



Editor's Message

Dear Readers

We are happy to announce our first edition of the Newsletter for 2018. It has been a great year in 2017 with a lot of activities happening. We understand that some farmers were able to fulfil their dreams through maximised production. Some were able to expand their projects. Lots of projects in water management were done; seed work has been recognised among other things which is good.

Our aim this year is for each farmer to increase production through innovations and partner learning. We wish to see a whole lot of projects happening in the community with the help of the new PORET volunteer team which is now in place.

Let's work together for the betterment of our families, communities we live in, the country and the Globe at Large. It should be each one of us dream to be recognised internationally for good work. We need to have stories of change shared globally through this platform of communication paper.

You can join our mailing list by sending us an email at poretnews@gmail.com

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Climate change affecting bumper harvest

“The drastic change in climate conditions has reduced yield expectations by half for 2017-2018 farming season.”



Sorghum wilting after three weeks of no rainfall

In most parts of Zimbabwe, rains last visited during the Christmas of 2017 and from there; it was no longer raining for the next three to four weeks. Most of the crops died because of no water and some worsened by fertilisers which were applied and the rains never come soon after it has been applied. **In the month of January, the Southern African Region was declared to have been hit by drought.**

Visiting most of the fields in Ward 2 Chakowa, sorghum and millet were burnt with no hope for survival. There are other crops such as pumpkins which people grow for the purpose of *eg* live mulching which were burnt because they spent quite some time without water. This has reduced diversity of crop which in turn affects food security and nutrition. Most families are liable to little harvest as opposed to their proposed tonnage.

Mr Mwatsika who has emerged as one of the farmers with good harvest during the 2016-2017 said that, *“2018 is a different year. I was looking forward to a good harvest which is higher than that of last year but with this state of long period of dry spell, I am expecting half of what I was looking forward to.”*

The lucky is to those who have managed to manage the water flows in their fields through digging of swales. These fields had stored enough water to moisture the fields for the next one week or so since the last rains. When the rains came, the crops were caught at a better position and it is from these few farmers that yields is expected to reach average.

According to Virginia Karisawu an Outreach Officer; most of the crops were burnt by sun which lasted for three weeks. She also confirmed that there are few farmers who have wetlands who have fields which survived by a whisker from the dry spell.

Mai Nduna who is a Cluster Coordinator from Mhandarume says that; *minda mizhinji yakatsva nezuva zvekuti vashoma vaticutarisira kuti vangakowe gore rino. Kuti tikwanise kuwana minda yemafield days zvikutotinetisawo.*

As being the case, Mr Dube urged farmers to put more water harvesting examples at their homes. As an outreach officer, Mr Dube is geared to help set many examples of water harvesting in the community to help minimise the problems associated with moisture deficit in the fields.

The Dream Project



One of the Fish Ponds at PORET

In this edition, we are going to discuss about fish farming project as the dream project which has hit all the corners of PORET and Chaseyama Community.

Fish farming Project is one of the most viable projects which can be done in the low veld though it takes a need for efficient clean water supply. Fisheries and aquaculture contribute to livelihoods for 800 million people and provide 3.1 billion people with 20% of their animal protein (FAO 2015), as well as micronutrients and essential fatty acids critical to cognitive and physical development (HLPE 2014). Three-quarters of the countries where fish contributes more than one-third of animal protein in the diet are low-income food-deficit countries (Kawarazuka and Bene 2011), where fish is often the cheapest and most accessible animal-source food (Belton and Thilsted 2014). To meet future demand for fish, particularly in developing countries, production will need to double by 2030 (FAO 2014). The scale of this challenge requires research innovations across the whole spectrum of aquaculture and fisheries production systems and associated value chains.

Sustainable increases in fish production directly increase the income of small-scale producers, provide opportunities for value chain innovations and reduce the cost of fish to consumers. Also fish is a vital, nutrient-dense animal-source food for many nutritionally vulnerable people, including children and pregnant and lactating women and also fish farming is an environmental friendly project.

Two fishponds have been so far constructed at PORET where fish farming needs to take place. These fish ponds drew much of their water from the borehole. The water which comes out as outputs from the ponds is then directed into a separate tank waiting to be used in the garden which is adjacent to the ponds.

The project is to done as a way of providing fish farming research, tourism and also to help with meat during the workshops and meetings. The idea of having the fish farming project was popularised by the community members during the planning meetings were they requested to have fish projects being done in the community. Due to water shortages, PORET thought it wise to have some fish ponds at its site so that they will study how best fish can survive under hot climatic conditions where water supply is poor.

