

PORET-CHASEYAMA AGROECOLOGY **3RD EDITION**

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A GLANCE AT PROJECTS INITIATED IN CHIMANIMANI LOW-VELD

Women as Ambassadors of Development

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Women in Farming

Women always work hard towards the development of the household, community and the nation at large. They strive at every stage of development to see a positive change because they understand very well that when the economies get robbed, they are the first ones to be affected. By encouraging women to involve themselves into development initiatives, we are promoting for the development of the economy at all levels. Empower women and develop a nation.

Editor's Note

"It is in the hands of the Policy makers, civil society organisations and households to make sure that women are actively involved in all decision making process if we want to develop our homes, communities and the nation at large. I believe that the success of every man is behind his woman so as the development of the community is blessed by the woman power to command."

Women empowerment is a development initiative which has been popularised through the concepts of WID, WAD and GAD but as of now, women are still surviving under the harsh threat of societal attitudes towards them. We have seen many developments which are done to give a better position to the status of women. We have thought it good to look at the projects which are being initiated by women in the low-veld of Chimanimani. By being able to

note down one or two of these projects, this will give us a clue if women are also involved in the development sectors. The main aim of discussing about women in this newsletter is not only in citing the number of women in development but to note how effective are their decisions in the whole process. It is because, the decision a woman takes is vital than the activity initiated.



Thank you for reading this Newsletter

Shadreck Masawi

PORET- Production Officer

Women Living on the Land

Guest Writer: Christian Furrer



With great delight, I have heard about the fact, that also women are being given a voice in this newsletter since both women and men are the backbone of the rural society where PORET is contributing to. When one looks at the people who are engaged in daily food

production and care about the fields and the next generation (kids and babies), it becomes clear, that the female participants of society are one of the main factors contributing to sustainability of local production and human welfare.

Even though traditionally, women have been disadvantaged when it comes to positions of power or decision making, things are changing also due to organizations like PORET or state structures. Whilst some positions like chief, headman or village head can only be taken by men, newer positions of power like chairperson, director or Member of Parliament can also be taken by women.

At PORET, I have met many persons, who describe themselves as being more successful in agriculture than in other income generating activities like those more often found in towns. Among them, women are doing a great job caring not only after kids,

but also livestock and the plants in the agricultural fields. If we look at the participants of PORET introduced activities like water harvesting at homesteads, PORET volunteer engagement or members of the permaculture club, we clearly see that women are the majority of the local farmers interested in permaculture. I am eager to read about their views in this volume of the newsletter of PORET.

In the past, when people have been writing about "feminism" or the newer established term "gender", they have too often tried to shift the blame to the other gender or just pointed out personal discomfort about a few topics. Let us try not to do the same. Let us know our rights and duties on our agricultural land, in our families and organizations. Let us, both women and men, stand together and work for the future of our communities and societies

Women in Road-runner/Traditional Chicken Production: By Shadreck Masawi



Reviving Traditional Chicken Production in Chimanimani

"Chicken Production traditionally was considered a women project"

Chicken production is one of the well-practised projects in the Chimanimani Low-veld. Traditionally, each household was well known for having at least a Chicken run at the homestead. The chickens were kept mostly to provide meat at special occasions or when there were visitors at the home. Others would sell chickens to pay for school fees and buy basic commodities which were needed at home. The type of chickens which were kept mostly were the *traditional chickens* compared to the *broiler chickens*.

The Globalisation of Broiler Chicken Production

With the dawn of the new millennium, there was a widespread import of broiler chicken from the European countries to Africa as well from South Africa to Zimbabwe. Broiler chickens alongside eggs were imported from South Africa to Zimbabwe at Low prices

which gave an imbalance of trade in the poultry sector. According to the Spoore magazine 2004, Africa imported some 182,000 tonnes of chicken from the EU, most of it produced on battery farms in Belgium, France and the Netherlands. With this, the new millennium has brought a disaster into the African Poultry Sector.

