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This project is implemented by Welthungerhilfe and APT



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# SIMBA NEWS FLASH

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## Smallholder Drought Mitigation in Gokwe South

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Whilst Gokwe is facing a big drought as a result of the El Nino, irrigation has been the solution to Innocent Chifamba a Gokwe Chisina farmer who was inspired by last season's water challenges. Last year Innocent lost quite a significant amount of the expected African Bird's Eye chilli profits as a result of his water source drying up. It's very peculiar for a smallholder farmer to drill a borehole of his own in a community such as Gokwe; boreholes are normally drilled by NGO's or by Donors. Thus Innocent has defied the odds.

2015/2016 season Innocent had grown chillies for a market to which he was introduced through the SIMBA project and his chillies flourished until mid-season when his water source dried up. Whilst Innocent's chillies went half season and he only picked 4 times compared to his counterparts who picked 8 times. This inspired Innocent to have a reliable and close water source unlike the unreliable one which was 200m away from the field and he had to carry using buckets to water the crop. Thus Innocent saved his chilli income of around \$ 2000 and topped up with the cattle he sold to drill his on 40m deep borehole costing him \$3300.



Figure 1: Crop is wilting

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After drilling the borehole Innocent ran out of funds to complete the irrigation system and thus he couldn't utilise the borehole. To complete the project he needed about \$3000 to buy submersible pump, generator, drip kit, piping, tank and all that is needed to make the irrigation work. The project facilitated for a bank loan application after realising that the crop was wilting and the borehole was not being used. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January 2016 Innocent started the process of applying for a loan which is taking long to be approved because of too many requirements by the banks and the complicated process.

The bank application gave Innocent and the project hope that the crop was now going to be saved from the dry spell, but it didn't work that way as the loan has not yet been approved. 2 weeks into the loan application process the crop started to wilt very badly. WHH had to help by pre-financing Innocent to complete the irrigation system for \$1400 which is to be repaid back by Innocent either by the loan if it's secured or by his crop earnings. The project did not give everything to Innocent for free because it wants to empower smallholders to be better business people who are able to account for all costs incurred by their businesses. Thus innocent contributed for borehole drilling and building of the tank stand. The drip-kit was given by the private sector actor Better Agriculture in form of a smallholder farmer experimental irrigation demonstration plot. The rest that was pre-financed by WHH; Innocent is to repay the money.



Figure 2: Installation of a submersible pump



Figure 4: First water flowing.....

On Tuesday the 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2016 water flowed out of the borehole for the first time bringing smiles of hope for the crops to the Chifamba family.



Figure 3: .....and being put to good use immediately

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of February the drip kit was finally installed with the help of a technician from Farm Shop, the company which sells the DripTech kits.

Everyone chipped in and in the afternoon the drip kit was finally working. Mr. and Mrs Chifamba are happy people with their workload massively decreased and with the potential for larger yields and income.



Figure 5: Everyone helping

The story of the Chifamba family is positive and inspirational story to everyone who sees smallholders from remote Gokwe taking a positive step towards drought mitigation.



Figure 6: A relieved Mrs. Chifamba



Figure 5: Mr. Chifamba and his son