Weather Alert:

January: The month of January was very hot. The maximum temperature reached was around 41 degrees Celsius which was due to the heat wave which has visited the Southern African region. Both day and night temperatures were hot. Due to this harsh condition, many crops were scorched making people to lose hope of having a good harvest. This has also impacted in some of the programs which were supposed to be done in February by PORET (Field Days) making them to be shifted to the month of March on condition that the rains come.

February: approaching the month of February, the heavy rains started to fall. The temperatures changes playing the maximum of 32 degrees Celsius. Some of the crops were relieved though some were burnt to the point that they were no longer able to come back again. Most of the farmers in the three wards where PORET operates start to replant with others diversifying their projects so that they at list will get something from farming.

Meet the Volunteer team



Setting examples at PORET- Ring leader B. Chemudondo demonstrating how swales are dug.

We are glad to introduce the PORET Volunteer team which comprises of the Director, Program Manager, Outreach Officers, Cluster Coordinators and Cluster Leaders. For the past years, few volunteers were involved in the operations of PORET with only the Director doing all the work. This has set back the functioning of the organisation since everything was centred on one person who actually by that time was working also in Chikukwa.

Even that's being the case; this former setup has managed to make a huge contribution to the development of the Chaseyama community where it was working. It has seen itself, managing to do water harvesting projects, building state of the art ECD, engaging the community in various trainings as well a

setting up a good example of agro-ecology at its Jinga centre.

For the past years, I was working alone with the help also of those well-wishers who come to my rescue in terms of engaging the communities. These people include the likes of Kumbirai Dube and other members whom I might not mention by names. But now, I think it's the high time to work as a team so that we diversify our work and be able to achieve the aims of PORET of helping the projects which are put in place and make them sustainable, said Julious Piti the Founder of PORET and also the Director.

Starting the year 2018, PORET managed to come up with a volunteer team which is supported for its time from the generous contributions from FEPA which is funding PORET in some its activities. This team was selected based on gender and personal sacrifices towards the project. The team has given their time to work together with PORET for a better community.

The coming in of this team helps in the good flow of information from the community to the Organisation and vice versa. It will also work in mobilisation of farmers to engage themselves in sustainable farming practises.

The overall goal for this team is to focus on collective results, and commitment to action plan. They say that for a team to be functional, they need to have a vision whereby one's goal is another and no one is to be blamed if something comes into the way just to hold each other accountable with lots of discussion and trust.

Welcome Blessing



It is with great pleasure to introduce the welcome back of Mr Blessing Chemudondo to this good work at PORET. Mr Chemudondo previously worked at PORET as a volunteer before he joined TSURO Trust. He has vast knowledge of sustainable farming which he wishes to share with people in the PORET working area. Now he holds a high ranking position as a Programs Manager who will be involved in overseeing the outreach program, work closely with the administration, processing and communication data among other things.

Surveys and Publications

Youth, HIV/AIDS and Agroecology practise in
Chaseyama, Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe



*Above: part of the participants who attended the
Validation meeting for Youth Survey
at Hotsprings resort*

Last year 2017 in November, Fezile Ncube and Kudakwase Mukute conducted a survey in Ward 2, 3 and 5 in Chimanimani. The research, which was commissioned by the Seed and Knowledge Initiative (SKI) of southern Africa – a PORET partner, had two interrelated objectives: namely: (1) To gain a better understanding of local realities concerning youth, their participation in agriculture, the impact of HIV/AIDS and the interrelation between these issues and their impact now and in future; and (2) To generate a better understanding of the perceptions and attitudes of youth and their elders towards agro ecology as an agricultural practice. They were assisted by Silvia Chibwe who is well vexed with the seed knowledge as well as Shadreck Masawi who has vast knowledge about youth activities in Chimanimani District capacitated by his history of working with the Ministry of Youth together with the National Aids Council under the Young People's Network program.

The research revealed that the key issues and concerns for young people are poverty arising from high unemployment rates among the youths, limited access to land by unmarried female youths, and lack of guidance by adults. This was mainly due to adverse economic conditions, Patriarchal system that promotes the male youths in resource allocation, Lack of understanding of child rights issues, among others.

From the research there were recommendations to make youth be active in agro ecology. There is need to Develop youth specific agro initiatives which are run and managed by the youths themselves. Such projects should include both crop and livestock farming. To ensure that there is steady flow of income throughout, there is need for having long season and short season crops. PORET should support the development and implementation of youth-led livestock production and marketing projects. PORET should support youth participation in horticultural production and marketing. PORET should work in partnership with health, education and development organisations to development HIV prevention and treatment literacy among youth.

Collaboration

2018 Reflection meeting at TSURO

One of the apparatus of sustainability is to have collaborations with other organisations in the District or outside from those who are doing the similar projects.