In Chimanimani District, poultry production has grown rapidly doubling the production of the road runners or the traditional chickens. Many projects have been implemented by Government, NGOs and individuals helping in the globalisation of broiler production at the expense of the road runners. Most of the people have chosen to go for broiler chickens whilst dumping the traditional

chicken production. Many farmers have cited that broiler production was fast and cheap compared to the road runners which need time to grow. Up-to this time now, many chickens runs for traditional chickens have now fallen into ruins overtaken by the broiler production.

With time, most farmers are now realising the importance of organically grown chickens compared to inorganic grown broiler chickens.

Broiler production is contributing to the dumping of culture towards the traditional chicken production. Traditional chickens were a symbol of a strong household which has food security within it. It was a shame for most women who have no single chicken run at their homestead. By having one, a woman was considered a wife who knows how to manage his family properly. According to Amai Bande, she said that they used to slaughter chicken when the visitors come or when their husbands come back from work. After a long period of separation, a woman was supposed to treat her husband in the good norm by slaughtering him a fattened chicken. If it was in the polygamous marriage, those women who were capable of feeding their husbands with chicken meat were the ones who were most loved.



A woman holding a broiler chicken

Let's embrace local chickens for today and tomorrow

The other thing concerning the broiler production is on the healthy sector. The meat

produced from the broiler is not healthy. According to the survey by the French Institut Pasteur when they analyse 200 samples of chicken, they found out that 83.5% of them were unfit for consumption. These chickens harbour a large quantity of flora made up of faecal or thermo-tolerant coliform organisms of pathogenic staphylococci. Some of the chickens were containing salmonella. Most of these chickens contain fat which is not good for the healthy as well.

Why we should go back to traditional Chicken Production

Upon realising this problem of globalising the broiler production, some organisations such as PORET and individuals thought it wise to preach the gospel of going back to *sangofa*, by growing the traditional chickens. According to the traditional chicken growers in Chaseyama, they noted many advantages of growing these chickens compared to the broiler chickens.

Traditional chicken production provides a major positive economic impact to the rural people especially those who are still practising it. Despite being a healthy meat which is environmental friendly, traditional chickens strengthen the local trade links within the rural and between rural and urban markets. Those farmers who are growing these chickens are enjoying good trade links as most people have realised the healthy risk behind broiler chickens. This demand in traditional chickens has slowly revived the traditional chicken industry.

The production of road runners is also less time consuming as well it has a connection with other projects at home. Road runners did not need much time when growing them in terms of monitoring them regularly as well as feeding them. The reason which makes them less time consuming is because they have a good relationship with other projects in the farming sector. Road runners move around looking for food themselves and it only needs the farmer to feed them two or three times a day. They can mix with other livestock compared to the broilers which are isolated to live on themselves. By mixing with other projects, road runners have the security they have especially when they are with turkeys and pigeons which protect them from the predators.

Also road runners have a maximum capacity of multiplication. Compared to broilers, road runners can lay eggs and hatch for themselves which will help the massive development of the project. A road runner grower does not need to buy the stock many times but just once. Whilst they have their chicken's home, they start to breed as many chickens as they want which mean that the farmer is liberalised from relying from the producers for the start-up chickens like what many people do with the broilers. In other words, the road runner producer is a free once he/she managed to buy the initial stock whilst the broiler prouder is shamed in dependency from the broiler chick producers for the batch of stock per every project.

Who are growing the Tradition Chicken?

The percentage of broiler chickens grown is still high for both rural and urban areas which still discredit the traditional chickens from overtaking the market. We visited farmers in Chimanamani Low veld to discuss with them about the traditional chicken production.

Ambuya Johane: Ambuya Johane is one of the chicken producers in the low-veld. She has been keeping a lot of chickens from the previous year together growing some small grains. When we visited her at her place, she has 26 chickens, 20 chicks and 5 cocks, the other 35 were burnt when her house was burnt in the past month. She said that she want to migrate from full time small grains production to chicken production because she has seen the potential in the production. She has discredited the broiler chickens saying that they are labourers to keep and are not good for the health.

