	**Specified objective indicator** (only if necessary for measurement or understanding)
MZ-I.1: The average yields increase by 15% of 70% cashew farmers trained in the 6 project countries (compared with farmers with no training). Base value: 467kg/ha Target value: 537 kg/ha Current value: 395 kg/ha[7] Achievement in % (10/2020): 0% Source: yield survey	The indicator is phrased SMART, but the reported data did not reflect the phrasing of the indicator. The reported figure lacked a clear and specific definition of what they were actually supposed to capture and also mixed trained and untrained farmers. The measurability of yield turned out to be very challenging and was addressed in a way that produced unreliable and inconsistent data.	The data underlying the indicator was not used to assess effectiveness. Data from the online FBO survey and the interviews was used to assess the achievement of the objective within the production component (component A).
MZ-I.2: In the six countries, RCN processing [volume] has increased by 50% (in metric tons). Base value: 80,300 t Target value: 120,750 t Current value: 212,010 t Achievement in % (10/2020): 100% (overachieved) Source: report from processing companies and associations, export data, government statistics	The indicator is relevant, specific and time bound. The target was achieved. Data on RCN processing volume per country is regarded as reliable (high measurability). However, attribution to the project intervention is limited, as discussed for dimension 2, below.	
MZ-I.3: Investments from private and public sector actors have increased by 30% to improve the cashew value chain. Base value: €65.5 million Target value: €85.2 million Current value: €122 million Achievement in % (10/2020): 100% (overachieved) Source: MF data base, desk study using sector reports	The indicator was not specific as 'private and public sector actors' is not properly defined. The figures reported captured donor spending (input) and were, therefore, not relevant for measuring the achievement of the project objective at outcome level. Figures on government spending and private company investments as referred to in the phrasing of the indicator were not available.	The data underlying the indicator was not used to assess effectiveness. Qualitative data from the interviews was used to assess the achievement of the objective within the sector organisation component (component D).
MZ-I.4: In the six countries, the volume of RCN sourced directly from farmers and farmer groups by processors has increased to 85,000 t Base value: 70,000 t Target value: 85,000 t Current value: 114,612 t Achievement in % (10/2020): 100% (overachieved) Source: yield survey and MF reporting	The indicator was specific, relevant and time bound. Regarding its measurability, for RCN sales means were calculated from the yield survey across all countries; risk of incorrect figures due to combining different samples and data sources. C.1 is regarded as the more reliable indicator.	MZ-I.4 was replaced by indicator C.1: The number of cashew producers selling RCN directly to processors increased by 34%. Base value: 70,000 producers Target value: 94,000 producers Current value: 93,758 Achievement in % (10/2020): 100% Source: MF data base

[7] The official partner figures reported are 467 kg/ha for the baseline and 512 kg/ha for the current value.

Project's objective indicator according to the (last change) offer	**Assessment according to SMART* criteria**	**Specified objective indicator** (only if necessary for measurement or understanding)
MZ-I.5: The number of jobs in the production, processing and trade of cashew products has increased by 10%, of which 40% were for women. **Base value: 434,000 jobs** • Production: 321,000 (193,000 men, 128,000 women) • Processing: 16,000 (3,000 men, 13,000 women) • Trade: 96,000 (mostly men) **Target value: 700,000 jobs** • Production: 547,000 (328,000 men, 219,000 women) • Processing: 30,000 (6,000 men, 24,000 women) • Trade: 123,000 (111,000 men, 12,000 women) **Current value: 712,839 jobs** • Production: 636,292 (381,739 men, 254,493 women) • Processing: 45,718 (11,434 men, 34,283 women) • Trade: 30,889 (mostly men) Achievement in % (10/2020): 100% (overachieved) Source: yield survey, national partners, processing companies	The indicator was specific, relevant and time bound. Measurability was considered difficult. Figures from different data sources and estimates were used to calculate reported figures. The figures for production were derived from an estimated additional work load for the application of GAP, while it remains unclear how farmers deal with this work load. Figures for processing were derived from the national processing volumes, thus reproducing the GAP attribution of indicator MZ-I.2. The method for the calculation of the value for trade was changed between baseline and current status, making comparison impossible.	The data underlying the indicator was not used to assess effectiveness. Data from the interviews and online surveys was used to assess the achievement of the objective within the production and processing component (component A and B).
MZ-I.6: Providing an additional annual income of €30.2 million for men and €20.2 million for women from cashew production and processing. Base value: €461 million/year (€184 million for women, €277 million for men) Target value: €712.8 million/year €228.1 million for women, €484.7 million for men Current value: €372 million/year (€161 million for women, €211 million for men) Achievement in % (10/2020): 0% Source: economic case studies. yield survey, partner data, government statistics	The data sources and calculation method were changed between baseline, target and current value. Figures were not comparable. The indicator was only partly relevant and specific as the additional income did not reflect the actual income increase of individuals and can be increased by the number of farmers trained (production). Figures for processing only reproduce MZ-I.2 and MZ-I.5.	The data underlying the indicator was not used to assess effectiveness. Data from the interviews and online surveys was used to assess the achievement of the objective within the production and processing component (component A and B).
* SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound		

Indicator MZ-I.1 'the average yields increase by 15% of 70% cashew farmers trained in the 6 project countries (in comparison to farmers who have not received training)' was not achieved, according to the figures reported, which are based on the yield survey. In fact, the yield figures used for the indicator do not show any significant

increase between 2015 and 2019.[8] However, the qualitative findings of the evaluation team contradict these figures. Representatives of FBOs are largely convinced that the adoption of GAP by farmers leads to an increase in yield (see Figure 7). Assessing the indicator and the reported figures derived from the yield survey, the evaluation team identified a number of methodological problems regarding sampling, data collection and the calculation of the figures used for reporting. This might explain why the yield increases suggested by the qualitative data could not be found there.

Firstly, there were substantial disparities between the formulated indicator and the reported figures (baseline, target and current values). The latter did not relate to 70% of trained farmers and did not refer to a comparison group as indicated. Instead, the figures referred to a comparison of yield between 2015 and 2019 for the whole sample of the yield survey, which is composed of trained and untrained farmers. Therefore, the figures reported reflected neither a comparison between trained and untrained farmers nor a comparison of the yield of farmers before and after receiving training. If the samples are supposed to represent the progress in yield increase among all farmers in the partner countries referring to macro-level sectoral change, this was also not achieved. The composition of the sample contains far more trained farmers than to be expected in the basic population and is not representative of cashew farmers in general.

Secondly, as the data was collected by political partners, the project had no control over the sampling applied. The sampling methodology differs from country to country and is to some extent not transparent. This made it difficult to get a clear picture of what the yield figures actually represented and how they should be interpreted. For instance, survey outcomes are reportedly politically sensitive and, in some cases, political partners may have chosen rather productive regions or farmer groups to make outcomes appear in a politically more favourable light (Int_13). Sampling also differed between 2015 and 2019, limiting a comparison of baseline and current values. Some figures suggested that there are structural differences between the 2015 and 2019 samples: farmers in 2019 had bigger farms (an average of 4.4 ha in 2015 compared with 5.3 ha in 2019; for further information, see Footnote 6 and the discussion of indicator MZ-I.6). Moreover, the 2019 sample contained less trained farmers than the 2015 sample (70.2% in 2015 compared with 62.1% in 2019).[9]

Thirdly, difficulties regarding the collection of data arose from the fact that yield also depends on the age of cashew trees. Because many farmers have trees of different ages on the same field, unproductive trees have been counted in the survey, thus distorting the measurement of yield. If farmers started to plant new trees with the improved planting material provided for them between 2015 and 2019, those trees will not yet be producing yield and are could have potentially distorted yield findings for 2019.

A better understanding of the yield survey findings would require an in-depth assessment of the raw data disaggregated by country, featuring a comparison of the groups of trained and untrained farmers, farmers adopting GAP and non-adopters. External factors and framework conditions in each country should supplement the interpretation of findings. Against the backdrop of inconsistencies in sampling and data collection of the yield survey and the calculation of reported figures not matching the indicator, and given that the evaluation team was not commissioned to assess the raw data of the yield survey, no clear picture on the yield increase of trained farmers or yield developments among the basic population of cashew farmers in the intervention countries was obtained. Therefore, the evaluation team can only provide a qualitative assessment in response to the question as to whether the yield of trained farmers increased (see p. 40).

Indicator MZ-I.2 'in the six countries, RCN processing [volume] has increased by 50% (in metric tons)' was overachieved according to the figures reported by the project. The volume of RCN processed in 2020

[8] The official yield figures reported by the political partners have been used as current status values for the projects progress reports. However, the project calculated yield figures from the raw data of the yield survey, which are smaller than the official partner figures. For the purpose of this evaluation, the evaluation team used the figures derived from the raw data.

[9] This may also be due to the fact that the question 'have you received GAP training' in the questionnaire was bound to a time frame of the last five years. In the 2019 data collection, farmers who received training before 2014 were not counted as trained farmers (unless they had received further training after 2014).

increased to 212,010 t compared to the 2015 baseline of 80,300 t and the respective target of 120,750 t. The underlying data is regarded as reliable as it comes from processing associations and is reflected in the amount of RCN processors are buying and the export volume of kernels. The doubling of in-country processing within five years indicates substantial growth of the processing sector in the partner countries and is regarded as a major achievement by the political partners (Int_22, 30, 31). However, since the project did not measure the increase in processing volume for the companies that received direct training but for all processors in the intervention countries, the numbers cannot be directly attributed to the project's intervention, but were also determined by external factors, such as market dynamics. To what extent the project contributed to this achievement will be discussed on p. 29.

Indicator MZ-I.3 'in the six countries, investments from private and public sector actors have increased by 30% to improve the cashew value chain' was overachieved according to the numbers reported by the project, reaching a figure of 122 million euros in 2020 against a target of 85.2 million. Three types of investments were counted for this indicator: all investments made within the framework of the project (project budget from BMZ, SECO and EU Delegation to Ghana funds, eligible contributions of board members, MF projects), other development investments made by technical or financial partners in the intervention countries and government investments based on RCN export taxes (GIZ 2020d). While the indicator was clearly achieved, the evaluation team noted that the indicator itself did not measure the achievement of the project's module objective. Donor spending is the input of development interventions, but not a result or outcome. Moreover, while the leverage of partner investments through public private partnerships such as MF projects may be regarded as a success of the project, it does not say anything about the actual results, outcomes or impacts of the projects and interventions implemented with these funds. By contrast, it is questionable whether the competitiveness of the cashew value chain is increasing while it relies on an increasing amount of foreign donor money. Only the third category, government investments based on RCN taxing, may indicate an improvement of political conditions for the cashew sector in the partner countries. In this case, however, it would make sense to not only measure the tax volume, but the amount of government spending combined with qualitative data on what the money is actually used for. The indicator should be reformulated to capture government spending for sector improvement or the private investments of processing companies in the future.

Indicator MZ-I.4 'in the six countries, the volume of RCN sourced directly from farmers and farmer groups by processors has increased to 85,000 t' was overachieved reaching 114,612 t in 2020 compared to 70,000 t in 2015. The average production volume per farmer/year was calculated across all countries, based on the yield survey data. It was subsequently extrapolated from the survey data and multiplied by the total number of farmers selling directly to processors in the context of MF projects. It remains unclear whether the farmers in the yield survey differ from those involved in the MF projects. As the average yield varies greatly between the six countries, while MF projects and the number of farmers involved are distributed unevenly across the countries, the calculation based on means calculated across countries may produce unreliable and incorrect figures. For this reason, the evaluation team regards the indicator C.1 'the number of cashew producers selling RCN directly to processors' as more reliable, as the figure is derived from companies engaged in setting up direct supply chains with farmers in the context of MF projects. The target of the indicator was largely achieved, reaching 93,758 in 2020 against the target of 94,000 (2015 baseline: 70,000). MZ-I.4 is therefore, replaced by C.1. In conclusion, the evaluation team considers the module objective within the supply chain to be achieved.

Indicator MZ-I.5 'the number of jobs in the production, processing and trade of cashew products has increased by 10%, of which 40% were for women" was achieved, reaching 712,839 jobs in 2020 against a target of 700,000 (2015 baseline: 434,000 jobs), according to the figures reported by the project. Jobs were calculated separately for production, processing and trade. For **production**, figures were based on the theoretical assumption that the adoption of GAP by farmers implies a higher workload and that the additional work resulted in the creation of new jobs or job-equivalents. The average farm size was calculated from the yield survey and multiplied by the total number of farmers trained by the project. A total figure in hectares, labelled as the ha of cashew farmers directly trained, is then multiplied by the GAP adoption rate for all farmers in the

yield survey sample (defined as farmers applying pruning, weeding and fire protection on a regular basis) to derive the total area where GAP are being applied. It is assumed that the application of GAP needs 66 additional labour days per hectare. Therefore, the total area where GAP is applied is then multiplied by 66 and the outcome is divided by 225 (a full-time job is defined as 225 working days). Disaggregation by gender is an estimates, based on observations that women engage in harvesting. However, as harvesting was not included in the calculation of the GAP adoption rate, the accuracy of this estimation is questionable. The 40% of women formulated in the target was applied to the total figure of jobs reported without further validation, thus, not reflecting an empirical outcome.

The evaluation team drew the following conclusions on the calculation of production figures: **Firstly**, average values from different data sources (yield survey, number of farmers trained) and estimates (66 labour days/ha for GAP adoption) were mixed and used to calculate total values, which may have produced inaccurate figures. **Secondly,** changes in indicator values depended heavily on the numbers of farmers trained and changes in farm size. The former is primarily a project output, while the latter is not solely related to the project's activities, but rather a confounding variable.[10] **Thirdly,** GAP adoption among farmers and the amount of additional work done is difficult to measure and hard to estimate. Asking farmers a simple yes/no question is not sufficient to determine whether farmers are adhering to the right frequencies of weeding, pruning or application of pesticides and whether they are applying the techniques correctly and thoroughly (Buama 2019). Although the 2019 yield survey instrument included more detailed questions on the frequency of applying different GAPs, a certain level of uncertainty remained regarding the frequency and quality of application and thus the time invested. Findings from stakeholder interviews also indicated that the workload from GAP depends on and varies with the skills of the worker, the condition of the plantation (for example, the distance and shape of trees) and the available tools such as brush cutters or chain saws (Int_20, 25, 26). **Fourthly,** the evaluation team feels that a simple translation of the additional workload into jobs (or job-equivalents) may not reflect the reality of farming life. Findings from the production survey and the stakeholder interviews (Int_20, 26, 27, 30, 32, 33) indicated that only a variable share of the work is done by hired labour. The majority of farmers either rely on family members or do more work themselves to cope with the additional work. Also, while the indicator covered full-time equivalents (and not only hired labour), the figures did not reflect the extent to which the additional workload done by family members is compensated by a higher income, which benefits the person doing the work. An indicator phrased 'jobs', however, should not only cover a workload, but work that is related to some sort of income or revenue. In conclusion, the figures presented for production described an estimated additional workload instead of measuring jobs created.

The figure for the **number of jobs created in processing** is derived from different sources: for some countries, employment numbers came from processors, associations or political partners. Where official numbers were not available, figures were derived from the processing volume (MZ-I 2). For each country, the workload for processing 1,000 metric tons of RCN was estimated on the basis of the degree of mechanisation. The estimation was based on interviews with processing companies. Subsequently, the coefficient was multiplied by increases in processing volume in the respective country. For disaggregation by gender, a share of 80% woman was estimated. While the share of woman decreases as mechanisation increases (because woman normally do the low-skilled work), findings from the processor survey and stakeholder interviews (Int_29, 31, 34, 35) indicated that a share of 80% is not unrealistic. In conclusion, while the number of jobs created in processing is regarded as realistic, the indicator resembles the attribution gap between the project intervention and the observed change because it does not focus on companies that received direct training, but on all companies in the project countries.

[10] The average farm size of the farmers sampled in the yield survey increased from 4.4 ha (in 2015) to 5.3 ha (in 2019). It is not clear whether this change in farm size is due to structural differences of the samples or to farmers planting new cashew fields. ComCashew also provided training in establishing new farms promoting the use of improved planting material. To what extent this explains an 18% increase in farm size between the 2015 and 2019 sample remains unclear.

Figures for the **number of jobs created in trade** were derived from the national export volume of RCN: export volume was multiplied by an estimated labour quantity required, which was derived from the cost of transporting RCN to the port and of preparing it for shipment (packing and loading). The methodology for the calculation of this labour quantity was changed during the project, leading to very different figures (the baseline was 96,000 before being changed to 12,577). However, the target value was not recalculated on the basis of the new assumptions, which did not allow for a comparison between target and current values. Due to this lack of a reference value to the number presented as current v, no assessment can be made as to whether the target was achieved or not.

Indicator MZ-I.6 'providing an additional annual income of 30.2 million euros for men and 20.2 million euros for women from cashew production and processing' was not achieved according to the reported figures. The current status figure of 372 million euros is even below the baseline of 461 million euros. This is due to a change in the data source and calculation of figures for production income. While the baseline and the target were calculated on the basis of a small number of economic case studies, the current figure is based on the yield survey. For the latter, the average net-income per household was taken from the survey data and multiplied by the total number of farmers trained. Besides the incomparability of the current figures with the baseline and target, the evaluation team would like to highlight a number of other methodological problems. **Firstly**, the average net-income per household is calculated for all farmers in the sample and not just for farmers who received training. However, the group of trained farmers may differ from those who did not receive training. **Secondly**, the total income figure depended depending heavily on the number of farmers trained. Consequently, the total income of farmers increases if the number of farmers being trained increases, even if the average net income per farmer household remains stable or decreases. Looking at a change in average household income figure would, therefore, make a better indicator. The average household income of the yield survey sample changed from 483 euros in 2015 to 537 euros in 2019 (using a constant RCN farm gate price from 2015 to exclude price changes as confounding variable), demonstrating a significant increase of 11%. However, **it raises questions as to how farmers were able to increase their income, if they were not able to increase their yield**, according to the yield survey data (see indicator MZ-I.1 above). It may be due to the increase in average farm size. However, if farmers had planted new cashew fields between 2015 and 2019, it is unlikely that these fields would have produced yield in 2019 as the trees would not yet be mature. Therefore, the coincidence of a falling yield and a rising income suggests instead that there were structural differences between the 2015 and 2019 samples or further inconsistencies in the data that would require a disaggregation by country to be further examined. In conclusion, income figures for production showed significant inconsistencies and did not provide a clear picture as to whether the income of cashew farmers has increased.

Income figures for processing were calculated by multiplying the number of jobs created (MZ-I.5) with an average or minimum wage per country. It was, therefore, the second indicator derived from processing volume (MZ-I.2) and because the minimum wage is an external factor that is not influenced by the project, it raises the question as to which additional value the indicator can contribute to the assessment of the project's achievement of the module objective.

The evaluation team came to the conclusion that the figures reported for indicator MZ-I.1, MZ-I.2, MZ-I.3, MZ-I.5 and MZ-I.6 did not sufficiently indicate whether the module objective was achieved. Thus, the qualitative findings from interviews and the online surveys were used to supplement the assessment of effectiveness. The score for dimension 1 was assessed as follows: a maximum of ten points was allocated to the achievement of the module objective within each of the four project components A, B, C and D.

MZ-I.1 was supposed to reflect achievements within the production component. According to the yield survey data, the project did not bring about any improvement in terms of increasing yield among farmers. However, as described above, the evaluation team considered the yield survey data inconsistent and unsuitable for describing the project's performance within component A. Once again, MZ-I.5 and MZ-I.6 did not provide a clear picture of job and income creation in production as they were also affected by inconsistencies in the yield

survey data. However, findings from the interviews and the online FBO survey showed that project stakeholders and representatives of FBOs have observed increased yield among trained famers, even though they cannot quantify it (for further discussion see dimension 2, hypothesis 1). The evaluation team therefore considers it plausible that at least some of the farmers who received training were able to improve their yields. As a result, the project scores 5 out of 10 points for component A.

MZ-I.2 was supposed to measure the project's achievement of the module objective within the processing component (component B). According to the reported figures, the project overachieved the indicator. While the data is regarded as reliable, the extent to which the increase in national production volume can be attributed to the project intervention is still unclear (see discussion of hypothesis two under dimension 2). MZ-I.5 and MZ-I.6 only reproduce this attribution gap as they are also based on the national processing volume. Consequently, the project scores only five out of ten points for component B.

MZ-I.4 was supposed to measure the project's achievement of the module objective within the supply chain component (component C). It was replaced by C.1, capturing the number of farmers selling RCN directly to processors. The indicator was fully achieved, reflecting the project's success in component C. As a result, the project scores 10 out of 10 points for component C.

