

Inter Congregation Sustainable Agriculture Project (ICSAP)



END OF PHASE EVALUATION REPORT

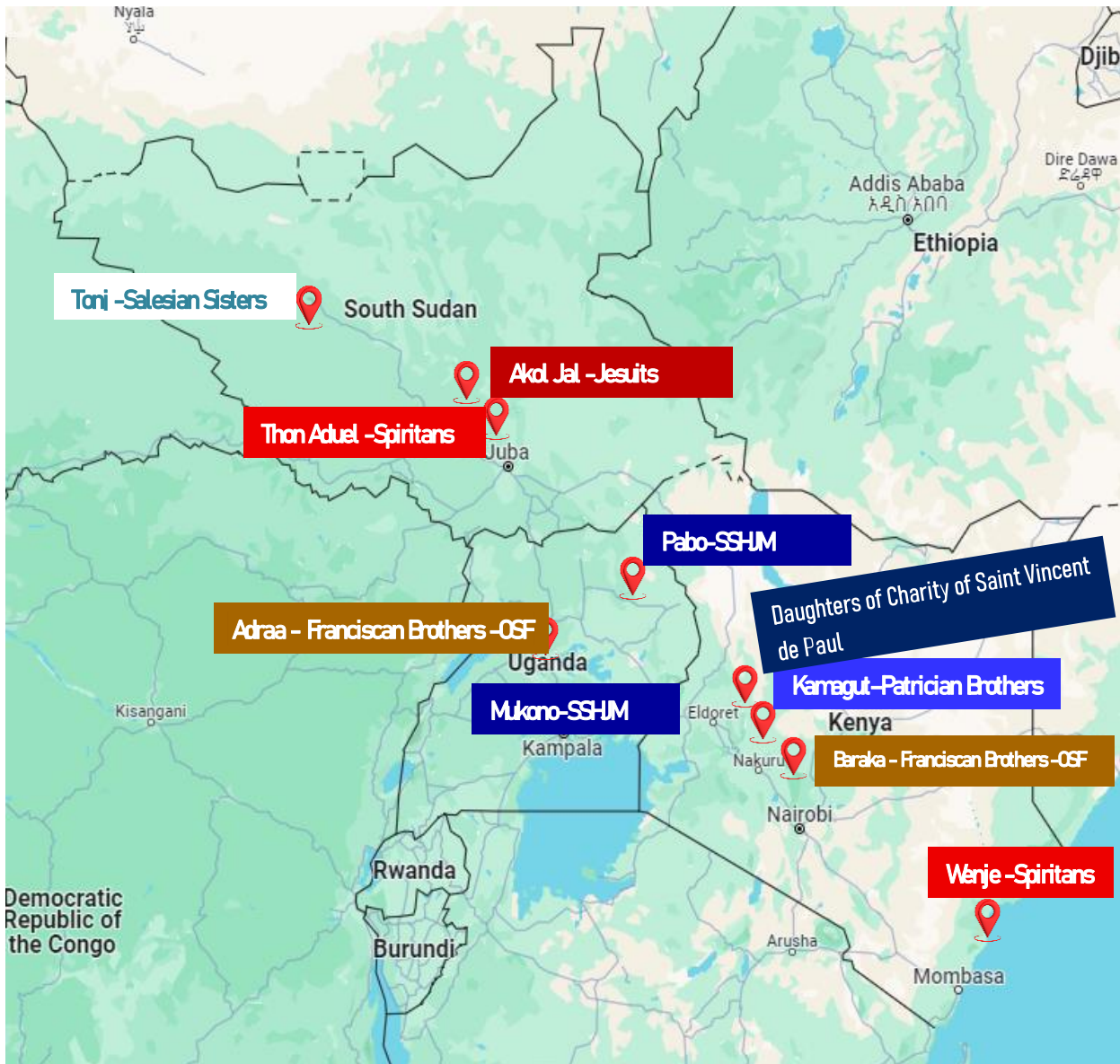
(F02/LRG/0220/01/2020-3yr

Implementation Period 2021-2023

Final Report



Member congregations and program activity sites



Cover Photo: Courtesy of ICSAP. Households of Thon Aduel participate in the bulking of groundnut and sorghum seeds for next planting season

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Sincere gratitude goes to the ICSAP programme Summit members, project managers, officers and secretariat staff for their role in mobilizing beneficiary households during data collection and for providing valuable information during one-on-one interviews and discussions. Special thanks go to Wiliam Mabor, Abraham Maker, John Apach Madut, Richard Kawemba and Acaye Bazil for great translation work in South Sudan and Uganda. We can't forget to thank the congregation's communities that hosted the evaluation team when we visited their project sites. Your hospitality truly made us feel at home.

This ICSAP 2023 End of phase evaluation exercise was commissioned by ICSAP Summit Board of Governance, facilitated and compiled by Dr. Moses Biwott (PhD).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	vi
ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS	vii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	viii
1.0. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background and Context of ICSAP project	1
1.2. Project goal and objectives.....	2
1.3. Project site	2
1.4. Purpose, Objectives, and Scope of the Evaluation.....	3
1.5. The Structure of the Report	4
2.0. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY	5
2.1. Evaluation Approach.....	5
2.2. Evaluation Methodology.....	9
2.3. Methodological and Study Challenges.....	11
3.0. FINDINGS	12
3.1. Demographic Characteristics of Sample Households	12
3.2. Relevance	13
3.2.1. Needs and Priorities of Target Beneficiaries	13
3.2.2. Policies and Priorities of host Countries	14
3.2.3. Implementing Partners	15
3.2.4. Misesan Cara	17
3.2.5. Alignment and Responsiveness to Sustainable Development Goals	18
3.3. Coherence.....	19
3.3.1. Consistency of ICSAP Intervention with the Goals and Operational Structures of Partner Congregations.....	19
3.3.2. Synergies and Linkages.....	19
3.4. Effectiveness	21
3.4.1. Achievements of project's Outputs.....	21
3.4.2. Performance on Target Outcomes.....	43
3.4.3. Institutional Framework for Implementation of ICSAP Activities.....	47
3.4.4. Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation & Reporting	47
3.4.5. Factors that Have Contributed or Impeded the Achievement of Project outcomes	49
3.5. Efficiency	50
3.5.1. Timeliness of Project Implementation	50
3.5.2. Procurement Processes.....	50
3.5.3. Human Resource Utilization	51

3.5.4. Financial Resources Efficiency (Value-for- Money).....	51
3.6. Impact.....	53
3.6.1. Notable Change Attributed to ICSAP Interventions.....	53
3.6.2. Directly or Indirectly, Intended or Unintended Impact.....	54
3.7. Sustainability.....	56
3.7.1. Potential of ICSAP Benefits Lasting Beyond the Funded Phase.....	56
3.7.2. Factors Likely to Influence ICSAP Sustainability.....	57
4.0. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT	59
4.1. Challenges.....	59
4.2. Lessons Learnt	60
5.0. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	61
5.1. Conclusions.....	61
5.2. Recommendations.....	65
APPENDICES	
Appendix 1: Site Specific Evaluation Reports	
Appendix II: List of Respondents from Beneficiary Households Interviewed	
Appendix III: List of ICSAP Personnel & Key Informants Interviewed	

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLES

Table 1: Evaluation Question and Matrix	8
Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Sampled Households.....	12
Table 3: The Context of ICSAP within National Policies	14
Table 4: ICSAP Budget and Cost Analysis.....	52
Table 5: Cost Benefit Analysis disaggregated by Project Sites	53

FIGURES

Figure 1: ICSAP Theory of change.....	7
Figure 2: Misesan Cara's Missionary Approach to Development (MADI)	17
Figure 3: Contribution of ICSAP to Sustainable Development Goals.....	18
Figure 4: Thematic areas covered in ICSAP training.....	22
Figure 5: Average Size of Kitchen Gardens Established by Beneficiary Households.....	24
Figure 6: Distribution of household based on the number of vegetable varieties in the Kitchen Garden	26
Figure 7: Estimated Average Distance to the Nearest Water Source	29
Figure 8: Application of Funds obtained from the Groups Savings Scheme.....	36
Figure 9: Average number of seedlings Issued and survival Rated	38
Figure 10: Levels of adoption of Health and Sanitation practices among beneficiary Households	40
Figure 11: Number of livelihood opportunities available to beneficiary Households	43
Figure 12: Sources of Livelihood for beneficiary households.....	43

ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

CEO:	Chief Executive Officer
CMC:	Cluster Management Committee
COVID-19:	Coronavirus Disease 2019
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
HDDS:	Household Dietary Diversity Score
ICSAP:	Inter Congregational Sustainable Agriculture Programme
ICSAPP:	Inter Congregational Sustainable Agriculture Pilot Project
IMO:	Indigenous Micro-Organisms
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MC:	Misean Cara
MADI:	Missionary Approach to Development Intervention
MOU:	Memorandum of Understanding
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development- Development Assistance Committee
RBF:	Result Based Framework
SA:	Sustainable Agriculture
SARD:	Sustainable Agriculture for Rural Development
SSHJM:	Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary
TOC:	Theory of Change

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ICSAP project

The inter-congregation Sustainable Agriculture programme (ICSAP) is an initiative of seven International religious congregations established in 2016 that works with vulnerable households in three Eastern African countries; Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan. The initiative started as a pilot project in September 2016 with the kind financial support of Misean Cara (MC) an Irish Charity with the oversight management of the Franciscan Brothers as the lead agency. Following the success of the pilot project, a one-year full project, was implemented in 2019. Currently in its third phase, the project is implemented in 10 programme project sites: four in Kenya, three in Uganda, and three in South Sudan. The current three-year program, a subject of this external evaluation commenced in January 2021 and came to an end in December 2023.

The ICSAP overarching strategic goal is to support poor households establish sustainable livelihoods that enhance household food, nutrition, and income security. This is to be actualized through the establishment of an inter-congregational partnership of religious congregations working together for the common good from a point of synergistic strength. The program seeks to support poor and marginalized households through the promotion of household food, nutrition, and income security through establishment of kitchen gardens with components of small livestock and additional components of health, sanitation and environmental protection.

In the current phase, ICSAP reached out to 1,152 households. In Kenya there were four programme project sites: Kitale, Kamagut, Baraka, and Wenje, collectively supporting 297 households. In South Sudan, three project sites were involved, with 285 beneficiaries: Thon Aduel, Akol Jal, and Tonj. Similarly, Uganda had three project sites in Adraa, Mukono, and Pabo, totaling 570 households.

Purpose, Objectives, and Scope of the Evaluation

The current evaluation aims to serve dual purposes of accountability and learning. It is intended to provide the ICSAP Summit, partner congregations, Misean Cara, and other key stakeholders with: (1) an impartial evaluation of the program's performance and impacts achieved to date, (2) a review of key strengths and weaknesses that have influenced the programme's performance, and (3) critical insights and recommendations for enhancing not only the present phase but also future phases of the ICSAP programme.

Evaluation Approach and Methodology

The current evaluation utilized a theory-based approach to establish evidence and examine the assumptions underlying the chain of causality between inputs, output, intermediate outcomes and potential contributions to the intended impact. A Theory of Change (TOC) reconstructed from ICSAP's Result Based Framework and Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) standard assessment for development evaluation served as a guiding evaluation framework. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of enquiry were used.

Household survey questionnaires, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and direct observation were used in collecting primary data. A review of existing performance and monitoring data and reports was carried out to supplement and triangulate the primary data. A total of 66 beneficiary households were visited and interviewed. Nine (9) FGDs were conducted, and 17 current and former programme and project staff, along with two (2) external key informants, were interviewed.

Key Findings

- ICSAP's goals, objectives, and interventions are highly relevant and responsive to the needs of the target households and their immediate communities. By leveraging on distinctive charisms and missions of each partner congregation, ICSAP has unified diverse intervention approaches previously adopted by partner congregations through Sustainable Agriculture and is effectively addressing the needs of the communities served by each congregation.
- There is consistency across all program and project site activity components within ICSAP result framework. Programme and Project activities, outputs, and outcomes are well-aligned and are contributing to the achievement of overall goals and intervention objectives.
- ICSAP has made significant contribution in building the capacity and capability of beneficiary households, particularly in empowering them with the knowledge and skills necessary for sustainable livelihoods, food security, and climate change resilience.
- ICSAP has effectively equipped beneficiary households with knowledge and skills, laying a strong foundation for sustainable livelihood across all project sites, Staff capacity-building efforts have enhanced the proficiency of project managers and officers in executing program activities.
- The goal of supporting each beneficiary household establishing a kitchen garden was achieved. Despite water scarcity, beneficiary households have successfully established kitchen gardens in nearly all project sites.
- The procurement and distribution of inputs such as seeds and tools to support the establishment of kitchen gardens were achieved, albeit with a few challenges. The goal of promoting diversity and consumption of green vegetables from household kitchen gardens has succeeded to a great extent, and is contributing to improved nutrition among beneficiary households.
- In ICSAP project sites where cereal production was planned and implemented this, has made very significant contribution to household food, nutrition and income security.

- Beneficiary households reported increasing area under cultivation of cereal crops following the training provided by ICSAP. However, the limited investment by households in additional inputs beyond those provided by ICSAP raises concerns about sustainability.
- The adoption of small livestock component as a source of livelihood has been successful, despite challenges in procurement of breeding stock and disease outbreaks. The contribution of adoption of small livestock in improving livelihoods among beneficiary households is evident. Sale of mature stock is a significant source of household income.
- The goal of establishing loans and saving schemes in each cohort of beneficiaries across all the ten project sites was achieved and has opened up opportunities for household to save and access to affordable credit. Village Savings And Loans (VSALs) have been successful and instrumental in bolstering the household saving culture. However, low periodic contributions are slowing down the accumulation of savings needed for significant investments
- The integration of the agroforestry component into kitchen gardening has achieved moderate success. Challenging climatic conditions leading to low survival rate of planted seedlings presents a significant impediment to the success of the agroforestry component.
- The goal of increasing the use of energy-saving stoves among beneficiary households was achieved to a great extent. Efforts aimed at improving households' basic hygiene practices in kitchen gardening have yielded results and the uptake of these practices is encouraging.
- The adoption of a group approach, bringing together beneficiary households in each cohort, village, or by proximity, introduced formal structures has significantly improved the effectiveness of ICSAP activities. The establishment of Management Committees has worked well in streamlining group operations. All groups across all project sites had established structures and formally elected group officials. Where both male and female beneficiaries were involved, gender consideration was evident.
- ICSAP has effectively diversified the livelihoods of beneficiary households, with all households engaged in at least two sources of income. This has not only improved economic resilience but also provides a buffer against external shocks, contributing to sustained household well-being.

- ICSAP has a documented M&E framework that has worked well in ensuring that programme and project activities were implemented as planned and progress towards set goals and objectives are measured, evaluated and reported. Monitoring and evaluation activities were timely and were fit for purpose. Input from monitoring and evaluation activities has been instrumental in addressing challenges and has supported learning and sharing of experiences.
- ICSAP's goal of diversifying sources of livelihood for beneficiary households to at least two was actualized. The contribution of kitchen gardening and small livestock in improving household livelihoods is evident. Kitchen gardening, improved cereal production and the adoption of small livestock are contributing to improved household food security as well.
- The goal of empowering households to achieve nutritional security through increased access and consumption of green vegetables and proteins in at least two meals a day was partially met. The contribution of kitchen gardening in increasing the consumption of green vegetables was evident.
- The efforts to increase household assets through ICSAP to at least three types have yielded moderate results. The direct contribution of ICSAP initiatives to increased asset ownership among beneficiary households is clear. Beneficiary households are using money earned from kitchen gardens, sale of mature livestock and cereal to purchase more livestock, household items, start or expand small businesses, or improve their homes.
- ICSAP's structured and legally binding framework ratified Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) by all seven member congregations has worked well in strengthening governance and has ensured equal participation and representation.

Conclusions

ICSAP's goals, objectives, and interventions are highly relevant and responsive to the needs of the target households and their immediate communities. ICSAP was well received and integrated within the programs and activities of partner congregations, developing synergies that are mutually beneficial. Overall, ICSAP largely achieved its goals.

The alignment and consistency across all project components within ICSAP is evident, with project activities, outputs, and outcomes closely resonating with the overall goals and intervention objectives.

The program has significantly contributed to building the capacity and capability of beneficiary households, particularly in empowering them with the knowledge and skills necessary for developing sustainable livelihoods, food security, and climate resilience.

The goal of supporting each beneficiary household in establishing a kitchen garden was achieved. The adoption of kitchen gardening as a livelihood opportunity has worked well in creating new livelihood opportunities for poor households.

The adoption of small livestock as a source of livelihood has been successful, despite challenges in procuring breeding stock and losses due to disease outbreaks. ICSAP has made significant progress in empowering households across four project sites to intensify cereal production as a means to enhance household food, nutrition and income security.

ICSAP has empowered beneficiary households to achieve nutritional security through increased access to and consumption of balanced diets which has been met with significant results.

ICSAP has made a notable contribution to diversifying livelihood opportunities for beneficiary households, with all households engaged in at least two sources of income.

The establishment of loans and savings schemes in each cohort of beneficiaries across all ten project sites has succeeded to a large extent, and has opened up opportunities for households to save and access affordable credit.

The integration of the agroforestry component into kitchen gardening has achieved moderate success despite challenging climatic conditions.

ICSAP has a well-documented Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework that effectively ensures the implementation of project activities as planned, measures, evaluates, and reports progress towards set goals and objectives.

Overall, the implementation of ICSAP activities followed the project plan, with most activities completed on time. However, delays were encountered in a few instances, primarily due to delayed fund remittances and procurement technicalities.

Despite the relatively short implementation period, ICSAP has demonstrated notable changes that point to the intended impact on beneficiary households and communities.

There is strong evidence to support continuation of both programme and project interventions and benefits beyond the current phase of ICSAP.

Recommendations

- The sustainability of kitchen gardening is highly dependent on access to and availability of water. Efforts to address this challenge in several project sites have yielded mixed results. While the sinking of wells and establishment of kitchen gardens around water wells has been successful, water tanks issued to households to support kitchen gardening were largely used for drinking water or left unutilized. ICSAP should develop tailored solutions including appropriate technologies that address the unique challenges of water scarcity specific to each project site.
- Access to quality vegetable seeds, fruit, and woodlot seedlings has emerged as a significant impediment to the realization of ICSAP's kitchen gardening and environmental goals in the majority of project sites. Given that seeds and seedlings are site-specific, each congregation should review and devise a working strategy to ensure that the right vegetable seeds and seedlings are both available and accessible to beneficiary households. Continued strengthening of households' capacity to develop indigenous vegetable seeds is strongly encouraged.
- The adoption of small livestock has shown significant potential in transforming the livelihoods of target households. However, the procurement of the breeding stock posed challenges. It is essential that ICSAP and member congregations review and align the current procurement strategy to ensure that timely and high-quality stock are procured.
- The performance of VSALs is promising and has great potential to improve both savings and access to credit. There is a need to strengthen the current VSAL model with the goal of enhancing its potential to stimulate more savings, improve accessibility to credit, and ensure the security of members' funds.
- While ICSAP has been successful in utilizing a lean staff, staff turnover at project sites level poses a significant threat to the continuity of ICSAP activities and the achievement of project outcomes. Therefore, ICSAP will need to expedite the recruitment and replacement of staff who have exited.
- The coordination and monitoring of ICSAP activities have predominantly fallen under the responsibility of the CEO. This arrangement has proven burdensome, especially given the geographical dispersion of project sites. Therefore, ICSAP should consider staffing the two cluster units, possible with a coordinator each to oversee both coordination and monitoring activity.
- The need for ICSAP's intervention to remain relevant is crucial for the program's sustainability.

While efforts have been made to introduce and promote new technology concepts such as Indigenous Micro-Organisms (IMO), which have improved intervention outcomes, more still needs to be done. Diversification of interventions would be of great significance.

- The role of member in-kind contributions and co-funding in ensuring the smooth running of project activities is evident especially where remittance of external funding are delayed. Therefore, it is important for member congregations to ensure that these funds are made available in a timely manner. Advance member funding is recommended as such funds are recouped once the project designated funds become available.
- The role of baseline data in monitoring and evaluation is crucial. Although ICSAP has established a template for collecting household data during recruitment, it needs to be enhanced with key indicators. There is a need to realign the existing baseline data collection tool to capture all indicators with the required depth of detail and accurately document the true status of all beneficiary households.

1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background and Context of ICSAP project

The Inter-Congregational Sustainable Agriculture Programme (ICSAP) was established in 2016 by seven religious congregations with the goal of improving the livelihood of target vulnerable households in three Eastern African countries: Kenya, South Sudan, and Uganda.

The founding member congregations are; the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, Patrician Brothers, Salesian Sisters of Saint de Paul, Franciscan Brothers OSF, the Jesuits, the Spiritans, and the Sacred Hearts Sisters of Jesus and Mary. Their dedication to serve the impoverished and marginalized, fulfilling both their spiritual and human needs using a common approach and strategy, became their unifying call.

ICSAP sought to achieve four objectives: to show that Religious Congregations can work together for the common good; to improve the competence of member Religious Congregations and their co-workers for the promotion of sustainable agriculture for rural development; to demonstrate that the targeted marginalized small farm households in member catchment areas can be empowered to achieve sustainable livelihoods; and, to document and advocate for government development policies and schemes that are pro-marginalized and environmentally sound.

ICSAP began as a pilot project in September 2016 with the kind financial support of Misesan Cara (MC), an Irish charity with Franciscan Brothers as the legal project holder. Positive outcomes from the pilot phase informed the decision to expand ICSAP to a one-year full project, implemented in 2019. The present phase is the third since the inception of ICSAP, with 9 implementation program sites: four in Kenya, two in Uganda, and three in South Sudan. The three-year program commenced in January 2021 and came to an end in December 2023.

The COVID-19 pandemic was the reason of the programme starting in the January of 2021 instead of 2020 which is the initial starting period.

1.2. Project goal and objectives

The ICSAP project is guided by a strategic goal and two intervention objectives.

Overall Strategic Goal

To enhance sustainable livelihoods that strengthening household food, nutrition, and income security. The overarching strategic goal was to be evidenced by effective inter-congregational partnership, aimed at enhancing household food security, improving household nutrition, increasing household income, and assets of target households through the practice of Sustainable Agriculture.

ICSAP Intervention Objectives

ICSAP has two complementary objectives:

- i) To prove that religious congregations can work together for the common good and the good of target beneficiaries by setting up an inter-congregation working partnership operating from a point of synergistic strength.
- ii) To provide support in the promotion of household food, nutrition and income security to target households in respective partner work stations by promoting the establishment of household kitchen gardens that provide fresh green vegetables and small livestock products to supplement household food, nutrition and income security.

