Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Activity: KAM - GROWTH (25-0001372)

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Key data

Activity basics

Type	Standard
Short name	KAM - GROWTH
Contract party	Technoserve, Inc. (30046172)
ODA	Yes
Amount EUR	13000000
Start date	01-12-2025
End date	30-11-2030
Full name	Growing Resilience and Opportunities for Wealth Through Horticulture (GROWTH)
Summary	

Activity details

Date of receipt of proposal	21-11-2025
Proposal's reference number	MINBUZA-2025.2684324
Budget holder	Ambassade Kampala (8221KAM)
Limit access	No
Related activity	10/01/1067 00:00:00

Accounting data

SAP application number	
Funds center	KAM UG Food security contribution (1702U01010009)

Policy data

Cooperation modality	Project support
Technical assistance	Between 10% (inclusive.) and 25% (exclusive) of the activity budget
CRS code	31161 Food crop production
Policy Keywords	
Refugees & host communities	No
Team Europe Initiative	No
Policy Markers	
__Trade & The Economy	Principal
_Security & Stability	Significant
Biodiversity	Not targeted
Climate change: adaptation	Significant
Climate change: mitigation	Not targeted
Desertification	Not targeted
Equality between men & women	Significant
Migration	Not targeted
Food security	Principal
Integrated water management	Significant
Market access	Significant
Market development	Significant
Private sector development	Significant
Explain your choices	GROWTH contributes directly to national and bilateral goals for a resilient, inclusive, and market-oriented horticulture sector that delivers sustainable food security and economic transformation. The activity works directly with smallholder farmers, farmer organizations, and agri-SMEs to deliver bundled services, strengthen governance, and improve access to finance and markets for hort It embeds gender-transformative approaches that promote equitable benefit sharing, women-led learning groups, and gender-responsive governance in farmer organizations. It fosters partnerships between Dutch and Ugandan enterprises across key areas such as seed systems, water management, cold chain infrastructure, and certification services. These collaborations leverage Dutch expertise to introduce innovative, cost-effective technologies that improve competitiveness while contributing to shared prosperity. In doing so, it addresses strategic interests of trade and the economy, security and stability.

Beneficiary location

Beneficiary location	Country
Country	Uganda
Location type	Territory
Specific location	Across the Kigezi, Elgon and Busoga regions plus the districts of Mukono and Kayunga in Buganda, sub-region.

Policy Appraisal

Policy relevance

- **What policy objectives, as set out in the annual plan, policy notes etc., will this activity contribute to?**

The activity (GROWTH) is designed in close alignment with the policy priorities of both the Government of Uganda and the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The program contributes directly to national and bilateral goals for a resilient, inclusive, and market-oriented horticulture sector that delivers sustainable food security and economic transformation. Uganda is currently the second largest producer of fresh fruits and vegetables in sub-Saharan Africa after Nigeria, producing about 5.3 million tons per year.

The activity reflects the priorities of the Netherlands' 2025 Policy Letter on International Development, which calls for stronger linkages between aid, trade, and investment. GROWTH operationalizes this vision by fostering partnerships between Dutch and Ugandan enterprises across key areas in the horticultural value chain such as seed systems, water management, cold chain infrastructure, certification services and market access. These collaborations leverage Dutch expertise to introduce innovative, cost-effective technologies that improve competitiveness while contributing to shared prosperity. In doing so, the program advances the Netherlands' two strategic interests, trade and the economy, security and stability, by promoting rural employment, strengthening food systems, and inclusive economic growth. By linking smallholder empowerment with private sector innovation, the program delivers on both governments' vision of a productive, resilient, and inclusive horticulture sector that drives long-term economic opportunity and food security. GROWTH activity will therefore provide bundled services that address productivity, post-harvest, financial and market gaps in the horticulture value chains, while enhancing (Dutch) partnerships that will facilitate better access to inputs, improve production processes and enhance access to markets.

At the national level, GROWTH supports Uganda's Vision 2040 and Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV), which identify agriculture as a cornerstone of industrialization and inclusive growth. The fourth National Development Plan (2025/26-2029/30) aims to accelerate Uganda's socioeconomic transition by promoting Sustainable Industrialization for Inclusive Growth, Employment, and Wealth Creation. Specifically for the agricultural sector, the plan targets enhancing value addition, production, and competitiveness for domestic and export markets. It promotes specialized extension services, integration of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), strengthening farmers' field schools and cooperatives, de-risking agro-industry, removing counterfeit agro-inputs, and improving legal and institutional frameworks to deal with regulatory and policy induced market distortions.

The GROWTH activity aligns with and contributes to the NDPIV by strengthening smallholder participation in commercial horticulture through building productive, financially viable, and climate-resilient farming systems. Through investments in farmer organizations, small and medium enterprises, and savings and credit cooperatives, GROWTH advances the objectives of the Agro-Industrialization Programme and the Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan (2025/26–2029/30)—improving productivity, reducing post-harvest losses, promoting value addition, and expanding access to profitable markets for the horticultural sector. In doing so, the GROWTH program contributes to Uganda's broader commitment to create jobs, increase household incomes, and enhance food and nutrition security.

The GROWTH proposal demonstrates strong alignment with the EKN's Multi-Annual Country Strategy (MACS) for Uganda (2026-2029), particularly under the thematic areas of Trade & Economy and Food Security & Health.

Trade & Economy (Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, enhancing access to finance for agri-MSMEs, promoting trade) : High Alignment: GROWTH aims to enable 100,000 SHFs to increase their incomes, and promote "sustainable and inclusive economic growth". The project is designed to equip market oriented SHFs with the tools and connections to operate profitably; improve their "productivity", which directly translates to improved performance of the SME; The project uses the "EFFORT" approach to build long-term sustainability and foster local ownership, ensuring the performance improvement is sustainable. It focuses on strengthening market linkages across domestic and regional trade and explicitly seeks to expand access to affordable finance for FOs, SACCOs, and agri-SMEs (MSMEs). The project also supports the Netherlands' goal to connect aid and trade by facilitating Dutch-Ugandan business partnerships (e.g., in irrigation, seed innovations, cold chain).

Food Security & Health (A programmatic priority): High Alignment: MACS notes that a large percentage of the population cannot afford a healthy diet, leading to high rates of stunting and anemia. GROWTH directly contributes to food and nutrition security by focusing on horticulture (fresh fruits and vegetables), aiming to reduce post-harvest losses, and strengthening compliance with food safety standards.

Sustainable Land Use / Climate Adaptation : Direct Alignment: The MACS pursues sustainable and inclusive economic growth. GROWTH is focused on "Growing Resilience" and contributes to climate adaptation and sustainable land use by accelerating the adoption of climate-smart practices.

The MACS asserts that Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) thematic area is a cornerstone for all interest areas and the activity directly ties with thematic area.

Further, the activity reflects the EKN- IGG ambition which places smallholder agriculture, sustainable land use, and climate resilience at the center of cooperation. The program's participatory approaches, PIP and EFFORT, embody the MACS principle

of empowering farmers to define and lead their own development priorities. These approaches enable smallholder farmers to increase productivity, strengthen resilience to climate and market shocks, and enhance food security within their communities. By integrating climate-smart technologies, irrigation systems, and regenerative agriculture, GROWTH reinforces commitments to sustainable land management and adaptation to climate change. The project is complementary to the other embassy funded FNS projects

Rationale

- **What issue/problem will be addressed by the activity**

GROWTH project clearly defines the core problem: The Ugandan horticulture sector is at a "tipping point", but most Smallholder Farmers (SHFs) are unorganized, lack knowledge, capital, and bargaining power, and cannot meet market quality/volume requirements.

Despite strong potential, Uganda's horticulture sector continues to be characterized by market inefficiencies that limit SHFs' participation and profitability. These inefficiencies stem from interconnected structural, institutional, and behavioral weaknesses across input, output, finance, and governance systems.

The problem analysis is further broken down into five distinct, clear challenges: 1) Low productivity and poor adoption of practices due to input/knowledge constraints and climate change; 2) Weak market linkages/fragmentation; 3) Inadequate access to tailored finance, with products unsuited to the seasonality and risk of horticulture; 4) Poor food safety practices; and 5) Entrenched socio-political power imbalances, elite capture, and gender norms.

- **Why does the activity help to address the issue/problem?**

GROWTH aims to improve the performance, sustainability, and resilience of smallholder horticulture farming systems in the Kigezi, Busoga, parts of Buganda, and Elgon sub-regions of Uganda. The program envisions market-oriented SHFs engaging in inclusive, competitive, and climate-smart horticulture value chains that support increased incomes, improved household food security and nutrition, enhanced local job creation, and greater resilience to market and climate shocks.

At the heart of this approach is the belief that when farmers define their own vision of success and are supported by farmer organizations that are responsive, inclusive, and professionally managed, they are more likely to make informed, future-oriented investments in their farms and livelihoods. When these visions are supported by improved access to knowledge, inputs, finance, services, and inclusive market opportunities, then they can transition to productive, profitable, and sustainable systems that create lasting value for their households and communities.

