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## Changes in Agricultural Development as Perceived by Local Farmers in the Bie Province, Angola

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### Abstract

The Bie province is one of the most affected provinces by the long-lasting civil war in Angola. The agricultural sector was significantly damaged in terms of availability of arable land, agricultural inputs, and technologies of storing and processing of agricultural products as well as rural population which was dislocated, violated and suffered from heavy fights. Since the ceasefire in 2002 the country has been rapidly changing due to external aid and outstanding income from oil and diamond production. However, the local rural population fully dependent on agricultural and related activities is not still self-sufficient in terms of food security and safety.

The survey was focused on local farmers who were asked to identify and rate the principle changes occurring in agricultural or rural development. The agricultural development issues and solutions were identified on the basis of questionnaires by the farmers themselves. At the same time the farmers were asked to order the changes in accordance with their perceived intensity and importance (in case of obstacles, solutions and priorities). The identified agricultural development issues were further defined as internal and external. The internal changes are changes in farmers' behaviour regarding their agricultural career. The external changes are those that considerably influence farmers' behaviour (internal changes) and can therefore indirectly support or hinder a farmer's development. The survey results were organised into five subjects mapping the agricultural development changes in the last five years, the most developed agricultural development issues, the least developed changes, the agricultural development issues of high priority in next five years, and the principle obstacles and suggested solutions for agricultural and rural development.

The conclusions then helped in the identification process of farmers' needs to be effectively addressed by extension services.

**Keywords:** Agricultural development, Angola, rural communities