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# CHASEYAMA AGROECOLOGY NEWSLETTER



Jinga Village, Chaseyama, Chimanimani District, 0773025438

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## MANICALAND PROVINCE MINISTER APPLAUDS AGROECOLOGY

Minister of State for Manicaland Provincial Affairs and Devolution, Honorable Nokhuthula Matsikenyerere hails agroecology projects which are being done in Chimanimani West. On the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2023, the Minister embarked on a tour of various projects which are being done by farmers from Chimanimani West who are into agroecology.

The Minister made a return to the low veld following past visits she has been doing to the since last year. She started her long day tour at Mhandarume ward 2 where she visited Mrs Bertha Chimbanga's homestead. The farmer has successfully carried out crop field impaction where she used cattle to enrich her soil through impaction. She managed to grow sorghum which has done well in her field.



*Above: Minister Interacting with farmers at Zvokuitirwa Permaculture Center*



*Above: Minister Matsikenyerere (at the centre) following proceedings at Mrs Berthas Field in Mhandarume*

The Minister visited Zvokuitirwa Permaculture Centre where she interacted with farmers who are into agroecology. The farmers are mainly concentrating in vegetable gardening and nursery production. Other projects being done at the centre include food processing, seed saving, mushroom production and water harvesting.

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### DIRECTORS MESSAGE

I am happy to welcome famers into the year 2023. We did well in the year 2022 and it's my hope that during this year 2023, we are going to see more examples of sustainable food production, water harvesting among others. I would also like to thank our youths who have shown determination in our quest to transform our area into a sustainable farming zone. It's my humble pleasure to see more of such initiatives during this year 2023.

*Julius Piti.*

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The Minister proceeded to Jinga Village where she visited two water harvesting sites. The two sites presented excellent examples of water harvesting where there are swales and dams to harvest rain water. The Minister was impressed by the two water harvesting sites and she urged farmers to keep on united to turn their areas into sustainable farming zones.

She concluded her visit by meeting farmers who had gathered at PORET centre. The Minister started by recognizing the projects which are being done in Chimanimani West of creating a sustainable farming zone. She urged farmers to learn along with PORET so that food production is hailed in the area.

## CROP FIELD IMPACTION, A SUCCESS



**Above:** *Sorghum Field at Mrs Bertha Chimbanga*

It's quite impressive to see farmers doing successful projects on their own as a way of improving food production. A typical example of such a farmer is Mrs Bertha Chimbanga from ward 2 Mhandarume who has managed to do a crop field impaction.

Crop field impaction is a way of improving soil fertility through the use of livestock. This process helps to loosen the soil as well as making livestock leave manure in the field to feed the soil.

According to Mrs Chimbanga, she used her livestock to feed her field. She grew sorghum which has done well. *"I have managed to grow sorghum on this field and as you can see, my sorghum has done well."* She said.

She also added on saying that, crop field impaction promotes our culture not only in terms of eating small grains but also through interacting with our livestock to help us grow health food. Small grains are considered healthy and they are also easy to grow.

PORET Director Mr. Julious Piti also added on saying that, *"we need our cattle to help us in growing food through the crop field impaction program."*

When these projects are done by farmers themselves, they come out well and they produce good results.



**Above:** *(in black skirt), Mrs Bertha Chimbanga explaining how a crop field impaction works.*



**Above:** *Mr J Piti explaining the importance of crop field impaction,*

# AGROECOLOGY ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS DAY



***Above:** Part of the Crowd during the agroecology advocacy and awareness day held at PORET*

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of February 2023, farmers gathered at PORET centre for an advocacy and awareness campaign towards sustainable farming in Chimanmani. The event was organized by PORET and Chaseyama Permaculture Club as a way of advocating for sustainable agriculture.

According to PORET Manger Mr. Blessing Chamudondo, the objectives of the day where to raise awareness on sustainable agriculture, food production and holistic land and livestock management. It was also the same day Chaseyama Permaculture Club wanted to update the Minister on the projects they were embarking in the low veld.

The event was attended by Minister for Manicaland Provincial Affairs and Devolution Hon Nokhuthula Matsikenyerere who was the guest of honor. Other respected guest during the same occasion were, Chief Mutambara, Headman, Village Heads, Stakeholders and CPC main committee.

During the same occasion. Mr. Jarawani who is a CPC member managed to share with the visitors and farmers about agroecology. He emphasized that agroecology is all about growing healthy food the sustainable way. He also added on that in agroecology, farmers should abstain from using synthetic chemicals.

Chaseyama Permaculture Club members managed to give testimonies on the work which is being done young people in their villages. Since last year, a number of young people have involved themselves in water harvesting initiatives where they identified gullies in their villages and turn them into water harvesting fields.

One of the farmers by the Name Dorothy Ziweya thanked youths for helping her come up with dams and swales in her field. Now she has managed to minimize the problem of soil erosion which was happening in her field.

Mr. Julious Piti the PORET Director managed to shed more light on the projects which are being done by farmers in the low veld. He touched on the issue of water harvesting and keeping our resources for the future generation. He urged farmers to use the resources they have to empower themselves. He also added on saying that lets empower our young generation to venture into agroecology, for the future of our area to be good.

The day was rounded up by a speech by Hon Matsikenyerere who urged farmers to continue doing the good work. She said that she was impressed by a statement from PORET Director Mr. Piti which said farmers should start doing projects and not to wait for people to come and initiate projects for themselves. She also urged farmers to grow small grains which are good in the low veld.



***Above:** Minister Matsikenyerere giving a speech*

## YOUTHS WATER HARVESTING PROJECTS, QUITE IMPRESSIVE IN THE LOW VELD

The beginning of last year saw a number of youths involved in water harvesting. Organized groups of youths from different wards managed to come up with water harvesting initiatives in their respective wards.

According to PORET Manager Mr. Blessing Chamudondo, *“youths from different wards we are operating in have managed to organize themselves to do water harvesting in their respective wards.”* The program which started last year has spilled into this year with a number of youth's involved in the water harvesting.

Up to to date, a number of water harvesting sites has been well established in different villages. The water harvesting program involves, digging of swales, construction of dams and gabions to store water as well as to reduce runoff and soil erosion. During the water harvesting, youths also managed to plant trees as part of the program.

There are quite a number of water harvesting sites in various wards. Water harvesting has been done at homesteads and also in the forest where much of erosion and deforestation has been taking place.

According to Kembo, one of the youths who is actively involved in this program, *“water harvesting is now part of our DNA as it is helping us to preserve our environment with a goal of making our region a sustainable farming zone.”*

Mr. Chamudondo is proud of the work which is being done by youths in helping keeping the environment and further reducing the effects of climate change. Youths themselves are happier to be part of this journey of transforming deserts in sustainable farming zones.



*Above: Gabions used to reduce runoff*



*Above: A dam used to Harvest water*



*Above: One of the gully which has been reclaimed. This picture shows where the gully starts.*