Zimbabwe



Organization: Muonde Trust
Location: Zvishavane, Midlands Province, Zimbabwe
Solution: Climate livelihood resilience through rainwater harvesting and women empowerment in Zimbabwe
Factsheet Period: First round of UNDP AFCIA funding (16 months); Second round of UNDP AFCIA funding (12 months)



Water harvesting training workshop in community in Mazviha, Zimbabwe @Muonde Trust

With only 67% of rural households in Zimbabwe having access to safe water sources (Government of Zimbabwe, 2021), rainwater harvesting is essential for securing water for agriculture, domestic use and livestock. Muonde Trust is driving locally led solutions to address rainfall variability in the Indigenous Vangowa community in Mazviha. Founded by local farmers, the initiative is refining traditional water harvesting techniques and strengthening agroecological practices to enhance resource management. The initiative is expanding through a peer-to-peer community mobilization approach, strengthening local governance and creating shared spaces for managing restored catchments. Beyond improving water access, this initiative provides a range of benefits, including sustainable resource management, enhanced agricultural productivity and improved health and economic outcomes for the community.

Key achievements

- Avoided severe food shortages in 110 households during the 2024 El Niño drought through two sand abstraction irrigation systems
- Enhanced collaboration with government and local stakeholders, engaging with ministries, rural councils and community-led environmental and savings groups
- Increased participation of women and youth across all activities, with women making up 54% of those in water harvesting and 39% in dry stone walling— work traditionally dominated by men
- Engaged youth through sports, arts and community activities
- Constructed 155 swales and 87 ponds to help replace soil erosion, regenerate catchments and support farming
- Covered 5 hectares of land with planted trees as part of the efforts to regenerate forests







Adaptation benefits

- Rebuilds landscape resilience to withstand droughts and other climate impacts
- Reduces flood risks by conserving soil and water and preserving natural resources

Innovation

- Refines and disseminates water harvesting techniques through a peer-to-peer community mobilization approach, leveraging Indigenous knowledge and community strengths.

Social impact

- Strengthens livelihoods, food sovereignty, income and dignity at the individual household level
- Rebuilds community integrity and resilience, enabling the capacity to withstand droughts and other impacts

Funding snapshot

- UNDP-AFCIA grant: US$235,000 (initial grant: $125,000; scaling grant: $110,000)

Replication potential

- Scaling up catchment restoration by engaging more farmers to restore catchment management across larger land blocks
- Expanding peer-to-peer community mobilization to implement soil and water management practices, fostering self-sufficiency and reducing dependence on remittances and food aid
- Marking 25 contour lines for 100 Chivi farmers, showing strong demand beyond the original project area
- Organizing exchange visits for beneficiaries of new irrigation plots to earlier-established gardens, enabling firsthand learning on governance structures, startup processes and practical operations



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To read their story, visit UNDP-AFCIA

To watch their video, click here

To contact the initiative, visit Muonde Trust