Project Intervention Strategy

ICSAP has adopted a two-pronged strategic approach in actualizing its objectives;

- i. Through dialogue and communication strategy, to establish a working partnership of religious congregations to enhance the effectiveness of missionary work.
- ii. To adopt Sustainable Agriculture as a strategy that enhances sustainable livelihoods so as to achieve household food, nutrition and income security with a specific focus on the transfer of skills, knowledge, technologies and practices that promotes environmental protection and sustainability in agricultural practices and improvement of basic hygiene at the household level.

1.3. Project site

In the current phase, ICSAP was implemented in nine (9) project sites, reaching out to 1,152 households. Kenya has four sites: Kitale, Kamagut, Baraka/Lare, and Wenje, targeting 297 households.

In South Sudan, three project sites were involved, with 285 beneficiaries: Thon Aduel, Akol Jal, and Tonj. Uganda has two project sites in Adraa and, Pabo/Mukono, with a total of 570 households.

The distribution of target households per project site was as follows:

1. Kitale in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya, in collaboration with Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, with a focus on 18 households.
2. Kamagut in Uasin Ngishu County, Kenya, with the Congregation of the Brothers of St. Patrick (the Patricians) as the implementing partner, aiming to support 60 households.
3. Baraka – Molo in Nakuru County, Kenya, hosted by Franciscan Brothers, supporting 150 households.
4. Wenje in Tana River County, Kenya, with the Congregation of the Holy Ghost under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (the Spiritans) as the implementing partner, targeting 75 households.
5. Bakhita in Tonj – Warrap State, South Sudan, hosted by Salesian Sister-Bakhita, with a goal of supporting 90 households.
6. Thon Aduel in Rumbek – Western Lakes State, South Sudan, under the care of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost fathers under the protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (the Spiritans), supporting 90 households.
7. Akol Jal in Rumbek – Western Lakes State, South Sudan, in partnership with the Society of Jesus – East Africa, targeting 105 households.
8. Adraa, West Nile in Madi Okollo district, Uganda, administered by Franciscan Brothers focusing on 120 households.
9. Pabo – Gulu in Northern Uganda and Mukono in central Uganda as one project site implemented with the support of the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, with a goal of capacity building 450 households.

1.4. Purpose, Objectives, and Scope of the Evaluation

The current evaluation aims to serve dual purposes of accountability and learning. It is intended to enhance accountability by providing ICSAP summit, the project team, project donor and other key stakeholders with an independent evaluation of whether the project has achieved the planned results. Also, the evaluation is intended at providing a critical view to understand what worked well, what did not, operational experience, opportunities and challenges.

Consequently, the outcomes and recommendations stemming from the concluded phase are anticipated to furnish the ICSAP Summit, partner member congregations, and Misesan Cara with:

- An impartial evaluation of the program's performance, emphasizing the observed and anticipated impact to date,
- Critical insights and recommendations for enhancing not only the present phase but also future phases of ICSAP program.
- Key strengths and weaknesses, along with opportunities identified in the course of implementing the current phase.

The evaluation covers the period from the start of the project in January 2021 through its end in December 2023, when most activities should have been completed and outputs achieved.

1.5. The Structure of the Report

Following this introduction in section one, Section two of the report describes the approach and methodology, including the theory of change. Section three presents the findings in line with OECD-DAC criteria and evaluation questions. Section four outlines key challenges and lessons learned, while conclusions and recommendations are outlined in section five

The report is also accompanied by the following Appendices:

- i. Appendix I. Key Findings from each project sites
- ii. Appendix II: List of Respondents Interviewed

2.0. EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

2.1. Evaluation Approach

The current evaluation utilized a theory-based approach to establish evidence and examine the assumptions underlying the chain of causality between inputs, output, intermediate outcomes and potential contributions to the intended impact. Theory-based evaluation is well-known for its ability to assess the effectiveness of program goals, objectives, activities, and outcomes while also providing a framework for understanding what works and what needs to be improved, as well as guiding in the identification of potential gaps and opportunities for program improvement¹.

A Theory of Change (TOC) (Figure 1) reconstructed from ICSAP's Result Based Framework and Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) standard assessment for development evaluation served as a guiding evaluation framework.

OECD-DAC² is a standard assessment used widely in development evaluation and is based on six primary domains. Each domain was contextualized for ICSAP.

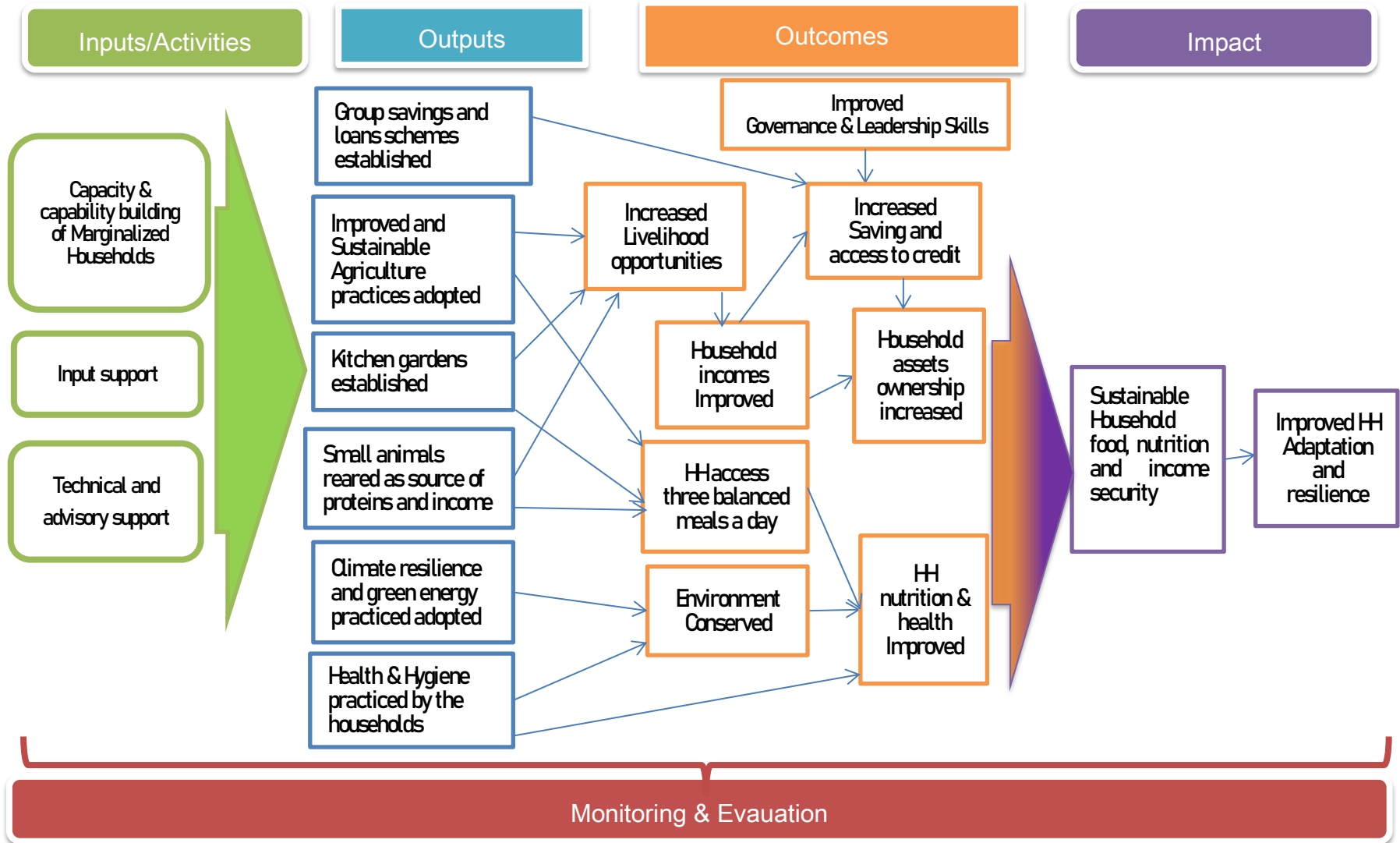
- **Relevance:** This involves assessing how well the goals of ICSAP align with the priorities and needs of the target households, implementers, and donor partners, policies of host countries and contribution to relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- **Coherence:** It establishes the extent to which ICSAP project components were internally consistent and aligned with other programs of partner congregations. It also seeks to determine whether ICSAP has created opportunities for synergy and interlinkages beneficial to both current and future programs.
- **Effectiveness:** This domain evaluates the degree to which the implemented activities achieve the objectives of ICSAP. Additionally, it examines the robustness of governance and management structures and identifies areas for improvement.

¹ White, H (2009). Theory-Based Impact Evaluation: Principles and practice. Working paper no. 3. International Initiative for Impact Evaluation, June 2009

² OECD (2021), Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully, OECD publishing. Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/543e84ed-en>.

- **Efficiency:** A comprehensive assessment, both quantitative and qualitative, of the outputs in relation to the inputs. This includes an emphasis on efficiencies attributed to cost management, staff, and equipment utilization.
- **Impact:** While acknowledging that it may be premature to fully analyze the impact of ICSAP interventions due to its first multiannual funding and operation period, the assessment focuses on early identification of significant changes in livelihoods. This involves recognizing indicators of desired or unfavorable impacts.
- **Sustainability:** This domain aims to examine the likelihood that the benefits derived from ICSAP activities will persist after the withdrawal of funding.

ICSAP's Theory of Change



(An adaption of the ICSAP's TOC and its Result Based Framework)

Drawing from ICSAP's Theory of Change (TOC) and in line with EOCD-DAC evaluation criteria, evaluation questions were formulated to guide the development of data collection tools, selection of evaluation methodology, and analysis and reporting of findings. The adopted evaluation criteria and questions are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Evaluation Question and Matrix

Evaluation criteria and key evaluation question	Evaluation Question
Relevance	
How are the objectives of the intervention consistent with the beneficiary needs and stakeholders' policies and priorities?	1. To what extent are the ICSAP objectives, strategies and interventions relevant to the needs and priorities of intended beneficiaries?
	2. To what extent are the intervention objectives relevant to host country and partners' policies and priorities?
	3. Is ICSAP intervention strategy in line with and responsive to Sustainable Development Goals?
Coherence	
How compatible is the ICSAP's intervention with other interventions Implemented by partner congregations?	4. How consistent is the ICSAP intervention with programs implemented by partner congregations?
	5. What are the synergies and interlinkages between ICSAP intervention and other interventions carried out by implementing partners?
Effectiveness	
To what extent have the expected outputs of the intervention been achieved?	6. To what extent has the project achieved its objective of improving household food, nutrition and income security?
	7. What is the quality of outputs delivered? Are they useful?
	8. Were institutional arrangements adequate for implementing the Project and for delivery of expected outputs and outcomes?
	9. To what extent have monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the project been timely, meaningful, and adequate?
Efficiency	
How efficient was the Program implementation?	10. Were ICSAP activities implemented in a cost-effective manner and as budgeted?
	11. Has ICSAP intervention been implemented within the scheduled time?
	12. To what extent did the ICSAP implementation utilize existing expertise?
	13. Could financial resources have been use more efficiently (Value-for-money)?
Impact / Impact Outlook	
How effective have the project approaches and strategies been in contributing to overall goals of ICSAP?	14. What are the positive changes to beneficiaries resulted from the Project?
	15. What is the overall impact of the project both directly or indirectly, intended, or unintended?
	16. To what extent has the project been replicated, scaled up or institutionalized?
Sustainability	
What is the likelihood that results will continue once Program funding and services have ended?	17. To what extent has the project build capacity and ownership of stakeholders to support continuity beyond the funding period?
	18. Will ICSAP's benefits last beyond the current project funding phase?

2.2. Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation used a mixed method approach incorporating quantitative and qualitative approaches. The evaluation was conducted in four distinct but interrelated phases.

Phase 1: Literature Review

At the outset, a documentary review was carried out to gain an in-depth understanding of the project and to guide the selection of evaluation methodology, approach, and tools. Several documents were reviewed and provided a basis for comparative assessment used to identify any changes, and assess progress towards project outcomes and goals. Secondary data were gathered through an in-depth desk review and served as the foundation for analysis and discussion of findings.

Phase 2: Development of data collection Tools and Data Collection.

The evaluator developed an array of practical and participatory tools to collect data from beneficiary households as the unit of analysis and other stakeholders. Key Informant Interview (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guides were used to collect qualitative data during discussion forum.

- ***Household Survey:*** A comprehensive questionnaire was developed to collect data pertaining to the objectives of the evaluation as set out in Table 1. A draft of the formal household questionnaire was shared with ICSAP secretariat for input before revision and deployment. A two-stage sampling plan was adopted in selecting study sample. First, project sites were sampled purposively and all sites were included and visited. Secondly; using Cochran Israel formula a sample of 74 households was identified for the study with a minimum of six households targeted in each of the ten project sites. Location that had a relatively higher number of beneficiaries was allocated more samples.
- ***Focus Group Interviews*** – FGDs were held at the site level with the beneficiary households in all project locations except Kamagut owing to logistical challenges. Due to the distance between target communities, two focus group discussions were held in Pabo for the 2022 and 2023 beneficiary cohorts. An FGD guide was developed for this purpose. The guide examined the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, potential impact realized so far, and sustainability of the various project components, and where possible, identified lessons that could be learned and best practices.
- ***Project Staff Interviews*** – In each project site, both the project manager and the project officer were interviewed. Project officers who played a significant part in the implementation of ICSAP activities were of key focus.

While project managers provided information on ICSAP implementation at the project site level, their role and insights as summit members were also sought. The views of the CEO, other summit members, key congregation staff were also sought.

- **Key Informant Interviews** - Key informants were chosen from individuals who were familiar with ICSAP, especially leaders and resource persons from the communities from which ICSAP beneficiaries came from. A key informant interview guide was developed for this purpose.
- **Direct Observation** – The evaluation used direct observation to assess what has been achieved, especially when it came to kitchen gardening and small livestock management. This offered strong evidence of what had been carried out and its tangible outputs. Where possible, records held by households and project staffs were reviewed.

Ten project sites were visited for the purpose of collecting data between November 20th and December 23rd, 2023. Due to floods in the Wenje, Tana River project site, the visit was postponed to mid-February and took place on the 15th and 16th. In each project site, not fewer than six households were interviewed with equal representation across the three years. All nine project officers were interviewed, as well as three project managers who were not summit members. Two key informants who participated in beneficiary identification were interviewed: a village elder in Baraka and voluntary health worker in Mukono. Nine (9) Focus Group Discussions were held in all project sites except for Kamagut.

Phase 3- Data Analysis and Report Writing

The main tasks performed during this phase included data entry, cleaning, and analysis of household responses and information collected during interviews and FGDs. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze quantitative data, while qualitative data from interviews were analyzed by identifying and classifying responses into common thematic areas. Qualitative and quantitative data were triangulated to improve the synthesis and interpretation of evaluation findings, facilitating the extraction of conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations.

Phase 4 – Dissemination

This last phase was devoted to writing of draft reports with preliminary findings presented to ICSAP Summit and other stakeholders for validation. Comments from these meeting are incorporated into a final report.

2.3. Methodological and Study Challenges

For some respondents, particularly those who benefited in 2021 and 2022, accurately recalling facts and events posed a challenge. This limitation hindered in some cases the depth of data collection at the desired levels of accuracy. Secondary sources, especially those available at the site office and secretariat, were consulted to supplement what had not been captured during the interviews.

The majority of respondents in Uganda and South Sudan could only communicate in their native languages, necessitating the use of translators. Consequently, interview and FGD sessions took longer than planned.

The contribution of interventions introduced by other donor agencies in some locations where the project was implemented could not be clearly isolated. This may have limited the accuracy in attributing changes at the household level observed solely to ICSAP interventions. For instance, in Wenje, several interventions in livelihoods, including sanitation and agroforestry, have been carried out by other agencies targeting the same households that were ICSAP beneficiaries.

3.0. FINDINGS

3.1. Demographic Characteristics of Sample Households

Across all ten project locations, sixty-six respondents were interviewed out of the seventy four targeted. Female respondents accounted for three-quarters (75.8%) of the participants. In South Sudan, all beneficiaries were women, whereas in Uganda, there was a balance between men (47.6%) and women (52.4%). In Kenya, slightly more than three-quarters (78.6%) of beneficiaries were women.

The mean age of the respondents was 49 years, with minimal differences in mean age across the three countries. Notably, in all three countries, the average household size was higher than the national average. In Uganda, households had an average of 9.67 dependents, which was significantly higher than the national average of 5³. A similar pattern was observed in South Sudan, where the average household size is 7.65, compared to the national average of 7⁴. In Kenya, the average household size was 6.82, which is significantly higher than the national average of 3.2⁵.

As seen in Table 2, more than a fifth (22.7%) of the surveyed households lived with persons with disabilities, with a third (33.3%) of the households surveyed in Uganda indicating the presence of persons with disabilities in their households. Similarly, a third (33.3%) of the households were headed by a single parent, all of whom were female.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Sampled Households

Characteristic		Kenya (n =28)	Uganda (n=21)	South Sudan(n=17)	Combined (n=66)
Gender	Male	21.4%	47.6%	0%	24.2%
	Female	78.6%	52.4%	100%	75.8%
Mean Age (Years)		51.71	46.0	47.43*(n=10)	49.04
Average HH size		6.82	9.67	7.65	7.94
Single Parent Headed HH		28.6%	33.3%	41.2%	33.3%
HH with Physically challenged		14.3%	33.3%	23.5%	22.7%

**Seven respondents who could accurately recall their Age or year of birth*

³ Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), 2021. Uganda National Household Survey 2019/2020. Kampala, Uganda; UBOS

⁴ International Organization for Migration (IOM), Jun 08 2023. DTM South Sudan — Inter Sectoral Needs Assessment Report- Rural Component (September 2022). IOM, South Sudan.

⁵ Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2022. Nairobi, Kenya

3.2. Relevance

In determining the relevance of ICSAP, the evaluation looked at whether the design and interventions used were appropriate for addressing the needs and priorities of the intended beneficiaries and stakeholders. The extent to which ICSAP initiatives were in line with host countries' relevant policies, plans, and goals, as well as those of implementing congregations and donors were reviewed. The ICSAP's contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals was examined as well.

3.2.1. Needs and Priorities of Target Beneficiaries

ICSAP's goals, objectives, and interventions were timely and addressed not just the current but also the most urgent needs of those targeted. The emphasis on promoting sustainable livelihoods, enhancing household food, nutrition and income security, and strengthening climate change resilience among marginalized households through ICSAP was valid and strongly echoed in the voices of beneficiary households during Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and household interviews.

Throughout the spectrum of ICSAP beneficiaries, as evidenced by baseline data and those collected through interviews, and during FGD sessions, access to food emerged as a critical priority. At baseline, the majority of households reported access to only one meal a day, most of the time consisting of one food category, often lacking vitamins and proteins. Additionally, nearly 70% of households subsisted on less than 1 Euro per day, with a significant 62% categorized as poor and in urgent need of food and nutritional support.

A review of ICSAP household selection and inclusion criteria indicates a strong focus on the truly marginalized and impoverished. Baseline data reveals high levels of vulnerability among households that hindered their chances of emerging from extreme poverty. At baseline, 56% of households were headed by females, the majority of whom were widowed, while 7.6% were headed by grandparents or children. Additionally, 15% of households were living with people with disabilities, further exacerbating their susceptibility to food insecurity and economic instability.

For households living in villages in Adraa, Pabo, and across South Sudan, improving access to basic sanitary amenities such as pit latrines was and still is a priority. In Baraka, unpredictable weather patterns, exacerbated by climate challenges, have repeatedly led to crop failures within the project catchment which lies in a rain shadow area, posing a consistent threat to food security. In Kitale, where many households rely on unsustainable livelihoods such as illegal brewing, the need for alternative economic pathways is evident. To these households, ICSAP represents a step towards breaking the cycle of poverty and improving livelihoods.

“ *ICSAP has come at the right time and has truly helped the poorest of the poor in our community. The widowed and the weakest have benefited, and your support has brought hope to them*”.

Joseph Ndirangu – Village Elder-Baraka- Lari

ICSAP has come in strongly in support of communities emerging from the ravages of conflict, such as those in Adraa and Pabo in northern Uganda, and across South Sudan. Testimonies from beneficiaries reveal profound impact of ICSAP in alleviating their suffering, with individuals expressing gratitude for the timely support that not only offered material aid and capacity building but also brought hope and a sense of belonging among the beneficiaries. In their own words, expressed during FGD sessions, ICSAP has served as a beacon of hope, offering a pathway towards resilience and restoration for households and communities emerging from the ravages of civil war.

“ *I don't sit outside my house thinking of the loss of my husband any more. I have to attend to my kitchen garden and take care of the goats. ICSAP has given me hope, ICSAP is my second Husband*”

Rebecca Mual. Thon Aduel

3.2.2. Policies and Priorities of host Countries

The concept and approach of ICSAP fits well within the national development frameworks of the three host countries. There is considerable concurrence between ICSAP goals and objectives with policies and development instruments in all the three countries, with agricultural sector at the center of their national economic growth agenda.

Table 3: The Context of ICSAP within National Policies

<p><i>Government of Kenya</i></p>	<p>ICSAP fits well within the economic pillar outlined in Kenya Vision 2030, which aims to improve the prosperity of all Kenyans through agriculture and livestock as key contributors. The overall aim of the Kenya Government Agriculture Policy of 2021, championing for the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices to ensure household and national food and nutrition security, mirrors ICSAP's overall objective. Furthermore, the policy seeks to increase the availability, access, and consumption of affordable, safe, diverse, and nutritious foods at all stages of the food chain, with the long-term intention of promoting dietary diversity, improved nutrition, and affordability, which are central themes of ICSAP.</p> <p><i>Kenya Vision 2030, Agricultural Policy 2021</i></p>
-----------------------------------	--

<i>Government of Uganda</i>	<p>The Government of Uganda's Vision 2040 identifies agriculture as the cornerstone of the economy and acknowledges the crucial role of smallholder farmers in driving economic growth. The overarching objective of the National Agriculture Policy 2013, aimed at achieving food and nutrition security and enhancing household incomes through coordinated interventions, aligns closely with the goals and objectives of ICSAP</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Uganda Vision 2040, National Agriculture Policy 2013</i></p>
<i>Republic of South Sudan</i>	<p>Through the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS), the young nation is focusing on rebuilding from the ashes of civil war through agriculture, with an emphasis on achieving food security as a tool for realizing freedom, equality, justice, peace, and prosperity for all. MAFS's vision seeks to transform the agricultural sector into a vibrant, productive economic sector that contributes to economic growth, social well-being, national food and nutritional security, and poverty alleviation. ICSAP, in a small way, is contributing to MAFS's mission, that aims to improve the quality of life for more than 87% of the rural population through capacity building and empowering poor and marginalized households improve their livelihood, food and nutritional security.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, 2016</i></p>

3.2.3. Implementing Partners

ICSAP was designed to be an inter-congregation working partnership bringing together seven founding congregations each established and guided by unique charism and mission call. Beyond unifying the diversity of approach adopted by each congregation in serving their communities previously, ICSAP has integrated well with the charisma and strongly aligned with the aspirations of all the partner congregations.