Core components/outcomes of the project: GROWTH is structured around three core components:

1. **Market-oriented smallholder horticulture farmers improve productivity of safe food by adopting climate-smart gap practices, inputs, and technologies.** Under this component, GROWTH will support SHFs to adopt climate-smart practices and improve productivity and quality, through stronger FO governance and financial management, enhanced production knowledge and capacity, and greater access to inputs and technologies. Component 1 is the cornerstone of GROWTH. Building on the farmer-centered participatory planning process (PIP/EFFORT), this component goes beyond traditional training to facilitate farmers' direct access to productivity-enhancing technologies, inputs, and services.
2. **Market-oriented smallholder horticulture farmers increase food safety and sales volumes and value of horticulture products through new and expanded relationships with farmer organizations and agri-buyers improving access to high-value markets by meeting required quality and food safety standards.** Through Component 2 activities, GROWTH will address this through two pathways: 1) strengthening FO capacity to aggregate, negotiate, and meet market demand while investing in first-stage post-harvest handling, quality, and food safety assets and services, and 2) building stronger linkages with agri-SMEs like aggregators, processors, and exporters, which will invest in more advanced processing and value addition. Component 2 capitalizes on the productivity gains and improved quality achieved under Component 1 by strengthening FOs as business entities and linking them to reliable markets. Improved post-harvest handling, aggregation hubs, and buyer partnerships translate the on-farm productivity improvements into higher incomes and reduced losses.
3. **Market-oriented smallholder horticulture farmers, farmer organizations and agri-SMEs access appropriate and affordable financial products and services.** This component 3 underpins Components 1 and 2 by ensuring that the farmers, FOs, and SMEs have the financial systems, products, and governance capacities to sustain investments in improved productivity and market participation. Strengthened SACCOs, de-risked lending products, and blended-finance mechanisms enable producers to access the inputs, equipment, and working capital introduced in Component 1. Through Component 3 activities, GROWTH will address capital constraints by strengthening the supply of horticulture-specific financial products, including risk mitigation products (e.g., insurance and guarantees), and improving demand and repayment capacity of borrowers

All these are underpinned by the PIP and EFFORT plans that increase farmer empowerment, inclusion and engagement in FOs. From our assessment, generally the proposed program components/outcomes are based on sound logic, are relevant, feasible and implementable.

However, the participatory approaches (PIP and EFFORT) need to be fully developed and integrated in the project to improve the added value of the project interventions. There is need to capture information/context analysis on the situation of farmer groups and others (youths, women etc) during inception phase so that GROWTH activities and interventions can align with it.
We further observe that under component 1: *Market-oriented smallholder horticulture farmers improve productivity of safe food by adopting climate-smart gap practices, inputs, and technologies,* the proposed activities and interventions that lead to improved productivity need further elaboration/attention. Productivity improvement component is core and foundation for the subsequent components of the project and it should be given adequate attention. The main proposed intervention(s) in GROWTH for improving productivity appear(s) to be provision of training and extension /knowledge services. The other interventions for improving productivity (access to inputs, technologies, appropriate equipment and services (eg soil health, water,) are weakly presented/elaborated. There have been so many projects (previously) focusing on training/capacity building of FOs in the past. What else should be done beyond training? Of course, all the above, needs to be based on the outcomes of the PIP and EFFORT at household, community and farmer organisation level.
Strategies for last mile solutions for enhancing access to quality inputs, soil testing, transportation, value addition, green housing, (cold chain) storage, value addition etc are mentioned but not well elaborated. It is important to note that HortiMAP has done some previous work on some of these aspects. It would be good if GROWTH project elaborated how it will build on these HortiMAP achievements/experiences/lessons.
Additionally, strategies and activities for boosting water for production/irrigation to increase productivity are weakly elaborated. Integrating water (especially irrigation development) in the project is considered critical and an important added value to address climate change effects, thus improving horticulture productivity. This is important given the fact that in the context analysis, the proposal states that in the past five years alone, SHF productivity has reportedly declined by 40% to 60% due to climatic shocks. In this light the proposed response to climate related risks should be given good attention.
The activities to promote food safety are mainly at the level of producers and FO/SME. This is not likely to have impact if the demand is not there. In other words, demand creation for the local market (of safe foods) is not sufficiently clear in the proposal. The project proposal needs to strengthen this. During the inception phase, there is need to collect more information on who are the consumers of what product? How is the demand for safe foods stimulated? Who will buy safer products against a higher price? How is inclusion really guaranteed. All these observations will be captured and addressed during the inception phase period.
Theory of Change (ToC):
The ToC's central belief is that when farmers define their own vision of success (via EFFORT plans) and are supported by responsive, inclusive, and professional Farmer Organizations (FOs), they will make informed, long-term investments. This process is then reinforced by improved access to knowledge, inputs, finance, and markets, leading to profitable and sustainable systems.
The ToC is presented using a detailed if-and-if-then structure as follows:
If farmers' agency is strengthened and their visions and plans are actively integrated into the business models, investment decisions, and service offerings of FOs, market actors, and supporting institutions;
And **if** farmer organizations are equipped to provide responsive, high-quality training, inputs, and services—backed by inclusive governance, business planning, and sound financial management;
And **if** agri-SMEs expand local processing, value addition, and post-harvest services in alignment with market demand and farmer supply;
And **if** SACCOs and FIs offer accessible, tailored products, and farmers and agri-SMEs are equipped to use them effectively;
And **if** demand for safe and nutritious food continues to grow, supported by stronger consumer awareness and adoption of food safety practices;
Then farmers will adopt climate-smart horticultural practices that improve productivity, reduce post-harvest losses, meet market and food safety standards, and increase their access to finance and profitable markets.
Over time, these interconnected shifts will create more competitive, inclusive, and resilient horticulture value chains. Smallholder farmers will then earn higher and more stable incomes, rural enterprises will grow, access to safe and nutritious food will expand, and communities will become better equipped to withstand environmental, economic, and social shocks. This transformation will be driven by farmers, responsive to market demand, and supported by systems, grounded in the belief that resilient communities begin with producers whose aspirations help shape the markets around them.
The Objectives : The overarching objective is to enable 100,000 SHFs to increase their incomes through improved productivity, better access to finance, and stronger market linkages.
The proposal specifies four primary objectives/areas of connection for the SHFs: 1) Increase productivity and reduce post-harvest losses; 2) Access high-value domestic and regional markets; 3) Access appropriate finance; and 4) Improve adoption of quality and food safety practices.
Expected Outcomes : The ultimate vision is for market-oriented SHFs to engage in inclusive, competitive, and climate-smart horticulture value chains, which in turn leads to increased incomes, improved household food security/nutrition, job creation, and greater resilience to shocks. The program aims to improve the overall performance, sustainability, and resilience of smallholder farming systems.

The Results Framework : The Results Framework is explicitly part of the proposal's structure and includes a Logical Framework (referenced as Figure 4) and Example Indicators and life-of-project targets (referenced as Table 9). This structure indicates a formal framework is in place for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL).
Grants: The project strategy should be on access to finance through credit in order to enhance sustainability and replicability of the results; so, credit will be promoted to enhance investments in horticulture value chain. We therefore expect the project to minimally use grants, only where very specific circumstances would justify and where credit is not feasible. · The strategy for (minimal) grants needs to be well developed/refined and will require an approval by EKN.

