



FARMERS CLUB SOFALA-ZAMBÉZIA

Newsletter QUARTERLY EDITION I 2016

EDITORIAL

Despite the economic progress in the last two decades, Mozambique continues to be a country that suffers with food insecurity and in which there is need for considerable improvements to increase the availability of food and improve access to them.

Withview to face this challenge ADPP Mozambique funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA), is implementing the Farmers Club project of in the districts of Maringue and Caia in Sofala province and Nama-curra and Nicoadala in Zambézia province.

The project is also being implemented under the agreement between ADPP Mozambique and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, through the provincial and district directorates.

It is a project which aims to increase food secu-

urity and improve the lives of more than 14.000 small farmers and their families in the selected districts, through the creation of Farmers Clubs and training of its members in sustainable farming practices, among other activities.

Apart from contributing for the reduction of rural poverty, the project includes interventions across health, literacy and gender equality areas. The farmers are also trained in the issues associated with climate changes as a way to reinforce their capacity in the mitigation and adaptability to the negative effects of global warming and ensure food security in the future. In this way, the objective of the present Newsletter is to bring to the reader the activities that are being developed by the Sofala and Zambézia Farmers' Club Project.

Good Reading

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Farmers Clubs improve the lives of small farmers in Sofala and Zambézia



Small scale farming is responsible for most of the national production in Mozambique. However, the revenues from agriculture are very low and the production is largely influenced by recurrent climate shocks, which affects directly the food security conditions.

Thanks to the Farmers Club project implemented by ADPP Mozambique, the life of small farmers in Caia and Maringue districts in Sofala, Nicoadala and Namacurra in Zambézia, are experiencing improvements.

The project is contributing for the reduction of rural poverty in the four districts through small scale agricultural development and increasing the wealth of

farmers' families in a sustainable way, with improvement of food security, access to the markets and financial resources through enlargement of the value chains. The project is also working to improve water conditions and environmental sanitation and increase awareness about health among farmers and in their families.

For the effect, 312 Clubs were formed where agricultural techniques are transmitted such as conservation farming, crop intercalary, rotation and crops diversification, conservation practices to minimize soil disturbance, composition and natural biodiversity, reducing therefore the erosion and degradation of soil. They were also established 624 demonstration fields so that farmers may make

an in loco comparison between traditional farming methods and the new technologies.

The objective of the Clubs is to demonstrate the important advantageous of being organized in associations. Besides offering support, Farmers Clubs provide access to new information through training, new agricultural inputs and use of equipment through sharing, a better negotiation power in the markets through joint sales activities and, eventually, access to external funds and other financial resources.

The idea of Clubs is not that of being a rigid structure, but yes an open forum for learning, cooperation and mutual support. In this way, they supply a tool based on practice and guided towards change in support of sustainable growth of rural communities.

Each Farmers Club has around 25 to 50 members and the Clubs Committees of Farmers are constituted by 5 local farmers that are trained in management and the clubs planning and in taking responsibility of the long term continuity of the Program. Each group of 5 Farmers Clubs is supported by one agricultural Instructor especially trained as extension agent that works and lives in the community where the program is implemented.

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Farmers Clubs change communities eating habits

Despite Government efforts in order to revert the scenario, the prevalence of malnutrition especially the infant malnutrition, continues to be high in Mozambique. The prevalence of malnutrition in Sofala is estimated at 36%. According to the 2014 annual report for Sofala Provincial Directorate of Health, mortality due to malnutrition is about 14,8%. In Zambezia province, the prevalence of malnutrition is 33%.

To deal with this high level of malnutrition, the project, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, conducted two nutrition campaigns among all members of the Farmers Clubs in all districts where the Program is being implemented.

In total, 1.297 farmers (903 women and 394 men) were trained. Besides the members of Farmers Clubs, communi-

ty leaders and district health activists did also take part in the trainings. They covered nutrition principles such as different types of food, balanced diet and food diversification. A training manual was developed with guidance from a specialist in nutrition from District Health Services of Caia. The new manual and methodology ensured that all farmers receive training of the same content and quality.

The training focused on low cost diet practices with high level of nutritional value, based on products locally available. The training took especial consideration the importance of infant nutrition balanced diet, nutrition for pregnant women and nutrition for HIV-positive people. The training revealed to be essential, given that the farmers declared that they came to know how to easily add nutritional value to their food.

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Project raises awareness on climatic changes

Climate change constitutes a serious threat to sustainable development and if not controlled well, will jeopardize all efforts made to eradicate poverty.