She has the dream to have more than a thousand of these road runners at her place provided that she finds enough resources to finance for the construction of other chickens runs at her place.

Amai Muererwa:





Amai Muererwa feeding her chicken

We also managed to talk with amai Muererwa from Nechitima Village who is into chicken production. Despite being a small grain producer, amai Muererwa said that she is now interested in growing the roadrunners. She said that she want to extend her farming projects into chicken as she realised that chickens are sustainable and are easy to manage in her area. She cited that it is easy for her to be a road runner producer because they are easy, cheap, and considered healthy compared to broilers. Amai Muererwa cited about the need for money to

buy broilers chicks, food which is not sustainable to the local farmers.

As of now, she has more than 60 chickens which are her initial stock. As for now, she is selling some of the chickens at \$5 and what is needed is for the buyers to come and buy the chickens which are ready for the market.

Apart from these two farmers whom we discussed with in detail about their chicken project, we also managed to visit some farmers in Ward 2 and 5 who are doing the same projects. The reason for these farmers of engaging themselves into road runner production is because of its sustainability and easy to manage compared to the broiler chickens.

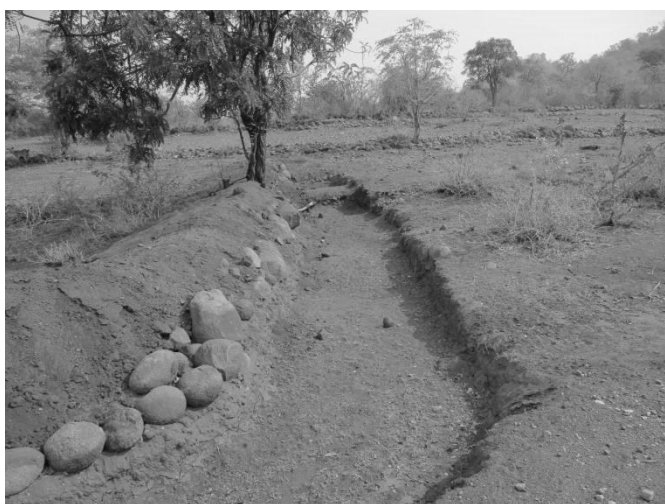
One last problem left in intensifying the Project

Even though the traditional chicken production is slowly growing, the market of the chicken by the producers is still low compared to the broilers. Many people are

buying road runners at low prices from the rural breeders and then sell them at high prices in the city markets. In Chaseyama for example, chickens are sold at \$4 to \$5 and in turn the buyers sell them at \$11 to \$12 dollars in the city markets of Mutare and Harare. When the producers compare themselves with those who are into broiler production, they are forced to believe in the broiler production. In the actual sense, a roadrunner producer needs three months to produce a good chicken and receives \$4 at the end whilst the broiler producer needs just six weeks to produce a chicken and sell it at \$8 which however will discredit the roadrunner production. This means that something needs to be done to make sure that roadrunner production is intensified.

The revival of the traditional chicken projects is beyond the reef, towards giving relief to the producers though some trade laws should be effected by the concerning governing bodies to give roadrunner production its rightful place in the market. There is need to monitor broiler production and give it a low status on the market whilst giving back the traditional chickens their fair share on the market.

Woman and Water management: By Farmer Writers



Water harvesting taking a breakthrough in the Low-veld

"The adverse effects of climate change is negatively affecting woman in all spheres of development. For rural woman, water is an essential element which forms the basis of development."

It started as a **story**, then a **lecture** to a **sample** and now it has largely become one of the well-practised projects in the Low-veld. The steps taken were not that simple. Thorns and stones were faced with many farmers falling by the way side. To those who managed to continue doing the project, they have become the champions who are now inspiring others to also join forces with them in implementing the water management project. Here we are talking about water harvesting.

