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Sustainable Intensification of Market Based Agriculture (SIMBA) #SIMBA_Impact

Improving livelihoods through market access |
Beulah Sunenyama and Sorghum Seed



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Background

Mrs. Beulah Sunenyama was born on 28 December 1979. Her parents had originally moved from Mazowe in Mashonaland Central, Zimbabwe, to settle in the Ganyungu area of Chisina in 1965. They came to Gokwe looking for better soils where they could grow food and cash crops, settling down to grow maize, sorghum and groundnuts, mostly on a subsistence basis. In the 1980's they started growing cotton as a cash crop. For many years cotton played a major role in the provision of household income needs, however the family was forced to stop growing it in 2014 due to viability problems. Like most other farmers in Chisina, the decision to stop growing cotton was not an easy one. The demise of cotton left the family with only maize and groundnuts, for which there were poor market options – either selling to middlemen at low prices, or to government's Grain Marketing Board (GMB) where there were usually lengthy payment delays.

"My parents relied on cotton for payment of our school fees and our general upkeep. Cotton was their main cash crop. The fall in prices really affected our livelihood. They unwillingly stopped growing it in 2014, the same year that I got married," said Beulah.

In 2012 Beulah's family joined the 'Promote Intensification and Sustainability in Agricultural Production' (PISAP) programme which was being supported by Welthungerhilfe (WHH). The programme promoted conservation agriculture (CA), a farming system considered as the most effective way of mitigating the droughts that had become so common in Gokwe South. Although the tillage system was being promoted on grains for food security, it is equally applicable to other crops. Beulah's parents, like some farmers in the area, did not immediately join the CA programme because of the stigma the system and high labour demands.

Opportunity

Beulah married Reason Sunenyama in 2014. She started seeking income generating projects after starting a family. Her husband was unemployed with no hope of finding a job in town due to the economic hardships being experienced in Gokwe South. Like many local men, he relied on casual work in the rural areas for income. He friends told her about a market-based programme targeting farmers practicing CA. She was very interested in finding out more.

"I grew up watching my mother taking a leading role in our farming activities, like most rural women in our area. So, when I got married I knew that I had to do the same. I knew my husband would be doing piece jobs like laying bricks or digging wells for others to get cash," said Beulah. "I therefore decided to take up farming to supplement my husband's income."



The programme which Beulah heard about was SIMBA. The rumour became a reality when the local headman and councillor called for a meeting to formally introduce the



programme. Beulah chose to participate in the sorghum value chain wherein National Tested Seeds (NTS) would contract farmers to multiply sorghum seed. For Beulah sorghum was not a new crop, having grown up in a family where it was a staple grain. Maize did not do as well in her area because of unsuitable soils and unfavourable climatic conditions

"I was one of the first ten people to join SIMBA in our area. I had some knowledge of how to grow sorghum but got more confident when I was told that I would get extension support," said Beulah. "This was also going to be our first time to grow sorghum for sale. The promise that NTS would buy the sorghum, and that all we needed to do was deliver our crop to Nyarupakwe Shopping Centre, made me want to participate in SIMBA."

Profitability analysis

Gross income

Beulah, with support and help from her spouse, started growing sorghum seed. In the 2016/17 season she produced 1 543 kg of sorghum seed from a 0.50 ha plot. This seed was cleaned at the NTS factory, which resulted in a loss of 63 kg, bringing the saleable yield to 1 479 kg. The NTS price for sorghum was \$0.468/kg resulting in a gross income of \$688.

Costs

The table below lists many of the materials and services usually associated with smallholder cropping enterprises. In some cases, where there is no cost, the service is still listed to explain how it was funded.

GROSS INCOME	
Sorghum seed sales	688.00
COSTS	
Seed (10 kg)	4.68
Inputs	58.00
Training and extension	0.00
Land preparation services	0.00
Labour services	50.00
Transport	53.99
Total	166.67
BENEFIT	
Net income	521.33

Beulah's costs were:

- Seed: NTS provided 10 kg SV4 sorghum seed as credit valued at \$4.68, which was deducted from her seed delivery at the end of the season.
- Inputs: Beulah used 100 kg of Compound D and 50kg of Ammonium Nitrate (AN) at a cost of \$28 and \$30, respectively.