MZ-I.3 was supposed to measure the project's achievement of the module objective within the sector organisation component (component D). However, the reported data did not provide any information on the achievement of the indicator, which is supposed to capture private investments or public spending for the development of the cashew sector. However, based on the qualitative data of the interviews, the evaluation team verified that four out of six partner countries have introduced an RCN export tax, which is – at least partly – used for public investments in the cashew sector (Int_30, 31, 32, 34, 35, for further discussion see dimension 2 hypothesis 4 and the paragraph on programme indicator 3 on p. 53). Furthermore, the increase in the national processing volume also suggests that private companies did make significant investments in the expansion of their operations. Consequently, the project scores 5 out of 10 points for component D.

Effectiveness dimension 1 – Achievement of the (intended) objectives – scores **25 out of 40 points.**

Effectiveness– Dimension 2: Contribution to achievement of objectives

Whereas a number of baseline studies from the start of the project in 2009/2010 do exist, the evaluation team was not commissioned to include them in the analysis. It was not, therefore, possible to establish a counterfactual evaluation design. The question as to the extent to which the project's interventions contributed to the achievement of module objectives was examined using a qualitative contribution analysis based on stakeholder interviews and the two ex-post surveys of FBOs and processors.

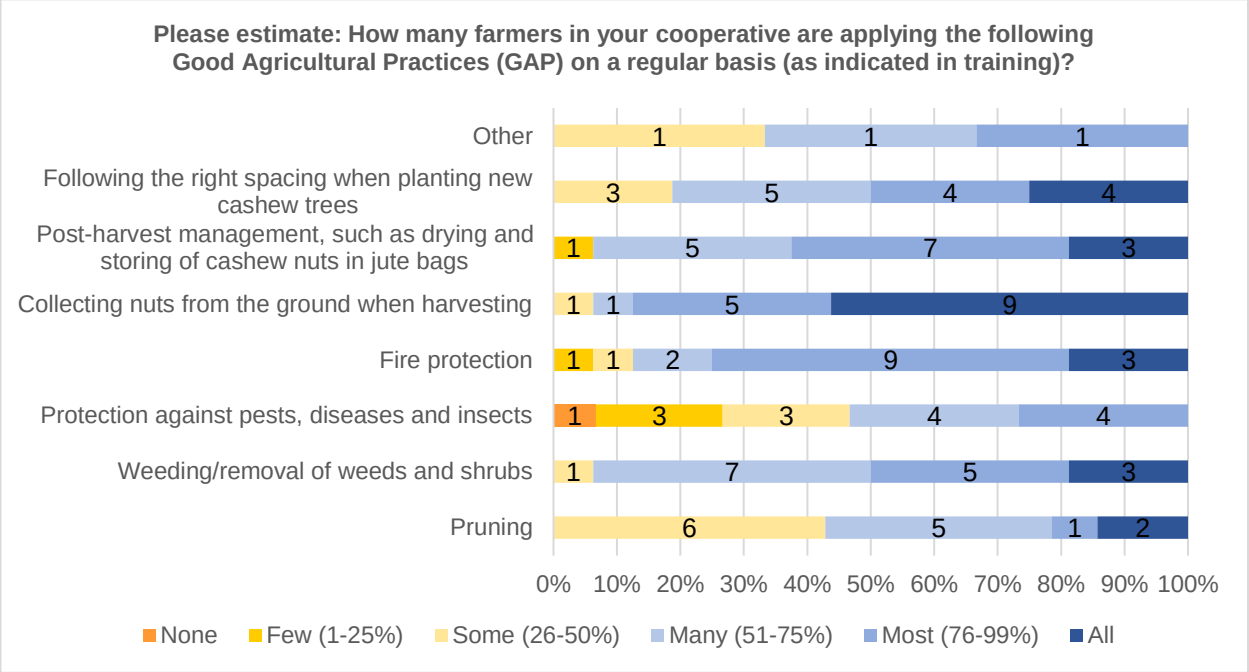
The analysis was structured on the basis of the four major results hypotheses. Each hypothesis underlies one of the project components as depicted in the theory of change. As outputs were developed ex-post by the evaluation team and were not agreed with BMZ, no target values exist. For this reason, an assessment of the achievements of outputs lacks clear reference values and can only be conducted in a descriptive manner to inform the starting point of the contribution analysis. Internal and external factors that contributed to or impeded project objective achievement as well as alternative explanatory factors for project objective achievement are included in the assessment.

Table 6: Selected results hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 (project component A) (activity – output – outcome)	Training farmers in GAP (activity/output) and improving their access to improved planting material (activity/output) enables farmers to achieve higher yields (kg/ha) and improve kernel quality. Farmers can sell their higher-quality RCN yield at a good price and increase their income.
Main assumptions	• RCN farm gate prices stay within a range that allows farmers to transfer increasing yields into higher income.
Risks/unintended results	• Price volatility/falling RCN farm gate prices may diminish farmers' income. Low prices for selling RCN may also limit farmers' motivation to apply GAP/use improved planting material. • Farmers rely on the work of their children to apply GAP. • The use of chemicals for pest control may harm humans and the environment.
Alternative explanation	None
Confirmed/partly confirmed/not confirmed	Confirmed

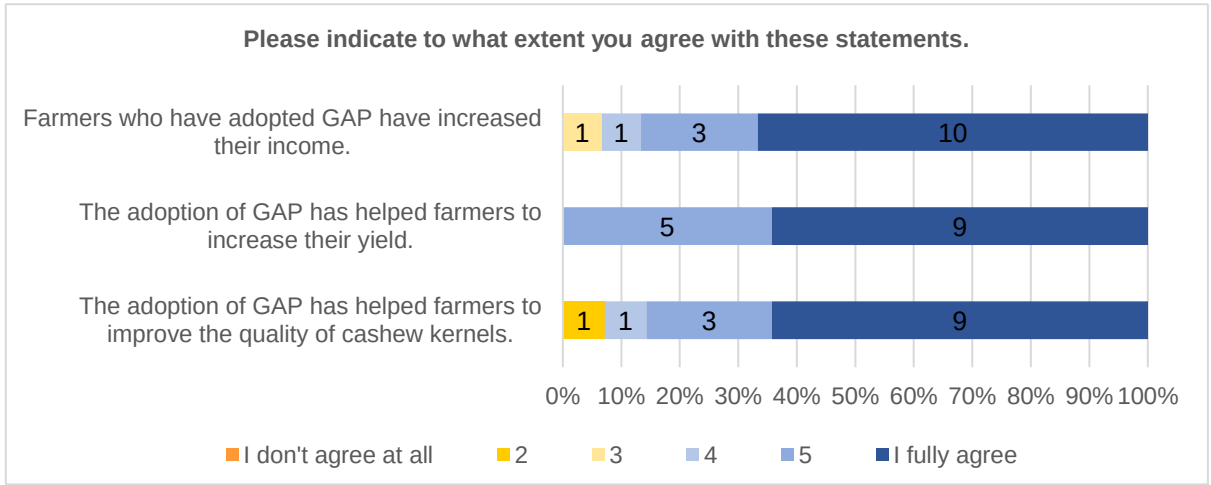
Hypothesis 1 refers to **project component A**, which covers project interventions in the sphere of cashew production. At output level, the project and its partners trained 302,804 farmers in phase 3. Since the beginning of the first project phase in 2010, 721,113 farmers have been trained. Moreover, the project provided funding (total volume: EUR 1,106,226) for nine MF projects for the improvement and distribution of improved planting material, which were implemented by research institutes and FBOs. In the context of the MF projects, 14 ha of scion gardens for research into planting material were established in Ghana. To assess the impact of GAP training on yield, it is important that farmers apply GAP (such as pruning, weeding, pest control and fire protection) at the right intervals and using the right techniques. Findings of the project's yield survey indicate that the average GAP adoption rate for farmers who received training within the last five years is 70%. This is largely confirmed by the findings of the production survey: Figure 6 shows that the majority of FBO representatives estimated that the adoption of GAP among their farmers is above 50%. However, the figure also shows that the application of pruning and pest control was lower than for other GAP. The main reasons for not adopting these GAP are apparently the amount of work involved, the high cost of hiring labour and the high cost for buying chemicals for pest control. These findings suggest that the project's implementation strategy could be improved by combining GAP training with further support for the supply of the required chemicals and strategies to cope with labour cost. Training in business skills, for instance, could help farmers to calculate the return of labour cost and make informed decisions on hiring labour.

Figure 6: FBO representatives' assessment of GAP adoption by farmers (Source: FBO survey)



Representatives of FBOs were also asked whether farmers applying GAP were able to increase their yield and income. The result presented in Figure 7 shows that they are strongly convinced of the benefits of GAP in terms of farmers' yield and income. These findings were largely confirmed in the stakeholder interviews. Political partners, researchers and processors who have been working with FBOs and farmers in the context of MF projects or GAP training are convinced that the proper application of GAP increases yield and kernel quality (Int_20, 22, 24-27, 30, 31, 33). While it has been observed that pruning and thinning have a positive impact on yield, it has also been observed that harvesting and post-harvest techniques such as the proper drying and storing of the nuts have a positive impact on the quality of kernels. Most stakeholders also stated that higher yields and better kernel quality improve farmers' incomes (Int_20, 14, 25, 26, 30, 31, 33).

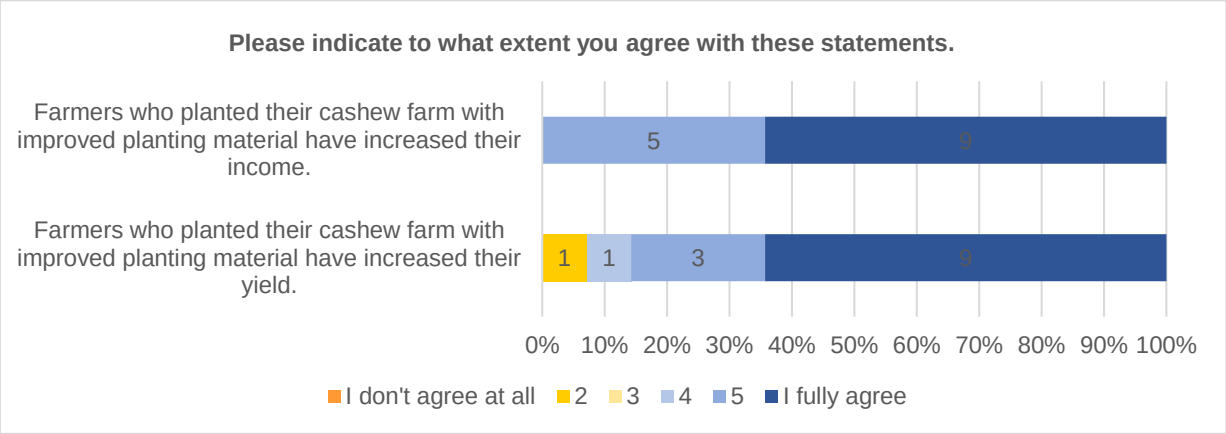
Figure 7: FBO representatives' observations on the impact of GAP on yield, kernel quality and income (Source: FBO survey)



Within the framework of MF projects in Ghana, Burkina Faso, Benin and Côte d'Ivoire, researchers were able to develop new cashew varieties that bring significantly higher yields and better kernel quality in trial plantings (Int_20, 27, 32, 33). Trials were conducted with farmers to select planting varieties that are particular suited to the climate of the region. While conventional trees yield no more than 600 kg/ha, improved planting material

may produce up to 2,000 kg/ha under optimum conditions (Int_17). Therefore, the potential for farmers to increase their yield is regarded as high as long as they get access to improved scions. FBOs are also very aware of this potential. Figure 8 shows that FBOs participating in the survey observed that farmers who planted fields with improved planting material were able to increase their yield and income.

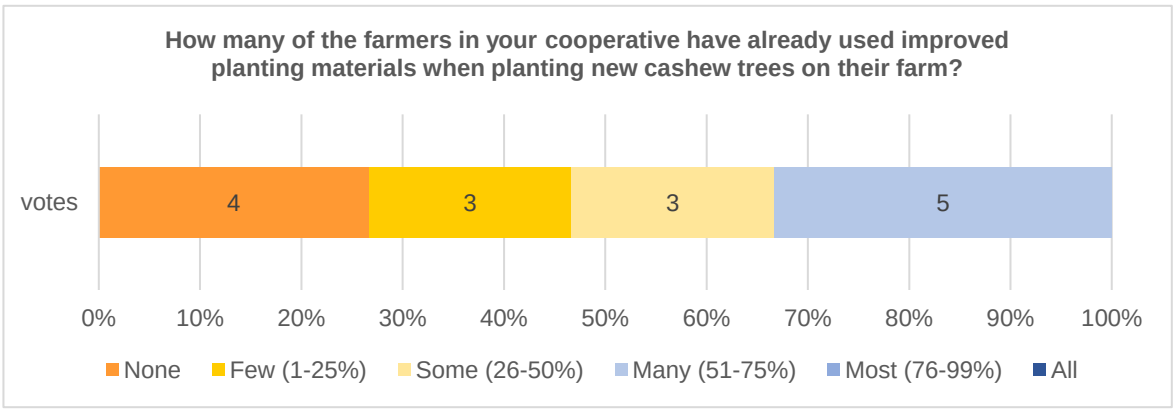
Figure 8: FBO representatives' observations on the impact of improved planting material (Source: FBO survey)



While the research into planting material was quite successful, there is still a lot of potential regarding its distribution to farmers. According to the project's monitoring data, the area planted with improved planting material increased significantly to 151,017 ha in 2020 (against the 2015 baseline of 31,254 ha). The material was distributed by political partners and FBOs in cooperation with the research institutes. While more land (87,716 ha) was planted with improved material in Mozambique than anywhere else, the corresponding areas in Benin (4,186 ha), Burkina Faso (4,145 ha) and Côte d'Ivoire (2,078 ha) are still rather small. In addition, 10 out of 15 FBOs that answered the relevant survey question indicated that the proportion of their farmers already using improved planting material is rather low (Figure 9). It is reported that the high price of seedlings and the long distances to nurseries limit farmers' access to scions or seedlings.

In Ghana, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture was able to increase the number of tree nurseries from 2 two 29 distributed over the cashew growing regions and the area of scion banks from 2 to 26 ha. According to MoFA and the Cocoa Research institute of Ghana (which is conducting the research into cashew planting material), about 40% of farmers in Ghana now have access to improved cashew varieties (Int_20, 22). By contrast, researchers in Burkina Faso and Benin have reported that farmers' access to improved planting material is still low. They also stressed the need for resources and follow up projects to scale up distribution (Int_27, 32).

Figure 9: FBO representatives' estimates of the distribution of improved planting materials among farmers (Source: FBO survey)



Researchers have also stressed the need for a stable long-term funding of their projects because the development, selection and distribution of planting material takes many years. Once new varieties are planted for trials, it takes five to ten years for them to mature and for their yield to become visible. Therefore, some have noted that the two-year time frame for the implementation of MF projects is too short and has made it difficult for them to address research aspects that are important and relevant but need more time (Int_27, 32).

In conclusion, the evaluation team considers hypothesis 1 to be largely confirmed. All involved stakeholders and representatives of the target group are convinced that GAP training and the use of improved planting material helps increase yield, kernel quality and farmers' income. Two main obstacles that limit the results at outcome level were identified. **Firstly**, farmers' adoption of GAP is constrained by the cost of inputs such as chemicals for pest control and the cost of hiring labour. Extending business training for farmers may help them calculate and deal with this additional cost.[11] **Secondly**, farmers' limited access to improved planting material in some of the partner countries was a big constraint on the impact of research and should be addressed in projects focusing on the distribution of seedlings and scion through nurseries, scion banks, nursery men and improved grafting techniques.

Table 7: Selected results hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 (activity – output – outcome)	Training company staff and linking up processors and financial institutions (outputs/activities) increases the competitiveness of the processing sector in the six partner countries, indicated by an increase in the volume of RCN processed (outcome). Expanding processing businesses create new jobs and additional income for workers.
Main assumptions	• Banks provide finance to processors. • The regulatory framework for processors remains stable or improves (see hypothesis 4). • RCN supply remains stable or improves (see hypothesis 1).
Risks/unintended results	• Processors are not able to cope with price volatility. • Processors are unable to access finance. • Occupational safety issues • Processors do not have access to new processing technology.
Alternative explanation	• High international demand for cashew nuts • Growing domestic market for cashew • Improved legal framework for cashew processing regarding taxes, subsidies and government support (ComCashew may have contributed through project component D, see Hypothesis 4) • Improved quantity and quality of RCN supply (ComCashew may have contributed by linking up processors and FBOs within Component C, see also Hypothesis 3)
Confirmed/partly confirmed/not confirmed	Partly confirmed

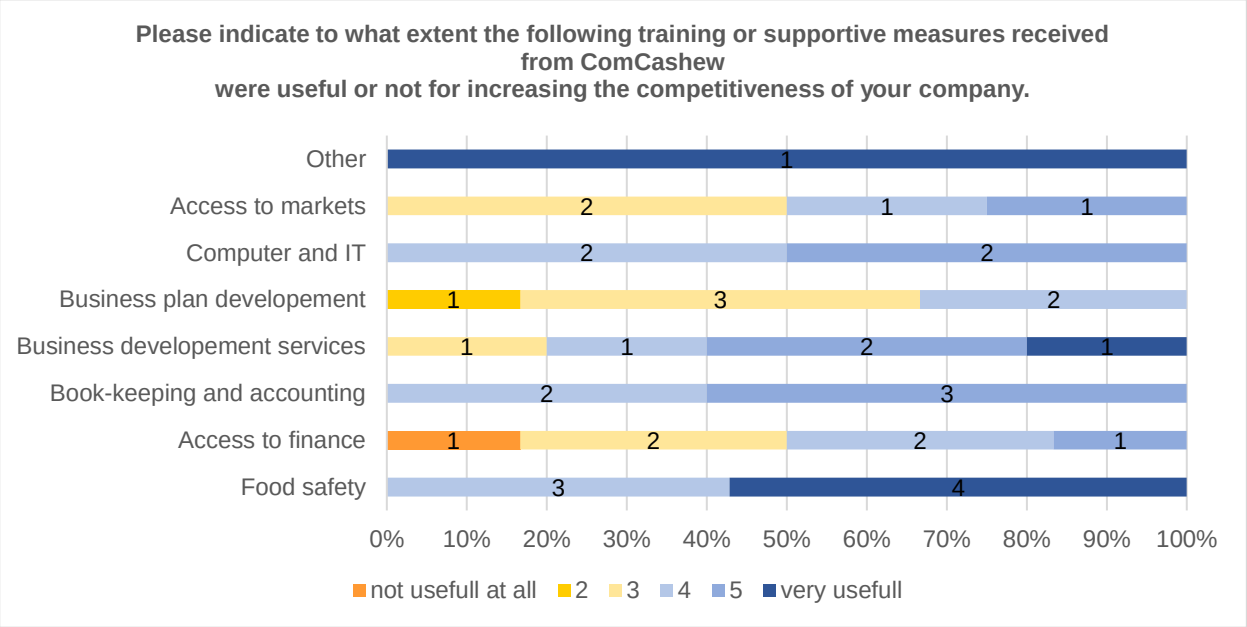
Hypothesis 2 refers to **project component B,** which covers the project's interventions in the sphere of cashew processing. At output level, the project and its partners provided technical assistance to 28 processing companies. They provided 14 companies with training in access to finance and linked up 13 of them with financial institutions. In addition, they conducted 13 training courses for managers. Overall, 255 processor employees received training. Moreover, the project contributed to the funds of three MF projects related to processors[12] and published 16 fact sheets, training manuals for processing staff and recipe books (to support domestic consumption).

[11] This was indicated in some of the open text box answers in the FBO survey.

[12] One project focused on the processing of the cashew apple; another sought to increase processors' market access by enhancing the exchange and transfer of knowledge.

Figure 10 shows that processors who participated in the online survey considered the training courses on food safety, book-keeping and accounting, and computer and IT to be very useful or rather useful for increasing the competitiveness of their company. Regarding training courses on access to finance, business plan development and access to markets, some of the processors considered them not very useful. While some of the processor associations interviewed confirmed the usefulness of training courses (Int_23, 29, 34, 35), they also pointed to the challenges faced by their members regarding access to finance and the acquisition of raw material. One association reported that even though companies know how to apply for finance after receiving training, they are not able to access bank loans as they cannot raise the required collateral (Int_23). Processors in African countries can only buy RCN during the harvest season, which lasts three to four months. Structured financing and a sound business plan are required to buy enough RCN within this short period to have enough raw material to use the installed capacity of their company throughout the whole year. Volatile RCN and kernel prices put further stress on processors: if they stock up with RCN during the harvest season, they make losses if kernel prices drop throughout the year. Interviews indicate that training and support from the project has not yet been sufficient to enable processors to cope with these problems. Moreover, banks are reluctant to provide finance as long as companies cannot prove how they will mitigate those risks (Int_23, 26, 28-30, 35). Another big challenge for processors, which the project has not yet addressed, is the availability, acquisition and implementation of recent and proper processing technology. Many processors still rely on manual labour for the shelling of nuts and other work steps, limiting their competitiveness. There is also a lack of qualified staff capable of installing and maintaining new machinery (Int_23, 29, 34).