The Franciscan Brothers -Baraka & Adraa

For Franciscan Brothers with communities in Baraka / Lare - Kenya and Adraa in Uganda, simplicity, poverty, and service to others, and the dedication to meeting the spiritual, educational, and social needs of their local communities is actualized through ICSAP. Franciscan Brothers have for a long time been a champion for the adoption of sustainable agriculture technologies and practices in the region as a strategy for achieving environmental sustainability. Their focus on rural development as a strategy in enhancing the livelihood of marginalized communities among rural East African communities is adequately addressed in the goals, approach and choice of intervention adopted by ICSAP.

Salesian Sisters of St Johns Bosco –Bakhita, Tonj

Through ICSAP, Salesian Sisters of St. John Bosco in Bakhita, Tonj are standing in and lending compassion for women who bore the greatest scars of the civil war in South Sudan. It is through ICSAP that they are able to lend hope to those living in extreme poverty, facing difficulties, and experiencing marginalization and hopelessness in the surrounding villages. In Tonj, their call to serve the young people through education and agricultural programs for women is actualized through ICSAP. The kitchen gardening and small livestock programs provide women with the opportunity to feed their families and earn some income that allows them not only to meet their basic needs but also to send their children to school.

The Patricians of Kamagut (Brothers of St. Patrick)

The Patrician Brothers dedication to serving the community of Kamagut and its surrounding areas is founded on the principles of St. Patrick established by Bishop Daniel Delany in 1808. Their deep commitment lies in providing education and support to the surrounding community, particularly focusing on the needs of disadvantaged youth and the poor. While education remains their key focus, their call to tend to the marginalized and hold all of creation to be holy and worthy of reverence is actualized through the programs brought about by ICSAP. It is through ICSAP that they demonstrate deep commitment to the values of compassion, solidarity, and service to others, by enriching the lives of those they encounter through their dedication and care.

Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary – Mukono & Pabo

Inspired by Christ's compassion and attuned to the struggles of humanity and the environment, the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary strive to cultivate communities rooted in gentleness, justice, and peace, reflecting the transformative love of God. For SSHJM, ICSAP interventions resonates strongly with their charism; “called to stand in solidarity with the poor and marginalized, extending the compassionate love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus through presence, empathy, and commitment to liberation”. In Pabo, once a refugee camp and for poor households in Mukono, ICSAP has come in to actualize women's empowerment and ease the straggles of households affected by HIV/AIDS, the disabled and elderly left behind when families returned to their villages after the war and has been instrumental in fostering resilience, dignity, and holistic well-being within vulnerable communities.

Daughters of Charity – Kitale

Inspired by the charism of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac, the Daughters of Charity embody their commitment to God by serving those in need and advocating for a more equitable society. Serving the impoverished and marginalized households in Matisi, Kitale, characterized by swampy landscape amidst widespread poverty exacerbated by illicit brewing and resultant alcoholism, has been greatly actualized through interventions facilitated by ICSAP.

Kitchen gardening and small livestock animals has been instrumental in providing alternative source of livelihood to the poor of the poorest and a source of hope to those grappling with extreme poverty.

Spiritans of Wenje in Kenya & Thon Aduel in South Sudan

ICSAP’s goals, targeting to improve the livelihoods of those left far behind, fit well with the mission call for the Spiritans in Wenje and Thon Aduel. Their call to serve communities in need, particularly in areas experiencing extreme poverty as is in Wenje, and those facing conflict in South Sudan, is actualized through interventions brought about by ICSAP. Working for the poor within their congregations, the Spiritans are fulfilling their commitment to willingly opt for the poor, the oppressed, and the disadvantaged. It is through ICSAP that they embody the values of solidarity, compassion, and service, seeking to uplift and empower individuals and communities in these regions.

3.2.4. Misesan Cara

ICSAP interventions is aligned and fits well within the five pillars of Misesan Cara’s Missionary Approach to Development Intervention (MADI), a powerful and longstanding model that has effectively addressed challenges facing poor and vulnerable communities around the world.

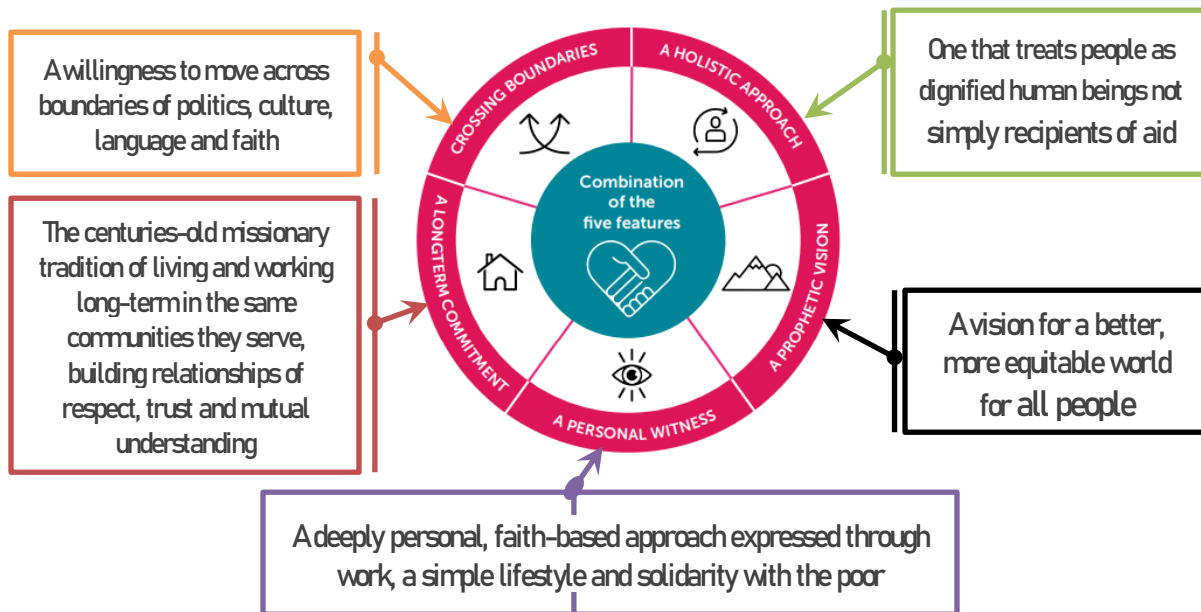


Figure 2: Misesan Cara’s Missionary Approach to Development Intervention (MADI)

Implementation of ICSAP intervention by different congregations working in multiple locations in Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan makes it a cross-border intervention and demonstrates a willingness to transcend boundaries of politics, culture, language, and faith.

Working with congregations that have established a presence in their respective locations lends ICSAP greater long-term commitment and fosters a deeply personal, faith-based approach expressed through work and solidarity with the poor on a personal level. ICSAP targets marginalized households and seeks to ensure in the long term that each beneficiary household is dignified, as envisaged in the MADI approach.

3.2.5. Alignment and Responsiveness to Sustainable Development Goals

A review of ICSAP goals, objectives and outcomes shows a close link and contribution to the actualization of several United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). ICSAP makes a direct contribution to SDG1 and SDG2 while indirectly contributing to seven other SDGs; SDG 3: good health and wellbeing; SDG 4: Access to quality education; SDG 5: Gender and equality; SDG 6: Access to clean water and sanitation; SDG 7: Promotion of affordable clean energy; SDG 13: Climate Action; SDG 16: Promotion of peace justice and strong institutions and SDG 17: Partnerships.

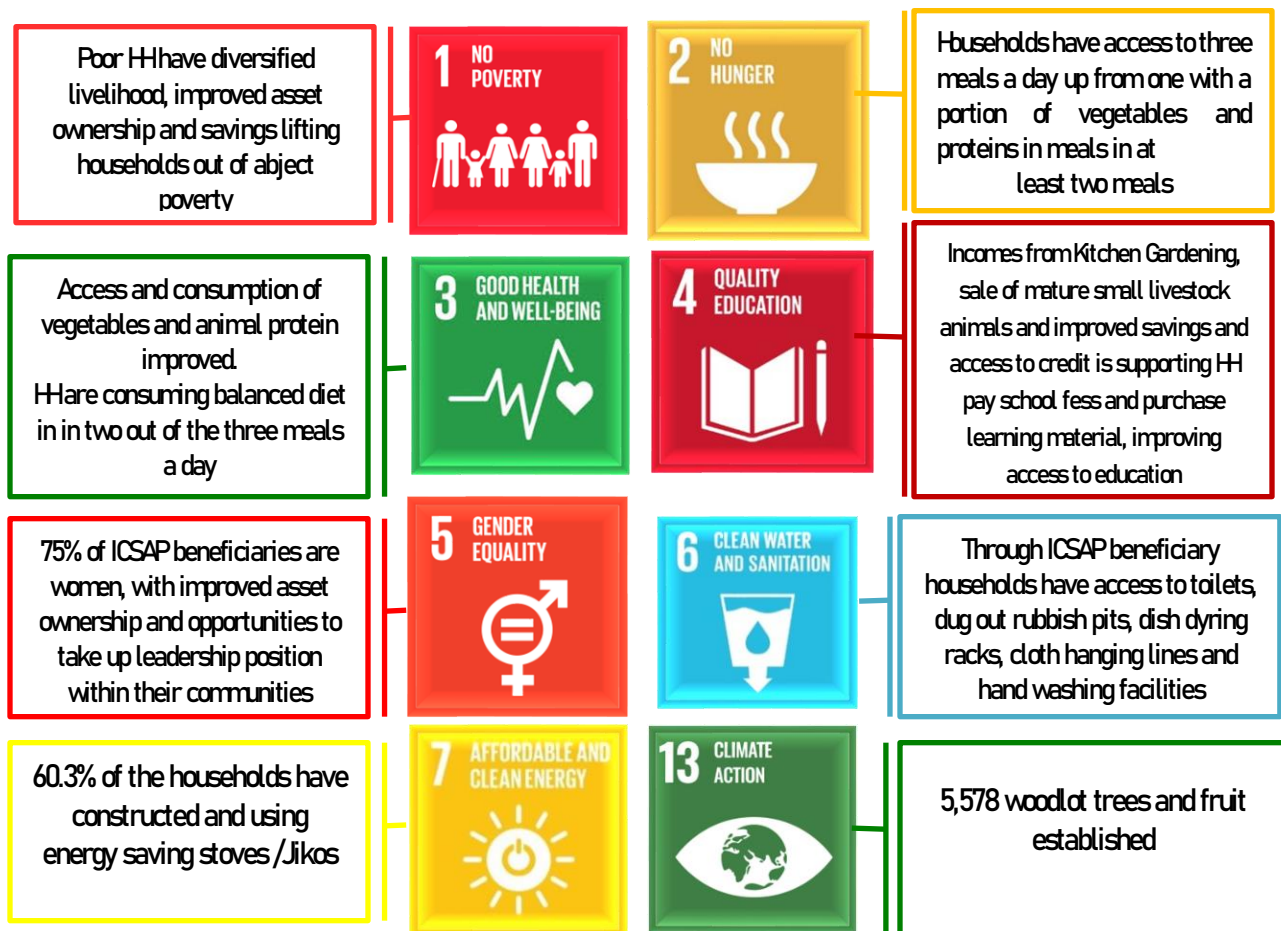


Figure 3: Contribution of ICSAP to Sustainable Development Goals

3.3. Coherence

In reviewing coherence, the evaluation sought to establish the extent to which ICSAP project components were internally consistent and whether it aligned with other programs of partner congregations. It also assessed whether ICSAP has created and exploited opportunities for synergy and interlinkages beneficial to both current and future programs.

3.3.1. Consistency of ICSAP Intervention with the Goals and Operational Structures of Partner Congregations

A review of ICSAP result Framework, Theory of Change and its Monitoring and Evaluation plan reveals a strong alignment and consistency across all project components. Overall, the project activities, outputs, and outcomes are consistent with the overall goals and intervention objectives. A strong causal relationship exist linking inputs and activities with intended outputs and outcomes. All activities implemented are relevant and are directly linked and contributes to an overarching goal

The coherence between the overall strategic goal and the intervention objectives is evident. Both the strategic goal and the intervention objectives are centered on enhancing livelihoods that improve access to food, nutrition, and income security. Establishing inter-congregational working partnerships demonstrates a commitment to collective action for the common good, aligning with the goal of enhancing sustainable livelihoods.

Promoting household kitchen gardens directly supports the overarching goal by addressing specific aspects of household food, nutrition, and income security. By focusing on the establishment of kitchen gardens, the intervention targets a practical solution to supplement household resources – human, natural, social, physical, financial, spiritual, thereby contributing to improved livelihoods.

ICSAP goals and objectives are closely aligned with those of programs and interventions already being implemented by participating congregations. ICSAP has significantly complemented the outreach programs for Baraka and Adraa colleges and has been implemented concurrently with other congregations' projects, including CHIN, WACFO, SALPO, SALPIN, and other sustainable livelihood projects. The realization of their overarching goals, seeking to empower marginalized households to achieve sustainable livelihoods by strengthening household food, nutrition, and income security, has been strongly complemented by ICSAP

3.3.2. Synergies and Linkages

ICSAP was well received and integrated within the partner congregation programs and activities and has developed synergies that are mutually beneficial.

Discussions with project managers, officers and summit members reveals a strong fit between ICSAP and existing partner programs and interventions, and in nearly all have been reported to be mutually beneficial, synergic and has improved intervention outcomes.

The inter-congregational approach adopted by ICSAP bringing together congregation serving in marginalized communities has worked well in creating a platform where ideas are shared and learnt. The concept of SA for instance, that has been perfected by the Franciscan brothers has since been adopted and implemented in all the ten project sites.

In Akol Jal, the Jesuits, with the introduction of ICSAP, have transformed the way community water wells, established by the congregation with the support of its partners, are utilized. Beyond merely being a water source, these wells have become a source of green vegetables for the entire community through the introduction of kitchen gardening. They have become meeting places where women congregate to give each other hope and a sense of belonging, especially for widows who lost their husbands during the civil war. ICSAP has also benefited through the use of training facilities within the established agricultural center.

In Mukono and Pabo, ICSAP is strongly complementary and well integrated with two programs run by the sisters: Child in Need (CHIN) in Mukono and Women and Children First Organization (WACFO) in Pabo. ICSAP has contributed to the actualization of the goals of CHIN and WACFO by addressing food and nutritional needs, especially among households living with children with disabilities, HIV, and extreme poverty. On the other hand, CHIN and WACFO staff have been instrumental in strengthening ICSAP's capacity-building activities, particularly regarding gender roles, women's rights, and leadership. This support has led to significant strides in empowering and giving women confidence to take up leadership roles within the projects and their community.

“ I have learnt a lot from ICSAP Program that will go a long way in improving how we will implement projects and activities at WAFCO. There is a lot that WAFCO has benefited from how ICSAP programs is implemented.”

Acaye Bazil, M&E Officer WAFCO, Pabo, Uganda

In Baraka and Adraa, ICSAP has come in handy in broadening OSF outreach programs in both project sites by actualizing the goals of its rural development program, promoting the integrated development of the surrounding communities. In Adraa, through ICSAP, the outreach program has been able to cover an entire village of Offaka/Osaba. Additionally, concurrently implementing ICSAP with the Sustainable Agriculture Livelihood Program in Offaka Sub-County (SALPO) has enhanced the effectiveness of both programs through knowledge and skill sharing among project staff.

This enhancement stems from the adoption of improved sustainable agriculture concepts and appropriate technologies, such as the indigenous microorganisms (IMO), which are known for their effective control of pests in kitchen gardens introduced through ICSAP.

Discussion with project staff and information collected through an FGD session in Kitale, revealed a strong working relation between ICSAP and existing medical, educational, sports, and nutrition programs undertaken by the sisters in the surrounding community. Through kitchen gardening and small livestock animals, beneficiary households have a source of livelihood, leading to notable improvements in child nutrition and school attendance. Additionally, ICSAP has enabled extremely poor households supported through the housing programs, as well as those seeking alternatives to selling illegal brew, to find a source of alternative livelihood through kitchen gardening and raising small livestock animals.

With the support of ICSAP, Salesian sisters in Tonj have reported improved school attendance among children from poor households. Feedback from beneficiary households indicates that income earned from kitchen gardening, sale of mature animal and groundnut harvests has not only improved their livelihoods and food security but has also supported their children's education at Bakhita School by contributing to part of the fees. Furthermore, students in the agriculture class at Bakhita Secondary School have the opportunity to acquire practical skills in agriculture through hands-on demonstrations conducted at the farm.

3.4. Effectiveness

In assessing effectiveness, the evaluation reviewed the progress made towards the realization of ICSAP's goals and objectives based on output and outcome indicators. The analysis also examines factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of these objectives.

3.4.1. Achievements of project's Outputs

Output 1: Capacity and Capability building of Households and Project Staff

The goal of equipping target households with knowledge and skills important for improved livelihoods was fully achieved. A review of performance reports and feedback from beneficiary households shows that all the 1,152 beneficiary households across the ten project sites were taken through capacity building sessions on key aspects of SA, small animal husbandry, sanitations, environmental conservation and other components outlined in the training syllabus. Respondents interviewed demonstrated good understanding of key concepts as seen in Figure 4. The use of demonstrations plots and monitoring visits by project officers to beneficiary households proved to be highly effective.



Figure 4: Thematic areas covered in ICSAP training

Plate 1.

Representative Capacity and Capability building activities of Households and Project Staff



Photo credit: Fr. Eric Simiyu & William Keyah

The recognition of differences in approach and interventions used previously by individual congregations and the need to transition to a common approach under ICSAP early in the project cycle was timely. This need was addressed through Capacity-building of project staff at Baraka Agricultural College in 2022 and 2023 facilitated by the ICSAP secretariat, bringing together project officers and managers. Project staffs interviewed acknowledge the role of the training in enhancing their understanding of SA, subsequently improving their confidence and efficacy in implementing ICSAP activities. They also underscored the invaluable opportunities the sessions provided for sharing experiences, addressing challenges, and identifying best practices. Through these sessions, the overarching goal of enhancing the capacity of ICSAP staff in key project areas, encompassing sustainable agriculture technologies and best practices, was successfully realized.

Output 2: Green Fresh Vegetables, Fruits, and Herbs Produced through the Establishment of Kitchen Gardens

a) Established Kitchen Gardening

The goal of supporting each beneficiary household to establish a kitchen garden was successful – 1,152 in total. All beneficiary households visited had established a kitchen garden. The sizes of the kitchen gardens established varied between project sites, with households in Lare in Baraka, Akol Ajal, Thon Aduel, and Adraa establishing smaller gardens of less than 100 square meters envisaged by ICSAP. In total 1,310 square meters (1.31) hectares of vegetable were established. Households in Kitale and Kamagut had relatively bigger gardens as seen in Figure 5.

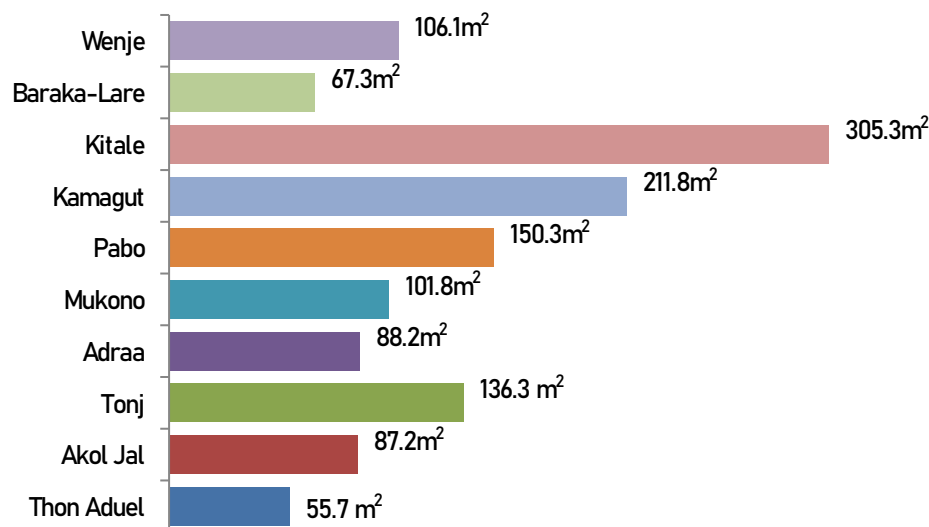


Figure 5: Average Size of Kitchen Gardens Established by Beneficiary Households

Household visits during this evaluation revealed that most beneficiary households had made significant efforts to protect their kitchen gardens by erecting fences around the edges of their gardens, with the exception of households in Adraa and a few in Baraka and Thon Aduel. In Kitale beneficiary households were supported with fencing materials and labor ensured that every household had secure fencing. The use of dry sorghum stocks to fence kitchen gardens in Tonj and Akol Jal exposed the gardens to inversion by grazing animals. Beneficiary households expressed willingness to collaborate with ICSAP, offering fencing poles if provided with chain-link fence materials to permanently address the issue.



b) Input Support for Kitchen Gardening

The procurement and distribution of inputs in the form of vegetable seeds and gardening tools to support the establishment of kitchen gardens were achieved in all project sites, albeit with a few challenges.

Vegetable Seeds – The distribution of vegetable seeds to beneficiary households was fully realized. Each beneficiary household received between 4 to 8 varieties of vegetable seeds, based on household preferences and seed varieties available. However, availability of quality and some varieties of vegetable seeds, especially in South Sudan and Wenje in Kenya, was a challenge.

Some of the seeds distributed to beneficiary households in Adraa, Pabo, Baraka, and Wenje failed to germinate due poor quality. A few households were able to develop traditional vegetable varieties from their kitchen gardens and are showing promising results in addressing the seed access challenge.

Kitchen Gardening Tools -The provision of gardening tools to households was complete and has served the intended purpose well. The type of tools procured and distributed to households varied from one project site to another depending on group needs.

The tools were appropriate and came in handy during the establishing and maintenance of kitchen gardens and during construction of sanitation facilities such as pit latrines and rubbish pits.

c) Varieties of Vegetables in the Kitchen Gardens

ICSAP goal of promoting diversity of green vegetables available for consumption from household kitchen gardens has succeeded to a great extent. Half (50%) of the households visited during evaluation had five or more vegetable varieties growing in their gardens. Notably, 93.9% of households cultivated at least one vegetable variety, a significant improvement from the initial baseline figure of 83.6%.

Further analysis, however, revealed a decline in the number of households maintaining more than five varieties in their kitchen gardens once they have exhausted seeds provided by ICSAP.

Additionally, as seen in Figure 6, the proportion of households left without any vegetable variety post-training exhibited an upward trend, particularly in Wenje, Adraa, Kamagut, and Mukono. This trend raises concerns regarding the continuity of kitchen gardening beyond the project's support period, underscoring the importance of access to seed.