Training and extension: Training and extension is especially important for a seed crop such as sorghum.

The NTS Seed Operations and Marketing Manager managed the contract farming programme, providing farmers with advice and organised inspections by the Seeds Services Department.

- Land preparation services: Beulah prepared the field for (CA) with her family members, including in-laws.
- Labour services: Beulah hired four people to assist her harvesting and threshing sorghum, paying them \$50.
- Transport services: NTS sent a truck to collect the sorghum and cowpea crops, which was charged to farmers on a pro-rata basis. The cost to Beulah was \$53.99.

Net income

Beulah's gross income was \$688, against total costs of \$167, leaving a net margin of \$521.

Impact

Beulah and her family have benefitted from the market development work of APT through:

- Introduction of an alternative cash crop: Although sorghum was a staple crop in Chisina, they had never grown the seed commercially. Sorghum seed production worked well for Beulah and her new family. It gave them confidence to stop cotton production at a time when it was no longer profitable.
- Improved Income: Earning income from a peasant crop such as sorghum was highly unusual for Beulah and other farmers who had always grown it on a subsistence basis.
- Increased asset base: Since first harvest in 2015, Beulah has derived reasonable income from sorghum seed production which she used to build a four-bedroomed house, buy two cattle, pay school fees and meet with household needs.

In addition to the market development work of APT, Beulah has also benefitted greatly from the other activities implemented by SIMBA including:

- Improved land use: CA taught Beulah how to better manage her fields using compost and nitrogen-fixing legumes. CA has enabled more efficient land use and yields have improved - CA is now widely practiced in all crops.
- Improved lifestyles: Other SIMBA activities focused on hygiene, health, internal savings clubs, broiler production and nutrition gardens. Beulah has benefitted immensely from these programmes, and is now rearing guinea fowl.

Beulah would like to expand farming activities in 2018. Depending on NTS requirements, she would like to increase the area under sorghum seed to 1.5 ha, and to increase her yields to 5 tons/ha by improving agronomic practices.

Sustainability

Overall, NTS's experience with Chisina sorghum farmers has been good. The company has also been contracting farmers to produce cowpea, which likewise has had encouraging results (see separate report). During the 2016/17 season NTS contracted 51 farmers growing 25 ha of cowpea and 25 ha of sorghum. In 2017/18, the company plans to increase the scheme to 65 farmers, each with 1 ha, to produce 30 ha each of sorghum and cowpea, and 5 ha of mung bean. This demonstrates the company's confidence and the likelihood that the contract farming programme will continue to flourish in the absence of APT facilitation.



Sorghum field

About SIMBA

SIMBA was a four-year (2013-2017) EU-funded programme, co-implemented in Gokwe South District by WHH and APT. The overall objective of SIMBA was to enable smallholder farmers to diversify and upgrade their diets to recommended levels, and to run part of their farming as a family business in cooperation with other value chain stakeholders, generating income. To achieve the objective, five results areas were defined:

1. Production and storage sustainably intensified to increase the variety, quality and quantity of nutritious and marketable commodities building on previous EU and Protracted Relief Programme (PRP) initiatives.
2. An inclusive pro-poor business model established based on six principles for a robust cash crop value chain that links small scale farmer household groups with commodity specific open and closed markets.
3. Community Health Clubs (CHC) reached the highest level of the group maturity index and demonstrate sound hygiene, health and nutrition behaviour.
4. A demand-driven, sustainable government and private sector coordinated advisory and research service established using a broad range of communication tools.
5. Lessons and experiences from the project widely shared and disseminated.

This brochure is one of a series describing the market interventions being implemented under Result Area 2.

About WHH



Welthungerhilfe is one of the largest non-governmental organisations (NGO) in Germany, founded in 1962. WHH's focus is to fight hunger and poverty and we want to achieve #zerohunger wherever we work by 2030. The organisation provides inte-

grated aid, from rapid disaster aid to long-term development cooperation projects. Help to self-help is the basic principle; it allows to strengthen structures from the bottom up together with national partner organizations and ensures the long-term success of project work.