The Concept of water harvesting

The Chimanimani low veld is one of the places which receives little rainfall as well suffer in the hands of deforestation and erosion hence leading the continued exploitation of woman in the community and

Africa at Large. When PORET started to implement the water management project in Chaseyama, they wanted to create a hub where other farmers will come and learn from. By coming up with swales at their site, many farmers saw it as a good move and later on started to harvest water at their places.

The topic on water and woman is a large one which may needs a good time to look at it. In this issue we want to talk much about farmers who were inspired to do water harvesting at their places.

Women and water

The realism that women and water are close friend needs to be looked not with impartiality because they are reasonably beyond doubt very good friends. Without water, women are the ones who suffer a lot. In Chaseyama, water is still a problem charged by the reason that there are not enough water sources around to provide water for household consumption. Women are forced to walk a long distant to look for one. That is why there is a strong call for women to really engage themselves into water management practise a thing which most women are trying to work on.



A lady coming from the well

Water management practises in the Low veld

Virginia Karisawu: By Jestina Matsitsiro-



Jestina Matsitsiro

It was a lovely day for all farmers who have managed to meet at Mrs Virginia Karisawu homestead to help her expand her water harvesting dam. Virginia Karisawu is a mother of five aged 43; she is also an Outreach Officer at PORET. After learning much about water management from the courses and practical's they were doing at PORET, she thought it wise to go and expand the dam which is in her field. She said that she wanted to harvest more water using the dam because there is a plenty of

water supply to her field. She wanted the same dam to become a multipurpose dam where she will expand the **Chaseyama Dream Project of fish farming** by also putting in some fish into the dam. According to Karisawu, as a woman, she thought it wise to engage into water harvesting since the after effects of the lack of water mostly affects woman. When there is no enough water, its woman who suffer most because they will be forced to walk long distance to fetch water as well need to provide food on the table.



Virginia Karisawu centre

Water Harvesting Projects in Mhandarume by Mai Nduna

Kunoku Kumhandarume kune varimi vakati wande varikuchengetedza mvura uye nenzvimbo dzinowanikwa mvura. Nyaya yekuchengetedzwa kwemvura haisi nyaya yakatanga zvino asi inyaya yakatangwa kare asi varimi vaishaiwa hanya nazvo. Mushure mekudzidza maererano nezvekuchengetedzwa kwemvura kuburikidza ne vashandi VePORET, varimi vakadzidza kuti mvura yakakosha muupenyu hwedu. Kunyanyanya kuvanhu vechidzimayi, mvura yakawanikwa zvinoita kuti vakadzi vakwanise kurima zvekudya zvakanwanda zvinobatsira mumhuri dzedu uye tinowana mvura yekunwa iyo inova inoti netsei munzvimbo dzisinganyatsonaye mvura.

Parizvino, varimi varikugadzira migeri inochengetedza mvura inenge yanaya kuitira kuti pasi pagare paneunyororo. Migeri iyi inodaidzwa kunzi maswales pachirungu. Tine varimi vakati wande vechidzimai varikuita chirongwa ichi nekuti vakadzi ndivo vanotsvaka zvekudya zvehuri uye mvura ichiva iyo yakakosha mubudiro dzedzimba dzedu.

Pamusha pangu ndakakwanisawo kuchera maswales uye mugodhi unochengeta mvura yekushandisa pamba. Tinoziva kuti mvura munzvimbo yedu inonetsa asi tikakwanisa kuchera migodhi uye Kuziva kuti mvura inoda kuchengetwa, hazvizombonetsi varimi muhurongwa hwavo hwose hwekurima.



Mugodhi wemvura uchiri kuchera kwamai Nduna

Uyezve nemhaka yekuti mvura inonetsa kunoku, tirikuyedza kudyara zvirimwa zvakaite senzungu uye sorghum zvisingade mvura yakawanda. Parizvino varimi vechidzimai vazhinji vakapedza kurima saka vave kutanga kudyara miti. Tinoti tikadyara miti tinoidiridzira nemvura yatinoisa mumagaba inenge ichibuda zvisihoma nezvisihoma izvi ndizvo zvirikutobatsira kuti miti yatirikudyara irarame.