Figure 10: Usefulness of training for processors (source: processor survey). The number of cases is low as not all processors participating in the survey received the relevant training



As discussed on page 36 for indicator MZ.I-2, the processing volume in the six partner countries increased twofold from 80,300 tons in 2015 to 160,741 tons in 2020. However, as the numbers do not refer to processors who received training or support from the project, but to all processing companies in the countries, it is questionable whether the project's supportive measures for processors described above really made a significant contribution to the increase in national processing volumes. Also, processors are rather reluctant to draw a direct causal link between the training and support provided by the project to the increase in national processing volume. They prefer to point to market dynamics and an increasing global demand for cashew kernels, which has created strong incentives for the expansion of processing capacities (Int_15, 28, 29, 34, 35). However, they do mention other explanatory factors that are linked to the project interventions within component C and D. Improving legal framework conditions and government support as well as improved supply chains and RCN supply through MF projects may also have contributed to increased processor

competitiveness. These factors will be discussed as hypothesis 3 and 4 below. The fact that processors are referring to the ways in which they benefitted from project component C and D underscores the assumption outlined in Section 4.2 that the four project components reinforce each other.

The evaluation team can confirm the last segment of the results hypothesis: increases in processing volume translate into the creation of new jobs and additional income for workers (Int_23, 29, 34, 35). However, in conclusion, results hypothesis 2 was only partly confirmed. While the training and supportive measures provided to processors and their staff may have helped some increase their processing volume, others still face major challenges that limit their competitiveness. A range of different external factors led to the increase in the national processing volume, as explained above.

Table 8: Selected results hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 (activity – output – outcome)	MF projects, co-funded by the project (activity/output), contribute to strengthened direct supply chains between farmers and processors, indicated by an increasing number of farmers selling directly to processors (outcome indicator C.1). This results in a better quantity and quality of RCN supply for processors and establishes supportive structures for farmers.
Main assumptions	• GAP training provided by processors helps farmers to increase the quantity and quality of production (see hypothesis 1). • Farmers sell their yields directly to the respective processors and not to other traders.
Risks/unintended results	Price volatility/falling RCN farm gate prices may undermine farmers' income. Low prices for selling RCN may also limit farmers' motivation to apply GAP.
Alternative explanation	None
Confirmed/partly confirmed/not confirmed	Confirmed

Hypothesis 3 refers to project component C, which covers project activities relating to the improvement of supply chains. Summarising the achievements at output level, the project co-funded 10 MF projects on supply chain topics (total volume: 1,040,346 euros) and provided an estimated 732 advisory services to link up actors across the value chain. Those MF projects were implemented by processors to establish a direct supply chain with groups of farmers. Processors provided support and training on GAP to farmers. In return, the farmers were encouraged to consistently sell their harvest to these processors. Processors often pay a premium price if farmers apply GAP and can deliver a higher quality and/or quantity of nuts. It is very clear that these MF projects are responsible for increasing the number of cashew producers selling RCN directly to processors from 70,000 in 2015 to 93,758 in 2020 (outcome indicator C.1), because processing companies have reported these numbers, which were obtained from the monitoring of their MF projects (M&E master tool). Further indicators based on the monitoring of MF projects also show a positive trend: the amount of cashew kernels, registered in traceability systems (market information systems) and traded from processor to roaster (outcome indicator C.2) have increased tremendously from 15,000 tons in 2015 to 87,354 tons in 2020. Furthermore, the number of international buyers involved in the establishment and development of direct supply chains as a result of their involvement in MF projects has increased from 15 (2015) to 19 (2020).

Stakeholders, such as political partners, board members, processors and processing associations have also confirmed that the MF projects initiated and funded by ComCashew contributed to the increase in farmers selling directly to processors and the volume of direct RCN registered in traceability systems. They also report an improvement in the efficiency of supply chains due to ComCashew's engagement in and co-funding of MF projects (Int_6, 7, 15, 25, 26, 30, 31, 33-35). Processors reported that the GAP training provided and the direct linkages to FBOs led to an improvement in the quality and quantity of RCN they are able to buy (Int_25, 26, 29, 34). Some also stressed that that working directly with farmers through an MF contributed to better mutual

understanding between processors and farmers, building trust and stability within the supply chain and a better exchange of market information (Int_6, 7, 15, 34). In conclusion, the project's contribution to the increased efficiency of supply chains can be confirmed.

The evaluation team identified problems relating to the administrative handling of MF projects by the GIZ office as a main constraining factor for the implementation strategy of the supply chain component. Both board members and processors implementing MF projects reported that complicated and bureaucratic administrative requirements hampered and delayed implementation (Int_6, 7, 15, 22, 24). In some cases, the payment of funds was delayed to the point where activities could not be carried out as planned, putting the success of the project at risk (ibid.). Other MF partners noted that the requirements for reporting to ComCashew were changed during the implementation of the project, causing trouble because the newly required information for reporting was not documented before (Int_24). As a result, some MF partners stated that they would not engage in an MF project with ComCashew again unless these administrative problems were solved (Int_6, 15). Consequently, the evaluation team recommends working together with partners to rethink the administrative structure of the Matching Fund for any future project phases.

Table 9: Selected results hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 (activity – output – outcome)	Consultancy services for political partners (activity/output) enable them to improve national framework conditions for processing and production (outcome).
Main assumptions	• The political landscape remains stable, partners do not withdraw from engagement with ComCashew and keep cashew politics on their agenda
Risks/unintended results	• Changes of political priorities in the partner countries • Conflicts between partner countries limit exchange and collaboration
Alternative explanation	None
Confirmed/partly confirmed/not confirmed	Confirmed

Hypothesis 4 refers to project component D, which covers the project's activities in supporting governments and linking up different stakeholders in the cashew sector at both national and international level. To summarise the project's outputs, staff provided consultancy services to government institutions and advisory services to local or regional industry associations on 284 and 100 occasions respectively. Such services can be joint workshops or trainings, experts giving inputs on certain aspects or issues, or reviewing strategy papers. Moreover, the project contributed to the organisation of 98 exchange formats connecting stakeholders, such as network meetings, conferences or exhibitions.

Findings from interviews with political partners, sector organisations and board members indicate that ComCashew helped raise awareness among African governments and international buyers of the potential of cashew production and in-country processing for the creation of jobs and additional income for farmers and workers (Int_11, 12, 14, 22, 29, 31). One of the political partners stated: 'We think that ComCashew has enabled the government to realise the opportunities that cashew nuts can offer for job and wealth creation. Indeed, the sector can make a substantial contribution to our trade balance' (Int_31). Moreover, the project's advice seems to be respected and appreciated by governments and business actors alike. Stakeholders valued the project for its neutral position and perspective, which was detached from any particular national or business interests. Instead of implementing an interest-driven agenda, the project instead acted as a mediator, connecter and facilitator in the background, creating protected spaces for government officials and business actors to exchange their experiences and share and disclose their information on market developments and the challenges the sector is facing. Stakeholders reported that ComCashew contributed to the creation of mutual

understanding between very different actors, which helped harmonise policies and strategies across countries and segments of the value chain (Int_6, 7, 11, 14, 15, 22, 26, 29).

In addition, political partners stated that the advice and support provided by the project significantly contributed to the creation and implementation of sector policies and strategies. In Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, the project supported the creation of the Conseil Burkinabé de L'Anacarde and the Conseil du Coton et de l'Anacarde, both departments of the Ministries of Agriculture that are dedicated to the development and implementation of cashew sector strategies (Int_30, 31, 33). Both countries introduced a tax on RCN exports and are using the revenues from this tax to finance the government's cashew strategy. Furthermore, both countries implemented a bundle of measures, including tax relief/advantages for local processors to incentivise investments, organising trade fairs for processing technology and bank guarantees for local processors to help them access funds from local banks. The representatives of the association of processors in Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire consider those sector policies to be good and helpful for increasing the competitiveness of local processing (Int_29, 35). Moreover, political partners have confirmed that ComCashew's technical advice, review of strategy papers and expertise contributed to the creation of these sector strategies (Int_30, 31, 33). One political partner expressed doubt that his country would have created its own department for the development of the cashew sector or even a solid sector strategy without ComCashew (Int_31). In conclusion, the evaluation team considers hypothesis 4 to be confirmed.

In this context, the Master Training Programme was identified as a key feature of the project's implementation strategy, facilitating exchange between stakeholders and building human capacity in all segments of the value chain. The MTP was designed to be a practical training course, covering all relevant aspects of cashew production, processing and trade, such as GAP, improved planting material, processing technology, food safety, global market dynamics, supply chain management, certification and also cross-cutting issues such as gender and climate as well as soft skills such as personal development, leadership and communication. Stakeholders from all segments of the value chain, such as representatives of FBOs, staff of processors, government officials or academics and researchers participated in the programme, and participants go through all components of the training – regardless of their background. The intention here is to help all stakeholders gain a better understanding of the whole value chain. To date, the MTP is not institutionalised in a local partner institution, but organised and funded by ComCashew.

The feedback on the MTP given by stakeholders during evaluation interviews was very positive. Political partners and processors alike stated that staff members who took the MTP are now better qualified, have a better understanding of the whole cashew sector and contributed to the development and professionalisation of their organisation. They also stressed that the MTP is an important platform for exchange and networking, because actors in all countries and all over the value chain met and completed the same training. This created mutual understanding and facilitated the creation of informal networks across countries and professions, thereby supporting the transfer of knowledge and the harmonisation of policies (Int_12, 14, 22, 26, 29, 30, 31, 33-35). It can therefore be concluded that the MTP contributed to the organisation and professionalisation of the sector as well as the capacities of government institutions and sector organisations.

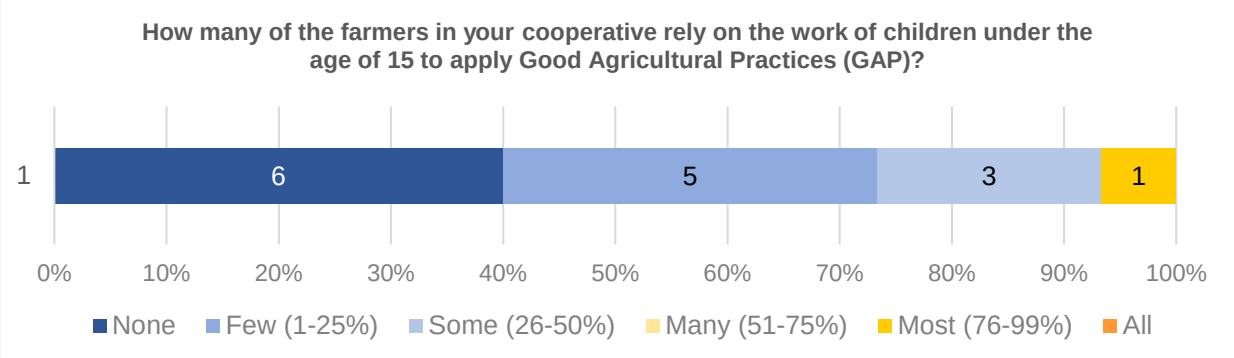
In conclusion, three impact hypotheses were confirmed, while one was only partly confirmed due to an attributions gap between the project's intervention (training and support for selected processors) and the relevant outcome indicator capturing national processing volume. Effectiveness dimension 2 – Contribution to achievement of objectives – scores **35 out of 40 points.**

Effectiveness – Dimension 3: Unintended results

Unintended results, the occurrence of risks and counter measures taken by the project was assessed on the basis of stakeholder interviews and the processor and FBO surveys.
Regarding the examination of unintended results, the project assessed whether children work on cashew farms and if farmers rely on the work of children to apply GAP. The assumption is that if the application of GAP requires additional work, it may result in an increase in child labour. Figure 11 shows that FBO representatives have observed that only some farmers rely on child labour to apply GAP. Only two representatives indicated that the application of GAP has led to an increase in work done by children under the age of 15 (FBO survey). Findings from the interviews with stakeholders (political partners, consultants and researchers working with farmers) suggest that children support their parents in the cashew fields, particularly by collecting the nuts from the ground during the harvesting season. Stakeholders also reported that children work in their family's fields during school holidays and that the work does not prevent children from going to school. The work children do in cashew fields is not perceived as particularly hard and stakeholders did not observe any forced child labour or human trafficking connected to cashew farming (Int_7, 27, 30, 32, 33). In conclusion, the evaluation team could not find evidence that GAP training and the application of GAP leads to an increase of child labour under exploitative conditions.

Nor did stakeholders observe any negative impact on farmer's health or the environment relating to the application of agrochemicals in cashew fields. Although GAP include the application of chemicals, pesticides are generally used as required to treat pests that occur and not in a large-scale preventive manner as is common with other crops (Int_30-33). Moreover, the project responded to this risk by making the responsible handling of chemicals and personal health protection part of GAP training for farmers (Int_36). Consequently, the evaluation team does not consider the risk associated with the application of pesticides to be particularly high.

Figure 11: FBO representatives estimates of the extent to which farmers rely on the work of children to apply GAP (Source: FBO survey)



A major risk for the achievement of the module objective, which the project outlined in the proposal, is the high volatility of RCN and kernel prices impacting farmers and processors. Indeed, prices underwent a boom between 2015 and 2018, followed by a fierce drop in 2018/2019.[13] The low price had a negative impact on the income of farmers and may also discourage farmers from applying GAP because the revenue they expect from increased yield may not cover the additional expense or the work involved (Int_6, 7, 11, 15, 30). However, FBO representatives did not report low RCN prices as a major challenge for farmers or a constraint for the adoption of GAP (processor survey). The volatility of prices also put stress on processors as they have to buy RCN within a 3–4 four-month time frame and keep them in stock for the rest of the year. If the price drops between

[13] Average RCN farmgate prices in African countries, for instance, almost doubled from 0.7 USD/kg in 2015 to 1.3 USD/kg in early 2018 and dropped below 0,6 USD/kg in late 2018/ early 2019 (Derks 2020).

buying RCN and selling the processed kernels, the processors make a loss. This is one of the main challenges for processors reported in the survey (processor survey).

The development of the price of RCN and kernels is an external risk driven by global market dynamics and cannot be influenced by the project. However, the evaluation team acknowledges that the whole project concept is geared towards strengthening the sector's competitiveness and, therefore, making farmers and processors more resilient to price drops. If farmers have better yields, they are in a better position to cope with income losses due to price drops. Moreover, the establishment of direct supply chains with partnerships between processors and FBOs can help farmers and processors reach a mutual understanding. This, in turn, facilitates the conclusion of agreements on contracts and prices for buying/selling RCN that are favourable for both sides and increases the stability and reliability of RCN supply/off-taking in times of high volatility (Int_11, 15, 24, 26, 29, 34). By contrast, training courses for processors on the development of business plans for structured financing and the mitigation of risks from changing market prices were not particularly successful. As described above, local processors are still struggling with the management of financing RCN purchasing and sales, and have problems accessing bank loans (Int_23, 26, 28-30, 35).

Another risk associated with processing is occupational safety. Some processing companies rely on manual labour to shell cashew nuts, which exposes workers – the majority of whom are female – to the toxic nutshell liquid. Processor associations and project staff have reported that providing workers with gloves and/or coconut oil to protect their hands, was introduced across the region and has minimised the negative impact on the health of workers. The project also helped processors automate the shelling process, which completely by-passes workers' exposure to nutshell liquid (Int_23, 29, 30, 34, 35; Nill 2015). The project also helped processors get food safety certificates, which, according to project staff, greatly increased the transparency of the sector and contributed to the implementation of safety standards for workers (Int_37).

The project has not yet implemented a systematic **assessment of unintended results in its monitoring system**. Questions relating to child labour, for instance, were not included in the yield survey instruments. Only figures on the work done by people over the age of 15 were collected (2019 yield survey instrument). The evaluation team therefore recommends including the monitoring of unintended results and risks, such as child labour, health and environmental impacts of agrochemicals and occupational safety issues in the project's monitoring framework.

The project team could not identify any unintended **positive results at outcome level**, as the broad results framework of the projects captures all positive results that have been observed.

In conclusion, the evaluation team considers unintended negative effects to be rather low. However, the project has not implemented a systematic monitoring of unintended results. Effectiveness dimension 4 – Unintended results – scores **17 out of 20 points.**

4.4 Impact

This section analyses and assesses the impact of the project. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the GIZ project evaluation matrix (see Annex 1).

Summarising assessment and rating of impact

Table 10: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: impact

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Impact	Higher-level (intended) development changes/results	25 out of 30 points
	Contribution to higher-level (intended) development results/changes	40 out of 40 points
	Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development results/changes	25 out of 30 points
Impact score and rating		Score: **90 out of 100 points** Rating: **Level 2: successful**

The evaluation team concluded that the project achieved significant developmental results against the programme indicators and the relevant SDG. However, the data available did not allow for a description of the quantitative extent of this impact and there is still room for scaling up positive results on income, employment, gender and the environment in the future (dimension 1). Regarding the projects contribution to higher-level development results, all results hypotheses were confirmed (dimension 2). The negative impacts of potential unintended results from indirect land-use change driven by the expansion of the cashew cultivation area are considered rather low to date, but should be monitored in the future (dimension 3).

In total, the impact of the project is rated Level 2: successful, with 90 out of 100 points.

Analysis and assessment of impact

Impact – Dimension 1: Higher-level (intended) development changes/results

According to the theory of change, the project is supposed to contribute to the objective of the umbrella programme Broad-scale Promotion of Agricultural Value Chains in Africa, which is formulated as follows: 'the agrarian economy of selected African countries and value chains grows sustainably and contributes to the reduction of poverty and an improved nutrition of a growing number of peasant households'. The project's achievements regarding this objective at impact level was assessed against the three programme indicators. Moreover, the aim was that the project would contribute to the achievement of SDG 1 (end poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 13 (climate action). The evaluation team assessed overarching developmental results in the context of the SDGs on the basis of the stakeholder interviews and the FBOs and processor surveys.

Programme indicator 1, 'the income of peasant households from the sale of products from the promoted value chains has increased', corresponds to the project's module objective indicator MZ-I.6, which was already assessed in the section on effectiveness criteria ('Providing an additional annual income of 30.2 million euros for men and 20.2 million euros for women from cashew production and processing'). As discussed on p. 39, the indicator is based on income data from the yield survey and the number of farmers the project trained. Several methodological constraints and contradictions in the data, however, made it impossible to get a clear picture on

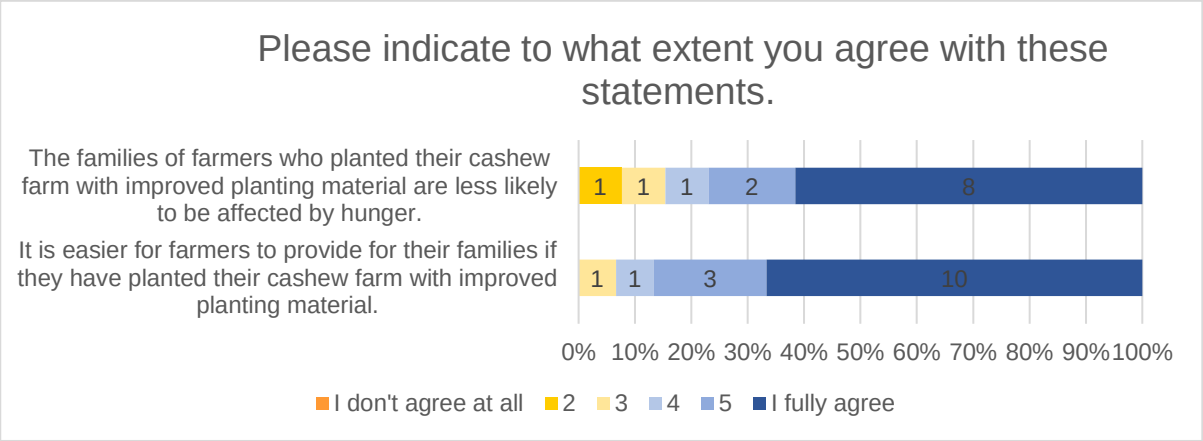
the extent of the income increase among trained farmers and their households (see p. 39 for details). However, the contribution analysis conducted for the assessment of the project's effectiveness (p. 29) showed that the majority of stakeholders and target group representatives observed that the adoption of GAP and the use of improved planting material helped farmers increase their income. In conclusion, the evaluation team considers it evident that peasant household incomes have increased. However, no conclusion can be drawn on the quantitative extent of this impact in terms of the number of households or figures regarding individual income increases.