The organisation is operating in Zimbabwe since 1980, implementing Food and Nutrition Security projects in various parts of the country. The WHH Vision in Zimbabwe, like elsewhere in the world, is that all people can exercise their right to lead a self-determined life with dignity and justice, free from hunger and poverty. www.welthungerhilfe.de and www.facebook.com/welthungerhilfezimbabwe/

Welthungerhilfe | Block 8 Arundel Office Park, 5 Norfolk Road, Mt. Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe | Tel: +263(4)369789

About APT



The Agricultural Partnerships Trust is a Zimbabwean registered trust that was formed in July 2010 out of concern for the development of rural communi-

ties in Zimbabwe, with focus on smallholder agriculture. The Trust raises and disburses funds to assist in improving livelihoods in the rural areas of Zimbabwe by enhancing economic development through sustainable agricultural and business methods and facilitating partnerships between smallholder farmers and organisations in the private and public sectors.

Since 2010 APT has been involved in a number of programmes, either singly or in consortia but always focusing on smallholder output and service market linkages – in other words, Market Systems Development. More information can be viewed at our website www.apr.co.zw or follow us on Twitter ([www.twitter.com/apr_zimbabwe](https://twitter.com/apr_zimbabwe)) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/apr.zimbabwe/). Alternatively, contact APT directly:

Michael Dawes | Agricultural Partnerships Trust
11 Hodson Avenue, Alexandra Park, Harare, Zimbabwe
michael@apr.co.zw | Tel: +263(4)744559 or +263(77)2212201

APT's partnership approach

APT is essentially a facilitator, brokering partnerships between the private sector and farmers. Although the type and level of support vary from programme to programme, APT has a history of delivering value to partnerships in many ways:

- **Intervention design:** Context analyses help APT understand the needs of farmers and companies for the design of relevant, innovative, profitable and sustainable market based interventions.
- **Partnership support:** Supporting partners in navigating their partnering journey by helping them to create a map, plan their route, choose their mode of transport and change direction when necessary.
- **Stakeholder mapping and introductions:** APT has working knowledge of market and non-market based organisations – contacts that are part of the building blocks of market systems development. For example, linkages with local government authorities in the districts are important at the start of the programme.
- **Extension service support:** Programmes such as SIMBA rely on a network of field officers and lead farmers who develop close working relationships with company Field Extension Officers, and who help extend the reach, or reinforce the knowledge transfer of company agents.
- **Administration services:** Company field officers have access to office and communication resources at the project centre, making it easier to work in the operational area.
- **Farmer training and organisation:** Programmes are often well resourced, able to assist companies in mobilizing farmers, organising meetings, hosting meetings and providing training resources, thereby reducing budgetary pressure on companies.
- **Platforms for dialogue:** As a neutral facilitator, APT has assisted companies in various ways. For example:
 - o Intercompany dialogue to increase value chain efficiencies by linking non-competing companies for shared services. APT organised a series of 'Networking Platform Meetings' under SIMBA which resulted in inter company linkages and increased transaction efficiencies.
 - o Mediation between companies and farmers: APT organised post-harvest meetings in most value chains to provide a platform for dialogue between farmers and companies, reviewing past performances & planning for the next season.
 - o Conflict resolution: Conflict between farmers & companies typically occur on several occasions during implementation of a programme. APT assists in conflict resolution through bilateral company and farmer meetings, & subsequent monitoring.
- **Budget support:** Depending on the nature of the programme, APT may be able to assist partners with cost sharing arrangements. This type of support might be necessary to
 - (1) reduce perceived and real risks associated with inclusive business models;
 - (2) reduce start-up costs that might otherwise prevent a company from engaging in this type of business model: &
 - (3) reducing the time taken to impact, an important consideration since donor-funded programmes are often short term.
- **Results measurement:** APT has considerable experience in the monitoring, evaluation and reporting of private sector development programmes. Reports are designed for quick turnaround, to ensure that companies and farmers have access to real time information concerning the market based intervention.