- PORET hosts PISCCA capacity building workshop
- Food processing transforms livelihoods in the dry areas of Chimanimani
- Local farmers benefit from showcasing their products during the PISCCA workshop
- Mr Thompson Mkwananzi ventures into the fish farming business

# CHASEYAMA AGROECOLOGY NEWSLETTER

*Jinga Village, Chaseyama, Chimanimani District, 0773025438*

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## PORET HOSTS PISCCA CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP

PORET has been awarded an opportunity to host PISCCA (Projets Innovants de la Société Civile et Coalitions d'Acteurs) Capacity Building workshops. Six organizations that are beneficiaries of the PISCCA project attended the workshop which started on the 23rd and ended on the 24th of January 2024 at PORET Centre in Chaseyama.

The organizations that attended the works are PORET, WICO, CWA, LID Agents, CASL Trust, and Bio-Hub Trust.

The workshop focused on how organizations can improve their resource mobilization capacity, peer learning, impact reporting, and engaging themselves in monitoring and evaluation.

During the workshop, organizations admitted that one of the major challenges they are facing was the issue of understanding how to mobilize resources that are in line with their vision and also on undertaking effective monitoring and evaluation.

Mr Hardlife Mudzingwa, the Director of Community Water Alliance (CWA), shared that as organizations, we are doing well in terms of project implementation but we are lacking in branding and effective reporting of our activities. This was also noted during the exercise on reporting about the work that organizations are doing. The results from the presentations showed that organizations are yet to present their work well so that it gives an impression to the audience.

This workshop worked as an eye opener to the participants as they managed to be refreshed on the number of issues to do with monitoring and evaluation in liaison with resource mobilization and impact reporting.

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***Above**: participants who attended the PISCCA workshop at PORET*

### DIRECTORS MESSAGE

As we embark on a new year filled with hope and possibilities, I am delighted to extend my warmest greetings to each and every one of you. The beginning of a new year offers us the opportunity to reflect on our past accomplishments and chart a course for the future.

We enter this year with renewed determination and commitment to advancing the principles of agroecology and sustainable agriculture. As stewards of the land, we understand the critical role that our work plays in nourishing communities, conserving biodiversity, and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

***Julious Piti** PORET Director*

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During the workshop, the facilitator Mr Patrick Mpedzisi emphasized on the need to have effective communication with the beneficiaries, the stakeholders, and the funders so that the information flow is uniform across all levels. This will help the organizations to reflect on the work they are doing and provides room for change.

At the end of the workshop, organizations noted that there is still a lot which they need to do in order to put their houses in order. Chief among them being impact reporting which promotes in relaying impacts as they happen.

The workshop ended well on day two with participants appreciating the information they got from the facilitator. This workshop promoted networking among the participants so that they can have collective effort towards addressing issues they are facing in their respective organisations.

## FOOD PROCESSING TRANSFORMS LIVELIHOODS IN THE DRY AREAS OF CHIMANIMANI

***Above**: Makwakwa and Vegetables being dried in a solar dyer*

Local farmers from Chaseyama are now thriving through food processing as they are now able to process a number of food items. This has been made possible through the donation of solar driers by PORET to different villages as a way of promoting value addition of the locally available foods.

During a visit by PORET officials and Mr Ebbie Dengu from team Europe to Zvokuitirwa and Mukono Village, the solar driers beneficiaries expressed gratitude as they are now utilising them to process various food such as vegetables and fruits.

According to Mrs Muzvidzo of Zvokuitirwa village, the solar drier they received from PORET is helping the Zvokuitirwa Permaculture Club to be able to process different food types. The farmers are now drying fruits and vegetables which they say it now improves the shelf life of the food and also makes sure that no perishable food is put to waste.

This was also supported by Juliet Mwaona, the Zvokuitirwa Permaculture Club Chairperson, who said that they are now able to dry fruits such as mangoes, and bananas which they are going to eat throughout the year. These solar driers have managed to change in quality of food as well as time of processing food. This has increase the number of food they process three folds in comparison to other traditional ways of food processing such as boiling.

