



# RA INTERNATIONAL – FOCUS ON WOMEN AND LOCAL VALUE CHAINS IN CABO DELGADO

RA International is one of Africa’s leading remote site service providers. It offers everything from facilities management, camp construction and supply chain services for clients operating in some of the world’s most challenging environments. The company listed on the AIM of the London Stock Exchange in 2018.

## Mozambique Operations

RA International’s presence in Mozambique extends back more than two decades through its subsidiary Royal Food Solutions, a hospitality support service provider specializing in high quality catering services in and around Maputo. In Cabo Delgado, it first began operations in 2019. The company places sustainability at the core of its business activities regardless of the challenging contexts where it operates. It continuously invests in initiatives that aim at increasing the skills of its workforce, using natural resources more economically, and helping small businesses become more resilient. RA International’s sustainability strategy is aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In 2020, the company further began the process of aligning its business with the Paris Climate Agreement, incorporating a set of science-based emissions reduction targets for some of its more established locations.

## Setting Corporate Targets for Women’s Employment and Contracting

In Cabo Delgado, the company’s focus is twofold: i) to hire as many women as possible across a wide range of positions, and ii) to support local entrepreneurship and socioeconomic development through investing in local value chains. As a company with a female CEO and a female Chair, RA International has set a target of increasing the percentage of women across its workforce to 15 % by 2022, up from 10% in 2019. Finding the right female talent is not always easy, given that women are still under-represented in fields such as construction and engineering globally. The fact that the company operates in remote and often conflict-prone lo-



cations makes it even more challenging. But by placing the issue high on its corporate agenda and tapping into its extensive networks, RA International managed to hire 12% women for its team established in Cabo Delgado, including in senior positions such as Site Engineers and Logistics Supervisors. It has also set targets to increase the percentage of contracts awarded to female-owned suppliers to 10% of all supply contracts awarded by end-2022.



## Supporting local entrepreneurship and socioeconomic development in Cabo Delgado

Early on in Cabo Delgado, RA International identified a particularly interesting challenge to solve. With time, its projects would require large amounts of fresh food items, and in line with its sustainability strategy, the aim is to purchase these locally as much as possible. The required infrastructure to procure the amounts of eggs needed was lacking in the local environment, and so, the company researched and built a program to set up an outgrower scheme that, in addition to supplying it with the quantities and quality required, has multiple benefits for the local communities. By investing in brooder units that supply local small-scale prod-

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ucers with dual-purpose birds, the company creates a sustainable local value chain. The small-scale producers are enabled to combine income generating activities (selling eggs and meat) with improved nutrition (protein for their families). On top of it all, the upfront investm-

ent made by RA International can be recovered through agreeing a preferential rate for buying eggs over time, ensuring that this is a viable, long-term business investment as opposed to a one-off, charitable initiative. Following the terrible attack on Palma in March 2021, RA International's projects in Cabo Delgado are temporarily on hold. However, the in-country teams are excited to see this initiative come alive once they can return and continue investing in local value creation in Cabo Delgado.

Vera Karmeback, Sustainability Manager at RA International, summarizes the ethos of the company: "The industry and locations we operate in mean that our work is full of challenges. But our teams are used to solving problems, and with this solution-oriented mindset and continued focus on sustainability from the top down and from the bottom up, we want to show all stakeholders that it is possible to operate responsibly and sustainably while being highly profitable, even when working in remote and challenging locations. We hope that through our actions, we will inspire change in our industry".

To learn more about RA International, visit <https://rainternationalservices.com/>

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