Programme indicator 2, 'the number of job-equivalents created alongside the agrarian value chains has increased', corresponds to the project's module objective indicator MZ-I.5, which was already assessed in the section on effectiveness criteria ('The number of jobs in the production, processing, and trade of cashew products has increased by 10% (40% for women"). According to the project's monitoring data, the increase in the national processing volume resulted in processors creating an estimated 45,718 new jobs. However, the contribution analysis on p. 45 shows that there is a significant attribution gap between the project's outputs and the increase of national processing volume, as the latter is also driven by external factors such as an increase in global demand. According to the monitoring data, the project also created an estimated 636,292 job-equivalents in the agricultural sector due to GAP training for farmers. As discussed on p. 37, the evaluation team questioned whether the additional workload connected to the application of GAP can be simply translated into job-equivalents, as it remains unclear whether the person doing the additional work receives a direct revenue or benefit from it. However, the evaluation team considers it evident that at least some of the additional work associated with GAP adoption is done by hired labour. Some of the farmers adopting GAP were able to increase their income as described above. It is therefore also plausible to translate at least some of the additional workload into job-equivalents. In conclusion, the evaluation team confirms that the project contributed to the creation of additional jobs in cashew processing and production, although no clear picture on the number of jobs attributable to the project's interventions was obtained.

The number of jobs created, and the increasing national processing volume also reflects the project's overarching developmental results regarding **SDG 8: decent work and economic growth.** Processing associations and political partners have described working conditions in processing as decent. Workdays last eight hours and wages seem to settle around the national minimum wages in each country. However, most processing companies pay workers not per hour or per day but according to the volume of their working output (for example, kg of nuts shelled per day). The absence of long-term contracts and insurance put workers in an even more insecure position and suggest that there is room for the improvement of working conditions. However, these conditions are typical of the socio-economic context in the partner countries and not only for the cashew sector (Int_23, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35).

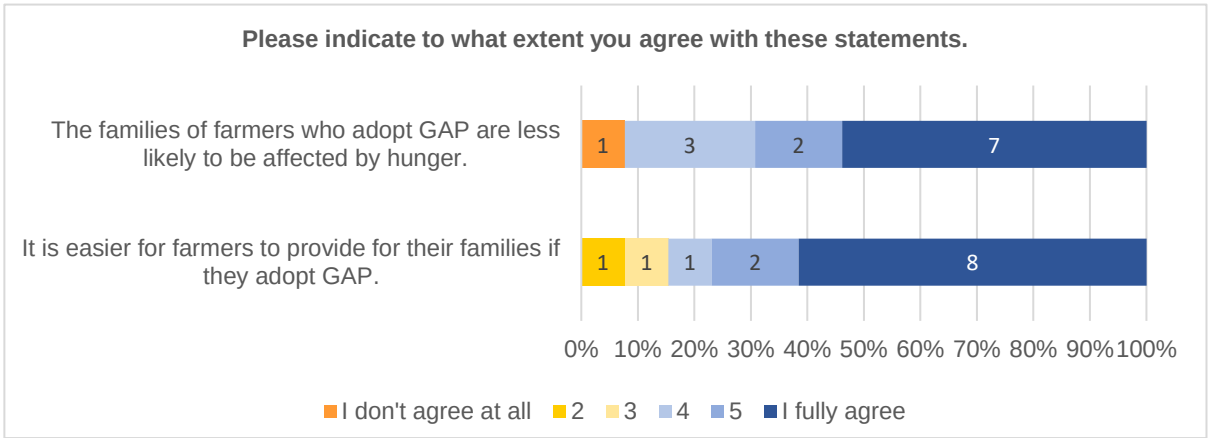
The creation of jobs and income in processing and production also indicates that the project achieved developmental results regarding **SDG 1: end poverty** and **SDG 2: zero hunger.** According to FBO representatives' observations, it is easier for farmers to provide for their families if they apply GAP and their families are less affected by hunger (Figure 13). The same applies to farmers who have planted their fields with improved planting material (Figure 12). However, as already discussed when assessing the project's module objective indicators regarding yield, income and jobs in production under effectiveness dimension 1, the data available did not allow for an assessment of the actual extent to which farmers could increase their income (in terms of number of farmers and figure of individual income increase). For this reason, the contribution to poverty reduction and improved food security cannot be quantified as well.

Figure 12: FBO representatives' assessment of improved planting material and poverty reduction/hunger (Source: FBO survey)



The project's achievement of **programme indicator 3,** 'the private sector, public partners and civil society institutions are increasingly implementing the promoted activities with their own funds', is assessed on the basis of partner contributions to project activities and the extent to which national governments invest in the financing of cashew-specific policies and measures. Firstly, partners have already contributed to the implementation of activities through the Matching Fund. Secondly, four out of six partner countries have introduced an RCN export tax. The intention is that the revenue will be redirected into the development of the sector (monitoring data, Int_30, 31, 32, 34, 35). While it is not clear to date how tax revenues will be used and distributed in detail, the evaluation team considers the development to be a big step in the right direction. In conclusion, national partners have already started to use their own funds to implement activities that it is hoped will increase the cashew sector's competitiveness. It is not year clear on what scale activities will be continued and expanded in the future.

Figure 13: FBO representatives' assessment of GAP and poverty reduction/hunger (Source: FBO survey)



Regarding the project's impact in the field of **SDG 5 (gender equality*)*** and other marginalised population groups (the Leave No One Behind Principle) the evaluation team made the following observations: Firstly, the proportion of women among staff members is reportedly as high as 80% (processor survey, Int_Int_29, 31, 34, 35). Interviews with processors also indicated that there are no significant social barriers excluding certain population groups from work opportunities and that the share of unskilled labour is high (ibid.). Therefore, the project has significantly contributed to the creation of work and income opportunities for women and persons with a low education background. Regarding cashew production, it is more difficult to assess the impact of the project's interventions on women. In the partner countries, land is predominantly owned by men, limiting women's direct access to production income (GIZ 2021). There was no reliable data on how the work in

cashew fields is distributed between men and women. Indeed, this distribution may differ between different regions and countries. Stakeholders observed that women are particularly involved in harvesting (Int_20, 25, 30). There is also no information available on the intra-household distribution of income between men and women. ComCashew seeks to strengthen women's position within cashew production and encourages women to participate in GAP training. An obligatory participation quota of 10% women was introduced and overachieved with a share of 14% in 2020 (Int_17). However, assessing whether this had a significant impact on women's position within peasant households was outside the scope of this evaluation. ComCashew also introduced activities to support women's income through the processing and the sale of by-products and intercrops such as the cashew apple or honey from beekeeping. Stakeholders involved in MF projects' focusing on the training of women in the processing of cashew apples in Mozambique and Ghana reported that women have started small businesses selling the by-products derived from the apple on local markets (Int_21, 22, 25).

For the **Master Training Programme**, 35% of participants were women in every year of the programme. Female participation in the last three cohorts was particularly high, reaching between 43% and 50% each year (M&E master tool). Raising awareness of and addressing gender inequalities in institutions and policies was also part of the agenda of the MTP (Int_26). The evaluation team received some anecdotal evidence about the impact of the MTP on gender equality. One consultant involved in the implementation of the MTP reported that he received feedback from a university professor stating that he started hiring female teaching assistants after he addressed gender issues for the first time in the MTP. Other participants from Benin have stated that contrary to the traditional rule that women are not allowed to own land in Benin, they bought land for their wives or daughters (Int_26). ComCashew also conducted a gender mainstreaming survey among 25 of their partner institutions (processors, government institutions and funding partners), nine of which answered the questionnaire. Findings suggested that while most partner institutions have a corporate policy or strategy on gender equality and at least one person tasked with gender-related issues, staff members' knowledge of gender concepts and approaches is still low. Moreover, senior management levels are largely dominated by men (GIZ 2021).

In conclusion, women and low-educated population groups benefitted from the creation of new jobs in processing. Evidence that the project had a significant impact on gender equality in cashew production and the mainstreaming of gender in political institutions and policies is rather limited.

To obtain a better picture of the project's impact in the field of **SDG 5 (climate action),** an external consultant (Te Pas/Scholten 2020) was commissioned to conduct a life cycle assessment of cashew production and processing. Findings suggested that in-country processing reduces the carbon footprint of cashew nuts by almost 30% compared with the processing of African cashews in Vietnam because of the resulting reduction in transport emissions. These findings indicated that the increase of in-country processing volume in the six partner countries (indicator MZ-I.2) led to a significant reduction in carbon emissions. Moreover, the study reported a significant reduction in carbon emissions due to the application of GAP on cashew farms.

The evaluation team **concluded** that the project achieved significant developmental results against the programme indicators and the relevant SDG. However, with the data available, it was impossible to describe the quantitative extent of this impact. Moreover, there is still room for scaling up positive results on income, employment, gender and the environment in the future.

Impact dimension 1 – Higher-level (intended) development changes/results – scores **25 out of 30 points.**

Impact – Dimension 2: Contribution to higher-level (intended) development results/changes

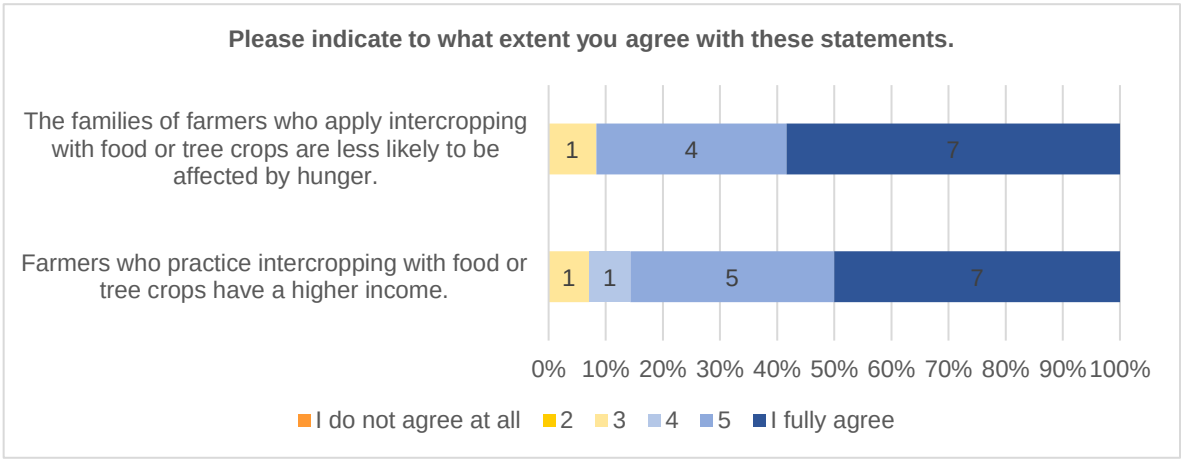
Three results hypotheses describing the causal link between the project's outputs and outcomes were selected from the theory of change and will be assessed in this section. The contribution analysis was based on the project's monitoring data, stakeholder interviews and the processor and FBO surveys.

Table 11: Selected results hypotheses 1 for impact

Results Hypothesis 1 (outcome – impact)	A higher yield and improved kernel quality due to the adoption of GAP and the use of improved planting material (outcome) helps farmers improve their income (outcome/impact) and contributes to a reduction of poverty (SDG 1) and hunger (SDG 2) among farmers and their families.
Main assumption	• RCN farm gate prices stay in a range that allows farmers to transfer increasing yields into higher income.
Risks	• The fall in RCN prices compromises farmers income. • Land-use change: if cashew replaces food crops, this may decrease food security (see dimension 3: Unintended Development Results below).
Alternative explanation	None
Confirmed/partly confirmed/not confirmed	confirmed

The evaluation team considers results **hypothesis 1** to be confirmed. As described in the section on dimension 1 above, FBO representatives observed that the families of farmers who adopted GAP and/or have planted their fields with improved planting material are less affected by hunger and that it is easier for those farmers to provide for their families. Moreover, most stakeholders agreed that the increasing income of farmers as a result of GAP and improved planting material had a positive effect on the reduction of poverty and the ability to buy food (Int_25, 27, 30-33). One consultant highlighted that poverty reduction is not only a function of yield and income but of having the ability to plan ahead and make proper economic decisions on spending, saving and investments (Int_25). While some farmers received training in business skills in the context of GAP training, findings from the FBO survey suggested that there is a lot of potential for scaling up. FBO representatives also observed that intercropping enables farmers to achieve better incomes and improve food supply (Figure 14). As intercropping is part of GAP training, this may also contribute to food security and poverty reduction.

Figure 14: FBO representatives' assessment of the impact of intercropping on income and food security (Source: FBO survey)



Falling RCN prices are considered an external factor that may compromise farmers' incomes, which may also have a negative effect on poverty and food security. However, prices have not yet fallen to a level where they would make cashew unprofitable for farmers (Int_7).

Table 12: Selected results hypotheses 2 for impact

Results Hypothesis 2 (outcome – impact)	Increasing national processing volume (outcome) contributes to the creation of decent work opportunities and economic growth (SDG 8).
Main assumption	• Processing companies pay their workers the national minimum wages. Wages are sufficient to provide a decent living for workers' families. • Exploitative working conditions are not prevalent.
Risks	• Occupational safety • Exploitative working conditions
Alternative explanation	None
Confirmed/partly confirmed/not confirmed	Confirmed (attribution gap between output and outcome exists, see Section on effectiveness)

The evaluation team considers results **hypothesis 2** to be confirmed. There is no doubt that companies employ new staff if they expand the volume they are processing. Political partners and processing associations in particular point to the positive impact of increased in-country processing on the creation of work opportunities and economic growth (Int_22, 23, 27, 29-31, 33-35). Occupational safety risks are not reportedly particularly high, whereas insecurity for workers due to the absence of fixed wages (payment by performance) and long-term contracts remain challenging. However, they do not compromise the positive impact on employment and income for workers (see discussion on working conditions under dimension one above and on occupational safety on p. 50, section on effectiveness).

Table 13: Selected results hypotheses 3 for impact

Results Hypothesis 3 (outcome – impact)	Increasing in-country processing (outcome) contributes to the reduction of carbon emissions (SDG 5: climate action).
Main assumption	• RCN not processed in Africa are shipped to Asia for processing; processed kernels are shipped from Asia to Europe/USA for consumption. • In-country processing reduces carbon emissions because it avoids shipment to Asia.
Risks	None
Alternative explanation	None
Confirmed/partly confirmed/not confirmed	Confirmed (attribution gap between output and outcome exists, see section on effectiveness)

The evaluation team considers results **hypothesis 3** to be confirmed. The life cycle assessment for cashew production (Te Pas/Scholten 2020) shows that the carbon footprint of cashew grown in Africa can be reduced by almost 30% if it is processed in the region and not shipped to Vietnam or India. This indicates that the project's achievements regarding the increase of the volume of in-country processing significantly contributed to climate change mitigation.

Regarding the project's contribution to **wide-spread impact and scaling-up**, the evaluation team acknowledges that the whole project concept and theory of change was geared towards achieving broad-scale macro-level changes within the whole sector among all actors of the value chain in the context of six countries. Particular scaling-up potentials were realised in the field of GAP training. As a result of the implementation with local partners and MF projects, a total of 721,113 farmers were trained. As the results hypothesis that says training farmers helps increase yield and income and helps reduce poverty was confirmed, the high number of trained farmers is regarded as a big achievement towards broad scale impact on rural development. Similar achievements regarding the distribution of improved planting material were not yet realised. As research

institutes have developed improved planting material with the support of the Matching Fund, there is high as yet untapped potential for scaling up distribution.

The **Master Training Programme** significantly contributed to the scaling-up of building capacity among key stakeholders of the cashew value chain. Since 2010, 730 people have graduated from the programme. Participation was not limited to the partner countries; stakeholders from neighbouring countries were also able to send their staff. Overall, participants from 19 different countries have graduated from the MTP (M&E master tool). Because the feedback from stakeholders who sent their staff to MTP was very positive, the evaluation team sees the programme as a significant way of having a positive broad-scale impact on the capacity of political institutions and sector organisations to strength the competitiveness of the cashew sector.

Impact dimension 2 – Contribution to higher-level (intended) development results/changes – scores **40 out of 40 points**.

Impact – Dimension 3: Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development results/changes

The evaluation team assessed several aspects and implications of **land use change as potentially unintended impacts** triggered by the project intervention. The assessment was conducted on the basis of stakeholder interviews and the survey of FBOs.

The promotion of one particular crop may encourage actors to plant new areas with it. Depending on how the area was previously used (or not-used), this can have different impacts. Indeed, according to official statistics (M&E master tool), the total area cultivated with cashew in the six partner countries increased from 1.7 million ha in 2015 to 2.7 million ha in 2020. In view of the fact that the project's whole theory of change is geared towards promoting cashew among famers, governments and the private sector, it seems plausible that the project contributed to this development to some extent. Three potential unintended impacts will be discussed here: the question as to whether an increase in the cashew cultivation area in forest areas is triggering deforestation; whether cashew replaces the cultivation of food crops, thereby indicating a decrease in food security; and whether there was an increase in the number of large commercial cashew plantations, which may have negative socio-economic and environmental impacts.

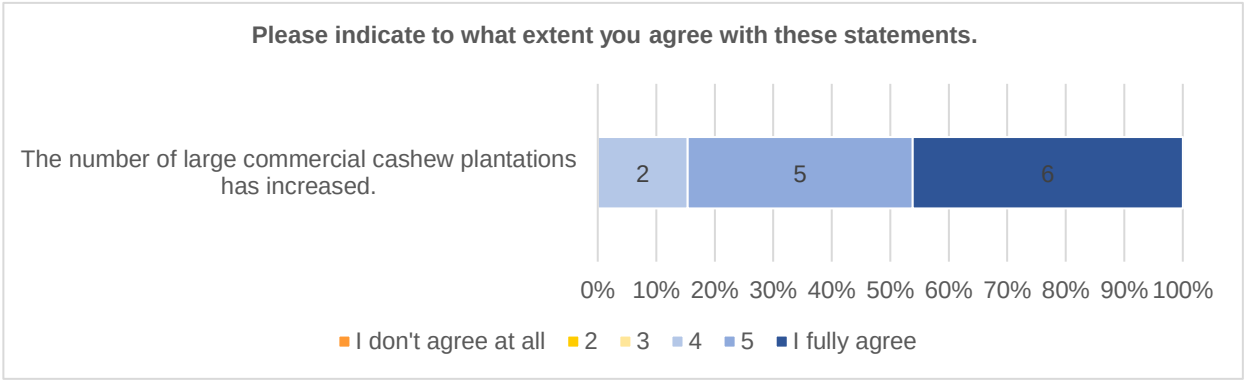
Whether farmers cut down forest trees to plant new cashew fields depends on the fauna of the area where they are located. According to most stakeholders, cashew is predominantly grown in savannah areas where no forest trees are cut down to expand the cultivation area (Int_20, 22, 25, 26, 30, 33). Only one stakeholder in Burkina Faso observed that farmers had cut down forest trees to establish new cashew fields (Int_27). While some FBO representatives agreed that farmers cut down forest trees to plant new cashew farms, they also confirmed that most expansion takes place on already degraded land or farm land that was previously used for other crops (FBO survey). In conclusion, the evaluation team does not consider the negative impact of cashew on forest areas to be particularly high.

The additional income generated by cashew can help farmers to buy more food for their families. However, some of the stakeholders interviewed observed that new cashew farms are replacing food crops such as cassava, maize or fruit trees and have expressed concern that this development may result in farmers losing a subsistence source of food supply, thereby raising food security issues (Int_20, 24, 30). The reliance on a single crop may put famers at particular risk if seasonal low yields due to the occurrence of pests or unfavourable weather conditions for that crop cannot be compensated for with the yield of other crops. For this reason, stakeholders have stressed the importance of promoting intercropping with food crops. The project has already addressed this issue and integrated intercropping into GAP training. According to the findings of the FBO survey, the majority of FBO representatives observed that farmers practicing intercropping could increase their income and improve their food supply. However, they also indicated that there are still farmers who are

not familiar with intercropping and do not know how to apply it properly (FBO survey). For this reason, the evaluation team recommends further intensifying efforts to train farmers in proper intercropping techniques.