Contextual analysis

- **Who is/are the target group(s) and why?**

Market-oriented smallholder farmers: The principal target are the market-oriented smallholder farmers (SHFs). and their organizations (FOs, SACCOs and Cooperatives)**.** SHFs represent 70% of Ugandan agriculture sector, with 3.5 million smallholder family farms. Despite the sector's $15.4 billion annual contribution to the economy, SHFs earn an average of $240 annually, compared to $700 for larger producers. Smallholders also face severe knowledge and resource constraints. Average farm size is just 1.3 hectares, with two-thirds of farmers cultivating less than one hectare. Adoption of improved practices is low. Many SHFs also experience structural exclusion, limiting their power in markets. In Busoga, for example, powerful market masters determine who can sell at local markets, often favoring larger vendors or loyal members of market associations. In Buyende, key aggregators and processors are located outside the district (e.g., in Kamuli or Kampala), shifting price-setting power away from producers. In Kamuli, sugarcane expansion, driven by large land leases to external investors, has displaced food production and intensified family conflict over cash advances, further weakening smallholder bargaining power and land security. Women farmers, despite their central role in horticulture, are particularly constrained by social norms that limit their mobility, decision-making, and participation in marketing and leadership roles. In some households, women cannot travel after dark, control income, or be seen engaging in certain tasks like pesticide spraying—undermining their capacity to fully engage in commercial horticulture.
Other targets include Farmer organizations, SACCOs, and agri-SMEs (input providers, processors, and other service providers) who play a crucial role in creating an inclusive horticulture sector.
As such, GROWTH will work directly with 100,000 SHF and their representative FOs and SACCOs. To reach this target, the project intends to work with approximately 400 FOs (both formal and informal), including 50 cooperatives and 50 SACCOs. Although the project intends to reach directly 100,000 SHFs, it does not however, mention how the indirectly reached beneficiaries will be measured/documented. Also, the proposal needs to describe the distinction between "reach", and "intensive support" to avoid misalignment of interventions. Further, during the inception phase, the project needs to include a strategy on how it will deepen and scale out its activities/interventions in all the regions and within districts (in the respective regions) to minimize the risk of diluting the quality of support provided.
Who are the other main stakeholders?
Consortium Partners (GROWTH Project): TechnoServe will collaborate with Agriterra, WSER, and PCP, each partner bringing a clearly defined role aligned to their comparative advantage, ensuring minimal overlap and maximum value for resources invested. The streamlined structure will enable rapid decision-making and strong delivery. Together, they will deliver all training and mentor farmer organizations, SACCOs, and agri-SMEs directly through project staff. Activities requiring highly specialized expertise unavailable on the GROWTH team will be subcontracted selectively. TechnoServe will ensure efficient, responsive, and compliant program management, provide expertise in climate-smart horticulture production and marketing support to SHFs, FOs, and agri-SMEs. Agriterra will lead the geographic selection of districts and corresponding FOs and SACCOs and conduct subsequent assessments to determine tailored support packages for each organization. Agriterra will also support TechnoServe with adapting the GROWTH EFFORT process during inception. Agriterra will then be responsible for rolling out EFFORT implementation with strategic oversight of short-term expert support from WSER.
WUR/WESR will take the lead in the adaptation of the PIP and EFFORT approaches and include lessons from other EKN projects. It is important to note that WSER already works with the Agriterra and UCA to implement the FORT project with the EFFORT approach (integrates PIP and EFFORT). The consortium will coordinate and collaborate with PCP through a strategic partnership to strengthen and expand the HCL with participating SACCOs, enabling them to provide credit and equity to horticulture SHFs, FOs, and agri-SMEs. PCP will be contracted directly by EKN.
Other EKN funded programs: TechnoServe will strategically coordinate and build upon interventions from other EKN-funded programs to create synergies and reduce duplication
Producer Organizations / Farmer Associations and SMEs: GROWTH will support FOs and agri-SMEs to finance new investments in practices and technologies primarily through debt or equity from SACCOs or other FIs. Therefore, GROWTH will establish strategic, market-oriented partnerships with commercial actors and FIs through MOUs and will sign or amend MOUs with local district governments to align with the GOU priorities.
Relevant Government departments and programs: TechnoServe will work closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), The Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS), and The Uganda Export Promotion Board (UEPB) to strengthen export certification, SPS enforcement, and market standards. The collaborations with UNBS will help to certify companies & products and simplify SME compliance procedures.

The project will engage with district local governments to institutionalize local food safety ordinances. Local government extension agents will be integrated to ensure alignment with GOU systems.
Research institutions (NARO and Makerere University: GROWTH will partner with research and knowledge institutions to strengthen on-farm diagnostics, pilot a tiered soil and water testing approach, laboratory testing support and training.
Private sector actors: The project will work and build stronger linkages with relevant private sectors in the horticultural value chain including : agri-SMEs like aggregators, processors, and exporters, which will invest in more advanced processing and value addition. The project will engage input suppliers such as East-West Seed, Syngenta, Holland GreenTech, and irrigation technology providers to strengthen linkages to the FOs. GROWTH project will collaborate with Food Safety Associates and Rikolto to strengthen vendor capacity and advocate for basic safe food tools and technologies. TechnoServe will also work with private suppliers to design last-mile distribution models that are identified as a needed through EFFORT approach.
Financial service providers: In partnership with the strategic partner Pearl Capital Partners (PCP), GROWTH will leverage an expanded the HCL to capitalize SACCOs, while linking commercially oriented FOs and market actors to financing through banks, (such as Equity Bank or Centenary Banks) MFIs, and FinTechs.

To what extent have stakeholders been involved in formulating the proposal?
There was extensive consultation with different stakeholders during the preparation and design of the GROWTH proposal. . Physical and virtual meetings were conducted with smallholder farmers, EKN funded projects, private sector, knowledge institutions, government institutions and farmer organizations/cooperatives in the target regions, and their interests, needs, perspectives and relevant lessons have been incorporated into the project. Further, a close out event for the HortiMAP project was used as another opportunity to identifyiand capture new ideas, opportunities, challenges, gaps, interests/ambitions etc in the horti sector from the different stakeholders that attended the event (including private sector, government, civil society, knowledge institutions etc). The event was attended by about 100 stakeholders in the horticulture value chains.

- **Is the intervention aimed at a specific geographical location, and if so, why?**

The project will be implemented in the regions of Elgon, Kigezi and Busoga including Mukono and Kayunga districts. These are the same regions where some Dutch funded food security projects (such as BRIGHT, CommonGround, INSPIRE, FORT, AGRIP and PCP) operate to allow for greater collaboration, impact, synergies and sharing of lessons/best practices. However, each of these regions is composed of several districts.
To prioritize and select target districts, the project will follow following criteria: 1) suitability of horticulture production based on soil, climate, and access to water; 2) opportunities to complement, but not duplicate, existing and previous donor efforts but avoid oversaturation and farmer fatigue; and 3) new areas underserved by donors.
TechnoServe will strategically coordinate and build upon interventions from other EKN-funded programs to create synergies and reduce duplication. When selecting districts and corresponding FOs and SACCOs, the project will take into consideration how it can leverage and build on existing work conducted by EKN projects, such as amending existing PIPs to incorporate horticulture goals and action plans under the PIP approach and focusing EFFORT on horticulture related FOs
The project has included some activities that have a national scope. For example, under the food safety campaigns, the project will promote safe food days," and school cooking demos; adopt branding/labeling that distinguishes safer produce; partner with supermarkets, schools, restaurants, and hospitals; and amplify messages via radio, community groups, and market demos. However, it is not clear how the targeted numbers (indirectly) reached under these activities will be documented.

Added value

- **What is the added value of the Dutch government being involved in relation to other donors, the EU, NGOs and local authorities?**

Through its Food Security and Nutrition portfolio, the Netherlands embassy in Uganda has made considerable investment in agriculture development and is recognized as a key donor in Uganda. Additionally, the Netherlands excels in the research and development of high value varieties of seeds (vegetables and potato) and is the global leader in the trade of horticulture technologies and innovations such as seed, irrigation, green houses, pests/disease biological controls etc. The Dutch horticulture continues to innovate and lead the way technologically. Hence, it has a lot to offer. This activity, therefore, provides unique platform and opportunity to connect Dutch innovation in horticulture seed technology, greenhouse cultivation, irrigation, machinery, knowledge, and sustainable farming practices with Uganda's rapidly evolving horticulture sector. This will further allow them to become serious partners in supply chains, and thereby also create business opportunities for companies, traders and retailers.
Another value addition is the integration of participatory approaches such as PIP/EFFORT into the Dutch funded programs which will provide lessons to other donors, organizations and government.

- **Are the recipients making an own contribution or co-participating in the activity, and if so, to what extent?**

The costs of all activities and support have been budgeted and will be paid for by the embassy. So own contribution from Technoserve or its consortium partners is not foreseen. In case of grants for innovative solutions, the beneficiaries will make a contribution to the costs involved. Additionally, the beneficiaries will create the time required to participate in the training and other capacity building activities, provide land where variety trials could be piloted, manage demonstration plots, and contribute their own resources to procures agri-inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and agri-chemicals.

Lessons learned

- **What lessons learned (from previous or comparable activities, published evaluations, relevant publications) will be addressed by the activity?**

With support from Netherlands embassy, Technoserve implemented the HortiMAP project (2020 -2024) and it achieved measurable results but also generated critical lessons that inform the design of GROWTH. The following broader lessons and innovations from HortiMAP have shaped the design and key adaptations for the GROWTH project:

1. Aligning loan repayment schedules with seasonal income cycles improved both access to and demand for credit. However, limited gains in financial literacy and recordkeeping—from 3% to 11%—indicate continued need for farmer business training to expand financial inclusion.
2. Market access barriers, such as middlemen dominance and low export engagement (only 17% of SHFs), revealed the need for deeper market integration and stronger farmer and agri-SME organizations. GROWTH has been designed to strengthen Uganda's emerging horticulture industry by applying a direct delivery methodology that responds to key market gaps identified under HortiMAP
3. While bundled services and productivity gains were strong, overlapping grant mechanisms sometimes distorted market incentives. GROWTH addresses this by consolidating financial support and channeling investments through formal institutions, strengthening SACCOs and digitizing VSLAs for sustainable agri-finance.
4. Recognizing that weak farmer organization governance limited-service delivery, GROWTH employs the EFFORT model to professionalize farmer groups through inclusive governance, business planning, and digital systems.
5. To address limited export market participation, GROWTH focuses on domestic market integration by linking farmers with processors and buyers and investing in aggregation hubs with improved post-harvest and food safety systems. Low adoption of climate-smart technologies prompted the inclusion of region-specific climate risk assessments and agri-tech partnerships for affordable digital and mechanized solutions.
6. While HortiMAP improved women's engagement, it also revealed persistent gender disparities. GROWTH embeds gender-transformative approaches that promote equitable benefit sharing, women-led learning groups, and gender-responsive governance in farmer organizations

Durability

- **How will the results of the activity be sustained after its end date? What is the exit-strategy?**

GROWTH's sustainability strategy is guided by the principle of defining exit strategies for every tailored activity with market actors.