All districts where the Farmers Club project is being implemented in Sofala-Zambézia are prone to drought, to desertification, to irregular rains and to floods which are consequences of climate changes. Agriculture and food security are especially vulnerable to climate changes.

Taking into consideration the climate changes effects, the project is contributing for the mitigation of the climate alterations through the introduction of conservation farming methods.

The instructors are raising farmers' awareness on the negative impact of fires and encourage them to adopt conservation farming methods.

The project is training farmers in the 312 clubs to adopt con-



servation farming as an alternative method to fire and tree cutting, only in this way, will they be able to produce more without the need to open new fields in search of fertile soil. Campaigns have been conducted to encourage farmers to plant more trees and reduce the cutting of trees through

the use of "fuel efficient" stoves, in order to minimize the use of firewood.

The Project is collaborating with community leaders to mobilize farmers' on protection of community forests among other activities that aim at mitigating the effects of climate changes.

Farmers trained in microfinances

With the objective to empower small farmers in order to ensure that they are able to apply in the best way the loans from the District Development Fund and of other institutions of microfinances, the Farmers Club Project, with the support of a special-

ized partner, Kulima trained farmers on issues related to microfinances.

The training covered themes and concepts of group economic and micro-credits. The projects' target is to train club committees in basic planning and financial management.

The Farmers Club Project created a total of 36 saving groups and the amount of money in circulation is about 169.106 Meticais. The farmers are encouraged to start fundraising activities that include individual contributions to deposit in a saving account.

“Thanks to this project our living standards improved”

-Says Augusta Companhia, member of the Farmers Club” 27 September”. 62 years of age



“I am a member of the ‘27 de Setembro’ club, here in Mixixine, Nicoadala district since the beginning of the project. I have been participating in various trainings offered by the project, such as training in saving and on how to start saving groups, about fuel-efficient stoves and on food processing.

Our instructor, Madalena, also taught us new techniques on farming and how to get a better harvest. I learnt about crop rotation and its benefits, about planting of different crops in the same field and how that increases soil fertility.

I also learnt about the importance of planting in straight lines to allow better removal of weed, treatment of pests and the efficiency during harvest. I also learnt about horticulture.

I had not planted vegetables in my field before this project, but after that training I am proud to say that I have been able to plant healthy vegetables in my field. “

“In the training about food processing, I learnt how to prepare

and preserve tomato puree” tells Augusta, proceeding:

“his is really useful because here in our midst it’s not possible to have a fridge. I learned how to prepare nutritive porridge by mixing sweet potato, moringa and pumpkin leaves, which is very good and cheap.

Augusta speaks about the role of instructor Madalena. “she also told us about the importance of washing hands before and after meals to avoid the spread of diarrheal diseases. She also, transmitted to us the importance of drinking clean water for good health and protection against diseases”.

“ I have four children and many grandchildren. Thanks to this project, our standard of life improved and we eat better than before. I also managed to buy one a wrapping cloth (capulana) among those that costs around 200 Meticaís. In the past, I could not afford it!, exclaimed.

Augusta does not limit herself within this list of benefits that the Farmers Club Project in Sofala and Zambézia brought her. “Now I can buy fish of good quality to feed my family. And my nephew is studying and I can support him in purchasing school uniform and material”, says. “I feel rewarded”.

Preventing Malaria and HIV/AIDS

Malaria and HIV/AIDS are a big health problem in Mozambique. According to the Ministry of Health (MISAU), the national prevalence rate of HIV is 11,5% and in 2012 there were 3,2 million registered cases of malaria, with mortality rates corresponding to 27% and 29% , respectively.

The project “Farmers Club” implemented by ADPP in the provinces of Sofala and Zambézia organized with success in collaboration with MISAU, two campaigns about malaria and HIV/AIDS to increase the awareness amongst farmers. The first was conducted in both provinces where farmers were sensitized about the transmission of diseases, prevention, symptoms and treatment. The second campaign was organized on the World AIDS Day, the 1st of December. In Sofala the campaigns were conducted in Tche-tcha, Ndoro and Phalami and in Zambézia in the localities of Botão and Furquia.

A total of 2.400 farmers participated in the events in which nurses of district health services lectured on prevention and treatment of HIV. There were also distributed male and female condoms, apart from voluntary counselling and testing activities.

ADPP Moçambique

Av. Massacre de Wiriamo, 258, Machava, Maputo Província, Moçambique

Tel: +258 21 750 106 Fax: +258 21 750 107

Email: info.adpp@adpp-mozambique.org

Website: www.adpp-mozambique.org