The broad-scale intervention of the project to promote cashew among government institutions and private sector actors such as cashew processors and international business groups trading in agricultural commodities, potentially increases investors' interest in investing in cashew production, processing and trade. During the stakeholder interviews, the evaluation team asked whether an increasing interest in cashew had attracted national or international investors that acquired larger areas of land for the establishment of large-scale cashew plantations based on hired labour. Some of the stakeholders had indeed observed an increase in large commercial cashew plantations and/or expected a (further) increase in the near future (Int_20, 22, 24, 26, 31, 32). Figure 15 shows that this observation is shared by FBO representatives (FBO survey). Investors buying land for larger plantations may increase the pressure on land availability. Large cashew plantations outside Africa also reportedly use greater amounts of herbicides (Nill 2015). For other crops such as palm oil, cotton or soy, large monocultures have also been associated with ecological problems, such as the high use of chemicals, deforestation, soil erosion and social problems such as the concentration of land and expropriation of small farmers.[14] As far as partner countries are concerned, while some of the stakeholders see the jobs created by large cashew plantations as an opportunity (Int_22, 25), others are concerned that family farmers will be pushed to sell their land to investors and point to the ecological problems that may follow (Int_24, 26, 32).

Figure 15: FBO representatives' observations on the increase of large-scale cashew plantations (Source: FBO survey)



The project has not yet assessed in detail the unintended impacts of land use change in its monitoring system. Changes in farm size, for instance, and questions on the use of land before cashew was planted are not part of the yield survey instruments. Data on larger plantations and their potential social and ecological impacts has not yet been collected. The evaluation team acknowledges that the project focuses very clearly on supporting smallholders. Moreover, it is unclear to what extent the observed increase of larger plantations can be attributed to the interventions of the project. However, it cannot be ruled out that the broad-scale promotion of the cashew sector also attracts companies and investors seeking to establish larger plantations. While cashew cultivation in Africa is still dominated by smallholders, and the problems described above have not yet been observed, the evaluation team recommends that the development of land-use change should be closely monitored in the next phase of the project.

The evaluation team **did not identify any positive unintended results at impact level.** This may be due to the fact that the very broad results framework at impact level already captures all of the possible positive developmental results that could be identified. None of the potential negative unintended results described

[14] For palm oil, for instance, see Cramb, Rob and McCarthy, John F., *The Oil Palm Complex: Smallholders, Agribusiness and the State in Indonesia and Malaysia*, NUS Press, 2016.

above was considered to have a significant negative impact at the present time. However, the project's monitoring of unintended results should be improved in the future.

Impact dimension 3 – Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development results/changes – scores **25 out of 30 points**.

4.5 Efficiency

This section analyses and assesses the efficiency of the project. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the GIZ project evaluation matrix (see Annex 1).

Summarising assessment and rating of efficiency

Table 14: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: efficiency

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Efficiency	Production efficiency (Resources/Outputs)	70 out of 70 points
	Allocation efficiency (Resources/Outcome)	30 out of 30 points
Efficiency score and rating		Score: **100 out of 100 points** Rating: **Level 1: highly successful**

Overall, the evaluation team concluded that the project's use of resources was efficient. Spending in relation to outputs and expected outcomes was thoroughly planned and implemented as outlined in the project proposal. The project was able to leverage significant partner contributions through the Matching Fund instrument and the eligible contributions of board members. Cofinancing helped maximise outputs and outcomes. Moreover, the project was able to use synergy effects by collaborating with other development projects inside and outside GIZ. The evaluation team considers it unlikely that the project could have achieved higher outputs or outcomes with a different use of resources or a different distribution of resources among the project components.

In total, the efficiency of the project is rated Level 1: highly successful, with 100 out of 100 points.

Analysis and assessment of efficiency

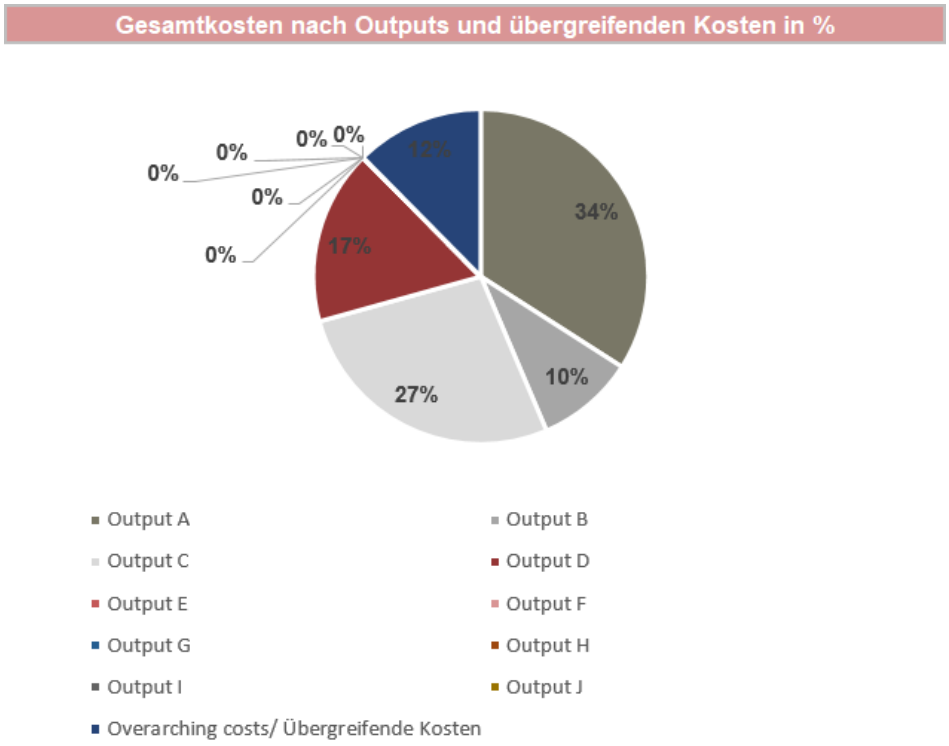
As the output indicators were developed ex-post in the context of this evaluation, they do not feature target values. It was not, therefore, possible to use the efficiency tool on the basis of these output indicators, as the tool needs target values to compare the degree of output achievement with the respective budget shares. Consequently, the efficiency tool was deployed on the basis of the achievement of outcome indicators (which the project formerly formulated as outputs). The evaluation team noted, however, that the quantitative achievement of outcome indicators did not always reflect the project's actual success in terms of effectiveness and impact, as discussed in the relevant chapters of the report. Instead, high over- or underachievement reflects data inconsistencies, difficulties in setting appropriate target values ex-ante and changes in the methodology and data sources between the calculation of targets and current value figures. Therefore, the use of the quantitative budget-output/budget-outcome ratio displayed by the efficiency tool was rather limited when assessing the project's effectiveness. The evaluation team had to draw on a rather qualitative assessment, based on interviews with the project staff, to assess the project's production and allocation efficiency.

Efficiency – Dimension 1: Production efficiency

Concerning deviations between the planned cost and the actual cost of the project, the financial report showed a residual value of 13,612,563 euros in September 2020.[15] This high residual value was achieved intentionally to finance a cost neutral extension of the project to 31 December 2021. The extension was implemented because project phase 4, which is due to start in 2022, would have resulted in a gap of one year between phase 3 and 4. The extension of phase 3 to the end of 2021 was, therefore, necessary to keep the project's staff, knowledge base and infrastructure and to maintain the relations with the various national partner organisations (GIZ 2020e, Int_37). The fact that the project was able to steer its resources carefully to be able to finance a cost-neutral extension indicates an efficient and well-structured use of funds.

As the project concept was developed before 2017,[16] it did not plan its financial structure in a way that allocates budget to outputs or outcomes. There is, therefore, no quantitative documentation that can be used to assess whether the project steered the distribution of funds among the outputs according to the initial plans.[17] However, project staff confirmed that the spending relating to outputs merely followed the initial plan (Int_37). The overarching cost of the project accounts for 12% of the overall budget, which is reasonable compared with other GIZ projects, particularly given that the project has a complex steering structure and operated in six countries.

Figure 16: Distribution of the budget among the four project components (Screenshot from GIZ efficiency tool, German only).



Regarding the distribution of spending between the four project components and respective outputs, significantly fewer resources were invested in component B than in the other three components (Figure 16). While it might have been possible to achieve higher outputs within the processing component by redirecting resources to it, this could have led to a decrease in the outputs of the other project components. The evaluation team concluded that it is unlikely that outputs could have been maximised with the same amount of resources.

[15] This is the residual value as listed in the financial report. The residual value displayed in the efficiency tool is calculated incorrectly for two reasons: Firstly, the financial data received from the project on cofinancing covered spending until June 2021 while the obligo report is dated September 2020. Secondly, it was not possible to fill in all cofinancing spending positions in the respective sheet of the efficiency tool as the tool either does not have the appropriate slots or the respective slots are blocked/cannot be filled in by evaluators. As the tool calculates residual values from the budget minus spending, the calculation is incorrect.

[16] A budget plan regarding the distribution of resources to outputs has only been mandatory for GIZ projects since 2017 (GIZ 2019b)

[17] As no budget planning data is available according to the planned distribution of the budget among outputs, the respective sheet in the efficiency tool was left blank.

Whether a relocation of resources to output B would have increased the impacts on the processing sector will be discussed in the section on dimension 2 below.

According to the achievement of outputs, the intervention concept and its instrument were realised as outlined in the project proposal with the given resources (GIZ 2015e). The same applies to the partner constellation: partners received sufficient funds to implement project activities such as GAP training and research into planting material to deliver the respective outputs (Int_20, 31, 33, 35). The thematic focus on the different segments of the cashew value chain is regarded as reasonable considering the given resources. Regarding the selection of the partner countries, project staff reported that the cost of achieving outputs in Mozambique has been particularly high. However, as Mozambique has the highest poverty rates among farmers in Afrcia, the project decided in line with the Leave No One Behind principle not to exclude Mozambique from project phase 3. The activities in Sierra Leone were regarded as particularly efficient because the project was able to implement activities (GAP training, implementation of scion gardens and nurseries) and achieve high outputs within the production component on a particularly low budget compared with other countries. Consequently, the inclusion of Sierra Leone in project phase 3 was regarded as very reasonable from an efficiency perspective (Int_37). In Burkina Faso, project staff reported that outputs on the production side were limited by the problematic security situation, which acted as a constraint on the project staff's field activities. The project therefore decided to focus on the creation of an enabling environment for processing. In general, the project worked in a very demand-oriented manner and varied the intensity and style of interventions and the respective resources invested based on requests from local partners and the given framework conditions (Int_37). The evaluation team considers the overall selection of countries and the scope of project interventions to be reasonable against the backdrop of the available resources and the outputs achieved.

Efficiency dimension 1 – Production efficiency – scores **70 out of 70 points**.

Efficiency – Dimension 2: Allocation efficiency

According to the evaluation team's assessment, the project achieved lower outcomes within project component B than it did in other project components. Processors are still struggling with a lot of challenges related to the management of buying RCN and access to finance and processing technology. Moreover, the industry has not yet reached long-term stability. When comparing the resources invested in each project component, it becomes apparent that the project invested significantly fewer resources in component B than it did in other project components. This indicates a rather proportional relationship between resources and outcomes and shows that the resources for component B have been used just as efficiently as the resources for other components). However, there is no straightforward answer to the question as to whether achievements in the processing sector could have been improved by putting more resources into this component. According to project staff, many different approaches were applied to support processors. The problem was not limited resources, but the complexity of the issue itself and the considerable influence of falling prices, which compromised processors' revenues. Furthermore, the project has only limited influence on processors and cannot directly intervene in their management and decision-making. According to project staff, the project exhausted its means to support processors quite comprehensively, and more resources would not have had a greater impact on their competitiveness (Int_37).

The project collaborated with many other GIZ developmental programmes focusing on agricultural value chains and also with other developmental organisations. Synergies were achieved through both the joint implementation of activities and knowledge exchange. In Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, ComCashew jointly implemented a study on the economic modelling of cashew production together with the GIZ Project Development of Biodiversity and Economy in the Area of Tai and Comoe (PROFIAB). ComCashew also jointly developed a concept for the processing of cashew apples with the regional GIZ project Participatory Development Programme in Urban Areas. In Ghana, ComCashew cooperated with the BMZ-funded Ghana

Skills Development Initiative to develop curricula on cashew-related topics. These are just a few examples of a larger number of cooperation projects with other developmental projects (GIZ 2020a). According to project staff, ComCashew became a central point of advice and expertise for other development projects. For this reason, the staff employed by the project is slightly above the available budget. Staff members were then seconded to other development projects as technical advisors, for instance, for the development of new project

Modulziel	In selected African countries, the competitiveness of the cashew value has increased
BMZ Kosten (Summe Einzelkosten)	7.857.979,92 €
Ko-Finanzierungen	1.354.954,44 €
Partnerbeiträge	5.790.202,90 €
Gesamtkosten	**15.003.137,26 €**
Restwert (BMZ Kosten und	20.707.203,77 €

Modulziel Indikatoren	Modulzielindikator 1 The average yields increase by 15% of 70% cashew farmers trained in the 6 project countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mozambique, and Sierra Leone) (in comparison to farmers who have not	Modulzielindikator 2 In the 6 countries, RCN processing has increased by 50% NEW TARGET FOR 2021 = INCREASE BY 137% TO REACH 190,000MT/YEAR	Modulzielindikator 3 In the 6 countries, investments from private and public sector actors have increased by 30% to improve the cashew value chain (in mio.€)	Modulzielindikator 4 In the 6 countries, the percentage of RCN source directly from farmers and farmer groups by processors have increased by 85,000 t
Zielerreichung	97%	112%	143%	135%

	Output A	Output B	Output C	Output D
Outputs	In ComCashew countries the efficiency of cashew production and productivity has increased	In the 5 countries the competitiveness of the local cashew processing industry for kernel and by-product processing has increased	In Aci countries the efficiency of the supply chain for cashew products has increased	The framework conditions to increase the competitiveness of the cashew value chain have increased
Kosten inkl. Obligo	1.959.531,98 €	830.234,52 €	1.011.006,88 €	2.460.832,64 €
Ko-Finanzierungen	993.545,51 €	144.343,81 €	47.071,55 €	74.578,37 €
Partnerbeiträge	2.157.134,41 €	454.133,56 €	3.008.634,84 €	0,00 €
Gesamtkosten	**5.110.211,90 €**	**1.428.711,89 €**	**4.066.713,27 €**	**2.535.411,01 €**
Gesamtkosten in %	**34%**	**10%**	**27%**	**17%**
BMZ Gesamtkosten in % ohne Kofi	**30%**	**9%**	**29%**	**18%**

concepts. For example, ComCashew staff members also worked as advisors for the BMZ-funded regional projects Competitive African Rice Initiative (CARI) and Green Innovation Centres for the Agriculture and Food Sector (GIC) (GIZ 2020a). This helped disseminate expertise and experience among other actors in the field of development, thereby creating synergies with the interventions of other donors and German development cooperation (Int_37, GIZ 2020a). Other development projects also sent their staff to ComCashew's Master Training Programme, which contributed to the capacity-building of their staff (ibid.). For instance, the staff from six other GIZ projects have, so far, participated in the MTP (M&E master tool). Moreover, the evaluation team did not identify any cases where insufficient coordination or complementarity of measures would have led to losses in efficiency.

Figure 17: Screenshot from GIZ efficiency tool.

Cofinancing by the EU and SECO helped improve outcomes. The SECO funds, for instance, were used to implement the Master Training Programme, which made a significant contribution to capacity-building and organisational development among partner institutions, which again helped create an enabling environment for the development of the cashew production and processing sector. Project staff reported that the use of EU

funds was challenging as these funds were bound to activities in Ghana, leading to an 'overfunding' of Ghana compared to the other countries. The project addressed this challenge by testing new interventions in the production sphere, such as climate-smart agriculture and agroforestry approaches in Ghana, embedding them in a comparative analysis and close technical exchange with the other intervention countries. Funds were also used to support the creation and development of the Tree Crop Development Authority in Ghana (Int_37).

The project could leverage high financial contributions from MF partners and board members. Partners have contributed significantly to the implementation of project activities through MF projects with a total of 2,885,713 euros, thereby increasing the overall efficiency of the project. The partner contributions stand in reasonable relation to the overall investments in the project. Efficiency dimension 2 – Allocation efficiency – **scores 30 out of 30 points**.

4.6 Sustainability

This section analyses and assesses the sustainability of the project. It is structured according to the assessment dimensions in the GIZ project evaluation matrix (see Annex 1).

Summarising assessment and rating of sustainability

Table 15: Rating of OECD/DAC criterion: sustainability

Criterion	Assessment dimension	Score and rating
Sustainability	Prerequisite for ensuring the long-term success of the project	45 out of 50 points
	Durability of results over time	40 out of 50 points
Sustainability score and rating		Score: **85 out of 100 points** Rating: **Level 2: successful**

The project did a lot to anchor results in partner structures. The joint implementation of activities in the production component have helped build technical capacities and organisational structures within partner organisations, enabling them to continue to support farmers. Financial sustainability, however, remains a challenge for the continuation of research into planting material (dimension 1). Assessing the long term durability of the results, the evaluation team considers the achievements relating to farmers' yield and income to be rather stable. However, processors are still struggling with many challenges and may not last without further support (dimension 2).

In total, the sustainability of the project is rated Level 2: successful, with 85 out of 100 points.

Analysis and assessment of sustainability

Sustainability – Dimension 1: Prerequisite for ensuring the long-term success of the project

The project's efforts and achievements in terms of anchoring results in partner structures and creating the prerequisites for long-term success were assessed on the basis of interviews with project staff, implementing partners and other stakeholders.

The project did quite a lot to anchor concepts and activities in partner structures to increase ownership and to build capacities within government institutions, sector organisations, processors and FBOs. Since phase 1, the project has continuously shifted its efforts from being a direct implementer of measures to adopting a more

advising, facilitating role. The concept of the Matching Fund helps entrench interventions such as GAP training, research into planting material or the establishment of direct supply chains in partner structures as they are fully implemented by the partners themselves with advice and co-funding from ComCashew.

From the start of the project, GAP training was implemented by the political partners and their network of extension officers. Later, national cooperatives such as FENAPAB in Benin also became partners and their field staff began to provide farmers with GAP training. Moreover, processors started to train farmers in the context of MF projects. These processors reported that they benefitted from improved kernel quality. Joint implementation contributed to building strong technical capacities and administrative structures regarding GAP among the different partners. Partners have confirmed that they want to continue with GAP training independently of ComCashew if the project ends (Int_22, 24, 30, 33). Research into and the distribution of planting material was also implemented by partners. Research was carried out by local institutes and distribution was organised by political partners and FBOs. The same can be said of data collection in the context of the yield survey, which was conducted by the political partners with advice from ComCashew.

However, while technical and organisational capacities developed well, financial sustainability is still a challenge when assessing the partners' ability to continue with key activities in the production sphere. While four out of six countries have introduced taxation on RCN exports, it is not yet clear to what extent these tax revenues will be used to finance the implementation of production-related activities. According to project staff, there is still disagreement among the different representatives of and associations within the value chain on how to distribute tax revenues (Int_36). While it is plausible that the political partners and processing companies will continue to train farmers (Int_22, 24, 30, 33), researchers have expressed concern that they have not yet been granted funds to continue their research projects and that local governments do not seem interested in investing in research (Int_20, 27, 32). Moreover, while the political partners conducted the yield survey, it was mainly funded by ComCashew. Project staff also expressed concern that they were not yet able to raise awareness among the partners that continuing data collection is crucial to monitoring progress within the sphere of production. They doubt that the yield survey will be continued once the project ends (Int_36). The evaluation team acknowledges, however, that the project's influence on the priorities of government spending is limited. In principle, four out of six governments have introduced export taxation and are, therefore, on the right track to creating sustainable financing mechanisms for the development of the sector.

In addition to activities linked to cashew production, the project has significantly contributed to the building of capacities within government institutions regarding the development and implementation of sector strategies and the creation of a supportive environment for the growth of the processing sector. As discussed in the section on effectiveness, the project contributed to the creation of cashew-specific government departments such as Conseil Burkinabé de L'Anacarde in Burkina Faso and the Conseil du Coton et de l'Anacarde in Côte d'Ivoire and provided advice on and reviewed the development of sector strategies (Int_30, 31, 33). Staff members in those departments are very aware of the potential that in-country processing and efficient supply chains have for economic growth, job and income creation, and take their role with regard to the further improvement of sector strategies and policy frameworks very seriously (Int_22, 30, 31, 33). These departments have assumed a key role in the further development of the sector that is likely to last beyond the end of the project. ComCashew has, therefore, not only contributed to capacity-building but also made a significant contribution to institutional development in the partner countries. The project also facilitated the creation of the Consultative International Cashew Council in 2016, an international government body that seeks to establish an ongoing dialogue for knowledge exchange and the harmonisation of government policies between cashew-growing countries in Africa. Stakeholders feel that the council's role is not yet strong enough. Moreover, this new institution has thus far experienced problems becoming equally accepted by all governments (Int_26, 28). It remains unclear to date, whether the council will be able to strengthen intergovernmental collaboration in the future.