- By beginning with PIP community plans and EFFORT FO member plans, the project will ensure farmer buy-in and ownership of activities from the start.
- Building capacity and linking farmers to markets then strengthens sustainability through lasting commercial relationships and reduced reliance on external support.
- The project has embedded in a Local Ownership and Exit Strategy: Sustainability is grounded in the farmer-led approach. The design is intended to "ensure investments... are embedded in sustainable systems that continue beyond the program period". Exit strategies will be incorporated into Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with local governments, including embedding training and extension into government systems where possible.
- The project will form market-oriented partnerships to deliver technical assistance (TA), drive behavior change, and promote long-term sustainability through improved access to capital.
- Working with local and international market actors—including Dutch businesses like Holland Green Tech and East-West Seeds—the project will strengthen commercial linkages and build trust-based relationships reinforced by incentives that encourage lasting change.
- From the outset and with agreement from our partner market actors, activities emerging from FO-based EFFORT plans will be designed to embed additional key sustainability levers so that FOs, SACCOs, agri-SMEs, and local governments continue thriving beyond the project life cycle.
- The project pays attention to Market-Driven Financial Sustainability. It emphasizes strengthening the financial ecosystem and reducing grant reliance. FOs and agri-SMEs will primarily finance new practices and technologies through loans or equity from financial institutions. Performance-based grants will be used "sparingly," requiring grantees to demonstrate additionality and contribute at least 50% co-investment
- Another strategy for sustainability is building and strengthening the local capacity. The project will apply a phased sustainability and exit roadmap for each activity or partnership, designed to strengthen local ownership while maintaining continuous implementation across the project's five years. Each activity will follow a time-bound pathway for gradually reducing external support and transferring responsibility to local actors. This phased approach ensures that while individual activities mature and local actors assume ownership, GROWTH continues active, uninterrupted implementation across all components through the project period, securing sustained impact beyond the project's duration.

- The project works to establish peer-to-peer learning networks to reduce long-term reliance on external trainers and strengthens FOs to deliver their own climate-smart extension and price information services.

However, we observe some weaknesses on sustainability. For example, the sustainability strategy depends on embedding and integrating training and extension services into local government budgets and performance plans. During the national budgeting processes, the government provides inadequate funding to local governments for supporting agricultural activities (through MAAIF and public service). This strategy is also vulnerable to GoU policy shifts and the central government's increasing consolidation of power. While aligning with local government systems is positive, macro-level political trends in Uganda show a shift toward a more army/security control and centralized governance model and elite consolidation (MACS context). Our experience with Result based Financing model through CORDAID is still struggling (but could offer good lessons). Therefore, relying on local government decentralized budgets for sustainability may prove to be challenging.

Reliance on External Financial Mechanisms : The plan to expand access to finance leans heavily on leveraging the Horticulture Credit Line (HCL) and other risk-mitigation products. The HCL is a critical, potentially external financing mechanism. The proposal details a focus on strengthening the demand side (SHF financial literacy, FOs' capacity) but the long-term, post-project financial structure that will replace the HCL and other donor-backed instruments is not fully detailed, risking a financing gap at the end of the project.

High-Risk Financial Environment : The core problem analysis notes that horticulture creates highly variable seasonal cash flow needs, making traditional short-term loans from SACCOs and FIs ill-suited. The proposal aims to fix this through innovative products (insurance, guarantees), but without a stronger commitment from local FIs or a permanent national risk-sharing facility, the project risks becoming the primary de-risking agent, and repayments may falter once project support is withdrawn.

Gender

- **Does the proposal include a gender analysis? If yes, what are the main outcomes? If no, why not?**

Yes, the project gives attention to gender aspects. GROWTH project will build on lessons from HortiMAP project on the gender aspects. Additionally, it will build a gender approach (based on PIP/EFFORT aspirations) to ensure that GROWTH meaningfully addresses the needs, priorities, and contributions of women, men, and youth throughout implementation. For example, the PIP and EFFORT approaches are designed to empower marginalized groups (PIP using the community as entry point, EFFORT using the FO as entry point). Within the PIP process, the project will apply a gender-responsive approach to ensure the deliberate selection and engagement of women, men, and youth farmers, capturing their distinct perspectives in household and community visioning

While the focus on and inclusion of smallholder farmers is well elaborated, the description of the approach and key activities does not specify how inclusion of women farmers, youths and/or vendors will be secured as part of the gender intervention logic. Gender sensitive analysis is missing. Specific interventions that address inclusion (for youths and women) are not well elaborated. It should be noted that social inclusion aspects are beyond youth and women.

During the inception phase, the project will conduct a Political Economy Analysis (PEA) to further identify systemic bottlenecks caused by unequal power dynamics in each targeted FO and SACCO environment. In addition, the project will conduct a gender analysis to better understand and address the specific needs, constraints, and aspirations of women, men, and youth so that project results are inclusive and transformative. Sex- and age-disaggregated data will be integrated into all core assessments.

All these studies and analyses will be used to develop a gender and youth action plan which will be used to guide our implementation and monitoring approaches to ensure women and young people will have equitable opportunities to benefit. The action plan will detail strategies to reach and benefit women and youth smallholders and women- and youth-led businesses and organizations.

The gender strategy should go beyond participation of women; it should also target the increase and involvement of women-led farmer organisations and companies. An indicator has to be integrated in the results-framework.

- **Does the proposal justify the target group's gender-specific interests and needs (and why)? Please explain.**

Yes. Women farmers, despite their central role in horticulture, are particularly constrained by social norms that limit their mobility, decision-making, and participation in marketing and leadership roles. Many women experience structural exclusion, limiting their power in markets. In some households, women cannot travel after dark, control income, or be seen engaging in certain tasks like pesticide spraying—undermining their capacity to fully engage in commercial horticulture.

- **Have women and young people been included in the stakeholder analysis? Please explain.**

Prior to the project design, a consultative process was carried out by Technoserve to seek views, needs, interests and perspectives of various stakeholders including women and youths. During the Q@E sessions, a woman (gender expert) and a youth representative) were included in the Q@E team composition to further pay attention to women and youth issues. Observations and views have been incorporated into the GROWTH project. However, during the inception phase, a detailed study (PEA and Gender analysis) will be done to further elicit their views.

Climate change

- **Does the proposal include an analysis of the possible effects of climate change on the activity or its results?**
- **the activity or its results?**

Yes. The proposal highlights climate change events (flooding, drought, extreme heat) as one of the key risks impacting crop productivity. In the context analysis, the proposal states that in the past five years alone, SHF productivity has reportedly declined by 40% to 60% due to climatic shocks.

- **Does the proposal include any interventions to combat these effects (adaptation/mitigation)?**

The proposal has presented adaptation (not mitigation) interventions to address effects of climate change. The adaptation measures include promoting climate-smart practices (irrigation, soil/water conservation, climate-resilient varieties); expand access to microinsurance; establish demonstration sites for adaptive practices; coordinate with early warning systems. Explore resilience building activities through other activities or in connection to household PIPs. Recognizing the high-water intensity of horticulture, GROWTH identifies a range of water-related solutions to sustainably improve productivity.

Cooperation, harmonization and alignment

- **Does the activity involve cooperation with Dutch organizations, the EU or other donors (including delegated cooperation), local organizations or other parties? How does the activity contribute to harmonization and/or multi-donor financing?**

Two Dutch organizations are part of the implementing consortium. GROWTH will be implemented by Technoserve in partnership with Dutch organizations - Agriterra and Wangeningen University (WUR). It will also work with Dutch private sector and knowledge institutions such as Agriterra, Syngenta Seed BV; Home Harvest (Bakkar Brothers); Dutch Seed Centre; Hollanda Greentech; Real IPM; Agricado Farms; House of Seeds; Simlaw Seeds etc .

At local level, the project will work with farmer organizations, cooperatives, SACCOs and relevant agri-SME's. While the link to businesses is well aligned, the mechanism for working with the private sector (both local and Dutch) is less developed. During the inception phase, the project needs to explain how to stimulate collaboration with both the local and the (Dutch) private sector. The project will seek further alignment and complementarity with other donors in the horticulture sector during implementation,

As GROWTH will be implemented in the same regions where other embassy funded FNS projects are already operating, it will align with them.

In terms of financing, the Netherlands embassy is a sole funder for the GROWTH project. Currently there are no concerted efforts in the horticulture sector that supports basket funding (multi-donor funding). No delegated funding and no other donors are involved in this project; however, the project will continue to explore any relevant donor initiatives during project implementation. In case other donors are identified by Technoserve to support the project, this will be done in consultation with the embassy.

- **What is the degree of (policy and financial) alignment?**

The project is well aligned with relevant government policies and programs in the horticulture sector development including the National Development (NDPIV). Further policy alignment is assured through active collaboration with the responsible government agency, which is the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF). MAAIF is interested in Policy and regulation, product quality and safety, trade and investment, and quality assurance.

