

FFM END OF PROJECT REPORT

NJEREMOTO DRIP IRRIGATION

INTRODUCTION

The project being reported hereunder falls inside FFM's permaculture agenda, a livelihood strategy aimed at achieving economic progress for Matibi populaces at the same time bringing about ecological conservation and sustainability. The particular assignment as stated above was to set up a drip irrigation system in the named garden, the purpose being to facilitate organic gardening in the community. The completed setup comes as the second such garden after Tamuka which was completed on December 7th 2018. Tamuka and Njeremoto Gardens sit along the length of Musaverema Dam, one in this end and the other on the other end. They are both of roughly the same size, being approximately 50mX50m and they enjoy a two-year-long supply of dam water in case of drought.

DELIVERABLES

The drip irrigation setup was the subsequent assignment after the completion of the fencing in April 2018. Two gardens were fenced at the same time but the irrigation system could not be installed at once because a single company was contracted to do that in both gardens. Irrigation Services, a Masvingo-based company, was contracted to install a drip irrigation mechanism powered by solar energy just as the one installed at Tamuka downstream. The specifications of the assignment were as written in the farm visit report dated July 19th 2018, done by the same company. Part of the detail included mounting a 5 thousand litres tank on a 3 metre steel stand as well as laying enough pipes to draw water over a distance of 250 metres from the dam. All this was done, not only to the satisfaction of the gardeners at Njeremoto but also to the envy of villagers situated outside the garden's threshold, who became more desirous to have the same system set up in their own zone.

CHALLENGES

The Njeremoto project endured nearly the same hassles as Tamuka. Worse, Njeremoto gardeners grew crops for nearly a year using buckets to irrigate, which was quite exhausting. Worse still, the cost soured a lot over the period. The Tamuka project took about USD6,000

but Njeremoto had to consume USD9,210. The Njeremoto project took off at the time when there were price riots in the country following a government-gazetted fuel price hike of 150%, which triggered widespread price increases across all sectors. In addition, foreign currency vendors (in this case Western Union) also reported shortage of cash to meet their customer requirements, causing the contracted company to go to the next city to source cash.

SUCSESSES

This project stands as evidence of a stronger business relationship between FFM and Irrigation Services. Prices were unbearable and materials were hard to obtain but the two organisations struck a balance between the needs of either party. Since this was the second time contracting the same company for a similar assignment, there was also increased confidence that the tasks would be done to the book. It was also a time for monitoring the performance of the earlier Tamuka project and taking lessons. On March 27th, for instance, the company sent a replacement valve to replace the one which the Agricultural Officer had reported to have broken.

The community also displayed acknowledgeable commitment in the project. At one time the contractor had to visit the garden without ample prior notice but the gardeners were always ready to cooperate. One day there was a funeral in the village but the gardeners went to the funeral and then to the garden afterwards in order to not postpone the work which was scheduled for the day. This was even against the cultural norm which prohibits work within two days of a funeral; and the village authorities deserve credit for the courtesy they applied in waiving the regulations for the good of the project. Gardeners from both gardens also exhibited commendable supportiveness as their committees did exchange visits to share experiences.

The contribution of the villagers to this project was also up to scratch. They particularly made the grade by practising organic cropping even ahead of schedule. Now that the scheme is complete with all sundries, it is doubtless that the organic gardening method is in good hands. They arranged by themselves for mini-trainings with the local agricultural officer. Also desirable about their commitment is that they help the frail and the elderly in tending for the vegetable beds. It has to be noted as well that the greater mass of their membership is made

up of women but they did physically demanding jobs such as clearing thick bushes and digging trenches by themselves. They also contributed monies such as to buy a padlock for the solar frame and hiring a boat to take the submersible pump to the deep of the dam.

CONCLUSION

As a final point, the above reported project is basically a success. Regardless of the trying economic situation, the project was carried out with superior coordination and care among its stakeholders. Improvements were observable in the handling of the project compared with the prior one, a sign of learning from experience. Going forward, the gardeners want toilets in the two gardens (Tamuka and Njeremoto) for which they have already moulded bricks and dug pits. They will build by themselves and what they requested is cement and wires worth 480 USD. Shortly after, the programme should see the fencing of two new gardens to expand the permaculture model in the wider community.

ATTACHMENTS



The boat that the women hired to submerge the pump



The power source for the submersed pump



A 5 thousand litres tank on a 3 metres stand



The Agric Officer (in the foreground and facing the camera) participating in laying the pipes



Women burying the pipes after system completion



Testing the pressure of the pumped water on a rather cloudy day, before the tank was even filled



Hygiene tap for washing hands and vegetables