Stakeholders also agree that the MTP built technical capacity and know-how, including on cross-cutting aspects such as gender, climate change and food security as well as on soft-skills such as personal development, communication and leadership within government institutions, processors, FBOs and sector associations. The MTP has also helped establish informal networks across countries and professions/institutions (Int_12, 14, 22, 26, 29-31, 33-35).

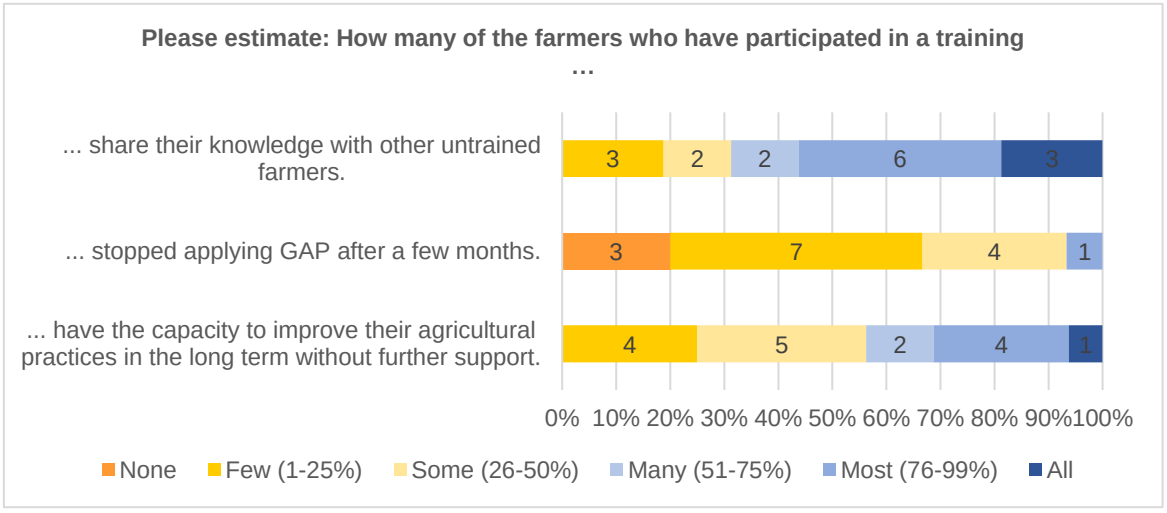
Sustainability dimension 1 – Capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders – scores **45 out of 50 points.**

Sustainability – Dimension 2: Durability of results over time

The long-term durability of the project's results was assessed on the basis of the FBO and processor surveys and interviews with relevant stakeholders.

The results of the FBO representatives' assessment of the sustainability of GAP training (see Figure 18) is rather mixed. While they indicated that only a few or some farmers stopped applying GAP a few months after receiving training, nine out of 16 FBO representatives estimate that only a few or some farmers have the capacity to improve their agricultural practices in the long term without further support. As discussed in the section on effectiveness above, the FBO survey suggests that access to agrochemicals and the cost of hired labour are the factors that limit GAP application the most. The project has already started to tackle these issues by encouraging partners to set up supportive structures for GAP application, such as service providers for the spraying of chemicals and pruning with chain saws (Int_6). If farmers are provided with these services by their FBO or the government department, it is likely that the long-term sustainability of GAP application could be significantly increased. While it is a good sign that 11 out of 16 FBO representatives estimate that many, most or all farmers are able to share their knowledge with untrained farmers, it is important that partner organisations continue to provide GAP training to reach all farmers in the partner countries. As outlined in the section on dimension 1, partners do have the technical and administrative capacity to continue training farmers. Consequently, the evaluation team considers the project's results regarding GAP to be quite stable in the long term.

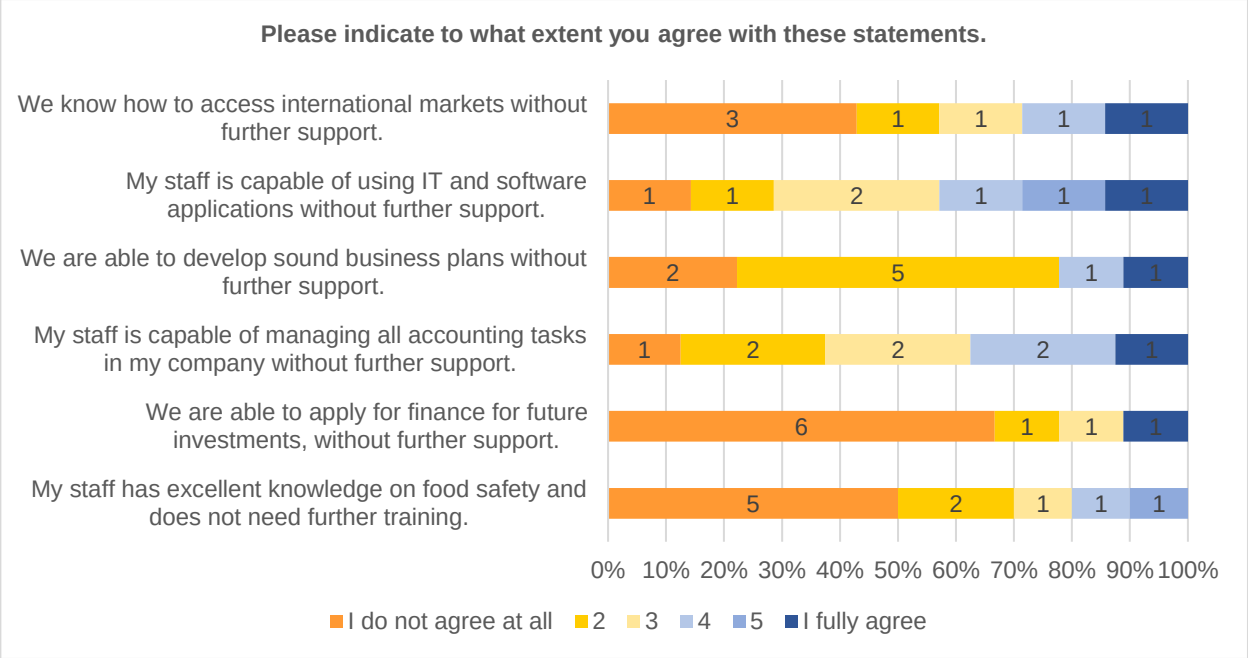
Figure 18: FBO representatives' assessment of the long-term sustainability of GAP training (Source: FBO survey)



Regarding research into and distribution of improved planting material, it remains unclear whether the institutes will be able to continue their research projects due to a lack of funds (Int_20, 27, 32). While some of the political partners and FBOs have started to distribute improved planting material to farmers, the evaluation team could not get a clear picture and was, therefore, unable to predict whether those activities will be

continued in the long run. While some partners are convinced that the distribution will be scaled up in the future (Int_31, 32), others are more sceptical about whether there will be enough funds and capacities (Int_20, 29).

Figure 19: Processors' feedback on the sustainability of training (Source: processor survey)



Regarding the competitiveness of the processing sector, most stakeholders agree that it would be too early for the project to withdraw after phase 3 (Int_6, 7, 11, 15, 20, 26, 28, 29, 34). While the volume of in-country processing has increased tremendously over the last five years, local processors still face many challenges, which have not yet been addressed in an adequate way (processor survey, Int_15, 20, 28, 34). This is also reflected in the processors' feedback on their long-term ability to deal with the challenges as shown Figure 19. According to the processors interviewed (Int_15, 20, 28, 34), many local processing companies do not have the technical and managerial capacity to make informed decisions about buying enough RCN to use their capacity and to deal with price volatility. Access to finance and to adequate processing technology and qualified technical staff are still big challenges. These are some of the reasons why many processing companies that began operating a few years ago run at low capacity or have closed down again (Int_15, 20, 28, 34). It therefore remains unclear whether the high increase in national processing volume will last over the next years and beyond.

Given the broad results framework and the high results level of the indicators, it is too early to say whether the project achieved long-term stability of results. In general, the project has the possibility to work on the above-mentioned sustainability challenges in phase 4 in order to increase the stability of the achievements over time.

Sustainability dimension 2 – Contribution to supporting sustainable capacities – scores **40 out of 50 points**.

4.7 Key results and overall rating

Overall, the project is considered successful because all interventions were highly relevant to the target groups and national partners. The joint implementation with national partner institutions and the MTP built capacities and contributed to organisational development among those partners, creating important prerequisites for long-term sustainability. Although the results framework and indicators of the project need to be improved and no clear picture could be obtained on the quantitative dimension of achieved outcomes and impacts, the

evaluation team drew a positive conclusion based on the qualitative data derived from interviews and the feedback from target groups collected in two online surveys. The different interventions across the sector demonstrated high coherence and the results reinforce each other. The project was able to raise awareness among governments of the potential of cashew for rural development and job creation. As a consequence, governments have put cashew on their agenda and are developing and implementing sector strategies. The increase of in-country processing may not be explained by the project's direct training measures to processors, which, indeed, show room for improvement. Nevertheless, the evaluation team is convinced that spillover effects from the interventions of other project components – such as improving direct supply chains and the quality and quantity of RCN supply as well as the improvement of legal and organisational framework conditions – have contributed to the increase of in-country processing. In conclusion, the project is close to having a broad-scale developmental impact on the transition of the cashew sector in the respective partner countries and beyond. The extension of the project to a phase 4 is highly appreciated. Whether a long-term impact on sector transition will be achieved depends on whether the project is able to consolidate and scale-up successful concepts and achievements, transfer existing knowledge and concepts to local organisations and further strengthen the capacity of and framework conditions for processors (particularly regarding finance and technology) to help them become a stable and competitive industry.

Table 16: Rating and score scales

100-point scale (score)	**6-level scale (rating)**
92–100	Level 1: highly successful
81–91	Level 2: successful
67–80	Level 3: moderately successful
50–66	Level 4: moderately unsuccessful
30–49	Level 5: unsuccessful
0–29	Level 6: highly unsuccessful
Overall rating: The criteria of effectiveness, impact and sustainability are knock-out criteria: If one of the criteria is rated at level 4 or lower, the overall rating cannot go beyond level 4 although the mean score may be higher.	

Table 17: Overall rating of OECD/DAC criteria and assessment dimensions

Evaluation criteria	Dimension	Max	Score	Total (max.100)	Rating
Relevance	Alignment with policies and priorities	30	30	**92**	Level 1: highly successful
	Alignment with the needs and capacities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders	30	30		
	Appropriateness of the design*	20	15		
	Adaptability – response to change	20	17		
Effectiveness	Achievement of the (intended) objectives	40	25	**77**	Level 3: moderately successful
	Contribution to achievement of objectives	40	35		
	Unintended results	20	17		
Impact	Higher-level (intended) development changes/results	30	25	**90**	Level 2: successful
	Contribution to higher-level (intended) development results/changes	40	40		
	Contribution to higher-level (unintended) development results/changes	30	25		
Efficiency	Production efficiency	70	70	**100**	Level 1: highly successful
	Allocation efficiency	30	30		
Sustainability	Prerequisite for ensuring the long-term success of the project	50	45	**85**	Level 2: successful
	Durability of results over time	50	40		
Mean score and overall rating		100	**89**		**Level 2: successful**

5 Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Key findings and factors of success/failure

The project followed a holistic approach to broad-scale developmental change of the whole cashew sector in six countries. Indeed, the findings of this evaluation suggest that it had a significant impact on all four components. Moreover, the evaluation team found clear evidence that the interventions and the results for each component are reinforcing and complementing each other in terms of a potential transition of the sector.

Training more than 700,000 farmers in GAP is regarded as a major achievement, and the observations of FBOs and stakeholders working with farmers suggest that it is likely that this training made a significant contribution to increasing the quality and quantity of farmers' yields and that farmers were able to increase their income accordingly. Research into improved planting material (co-)funded by the project was very successful and has delivered improved cashew varieties that have the potential to help farmers achieve up to four times more yield than with the old varieties. Significant efforts to distribute these planting materials to farmers have been started together with the partners. However, in many regions, farmers' access to high-yielding varieties is still low and partners require further support for scaling-up. The involvement of processors and board members in the training of farmers proved very beneficial, as it contributed to mutual understanding and support between both groups. Processors learned that they benefit from a better quality, quantity and continuity of RCN supply if they assume responsibility for training and supporting farmers.

Unfortunately, the quantitative yield survey data available cannot underscore this qualitative assessment. There is no data-backed proof of the extent to which GAP application impacts yield and how the respective increase in revenue is related to additional labour and input costs. There is also little evidence to show how labour and respective income is distributed among households and family members. The role of hired labour and the question as to which population groups benefit from it has also not been systematically addressed to date. For this reason, data sampling and collection should in future be improved in order to ensure better data with respect to the resources invested in the survey (see recommendations on monitoring and evaluation below).

The volume of in-country processing increased significantly, overachieving the project's module objective indicator. Even though there is an attribution gap between the project's interventions and the national processing volume, it is likely that the project contributed to the competitiveness of local processors not only through the limited efforts in the direct training of staff, but also through an improvement in conditions in the following areas: 1) improving supply chains and the quality of RCN supply through achievements in the production (increase of yield and kernel quality) and the supply chain component (linking up processors and farmers, increased direct RCN sales); 2) capacity-building among sector organisations such as the African Cashew Alliance, FBOs and national processors' associations, and the facilitation of knowledge exchange, networking and mutual understanding between different private and public actors along the value chain (for example through the MTP and the facilitation of conferences, workshops and trade fairs); 3) the facilitation of organisational development and capacity-building within government institutions, which ultimately affected their perspective on strategies for developing the cashew sector. Processors consider government interventions such as RCN export taxes and subsidies for processors to be beneficial for the fostering of in-country processing. Here too, the reinforcing and complementing character of the project's achievements within the four components becomes visible.

The direct training and support provided to processors was less successful and shows room for improvement. Access to finance for buying raw material, the management of risks associated with the acquisition of RCN and

selling to international markets are still major challenges, and many processors do not feel that they are in a position to address them yet. The problem of acquiring modern processing technology and the education of local mechanics to enable them to install and maintain that machinery has not been addressed by the project at all so far. According to most of the stakeholders, the sector is still fragile and for many of the local processing companies, it is not yet clear whether they will be able to continue or whether they will close down again in the coming years.

Joint implementation involving public and private sector partners was identified as a key factor for success because it created ownership and ensured the long-term sustainability of project activities and achievements. The Master Training Programme's further contribution to the increase of technical capacities among all stakeholders of the value chain and the broad perspective it is imparting is regarded as beneficial.

While the theory of change and the results hypothesis are plausible and in general well designed, the operationalisation of targets with the respective indicators shows a range of methodological shortcomings and missing data. This has to some extent compromised the evaluability of the project's effectiveness and efficiency. As the explanatory function of the indicators regarding the achievement of the project's objectives is limited, the evaluation team had to draw on qualitative data from stakeholders and target groups for most of the assessment. These problems were exacerbated by the high results level of the module objective indicators, which are at impact rather than at outcome level, limiting the attribution to project interventions. The indicator framework should, therefore, be improved for the next project phase (see recommendations on monitoring and evaluation below).

Findings regarding the 2030 Agenda

Universality, shared responsibility and accountability

Based on its broad-scale development approach, the project was able to make significant contributions to SDG 1 (end poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger) and SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth). Following the observations and assessments of the representatives of target groups and stakeholders, it is plausible that training farmers in GAP and the distribution of improved planting material contributed to poverty reduction and increased food security among farmers and their families. It is also evident that the increasing volume of in-country processing created jobs and income for the local population. These developmental results were achieved, on the one hand, through a broad intervention approach combining activities for different spheres of the value chain and the focus on improving framework conditions. On the other, the success of the project was also based on the use of existing and the development of new partner structures in the intervention countries. The training of farmers and the research into and distribution of planting material in particular was implemented by the political departments, FBOs and processing companies, thereby increasing their capacities and creating the prerequisite for long-term continuation.

Interplay of economic, environmental and social development

The life-cycle assessment for cashew shows that in-country processing significantly reduces carbon emissions because it bypasses the need for shipment of RCN to Asia. To monitor further interplays between economic development and environmental impact, the dimension of land-use change should be taken into account in the future. The tremendous increase in cashew cultivation in the partner countries may have positive environmental impacts due to the potential carbon sequestration of the cashew trees (Te Pas/Scholten 2020) as long as this takes place on degraded land. The increase of the cultivation area, however, may also replace subsistence food crops, which can be problematic from a food security perspective, pointing to the importance of promoting intercropping. Stakeholders have further observed a growing number of large-scale cashew plantations based on hired labour. While adverse effects such as environmental pollution with agrochemicals or concentration of land in the hands of foreign investors or local elites, pushing smallholders to sell their cashew fields, have not yet been identified, these issues may occur in the future and should be closely monitored.

Inclusiveness/leave no one behind

The project had a significant impact on women's employment, especially as up to 80% of staff members in processing companies are female. Women's positions within peasant households where also supported through a number of MF projects that created new income sources for women through the processing of by-products.

Employment opportunities in cashew production and processing are inclusive in the sense that the evaluation team could not identify barriers related to levels of education or social categories such as religion, ethnicity or class. In fact, the increase in smallholder income and employment in processing and production tended to benefit those strata of the rural population that have little education and are economically disadvantaged. The only barrier might be physical capability.

5.2 Recommendations

The evaluation team makes the following recommendations to ComCashew for the design of the follow-on project.

Recommendations regarding the training of farmers

- The main reasons for not adopting GAP are reportedly that they involve too much work, the high cost of hiring labour and access to/high cost of chemicals for pest control (FBO survey). These findings suggest that the sustainability and impact of GAP training could be improved by combining it with durable supportive structures that provide input, equipment and/or GAP services to farmers, such as pruning with chain saws or spraying with pesticides. The project has already started to work on this task and these efforts should be intensified.
- FBO representatives have said that they see a need for the provision of further business training for famers. Business skills have the potential to help farmers make informed decisions about saving and investments and planning and calculating additional input costs associated with GAP adoption. It is recommended that the project scales up the farmer business school concepts that have already been introduced. FBOs also expressed interest in more support for the organisational development of their cooperatives including aspects such as access to markets, establishment of links to processors and the organisation of group sales (FBO survey).
- FBO representatives also said that there will in future be a need for intensified training on intercropping. Intercropping has the potential to increase food security and farmer incomes. It can also reduce the adverse economic and environmental impacts of monocultures. Findings from the survey suggest that not all farmers have the technical capacity to conduct intercropping in a proper way.

Recommendations regarding improved planting material

- With co-funding from ComCashew, researchers developed high-yielding cashew varieties that have tremendous potential to double – if not triple – farmers' yields. Efforts should be intensified to support sustainable partner structures (nurseries, scion banks/gardens, nursery men, etc.) for the distribution of planting material to farmers. This also includes training farmers in techniques of rejuvenating old cashew fields and planting new fields, which was also mentioned by FBO representatives as a future need (FBO survey).
- Researchers have stressed the importance of ongoing research for the development of varieties that are adapted to different climatic environments, soil conditions and the effects of climate change. They also emphasised the need for collaborative research projects across countries to exchange genetic material and experience with different cashew varieties. However, these projects lack a **sustainable source of**

funding. Raising awareness among governments of the importance of improving planting material to instigate a discussion on the reinvestment of RCN export tax revenues into research could be an asset.

Recommendations regarding the support of processors

- Despite the support they have received from ComCashew, processors reported that **access to finance** and the management of **buying raw material** in harvest season to allow them to operate at full capacity for the whole year is still a major challenge that many are struggling with. Processors that are unable to deal with these challenges are likely to close down. It is therefore recommended that the project intensify its efforts to develop new concepts for training and supporting the management of processing companies. As one board member proposed (Int_28), this could include programmes of conditional financing combined with a long-term package of training and guidance.
- Access to technology is reportedly the second big challenge for processors that is limiting their competitiveness. The project has not yet addressed this challenge. It is therefore recommended that the project develop and implement **programmes for the training and education of mechanics**, thereby enabling them to implement and maintain the latest machinery. This should be supplemented by further measures to support companies in the acquisition and implementation of new processing machinery.

