



# CTDT Monthly Newsletter



*cowpea multiplication site in Chirundu district*

## Restoring Local Seeds Through Multiplication

Traditions and customs are of utmost importance in preserving the heritage of a given nation; preservation of local seeds from generation to generation is also an important aspect in preserving this heritage.

CTDT engages with a number of farmers in seed multiplication to ensure the recovery and conservation of local seed plants in the communities where these seeds were slowly going into extinction.

In Chirundu district, the local farmers planted cowpea for seed multiplication; cowpea is a resilient crop which is able to help in the hunger situations in times where there is a drought.

Mr. Ben Siamapabi a small-scale farmer in Chirundu district shares that they opted for 'musandile' an early an early maturing variety in trying to ensure food security in his community.

"This cowpea will help us in lessening the hunger situation in our community because our area is prone to droughts and us having this early maturing variety

of cowpea is a plus on our end because we will be food secure," He said.

He further added that the reason they planted cowpea on a bigger plot was to have it shared among the community members.

"We want each and every one to have this cowpea variety in their households, hence we planted on a larger scale and if by next year we still have some other households without it, we will plant some more until each member of our community has this variety because we have seen the value it has to our food and nutrition security," he added

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## Armoured Bush Crickets Attack Chirundu Crops

Chirundu district was between the months of February and March hit with an outbreak of the armoured bush cricket which started to attack crops at the point of flowering.

The outbreak of the armoured bush cricket is presenting a real threat to the district's household food and nutrition security due to its feeding nature of destructiveness on any plant it sits on.

Mr. Brian Chibulo who is a headteacher and farmer in Chirundu's Machavika area said the community had enough food that was planted but the presence of the armoured bush cricket is becoming a threat to their food security.

"Please come and deal with this insect before we lose all our crops; dealing with it is the only assurance for us to have food for the whole year before we harvest for the next season," He said.

We are further asking the Ministry of Agriculture to intervene in this issue early enough in the coming farming season not knowing it could attack again; we are calling upon the ministry to come up with



*A farmer holds an armoured cricket which has destroyed hundreds of hectares of crops in Chirundu district*

agroecological measures of controlling the armoured cricket before the next farming season" Mr. Chibulo added

And Grace Simunzi also a farmer in Chirundu district said planting a diversity of crops has helped her to have sufficient food for her family even after the crops were attacked by the armoured bush cricket.

"I planted a variety of crops to ensure food security for my family; I planted cowpea, pearl millet, groundnuts and sorghum. Though my pearl millet was completely eaten up by the armoured bush cricket, I still have some food left because I planted a variety of crops," She said.



*Farmers from the big concession being welcomed into the seed bank*

## FIAN Zambia Visit to Shibuyunji Community Seed Bank

FIAN Zambia, represented by the programs officer monitoring and accountability, Mwila Bowa lead a group of farmers from Mumbwa's Big Concession on a tour of the Medzaland community seed bank in Shibuyunji district on a farmer exchange program.

The visit started with a tour of the old community seed bank where the farmers from Shibuyunji shared the stories on how they started with their community seed bank.

They were later lead to one of the farmer field schools where the field day was to be held; this event gave an opportunity for the farmers to share the different agroecological practices that were employed in managing the different crops that were being showcased.

The tour was concluded at the Community seed bank where the visiting farmers were taken on a familiarisation tour of the Medzaland community seed bank to appreciate the work being done by the farmers in the district.

Cholwe Mweemba who is a lead farmer from Big Concession appreciated the interaction citing that he was touched with the experiences shared by their counterparts and hoped that these programs would also be implemented in their community.

"I therefore urge you my fellow farmers from the Big Concession to learn from these experiences; see how far these people have gone; they say a thousand miles starts with a one single step. This only means they started out very small and they have now grown," He said.

And one of the women visiting farmer was elated with what she had seen in Shibuyunji district particularly with the work being done at the seed bank. She was quick to say that with what they had seen and heard from their counterparts, the program was one which brings development to communities especially on the part of women

"I say so because women are the custodians of the family, they are the ones in charge of taking care of food issues at household levels; women are the ones who even make a choice on what seed to plant," she added.

## CTDT Conducts ToT in Seed Production and Marketing

CTDT recently held a five-day training of trainers (ToT) in seed production and marketing; the aim of the ToT was to create a first team of facilitators who will implement the farmer field schools (FFS) on Seed Production and Marketing at the community level.

CTDT Project Manager Juliet Nangamba, told the participants that according to a study done by McGuire and Sperling 2016, across five African and one North American country on Farmer Managed Seed Systems (FMSS) showed that farmers access most of their seed from informal seed systems with 50.9% sourced from local markets.

She added that promotion of local markets for farmer varieties was an important channel through which Small Holder Farmers (SHF's) seed varieties would easily traded on the markets which would in turn help in bettering the livelihoods of rural communities.

And participating farmers during the open discussions

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shared a number of issues, challenges and opportunities they thought they had when it came to seed production and marketing.

Among the issues highlighted by the farmers were that the prices of their produce were unpredictable on the market as the power of determining prices rested with the buyer and not the farmers themselves.

The farmers went on to also share their experiences when it came to hybrid seeds' performance and comparing it to the local seeds which they had been saving and sharing within their communities for generations.



*SCCI presenting on seed policy and regulations in Zambia during the ToT*

It was further noted that the emergency of covid-19 was a wake-up call for African governments to consider FMSS as a viable source of food and seed for its local markets.

The coming of covid -19 saw a number of countries where food products and other farming inputs are imported from closed up due to the mobility restrictions to stop the spread of the virus.

In concluding the training, farmers were taken to Chongwe market in Chongwe district to conduct a market research of the available local seed on the market and to see what opportunities are there for the local farmers' varieties.



*Visit to the Chongwe market on market research for local seeds*

**Quote:** It is vitally important that we can continue to say, with absolute conviction, that organic farming delivers the highest quality, best-testing food, produced without artificial chemicals or genetic modification, and with respect for animal welfare and the environment, while helping to maintain the landscape and rural communities.

**Prince Charles**



# Picture Stories



*Construction of the Rufunsa Community Seed Bank underway*



*Display of dried local traditional varieties of vegetables. These local preservation methods are important for ensuring food security during off seasons.  
**Photo credit:** Shibuyunji DFO*



*Community mapping process in Machavika area of Chirundu district*



*Traditional maize storage system in Rufunsa district*



*Training on resilient crop production in Rufunsa district*



*Field day in Chikankata*