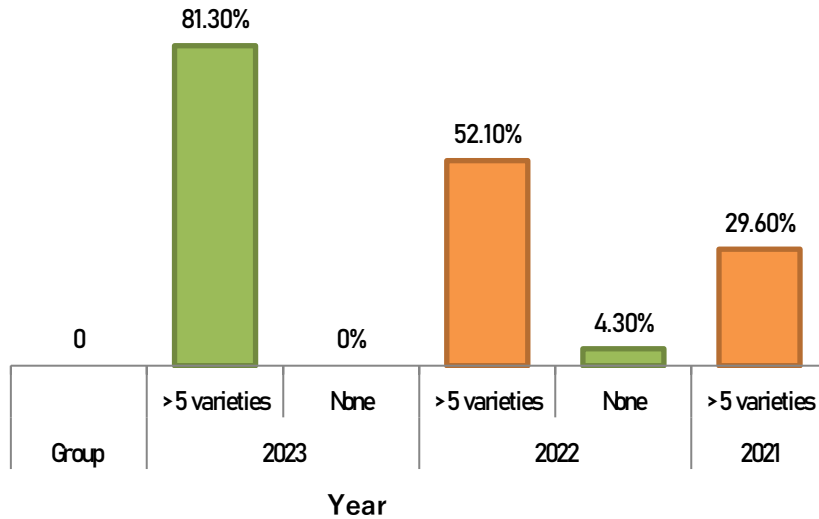


Figure 6: Distribution of household based on the number of vegetable varieties in the Kitchen Garden

d) Consumption of fresh green vegetables in at least two meals per day

The objective of enhancing the role of kitchen gardening in addressing nutritional deficiencies, particularly in increasing the consumption of green vegetables among the target households, was achieved to a moderate extent. The introduction of kitchen gardening has increased the proportion of households consuming at least a portion of vegetables a day from 72.3% to 86.4%. However, the goal of having vegetables consumed in at least two meals a day has only been moderately realized. Less than half (45.5%) of beneficiary households reported consuming two or more portions of green vegetables in their meals on the previous day, while 40.9% incorporated vegetables into at least one meal each day. Notably, 13.6% of households, mostly from Wenje, did not consume any vegetables the day before. Evening meals emerged as the primary time for vegetable consumption, with 69.7% of households reporting having vegetables during dinner, compared to 54.5% who consumed vegetables in their mid-day meal.

Despite beneficiary households establishing and managing their kitchen gardens in their first year upon recruitment, their commitment decreased in subsequent years, a factor that threatens the continuity of the concept. Insights gathered from these households point to three driving factors; weak or lack of fencing around the kitchen gardens, challenges in accessing vegetable seeds, and water scarcity during dry seasons.

e) Establishment of Fruits Trees in the Kitchen Gardens

The goal of establishing at least two fruit trees in support of household nutrition was achieved to a moderate extent. All project sites except Kamagut and Akol Jal supported households with between one and five fruit tree seedlings.

Data collected during evaluation visits revealed a marginal increase in the proportion of households with at least one fruit tree in their kitchen garden, rising from 65.6% at the baseline to 71.2%. Nearly a third (30.3%) of these households had three or more types of fruit trees. Three project sites; Baraka, Wenje and Mukono exhibited low fruit tree presence in their kitchen gardens due to limited availability of tree seedlings and low survival rate.

This low survival rate underscores the importance of selecting local varieties adapted to the prevailing climatic conditions and intensifying efforts in establishing tree nurseries to enhance seedling accessibility within project sites, which can also serve as a source of livelihood for households. Efforts to address these challenges were evident. SSHJM in Pabo is providing capacity building to members of the community in nursery establishment, while in Baraka and Adraa, the College tree nurseries are augmenting their inventory with more fruit seedlings. In Thon Aduel, the project manager is in the process of establishing a fruit tree nursery.

**Plate
3.**

Representative socio-economic dynamics at household level in the ICSAP Project Sites including enhancement of social and financial capitals besides enhanced dietary diversity



Photo credit: William Keyah

f) Addressing Water Access Challenge

During the pilot phase, ICSAP highlighted water scarcity as a significant obstacle to the effective utilization and sustainability of kitchen gardens.

Information collected from beneficiary households still paints a picture of difficulty in accessing water to support their kitchen gardens. As seen in Figure 7, households have to travel on average 310 meter in search of water with beneficiaries in eight of the ten project sites still having to travel more than 100m to access water. The implementation of interventions intended at addressing this challenge yielded diverse outcomes.

Construction of water wells in Akol Jal and Kitale was complete and is contributing to the adoption and improved yields from the kitchen gardens and improved access to clean water for household use as well. In Akol Jal, the establishment of kitchen gardens around community water wells is not only addressing water challenges for the households but also is fostering social interactions among women, offering a platform for training sessions and other group activities such as savings schemes.

**Plate
4.**

Shallow Well development in Kitale Project site – Kenya
Each well is used by 4 households: *1 direct household and 3 indirect households*



Photo credit: William Keyah

The distribution of water storage tanks in Baraka was completed, with each household receiving 250-liter tanks. However, households predominantly used them for storing drinking water rather than for kitchen gardening purposes. In Wenje, delays were observed in the procurement and distribution of water tanks to beneficiaries. A few who had received the tanks had not used them yet for the intended purpose.

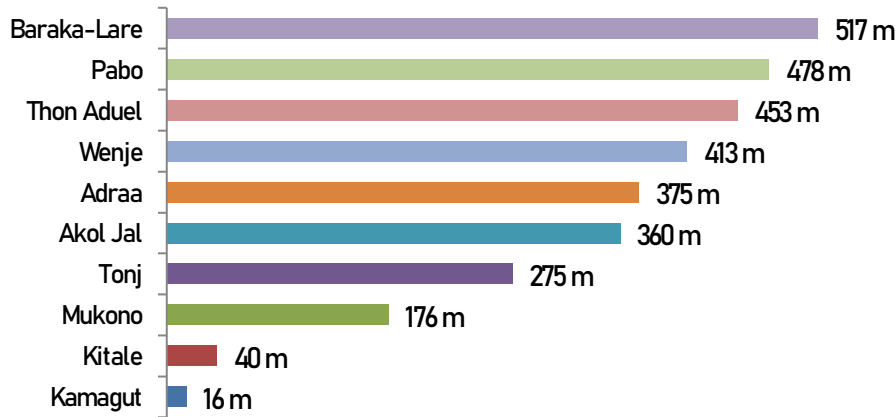


Figure 7: Estimated Average Distance to the Nearest Water Source

Output 3: Intensification and Diversification of Cereal Production

Four project sites: Tonj, Thon Aduel, Adraa, and Pabo, benefited from capacity-building efforts directed at improving productivity and output of cereal crops as a source of livelihood.

The goal of capacity building households on improved and sustainable crop husbandry was fully realized, and the levels of adoption and influence of crop output are promising.

All households interviewed reported receiving training on improved crop farming techniques. Among those who underwent training, 73% embraced new planting methods, 68% adopted innovative land preparation techniques, 63% implemented modern weeding approaches, 54% upgraded harvesting and storage practices, while 38% indicated a shift towards improved food processing techniques.

All target households in the four project sites were supported with a variety of seed that have produced better yields, some of which were set aside as seeds for subsequent seasons.

Beneficiary households reported increasing area under cultivation of staple crops following the training provided by ICSAP. In Adraa, households reported expanding the area under cultivation of sorghum, millet, beans, groundnuts, simsim, and cassava. Similarly, in Pabo, households noted an increase in the cultivation area for cassava, beans, and groundnuts.

Thon Aduel households got a good harvest of groundnut due to the adoption of correct planting spacing and weeding practices.

Plate 5. Varieties of Cereals production: processing and storage in Thon Aduel – South Sudan



Output 4: Small Livestock Production to Supplement Household Food, Nutrition and Income.

The adoption of small livestock animals as a livelihood opportunity and an alternative source of protein for beneficiaries achieved mixed results. Beside procurement of younger stock that took a long time to mature and losses of animals due to disease outbreaks, small livestock made a great contribution to improving household income.

The level of consumption of protein derived from livestock at the household level was moderate. Allowing each project site and beneficiary group to choose their preferred type of small animals has proven effective.

a) Procurement and distribution of small Animals

Pigs

Beneficiary households in Uganda opted for pig farming, employing both individual and group rearing approaches that yielded mixed results.

SSHJM opted for group approach given the limited budget and large numbers of households supported in Mukono and Pabo. Piggeries were established in one household with all group members expected to participate in the feeding and cleaning of the pigsty which has worked well. For a start, ICSAP has been supporting the households with feeds.

The plan to distribute piglets to individual households as numbers increased has been slow due to little number of piglets per farrowing. The use of IMO has worked well in improving the sanitary conditions of the piggeries. There are concerns however on the sustainability of the piggery once ICSAP support comes to the end.

In Adraa, individual approach was used and each household independently raised piglets. Good progress has been made in distribution of breeding stocks to beneficiary households, albeit at the slow pace. Some of the beneficiary households were yet to receive their piglets at the time of this evaluation.

As a precondition to receiving piglets, households were required to construct a piggery house which had not been done in some households at the time of this evaluation.

Delays in procurement of piglet, periodic swine flu outbreaks, sale of parent stock and poor management of piggeries were noted and are likely to slow down the actualization of intended benefits to the target households.

**Plate
6.**

IMO ready for use in Piggery established by Dii Cwinyi Farmers VSAL group through the Support of ICSAP in Pabo-Uganda



Photo credit: Dr. Moses Biwott

Sheep & Goats

The choice to support households with sheep and goats worked well considering prevalent dry climatic condition in majority of the project sites. The distribution of goats in the respective project sites was largely complete, with each household receiving between one and three except for households in the last cohorts in Wenje and Akol Jal who were yet to receive their goats at the time of the evaluation visit.

Nearly all (92%) of beneficiary households visited reported their goats kidding to between one and eight kids since receiving their parent stock. All households in Baraka and a few in Kitale received young ewes as their preferred small livestock animals, all of which were about to or had lambed.

Better outcomes would have been achieved were it not for the purchase of younger stock, due to the high costs of mature animals resulting from general inflation and increase in the cost of commodities in the markets.

**Plate
7.**

**Representative gifts of goat or sheep for households in ICSAP Project Sites
as part of capacity and capability development**



Photo credit: Fr. Boniface Isenge & William Keyah

Poultry -Chicken & Ducks

The goal of supporting poor households through poultry as a way of improving their livelihoods and household food security was achieved to a moderate extent. Distribution of chicken and ducks were complete in all six project sites that chose to empower households with poultry except for the last cohort of beneficiaries in Kamagut. Each beneficiary household received between three and five chickens.

In Kitale, a few households were supported with ducks instead of chickens due seasonal flooding in area and chicken disease outbreaks, all of whom reported increase in the size of their brood. Data collected from beneficiary household's revealed moderate increase in the number of chickens largely due to high mortality rate as a result of diseases outbreaks, theft and loss to wild cats and birds of prey.

Plate 8.	Representative gifts of chicken or ducks for households in ICSAP Project Sites as part of capacity and capability development
-----------------	--

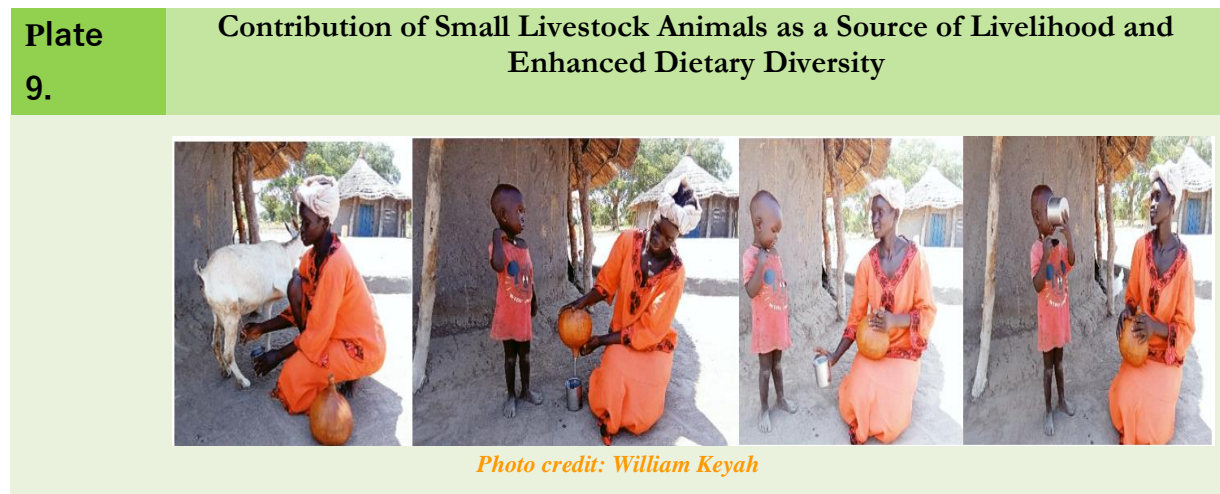


Photo credit: Fr. Boniface Isenge

b) Contribution of Small Livestock Animals as a Source of Livelihood and Enhanced Dietary Diversity

The contribution of small livestock in improving livelihoods among beneficiary households is evident. Interviews and discussions during FGD sessions and data collected from beneficiary households revealed that households earned income from selling mature animals bred from the initial stock received from ICSAP. Those who benefited from poultry, sheep, and goats reported earnings from sale of mature stocks. However, the contribution of milk, eggs, and other products derived from small animals did not reach commercial quantities for sale.

The goal of supporting each household with small livestock as a complementary source of protein was achieved to a moderate extent. More than half (56.1%) of the households reported consuming a portion of animal protein in at least one of their previous day's meals. Additionally, over a quarter (27.2%) either consumed goat or cow milk or added milk to their tea, with small livestock animal meat being consumed by only 6.1% of the households in their previous day's meals.



Output 5: Promotion and Establishment of Savings and Loaning Schemes

The goal of establishing loans and saving schemes in each cohort of beneficiaries in nine out of the ten project sites was achieved and has opened up opportunities for household to save and access affordable credit.

A total of 26 Savings and Credit groups were established; 8 Village Saving and Loans (VSALs) and 18 Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs), over the three years surpassing the project targets of eighteen. ROSALs emerged as the preferred scheme in seven project sites, with the exception of households in Mukono, Pabo, and Adraa, which opted for VSLAs. The performance of the established schemes posted mixed results. While it was anticipated that all households would join and belong to a saving group upon completing their training, only 73% of the households reported belonging to a VSAL or ROSALs.

Plate
10.

VSAL and ROSAL groups in Pabo, Uganda & Kitale Project Site respectively



The slogan "Di Cwinyi" meaning "tolerant in all circumstances"

No	Names	Welfare	Shares	Shares
1	Alice Nafula	1170/-	5400/-	5470
2	Anne Kinyu	760/-	3720/-	3730
3	Glady's Naluswa	320/-	5780/-	5160
4	Mariyana Hamah	660/-	3740/-	3950
5	Aune wasike	1120/-	6760/-	5630
6	Jean Wambani	560/-	2350/-	2690
7	Emara Simiyu	960/-	11900/-	12200
8	Margaret Natukya	800/-	5350/-	5520
9	Rosa Namawano	370/-	2360/-	2410
10	Susan Vakyoya	960/-	5110/-	5180
11	Elizabeth Kilande	430/-	2110/-	2160
12	Anne Nanyala	760/-	3270/-	3280
13	Mercy Kasha	720/-	4780/-	4800
14	Pamela Fama	860/-	8600/-	8800
15	Alice Okuma	600/-	1170/-	1170
16	Hellen Nekesa	310/-	2000/-	2000
17	Benedict wasike	570/-	3060/-	3160
18	Christine munira	700/-	1450/-	1450
19	Lydia Makochia	340/-	2300/-	2380
20	Phyllis Minaya	640/-	3200/-	3230
21	Eunice Nafula	580/-	2300/-	2380
22	Pamela Mutyonga	520/-	2510/-	2510
23	Doreen Mubandika	580/-	5300/-	6100
24	Emma wambukya	520/-	2780/-	2880
25	Mary Mutyonga	170/-	1780/-	1780
26	Ken Okiano	320/-	1380/-	1380
27	Jaclyne Nangeke	360/-	1060/-	1110
28	Conceptor Namukala	460/-	7180/-	7380
29	Fama Nafula	560/-	3480/-	3530
30	Tenesa Natungu	320/-	1530/-	1630

125,400 - DINK SAVINGS FOR 30 PEOPLE

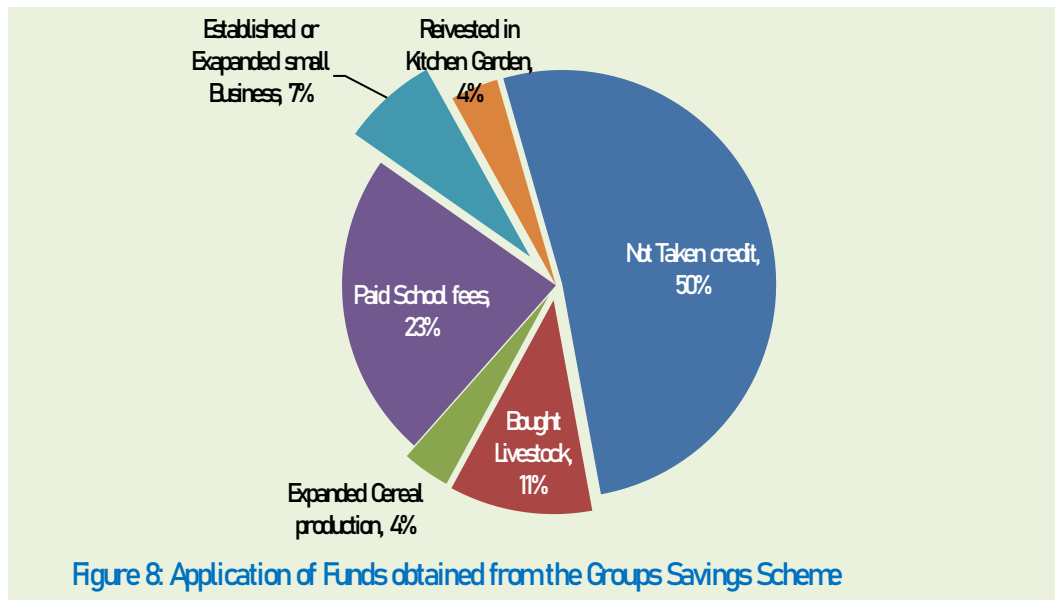


The Kitale ROSAL at their regular meeting with records at hand

Photo credit: Dr. Moses Elwott & William Keyah

The aim of introducing the VSLAs and ROSALs was twofold: to encourage savings and facilitate credit uptake for investment in productive ventures. The target was for households to accumulate savings of at least 50 Euros. Data collected during the evaluation indicates that 68% of households participating in the group savings scheme had savings which was encouraging considering the limited economic opportunities for the poor households. The average savings per household however was 10.18 Euros, significantly below the 50 Euros targeted. The utilization of a savings box, commonly referred to as 'Sanduku,' was widely embraced by group members under the VSLAs and ROSALs, facilitating smooth operations. Low periodic contributions by households were evident across all ROSAL schemes and have not yielded the desired benefits, given the slow pace in the accumulation of savings for significant investment.

Credit uptake from both ROSALs and VSLAs was relatively low with only half (50%) of those who had joined savings groups taking up credit from the group's savings scheme. While the credit facility was intended for investment in livelihood improvement assets, close to a third (32%) of the households had taken loans for consumptive purposes, such as to pay school fees or meeting medical expenses with less than a fifth (18%) using the facility to acquire real assets mainly livestock, opening up new farming areas and establishment or expansion of small businesses as seen in Figure 6.



Output 6: Promotion of Climate Resilience and Green Energy

a) Establishment of Woodlots

The integration of the agroforestry component into kitchen gardening has achieved moderate success, largely due to challenging climatic conditions as reported in six out of the ten project sites.

Despite a significant majority (92.4%) of beneficiary households acknowledging receiving training on agroforestry and noting that it had brought about a shift in their attitudes and commitment toward household-level environmental conservation, the establishment of woodlots at the household remained low.

The distribution of woodlot tree seedlings in all project sites except Akol Jal and Kamagut was completed as planned. Households in Adraa received the highest number of seedlings, with each household receiving an average of 43 seedlings. This was attributed to the availability of tree seedlings from the college tree nursery. Households in all other project sites received between 2 and 9 seedlings (see Figure 9).

A further review shows that only a few households (16.7%) have taken the initiative to obtain additional seedlings from their own resources. Households and project staff attribute this low investment to the unavailability of tree and fruit seedlings and high cost of seedlings in the market, as well as unfavorable climatic conditions.

**Plate
11.**

ICSAP donated woodlot trees seedlings established in Adraa –Uganda

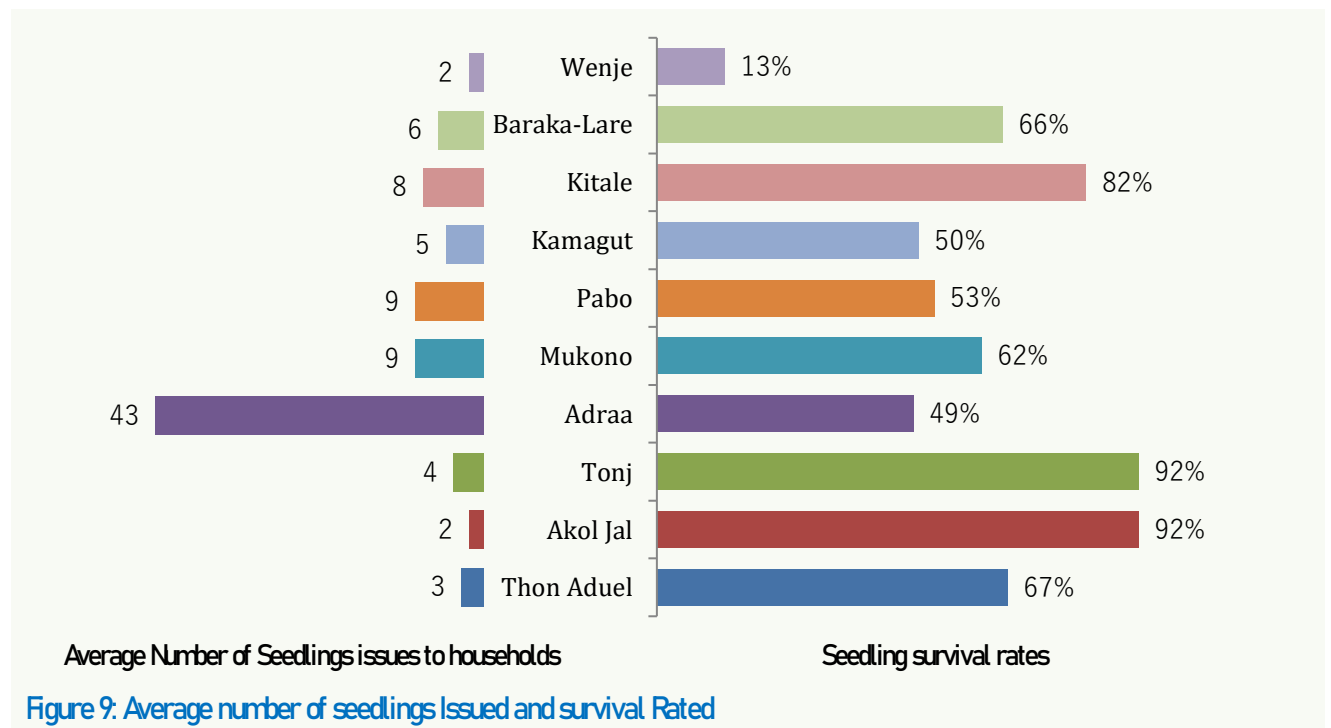


Photo credit: Dr. Moses Biwott

The survival rate of planted seedlings fell below the project target and presents a significant impediment to the success of the agroforestry component within kitchen gardens. On average, 63.3% of seedlings issued to households survived against a project target of 75%. As seen in Figure 13, Tonj and Akol Jal exhibited the highest survival rates of 92%, while in Wenje, only 13% survived, due to harsh climatic conditions.

