



ICH- LIEBE -FISCH | I LOVE FISH PROJECT

REPORT ON THE FIELD VISIT TO MCHINJI

(SITE IDENTIFICATION AND STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION MEETING)



24th November 2016

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1. INTRODUCTION

A field visit was organized to Mchinji to identify and inspect project site and beneficiaries, and to conduct stakeholder consultation meeting (Stakeholder Consultation, Sensitization and Compilation of Technology platform structures-**WP 5A.1**) on 24th November 2016.

2. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION MEETING

A meeting with the Mchinji District Executive Committee (DEC) was held at the Mchinji District Council office. The meeting was organized with the purpose of sensitizing Government officials and other stakeholders about the project in order to seek their approval for the implementation of the project in the district as is required by the Government. The DEC comprises of a variety people ranging from traditional leaders, law enforcement officers, journalists, human rights officers and other government personnel from different departments. The figure 1 below shows a section of members that attended the DEC meeting.



Figure 1 Section of Members during DEC Meeting

The project team presented to the DEC members the goal of the project, its objectives, project life span and the implementing partners (Malawi and Germany partners). The DEC members were satisfied with the project saying it is exactly the type of the project that the district needs because it will have a very significant impact to communities' livelihoods over time hence they approved the project to proceed. Comments were also made that the project should complement

efforts of other previous and ongoing projects which are in the area. These include Local Development Fund projects which works with fish farmers mainly in pond construction.

3. SITE AND BENEFICIARIES IDENTIFICATION AND INSPECTION

With the help of District Fisheries Officer, the project team inspected fish ponds of IFFNT farmers in Mkanda Extension Planning Area and specifically in Chisamba- Matidzi and Kawele Villages. Fish farmer's in the area have been grouped in clubs which is ideal for the project in terms of community outreach and sustainability of project outcomes. Club representatives and traditional leaders were present during the inspection and were briefed about the project. In both villages fish farmers are already in clubs.

The fish farmers were excited with the possibility of being project partners through the IFFNT. They explained how the introduction of hybrid fingerlings which the project is aiming at will help ease the challenges they face when trying to access quality fingerlings. It was observed that majority of the ponds had water (especially for Chisamba-Matidzi) but with no fish due to unavailability of fingerlings.

3.1 Chisamba-Matidzi village

Tikondane club is one of the clubs the project team inspected and it is located in Chisamba-Matidzi village. Tikondane club owns 8 ponds with 45 families as members of the club (22 women and 23 men). It was observed that the ponds were of different sizes ranging from 250m² to 1000m². Apart from the club ponds, some members own individual ponds of smaller sizes ranging from 200m² to 500m². Within the same area it was observed that some farmers are already practising vegetable farming as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2 Mustard Vegetables in Chisamba-Matidzi Village

3.2 Kawele Village

The fish farmers from Kawele Village (belonging to Chikondi club) were also excited, emphasising that the project would provide access to hybrid fingerlings which would enable them to have better harvest. Ponds in this area were dry (see Figures 3 and 4) and farmers emphasised that drought has been affecting fish farming in the area.

The club has 7 ponds in one spot and there are 36 families who are club members. The ponds were observed to be of different sizes ranging from 440m² to 1000m². Chikondi club started fish farming in 2007 and most of the clubs in Mkanda EPA have originated from Chikondi club. It was observed that the club is implementing Integrated Aquaculture-Agriculture. Tomatoes, maize, sugarcane and bananas are some of the crops that are grown adjacent to the fish ponds.

They also bought animals (pigs and goats) which are reared by club members and the animal dung (manure) are used to fertilise the ponds. The ponds had no water during inspection and farmers complained that they are having challenges to even just keep fish seed. Despite the drought challenge the fish farmers in this area are very hard working as they were found clearing the ponds, preparing for rainy season (Fig 4).



Figure 3: Dry Pond in Kawele Village



Figure 4: Two women clearing weeds in one of the ponds in Kawele Village

4. CONCLUSION

To conclude; Mchinji Government officials and other stakeholders were sensitized about the project and they approved it to proceed. Mkanda EPA in Mchinji district was inspected and the project team recommended that Kawele Village and Chisamba-Matidzi Village would be potential good project sites for Mchinji district, especially if we need to compare sites which have different water availability regimes