Apart from improved shelf life, the solar driers are helping the farmer's to make a living through drying food for sale. When the team visited Mukono village, they found out that a number of vegetables were being dried. Asked of what they want to do with the vegetables, Mr Rindai Mukono said that they are processing fruits and vegetables in big quantities so that they can be able to expose them to the market.

The availability of these solar driers is now changing the community in terms of nutrition and food security. They are proving to be a life changer for the farmers as they say are now able to process and store food for longer periods.

***Above**: Mr Ebbie Dengu in blue shirt talking to Mr Rindai Mukono left and Mrs Mukono on the right*

# LOCAL FARMERS BENEFITS FROM SHOWCASING THEIR PRODUCTS DURING THE PISCCA WORKSHOP

***Above**: Visitors from Swiss Embassy and farmers looking at products on display*

***Above**: Sorghum seeds on display*

***Above**: Councillor Robert Bande far right*

As some people are fighting what is called *January Disease* referring to the period of lack of money presumed to have emanated from overspending during the festive season, Farmers from Chaseyama have managed to sell some of the seeds to the visitors who came for the Capacity Building Workshop at PORET.

PORET invited farmers to be part of the capacity building workshop mainly with an intention of sharing the seeds they are growing and their knowledge about food processing. The occasion turned from being solely a learning event to a seed market day.

The farmers displayed a number of small grains which include varieties of sorghum and millet. Some displayed processed foods.

During the tour of the products, the participants from other organisations liked the products which were on display and they bought these seeds. One of the most liked seed was that of chinyimavarume a traditional vegetable seed and svoboda a sorghum variety. Also some they bought buckets of honey.

According to Judith Bingadhadhi one of the farmers who was displaying her products, said, *I am happy to sell my products and now I have money which I am going to use back home.* She further added that she was not looking forward to selling these seeds as she thought that it was only a knowledge-sharing occasion.

A total of USD 96-00 was sold during the day. This has also improved the morale of the farmers as they now understand that if they grow these seeds and process food in large quantities, they are going to make it into the markets.

Also, some farmers indicated that this has made them to realize that they still have a lot to do in terms of processing food in large quantities, and improving their branding and marketing.

# MR THOMPSON MKWANANZI VENTURES INTO THE FISH FARMING BUSINESS

Look and learn visits are changing the mind-sets of the farmers in Chimanimani. Some farmers are not exposed to what others are doing in terms of food production hence they remain stagnant without knowledge on income-generating projects.

One of the beneficiaries of the look and learn visits is Mr Thompson Mkwananzi from Zvokuitirwa village. Following a visit to Mr Mutokotori's homestead in Chipinge who is into fish farming, he was motivated to start a fish farming project at his place.

Currently he has managed to construct a fish pond which is measuring 10mx10m which he said he is going to use in his fish farming business.

Before he chose to venture into fish farming, he did his research on the type of business he would want to venture into and establish possible markets to sell his product.

Asked of his plan with fish business, he said that he has established that there was a few farmers who are effectively into fish farming. He visited some shops and observed that there is high demand of fish by the local people as it serves as an alternative source of food for the local people apart from vegetables and other animal products. Hence through his research he found out that if he ventures into fish farming business, he can be able to contribute to the fish supply business with local people buying them from him at reasonable prices.

He said his plan is to start small and increase with time which will give him room to learn from the first attempt of the project.

Mr Mkwananzi was also inspired by some stakeholders who visited his place and witnessed him constructing the ponds who encouraged him to continue with the good work.

According to Mr Makombe, Agritex Officer for ward 3, Mr Mkwananzi was urged to make sure that there is enough food, fresh air and to avoid overfeeding of the fish.

In terms of marketing, the Agritex officer said that there is plenty of markets for fish locally before thinking of selling them outside. Only what is needed is to establish relations with markets and also to be competitive.

***Above:*** *the picture shows a group of people assisting in the construction of a fish pond at Mr Mkwananzi homestead*

***Above:*** *fish under construction*