Financial alignment, the project will pilot innovative approaches like agricultural insurance schemes and cash-flow-based lending. It will also support the digitization of SACCOs to reduce costs and improve transparency, while improving SHF financial literacy to create "responsible and bankable borrowers". It will thus explore linkages with financial service providers (including commercial banks, MFIs, insurance companies and credit guarantee schemes.).

Digitalisation

- **Have proposed digital technologies been developed or chosen in collaboration with end-users? donors (including delegated cooperation), local organisations or other parties?**

Yes. TechnoServe's standard technology stack will be deployed to ensure efficient, accurate, and secure data management. For mobile data collection, the program will use AppSheet for flexible, no-code development of tools to collect, manage, and store relational data, providing project teams with greater visibility and control over day-to-day monitoring information. All collected data will be integrated and stored in BigQuery, Google's analytics-ready data warehouse, which allows seamless integration across different systems and formats. Finally, Looker Studio will provide dynamic dashboards and data visualizations, enabling program managers and partners to monitor performance, track disaggregated results, and identify trends in near real time. Together, this stack will enhance transparency, reduce reporting burdens, and support adaptive management.

GROWTH will support FOs and agri-SMEs to finance new investments in practices and technologies primarily through debt or equity from SACCOs or other FIs. It plans to work with Fintechs in the provision of financial services, The project will develop literacy- and numeracy-friendly training materials (visuals, local languages) to ensure low-literacy groups aren't excluded, which can be incorporated into the EFFORT approach. Further, the project will support digitization for financial and marketing systems to increase efficiency, transparency, and member access in SACCOs and cooperatives. It will ensure that farmers have ongoing access to evolving extension information, technology, and markets.

Based on SHF-articulated visions and as market actors adopt practices and technologies, the project support will evolve to meet their needs, ensuring lasting growth across the horticulture sector.

- **Does the proposal include an analysis of the local digital ecosystem?**

There is no specific digital technology analysis or component. However, during monitoring, the project will deploy digital tools (e.g., mobile-based data collection and dashboards) to enable real-time monitoring and efficient data management. Implementing partners will be supported to submit timely, high-quality performance data and progress narratives, with periodic verification and capacity strengthening.

- **Is data security guaranteed?**

Yes. During implementation, the project will collect and store data. TechnoServe's data protection policy and procedures help ensure the organization achieves the highest attainable standard in data protection for its clients. These procedures provide uniform guidance to country platforms to support compliance and manage the risks associated with collecting and processing project data, while accounting for variation in donor requirements and national-level regulations.
TechnoServe's data protection policy is aligned to the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and to other similar legislation in Uganda (and other countries where Technoserve operates). For data generated during monitoring and evaluation, the procedures ensure that consent is consistently documented, the right to have personal data deleted is upheld, datasets are pseudo-anonymized, and encryption and password protections are deployed. In addition, restrictions govern who can access data and how it can be used, safeguarding participant privacy and building trust with program beneficiaries. Where any information/data may lead to identification of personal data for an individual, this data will be protected by the organization's data protection policy and guidelines. This will be in line with EU General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Privacy Act of Uganda, 2019.
Furthermore, the project will assess whether data protection policies of digital solution service providers are in line with national laws or data protection legislation for EU-based service providers.

- **Are digital solutions locally sustainable/relevant?**

Yes. Digital solutions are locally relevant. The digital solutions are relevant right from project design and implementation to knowledge sharing. The digital solutions help to supports and improve results-based programming, strengthen accountability, and enable adaptive management and continuous learning. Digital solutions are increasingly becoming relevant in providing e-extension and training services, digital finance solutions, e-commerce, e-certification of quality inputs etc. The project will further explore how relevant digital solutions can be integrated into the project to further improve project performance, efficiency and impact

- **Is duplication avoided?**

Yes. To avoid duplication, the project will build on and support existing digital solutions. Where such digital solutions do not exist, the project will explore building up those digital solutions in collaboration with other stakeholders

Additional remarks (if applicable)

Results

Food and Nutrition Security

B. Productivity and Income

Indicators
Outcome B.1.1. Number of SSFPs (disaggregated for male/female) who progressively realize a living income
Measurements:

Outcome B.1.2. Number of SSFPs (disaggregated for male/female) who progressively decrease the yield gap
Measurements:

Outcome B.1.3. Number of female SSFPs who progressively became more empowered
Measurements:

Outcome B.1.4. Number of SSFPs (disaggregated for male/female) whose livelihood became more resilient to shocks
Measurements:

Reach B.2.3. Number of SSFPs indirectly reached
Measurements:

A. Malnutrition

Indicators
Outcome A.1.1. Number of people with a more diverse and adequate diet
Measurements:

Reach A.2.3. Number of people indirectly reached
Measurements:

Women's Rights and Gender Equality

Women's Economic Empowerment

SDG target(s): 1, 2, 4, 5, 8 and 10 Short description: The enabling environment is strengthened to promote women's economic rights and empowerment and to encourage female entrepreneurship.

Indicators
WRG025. # of private sector company policies blocked, adopted or improved to promote women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship
Measurements:

3.3. # individuals (disaggregated by type, age and gender) with improved attitudes and practises on women's economic rights, empowerment and entrepreneurship.
Measurements:

Private Sector Development

1. Strengthening the business climate

SDG target(s): 8a, 8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.8, 8.10, 10.2, 17.11. Short description: In the result area 'strengthening the business climate', the approach is to strengthen the local business climate through interventions relating to infrastructure, youth employment and entrepreneurship, policy and regulation, institutional capacity building and social dialogue to strengthen MSME's within their ecosystem and improve their access to financial and other services.

Indicators

1.A. Number of companies with a supported plan to invest, trade or provide services. (IATI code XXX001)
Measurements:

1.E. Number of MSMSEs gaining new or improved access to a value chain. (IATI code XXX0005)
Measurements:

1.L. Number of strengthened organisations contributing to a sustainable local business climate. (IATI code XXX0012)
Measurements:

1.M. Number of members of supported organisations. (IATI code XXX0013)
Measurements:

1.L. Number of strengthened organisations contributing to a sustainable local business climate. (IATI code XXX0012)
Measurements:

2. Strengthening trade for development

SDG target(s): 8a, 8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.8, 8.10, 10.2, 17.11. Short description: In the result area 'strengthening trade for development' the focus is on improving market and trading systems, where conditions for economic activity to cross borders more easily are created. We also encourage transitions to more sustainable production and trade practices through economic and social reforms (market transformation) in lower middle income countries. We contribute to increased and more sustainable trade between the EU and lower and middle income countries.

Indicators

2.D. Number of MSMEs that utilize business development services. (IATI code XXX0004)
Measurements:

2.E. Number of MSMSEs gaining new or improved access to a value chain. (IATI code XX0005)
Measurements:

2.F. Number of direct jobs supported in individually supported MSMEs.(IATI code XX0006)
Measurements:

2.G. Number of direct beneficiaries supported to have raised incomes. (IATI code XXX0007)
Measurements:

2.L. Number of strengthened organisations contributing to a sustainable local business climate. (IATI code XXX0012)
Measurements:

2.P. Number of individuals that obtain financial services. (IATI code XXX0016)
Measurements:

2.Q. Number of MSMEs that obtain financial services. (IATI code XXX0017)
Measurements:

3. Strengthening the financial sector

SDG target(s): 8a, 8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.8, 8.10, 10.2, 17.11. Short description: The result area 'strengthening the financial sector' strives for a financial sector that offers a larger range and volume of inclusive financial MSME products in an increasingly diverse and conducive financial ecosystem ("financial inclusion"). MSMEs utilise these inclusive financial products to grow and provide jobs and provide opportunities to underserved groups.

Indicators

3.D. Number of MSMEs that utilize business development services. (IATI code XXX0004)
Measurements:

3.E. Number of MSMSEs gaining new or improved access to a value chain. (IATI code XXX0005)
Measurements:

3.F. Number of direct jobs supported in individually supported MSMEs. (IATI code XXX0006)
Measurements:

3.G. Number of direct beneficiaries supported to have raised incomes. (IATI code XXX0007)
Measurements:

3.L. Number of strengthened organisations contributing to a sustainable local business climate. (IATI code XXX0012)
Measurements:

3.M. Number of members of supported organisations. (IATI code XXX0013)
Measurements:

Strengthened Civil Society

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring

- **Specify what reporting information is required for this activity, based on the activity analysis decision tree (see Help).**

