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## Chirundu farmers visit to Kasisi Agriculture Training Center (KATC)

Farmer exchange programs give farmers an opportunity to exchange and share knowledge on the different practices each farmer engages in.

Farmers from Chirundu district recently visited Kasisi Agricultural Training Center (KATC) where they were taught on the different techniques of sustainable organic agricultural practices and had an opportunity to visit a practicing farmer who is into avocado organic production.

Benny Siamapabi is a farmer from Chirundu district who appreciated the visit and shared that he would take back the knowledge to his community.

“Having been given this opportunity, we also need to be teachers to our friends so that they know about the use of compost as well as trees like avocado,” he said.

Goodson Kalolo is an organic farmer in Kasisi; he challenged Chirundu farmers not to be too dependent on the government for farming inputs which have not so much helped them but instead use their own locally available on farm materials.

“Organic farming does not require you to use all these sophisticated materials to produce whatever it is you are producing at your farm, all you need are the very things you use at your farm like chicken droppings, cow dung and manure from goats,” Mr. Kalolo said.

Mr. Kalolo encouraged the farmers to work as a team and not work in isolation if they are to turn their farming into a business that would sustain their incomes.



***Goodson Kalolo “Through this type of farming, I can safely say that am living a very comfortable life and am able to take care of my family, am challenging you the small-scale farmer to take up this type of farming if you want to improve on your incomes . I say so because organic food production does not require you to use a lot of resources because you use the materials at your farm.”***





### Francis Phiri Appreciates Training in Seed Production and Marketing

From one farming season to the next, small scale farmers have been producing food not only enough for their household consumption but often times end up with a surplus which they are constantly looking for markets to sell.

Mr. Francis Phiri a small-scale farmer in Shibuyunji participated in the Training of Trainers (ToT) as facilitators in seed production and marketing.

He was very delighted to have connected virtually with the global team and other project participants from Zimbabwe and Uganda during the online training.

He appreciated the training in vision and planning, cost benefit analysis and record keeping which he has begun implementing on his farm.

This has helped him track his expenditure and profit. "Everyone in business must learn this skill. The knowledge the training gave me cannot be compared to anything. People must wake up and begin thinking. The training opened my eyes," he said.

Mr Francis feels that the training in seed production and marketing is very important for farmer groups and individual farmers as it can be applied in other business ventures.

Mr. Francis remains committed to ensuring that his fellow farmers understand the business concept in seed production and marketing.

### Nutrition Key to Development- Mary Siamakaba

Nutrition security is of utmost importance for communities to develop, Mary Siamakaba a farmer in Chirundu district says. She shares her story on how they live as a community with a spirit of sharing amongst themselves, she says they not only share seed but also provide food to those who are less privileged.

"Since CTDI came in 2018, we were taught on the farming practices we should adopt considering the weather we were experiencing, we had three programmes which involved diversity, seed production and nutrition".

"Nutrition is my favourite program because I got touched when CTDI told us on how Zambia was being affected by malnutrition. I was mostly interested in nutrition, it's the topic of nutrition I have interest to share information because its close to my heart," she said.



*"These crops are good for my community because we consume them, sell them and we also do a lot of value addition ,"* Mary Siamakaba.

Mary however added that her community still grapples with malnutrition due to the effects of climate change which has greatly impacted their agricultural production.

"Agriculture in Chilindi is dependent on the climate change, we usually go for crops that are early maturing because of the limited rains we receive. I love that we have a lot of different varieties, early maturing as well late maturing. Last season I had three different sorghum and pearl millet varieties.

"These crops are good for my community because we consume them, sell them and we also do a lot of value addition on the crops like nshima, porridge and drinks," Mary added.



*The inclusion of wild food varieties in the diets of rural communities is seemingly closing the gap to food insecurity especially during scarcity periods thereby ensuring nutrition security.*





“Farming practices of nowadays and that of the past years is different, in the past our forefathers used to practice their agriculture easily because of the good rains. Since the recent past, the rains are scarce because of the impact climate change has brought upon us.

The change in climate has changed a lot of things for us, what we are supposed to do with the change in climate is to adopt a diversity of crops. Different crops will ensure our food security as we do not completely loose out on everything. With this climate we should not only be planting one type of crop,” She said.

With the change in climate, it calls for farmers to have knowledge on the type of crops they are planting and the timings for planting.

“We should embrace sustainable agricultural practices like ripping for better yields even when we do not have enough rains. It calls for us farmers to be proactive and be on the lookout for weather information because the government always updates us on the weather situations each and every year; they measure how the rains are and tell us if there will be enough rains or not, they say if the rains are coming early or late.

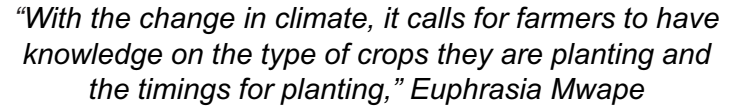
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Mrs. Mwape added that the change in climate is teaching farmers a lot of things; its teaching the farmers on the importance of planting a diversity of crops for example, groundnuts, beans which are good sources of nutrition and also early maturing.

"It has reminded us that even with little rains we can still plant early maturing crops like other sorghum varieties which take a period of three months instead of six months mature thereby ensuring our food security at household levels," She said.



## Upcoming Event



# ZAMBIA TRADITIONAL SEED AND FOOD FESTIVAL