The goal of establishing three tree nurseries has not been achieved as planned as only one tree nursery was established in Adraa and supplied seedlings to ICSAP beneficiaries. All other project sites, obtained their tree seedlings from external sources, which proved to be both costly and unreliable.

Efforts to respond to this challenge were noted in two project sites. In Pabo, SSHJM is capacity building a few households on tree nursery establishment and management and is expected to provide significant support to ICSAP in the upcoming phase. Similarly, in Thon Aduel, the project manager has initiated a small-scale tree nursery in the church compound that has shown great potential for expansion.



b) Adoption of Energy Saving Stoves

The goal of increasing the use of energy-saving stoves among beneficiary households was achieved to a great extent. Capacity building households with the knowledge and skills needed for installing, using and maintenance of energy-saving stoves was carried out in all project sites except in Wenje. Visits to beneficiary households revealed that 60.3% have installed energy-saving stoves, 7% higher than the project target. The adopted energy saving stove is the Rocket

Lorena stove which has been adapted various shapes all of which are working to varying levels of efficiency with the advantage of a household being able to include a chicken brooding coop either bellow or on the sides of the stove which alternatively is used for keeping cooked food hot or storage for some other food stuffs.

Except for households in Kitale that reported challenges in the use of the stove due to large size that consumed more wood fuel and smoke chimney that did not work well all other households used their installed energy saving stoves well. In Kamagut, the design of the stove included a chicken brooder that has worked well in protecting chicks during cold seasons.



Output 7: Adoption of Better Health & Hygiene Practices

Efforts aimed at improving households' basic hygiene practices have yielded positive results. Almost all (96%) target households reported receiving training on nine aspects of health and sanitation practices.

The uptake of these practices is encouraging except for hands washing. As seen in Figure 10, more than 70% of beneficiary households have since established and are using pit latrines, enclosed bathing booths, and cloth drying lines.

Additionally, more than half of the target households reported boiling or treating drinking water, have ventilated kitchens and dug out rubbish bits.

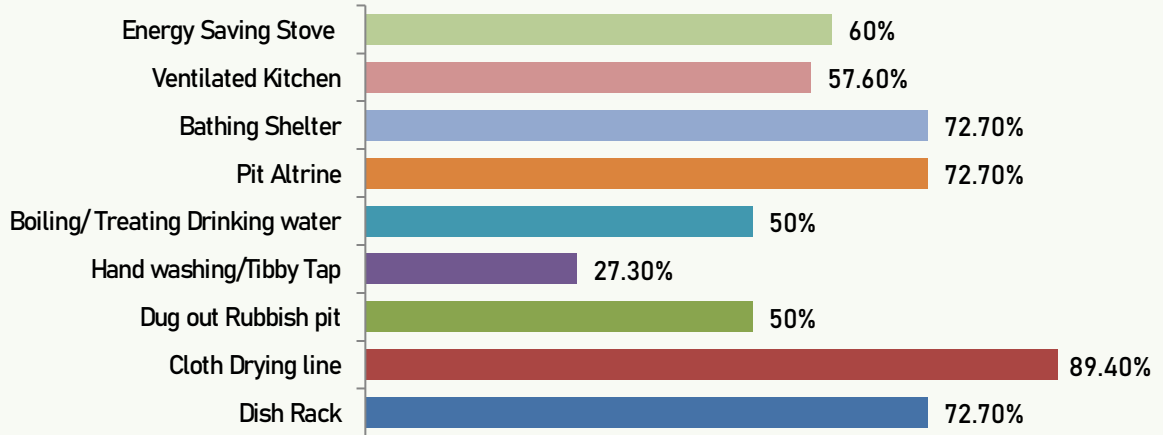


Figure 10: Levels of adoption of Health and Sanitation practices among beneficiary Households

Plate 13.

Cloth line, Dish Rack and various Toilets established by households in Thon Aduel; Pabo and Kitale Project Sites



Photo credit: William Keyah

Output 8: Governance and Management of Individual and Group Enterprises and Leadership skills

The adoption of a group approach, bringing together beneficiary households in each cohort, village, or by proximity, introduced formal structures that significantly improved the effectiveness of ICSAP activities. Each year, beneficiary households in all project sites come together for training and capacity building. All groups had established structures and formally elected group officials. Gender consideration was evident; where there were both genders in the group, the positions of chair or vice-chair were shared. The targeting of women, who account for the majority of beneficiaries, has been highly beneficial in fostering women's empowerment. In Pabo for instance, in supplementing ICSAP activities, WACFO, is encouraging women to take on leadership roles in their communities.

The establishment of Management committees has worked well in bringing order and discipline especially where group activities were involved and in the management of savings and loans scheme as well. In Pabo, a “police man” is appointed as a member of the group management committee to ensure that each member conforms to group agreed rules including timely payment of contributions and repayment of any credit facility offered.

Plate 14.

ICSAP GOVERNANCE SUMMIT BOARD

 <p>Brother Tony Dolan the Minister General OSF and chairperson of ICSAP Summit Board during the implementation phase of this programme was by Br. Charles Lagu Alchem as Minister General OSF and also replaced by Fr. Fred Elima as chairperson of ICSAP Summit Board.</p>	 <p>Fr. Augustine Ekeno, S.J., took study leave and was replaced by Fr. Eric Simiyu, S.J. as Director of MAJIS Centre in Rumbek South Sudan and, ICSAP Programme Manager and Member of ICSAP Summit Board.</p>	 <p>SR. Ruth Mora (Salesian Sisters of John Bosco) the Provincial Superior and Member of the Summit Board was replaced during the programme phase by Sr. Marie Dominique Mwema Mukatu in same capacities.</p>
 <p>Sr. Mary Holland (Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul) a member of the Regional Council, and Administrator of Kitale Mission Station, ICSAP Summit Board member and secretary to the Summit Board was replaced by Sr. Debora Mallott in same capacity during the programme phase.</p>	 <p>Fr. Fred Wafula Elima in Kenya and Fr. Boniface Isenge in South Sudan (Spiritans) are alternate members of ICSAP Summit Board</p>	 <p>Br. Placido Tony (Patrician) the Provincial Superior, is member of ICSAP Summit Board and treasurer to the Board.</p>
 <p>Sr. Jane Frances (SSHJM) is the Regional Superior of SSHJM, and Member of ICSAP Summit Board.</p>		

Output 9: Monitoring & Evaluation

ICSAP has a documented M&E framework that has worked well in ensuring that project activities were implemented as planned and progress towards set goals and objectives are measured, evaluated and reported. Monitoring and evaluation activities were to a great extent timely and were fit for purpose.

Despite limited staff capacity at the secretariat and delays in funding, monitoring visits were conducted at all project sites as planned, although with a few delays. In each project site, the project manager and project officer made regular visits to households to monitor activity implementation and provide advice and guidance. According to information gathered from project officers and managers, as well as a review of field reports, household monitoring visits were conducted at least once a month for groups established each year, with follow-ups on previous groups carried out primarily by project officers with the assistance of managers.

The secretariat staff conducted a total of twelve (12) physical visits and one virtual monitoring visit to project sites during the current phase. Additionally, one distance monitoring visit, with participation from Misean Cara for all project sites, was carried out in 2021. Project managers and officers interviewed acknowledged the critical role of the monitoring visits in improving their effectiveness, especially in addressing project-specific challenges.

The geographical distance to project sites in South Sudan, along with the related security risks and the limited financial resources at the secretariat, were cited as key factors contributing to the shortfall in site visits in South Sudan.

All field visit reports prepared by the secretariat were shared during summit meetings and proved effective in informing decision-making at both the project site level and the Summit Board. The plans for the two cluster units to take up part of the monitoring roles and provide close technical support are yet to be fully actualized due to limited financial resources. Two physical planning meetings cum training sessions held in September 2022 and 2023 have been instrumental in providing a platform for the cluster units.

Two evaluation activities: mid-term and end term evaluation including documenting household characteristics at baseline were planned during the current phase and were actualized. At the outset of the current phase, baseline data was collected from selected households. However, it failed to capture all the indicators. An envisaged external mid-term evaluation planned for mid-2022, aimed at reviewing progress and identifying any bottlenecks to achieving project goals, was not carried out for shortage of adequate financial resources. However internal monitoring activity reports and distance monitoring visits by Misean Cara in June 2021 provided valuable insights into project progress. While these two sources may have effectively reviewed project progress, an in-depth assessment desired at midterm was limited.

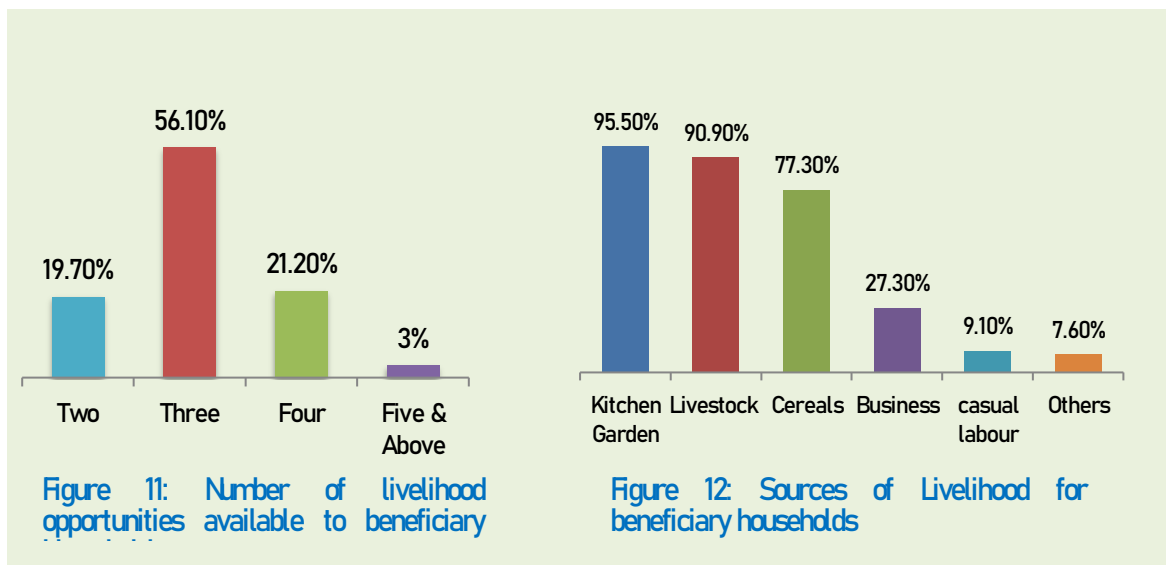
3.4.2. Performance on Target Outcomes

The Theory of Change (TOC) and Result Based Framework (RBF) envision a causal link between inputs, outputs and outcomes. At the outcome level, five indicators were set out to monitor how well the ICSAP interventions were contributing to improved livelihood food and nutritional security, improved savings and adoption of green and climate-resilient practices. The performance in all the five outcomes was largely satisfactory.

Outcome 1: Target Households Achieve at least 2 livelihood Opportunities

ICSAP's goal of diversifying sources of livelihood for beneficiary households to at least two was actualized. Evaluation results show that all beneficiary households had at least two sources of livelihood. Further analysis reveals that nearly a fifth (19.7%) of households relied on two sources of livelihood, while over half (56.1%) were engaged in three livelihood opportunities. Further, close to a quarter (24.2%) reported earnings from four or more livelihood opportunities as seen in Figures 11 & 12.

The contribution of kitchen gardening and the introduction of small livestock in improving household livelihoods is evident. For households with two sources of income, the introduction of kitchen gardens through ICSAP created a new source of revenue. Similarly, the introduction of small livestock increased the proportion of households that raised livestock as a source of livelihood from 69.9% to 72.7%.



Outcome 2: Supporting Household Access Three Meals a Day

Kitchen gardening, adoption cereal production techniques and introduction of small livestock are contributing to improved household food security.

A review of information collected through a 24-hour Dietary Recall version of the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS) tool indicates that 94.8% of the beneficiaries had three meals the previous day, with all of the remaining households reporting having two meals the day before.

Only two households (out of sixty-six surveyed) indicated lack of food supplies as a reason for not consuming all three meals. Nearly all households with elderly persons or breastfeeding mothers reported having a light meal between main meals.

Outcome 3: Improved Access and Consumption of Balanced Diet

The goal of empowering households to achieve nutritional security through increased access to and consumption of balanced diets has been partially met. A review of data collected through the HDDS household diet assessment tool revealed that 72.7% of households consumed all food groups in a single meal or in various combinations over the course of three meals the previous day, while the remaining households reported consuming two balanced meals. However, fruit consumption remains low.

The contribution of kitchen gardening in increasing the consumption of green vegetables was evident. Forty-five (45%) percent of the households visited stated that they had consumed vegetables at least twice the day before, while 40.9% had vegetables in one meal.

Notably, 13.6% of households did not include any vegetables in their meals, with the majority of them coming from Wenje. Vegetable consumption was particularly high in Akol Jal, Thon Aduel, and Tonj, attributable to the adoption of kitchen gardening, which was observed during the evaluation visit.

Access to and consumption of cereals did not present any challenges to the surveyed households. However, fruit consumption remains low, with only 27.3% of respondents indicating that they consumed at least one fruit the previous day.

The contribution of ICSAP efforts to increase fruit consumption is limited but promising, as most of the fruit tree seedlings issued to beneficiary households have yet to reach the fruiting stage.

Plate 15.

Fruit tree established through ICSAP in Thon Aduel & Akol Jal

*Photo credit: Dr. Moses Biwott***Outcome 4: Increased Household Assets to at Least 3 Types**

It was envisioned that income derived from the sale of surplus from kitchen gardens, mature small livestock animals, and improved cereal outputs would catalyze the accumulation of assets by beneficiary households. While household assets include human, financial, physical, and social assets, the current evaluation focused on the physical assets, which included primarily livestock (cattle, goats, pigs, sheep, and poultry), business stocks, savings, and assets used to provide services for a fee, such as motorcycles, ox ploughs, etc. Efforts to increase household assets through ICSAP to at least three types have yielded moderate results. Close to half (48%) of the households possess three or more classes of assets, while 34% own two new forms of assets.

Small livestock animal emerges as the most preferred asset, with 96% of households owning newly acquired small livestock animals, including cattle (31.8%), goats (39.4%), sheep (21%), and poultry (83%).

The contribution of ICSAP initiatives to increased asset ownership among beneficiary households is evident. More than half (54.5%) of the beneficiary households indicated they used money from kitchen gardens, sale of livestock manure, cereals and groundnut harvests to purchase additional small livestock animals, household items, start or expand small businesses, or improve their homes.

Eight households (12.1%) visited during this evaluation had purchased additional goats from income earned from the sale of vegetables, cereal, and groundnut crops harvested after joining ICSAP. Four households (6%) reported purchasing cattle from the sale of mature stock of goats and sheep supported by loans from their group savings. Two of these households purchased oxen for plowing, allowing the households to expand their land under cultivation and also providing ox-ploughing services to neighbors, earning additional income. Households also indicated investments in farm implements and seeds, while five beneficiaries used the money from their savings to start or expand small retail businesses as a source of livelihood.

Outcome 5: Increased Households Saving to at Least 50 Euros

Despite the challenging economic conditions faced by poorly resourced households given their competing needs for the limited income earned, the project's goal of increasing beneficiary households' savings accumulation to at least 50 Euros through group saving schemes has been realized to a moderate extent. Two forms of savings schemes, ROSALs and VSALs, were used for this purpose and have yielded different outcomes in promoting household savings, with VSALs outperforming the former.

Despite its flexibility, the preference for ROSALs among groups in Kenya and South Sudan did not yield significant accumulated savings over time. The average accumulated savings of 11.45 Euros per member household were rather low. Citing low and irregular income, the majority of the groups settled on low periodic contributions that did not result in substantial savings. Furthermore, all accumulated savings would be handed back to each household at their end of year meeting, most of which went into meeting immediate expenses, and only in a few cases the cash were channeled into acquisition of assets.

The adoption of VSALs in Pabo, Adraa, and Mukono yielded positive results and demonstrated significant potential for promoting accumulated savings over time. Despite setting low periodic contribution amounts, there was a consistent accumulation of savings over time. The average accumulated savings per member household was 68.20 Euros, surpassing the project target of 50 Euros. Effective management, good leadership, and member cohesion were all evident in groups that performed well.

3.4.3. Institutional Framework for Implementation of ICSAP Activities

ICSAP has a structured and legally binding framework ratified by all seven member congregations that has ensured equal participation and representation.

The governance and management structures are well established and have supported ICSAP's unique operational and management structure.

An all-inclusive Summit Board comprising the Major Superiors or their delegate from each of the seven founding congregations is established and has played its role effectively. The summit has had seven meetings in the current phase. The participation of the project managers, who are also responsible for overseeing the implementation of ICSAP activities at the project site, in the summit has ensured that project-level challenges and concerns are addressed. However, governance questions have arisen due to the project manager's dual role. Moreover, considering the weighty decisions and implications of summit deliberations, some of which require input and consideration from the highest authority of each partner congregation, it would be more appropriate for a Major Superior or their direct appointee to sit at the Summit Board.

A Board of Management (BOM) made up of the project managers and project officers have played a key role in supporting actualization of ICSAP activities, as ratified and approved by the Summit Board. Due to the geographical spread and limited resources the cluster meetings have been enjoined and held virtually. This was complemented by two weeks training and planning meetings for all clusters held in September 2022 and September 2023.

ICSAP has a lean secretariat with only three staff members: the CEO, a project coordinator, and a finance officer. The finance officer is part time and offers only 20% of time while the CEO worked on a 50% part time. However, during the absence of the program project sites coordinator, the CEO shouldered all the responsibilities. Their tasks include coordinating and monitoring the program. The CEO is responsible for overall project coordination, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, as well as technical backstopping and ensuring the implementation of summit policies. The finance manager oversees all financial matters, including preparing primary records for auditing. The project coordinator is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of planned activities across all project sites. The resignation of the project coordinator in mid-2022 due to health challenges has placed more work in the hands of the CEO.

3.4.4. Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation & Reporting

ICSAP has an established and documented M&E framework that has contributed to the actualization of project goals and objectives. A review of RBF and M&E documentation shows that the indicators and metrics monitored were not only relevant but also effectively measured specific outputs and outcomes.

As envisaged in the M&E framework, the timing of monitoring and evaluation activities were appropriate and well placed to track and evaluate key project performance and milestones.

The M&E framework has addressed all relevant aspects of the project being monitored and evaluated. Despite reliance on monitoring visits and progress reports prepared periodically by project staff at the project site level, data collected for monitoring purposes were both reliable and valid.

Project managers and officers interviewed noted that feedback from monitoring visits by the secretariat staff was both useful and informed decision-making where adjustments and enhancements were needed.

Notably, tasking two secretariat staff; the CEO and the project coordinator to monitor activities across all ten project locations in three countries was rather overambitious. This situation was further worsened by the resignation of the project coordinator in 2022 due to health challenges, resulting in fewer monitoring visits. ICSAP should consider strengthening the capacity and staffing at the Cluster Management Units to provide support for monitoring activities.

Input from monitoring and evaluation activities has been instrumental in bolstering learning and sharing experiences, successes, and challenges from different project sites. Information gathered through monitoring and evaluation reports and visits has gone into the preparation of field monitoring reports that were shared. A performance monitoring dashboard and ICSAP newsletter have been instrumental in providing a platform for sharing performance feedback and experiences.

Two areas were, however, noted for possible improvement. First, not all indicators were backed up by corresponding data from the project site to monitor their progress and status. As such, there is a need for M&E data collection to cover all indicators at the three levels: inputs, outputs, and outcomes. More importantly, the baseline data needs to be comprehensive in documenting the status of the households at recruitment.

ICSAP has a structured reporting framework that has contributed greatly to timely sharing of information promoting effective decision making and M&E effectiveness. Project officers are assigned the role of generating reports to the project manager. Whereas project managers provide monthly reports to the secretariat, the CEO prepares overall reporting and monitoring of activities and reports to the Summit Board. The CEO also coordinates joint Board of management functions and responsibilities.

3.4.5. Factors that Have Contributed or Impeded the Achievement of Project outcomes

There are several notable factors identified in the course of this evaluation that have contributed to the achievement or non-achievement of the intended outputs and outcomes that are worth noting:

- The strong alignment between ICSAP's interventions and the vision, charism, and operational frameworks of partner congregations has been instrumental in achieving ICSAP's goals. ICSAP interventions are highly compatible and complementary to existing programs implemented by partner congregations, a factor that has contributed to ICSAP's effectiveness and efficiency.
The shared interest in serving marginalized communities and those left behind integrates seamlessly with the missions of participating congregations.
- The role of project staff, especially the project officers, has shown to greatly influence the project outputs and outcomes, with the potential to bring about the desired impact on beneficiary households. Dedication and commitment from the project site staff emerged as key determinants of the project outcomes.
- The inbuilt flexibility within ICSAP, which gives each partner congregation and beneficiary household a greater say in key project decisions, has a positive influence on the performance of ICSAP. Having the flexibility to tailor their project inputs and activities has effectively strengthened both the relevance and the contribution of ICSAP interventions in improving livelihoods.
- The quality of inputs plays a critical role in ensuring that households get the right footing and realize the benefits of interventions. Issuing quality breeding stocks, seeds, and inputs to the target households at the right time has resulted in better intervention outcomes and increased chances of improving livelihoods.
- Changes in leadership within implementing congregations tend to slow down the momentum of implementation, underscoring the importance for congregations to establish transition plans that minimize interruptions to the continuity of ICSAP project activities.
- Water scarcity remains the greatest threat to the success of kitchen gardening, especially vegetable growing, and is directly impacting the establishment of fruit and woodlot trees.

