

Chitetezo Cooperative Federation Capacity building report January to June 2023

Accelerating the Impact of the CGIAR's Research in Africa (AICCRA)-Zambia

Legume Value Chains, Changing Lives, Protecting Nature

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

CFMG.....Community Forest Management Group

COMACO.....Community Markets for Conservation

CCF.....Chitetezo Cooperative Federation

CCA.....Community Conservation Area

CSO..... Civil Society Organization

DF.....District Forestry

DNPW.....Department of National Parks and Wildlife

DACO..... District Agriculture Coordinator

FISP..... Farmer Input Support Program

Ha..... Hectare

GMA.....Game Management Area

GRZ.....Government Republic of Zambia

PS..... Permanent Secretary

1.0 BACKGROUND

COMACO has been working with over 230,000 registered farmers, in Eastern, Muchinga and Central provinces, and these farmers have all signed conservation agreements to be part of a mission to secure a better life and become good stewards of their natural resources. Over 86% of these farmers have since become food secure, from increased adoption of regenerative soil improvement practices. Their income levels have also more than tripled with access to the COMACO markets.

In Eastern province alone, COMACO is working with 62 multipurpose cooperatives that practice climate smart agriculture for increased productivity and sustainability and these cooperatives have formed a federation called Chitetezo Cooperative Federation with the support of the Accelerating Impact Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA) project.

Chitetezo Cooperative Federation (CCF) was formed to act as a mother body of all the multipurpose cooperatives that are working with COMACO in Eastern province. The mission statement of the federation is “Removal of poverty from our communities to build a better future for all of our people and a safer and more protected environment to sustain our needs”. In line with this mission, the federation’s aim is to improve small scale farmer’s lives and at the same time help conserve the natural resource through strengthening community-based leadership and increased gender roles in the cooperative leadership.

With the support from AICCRA, COMACO through the federation is still developing and introducing several initiatives to ensure it quickly achieves its goals of attaining good life for its people living in a safe environment.

Diversifying carbon market opportunities have also helped to account for increased carbon biomass derived from conserved forests and agroforestry, by planting *Gliricidia sepium* trees on farmers’ fields, and from reduced forest degradation resulting from improved land use practices such as minimum tillage, composting, crop rotation, etc.

To attain full benefits of these community-based land use practices, proper handling of climate information services is key, as it enhances a positive change in people’s lives to adopt the best farming practices and resilience to climate change effects.

2.0 PROJECT PROGRESS ACTIVITIES

The objective of this report is to highlight project activities by Chitetezo Cooperative Federation (CCF) during the last quarter the project has been running, examine activities and how they are contributing to the desired goals of the project. The report includes a review of activities that occurred between January and June 2023 namely;

- Chitetezo Cooperative board meeting
- Crop market workshop with stakeholders
- Cashier trainings
- Chiefdom/cooperative Training on Crop markets
- Field days activities
- Agroforestry trainings

- Radio Launch
- Outreach through farm talk

2.1 OBJECTIVES

The overall objective is to establish a federation of more than 55 cooperatives that gives equal opportunity to Women and youths to become more profitable and food secure by adopting an agroforestry and legume-based farming system with their inherent conservation benefits.

3.0 PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The aim of CCF is to address the gaps faced by member cooperatives and link farmers into the value chain for opportunities to increase their income at household level. To do this, the Federation tackled constraints across the value chain from the farm level to markets without compromising the quality of crop produced through Climate Smart Agriculture. To meet these aims the following activities were done in the period under review:

3.1 Chitetezo federation board meeting

Chitetezo cooperative federation held its third board meeting on the 25th of January ,2023. This meeting was attended by all the board members(7 Males and 3 females). The meeting was Chaired by the board chairperson.

3.1.1 Objectives of the CCF Board meeting:

The main objectives of the board meeting were:

- To get team updates from all board members on matters that concern COMACO and the CCF from the field.
- To discuss the affiliation process on how to make more cooperatives join the federation.
- To review the previous crop market in the chiefdoms where digital payment was used. Looking at the 'Cash in -Cash out' challenges those farmers faced.
- To review membership fee payments and amounts that each cooperative member must contribute to their respective cooperatives and how the crop market can be used to collect membership fees.
- To look at crop buying strategy for 2023 market season where twelve cooperatives were selected to do crop buying by themselves.
- To review the status of the organic seed that was given to farmers and chart the way forward.
- To look at seed multiplication as a potential business for the cooperatives.