The embassy will regularly monitor the project. During project monitoring, the embassy shall assess and judge project performance against agreed indicators or measures. It will pay attention to Results and Key Performance Indicators, short- and long-term risk, assess/review Annual plans, budgets and annual reports. It will assess extent to which the project outcomes and interventions have remained aligned and consistent with beneficiaries' requirements/interests, Bemo, government priorities, etc..
The embassy together with the implementing organization (Technoserve) will continue to examine critical lessons, challenges, and unintended effects as a learning exercise to inform recommendations for future horticulture projects/programs. The embassy will also monitor how the project engages stakeholders and how it builds relations with the government in addition to the other FNS projects, how the project responds to/addresses project risks, and how the project complies with financial, ethical, and other legal requirements.
To keep track of the progress, the embassy will conduct field monitoring visits to the project at least 2 times annually. Halfway the first year, the project shall provide a reflection report highlighting whether the project is on track, and ensuring that possible risks, challenges and opportunities are well analyzed and addressed accordingly. This reflection report is not a mandatory report that has to be assessed in IMPACT but rather it is for information purposes. The reflection report is one of the monitoring tools to assist the project in adapting strategies and activities when required.
The embassy has initiated and put in place a "Joint Peer to Peer Monitoring" that involves participation of all FNS projects. GROWTH project will be expected to participate. This bi-annual joint monitoring helps projects to learn from each other's, enhances collaboration and synergies, fosters sharing of lessons/best practices and identifies topical issues/challenges to be addressed.
An inception phase period of 6 months has been requested and granted. The inception phase period of 6 months is considered adequate since most of the GROWTH activities will build on already available experiences/lessons and processes from Hortimap and from other PIP and EFFORT projects. It is important to start PIP, EFFORT and market activities already in the inception phase.
During the inception phase period, the project will provide regular updates on the progress of the project. This is to make sure that the project implementers (new staff) fully appreciate what the project is all about and are well aligned to the project expectations.
The GROWTH proposal has embedded in a Results Framework including the project's Logical Framework and an elaborated theory of change (ToC) with indicative indicators, outputs and key milestones. This results framework will form a basis and a guide for Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL). The proposed outcomes, outputs and indicators need to be well connected, measurable and quantifiable. Although there are several indicators measuring systemic change in the proposed log frame, we do recommend including more qualitative indicators to capture signs of systemic changes as well.
For the mentioned indicators, both baseline, mid-line and endline data need to be collected. However, in the proposal no reference is made to this type of data collection/processing, nor to a methodology that will be applied to validate the attribution of results to GROWTH. We expect that a baseline study will be conducted during inception phase to ensure that baseline data on all the proposed indicators are well captured. Will there be a control group?
During this inception phase period, the result framework will be further developed and will form a main tool for MEL. Additionally, the project will develop a learning framework to show how lessons learnt will be captured and applied. Learning is a core component of the GROWTH strategy through MEL. The learning component uses the evidence generated through evaluations, monitoring, annual surveys, and stakeholder reflection meetings to adapt implementation, sharpen strategy, and contribute to the horticulture sector more broadly. The GROWTH project will host annual reflection workshops with staff, farmer organization leadership, agri-SMEs, and financial institutions to review dashboards, discuss trends, assess bottlenecks, and decide on adaptations for the next implementation period.
GROWTH's learning agenda will be generated in consultation with GROWTH consortium partners, EKN, and project beneficiaries. The project will examine, among other topics, some key questions related to the PIP and EFFORT approaches. The project has identified some key learning questions based on gaps in evidence related to the ToC assumptions, EFFORT, access to services, and about how change happens.
Some of the learning questions proposed by the project are:

- *To what extent are SHF households and FOs able to articulate long-term visions (3-5 years) and integrate them into their PIP community and household and EFFORT FO member and FO plans, and how does this visioning process influence their investment and behavior in short and medium term (e.g. choice of technologies, farm planning)?*

- *How inclusive and participatory is the PIP and EFFORT processes: which individuals or groups (by gender, age, landholding size, marginalized status) are and are not actively contributing to the drawing, planning and acting phases? What barriers arise, and how are they addressed?*
- *How well do FOs, agri-SMEs, extension providers, and financial institutions respond to EFFORT-defined priorities (from farmers): are their services, inputs, training offers, and finance products aligned with the visions and action plans emerging out of EFFORT?*
- *What are the costs, time demands, and required capacities (facilitators, trainers, facilitators) involved in implementing and replicating the PIP and EFFORT process to a high standard, and how sustainable are these in terms of FO leadership, financial resources, institutional capacity beyond the project period?*
- *What are the key contributing factors to developing a lasting commercial relationship between SHFs and agriSME buyers?*

By answering such questions, GROWTH not only refines its approach in the short term but also generates transferable lessons about whether and how PIP and EFFORT approaches can catalyze sustainable change in horticulture value chains, especially under market, climate, and institutional stress.
In addition to the learning questions above proposed by the project, the embassy would like to add the following **Learning questions on expected outcomes:**

- *What are the long-term effects resulting from the project interventions: including contribution towards the intended impact, (positive or negative impacts), or intended/unintended effects?*
- *How are the project interventions contributing to the horticultural sector transformation, particularly on helping smallholder farmers to access local and regional market opportunities, create job opportunities along the horticultural value chains, and household access to horticultural inputs and products?*

All these learning questions will also be included and reported on during annual reports, mid-term review and final evaluation consultations.
In terms of project reporting, the embassy will use different project reports to monitor the project and expects the project to submit the following reports:

Type of report	**Period covered**	**Deadline**
Inception Phase Report	01/12/2025-31/05/2026	30/06/2026
Annual plan and annual budget	01/12/2025-31/12/2026 01/01/2027-31/12/2027 01/01/2028-31/12/2028 01/01/2029-31/12/2029 01/01/2030-30/11/2030	As in proposal 15/10/2026 15/10/2027 15/10/2028 15/10/2029
Combined narrative and financial progress report, consisting of: Updates on progress in accordance with the IATI standard described in the ministry's IATI Publication Guidelines.1	Periodically, in any case once every 12 months, in accordance with IATI standard.2 01/12/2025-31/12/2026 01/01/2027-31/12/2027 01/01/2028-31/12/2028 01/01/2029-31/12/2029 01/01/2030-30/11/2030	 31/03/2027 31/03/2028 31/03/2029 31/03/2030 In final report
(Annual) audit opinion & audit report	01/12/2025-31/12/2026 01/01/2027-31/12/2027 01/01/2028-31/12/2028 01/01/2029-31/12/2029 01/01/2030-30/11/2030	31/05/2027 31/05/2028 31/05/2029 31/05/2030 30/04/2031
Combined end narrative and financial report	01/12/2025-30/11/2030	30/04/2031

Evaluation

Describe whether a final evaluation and/or a mid-term review has been planned. If yes, state:

Yes. Both Mid-term review and Final evaluation will be conducted.

The mid-term review will be carried out in the 3rd year of project implementation. Technoserve will be responsible for preparing and commissioning the MTR process. The budget for the MTR is included in the proposal. However, the ToR for the mid-term review (MTR), budget, proposed consultant and draft MTR report will require approval by the embassy.

The final evaluation of the GROWTH project will be prepared, commissioned and financed by the embassy. This will have a separate budget (estimated at Euro 120,000) outside the project budget. The ToR for the final evaluation will be prepared in consultation with Technoserve and will follow the OECD guidelines. An external consultant(s) will be identified and a separate contract for conducting a final evaluation will be signed with the selected consultant(s). Learning questions will be included and answered in both MTR and final evaluation reports. The procedures will be added to the grant decision.

Finance

Budget breakdown

- Include an overview of the activity budget, including overhead costs.