- Funding remains a key contributor to the achievement of ICSAP goals. By design, the presence of in-kind contributions and member contributions has ensured the continuity of ICSAP activities, even during delays in remittances from Misesan Cara. These two internal sources have been instrumental in bridging gaps for congregations when agricultural seasons did not align with the arrival of external funding.
- The role of project monitoring is imperative and has had a strong influence on implementation and the performance of ICSAP, especially at the project site level. Input from monitoring visits has been invaluable in ensuring that each project site stays on track and implements interventions as envisioned.

3. 5. Efficiency

3.5.1. Timeliness of Project Implementation

The implementation of ICSAP project activities set out in the project plan was largely timely except for a few activities that run behind schedule due to delay in fund remittances and procurement technicalities.

Training of households in all project sites were completed as scheduled except where the recruitment process run behind schedule as witnessed in the third cohort in Akol Jal. Procurement of inputs especially livestock was found to run behind schedule in a half of the project sites (Adraa, Wenje, Baraka, Akol Jal and Kamagut), with majority of the project staff attributing it to delayed funding, availability of quality breeding stocks and high market prices.

Procurement and issuance of seeds and seedlings to beneficiary households was delivered on time and at the onset of the growing seasons. Except for few instances, reporting of performance and status of activity implementation at the project sites to the secretariat was reasonably on time. Feedback from the monitoring visits was also timely.

3.5.2. Procurement Processes

A review of ICSAP procurement process revealed that they were not only lean but also efficient. This was largely attributed to decentralization of the procurement function to the implementing congregations with close monitoring from ICSAP secretariat. In all sites, procurement of goods and services was carried out in line with procurement procedures and policies of host congregations and utilized the services of suppliers already prequalified by the respective congregation hence eliminating lengthy procurement procedure.

With the exception of the procurement of livestock, which experienced delivery delays due to market challenges, as noted in Wenje, Adraa, Baraka, Akol Jal and Kamagut, all other procurement contracts were executed within the set timelines and in accordance with specifications.

3.5.3. Human Resource Utilization

The ICSAP staffing structure was lean and cost-effective, largely due to the working arrangement in which project managers and secretariat staff worked for ICSAP on a part-time basis.

There are nine project officers, one at each project site, engaged on a full-time basis. SSHJM engaged an additional project officer on the same budget line. Project officers are tasked with overseeing the recruitment of beneficiary households, conducting capacity building sessions, providing guidance through household visits, and monitoring to ensure the full implementation of activities. There are nine project managers who dedicate 25% of their time and expertise to ICSAP activities, as part of member in kind contributions.

They bear responsibility for the overall delivery of the project at the project site, providing oversight management, compiling data and information, and submitting reports to the ICSAP secretariat. The secretariat is led by a CEO who works two weeks per month and is responsible for planning, policy implementation, coordination, and monitoring, reporting, and technical support. Additionally, there is a finance officer, employed by the Franciscan Brothers, who allocates 20% of the work hours to ICSAP financial matters.

Except for the project managers in Thon Aduel and Kamagut, as well as the CEO, who acknowledges being overstretched due to staff exits, all other staff indicated that they were optimally engaged in their work.

3.5.4. Financial Resources Efficiency (Value-for- Money)

Overall, the financial management systems employed by ICSAP were adequate, accountable, and demonstrated prudent financial management. A review of financial management procedures, both at the secretariat and individual project sites, revealed adequate multi-level controls and accountability. Project managers at each project site were assigned the responsibility for the allocated funds and reporting, with technical support from the congregation's financial officer/in charge. Itemized quarterly financial reports analyzing expenditure against approved budgets were submitted to the secretariat.

As a backstopping measure, the program finance officer ensured that all allocated finances were accounted for and consolidated for review at the Summit Board and reporting as per donor requirements.

All funds received were utilized as per approved budget. A total of 461,100 Euros was received over the three years (2021-2023), comprising 345,000 Euros from Mيسان and 116,100 Euros from member and in-kind contributions.

A broad analysis of the budget shows that 52% of the total funds went into direct program activities at household level, a proportion that has not changed significantly from the 55% recorded in the preceding one-year phase implemented in 2019.

As seen in Table 4, equipment and materials accounted for 40% of the total allocation. Indirect costs were allocated 48% of the total budget, with human resources and Monitoring and Evaluation costs accounting for 29% and 9%, respectively.

Allocating close to half of the total funds to indirect costs were rather high but justifiable considering the staff size and the costs of travel to project sites spread across the three countries.

Table 4: ICSAP Budget and Cost Analysis

Cost Component	Budget Line	Mيسان Cara (€)	Co-Funding*(€)	Total(€)	% Allocation per cost item	% Allocation per cost component
Direct costs	Equipment & Materials	169,185	15,000	184,185	40%	52%
	Training	62,40	20,400	26,640	6%	
	Recurring Costs	7,890	18,300	26,190	6%	
Indirect costs	Human Resources	109,635	25,800	135,435	29%	48%
	Administration	18,900	18,000	36,900	8%	
	Monitoring & Evaluation	25,650	18,000	43,650	9%	
	Organizational Development	7,500	600	8,100	2%	
Total		€345,000	€116,100	€ 461,100	100%	

**This constitutes 15% in kind and 10%-member contribution*

Investments in households across all project sites yielded a positive cost-benefit ratio. The input-output ratio varied between project sites, primarily due to differences in the number of beneficiaries and the levels of investment in each household, as illustrated in Table 5. Despite SSHJM targeting a relatively larger number of households than all other project sites and investing the least per household, their efforts yielded the highest returns.

In Kitale, despite having the fewest beneficiary households and the highest investment per household, their input-output ratio was the lowest. Responses from project staff indicated that a substantial amount of funding was allocated to the construction of shallow wells and toilets. While toilet infrastructure may not have a direct and immediate effect on household livelihood status, it will greatly contribute to improved quality of life for household in the long run. The shallow wells have contributed significantly to kitchen gardening productivity.

Table 5: Cost Benefit Analysis disaggregated by Project Sites

Project Site	Actual HH benefitted	Total of investment at HH for three years (€)	Investment /HH in €	% investment at HH level	Total accumulated value of capital at the HH level at end line (€)	Input-output ratio
Kamagut	60	3,478.3	57.97	12.6	11,774.0	3.4
Kitale	18	12,888.9	716.05	46.9	17,661.9	1.4
Baraka	94	9,170.5	97.56	33.3	39,044.7	4.3
Pabo / Mukono	450	7,368.2	16.37	26.8	48,435.2	6.6
Tonj	87	3,851.2	44.27	14.0	10,739.5	2.8
Adraa	120	14,828.0	123.57	53.9	36,091.8	2.4
Wenje	75	14,894.9	198.60	54.2	68,569.6	4.6
Akol Jal MAJAIS	103	5,624.9	54.61	20.5	25,625.6	4.6
Thon Aduel	90	16,549.8	183.89	60.2	98,132.5	5.9
Total	1,097	88,654.6	80.82	-	356,074.8	-
Average	-	-	-	35.8	-	4.0

3.6. Impact

The intended impact of ICSAP intervention activities may not have been fully realized over the three years. However, some level of change in knowledge, attitude, and practices within households was evident. Several intermediate pointers to the likelihood of the project achieving its impact in the long run are already visible.

3.6.1. Notable Change Attributed to ICSAP Interventions

There is evidence of households recognizing their potential to change their livelihood status. Knowledge and experience gained as a result of ICSAP capacity-building initiatives have opened households' eyes to the possibilities of transforming their economic state by utilizing available resources. Almost all FGD participants acknowledged recognizing their potential and opportunity for improving their livelihood status, particularly through kitchen gardening.

ICSAP has ignited a sense of confidence and creativity in multiplying assets through the knowledge and capabilities unlocked during ICSAP training and with seed inputs. Evidence of households leveraging earnings from kitchen gardens to acquire livestock, establish new business opportunities, or expand existing ones is a testament to the transformative impact of ICSAP on beneficiary households.

ICSAP beneficiary households are demonstrating an enhanced capacity to respond to unforeseen economic and other shocks associated with climate change.

The storage of cereals and groundnuts, from improved yields due to the adoption of better farming practices, coupled with income generated from the sale of green vegetables during dry seasons, increased savings, access to credit facilities from savings groups, and improved asset ownership, particularly in small livestock animals, has fortified their ability to endure prolonged droughts and meet unexpected expenses.

Education is greatly benefiting from the ICSAP intervention in many households. School attendance has notably improved, largely due to households' ability to purchase stationery and, in some cases, pay tuition fees, as well as gain access to food.

The participatory approach adopted by ICSAP has, to some extent, reduced donor dependency syndrome that was prevalent at the onset of the interventions. While households may not have fully embraced the beneficiary driven approach, project managers and officers reported improved commitment and ownership of ICSAP interventions among beneficiary households.

A savings culture has begun to yield results, albeit on a smaller scale. The establishment of savings groups has indeed shifted household mindsets regarding their ability to save, even with limited income.

Moreover, there is a growing recognition of the role of such savings not only in wealth creation but also as a safety net during times of crisis. Evidence of households utilizing their savings to build up household assets, such as purchasing livestock such as chickens, goats, or cows, purchase of farm implements, is taking root.

3.6.2. Directly or Indirectly, Intended or Unintended Impact

ICSAP has opened up a new frontier where member congregations can collaborate, work together and make a greater impact in the communities they serve. This has strengthened the actualization of their individual charisms by addressing the needs of the marginalized and those in need within their congregations.

ICSAP has strengthened intervention capacities of partner congregations. Through ICSAP, the majority of congregations have diversified their approach to addressing livelihood challenges facing the poor within their communities. In fact, concepts such as kitchen gardening, IMO, use of bio-pesticides introduced by ICSAP are shaping how other development programs implemented by partner congregations are structured and carried out.

The group approach adopted in the implementation of ICSAP activities in bringing households together has improved cohesion, establishing social support structures to assist those facing social challenges. ICSAP has been instrumental in supporting widows and those who have been left behind, helping them find hope and restore their dignity.

Better utilization and protection of natural resources has emerged, especially in areas with shared community resources. For instance, the establishment of kitchen gardens around water wells in Akol Jal has led to better management systems, ensuring that limited water resources and equipment are used prudently.

Improved cereal and groundnut yields are motivating households to utilize idle yet productive portions of their land, as observed in the majority of beneficiary households in South Sudan and Uganda.

Establishment of wood lots and fruit trees as a result of ICSAP may not have yielded benefits to the recipient households and community in the short term.

However, once fully established, it is more than likely to make significant contribution in protecting the fragile environment and improves access to fruits and fuel wood.

The recognition of the role of women, both at the household level and within their communities, is improving as a result of the empowerment received through ICSAP.

Capacity building for women in leadership and their involvement in activities such as kitchen gardening, cereal production, and ownership of small livestock animals such as goats and sheep has increased recognition of women's roles in contributing to household well-being and decision-making.

“ Encouraging women to take up leadership of their groups and equipping them with leadership knowledge has strongly uplifted their confidence. They no longer kneel before men and they understand their rights and potential to lead and transform their communities.”

Victor Arop, Project Manager, Pabo, Uganda

There is an emerging sense of resilience among beneficiary households in responding to unexpected economic shocks, thanks to both capacity building and input support from ICSAP.

Information gathered through FGDs and household interviews revealed a strong level of confidence in overcoming unexpected financial challenges.

Households in nearly all project sites reported utilizing the knowledge acquired through ICSAP and diversifying sources of livelihood to overcome unexpected financial difficulties.

Drijaru Merciana, a 63-year-old widow from Ossabo/Ayibo village, was devastated by the loss of her husband and almost lost hope of living again. Her nomination as an ICSAP beneficiary during a village meeting in 2021 marked the beginning of her journey to full recovery. After attending capacity building training, Drijaru received a pig and an assortment of vegetable seeds, filling her with joy and determination to transform her life. However, a few months later, she lost her pig due to a swine flu outbreak. Undeterred, she utilized the knowledge and seeds received through ICSAP to venture into onion farming, which enabled her to purchase two pigs worth UGX 150,000 (Euro 38).

Unfortunately, fate dealt another blow when all her pigs were stolen a few months later. Despite these setbacks, her persistence and determination led her to earn close to UGX 200,000 (Euro 50) from the sale of onions from her kitchen gardens. With this income, she has bought one goat that is in-kid, and she is hopeful for a new beginning.

*“Even if they stole my Pigs, they cannot take away what I have learnt from ICSAP”,
Drijaru Merciana –Adraa, Uganda*

3.7. Sustainability

There is evidence supporting the continuation of both ICSAP programs and benefits beyond the current phase. ICSAP has established a working framework that strongly encourages ownership, inclusion, and participation. The extent to which these benefits will be sustained will depend on several determining factors.

3.7.1. Potential of ICSAP Benefits Lasting Beyond the Funded Phase

ICSAP is well embraced by all participating congregations. Project managers and summit members who were interviewed acknowledge the integration of ICSAP activities into their outreach and development programs. Concepts like SA and IMO are already being incorporated into existing interventions and will most likely influence the design of future livelihood programs.

The participation and capacity building of congregation staff have played a crucial role in facilitating the transfer of skills and knowledge. Project managers and officers who have been well capacitated through ICSAP are likely to continue contributing to their congregations as valuable resource persons even after the conclusion of ICSAP.

The integration of beneficiary participation in both the design and implementation of ICSAP has bolstered ownership and enhanced the prospects for sustained adoption and implementation of the concepts learned at the household level beyond the current phase.

Peer learning is evident, albeit on small scale among beneficiary households in nearly all project sites and has played a key role in generating interest in the ICSAP program. Interviews with beneficiary households revealed that neighboring households are already establishing kitchen gardens, taking cues from beneficiary households.

The willingness of non-beneficiary households to participate in capacity-building sessions and going to the extent of implementing what they have learnt, despite not receiving input support as noted in Adraa, Tonj, and Kitale, is an indication of continued adoption of the concepts beyond ICSAP.

The involvement of children in kitchen gardening and the management of small livestock animals, as observed in Pabo, Mukono, Adraa, and Kitale, strengthens the case for the sustainability of ICSAP. Instilling SA concepts at an early age increase the likelihood of their continued application in later years.

3.7.2. Factors Likely to Influence ICSAP Sustainability

In-kind and member contributions remain a key lifeline for ICSAP. The commitment from member congregations in fulfilling their part has greatly contributed to the continuity of ICSAP activities when donor funding delayed. The continued and timely availability of these funds will be critical for continuity of ICSAP.

The continued relevance of ICSAP interventions within the broader scope of operations and charism of each congregation will be crucial. Improving the effectiveness of existing ICSAP interventions and adopting new interventions relevant to current and emerging household needs will be critical for ensuring the continued relevance of ICSAP. The proposed introduction of urban rice and integration of bee keeping project within ICSAP as additional livelihood opportunities is a step in the right direction and should be considered.

Water scarcity poses a significant challenge for many households, despite efforts that have been made in some project sites. Most households cited water scarcity, especially during dry seasons, as a major concern, and has shown to influence household commitment to and continued kitchen gardening.

The ability of households to effectively utilize income generated from kitchen gardening, improved cereal and groundnut yield and sale of mature small livestock animals in accumulating saving and investing in productive assets, will play a crucial role in leveraging beneficiary households out of the cycle of poverty and ensure creation of sustainable livelihoods post-ICSAP

Access to quality seeds has been shown to play a significant role in the sustainability of kitchen gardening and the production of cereal crops. Evidence from beneficiary households indicates a higher likelihood of decreased activity in kitchen gardening and cereal production in instances where access to quality seeds was challenging. The establishment or development of seed supply systems will be critical for ensuring ongoing benefits.

Household commitment to the implementation of ICSAP concepts will be instrumental for the continuity of these concepts and their associated benefits beyond the current phase. ICSAP, by design, is beneficiary-driven, an approach that has proven effective in reducing donor dependency, which is common in the majority of households at recruitment. If fully embraced, ICSAP concepts can be instrumental in improving the economic status of beneficiary households.

4.0. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT

4.1. Challenges

During the course of the evaluation, a number of program and activity-specific challenges were identified.

- High donor dependency syndrome and a preference for donations among beneficiary households across ICSAP project sites have stood out as great impediment to beneficiary commitment and the potential for dropout mid-implementation. In some instances, households remain only committed for the sake of receiving inputs, after which they would put in little effort in implementing project activities. Great amounts of energy have to go into ensuring that only the deserving and committed are recruited into the program.
- Access to water stands out as the biggest threat to the actualization of the goals of the ICSAP program especially kitchen gardening. While there have been efforts to address the water challenge in three project sites through the distribution of water tanks and the sinking of shallow wells, access to adequate and affordable water remains a significant challenge and threat to the sustainability of kitchen gardening particularly in the light of climate change effects.
- Access to quality seeds stand out as big challenge for a majority of project sites, especially in South Sudan and Wenje. The unavailability of such a critical input continues to threaten not only the output from kitchen gardening but also the sustainability of the concept as a whole.
- Working in project sites that are not only across borders but also considerable distances apart come with significant logistical challenges and demands for ICSAP. These challenges have not only increased operational costs but also limited critical program activities such as monitoring visits, staff and management meetings.
- The role of project staff, especially project officers, in the actualization of ICSAP goals is critical. When projects staff exited, it took longer than expected to hire and deploy replacements, resulting in significant delays in the implementation of ICSAP activities. This was evident in Kamagut, Thon Aduel, and the replacement of the project coordinator at the secretariat.

4.2. Lessons Learnt

A number of lessons can be drawn for the current implementation phase:

- Inter-congregational partnerships, irrespective of differences in their charism, can work together in synergy and serve their congregations better. ICSAP has demonstrated that it is possible for different congregations, inspired by unique charisms, to work across boundaries and serve diverse needs, achieving greater impact than working alone as individual congregations.
- A participatory approach to livelihood interventions yields better outcomes: when beneficiaries take a lead role in the implementation of project activities, it improves ownership and commitment, which are key ingredients for realizing project outcomes and sustaining benefits beyond the project's life.
- Flexible intervention designs work better when implementing programs in different locations with diverse challenges and households with heterogeneous needs. Designing projects around local needs and contexts ensures that interventions are not only relevant but also impactful.
- With the right input, knowledge, and support, households are willing and capable of improving their livelihood status. ICSAP has shown that adequately capacitated and supported households are willing and able to solve their own challenges, thereby improving their livelihood status.

5.0. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusions

Relevance

ICSAP's goals, objectives, and interventions are highly relevant and responsive to the needs of the target households and their immediate communities. By focusing on sustainable livelihoods, food security, and climate resilience, ICSAP effectively addresses the critical priorities of these households. The program's overarching goal aligns well with the national development frameworks and priorities of Kenya, Uganda, and South Sudan, and its interventions resonate with key policies and strategies aimed at promoting agricultural productivity, food security, and economic growth in these countries.

ICSAP has leveraged the distinctive charisms and missions of each partner congregation, unified the diverse approaches previously adopted in serving their communities, and is addressing the needs of the communities where each congregation is serving. The overall intervention approach aligns closely with Misesan Cara's Missionary Approach to Development Intervention (MADI), particularly in its emphasis on solidarity, partnership, and empowerment of marginalized communities.

ICSAP's aligns well and lends support to the actualization of Sustainable Development Goals. ICSAP goals and outcomes directly contribute to several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), and indirectly to others goals such as SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

Coherence

The alignment and consistency across all project components within ICSAP are evident with project activities, outputs, and outcomes closely resonating the overall goals and intervention objectives. This coherence is evidenced by the strong alignment between ICSAP interventions and programs implemented by partner congregations that share similar goals, strategies, and target beneficiaries. Furthermore, the alignment of ICSAP's goals and objectives with those currently implemented by participating congregations strengthens the program's effectiveness in addressing community needs and achievement of shared developmental goals.

ICSAP was well received and integrated within the programs and activities of partner congregations and has developed synergies that are mutually beneficial.

The inter-congregational approach adopted by ICSAP, bringing together seven congregations serving in marginalized communities, has worked effectively in creating a platform for sharing and learning ideas that have improved intervention outcomes.

Effectiveness

Overall ICSAP has achieved its goals to a great extent. The program has made significant contribution in building the capacity and capability of beneficiary households, particularly in empowering them with the knowledge and skills necessary for sustainable livelihoods, food security, and climate resilience. ICSAP has effectively equipped beneficiary households with knowledge and skills, laying a strong foundation for sustainable livelihood across all project sites.

The goal of supporting each beneficiary household establish a kitchen garden was a success. While the programs succeeded in establishing kitchen gardens in nearly all target homesteads, continued utilization and productivity of the kitchen garden decreased in subsequent years. However, the role of kitchen gardening in promoting diversity and consumption of green vegetables by target households was achieved to a great extent. The procurement and distribution of inputs such as seeds and tools to support the establishment of kitchen gardens were achieved, albeit with a few challenges.

ICSAP has made significant progress in empowering households across four project sites to intensify cereal and other staple crop production, a step that is showing promising results in strengthening household food, nutrition, and income security. Beneficiary households have reported expanding the area under cultivation of common crops after receiving training from ICSAP. However, concerns about sustainability arise due to the limited investment by households in additional inputs beyond those provided by ICSAP.

The adoption of small livestock animals as a source of livelihood has been successful, despite challenges in procurement of breeding stock and disease outbreaks. The positive contribution of small livestock animals to improving livelihoods among beneficiary households is evident. The sale of mature stock has made a significant contribution in generating income. However, its contribution to improved nutrition through consumption of animal protein at the household level remains low.

The goal of establishing loans and savings schemes in each cohort of beneficiaries across all ten project sites was achieved and has opened up opportunities for households to save and access affordable credit. Households that joined VSALs made significant progress in accumulating their savings. However, low periodic contributions by households were evident across all ROSAL schemes, and are slowing down accumulating savings.

The integration of the agroforestry component into kitchen gardening has achieved moderate success despite challenging climatic conditions. Survival rate of seedlings fell below the project target, presenting a significant impediment to the success of the agroforestry component. On the other hand, the goal of increasing the use of energy-saving stoves among beneficiary households was achieved to a great extent.

ICSAP has made notable contribution in diversifying livelihoods opportunities of beneficiary households, with all households engaged in at least two sources of income. This has not only enhanced economic resilience but also provided a buffer against external shocks, contributing to sustained household well-being.

ICSAP has a well-documented Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework that effectively ensures the implementation of project activities as planned, and measures, evaluates, and reports progress towards set goals and objectives. Monitoring and evaluation activities were largely conducted in a timely manner and were fit for purpose.

The goal of empowering households to achieve nutritional security through increased access to and consumption of balanced diets has been partially met. The contribution of kitchen gardening in increasing the consumption of green vegetables was evident despite challenges due to water scarcity and access to quality seeds.