In pursuance of this, three sister organisations which are PORET, CELUCT and TSURO this year 2018 held a reflection meeting at TURO Boardroom in Chimanimani.

The reflection meeting was focused on looking back at the projects which were implemented by the three organisations in the District. They discussed about their success and failures and how best they can help each other in committing themselves in the community development.

Reflection meetings help the organisations to learn from each other, share their visions, analysing them as well as evaluating their work. It actually works as a collective monitoring tool.

PORET shared its successes in 2017 which include successful carrying out of planned events, featuring in various publications as well as being able to work close with farmers. In fulfilling its role, the organisation also faced some problems in resources especially in the transport and communication which needs to be addressed. Some of its planned activities especially during the beginning of this year in field days were disturbed due to climate change whereby sun burnt the crops. This year the organisation is fully geared to fulfil its role in community development through sustainably utilising the few resources which are available.

Reflection of January and February Activities

With the start of the year, few projects and programs have been initiated in the low veld and at PORET by Permaculture Club and PORET. These include;

- 🌐 Planning and review meeting with John Wilson. As a way of Planning and monitoring and Evaluation exercise, Mr Wilson visited PORET to see the progress of work done last year as well help in planning for the year 2018.
- 🌐 Chaseyama Permaculture Club Annual General Meeting. The outcome of this meeting show the renaming of the club to just Permaculture Club since the programs are now involving other communities. Also new Permaculture Club committee was elected. The new committee promised to deliver good work during its tenure. Also the ECD School held its AGM.
- 🌐 PORET managed to send two of its officers for an advocacy and lobbying training which was

held in Zambia during the start of the month of February.

- 🌐 There was also a borehole pegging in Jinga which going to be sponsored by PORET. The reason for having this borehole in Jinga now is because of the lack of water for drinking. People from Hapare and Jinga survive from stream water which is not healthy at all. If the villagers want to do washing, they are forced to walk nine kilometres to Odzi River. Having the borehole drilled in Jinga will help reduce these problems as well as avoiding detergent deposition in the rivers which affects aquatic life.

Upcoming Events and Activities

This coming months of March and April, PORET and the team of Volunteers planned to full fill and implement the following;

- 📅 Monitoring and Evaluation Workshop which is to be facilitated by Christen Furrer. The workshop targets to have at least thirty farmers trained in monitoring and evaluation so that they will be equipped with knowledge on how they can measure their performances. The facilitator is from Switzerland who has vast knowledge in Monitoring and Evaluation. He has been working at FEPA as an intern and now came to PORET as a visitor, trainer and FEPA representative.
- 📅 There is a documentation workshop which is going to be done in March facilitated by Shadreck Masawi and Christian Furrer. The workshop will be targeting at least 42 participants who will be trained in documentation or record keeping. It has been identified that most farmers are not able to document properly. This workshop will help farmers to monitor their activities at home so that they are able to understand progress they are making in all their projects.
- 📅 In the month of March, there are ten field days which have been organised by Permaculture Club in collaboration with PORET. The volunteer cluster coordinators and leaders with the help of outreach officers are going to locate possible fields where these field days should be done.
- 📅 In this same month of March, a visitor from Germany is going to pay a visit to PORET.

It's absolutely **free**: Platform for farmers

PORET Volunteer team Positions

1. Director
2. Accounting and Administration:
3. Program Manager
4. Finance Manager
5. Outreach officer 1
6. Outreach officer 2
7. Information Officer
8. Gardener 1
9. Gardener 2
10. Cluster coordinator Ward 2
11. Cluster coordinator Ward 3
12. Cluster coordinator Ward 5
13. Cluster leader ward 2:1
14. Cluster leader ward 2:2
15. Cluster leader ward 3:1
16. Cluster leader ward 3:2
17. Cluster leader ward 5:1
18. Cluster leader ward 5:1

Letters to the Editor

Send your request, queries,
invites and suggestions:

Email: poretnews@gmail.com

Sms: 0778312138

This space is reserved for farmers to send their request, innovations or sustainable ideologies, queries, invites and suggestions using whatsapp, email or sms platform. They can also process through the cluster leaders.

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Advertising Space here

HOW TO ADVERTISE?

To advertise with us, just send your advert through our whatsapp or sms or email platform stating what you want to advertise. Strictly adverts based on sustainable living.

WHAT TO ADVERTISE?

Here you can advertise the following;

- a. Activities or events happening
- b. Products or good you are selling
- c. Products or goods you are looking for
- d. Weather reports

WHEN TO SEND YOUR ADVERT?

Adverts are accepted one week before the publishing of the Newsletter which is a week before the end of February, April, June, August, October and December.

BENEFITS OF ADVERTISING?

- a. Easy marketing of your products
- b. Networking with farmers, manufacturers etc.