

Activity Progress Report

Sustainable Intensification of Market based Agriculture (SIMBA)

ZWE 1077

Gokwe South District

Month [&Year] : February 2015

Ward(s) : Chisina 1, 2, 3&4, Nemangwe 3,4&5, Njelele 1,2&3, Ngomeni, Sayi, Jiri 1&2

1 GENERAL INFORMATION / CONTEXT EVOLUTION

The month was dedicated to field day activities. These are annual events where farmers have an opportunity to come together and showcase how conservation farming can result in high yields when all CF principles have been adhered to. Farmers plan and organise these events on their own as part of community empowerment for sustainability. Cluster and ward competitions were held throughout the district in preparation for the district field day that will be held in March. Uneven distribution of rainfall continued to be experienced throughout the district. This year seems to be turning down any high expectations by farmers on good harvest across the district. In February, crops were affected by moisture stress causing poor grain filling and early maturity for some variety of maize due to dry spells experienced.

Main activities of the month were monitoring of CA field competitions, exchange visits & granary constructions.

ACTIVITIES OF THE month

ACTIVITIES	TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT	OUTSTANDING
CA cluster field days	57	53	4
Ward field days	14	14	nil
Chillie Farmers exchange visit	1	1	nil
Market garden review meetings	4	4	nil
Granary construction	6	4	2
CA exchange visit	1	1	nil

2 PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

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2.1 Problems

- 2.2** Dissatisfaction by some farmers about the judging. Some farmers were not satisfied about how field days were judged. In Chisina 1, one farmer David Musandipa of Ganyungu did not understand the process to an extent of calling the project manager without seeking clarification from the field team. Others, like in Chisina 4, did not understand why their fields were not judged. In old wards, it was not much of a problem except for Mr Obert Mangena of Chamatendera who still think is better than the winner because of the visible mulch in his field. Farmers judge and give themselves top positions because of one principle they did well such that it becomes very difficult for them to accept the results. Musandipa went to an extent of accusing the FO and FTs of corruption just because he wanted to be in top four positions which he missed with a whisker. He was on position five.
- 2.3** Some field officers could not access some fields due to bad roads and flooded rivers.
- 2.4** It was also difficult to attend all cluster events because at times four events would be held same day. Distances would not allow the officer to get to every event.
- 2.5** Lack of information and inadequate knowledge resulted in poor performance for the Chisina 1 & 4.
- 2.6** Accommodation challenges at farmer households to accommodate the WHH team that was moving around.

Solutions undertaken

- 2.7** The judging process was explained during judges' comments to make it clear to farmers. For the complaint by David Musandipa, re-judging was done and the field officer scored his field with them explaining what is expected of each attribute and comparing with what was there. Each score was agreed upon by both parties. An explanation was also made on how they are ranked at ward level. It was not an obvious case that if one is on top position at cluster level; the same will be in top positions at ward level. The position depends on the individual performance against all other farmers in the competition. The son to the farmer understood and apologized

to the FO and the FT for the inconvenience although later the father and the other brother complained again.

- 2.8** It is recommended that in the next season, independent judges or field officers be provided with vehicles for judging
- 2.9** To start cluster events early so that events for different wards do not clash
- 2.10** It was agreed that a team of field officers will assist each other on CF trainings again in Chisina
- 2.11** To reduce accommodation problems in the field, the team requested that they be provided with camping equipment for field use.