Efforts to increase household assets through ICSAP have yielded moderate results. The program's initiatives have directly contributed to increased asset ownership among beneficiary households. Funds generated from kitchen gardening, the sale of mature livestock, cereal and groundnut harvests have gone into purchase of additional livestock, household items, used to start or expand small businesses, or improve their homes.

Efficiency

Overall, the implementation of ICSAP activities followed the project plan, with most activities completed on time. However, delays were encountered in a few instances, primarily due to delayed fund remittances and procurement technicalities.

ICSAP's procurement processes are both effective and cost-saving. Decentralized procurement functions and close monitoring from the secretariat have worked well despite a few delays in procurement. Sourcing breeding stocks and procuring seeds and seedlings remain major challenges in the majority of project sites.

The program operates with a lean secretariat comprising the CEO, a project coordinator, and a finance officer, who are tasked with coordinating program activities. There is a dedicated team of project officers and managers responsible for overseeing activities at project sites.

However, delays in staffing were evident in locations where staff turnover occurred, affecting implementation of project activities.

The financial and accounting system employed by ICSAP are adequate and accountable. Financial transactions are well documented and in compliance with accounting procedures and policies of member congregations, ICSAP and in compliance with donor reporting requirements. Despite some variability in the input-output ratio across project sites, investments in households yielded positive returns. Cost-cutting measures such as group model training, use of in-house facilities provided by member congregations and use of virtual meeting contributed to financial efficiency.

Impact

Despite the relatively short implementation period, ICSAP has demonstrated notable changes that points to the intended impact on beneficiary households and communities. The project has empowered households to recognize their internal potential, fostering confidence and creativity in exploiting opportunities for improved livelihood. Improved resilience to economic and climate-related shocks, enhanced education access, reduced donor dependency and the cultivation of a savings culture are among the observed changes that once fully realized will be instrumental in improving the livelihood status of beneficiary households. ICSAP is shaping development and a livelihood program implemented by member congregations, and is advancing community cohesion, and environmental sustainability. The program has spurred the adoption of sustainable agriculture practices, improved resource utilization, and is redefining gender roles especially in leadership and decision making.

Sustainability

Evidence strongly supports the continuation of both programs and benefits beyond the current phase of ICSAP. Integration of ICSAP activities into existing outreach and development programs, and emphasis on Sustainable Agriculture will continue to influence on future livelihood programs. ICSAP has established a working framework that promotes ownership, inclusion, and participation at both partnership and household levels. The active involvement and capacity building of congregation staff and households have ensured the transfer of skills and knowledge that will continue to be utilized even after the conclusion of ICSAP.

The integration of beneficiary participation in design and implementation has bolstered ownership and enhanced prospects for sustained adoption and implementation of learned concepts at the household level beyond the current phase. Peer learning among beneficiary households is evident and is driving continued adoption, with neighboring households already implementing practices observed from ICSAP beneficiaries.

Several factors are likely to influence the sustainability of ICSAP, including household commitment to the continued implementation of concepts, continued relevance of interventions within the broader scope of operations and charism of each congregation, access to water and seeds, and how effectively households utilize derived income to expand livelihood opportunities.

5.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the lessons learnt and conclusions from the current phase of the project, the following are recommended:

While ICSAP has been successful in utilizing a lean staff, staff turnover especially at project site poses a significant threat to the continuity of ICSAP activities and the achievement of project outcomes. Staff turnover and delayed replacements, as observed in Kamagut, Thon Aduel, and at the secretariat, have been disruptive and have slowed down progress in the implementation of planned activities, while also overstressing the remaining staff. Therefore, the recruitment of replacement staff should be expedited.

The coordination and monitoring of ICSAP activities have predominantly fallen under the responsibility of the CEO, who by design allocates 50% of the available time to ICSAP. This arrangement has proven burdensome, especially given the geographical dispersion of project sites. The creation of two cluster units aimed to enhance the monitoring and coordination of project activities remains underutilized. Therefore, ICSAP should consider staffing the two cluster units, possible with a coordinator to oversee both coordination and monitoring activity.

The need for ICSAP's intervention to remain relevant is crucial for the program's sustainability. While efforts have been made to introduce new technological concepts such as IMO, which have improved intervention outcomes, more still needs to be done in the face of climate change effects. Furthermore, ICSAP's goal of diversification, especially in interventions aimed at creating new livelihood opportunities for the poor, was notably low. The planned introduction of urban rice and integration of beekeeping should be prioritized. Additionally, it would be beneficial for ICSAP to consider establishing or funding a research component to enhance innovation and improvements.

The role of member in-kind contributions and co-funding in ensuring the smooth running of project activities is evident. Therefore, it is important for member congregations to ensure that these funds are made available in a timely manner.

Beneficiary commitment is crucial for ICSAP to achieve its desired impact. It is important to prioritize the recruitment of individuals who genuinely demonstrate commitment to the program's objectives, rather than solely focusing on those interested in receiving inputs. Therefore, ICSAP should strengthen its beneficiary selection procedures and conduct thorough assessments to ensure that resources are allocated to those most likely to actively engage in and benefit from the program.

The sustainability of kitchen gardening is highly dependent on access to water. Efforts to addressing the water scarcity have yielded mixed outcomes. ICSAP should explore more opportunities for improving access to water and in developing and promoting water efficient technologies.

Access to quality vegetable seeds, fruit and woodlot seedlings has stood out as a major impediment to the actualization of ICSAP environmental goal. The establishment of tree nurseries as was envisaged in the ICSAP activities has not yielded desired results. There is need to develop a strategy to improve access to quality seeds in project sites, particularly in those in South Sudan and in Wenje where availability is limited. Opportunities for households to develop their own seeds or establish linkages with quality suppliers should be considered.

The adoption of small livestock animals has demonstrated significant potential in transforming the livelihoods of resource poor households. However, the procurement of breeding stock has posed challenges for many project sites due to low budget allocations and limited supply in the market. It's essential to review and align the current procurement systems used by different congregations to ensure timely and effective procurement and distribution of small livestock animals.

The performance of VSALs is promising and has great potential in improving both savings and access to credit. As currently implemented, low contribution from households into the kitty has limited access to credit for qualifying households. There is need for a review of the current VSAL model with the goal of enhancing the opportunities for improved savings, credit accessibility and security of the funds. Where ROSALs are preferred, appropriate strategy should be put in place to encourage buildup of savings over time.

The role of baseline data in monitoring and evaluation is crucial. While ICSAP has established a framework for collecting household data during recruitment, it has not been comprehensive and has not adequately captured data on indicators as set out in the RBF, both in form and level of detail. There is need to align the existing data collection tool so as to capture all indicators and document status of all beneficiary households. This also calls for commitment from project officers in ensuring that the data is both accurate and complete.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Site Specific Evaluation Reports

Thon Aduel – *Holy Ghost Fathers*

The implementation of ICSAP activities in Thon Aduel has been a success and has made a positive impact in transforming the livelihood status of beneficiary households. ICSAP has been very relevant to the needs and aspirations of both the implementing congregation and beneficiary households.

- ICSAP is relevant in context, approach and interventions for Holy Ghost fathers in Thon Aduel. The community has just emerged from a civil war that destroyed much of their livelihoods driving households into abject poverty. Many are widowed and face challenges in picking themselves up from the ravages of war with food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty still a big challenge.
- There is a great interest in ICSAP project within the beneficiary community. All beneficiaries in the current phase indicated being motivated by the success of the 2019 pilot group and how preceding groups have since succeed in transforming their households.
- For the Spiritans, ICSAP has actualized their call to willingly opt for the poor, the oppressed and the disadvantaged. ICSAP has allowed them to make a change and lasting impact in the physical realm while attending to community spiritual mission of taking the gospel to those who have scarcely heard of it.
- The establishment of kitchen gardens was evident in the homesteads of the majority of the households visited with a strong sense of ownership evident through the amount of work that has gone into fencing, management and productivity of the garden.
- Target households have been issued with tree seedlings, albeit few in number. Agroforestry and planting of fruit and non-fruit trees remains a big challenge due to the land tenure system and farming practices. Land is still communally owned and open grazing during dry seasons have destroyed tree and fruit. Despite great strides made by ICSAP in enlightening the negative effects of bush fires among beneficiaries, bush burning by other members of the community remains a big threat to seedlings establishment and sustainability of Kitchen gardens.
- Adoption of sanitation practices remains relatively low with all six households visited lacking a functional pit latrine. Construction of latrines and rubbish pits has been challenging due to seasonal flooding. There is a sense of laxity towards establishing and using toilet despite ICSAP training, a pointer to likely influence of culture of social norms that need to be identified and demystified.

- Despite households interviewed indicated being trained on aspects of savings and credit, there is little participation in savings group.
- Establishment of wood lot and fruit trees remains slow due to limited access to seedlings, seasonal bush fires, destruction from animals during open grazing period and prolonged drought periods
- Documentation of project activities at the project office is evident. All record keeping is done by the project manager due to the absence of a substantive project officer. Record-keeping at the target household level is however lacking due to high levels of illiteracy among community members.
- The project manager, exhibits great enthusiasm and has been instrumental in the success of the project. He has mastered the local language, which enables him to effectively communicate and motivate the women involved in the project. This has helped to overcome language barriers and has contributed to the successful delivery of project outcomes.
- The absence of a qualified project officer remains a significant challenge and has negatively impacted the implementation of some of ICSAP activities. Currently, an acting project officer who was a beneficiary from a previous group supports the project manager in household mobilization and provides assistance in a few capacity-building topics. However, her lack of formal education and limited writing skills is limiting her ability to fully execute her roles as a project officer leaving the project manager to do most of the work.
- The earnings from kitchen gardening and sale of small livestock animals is improving access to education and school attendance among children in beneficiary households. Four out of six households visited indicated that they utilized income from these activities to support their children's education.
- The introduction of small livestock animals has proven to be a catalyst for better livelihoods among beneficiary households. Households have shown self-initiative aimed at improving household asset ownership and living standards. Households have sold goat offsprings from the stock received from ICSAP to purchase an ox plough that has enabled them to cultivate larger land areas, resulting in increased groundnut harvests and additional income from leasing out the services of the ox-plough to other farmers.
- The introduction of improved cereal crop husbandry has yielded promising results. Beneficiary households reported bumper harvests of groundnuts due to enhanced land preparation, seeding techniques, and increased cultivation areas, facilitated by the relative peace prevailing in the area.

- ICSAP has worked well in strengthening the spirituality and participation of target households in church activities. The ability of households to fulfill their religious duty of giving to support the work of the church has been greatly enhanced. Beneficiary households are now contributing to church functions by providing vegetables and donating goats to support church events.
- ICSAP has been a source of hope for widows who lost their husbands during the war. Coming together as women has provided them with a platform for social support, fostering a sense of belonging among themselves.
- There are key indicators of sustainability of ICSAP interventions at Thon Aduel. Increase in the livestock ownership at the household level, improved groundnut yields and the dedication by women to continue implementing ICSAP concepts is promising.
- Overall, the implementation of ICSAP activities at Thon Aduel has been successful and has contributed to improved livelihood of beneficiary households and the community despite the absence of a qualified project officer.

Adraa, Uganda – Franciscan Brother OSF

Adraa, located in the West Nile region of Northern Uganda, is in the process of recovering from the devastation caused by the civil war that has plagued the area since 1985. Coupled with economic and political isolation, this has resulted in high levels of rural poverty. Communities reside in nuclear villages, and land is predominantly held under customary ownership. Farms are fragmented, with a primary focus on subsistence food production, much of which has not been sustainable. In some areas, villages with over a hundred households lack basic amenities such as pit latrines.

- ICSAP aligns well with the Franciscan mission in Adraa, which aims to promote education, agriculture, and rural development. Serving as a crucial outreach program for Adraa Agricultural College, ICSAP has effectively built the capacity of the community in Offaka Sub-County to utilize available natural resources for sustainable livelihoods.
- The beneficiary selection process in ICSAP is highly participatory, facilitated by Village Development Committees. Each year, the Village Development Committee (VDC) holds meetings where the project concept is explained, and beneficiaries are selected through consensus.

However, focusing on one village with 125 households instead of extending assistance to adjacent villages with more deserving cases may have included households that would not have been considered as poor and created a sense of entitlement which can be attributed to low commitment from households in implementing some of ICSAP activities.

- The Trickle-down strategy, which encourages each beneficiary to bring along three other community members to attend training sessions despite not directly benefiting from the project inputs has reached over 360 indirect beneficiaries. These individuals are equipped with knowledge and concepts disseminated and promoted through ICSAP.
- ICSAP training has greatly benefited from the utilization of training facilities and resources, such as the college farm and training halls, enabling practical training sessions before beneficiaries set up kitchen gardens at household's level.
- Majority of the households have established kitchen gardens, with a variety of vegetables, herbs and fruit trees. However, none of the households visited had fenced their kitchen gardens risking destruction by livestock during dry seasons when open grazing is likely.
- Sharing of some key kitchen gardening tools among groups member as a cost cutting measure has worked well except for a few instances where accessibility was a challenge.
- Timely procurement and distribution of chicken is still a challenge. Purchase of younger flock has led to high mortality due to susceptibility to disease outbreaks and was noted to take long before maturity, resulting in high maintenance costs.
- The premature sale of pigs and chickens received from ICSAP as input support by households, without consulting project officers is worrying and may negate the intended impact and explains the entitlement notion mentioned above. This calls for stringent enforcement of non-sale policies in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to prevent unwarranted disposal.
- Households are exhibiting a sense of dependency on project inputs rather than gaining independence, particularly concerning seed support. Majority of households lack seeds for continued kitchen gardening, necessitating a strategy for seed sustainability, including traditional seed development as part of training and allowing households to grow their seed bank. Alternatively, training households as seed propagators could serve the community while generating some income and, potentially reducing project input costs.

Pabo, Uganda – Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary

In Pabo, an area that was once a refugee camp, SSHJM supports disabled and elderly persons who were abandoned when their families were repatriated to their villages of origin. The congregation's mission to be a transforming presence in situations and areas of the world where the poorest of God's people are so often forgotten and excluded is strongly aligned with the goals and aspirations of ICSAP. The implementation of programs by the Women and Children First Organization (WACFO), which focuses on women and children alongside ICSAP, has been both synergistic and complementary.

- Beneficiary selection is transparent and targeted, bringing on board the most deserving households. The adoption of a four-step beneficiary selection process has worked well: first, there is sensitization of the project within the target village, followed by engaging local leaders through participatory village meetings to identify and recommend the most deserving cases. Subsequently, the project staff visits the households to verify their suitability against ICSAP recruitment criteria. Lastly, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) officer assesses to ensure that the procedure and criteria have yielded truly deserving cases.
- Strong sensitization prior to the recruitment of the households has effectively reduced the donor dependency mindset among the beneficiaries. Notably, a clear understanding of the project approach and duration has prepared households well for project exits, a factor that has greatly improved the continuation of ICSAP benefits beyond the project support.
- A village approach for each cohort has proven effective. By bringing together beneficiaries from the same village, the program has significantly reduced distances between households, thereby increasing household participation in training and meetings and fostering strong cohesion and participation in village savings and loans groups.
- Implementing ICSAP alongside WACFO has strengthened safeguarding issues and expanded capacity-building opportunities for ICSAP beneficiaries, such as advocacy for women's rights and leadership, and sensitization on HIV/AIDS and Covid-19, aspects that were not initially part of ICSAP programs. The presence of an internal M&E officer who oversees all project implementations has had a strong positive impact on the overall performance of ICSAP.

- Households reported a bumper harvest of green vegetables during the rainy seasons, attributed to the adoption of kitchen gardening. However, much of it is lost due to the lack of a ready market. This has raised the need for value addition, particularly preservation of vegetables harvested during the wet season for consumption and sale during dry seasons, which has strong potential as an income-generating project for the group.
- Pigs are issued per group and raised in a central piggery. Each member is put on a duty roster where they are expected to work in the piggery. While ICSAP has been providing feed for the pigs, this is largely unsustainable, and there is a need for a cost-effective alternative. The slow pace of sharing out piglets to every household may ultimately delay the intended impact of the pig project on the households.
- Long distances to water sources, competition and scarcity of water during dry seasons, and lack of or poor fencing of kitchen gardens stand out as major threats to the sustainability of kitchen gardening among beneficiary households. Access to water remains a significant challenge, particularly during the dry season from December to March, with some wells drying up. There is a need to explore opportunities for tapping runoff water, considering that most of the compounds are good water runoff catchments.
- There is notable success in the establishment, participation, and management of village savings and loans schemes. However, members' contributions are still low, especially during the dry seasons. The true potential of the credit facility created by VSALs remains underutilized due to low savings, limiting the size of the credit facility available to members. There is a need to inject funding to increase access to credit while developing and implementing stringent policies to guard against default rates.
- Establishment of VSALs has had an encouraging positive influence on beneficiary households. The VSLA has reduced reckless spending and has been a source of unity among members. A widow noted that after losing her husband, the kitchen garden became an attraction that brought members of the community into her household, allowing her to overcome her loss and have opportunities to interact with her neighbors, diverting her thoughts from her deceased husband.
- Emergence of soil borne & pest resistant diseases is threatening the gains and continuity of the Kitchen gardening. WACFO is also implementing a program on bio-pesticides that will hopefully overcome the challenges faced by households experiencing resistant pest attacks. There is an urgent need for a solution to addressing Soil-borne diseases.

- Households that have implemented row planting have reported better yields and ease of weeding. However, some households abandoned the concept because of the requirement for additional labor and the need to plant numerous crops within a short period to maximize the limited seasonal rains. It is also notable that mixed cropping, especially where different spacing is required, limits the adoption of row planting.
- Delays in funding for ICSAP program activities remain a key challenge in timely implementation, especially considering that some activities depend on seasonal weather patterns. The use of internal funds, however, has supported the continuity of project activities even during funding delays.

Mukono, Uganda – Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary

The Mukono sub-project, implemented by the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary near the capital city of Kampala, primarily focuses on empowering women, implementing community education programs for disabled children, and spearheading development projects under Children in Need – CHIN. Situated in Nama Sub County, Mukono District, Uganda, their calling plays a crucial role in uplifting the local community.

- The decision made by SSHJM in 2021 to allocate the ICSAP budget to cover both Pabo and Mukono, despite the initial risk of underfunding project interventions, has been validated. Tangible positive outcomes and improved livelihoods of targeted households are evident.
- Targeting the most vulnerable individuals, particularly those left behind in the midst of affluence in the suburban area of Mukono, underscores the necessity of ICSAP in the region. ICSAP strongly aligns with the Sisters' mission to stand in solidarity with the poor and marginalized, particularly the empowerment of the marginalized.
- Notably, 57% of the 60 households are women living with HIV, with approximately 43% being widows. Many households contend with the dual burden of HIV and widowhood, compounded by caring for children with physical and mental disabilities, some of whom are supported at the CHIN center. Additionally, a significant portion of the youth is unemployed, with some enrolling in CHIN to acquire employable skills. The burden is even greater noting that on average, each household consists of six dependents.

- The beneficiary identification and selection process are well structured, and has ensured that truly deserving cases are considered. Collaborative efforts between Community Health Volunteers and project officers have facilitated the identification and selection of vulnerable households, primarily comprising widows and those caring for disabled children or affected by HIV within the community.
- The benefits of intensification are evident, with targeted households effectively utilizing limited land space for intensive cultivation of various vegetables, both exotic and indigenous. Focusing on high-value vegetables has proven fruitful. However, challenges due to limited space persist, particularly for households residing in cramped-up quarters or renting with restricted land use.

Destruction by neighboring animals poses a threat to kitchen gardens due to in-existent fencing structures, while theft of small livestock and vegetables remains a challenge.

- The adoption of group pig and chicken rearing is yielding results, despite challenges associated with high cost of feeds and disease outbreaks. Having a common activity has not only created a strong social bond among beneficiaries but also opened up livelihood opportunities for poor households.
- Households still face challenges accessing adequate and affordable water, hindering the full utilization and productivity of kitchen gardening efforts. Municipal water supply is relatively expensive for majority of the households.

While rain water harvesting presents a potential solution, many households lack water collection and storage infrastructure.

- Encouragingly, there is strong involvement of children in kitchen gardening and has been instrumental in promoting knowledge transfer and potential sustainability of ICSAP interventions among beneficiary households.
- The use of Indigenous Microorganisms (IMO) in managing hygiene and odor in piggeries has yielded positive results. Households have reported a decline in its effectiveness due to pest resistance in their kitchen gardens resulting from neighboring use of artificial chemicals, exacerbated by the proximity of kitchen gardens in urban areas.

Kitale, Kenya – Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul

For the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul, their acceptance to implement ICSAP interventions among the multi-ethnic community in Matisi Ward in Kitale as part of their mission to aid the poor and marginalized is validated. The majority of households around Matisi are extremely poor, residing on small pieces of land that are swampy, with alcohol as the means of survival, which has led to a high rate of alcoholism, hopelessness, and despair.

- Referrals from medical, educational, sports, and nutrition programs implemented by the sisters have worked well in ensuring that truly needy and most deserving households are identified and selected. ICSAP is well aligned and integrated with these programs. Every beneficiary undergoes a formal evaluation before being enlisted. The project officers and the sisters assess all cases to determine their suitability, ensuring compliance with selection criteria.
- The kitchen garden, in particular, has strongly complemented the nutrition and education programs. It has significantly contributed to the reduction of malnutrition among beneficiary households through improved access to vegetables and proteins from small animals. The education program has greatly benefited from the income generated from sales of vegetables, which has largely gone into payment of tuition fees, purchase of school uniforms, and stationery, addressing a major challenge for most beneficiary households.
- Commitment and dedication from the project officer, has been instrumental in shaping the mindset of the beneficiary households. She demonstrates enthusiasm for her work and has integrated well with beneficiaries, a factor that has worked very well in raising hope and confidence among beneficiaries.
- Continuity of ICSAP interventions and benefits is evident. Referrals from previous beneficiaries have played a significant role in directing those in need to the sisters. Most of the current beneficiaries have developed interest largely due to the success of the previous groups.
- The development of wells in the majority of beneficiary households has significantly alleviated water challenges. There is adequate access to clean water for household use and irrigation. Despite a few of the wells drying up or yielding less during dry seasons, they are shared with neighbors, extending the project's impact beyond the direct beneficiaries.