Just like other farmers who are doing water management in the low veld, women have find it good for them to be actively involved in the project so that they will not be disadvantaged since women and water are the best friends, failure of one will result in the women finding it hard to provide for the family.

As of now, there is need to drill boreholes and installation of water tanks for the supply of water into the community.

Women Securing Food in the Low-Veld



Lack of land ownership, lack of cash in circulation, high food prices, unenforced agriculture laws and culture are some of the socio-economic factors which are affecting food security in most rural areas in Zimbabwe. For the past months, cash crisis have hit the country leading to failure of accessing of basic needs by woman in the country. For the past years, women have failed to be fully recognised as the custodians of the land which they spent much of their time being its stewards. Also for the past decades, the prices of the basic commodities in Zimbabwe have not been stable and most of the Zimbabweans were finding it difficult to access the basic needs. With all these things faced by woman in Zimbabwe, we want to trace how women in Chasesyama are coping with securing food for their families.

Mai Bande- Food Diversity



Amai bande standing in her vegetable garden

Amai Bande ndeumwe wevarimi vechidzimayi vanogara munzvimbo ye Nechitima muward 3 rechakowa. Murimi uyu anorima zvirimwa zvakati wandei kubva kumbeu dzetsanga diki kusvikira kumichero uye kuzvipfuyo. Takakwanisa kuenda kumba kwamai Bande uko vakanoitudzwa maererano

nehunyanzvi hwavomukurima. Aya ndiwo mashoko avo;

Sezvamunongoona kudai, pano tinorima semhuri ini nababa uye nevana vedu. kurima kwose kwatinoita, tinorima zvirimwa zvakati wandei kubva ku sorghum, nzungu, bhinzi, nyimo. Tinezvifuyo pano zvinoti, huku, hanga, hangaiwa, matoki, mombe uye mbudzi. Zvipfuyo izvi pamwe nezvatinorima zvinotibatsira mukudya kwedu semhuri nekuti hapana zvatinoshaiwa.

Mugore rapera ratarakirama iri, tikakwanisa kuwana zvirimwa zvebhinzi zvakanwanda zvekuti patichapedza kumenya, tikutarisira kuwana matsaga akati wandei.

Zvakakoshera kuti pamba pavenechikafu chakanwanda uye chinivaka muiro ndechekuti zvinodzora ndangariro kumunhu wechidzimayi. sezvo vakadzi vari ivo vanoona kuti pamba padyiwa ere, ndivo vanenge vaine mutoro wakawanda uye kunetsekana mupfungwa kana pasina kudya kwakakwana kunodiwa.

Kuno kunzvimbo yedu kunonetsa mvura asi tirikuzama napose patinogona kuti tigadzire kudya kwakakwana kumhuri dzedu. naizvozvo tinongoti semadzimayi dai takakwanisa kupuwa mukina mukuru uye zvekushandisa zvinodikanwa mukurima kuitira kuti tikwanise kupa mhuri dzedu kudya kwakakwana.

Amai bande varikurimawo miriwo yendudzi dzakasiyana-siyana iyo inovabatsira mukupa kudya kunovaka muviri.

Bee Production and value addition

Food security is not only by growing mall grains but can also be from the secondary industry in the food production. Most people who find it difficult to engage themselves into crop production are turning into other activities so that they provide for their families.

We managed to trace back the lives of two women from Jinga Village who are surviving

through honey production. Kodzevhu Mutanda is the mother of four who finds it good to fully depend on honey production to provide for the family. The other women is amai Murawu who is a good crop producer as well engaging into honey production.

For the past years, Kodzevhu has been into honey production and processing whereby she inherited some bee hives from her parents. She started to keep them well and harvest from the hives every year. After harvesting the honey, Kodzevhu will then process it and pack into bottles. It is from the money she gets from selling honey that she is using to buy food for her family, to buy clothes and other necessities.