Recommendations regarding unintended impacts

- The national cashew cultivation area in the partner countries has increased tremendously over the last five years and may continue to do so. Although the evaluation team could not yet identify negative results, **potential impacts of land-use change should be monitored in the future.** This accounts for the potential replacement of subsistence food crops as well as expansion into biodiversity areas such as forests. It includes the collection of information about the conditions under which farmers increase their cashew fields, how they acquire land and how the land was previously used (other crops, livestock, savannah, forests etc.). Comparing land-use may also allow for an assessment of whether the increase in cashew cultivation implies an increase in carbon sequestration. While some of these aspects may be integrated into the yield survey instrument, an in-depth case study with smaller samples could produce additional findings that would allow for greater understanding of the dynamic of land use change. Potential social and environmental impacts of the proliferation of larger plantations and land acquisition by investors should also be taken into account.

Other general recommendations

- Even though the project has already done a lot to anchor activities and concepts in partner structures, these efforts should be intensified and assembled to create a **comprehensive exit strategy** covering all areas of the project's interventions. It would be good to find a way of ensuring that the MTP is continued by partners after the end of the project. Financial sustainability is a key challenge that should be taken into account.
- The **administrative requirements of the Matching Fund** have proven to be a big obstacle for partners and have delayed funds and project implementation. It is, therefore, of great importance that a solution be found for adapting the administrative structure to the capacities and requirements of partners and the respective projects implemented.

Recommendations regarding the results framework, monitoring and evaluation

- **Module objective indicators** should be located at outcome level and should be **clearly attributable to the interventions of the project.** To limit external factors, for instance, it may be more suitable to develop indicators that measure the performance of processors that have received direct training from the project rather than looking at the performance of all processors in the country. The national processing

volume can supplement the monitoring of the project's developmental impact but should not be used as the only outcome indicator for processing.

- **Outputs and outcomes** (and respective indicators**) should be clearly defined and differentiated** according to the standard terminology of Input-Output-Outcome-Impact models. Outputs should only describe services and products derived from activities implemented by the project and its partners or increased knowledge and capacities among partners. Objectives measuring the performance of the target groups (yield of farmers, performance of processors) have to be located at outcome level, as they already describe positive change resulting from the target groups making use of the project's outputs. Labelling outcomes as outputs not only compromises the assessment of effectiveness and efficiency in the context of evaluations, it also downscales the results achieved, making them smaller than they actually are.
- Indicators should be phrased specifically and precisely so that they properly reflect target dimensions. The **data reported must correspond to the phrasing of the indicator**. If the methodology behind the figures reported is changed, the phrasing of the indicator should be adjusted accordingly.
- **Indicators should only be introduced if a reliable data source is available** and data collection and aggregation is planned from the outset. Indicators such as capacity utilisation or processing cost do not help to measure the progress of the project if reliable data is not available.
- If the method of calculation for an indicator is changed**, baseline and target values should be recalculated according** to the new method. If not recalculated, the project is measured against a target that is no longer relevant and cannot be achieved. If targets are agreed with donors, they should be renegotiated based on the new calculation method.
- Indicators MZ-I.5 (jobs) and MZ-I.6 (additional income) are based on estimates and not on representative survey data. To what extent GAP training facilitates additional employment has not yet been very well assessed. Moreover, jobs created in processing cannot be directly attributed to project interventions. Income figures are derived from the number of jobs created in processing, thereby reproducing the attribution gap. Income in production also depends on the number of farmers trained and does not say much about the increase in individual household income. Consequently, **aggregated figures on jobs and additional income should not be used for reporting to the public without clearly contextualising them as estimates and referring to the attribution gap.**
- The evaluation team recommends a number of measures to **improve data on the impact of GAP training. Firstly**, to get better findings in relation to the already large amount of resources invested in data collection, sampling methodologies should be improved, and a uniform sampling approach should be introduced to increase the comparability of data over time and across countries. A panel survey following the development of the yield and income of farmers who received training at one point in time (ideally including a comparison group of untrained farmers) may be more suitable than mixing trained and untrained farmers. **Secondly**, data collection instruments and methods should be improved in terms of the measurement of GAP adoption (for example, enumerators directly check the fields to establish whether GAP have been applied properly) and in terms of unproductive trees distorting yield measurement. **Thirdly**, data analysis disaggregated by country should test the project's results hypothesis (for example, comparing the yield of farmers adopting GAP with non-adapters) and examine explanations for inconsistencies and contra-intuitive or adverse findings. **Fourthly**, data on production could be improved by a second qualitative survey based on a smaller number of case studies to investigate the impact of GAP and improved planting material on rural development. This survey could include inquiry into the main factors constraining or enabling GAP adoption, the distribution of work and income among household and family members, and the role of hired labour. It could also serve to further examine potential unintended impacts of land-use change, the use of agrochemicals or child labour.
- It is recommended that the **GIZ evaluation unit** treat projects that are funded in several phases but have retained the same intervention logic and set of indicators as one project when commissioning an evaluation. ComCashew's interventions and their impact cannot be separated into three project phases. Moreover, by only looking at phase 3, it is not possible to evaluate the project against a counterfactual baseline. It is also recommended that future evaluations include the secondary analysis of monitoring data to examine and test the project's results hypothesis.

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Ghana's 2019 SDGs Budget Report

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Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019-2023.

Annex: Evaluation matrix

OECD-DAC Criterion RELEVANCE (max. 100 points)

Assessment dimensions	**Filter - Project Type**	**Evaluation questions**	**Evaluation indicators**	**Data collection methods** (e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, documents, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, survey, etc.)	**Data sources** (list of relevant documents, interviews with specific stakeholder categories, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	**Evidence strength** (moderate, good, strong)
The project concept (1) is in line with the relevant strategic reference frameworks. Max. 30 points	Standard	Which strategic reference frameworks exist for the project? (e.g. national strategies incl. national implementation strategy for 2030 agenda, regional and international strategies, sectoral, cross-sectoral change strategies, if bilateral project especially partner strategies, internal analysis frameworks e.g. safeguards and gender (2))	Existence of strategy papers regarding rural development/agrarian value chains in the six partner countries. Existence of regional strategies regarding the cashew value chain. Existence of Agenda 2030 implementations strategies in the respecitve countries	Document analysis, internet search, interviews	**Documents:** strategy papers regarding rural development/agrarian value chains in the six partner countries, regional strategies regarding the cashew value chain (eg. African Cashew Alliance), Agenda 2030 implementations strategies in the respecitve countries. **Interviews:** Project staff, political implementation partners, donors	strong
	Standard	To what extent is the project concept in line with the relevant strategic reference frameworks?	Project goals are in line with the goals defined in the respective strategies	Document analysis, internet search, interviews	**Documents:** strategy papers regarding rural development/agrarian value chains in the six partner countries, regional strategies regarding the cashew value chain (eg. African Cashew Alliance), Agenda 2030 implementations strategies in the respecitve countries. **Interviews:** Project staff, political implementation partners, donors	strong
	and Fragility	To what extent was the (conflict) context of the project adequately analysed and considered for the project concept (key documents: (Integrated) Peace and Conflict Assessment, Safeguard Conflict and Conflict Sensitivity documents)?				
	Standard	To what extent are the interactions (synergies/trade-offs) of the intervention with other sectors reflected in the project concept – also regarding the sustainability dimensions (ecological, economic and social)?	References in project proposals, progress reports and further relevant documents to the sustainability dimensions and to interations with other sectors	Document analysis	Project proposal, progress reports, further relevant documents	
	Standard	To what extent is the project concept in line with the Development Cooperation (DC) programme (If applicable), the BMZ country strategy and BMZ sectoral concepts?	Project concept and objectives are in line with the umbrella programme, the BMZ country/regional strategies and the BMZ sectoral concepts	Document analysis, Interviews	**Interviews:** Donors (BMZ), project staff **Documents:** Project proposal, progress reports, proposal and reports of the umbrella project (Breitenwirksame Agrarwertschöpfungskettenförderung Afrika), BMZ country/regional strategies (e.g. Marschallplan mit Afrika), BMZ sectoral concepts (eg. Agrarfinanzierung, "Eine Welt ohne Hunger").	strong

	Standard	To what extend is the project concept in line with the (national) objectives of the 2030 agenda? To which Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is the project supposed to contribute?	References in project proposals, progress reports and further relevant documents about contributions to the SDGs	Document analysis	Project proposal, progress reports, further relevant documents	strong
	Standard	To what extend is the project concept subsidiary to partner efforts or efforts of other relevant organisatons (subsidiarity and complementarity)?	References in the project documents on synergies/complementarities with other DC projects. Statements on subsidiarity/complementarity of project staff, implementing partners and other DC-porjects/donors	Document analysis, Interviews	**Documents:** Project proposal/progress reports **Interviews:** project staff, implementing partners, staff from other DC-Projects, donors	
	and SV/GV	To what extent does the project complement bilateral or regional projects? To what extent does it complement other global projects?				
	and SV/GV	To what extent is the measure geared towards solving a global challenge that cannot only be effectively addressed bilaterally/ regionally?				
	and IZR	To what extent does the project complement bilateral or regional projects? To what extent does it complement other global projects?				
	and IZR	To what extent is the measure geared towards solving a global challenge that cannot only be effectively addressed bilaterally/ regionally?				
	and IZR	To what extent does the measure close gaps in the solution of global development problems where classical multilateralism reaches its limits?				
The project concept (1) matches the needs of the target group(s). Max. 30 points	Standard	To what extent is the chosen project concept geared to the core problems and needs of the target group(s)?	- Overlap of needs formulated by the target groups with the project activities, outputs and outcomes - assessment of target groups to what extend the project has met their requirements	Interviews, standardized online survey, document analysis	**Interviews:** Political parterns, processor associations, research institutes **Online Survey:** Processors, FBO **Documents:** project proposal, progress reports	strong
	Standard	How are the different perspectives, needs and concerns of women and men represented in the project concept?	References of gender aspects in the project documents -existence and quality of a gender analysis and gender strategy -gender-sensitivity of M&E indicators	Document analysis, Interviews	**Documents:** Project proposal, progrees reports, gender analysis, results matrix, M&E Documents **Interviews:** project staff	strong
	and Fragility	How were deescalating factors/ connectors (4) as well as escalating factors/ dividers (5) identified (e.g. see column I and II of the Peace and Conflict Assessment) and considered for the project concept (please list the factors)? (6)				
	Standard	To what extent was the project concept designed to reach particularly disadvantaged groups (LNOB principle, as foreseen in the Agenda 2030)? How were identified risks and potentials for human rights and gender aspects included into the project concept?	Existence and quality of references adressing the issues of particularly disadvantaged groups in the project documents. -existence and quality of an analysis of risks in the project documents	Document analysis, Interviews	**Documents:** Project proposal, progress reports, further project documents **Interviews:** project staff	strong

	and Fragility	To what extent were potential (security) risks for (GIZ) staff, partners, target groups/final beneficiaries identified and considered?				
	and IKT	To what extent has the utilization of digital solutions contributed to expanding the cooperation with partners or beeficiaries, i.e. through additional participation possibilities?				
	Standard	To what extent are the intended impacts regarding the target group(s) realistic from todays perspective and the given resources (time, financial, partner capacities)?	Assessment by the evaluators based on all data collected.	See evaluation question below	See evaluation question below	
The project concept (1) is adequately designed to achieve the chosen project objective. Max. 20 points	Standard	Assessment of current results model and results hypotheses (theory of change, ToC) of actual project logic: - To what extent is the project objective realistic from todays perspective and the given resources (time, financial, partner capacities)? - To what extent are the activities, instruments and outputs adequately designed to achieve the project objective? - To what extent are the underlying results hypotheses of the project plausible? - To what extent is the chosen system boundary (sphere of responsibility) of the project (including partner) clearly defined and plausible? - Are potential influences of other donors/organisations outside of the project's sphere of responsibility adequately considered? - To what extent are the assumptions and risks for the project complete and plausibe?	Assessment of the results model and project concept as described in the evaluation question.	Document analysis	**Documents:** Results Model, project proposal, progress reports	strong
	Standard	To what extent does the strategic orientation of the project address potential changes in its framework conditions?	References to changing framework conditions in the project region and the ceshew sector/market and respective coping strategies in project documents	Document analysis	Project proposal, progress reports	strong
	and IKT	Which digital solutions are used in the project and what significance do these digital solutions have in the framework of the results model?				
	Standard	How is/was the complexity of the framework conditions and guidelines handled? How is/was any possible overloading dealt with and strategically focused?	References in documents and discussion in interviews on the handling of complex framework conditions.	Document analysis, Interviews	**Interviews:** Project staff **Documents:** pre-redings and minutes of board meetings, presentations from strategic planning workshops	strong
The project concept (1) was adapted to changes in line with requirements and re-adapted where applicable. Max. 20 points	Standard	What changes have occurred during project implementation? (e.g. local, national, international, sectoral, including state of the art of sectoral know-how)?	Interviewees refer to changes. References on changes in the progress reports and change offers. Impacts of Covid 19 on the cashew sector and project implementation.	Interviews, document analysis	**Interviews:** project staff, external consultants, political implementation partners, board members, MF-projects, other DC projects **Documents:** progress reports, Prereedings and pre intervies of board meetings	good
	Standard	How were the changes dealt with regarding the project concept?	Interviewees report on the adaption of the project concept according to the occured changes. -References on adaption of the project concept according to the occured changes in the progress reports and change offers. Project's respond to Covid-19 related challanges.	Interviews, document analysis, standardized online survey	**Interviews:**project staff, external consultants, political implementation partners, board members, MF-projects, other DC projects **Documents:** progress reports **Survey:** processors	good

(1) The 'project concept' encompasses project objective and theory of change (ToC, see 3) with activities, outputs, instruments and results hypotheses as well as the implementation strategy (e.g. methodological approach, CD-strategy, results hypotheses)
(2) In the GIZ Safeguards and Gender system risks are assessed before project start regarding following aspects: gender, conflict, human rights, environment and climate. For the topics gender and human rights not only risks but also potentials are assessed. Before introducing the new safeguard system in 2016 GIZ used to examine these aspects in seperate checks.

(3) Theory of Change = GIZ results model = graphic illustration and narrative results hypotheses

(4) Deescalating factors/ connectors: e.g. peace-promoting actors and institutions, structural changes, peace-promoting norms and behavior. For more details on 'connectors' see: GIZ (2007): 'Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen', p. 55/135.
(5) Escalating factors/ dividers: e.g. destructive institutions, structures, norms and behavior. For more details on 'dividers' see: GIZ (2007): 'Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen', p. 135.
(6) All projects in fragile contexts, projects with FS1 or FS2 markers and all transitional aid projects have to weaken escalating factors/dividers and have to mitigate risks in the context of conflict, fragility and violence. Projects with FS1 or FS2 markers should also consider how to strengthen deescalating factors/ connectors and how to address peace needs in its project objective/sub-objective?

OECD-DAC Criterion EFFECTIVENESS (max. 100 points)

Assessment dimensions	**Filter - Project Type**	**Evaluation questions**	**Evaluation indicators**	**Data collection methods** (e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, documents, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, survey, etc.)	**Data sources** (list of relevant documents, interviews with specific stakeholder categories, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	**Evidence strength** (moderate, good, strong)
The project achieved the objective (outcome) on time in accordance with the project objective indicators.(1) Max. 40 points	Standard	To what extent has the agreed project obective (outcome) been achieved (or will be achieved until end of project), measured against the objective indicators? Are additional indicators needed to reflect the project objective adequately?	Outcome indicators as listed in the project's results matrix.	Assessment of project monitoring data, interviews, online survey	Project's monitoring data. **Interviews:** Political implementing partners, board members, processors, sector associations **Survey:** FBO, processors	moderate
	and Fragility	For projects with FS1 or FS2 markers: To what extent was the project able to strengthen deescalating factors/ connectors (2,4)?				
	Standard	To what extent is it foreseeable that unachieved aspects of the project objective will be achieved during the current project term?	Unachieved aspects are due to changes in methodology between calculation of target and current values or methdological constraints (yield survey).	Interviews	Assessment of projects monitoring data.	moderate
The activities and outputs of the project contributed substantially to the project objective	Standard	To what extent have the agreed project outputs been achieved (or will be achieved until the end of the project), measured against the output indicators? Are additional	Reformulated output indicators.	Secondary analysis of project monitoring data, document analysis Interviews.	Project's monitoring data. M&E documents **Interviews:** Project staff	moderate

achievement (outcome).(1) Max. 30 points		indicators needed to reflect the outputs adequately?				
	Standard	How does the project contribute via activities, instruments and outputs to the achievement of the project objective (outcome)? (contribution-analysis approach)	Attributability of observable outcomes to project activities and outputs.	Interviews, Online Survey	**Interviews:** Project staff, board members, MF-projects, political implemenation partners, sector associations, processors **Survey:** FBO, Processors	good
	Standard	Implementation strategy: Which factors in the implementation contribute successfully to or hinder the achievement of the project objective? (e.g. external factors, managerial setup of project and company, cooperation management)	Inductive identification of external factors, managerial factors and cooperation management aspects contributing or hindering the achievment of project objective.	Interviews, Document analysis	**Interviews:** Project staff, board members, MF-projects, political implemenation partners,	good
	Standard	What other/alternative factors contributed to the fact that the project objective was achieved or not achieved?	Identification and examiniation of alternative factors. Influence of price development and market dynamics on production and processing.	Interviews	**Interviews:** Project staff, board members, MF-projects, political implemenation partners, sector associations, processors **Survey:** FBO, Processors	good
	and IKT	To what extent has the utilization of digital solutions contributed to the achievement of objectives?				
	Standard	What would have happened without the project?	Qualitative assessment of interviewees.	Interviews	Interviews: Project staff, board members,MF-projects, political implemenation partners, sector associations, processors Survey: FBO, Processors	good
No project-related (unintended) negative results have occurred – and if any negative results occured the project responded adequately. The occurrence of additional (not formally agreed) positive results	Standard	Which (unintended) negative or (formally not agreed) positive results does the project produce at output and outcome level and why?	Inductive identification of unintended results. Influnce of prices volatility on production and processing. Occurance of child labor. Assessment of occupational safety.	Interviews	**Interviews:** Project staff, board members, MF-projects, political implemenation partners, sector associations, processors **Survey:** FBO, Processors	moderate
	and Fragility	To what extent was the project able to ensure that escalating factors/ dividers (3) have not been strengthened (indirectly) by the project (4)? Has the				

has been monitored and additional opportunities for further positive results have been seized. Max. 30 points		project unintentionally (indirectly) supported violent or 'dividing' actors?				
	Standard	How were risks and assumptions (see also GIZ Safeguards and Gender system) as well as (unintended) negative results at the output and outcome level assessed in the monitoring system (e.g. 'Kompass')? Were risks already known during the concept phase?	Sensitivity of indicators towards risks and (unintended) negative results. Project's monitoring of risks and unintended results.	Document analysis, analysis of indicators and monitoring data, interviews	Documents: Projects M&E documents, project proposal, progress reports Interviews: project staff, implementation partners,board members, MF-projects	good
	and Fragility	To what extent have risks in the context of conflict, fragility and violence (5) been monitored (context/conflict-sensitive monitoring) in a systematic way?				
	Standard	What measures have been taken by the project to counteract the risks and (if applicable) occurred negative results? To what extent were these measures adequate?	References of risk management and counteractions in the progress reports. - project staff and implementation partners report on measures to counteract risks - Deegree of success of respective measures in counteracting risks assesd through interviews and surveys	Document analysis, interviews	Interviews: Project staff, board members, other DC projects, MF-projects, political implemenation partners, sector associations, processors Survey: FBO, Processors	good
	Standard	To what extend were potential (not formally agreed) positive results at outcome level monitored and exploited?	No unintended postive results identified.	Interviews		good

(1) The first and the second evaluation dimensions are interrelated: if the contribution of the project to the objective achievement is low (2nd evaluation dimension) this must be considered for the assessment of the first evaluation dimension also.

(2) Deescalating factors/ connectors: e.g. peace-promoting actors and institutions, structural changes, peace-promoting norms and behavior. For more details on 'connectors' see: GIZ (2007): 'Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen', p. 55/135.

(3) Escalating factors/ dividers: e.g. destructive institutions, structures, norms and behavior. For more details on 'dividers' see: GIZ (2007): 'Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen', p. 135.

(5) Escalating factors/ dividers: e.g. destructive institutions, structures, norms and behavior. For more details on 'dividers' see: GIZ (2007): 'Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen', p. 135.