- Due to relatively larger kitchen gardens fenced with support from ICSAP, access to fresh green vegetables has greatly improved, and beneficiary households have reported better income generation opportunities through the sale of surplus produce.
- The introduction of a savings and credit scheme has been very successful. The group has established savings schemes that have worked well in building up savings and access to credit recouping over 100,000 (110,000) (Euro 792) in less than 12 months. The program has ignited a welfare arm and has set aside a kitty to support those bereaved and even newborns.
- The group has initiated a nutritional program every week where they contribute part of the vegetable harvest to support the sisters in feeding street families. There is a strong diffusion of knowledge and skills to immediate households as evidenced by numerous non-beneficiary households who have also established kitchen gardens.
- ICSAP is well integrated with all the other programs and has contributed to improved intervention outcomes. Collaboration among staff across all its programs is working well and is complementary. Weekly meetings, often held every Thursday, bring together all staff in social work and mobilizers, has worked well in strengthening ICSAP effectiveness. Integrating ICSAP intervention within other programs reduces duplication, enhances teamwork and strengthened targeting, relevancy of the intervention and complemented follow-up.
- Documentation at the project office is detailed, complete and verifiable. However, little is documented at the household level due to low literacy and partly due to lack of interest. Monitoring and Evaluation visits by the secretariat have been instrumental in providing motivation and guidance to the project team.
- The black cotton soils pose a big challenge as they easily get waterlogged during rainy seasons and dry up fast during dry seasons. This calls for intensified conditioning of the soil through the use of compost manure.
- Climate change also poses a great danger. In Kitale, 2023 was the most challenging year with abnormal temperatures making kitchen gardening challenging. Despite this, the majority of beneficiary households were able to continue harvesting vegetables from their kitchen gardens, a true indication of resilience brought about by ICSAP. The shallow well becomes an oasis for the majority of households living in the area.
- ICSAP has opened up opportunities and has attracted other stakeholders in support of programs targeting the poor and marginalized households in the areas.

Donor funding in support of construction of additional shallow wells and toilets was actualized as a result of what ICSAP has done for the households in the area.

- ICSAP has ignited a sense of unity and sharing among the neighborhood. Sharing of shallow wells and, in some cases, toilets has brought in a sense of brotherhood and fostered reconciliation, lifting the families out of shame, raising their self-esteem and self-worth.
- Beneficiary households reported a few challenges though; cracks on the newly constructed toilets, falling off fencing poles and torn wire mesh, as well as ineffective pesticide.

Kamagut, Kenya – Patrician Brothers

Kamagut is an area characterized by stark contrasts, where scarcity coexists with abundance. Situated between Eldoret and Kitale, the breadbasket of Kenya renowned for commercial maize production, lie many households deeply entrenched in poverty, often overlooked. The Patrician brothers' charism of witnessing Christ through teaching, youth work, and by example, along with their motto, "fundamental options for the poor," finds realization through the adoption of ICSAP interventions targeting the impoverished. Through ICSAP, 60 households, who might have otherwise been forgotten, have access to new sources of livelihood and opportunities to rebuild their lives.

- Identification and recruitment of deserving beneficiaries is both targeted and relevant, resulting in the inclusion of truly deserving cases. Collaboration between community members and other religious congregations in the area has been instrumental in identifying the poorest and most deserving individuals.
- The adoption of small animals among beneficiary households has been limited, with chickens issued to a number of households in the 2021 cohort. However, households in the 2023 cohort were yet to receive their chickens due to delayed procurement. Those supported with chickens reported a notable increase in income, although periodic disease outbreaks have resulted in losses. Interviews with outgoing project officers indicated a preference for sheep over chickens among the majority of the 2023 cohort, citing better survival rates and minimal input requirements.

- High turnover of project officers is a concern that needs to be addressed. Intermittent unavailability of project officers on the ground has negatively affected both the continuity and quality of outcomes of ICSAP activities. During our evaluation, we could not access any beneficiaries from the 2022 cohort, and information regarding achievements for this group was unavailable.
- Households visited reported receiving seeds for their kitchen gardens, with a few tree seedlings procured and distributed to beneficiary households. There were instances of chicks dying soon after issuance to the beneficiaries. The 2023 group has completed their training but is yet to receive their chickens.
- There is evidence of donor dependency syndrome, with some households indicating a preference for handouts rather than long-term engagement in kitchen gardening. Among the 2021 cohort visited during this evaluation, poorly utilized and unfenced kitchen gardens were noted. Interestingly, all households visited have their own water wells within a distance of 30 meters, which could otherwise catalyze the effective use of kitchen gardening.
- The adoption of health and sanitation practices among beneficiary households is notable, except for the lack of handwashing facility close to toilets, which was not found in any household visited. Energy-saving stoves are well established in all households visited.

Baraka-Lare, Kenya – Franciscan Brothers OSF

The Lare community in Njoro Sub County is a post-conflict settlement facing unpredictable climatic conditions as a result of climate change, which has driven the majority of households deep into poverty. The household's dependence on subsistence agriculture, largely maize and beans is adversely affected by unpredictable rainfall patterns, greatly impacting food security and household livelihood. Access to green vegetables, especially during dry seasons, is challenging.

- The beneficiary selection process is both participatory and community-driven. Involving village elders and allowing the community to nominate the most deserving cases in open village meetings has proven effective in beneficiary selection.
- Sensitization of the project concept, especially with the help of community leaders at the recruitment stage, has strengthened commitment and reduced donor dependency syndrome and has worked well in ensuring that households enlisted remain committed to the program.

- All households have received training in all thematic areas outlined in the ICSAP training syllabus. All respondents indicated attending at least four training sessions and could easily recall the concepts taught. Sit-in lessons and practical demonstrations carried out at the community farm and beneficiary households have effectively improved beneficiary knowledge and changed attitudes toward kitchen gardening, better hygiene practices, and environmental protection.
- There has been significant progress in adopting better health and sanitation practices among beneficiary households, except for the construction of rubbish pits, which were missing in all households visited, and the use of handwashing facility, which was noted in only half of the beneficiary households.
- The adoption and implementation of the kitchen gardening concept is evident, except for a few households with poorly constructed or no fencing around their gardens. Five out of eight households visited had kitchen garden fences made up of maize stalks, which may not be sustainable as they are prone to weathering and destruction by livestock. Encouraging the use of locally available materials that are permanent and long-lasting should be emphasized.
- The majority of project activities scheduled for implementation were completed on time, except for the procurement and distribution of inputs to the last cohort of 2023, where chickens and sheep were delivered weeks before the evaluation date and water tanks were yet to be delivered.
- The distribution of inputs in support of kitchen gardening and the adoption of small livestock is satisfactory, except for the quality of livestock procured. Each household has been supported with a sheep or a goat, depending on household preference, five chickens, and ten kilograms of chicken feed to start. However, some households reported that some of the sheep did not respond well to the climatic conditions, and most of the chickens issued were too young, resulting in high mortality rates. Household whose livestock survived reported good progress, and some have multiplied.
- Water remains the biggest challenge among households despite the distribution of water tanks. Most households received a 250-liter tank that have been converted to store drinking water rather than support kitchen gardening. While the majority of households live in iron-roofed houses, most have not installed water harvesting gutters, a strategy that could alleviate water shortages during rainy seasons.

- Record-keeping remains a significant challenge despite households receiving record-keeping books. This was attributed to low literacy levels especially among the aged, and to some extent lack of commitment from the target beneficiaries.

Akol Jal, South Sudan – Jesuits

Akol Jal, and many of the surrounding villages in Lake State, have just emerged from the roughages of a civil war that brought with it great loss and suffering. Poverty and hunger still pose significant challenges for the majority of households who are beginning to rebuild their livelihoods. Food and nutritional insecurity are among the greatest challenges, compounded by harsh climatic conditions and water scarcity, especially during the months of January and May. For households in Akol Jal, ICSAP has not only come at the right time but also when it is most needed.

- ICSAP has integrated well into the Multi-Educational and Agricultural Jesuit Institute of South Sudan (MAJIS) initiative and has strongly contributed to the realization of Jesuits' mission to provide training in agriculture and animal husbandry, indirectly supporting basic education for the people of Rumbek. Moreover, ICSAP is contributing to the realization of MAJIS' rural livelihood diversification program, which aims to contribute to the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically targeting extreme poverty eradication and working towards zero hunger. Additionally, ICSAP has significantly supported Jesuit outreach programs aimed at improving production and access to vegetables in villages neighboring Akol Jal, thereby extending MAJIS activities to the village. The Jesuits' plan to expand their agricultural training center in Akol Jal aligns well with ICSAP.
- Beneficiary identification and selection processes are both participatory and targeted, ensuring that truly deserving households benefit. The use of village meetings and church forums to raise awareness about the project and its concepts has been effective, significantly improving commitment and participation from households in ICSAP activities. Notably, a significant number of beneficiaries are widows. A mix of young, newly married, and elderly women in all three cohorts has enhanced cohesion, teamwork, and organization within the groups.
- Bringing together beneficiaries from the same village as a group and establishing kitchen gardens around water wells has proven highly effective in addressing key challenges associated with individual household gardens.

- Assigning each beneficiary a plot around the well has eliminated the need to carry water over long distances, a significant burden, especially for elderly beneficiaries, while also improving security and making training centralized and effective. However, this has come at a cost for beneficiaries living far from the well who have to travel.
- Donor dependency syndrome is dominant and is still a challenge to full adoption and realization of the project benefits in the long run. Beneficiaries still expect assistance at no cost and make limited efforts in extending project's activities beyond. Efforts by the project team to inculcate commitment and participation is yielding fruits.
- Kitchen gardens were well organized, cared for, and host a variety of vegetables depending on household preferences and seed availability. During focus group discussions, households reported meeting their vegetable needs during dry seasons and earning from surplus sales.
- Fencing of the kitchen gardens in all group sites is still a challenge, mainly due to the use of sorghum stacks that easily withered and could be destroyed by grazing animals. Households expressed willingness in partnering with ICSAP in erecting chain-link fencing around their gardens as a long-term solution. Theft of vegetables and destruction of kitchen gardens by livestock during the dry season remains a big challenge.
- Training of households in sustainable agriculture, intensification of cereal production, and health and hygiene practices was completed as planned. However, delays in establishing kitchen gardens and distributing small livestock animals to 2023 beneficiaries lagged behind schedule. The 2023 group was established in September, which was rather late for any significant changes to occur. By the time of the evaluation visit, households were preparing their kitchen gardens, and goats issued as part of the small livestock animals had just been distributed among the target households.
- The distribution of cereal, vegetable, and groundnut seeds yielded positive results. Sorghum seeds distributed to 2023 beneficiaries were producing ears promising a good harvest. Additionally, a few dwarf variety pawpaw seedlings distributed and transplanted in June 2023 were well established and close to the first fruiting harvest.
- Access to quality fruit seedlings remains a challenge, and has limited the number of households that have successfully planted fruit trees and established woodlots. Empowering congregations and households with the ability to develop their local seeds or raising seedlings and improving the supply chain could be viable solutions.

- Seasonal activities are significantly influencing women participation in kitchen gardening. During rainy seasons, women focus on groundnut and cereal cultivation in open fields, only to return during the dry seasons, when most boreholes have low yields, and competition for water for livestock and households is high.

Bakhita Tonj, South Sudan– Salesian Sisters

Tonj is a growing rural town that continues to receive returnees after the signing of a peace agreement that ended a long civil war in South Sudan. For the majority of households who are picking up the pieces, poverty and marginalization are evident. While education for the youth remains a key focus for the Salesian sisters in securing the future of the young country, women empowerment through its agricultural program offers the greatest opportunity for addressing immediate pressing needs for food and nutritional security and providing resource poor households, especially widows, with a source of livelihood opportunities.

- The introduction of ICSAP has not only complemented the efforts made by the sisters through agricultural programs but has widened its reach to the most deserving households and expanded the program to empower women in kitchen gardening, rearing of goats and chickens, adoption of improved agricultural practices in the production of sorghum, millet, and groundnuts, as well as better health and sanitation practices.
- The beneficiary identification and selection process was participatory, with the community playing a key role in identifying the most deserving households. Members proposed by the community were validated through a visit by the project officer to the households, ensuring that truly deserving cases were included.
- From the FGD sessions and interactions with the beneficiaries, it is easy to note a high level of donor dependency syndrome, with many expecting donations with little to no effort. Efforts put in by the project officer to enhance ownership of the program intervention have yielded notable commitment from the households, which is quite encouraging. Households are beginning to take self-initiatives and ownership of the kitchen gardens, as evidenced by the quality of fencing and the crops planted in the gardens.
- Internal leadership changes within the congregation that affected the project manager and officer in 2021 brought transitional challenges, delaying the recruitment and capacity building of the first cohort in 2021.

The new staff reported taking time to understand the concept of the ICSAP project, leading to delays in the commencement of project activities. This highlights the need for effective transition management to ensure that time is not lost during the project implementation phase.

- The project approach adopted by the Salesian Sisters at Bakhita Tonj has worked well. Three groups have been capacity-built, one every year despite initial delays at the beginning of the current phase. At the onset of each cycle, beneficiary households are assigned plots within the congregation farm for training. The sisters have sunk a borehole through the support of an external donor to provide water for the groups during their demonstration trainings. A training hall at the farm has provided both convenience and a conducive environment for training. Once trained, the women set up the kitchen gardens in the villages, and the project officer makes follow-up visits for technical support, monitoring, and guidance.
- Records are well-kept by the project officer, documenting all data related to the project as well as the inputs and production of vegetables sold by each beneficiary household. Weekly sales are recorded by the project officer and have worked well in documenting the progress made by each household.
- Water is accessible to the majority of households, except for a few households that are further away from the community well. While fencing of the kitchen gardens is evident, the use of sorghum stocks may not last for a year before they fall off. Stronger fencing should be encouraged.
- All households have been supported with tools, including wheelbarrows, which have alleviated the burden of women carrying water on their heads. This was a prudent decision considering that the majority of beneficiary households are women and aged.
- The issuance of inputs, especially seeds, was timely and has contributed greatly to good vegetable harvests among beneficiary households. However, households are beginning to develop a dependence on the project to provide them with seeds.
- Cereal and groundnut seeds have yielded good harvests in the last two seasons, with four in six households visited indicating having enough groundnuts to meet their household needs and some surplus for sale. Providing safe groundnut seed storage space at the sister's facility for beneficiary households has worked well in ensuring that households have adequate groundnut seed for subsequent planting seasons.

- The procurement and distribution of goats and chickens to the households were successful, except for two households that reported that the chickens and goats procured were sick, and some died soon after, leaving beneficiaries disadvantaged. An occasional outbreak of chicken diseases was also noted as a threat to the growth of small livestock animals.
- The distribution of fruit and tree seedlings was conducted with each beneficiary household receiving between two and seven seedlings, boasting a commendable 92% chance of survival. This achievement is notable and deserves recognition. However, the variety of fruit seedlings was limited to only two types: mangoes and guavas. This highlights the need to explore more varieties suitable for the climatic conditions, where budgetary allocations allow for such diversity.
- Strengthening intensification and mechanization by supporting each beneficiary group with an ox plough has greatly increased sorghum, millet, and groundnut yields as a result of increased area under cultivation and encouragement. More households have indicated readiness to provide more oxen if supported with additional ox ploughs.

Wenje, Kenya– Holy Ghost Fathers (Spiritans)

Wenje is a semi-arid area characterized by scarce, erratic, and unreliable rainfall, resulting in persistent moisture stress and frequent prolonged droughts and flooding. The weather is hot and dry, especially during the dry seasons, and periodic flooding has exacerbated conditions. The prevalence of poverty among households is high.

- The involvement of local chiefs and village headmen in identifying poor and deserving households has proven effective. The selection of beneficiaries from eight villages, with a focus on at least three in each cohort, has greatly ensured that the most vulnerable households are included in the project. These villages, including Vukoni, Makere, Wenje Boji, Jamuhuri, Kipendi, Bububu, and Maromi, have all benefited, with at least three villages benefiting every year.
- The tendency toward donor dependency syndrome is evidently high, attributed to the approach used by other non-governmental organizations operating in the region. The project team has made significant efforts to instill a culture of commitment through their training and community forums, yielding fewer dropouts mid implementation.
- Strict enforcement of the Memorandum of Understanding established between ICSAP and households worked well in ensuring that households commit to implementing the project activities.

However, this approach may be fostering a sense of a contractual relationship rather than a beneficiary-driven approach to project implementation as noted during an FGD session.

- Training of households on sustainable agriculture concepts, improved cereal crop production methods, health and hygiene, small livestock management, establishment of group saving schemes, and agroforestry was completed as scheduled. Evidence of the adoption of these concepts at the household level varied. The establishment of group saving schemes and the installation of energy-saving Jikos at the household level was notably missing. The use of practical demonstrations and follow-up visits by the project officer to beneficiary households ensured that the concepts were implemented correctly.
- The establishment and management of kitchen gardens by beneficiary households have had moderate success, with water scarcity cited as the biggest challenge. Two out of the nine households visited had no vegetable crops in their kitchen gardens citing acute water challenges. Household's seasonal crops, mainly green grams, grown along the banks of River Tana have influenced the commitment of households to sustain the kitchen gardens, especially during the crop-growing seasons. Household members dedicate much of their time to the riverbanks during these seasons, continuously guarding the farms against invasion by wild animals.
- The issuance of water tanks to beneficiary households in an effort to address water challenges has yielded mixed results. While participants during FGD sessions indicated a reduced number of trips to the river and the ability to water their vegetables for longer periods, two out of the nine households visited had not utilized the tanks for the same purpose.
- The issuance of goats to households has been largely successful, with a few households from the 2023 cohort yet to receive their stock. High prices and limited availability of bucks for sale in the market are cited as the main challenges. This has also led to a reduction in the number of goats each household was to receive, from five to three, the majority of which are relatively younger, resulting in a longer waiting period before they mature for breeding.
- Engagement of households from villages far away from the River Tana, the only source of water during dry seasons, has not yielded good results and threatens the sustainability of kitchen gardens during those periods, despite promising results during wet seasons due to dependence on rainwater.

- Access to quality seeds for both issuance to households as part of input support and for the continuity of kitchen gardening beyond the ICSAP support phase was noted as a significant challenge.

Three of the nine households visited reported poor germination of seeds issued to them. Access to fruit seedlings equally poses a challenge, compounded by low survival rates.

- Households interviewed reported earning income from the sale of green vegetables largely during the wet season, which they used to purchase household food items. Others have sold goats to pay for school fees and medical expenses.
- Value addition especially through solar drying of vegetables during rainy seasons looks promising and should be explored.

Appendix II: List of Respondents from Beneficiary Households Interviewed

NAMES	Gender	Cohort	NAMES	Gender	Cohort
AKOL JAL, South Sudan			KAMAGUT		
1. Ayieda Wát	F	2021	1. Eunice Jelagat	F	2023
2. Nyadith	F	2021	2. Viola Kembai	F	2023
3. Mary Yom	F	2022	3. Rael Tutel	F	2021
4. Martha Adol	F	2023	4. Lenah Chelimo	F	2021
5. Nyanthok Marial	F	2023	5. Monicah Jebet	F	2021
THON ADUEL			BARAKA - LARE		
1 Elizabeth Yiar	F	2022	1. Jane Nyawera	F	2023
2 Hellena Amer	F	2021	2. Hannah Nlungu	F	2022
3 Mary ALuel	F	2022	3. Jullia Wanjiku	F	2021
4 Mary Yom	F	2022	4. Grace Wangeci	F	2022
5 Victoria Yar	F	2021	5. Teressiah Wairimu	F	2023
6 Susan Akoi	F	2021	6. Elizabeth Karanja	F	2022
TONJ			7. Susan Wangoi	F	2023
1. Monica Alek Akon	F	2022	8. Caroline Wangui	F	2022
2. Angelina Ding	F	2023	9. Martha Wanjiku	F	2021
3. Peninah Barnaba	F	2023	MUKONO		
4. Mary Awanyor	F	2022	1. Apendi Jane	F	2021
5. Mary Yar Deng	F	2022	2. Bukaya Fatuma	F	2022
6. Mary Machar	F	2021	3. Viola Nakitande	F	2023
KITALE			4. Achiro Kevin	F	2022
1 Eunice Nafula	F	2021	5. Getrude Namutembi	F	2022
2 Ann Nasimiyu	F	2021	6. Nambenga Mildred	F	2021
3 Suzzy Bakhoya	F	2022	ADRAA		
4 Gladys Waswa	F	2021	1 Nasiar Faidah	M	2023
5 Jane Nyongesa	F	2023	2 Abido Sande	M	2022
6 Samwel Wágulu	M	2023	3 Adam Richard	M	2023
WENJE			4 Adri James	M	2022
1 Issah Dhado	M	2021	5 Mary Avoko	F	2022
2 Martha Mavona	F	2021	6 Muru Florence	M	2021
3 Omar Hilbae	M	2023	7 Ondoru Paskal	F	2021
4 Asaph Abio Gafo	M	2021	8 Leti Alex	M	2021
5 Martha Murowa	F	2021	PABO		
6 Malibe Abio	M	2022	1 Abwoyo Grace	F	2022
7 Stella Mrooa	F	2022	2 Abalo Santa	F	2022
8 Ali Said Dhadho	M	2023	3 Akot Susan	F	2021
			4 Kamakech David	M	2021
			5 Angware Ngthy	F	2023
			6 Kamuke Sunday	M	2023
			7 Alex Bongomi	M	2021

Appendix III: List of ICSAP Personnel & Key Informants Interviewed

Name	Designation/Responsibility
1. Br Tony Dolan	Outgoing Chairperson of ICSAP SUMMIT
2. Mr. William Keya	CEO, ICSAP
3. Sr. Mary Holland	Outgoing Project manager – Kitale & Member of ICSAP Summit Board
4. Sr. Jane France Nalwanga	Project Manager– Mukono & Member of ICSAP Summit Board
5. Fr. Boniface Muema	Project Manager– Thon Aduel
6. Fr. Eric Simiyu	Project Manager – Akol Jal
7. Fr. Fredrick Wafula	Project Manager – Wenje & Member of ICSAP Summit Board
8. Sr. Dolores Alfonso	Project Manager - Bakhita-Tonj
9. Br. John Mwangi	Project Manager - Kamagut
10. Fr. Charles Lengu	Principal - Adraa Agricultural college
11. Mr. Kizito Onenchan	Project Manager_ Adraa
12. Ms. Proscovia Amariyo	Project Officer – Adraa
13. Mr. James Majang	Project Officer – Akol Jal
14. Ms Mary Emma Simiyu	Project Officer- Kitale
15. Mr. Doyo Ali Saidi	Project Officer – Wenje
16. Ms. Abigaël Chebor	Project Officer – Lare
17. Mr Simon Peter Loum	Project Officer – Pabo Gulu
18. Ms Anna Tuyett	Project Officer – Bakhita – Tonj
19. Sr. Mary Goreti	Project Officer- Mukono
20. Mr. Samwel Khosumba	Outgoing Project Officer- Kamagut
21. Mr. Joseph Ndirangu	Village Elder –Lare
22. Mr. Victor Arop	Project Manager – Gulu
23. Mr. Bazil Acaye	MSE officer – WACFO – Gulu

ICSAP

Franciscan Brothers Generalate,
P.O. Box 195, Baraka, Molo – Kenya
Phone: (+254) 720 101 045; 769 075 830

info@icsap.africa; ceo@icsap.africa; programcoordinator@icsap.africa; icsap2016@gmail.com