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SHARP survey process in Zimbabwe

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E-LEARNING SERIES | Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program on DRYLAND SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES

SHARP survey process in Zimbabwe

Implementation Steps for SHARP+

1. Engagement with the national FAO team and the Global Coordination at FAO HQ for logistical arrangements and technical support

2. Zimbabwe contributed actively to adapting the SHARP+ tool to the local context:
   - Reworded selected survey questions for cultural relevance
   - Added local tree species names to enhance clarity and accuracy

3. Development of the SHARP survey plan focusing on the sampling frame with geographic dispersion of the targeted FFPOs (Forest and Farmer Producer Organizations (FFPOs), data collection, manpower availability, equipment and transport.

SHARP survey process in Zimbabwe

Implementation Steps for SHARP+

4. Multi-institutional survey team from EMA. Forestry Commission, CTDO, WV and ZPWMA

5. Training and Pre-testing
   - Two rounds of team training, including field testing of tools: September 2023 and November 2023
   - Feedback from pre-testing informed refinements to the global tool

6. Data collection: Conducted from 22 November to 3 December 2023 (10 days)
   - One coordinated team moving ward by ward across eight districts:
   - Chimanimani, Masvingo, Shurugwi, Bikita, Buhera, Chipinge, Chivi, and Zaka
   - Total of 514 farmers surveyed

How the data is supporting evidence-based decision

How the data is being used

- Adaptive Management
- Tailoring of the Capacity Needs Assessment
- Monitoring and Evaluation

Physical capability (Skills, abilities, etc.)	
1. Sorghum and millet cultivation is more common among subsistence farmers, particularly in Boa Mix, emphasizing their role in food security rather than sales.	Formation of FFSs and the promotion of a specific varieties of millets (particularly Okashana) within such dryland areas with a mix of other practices such as soil and water conservation (infiltration pits).

How the data is supporting evidence-based decision

	Physical capability (Skills, abilities, etc.)	
2.	Although the use of NTFPs is widespread, many farmers are dissatisfied with the current system they are applying. Dissatisfaction is mainly rooted in low product quantities, prompting the need to explore and enhance NTFP systems for increased productivity and resilience. Potentially already existent knowledge within the landscape can be leveraged on.	Formation of FFSs and the promotion of a specific varieties of millets (particularly Okashana) within such dryland areas with a mix of other practices such as soil and water conservation (infiltration pits).

How the data is supporting evidence-based decision

Physical capability (Skills, abilities, etc.)	
3. Boa Mix FFPO exhibits a higher prevalence of subsistence farming, heightened susceptibility to shocks, and overall lower resilience across various aspects of the farming system, including limited agricultural diversification (agricultural activities and crop species grown), lower adoption of water conservation practices, higher reported incidences of drought, and lower nutritional diversity. A targeted intervention is recommended to enhance these specific aspects among Boa Mix FFPO members for bolstering overall resilience.	SLM practices being promoted within the wards- soil and water conservation, growing of drought resistant varieties, promotion of diversified production systems (diversified crops, livestock for both enhanced productivity and nutrition and GVCs support for livelihoods- eg business planning etc).

How the data is supporting evidence-based decision

Physical capability
(Skills, abilities, etc.)

4. Lack of know-how is a key barrier for SLM and contributes to lower resilience to drought and reduced agricultural productivity.	FFPOs and farmers are receiving capacity on SFM, SLM and sustainable production practices at FFS level. There is evidence of practices at FFS and individual farmer level. Tradition grain production being promoted through the community seed banking approach and seed multiplication.

How the data is supporting evidence-based decision

	Physical capability (Skills, abilities, etc.)	
	5. Although water availability is decreasing, adoption of water conservation practices is low. Effective and low-cost practices should be explored, seeing that limited water availability is a key challenge for farmers in the area.	In field water conservation techniques being practiced at FFS level. Water harvesting methods also being practiced. Enhanced involvement of local extension services and learning from other child projects. Evidence of success being documented
	6. Despite diminishing water availability, there is limited adoption of water conservation practices, and some farmers perceive the practices they implement as insufficiently effective. The project can explore and test innovative water conservation methods, aiming to enhance their efficacy and encourage broader adoption based on proven success.	

Physical Opportunity (Environmental context, resources, market access, etc.)

The limited adoption of perennial crops on farms indicates the potential benefits of increasing their cultivation. Growing perennials can contribute to various advantages, such as enhancing soil health, providing consistent yields over multiple seasons, promoting biodiversity, and offering resilience to climate variations.

IMPLEMENTATION

As Zimbabwe we have not been growing perennial crops in croplands except cassava at small scale. Lessons learned from Malawi during the recent coordination workshop in Blantyre. In-depth studies on the growing of perennial crops is recommended.

SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES PRODUCTION FRAMEWORK

Evidence based decision making: Tailoring project interventions

- **Challenge:** Acess to cereal banks for storing food during periods of low food availability is limited
- **Opportunity:** Rich diversity of millet and sorghum varieties offers potential for harnessing genetic diversity, improving existing land races

Project Response:

- Four Community Seed Banks (CSBs) are being established across the landscape
- Focus on germplasm preservation and seed availability during lean seasons
- Formation of a CSB network to enable seed exchange and safeguard local varieties

Quelea birds targeting millet and sorghum grains pose an issue and strategies for protection should be explored.

Promotion of locally adapted traditional varieties that are resistant to attack from quelea birds such as Okashana doing very well within the FFSs and the farmers. Success and results of the innovation being documented to outscalling to others farmers.

Evidence based decision making: Tailoring project interventions

Challenge: There is a strong need to diversify income sources and improve access to markets for FFPOs and smallholder farmers.

Project Response:

- Support for Green Value Chains (GVCs) and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)
- Ongoing research on the nutritional and market potential of local Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs)
- Marketing symposiums organized to foster collaboration and integration in value chains

Evidence based decision making: Tailoring project interventions

Key Finding: Limited access to finance and low financial literacy levels hinder farmers' ability to invest in sustainable practices.

Project Response:

- WV is facilitating localized financial access through Internal Savings and Lending groups (ISALs/VSLs)
- Training is provided to improve financial literacy at FFPO and farmer level
- Initial steps taken to link FFPOs with formal financial institutions

Evidence based decision making: Tailoring project interventions

Key findings: Limited active involvement in forest conservation activities

Project response:

CBFMCs identified/ formed and being supported through training and equipment support. Planting of trees in croplands, woodlots (at Gudyanga), woodland management practices being done, ANR support being provided, tree nurseries being supported, ESC being supported and the involvement of schools in SFM will yield the desired results.

Evidence based decision making: Tailoring project interventions

Nurseries being promoted at community level and at CSBs. Water facilities being established at CSBs to address the water scarcity issues. Seedlings availability being addressed at community level. Evidence of best practices on SFM being documented for replication across the landscapes mechines. A total of 100 assorted (tractors, earth augers, threshers and planters) set of equipment provide through the FFSs.

Evidence based decision making: Tailoring project interventions

Key findings: Insufficient yields of millet, pests and diseases difficulties in selling

Project response:

- Extension services department is involved in the FFS approach to address productivity issues.
- Difficulties in processing the traditional varieties being addressed through the provision of equipment and training on business planning and GVCs.
- Market linkages with the formal markets being explored to address marketing challenges.
- The project is exploring the potential benefits of the local varieties in the formal markets for enhanced livelihoods.