Growth Consortium Summary By Intervention, Cost Category And Year								
Category	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total	Share Per outcome	Share
Outcome 1: Market-Oriented Smallholder Horticulture Farmers Adopt Climate-Smart Practices That Increase Productivity								
Personnel	190.898	378.355	393.200	411.515	342.595	1.716.563	34%	
Travel	33.262	31.723	35.315	33.730	35.230	169.259	3%	
Equipment	59.483	11.102	13.227	12.240	12.852	108.903	2%	
Consultants / Professional Services	7.567	10.000	6.667	6.667	3.333	34.233	1%	
Activity And Operational Costs	475.394	917.111	710.170	257.981	228.368	2.589.023	51%	
Total Direct Costs	**766.604**	**1.348.291**	**1.158.578**	**722.132**	**622.377**	**4.617.982**	92%	
Indirect Costs	67.658	125.215	106.299	62.376	56.599	418.146	8%	
Total Budget	**834.262**	**1.473.506**	**1.264.876**	**784.508**	**678.976**	**5.036.128**	100%	**39%**
Outcome 2: Market-Oriented Shfs Increase Participation In Local And Regional Horticulture Markets That Increase Their Incomes								
Personnel	155.255	265.469	275.553	288.170	225.148	1.209.595	42%	
Travel	31.243	28.152	31.516	30.105	31.755	152.771	5%	
Equipment	49.101	10.894	13.009	12.011	12.611	97.626	3%	
Consultants / Professional Services	7.067	10.000	6.667	6.667	3.333	33.733	1%	
Activity And Operational Costs	253.313	336.301	281.165	167.178	147.747	1.185.705	41%	
Total Direct Costs	**495.979**	**650.816**	**607.909**	**504.131**	**420.595**	**2.679.431**	92%	
Indirect Costs	41.658	56.568	52.371	41.753	37.029	229.379	8%	
Total Budget	**537.637**	**707.384**	**660.280**	**545.885**	**457.623**	**2.908.810**	100%	**22%**
Outcome 3: Market-Oriented And Agri-Smes Access Appropriate And Affordable Financial Products And Services						0		
Personnel	110.845	245.075	254.472	266.407	237.612	1.114.410	37%	
Travel	28.269	27.498	29.156	29.206	29.852	143.981	5%	
Equipment	49.011	10.816	12.927	11.925	12.521	97.200	3%	
Consultants / Professional Services	7.367	10.000	6.667	6.667	3.333	34.033	1%	
Activity And Operational Costs	264.615	413.388	343.937	194.741	168.529	1.385.210	46%	
Total Direct Costs	**460.106**	**706.777**	**647.158**	**508.945**	**451.848**	**2.774.834**	92%	
Indirect Costs	40.195	64.366	58.574	44.590	41.370	249.095	8%	
Total Budget	**500.301**	**771.143**	**705.733**	**553.535**	**493.218**	**3.023.930**	100%	**23%**
Administrative & Mel						0		
Personnel	169.578	217.776	228.665	240.098	245.062	1.101.179	54%	
Travel	8.390	6.718	10.061	7.407	10.675	43.251	2%	
Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	
Consultants / Professional Services	81.273	35.723	89.056	39.384	101.492	346.929	17%	
Activity And Operational Costs	62.618	70.322	73.838	77.530	70.817	355.126	17%	
Total Direct Costs	**321.859**	**330.539**	**401.621**	**364.420**	**428.046**	**1.846.484**	91%	
Indirect Costs	32.186	33.054	40.162	36.442	42.805	184.648	9%	
Total Budget	**354.045**	**363.593**	**441.783**	**400.861**	**470.851**	**2.031.133**	100%	**16%**
Total Project Budget	**2.226.245**	**3.315.626**	**3.072.672**	**2.284.789**	**2.100.669**	**13.000.000**		
						0		
	Per Main category							
Personnel	626.576	1.106.675	1.151.890	1.206.190	1.050.417	5.141.747		40%
Travel	101.164	94.090	106.048	100.448	107.512	509.262		4%
Equipment	157.595	32.812	39.162	36.175	37.984	303.729		2%
Consultants / Professional Services	103.273	65.723	109.056	59.384	111.492	448.929		3%
Activity And Operational Costs	1.055.939	1.737.123	1.409.110	697.430	615.461	5.515.064		42%
Indirect Costs	181.697	279.203	257.406	185.160	177.803	1.081.269		8%
Total Project Budget	**2.226.245**	**3.315.626**	**3.072.672**	**2.284.789**	**2.100.669**	**13.000.000**		100%
Share per annum	17%	26%	24%	18%	16%	100%		

- Is the budget arithmetically correct?
  Yes, see MINBUZA-2025.2677468
- Are the amounts/rates in the budget acceptable?
  The amounts/rates (for staff costs) are on the higher side. In the previous programme Hortimap (10-0001067) there was a similar discussion on the high rates.
  In Growth, some positions had to be discussed (HQ/Uganda based); regional staff has in the final proposal reduced to a minimum. In the contribution agreement it will be added that regional positions cannot be part of the project unless explicitly on the budget (or prior-approved)
  EKN has discussions with the IP on the high rate for the international TL. The proposed TL coming from another NL project is quoted in that particular budget with a higher salary than in the current budget.
  There were longer discussions needed on the share of personnel cost; The initial budget contained more than 50% of personnel costs; This has been further reduced in the final budget. EKN has put a cap of 40% on this budget category
- Briefly explain the structure of the budget.
  There are different structures of budget available. leading is the "EKN Form"
  There are five categories :
-

a	Outcome 1: Market-oriented smallholder horticulture farmers adopt climate-smart practices that increase productivity

b	Outcome 2: Market-oriented SHFs increase participation in local and regional horticulture markets that increase their incomes
c	Outcome 3: Market-oriented and agri-SMEs access appropriate and affordable financial products and services
d	Outcome 4: Market-oriented SHFs improve adoption of food safety practices align with local and regional
e	Administrative & MEL

The categories have each components

A.	Personnel
B.	Travel
C.	Equipment
D.	Consultants / professional services
E.	Activity and Operational Costs
F	Indirect costs

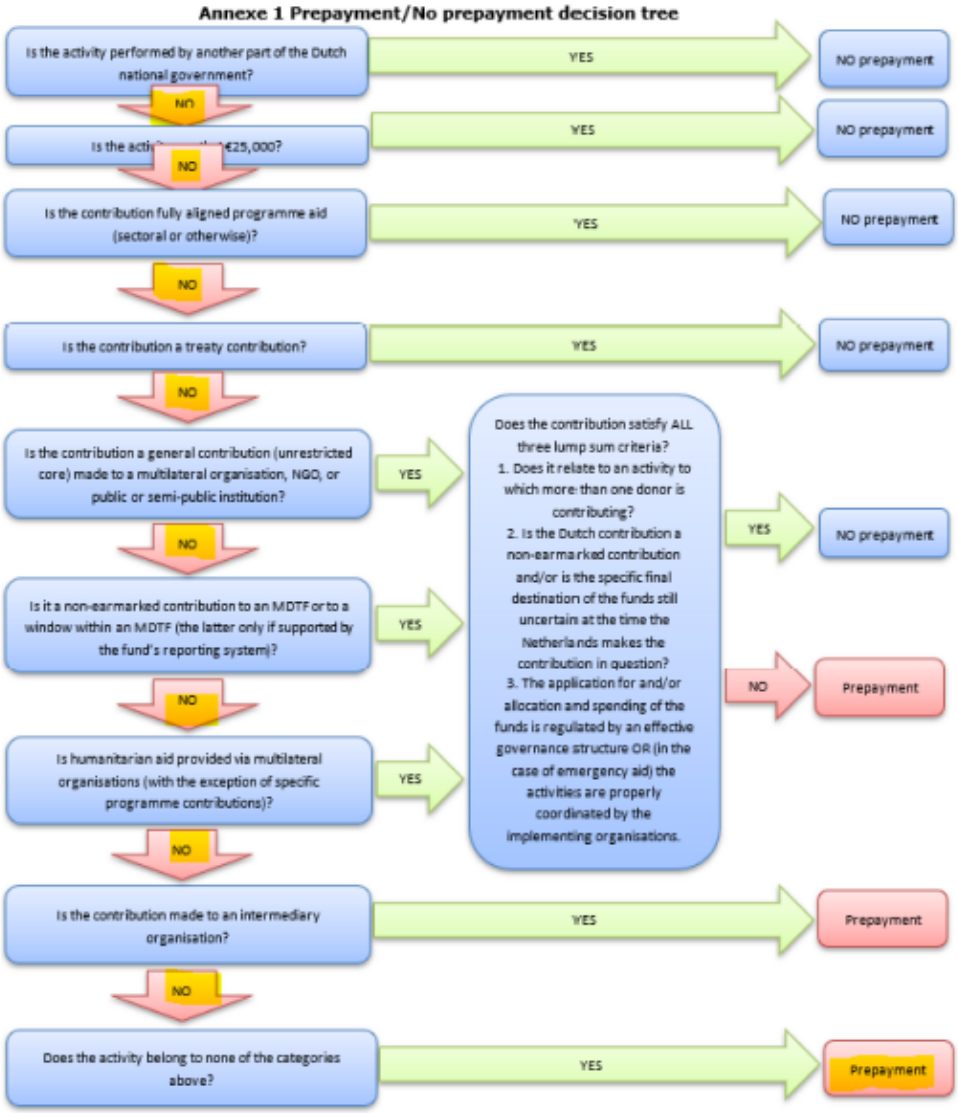
- Are overheads proportional to outputs? What is included? What is recharged?
  The overhead charged by Technoserve is 10% on the Technoserve activities; In the Hortimap programme (IMPACT 10-0001067) this was 10,0%
  Technoserve initially requested 2% on the expenditure for Agriterra, this was not accepted by EKN; Agriterra is using 10% (no overhead over overhead); WUR does have fixed rates including overhead
- Is implementation conditional on the budget being amended in an inception phase?
  In the inception phase, the IP can come up with a complete budget; The 40% personnel cost can at that moment not be surpassed

Earmarking

- Is the Dutch contribution to the programme earmarked (i.e. reserved for a specific purpose)?
  NL is the sole contributor. May Technoserve find an additional donor, it needs to be discussed if the NL contribution will be earmarked

Prepayments

- Based on the prepayment decision tree (see Help), do the payments need to be entered as prepayments and why? In the case of a lump sum, assess this against the applicable criteria and give the reasons for your choice.
  In the prepayment decision tree (See (see below) , it is clear that payment have to be registered as prepayment.
  prepayments will be paid on receipt of a request for payment covering for planned expenditure for maximum 12 months



4. What is the maximum percentage that can be paid as prepayment, and why?
   95%. This avoids having to reclaim money from the IP. It also provides the ministry with the means to compel the IP to submit the final accountability report, if it fails to fulfil the reporting requirement set out in the arrangement
5. Which are the reporting obligations on the basis of which prepayments can be closed?

- the (interim + final) narrative and financial (and audit) reports have been received;
- after it has been established that all contractual reporting obligations have been fulfilled;
- all reports have been approved;
- a letter of approval of the reports has been drawn up and sent to the organisation.