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(4) All projects in fragile contexts, projects with FS1 or FS2 markers and all transitional aid projects have to weaken escalating factors/dividers and have to mitigate risks in the context of conflict, fragility and violence. Projects with FS1 or FS2 markers should also consider how to strengthen deescalating factors/ connectors and how to address peace needs in its project objective/sub-objective?
(5) Risks in the context of conflict, fragility and violence: e.g. contextual (e.g. political instability, violence, economic crises, migration/refugee flows, drought, etc.), institutional (e.g. weak partner capacity, fiduciary risks, corruption, staff turnover, investment risks) and personnel (murder, robbery, kidnapping, medical care, etc.). For more details see: GIZ (2014): 'Context- and conflict-sensitive results-based monitoring system (RBM). Supplement to: The 'Guidelines on designing and using a results-based monitoring system (RBM) system.', p.27 and 28.

OECD-DAC Criterion IMPACT (max. 100 points)

Assessment dimensions	**Filter - Project Type**	**Evaluation questions**	**Evaluation indicators**	**Data collection methods** (e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, documents, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, survey, etc.)	**Data sources** (list of relevant documents, interviews with specific stakeholder categories, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	**Evidence strength** (moderate, good, strong)
The intended overarching development results have occurred or are foreseen (plausible reasons). (1) Max. 40 points	Standard	To which overarching development results is the project supposed to contribute (cf. module and programme proposal with indicators/ identifiers if applicable, national strategy for implementing 2030 Agenda, SDGs)? Which of these intended results at the impact level can be observed or are plausible to be achieved in the future?	Contribution of the project to the indicators of the umbrella programme. SDGs: 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 13, 17	Secondary analysis of project monitoring data, interviews, online survey	Project's monitoring data **Online survey:** FBO, processors **Interviews:** Political implementing partners, board members, processors (associations), MF-projects, sector associations	good
	and IZR	To what extent have the IZR criteria contributed to strengthening overarching development results?				
	Standard	Indirect target group and 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB): Is there evidence of results achieved at indirect target group level/specific groups of population? To what extent have targeted marginalised groups (such as women, children, young people, elderly, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, refugees, IDPs and migrants, people living with HIV/AIDS and the poorest of the poor) been reached?	Disaggregation of programme indicators by gender. Results (income and job generation) among amon woman and disadvantaged population groups.	Secondary analysis of project monitoring data, Interviews, online survey	Project's monitoring data **Online survey:** FBO, processors **Interviews:** Political implementing partners, board members, processors (associations), MF-projects, sector associations	good
The project objective (outcome) of the project contributed to the occurred or foreseen overarching development results (impact).(1) Max. 30 points	Standard	To what extent is it plausible that the results of the project on outcome level (project objective) contributed or will contribute to the overarching results? (contribution-analysis approach)	Attributability of the observed impacts to the project outcomes	Interviews, online survey	Interviews: Project staff, board members, other DC projects, MF-projects, political implemenation partners, sector associations, processors Survey: FBO, processors	good
	Standard	What are the alternative explanations/factors for the overarching development results observed? (e.g. the activities of other stakeholders, other policies)	Inductive identification of alternative factors.	Interviews, online survey	Interviews: Project staff, board members, other DC projects, MF-projects, political implemenation partners, sector associations, processors Survey: FBO, processors	good

	Standard	To what extent is the impact of the project positively or negatively influenced by framework conditions, other policy areas, strategies or interests (German ministries, bilateral and multilateral development partners)? How did the project react to this?	Inductive identification of framework condictions.	Interviews, online survey	Interviews: Project staff, board members, other DC projects, MF-projects, political implemenation partners, sector associations, processors Survey: FBO, processors	good
	Standard	What would have happened without the project?	Qualitative assessment of interviewees.	Interviews	Interviews: Project staff, board members, other DC projects, MF-projects, political implemenation partners, sector associations, processors	good
	Standard	To what extent has the project made an active and systematic contribution to widespread impact and were scaling-up mechanisms applied (2)? If not, could there have been potential? Why was the potential not exploited? To what extent has the project made an innovative contribution (or a contribution to innovation)? Which innovations have been tested in different regional contexts? How are the innovations evaluated by which partners?	Refernces on broad impact, scaling up and innovations in the project documents. Interviewees report on scaling up potentials and actual contribution of the project to achieving broad impact. . Number of participatns in MTP from outside the partner countries. Amount of improved planting material distributed to other non-project countries.	Document analysis, Interviews	Interviews: Project staff, board members, other DC projects, MF-projects, political implemenation partners	good
	and IZR	To what extent has the project made an innovative contribution (or a contribution to innovation)? Which innovations have been tested in different regional contexts? How are the innovations evaluated by which partners?				
No project-related (unintended) negative results at impact level have occurred – and if any negative results occurred the project responded adequately. The occurrence of additional (not formally agreed) positive results at impact level has been monitored and additional opportunities for further positive results have been seized. Max. 30 points	Standard	Which (unintended) negative or (formally not agreed) positive results at impact level can be observed? Are there negative trade-offs between the ecological, economic and social dimensions (according to the three dimensions of sustainability in the Agenda 2030)? Were positive synergies between the three dimensions exploited?	Inductive identification of unintended results on impact level. Assessment of impacts of land-use change.	Interviews	Interviews: Project staff, board members, other DC projects, MF-projects, political implemenation partners	good
	and Fragility	To what extent did the project have (unintended) negative or escalating effects on the conflict or the context of fragility (e.g. conflict dynamics, violence, legitimacy of state and non-state actors/institutions)? To what extent did the project have positive or deescalating effects on the conflict or the context of fragility (e.g. conflict dynamics, violence, legitimacy of state and non-state actors/institutions)?				
	Standard	To what extent were risks of (unintended) results at the impact level assessed in the monitoring system (e.g. 'Kompass')? Were risks already known during the planning phase?	Sensitivity of proigramme indicators towards risks and (unintended) negative results. Comparison between occured risks during project implementation with anticipated risks in the project proposal.	Document analysis, Interviews	Documents: Projects M&E documents, project proposal, progress reports Interviews: project staff, implementation partners, other DC-Projects, board members, MF-projects	good
	Standard	What measures have been taken by the project to avoid and counteract the risks/negative results/trade-offs (3)?	References of risk management and counteractions in the progress reports. Project staff and implementation partners report on measures to counteract risks/negative results/trade offs.	Document analysis, interviews	Documents: progress reports Interviews: project staff, implementation partners, other DC-Projects, board members, MF-projects	good

	Standard	To what extent have the framework conditions played a role in regard to the negative results ? How did the project react to this?	References to framework conditions when discussing negative results.	Document analysis, Interviews	Documents: progress reports Interviews: project staff, implementation partners, other DC-Projects, board members, MF-projects	good
	Standard	To what extent were potential (not formally agreed) positive results and potential synergies between the ecological, economic and social dimensions monitored and exploited?	Monitoring of unintended positive results by the project.	Document analysis, Interviews	Documents: progress reports, M&E documents and data Interviews: project staff, implementation partners, board members, MF-projects	good

(1) The first and the second evaluation dimensions are interrelated: if the contribution of the project outcome to the impact is low or not plausible (2nd evaluation dimension) this must be considered for the assessment of the first evaluation dimension also.
(2) Broad impact (in German 'Breitenwirksamkeit') is defined by 4 dimensions: relevance, quality, quantity, sustainability. Scaling-up approaches can be categorized as vertical, horizontal, functional or combined. See GIZ (2014) 'Corporate strategy evaluation on scaling up and broad impact: The path: scaling up, the goal: broad impact' (https://www.giz.de/de/downloads/giz2015-en-scaling-up.pdf)
(3) Risks, negative results and trade-offs are separate aspects and are all to be considered.

OECD-DAC Criterion EFFICIENCY (max. 100 points)

Assessment dimensions	**Filter - Project Type**	**Evaluation questions**	**Evaluation indicators (pilot phase for indicators - only available in German so far)**	**Data collection methods** (e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, documents, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, survey, etc.)	**Data sources** (list of relevant documents, interviews with specific stakeholder categories, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	**Evidence strength** (moderate, good, strong)
The project's use of resources is appropriate with regard to the outputs achieved. [Production efficiency: Resources/Outputs] Max. 70 points	Standard	To what extent are there deviations between the identified costs and the projected costs? What are the reasons for the identified deviation(s)?	Das Vorhaben steuert seine Ressourcen gemäß des geplanten Kostenplans (Kostenzeilen). Nur bei nachvollziehbarer Begründung erfolgen Abweichungen vom Kostenplan.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	strong
	Standard	Focus: To what extent could the outputs have been maximised with the same amount of resources and under the same framework conditions and with the same or better quality (maximum principle)? (methodological minimum standard: Follow-the-money approach)	Das Vorhaben reflektiert, ob die vereinbarten Wirkungen mit den vorhandenen Mitteln erreicht werden können.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	moderate
	Standard		Das Vorhaben steuert seine Ressourcen gemäß der geplanten Kosten für die vereinbarten Leistungen (Outputs). Nur bei nachvollziehbarer Begründung erfolgen Abweichungen von den Kosten. Die übergreifenden Kosten des Vorhabens stehen in einem angemessen Verhältnis zu den Kosten für die Outputs. Die durch ZAS Aufschriebe erbrachten Leistungen haben einen nachvollziehbaren Mehrwert für die Erreichung der Outputs des Vorhabens.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	moderate
	Standard		Die übergreifenden Kosten des Vorhabens stehen in einem angemessen Verhältnis zu den Kosten für die Outputs.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	strong
	Standard		Die durch ZAS Aufschriebe erbrachten Leistungen haben einen nachvollziehbaren Mehrwert für die Erreichung der Outputs des Vorhabens.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	moderate
	Standard	Focus: To what extent could outputs have been maximised by reallocating resources between the outputs? (methodological minimum standard: Follow-the-money approach)	Das Vorhaben steuert seine Ressourcen, um andere Outputs schneller/ besser zu erreichen, wenn Outputs erreicht wurden bzw. diese nicht erreicht werden können (Schlussevaluierung). Oder: Das Vorhaben steuert und plant seine Ressourcen, um andere Outputs schneller/ besser zu erreichen, wenn Outputs erreicht wurden bzw.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	moderate

			diese nicht erreicht werden können (Zwischenevaluierung).			
	Standard	Were the output/resource ratio and alternatives carefully considered during the design and implementation process – and if so, how? (methodological minimum standard: Follow-the-money approach)	Das im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene Instrumentenkonzept konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf die angestrebten Outputs des Vorhabens gut realisiert werden.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	good
	Standard		Die im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene Partnerkonstellation und die damit verbundenen Interventionsebenen konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf die angestrebten Outputs des Vorhaben gut realisiert werden.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	good
	Standard		Der im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene thematische Zuschnitte für das Vorhaben konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf die angestrebten Outputs des Vorhabens gut realisiert werden.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	good
	Standard		Die im Modulvorschlag beschriebenen Risiken sind hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf die angestrebten Outputs des Vorhabens gut nachvollziehbar.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	good
	Standard		Die im Modulvorschlag beschriebene Reichweite des Vorhabens (z.B. Regionen) konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf die angestrebten Outputs des Vorhabens voll realisiert werden.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	good
	Standard		Der im Modulvorschlag beschriebene Ansatz des Vorhabens hinsichtlich der zu erbringenden Outputs entspricht unter den gegebenen Rahmenbedingungen dem state-of-the-art.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	moderate
	Standard	For interim evaluations based on the analysis to date: To what extent are further planned expenditures meaningfully distributed among the targeted outputs?				
The project's use of resources is appropriate with regard to achieving the projects objective (outcome). [Allocation efficiency: Resources/Outcome] Max. 30 points	Standard	To what extent could the outcome (project objective) have been maximised with the same amount of resources and the same or better quality (maximum principle)?	Das Vorhaben orientiert sich an internen oder externen Vergleichsgrößen, um seine Wirkungen kosteneffizient zu erreichen.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	moderate
	Standard	Were the outcome-resources ratio and alternatives carefully considered during the conception and implementation process – and if so, how? Were any scaling-up options considered?	Das Vorhaben steuert seine Ressourcen zwischen den Outputs, so dass die maximalen Wirkungen im Sinne des Modulziels erreicht werden. (Schlussevaluierung) Oder: Das Vorhaben steuert und plant seine Ressourcen zwischen den Outputs, so dass die maximalen Wirkungen im Sinne des Modulziels erreicht werden. (Zwischenevaluierung)	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	moderate
	Standard		Das im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene Instrumentenkonzept konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf das angestrebte Modulziel des Vorhabens gut realisiert werden.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	good
	Standard		Die im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene Partnerkonstellation und die damit verbundenen Interventionsebenen konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf das angestrebte Modulziel des Vorhaben gut realisiert werden.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	good
	Standard		Der im Modulvorschlag vorgeschlagene thematische Zuschnitte für das Vorhaben konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf das angestrebte Modulziel des Vorhabens gut realisiert werden.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	good

	Standard		Die im Modulvorschlag beschriebenen Risiken sind hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf das angestrebte Modulziel des Vorhabens gut nachvollziehbar.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	good
	Standard		Die im Modulvorschlag beschriebene Reichweite des Vorhabens (z.B. Regionen) konnte hinsichtlich der veranschlagten Kosten in Bezug auf das angestrebte Modulziel des Vorhabens voll realisiert werden.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	good
	Standard		Der im Modulvorschlag beschriebene Ansatz des Vorhabens hinsichtlich des zu erbringenden Modulziels entspricht unter den gegebenen Rahmenbedingungen dem state-of-the-art.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff	moderate
	Standard	To what extent were more results achieved through cooperation / synergies and/or leverage of more resources, with the help of other ministries, bilateral and multilateral donors and organisations (e.g. co-financing) and/or other GIZ projects? If so, was the relationship between costs and results appropriate or did it even improve efficiency?	Das Vorhaben unternimmt die notwendigen Schritte, um Synergien mit Interventionen anderer Geber auf der Wirkungsebene vollständig zu realisieren.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff, donors, other DC-projects, political implementation partners, board members	moderate
	Standard		Wirtschaftlichkeitsverluste durch unzureichende Koordinierung und Komplementarität zu Interventionen anderer Geber werden ausreichend vermieden.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff, donors, other DC-projects, political implementation partners, board members	moderate
	Standard		Das Vorhaben unternimmt die notwendigen Schritte, um Synergien innerhalb der deutschen EZ vollständig zu realisieren.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff, donors, other DC-projects, political implementation partners, board members	good
	Standard		Wirtschaftlichkeitsverluste durch unzureichende Koordinierung und Komplementarität innerhalb der deutschen EZ werden ausreichend vermieden.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff, donors, other DC-projects, political implementation partners, board members	good
	Standard		Die Kombifinanzierung hat zu einer signifikanten Ausweitung der Wirkungen geführt bzw. diese ist zu erwarten.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff, donors, other DC-projects, political implementation partners, board members	moderate
	Standard		Durch die Kombifinanzierung sind die übergreifenden Kosten im Verhältnis zu den Gesamtkosten nicht überproportional gestiegen.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff, donors, other DC-projects, political implementation partners, board members	good
	Standard		Die Partnerbeiträge stehen in einem angemessenen Verhältnis zu den Kosten für die Outputs des Vorhabens.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** project proposal, progress reports, financial reports **Interviews:** project staff, donors, other DC-projects, political implementation partners, board members	good
	and IKT	To what extent has the utilization of digital solutions contributed to gains in efficiency? To what extent have digital solutions offered opportunities for upscaling?				

OECD-DAC Criterion SUSTAINABILITY (max. 100 points)

Assessment dimensions	Filter - Project Type	Evaluation questions	Evaluation indicators	Data collection methods (e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, documents, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, survey, etc.)	Data sources (list of relevant documents, interviews with specific stakeholder categories, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	Evidence strength (moderate, good, strong)
Prerequisite for ensuring the long-term success of the project: Results are anchored in (partner) structures. Max. 50 points	Standard	What has the project done to ensure that the results can be sustained in the medium to long term by the partners themselves?	Capacity building measures.	Document analysis, interviews	**Documents:** progress reports, project proposal **Interviews:** project staff, political implementation partners	strong
	Standard	In what way are advisory contents, approaches, methods or concepts of the project anchored/institutionalised in the (partner) system?	Qualitaty/degree of instutionalization/anchoring in partner structures of: - data collection and surveying of cashew production and processing - Research and distribution of planting material - GAP trainings of farmers and MTP (introduced curicula) - Development of sector strategies and enableing legal frameworks.	Document analysis, interviews, online survey	**Documents:** progress reports **Interviews:** political implementation partners, board members, MF-projects, sector associations **Survey:** board members	good
	Standard	To what extent are the results continuously used and/or further developed by the target group and/or implementing partners?	Production: GAP adaption of farmers, continious development and distribution of improved planting material by partners. Processing: long-term adaption of technology and business skills/strategy, predicted long-term growth of processing capacity and volume Framework conditions: implementation and further development of sector strategies by political implementation partners	Interviews, online survey	**Interviews:** political implementation partners, board members, MF-projects, sector associations **Survey:** board members, processors, FBOs	good
	Standard	To what extent are resources and capacities at the individual, organisational or societal/political level in the partner country available (long-term) to ensure the continuation of the results achieved?	Availability of capacities and recources among partners and target groups to maintain results listed above.	Interviews, online survey	**Interviews:** political implementation partners, board members, MF-projects, sector associations **Survey:** board members, processors, FBOs	good
	Standard	If no follow-on measure exists: What is the project's exit strategy? How are lessons learnt for partners and GIZ prepared and documented?	Follow-on measures are currently prepared.			
	and Fragility	To what extent was the project able to ensure that escalating factors/dividers (1) in the context of conflict, fragility and violence have not been strengthened (indirectly) by the project in the long-term? To what extent was the project able to strengthen deescalating factors/connectors (2) in a sustainable way (3)?				
Forecast of durability: Results of the project are permanent, stable and long-term resilient.	Standard	To what extent are the results of the project durable, stable and resilient in the long-term under the given conditions?	Estimated long term stability of results listed above.	Interviews, online survey	**Interviews:** political implementation partners, board members, MF-projects, sector associations **Survey:** board members, processors, FBOs	moderate

Max. 50 points	Stand ard	What risks and potentials are emerging for the durability of the results and how likely are these factors to occur? What has the project done to reduce these risks?	Inductive identification of risks and potentials for long-term stability of results. Project's measures for risk reduction.	Interviews	**Interviews:** project staff, political implementation partners, board members, MF-projects, sector associations	moderate

(1) Escalating factors/ dividers: e.g. destructive institutions, structures, norms and behavior. For more details on 'dividers' see: GIZ (2007): 'Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen', p. 135.
(2) Deescalating factors/ connectors: e.g. peace-promoting actors and institutions, structural changes, peace-promoting norms and behavior. For more details on 'connectors' see: GIZ (2007): 'Peace and Conflict Assessment (PCA). Ein methodischer Rahmen zur konflikt- und friedensbezogenen Ausrichtung von EZ-Maßnahmen', p. 55/135.
(3) All projects in fragile contexts, projects with FS1 or FS2 markers and all transitional aid projects have to weaken escalating factors/dividers and have to mitigate risks in the context of conflict, fragility and violence. Projects with FS1 or FS2 markers should also consider how to strengthen deescalating factors/ connectors and how to address peace needs in its project objective/sub-objective?

Additional Evaluation Questions

Assessment dimensions	**Evaluation questions**	**Evaluation indicators**	**Data collection methods** (e.g. interviews, focus group discussions, documents, project/partner monitoring system, workshop, survey, etc.)	**Data sources** (list of relevant documents, interviews with specific stakeholder categories, specific monitoring data, specific workshop(s), etc.)	**Evidence strength** (moderate, good, strong)
Impact and sustainability (durability) of predecessor project(s)	Which of the intended impact of the predecessor project(s) can (still/now) be observed?				
	Which of the achieved results (output, outcome) from predecessor project(s) can (still) be observed?				
	To what extent are these results of the predecessor project(s) durable, stable and resilient in the long-term under the given conditions?				
	In what way were results anchored/institutionalised in the (partner) system?				
	How much does the current project build on the predecessor project(s)? Which aspects (including results) were used or integrated in the current project (phase)?				
	How was dealt with changes in the project context (including transition phases between projects/phases)? Which important strategic decisions were made? What were the consequences?				
	Which factors of success and failure can be identified for the predecessor project(s)?				
Follow-on project (if applicable)	Based on the evaluations results: Are the results model including results hypotheses, the results-oriented monitoring system (WoM), and project indicators plausible and in line with current standards? If applicable, are there any recommendations for improvement?	A follow on project is still in planning and not yet approved.			
Additional evaluation questions	What are particular needs and demands of the local partners and target groups with respect to the future design of follow-on projects	Needs formulate by local partners	Interviews	Political implementation partners, MF-projects, board members, regional associations, processors	

(1) Please add additional questions of interests raised by the project including partner or target group during the inception phase that could not be included into the OECD/DAC criteria.

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