According to her, it is sometimes difficult for women headed families to live on themselves as many people will only think that men are the ones who can make a household stand. So for her, the story is different, she is into full time honey production and also manage a small field to grow sorghum. She urged other women that it is from the women that the household can survive and for the food; women should play a significant role In making sure that there is enough food for the family.



Amai Murawu carrying a traditional bee hives

From the other view, amai Murawu said that most people thought that only honey production can be done by man but the reality is women are always behind every project initiated at home. She said she helped her husband in looking after the beehives and every year they harvest from them. They sell honey and get money in

exchange which is one of the benefits of the project. Her main argument was that, in honey, we get medication as well as some nutrients which are needed in the body. She

urged women to practice different types of projects which will help in the production of enough food on the table.

Woman in Education: By MV Tsinakwadi and M Tsuru

Dedicating time to the Infants



Marry Violet Tsinakwadi and Media Tsuru

Women's roles in the development agenda is not only limited to full engagement into household chores, it also expands to education of the Children both in formal and informal sector. We have quite a number of women who have volunteered themselves to become teachers of the Early Childhood Development across the country for the past years and yet today they have committed their time with kids. These women also take their time to educate their children at home from a tender age until they die this then forms part of the informal education sector. In this episode, we want to discuss about two women who have taken their time to spent much of their time with kids at PORET ECD Learning centre; we are talking about Mrs Tsinakwadi and Mrs Media Tsuru from Chaseyama. Mrs Marry Violet Tsinakwadi is a retired Headmistress from Chaseyama Primary School. She has taken her time to develop the school from no block until the school was completed and geared to work. As a woman Head during the 80s, many people did not believe in her capabilities as an African lady of leading a school. Through Dedication and hard work, she proved all her critics wrong. On the Other side, Mrs Media Tsuru grows passion with children so she volunteered to work with Marry at PORET-Chaseyama B ECD Centre.

In this part of formal education, the two teachers have been working hard in trying to create the best ECD centre which breeds good students. The two managed to maintain their status as an ECD which provides the best infant education in the area. When the kids graduate from the centre, they are rated as the top class students at all the school they are enrolled. According to Mary Violet; "we are producing good students here not because we are clever but because we developed passion to work with these kids and try to understand each Childs need and weakness. We work with the strength and weakness of each child so that we give each a right dose of knowledge." The ECD has managed to produce good students like Obey Nkomo who are doing well at their primary schools.



Some of the students enrolled at Chaseyama B ECD Centre



The students seated inside their classroom

According to MV Tsinakwadi, a society without a woman is dead. What women do appears to be minor but in reality, they perform a great role in the upkeep of the family and community. She also said that; *vakadzi varimumabasa ekudzidzisa ndivo vanokwanisa kuti mwana wemuzera wechidiki adzidze uye nekutambanuka pfungwa. Izvi zvinobuda nekuti vakadzi vane hanya uye vaemwoyo wekubereka zvinoita izvo kuti vade kudzidzisa mwana umwe noumwe pane icho chaanenge asinganyatsonzwisise uye kugona.*

Also M Tsuru said that at the centre, they perform a motherly education through understanding the needs of every child. She said that she is a teacher because she likes her work and not because she wants favours at the end.

We can see that the ECD is doing well in terms of providing quality education however there are a lot of things which needs to be looked at. The first thing is the welfare of the teachers with transport which the teachers say they walk 5killometres every day to school. After then the household chores will be waiting for them. As women in education, Media said that it will be fine if they can get a transport which will carry the teachers and the children to school. This will also improve their enrolment. For now, the student population combined of the two classes is 20 of which their fees are not able to provide for the teacher welfare and for the school needs. Their special needs are into transport and resources to use at the centre as well as enough marketing of the entre.

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PORET CHASEYAMA AGROECOLOGY NEWSLETTER

Connecting generations of Famers together