Available resources

	Foreign currency	**EUR**
Implementing organisation's own contribution		0
Firm commitments by other donors (for each donor)		0
Dutch contribution		13,000,000
Total available resources		13,000,000
Budget needed		13,000,000
Still to be financed		0
Soft commitments by other donors (for each donor)		0
Uncovered balance		0

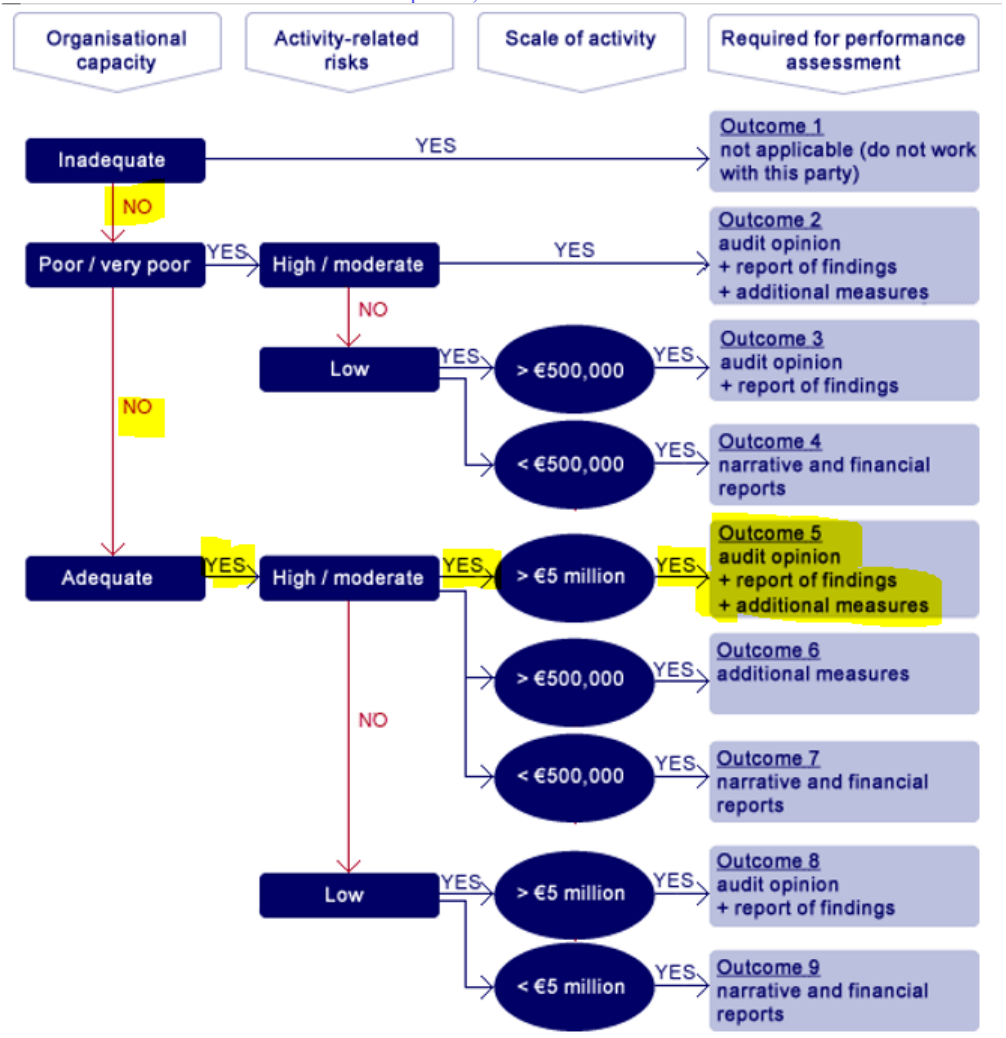
- Are there any non-financial contributions relevant to implementation of the activity, such as deployment of volunteers, availability of buildings, materials, etc.?
  The Dutch contribution does not take the form of a grant with a repayment obligation, a loan, an equity investment or a guarantee
- If there is an uncovered balance, how will this affect implementation of the activity (e.g. proportional reduction in outputs, omission of regions) and how will this affect the decision whether to fund this activity?
  There is no uncovered balance

Grant with a repayment obligation, loans, equity investment or guarantee

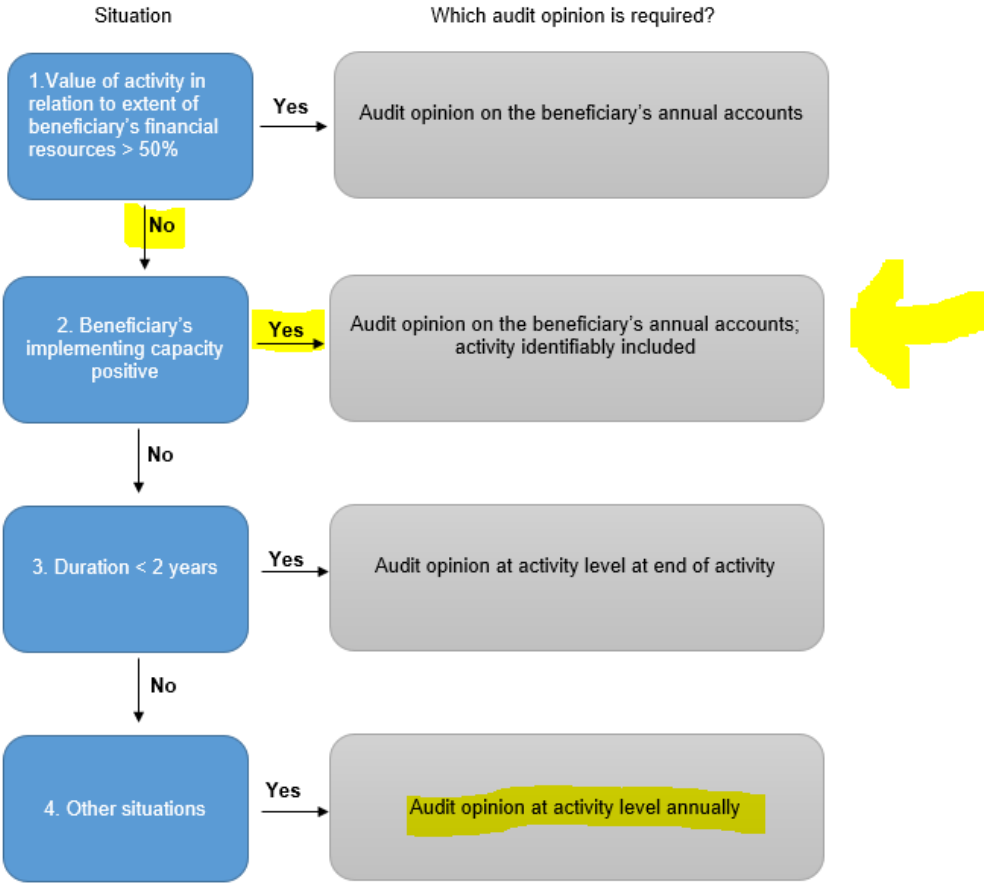
- Does the Dutch contribution take the form of a grant with a repayment obligation, a loan, an equity investment or a guarantee (either in whole or in part)? If yes, briefly set out the consequences for accounting and how correct processing in the financial records will be ensured.
  No grants with a repayment obligation, no loans, no equity investment or guarantees
- Are there revolving funds? If yes, please explain what will happen to any residual funds, how closure will take place and which agreements should be made.
  No, there are no revolving funds

Audit opinions

- Is an audit opinion required for the activity (see Help)? Briefly explain.
  Find below the decision tree on the audit opinion;



An audit opinion is obligatory above EUR 5M; Beneficiary's annual account could be sufficient. Technoserve is generally working with project audits. Since this is a programme is implemented by a consortium an audit protocol for consortia should be chosen.



Conclusion in activity appraisal document	Requested in decision or agreement	Audit protocol and auditor's reference to it
No audit opinion	n/a	n/a
Audit opinion for information purposes	Audited annual accounts	n/a
Operating grants		
Audit opinion on annual accounts for final settlement of grant	Audited annual accounts	Yes; no reference to the decision in the audit opinion
Audit opinion on the annual accounts and report of findings for final settlement of grant	Audited annual accounts and report of findings	Yes; reference to the decision in the report of findings
Activities		
Audit opinion on the annual accounts to close activity prepayments	Audited annual accounts	Yes; no reference to the decision or agreement in the audit opinion
Audit opinion (and report of findings) on financial statements to close activity prepayments	Audited financial statements (and report of findings)	Yes; reference to the decision or agreement in the audit opinion (and report of findings)

It will be important that the effectivity of the confidentially advisor and the transparent reporting of breaches of the code of conduct / SEAH are compliant with the conditions. The audit protocol requires the auditor to pay explicit attention to compliance with those conditions.

- Should the audit opinion be accompanied by an additional auditor's report (for example, on the risks set out above, or on monitoring that the organisation carries out on its prepayments to other organisations)?

  Yes, an ISRS 4400 obligations will be requested