

Sustainable Intensification of Market Based Agriculture (SIMBA)

Gokwe South District, Midlands Province (ZWE 1077)

February 2014. Monthly report.

Activities:

- Stakeholders' meeting ZWE 1077
- Recruitment of field technicians.
- HAP
- Ward inception meetings
- CA field day preparations.

Stakeholders meeting:

ZWE 1077 started at the beginning of the year 2014 following the end of PISAP ZWE 1041 in December 2013. The new project now with a market oriented approach kick started with an all stakeholders' meeting that was held at Gokwe Hotel. All relevant stakeholders were called to the meeting where the project package was available. Presentations from WHH and the partner organisation APT were done to the stakeholders with a question and answer session opened for the purposes of discussing the contents of the project. All the stakeholders managed to take their part during the meeting and it was agreed that the new project has to be done and was seen to bring a great opportunities to the people of Gokwe South.

Also as part of the presentations during the stakeholders' meeting was the HAP, (Humanitarian Accountability Partnership). The presentation was done by Varaidzo Nyadenga and the presentation focussed mainly on the new approach that the organisation will be looking forward to undertake. The issue of accountability was raised and will become an issue of focus with and during the project implementation program.

Recruitment of Field Technicians:

Following the call for vacancies that had arisen for field based staff at the organisation, interviews for the above mentioned posts were done at the office Gokwe. Two people from each ward were required to fill in two positions of field based staff for the following wards; Nemangwe 5, Nemangwe 3, Njelele 1&2, Ngomeni, Jiri 1&2. A list of the selected candidates for the wards was compiled and filed in the office. Some of the interviews are yet to be done for the new wards which are Chisina 1, 2, &3, Sai 1 and Njelele 3

Project inception meetings.

All new projects have to be introduced to the clients/beneficiaries which are the people who actually directly benefit from the project. This is mainly done to avail the project package to the clients and in such a manner get the views of the beneficiaries before the project is implemented. The meetings are addressed at ward level at the ward centre of each ward. All interested people from within the ward are invited to attend this meeting. The ward based councillor and all the stakeholders also attend to this meeting. Agritex as the main stakeholder in the project is supposed to be at the meeting as the whole project package is delivered to the clients.

Thirteen meetings were held in the month of February for the following wards: Nemangwe 3 & 5, Jiri 1&2, Chisina 1, 2&3, Njelele 1, 2 &3, Sai1 and Ngomeni. Huge turnouts were witnessed during the meetings as people came to listen what the new program held for them. All Agritex extension staff in the wards visited came to attend the meetings, a sign of improved relations growing between the organisation and government departments.

Preparation for CA field days:

For the retained wards, which are Nemangwe 5 and 3, Ngomeni Njelele 1 and 2, preparations for the conservation agriculture field days have since begun and are expected to start in the month of February 2014. Following the end of ZWE 1041, all the farmers who were participating in the project were left to finish off the 2013-14 season alone with no assistance from the project. The design was to pull out assistance to the farmers and see whether they will manage to finish the last agricultural season of the project. The field days are therefore planned to assess the extent to which the farmers managed to practise CA even after there was no more assistance from the project. The 2013-14 seasons left all the project beneficiaries to look for their own agricultural inputs and the planning as well as conduction of these field days.

The rainfall pattern:

There has been generally a fair rainfall distribution across all the wards in the areas of operation. However, a poor start to the season at the beginning saw many farmers failing to establish their crop due to poor germination of crops, a situation that left many with no option than re-start the planting process. A few farmers managed the first crops while the majority had to settle for rather a late crop into the season. From the general look of the field crops, the season looks brighter and with the current rains there is more likely an opportunity that the farmers will get a good harvest.

Compiled by

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