

# AGRA

## impact series

## Sebastião Jaquisson: The VBA that wanted to be an agro-dealer

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Sebastião Jaquisson is a 32-year-old farmer and produce trader who lives in Chiuta village, Mecanhelas district, Niassa province. He is a high school graduate (12th grade), Jaquisson cultivates maize, sweet potato and tobacco, and is involved in trading vegetables (buys and sells).

### Community Agribusiness Entrepreneur

Jaquisson joined Otumiha project in 2017 as a Community Agribusiness Entrepreneur (CAE). The project trained Jaquisson on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), post-harvest management and market related issues. In the 2017/18 agriculture season, Jaquisson planted improved varieties of maize and soybean in demonstration plots on his farm. In that season, Jaquisson assisted about 250 farmers through training on GAP, post-harvest management, and by sharing experiences in the field days organized locally. With the additional training received he also worked as an aggregator of produce for his farmer network. He and his fellow farmers were very impressed with results attained by the soybean demonstration results. Thereafter, every one of the farmers started demanding for soybean seeds to grow on their own farms.

Sebastião Jaquisson works with 10 lead farmers (facilitators) and each lead farmer works with 25 smallholder farmers. In the cropping season 2019/2020, he sold 887kg and 597kg seeds of maize and soybean respectively, 40 bottles of pesticide and 500kg of fertilizer; and aggregated and marketed 20MT of maize and 10 MT of soybean. He earned about 30,000MZN in commissions (US\$420).

### Opportunity to become an agro-dealer

With the growing interest in soybean seed, an imminent opportunity for business appeared. Chiuta had no agro-dealer and the nearest agro-dealer was based in Tóbuê village, 25 km away from Chiuta. This was aggravated because the Tóbuê's agro-dealer was not selling soybean seeds. Therefore, the only place to get soybean seeds was in Cuamba, 35



*Sebastião Jaquisson showing the protocol of soybean demonstration plot to the Administrator of Mecanhelas district and farmers during field day.*

km away from Chiuta. This was a great challenge for Jaquisson and his farmers' network.

Jaquisson seized this opportunity to sell soybean seeds, because there was demand.

### Process to become an agro-dealer

Jaquisson successfully applied for a US\$500 matching grant facility offered by Otumiha to become an agro-dealer to respond to the demand for soybean seed in his village. He fulfilled two major selection criteria: (i) having a facility to use as a retail shop, and (ii) experience of managing small business. He therefore selected and trained on input storage and basic business skills. Then, he became an agro-dealer.

### As an agro-dealer

Currently, Jaquisson is a CAE and an agro-dealer. He trains his farmers as well as sells inputs such as soybean, maize and vegetable seeds, pesticides and other inputs. Since Jaquisson started his input business, he already made a 8,000 MZN (\$120) profit. He is also aggregating produce from the farmers and makes money from that as well, therefore having 3 sources of income.

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