



Sustainable Intensification of Market Based Agriculture (SIMBA)

Gokwe South District, Midlands Province (ZWE 1077)

October 2014 Monthly report.

Activities:

- CA pre-planting activities
- Voucher distributions
- Nutrition Gardens.
- ROSCAS trainings and group registration.
- Granaries.

CA monitoring and verification

The following pre-planting activities continue to be carried out in the different wards as farmers prepare for the cropping season. Manure application in basins, mulching of plots and fencing. Basin preparation has been completed and the farmers are busy applying manure in their basins for those that have cattle manure. Basal fertilizer application is expected to start during this month as most farmers would have accessed the fertilizer from the voucher program.

One training gap was identified during the course of the month and this was on the pre-planting operations. Cluster based trainings on these pre-planting activities have already been planned for farmers to fully understand what is supposed to be done during this time of the year on the CA calendar.

The number of farmers who would have done mulching and basal fertilizer application is expected to increase soon after the trainings are through. Some of the issues to be addressed during the trainings include the planting procedure as well as first weeding.

Verifications and Voucher distributions.

Farmer verifications for the CA program were the major activity done during the month of October. For a farmer to qualify for the voucher program, a pre-payment of USD40-00 was supposed to be done to an account opened in the name of WHH, while the same farmer was supposed to have prepared his/her CA plot in preparation for the coming season. Only those farmers that managed to meet the deadline of 10 October 2014 for paying to the bank received their vouchers. The distribution process was well done with all the farmers who paid their initial deposit coming to collect their vouchers.

Voucher redemptions.

Agro-dealer shops were established across the operational area where major shopping centres were the points where the agro-dealers opened shops for the sake of selling their products. A private sector partnership was established between the agro-dealers and WHH where the prior would supply agricultural inputs to the wards while the later would supply vouchers to the farmers for them to buy the inputs. Farmers are going to redeem their vouchers at the nearest shops available in their ward. Two vouchers were given out, one \$40-00 and the other \$80-00. The two vouchers are being used to purchase at least two bags of fertilizer and a pack of seed. The remaining amount on the voucher is expected to be spent on purchasing of other agricultural products such as herbicides hoes and picks.

Nutrition Gardens

A general observation across the wards shows that water is getting to be an issue in most gardens. Most gardens depend on shallow wells for water while a few depend on rivers and deep wells. The water issues have however affected most of the production in the gardens. With concentration shifting towards open field operations, most gardens have scaled down most of their operations.

ROSCAS

Trainings continue to be done in the different wards as the facilitators continue with their job. Group registrations have been done and information on the registered group members is currently being collected. Group monitoring tools are currently being circulated and information on the savings is being collected. It has been noted that some ROSCA groups managed to use part of their savings for the procurement of vouchers for this season. Some groups are still saving their money in preparation for the end of cycles at the end of the year.

A massive monitoring exercise is being proposed to move around all the wards collecting all information about the ROSCA groups so that a proper database of the groups can be put in order.

Granary site selection.

Site selection of all possible granary sites was done in the various wards. Eight sites were selected per each ward, each cluster making a provision of at least two sites. The selection criteria for these granaries was well explained during the trainings for community based planning and monitoring that were carried out in the wards. Granary committees were also selected to enhance proper management of work that need to be carried out when construction works begin on the granaries.

Materials for granary construction are beginning to arrive at the different sites for construction. Bricks are coming from Harare and distribution to various points has started. Other materials such as river sand, gravel and pit sand are being collected locally by farmers. Construction is expected to start as soon as all the material has been put in place.

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