Board members during the 3rd Board meeting for Chitetezo Cooperative Federation

3.2 Crop Market workshop with Stake holders

Previously there was little education on crop markets given to the cooperatives and this led to a lot of misunderstandings between farmers and COMACO in this regard. To change this narrative, COMACO decided to start engaging more with cooperatives so that the farmers understand the dynamics that affect the market and what COMACO was doing to continue providing the much needed markets to the farmers. COMACO, with the help of its partners Chitetezo Federation and AICCRA went further and identified 12 cooperatives that were ready to go into crop buying themselves. These cooperatives had shown good leadership, accountability and had prior experience managing large sums of monies at cooperative level.

To build capacity in the cooperatives in readiness for the crop market season, COMACO with the help of AICCRA held a workshop at Eastern Comfort Lodge in Chipata from the 24th to the 27th of April 2023. This workshop targeted cooperative chairpersons, treasurers, Principal lead farmers and business managers focusing on:

- Financial Management and requisitions
- Orientation on the electronic farmer register during crop purchase (using tablets)
- Training in accounting principles, record keeping, reconciliations and retirement of funds and stock take.
- Capacity building – cooperative stock control and management including standardization.
- Membership fee collection Cooperative cost control and logistics management
- Cooperative cost control and logistics management
- A practical session to walk through processes and procedures in order to close knowledge gaps was undertaken.
- Security of cash and crop

- Quality training – pre-harvest, during harvest, post-harvest. Robust bulking point management, quality requirements and inspections at bulking points. Batching and tagging of crops.
- Roles, responsibilities, and key functions of people involved in crop buying by cooperatives.
- Advance feedback from selected cooperative leadership on potential solutions to last years' challenges encountered with electronic eTumba payment.
- Short discussion of challenges from the previous season (both COMACO & cooperative side)
- Background about COMACO, its objectives, and what it seeks to achieve through this training.
- Batching

A total of 67 people participated in the trainings 15 females and 52 males.



Crop Purchase Logistics calculations and lay out by the COO for Operations, Mr. Stuart Hall during the four days crop buying training workshop for 2023 Marketing Season in the Eastern Province covering all the COMACO East co-operatives.

3.3 Cashier Training

The main objective of the training was to train and equip cashiers, business managers and Principal Lead Farmers with knowledge on how to manage the crop purchases process such as cleaning and managing of bulking points, quality of the crop to be bought, handling of cash in the field, roles and responsibilities for each person involved in crop purchase and the documentation to be used.

Three separate trainings were held in May 2023 in Chipata, Petauke and Lundazi with the support from AICCRA. The Chipata training covered Mambwe, Chipata, Chipangali, Kasenengwa, Katete and Sinda districts, while the training in Lundazi covered Lumezi, Lundazi, Chasefu and Chama districts and the training in Petauke covered Petauke, Lusangazi and Nyimba districts respectively. The trainings attracted a total of 292 participants broken down as follows:

Training	Male	Female	Total
Chipata	100	41	141
Lundazi	76	28	104
Petauke	27	20	47
Total	203	89	292



Cashier training in Lundazi

3.4 Chieftdom/Cooperative Trainings

Chieftdoms trainings were successfully conducted in several chieftdoms of Nyimba, Petauke, Chipata and Mambwe districts. The trainings were well attended, characterized with good representation from Cooperative board members, SLFs, PLFs, producer group trainers, Business managers, Cashiers, headmen and indunas as statistically tabulated in the table below.

The objectives of the training were:

- To Prepare COMACO cooperatives for the 2023 crop marketing season and its implementation strategies.
- Make farmers understand COMACO vision and its goals.
- Help cooperatives develop a sense of ownership and self -financing through membership fee generation and other business ventures.



Chieftdom/Cooperative training on crop marketing

S/N	Chieftdom	Female	Male	Total
1.	Nyamphande	8	15	23

2.	Mwape	32	18	50
3.	Mumbi	9	17	26
4.	Mwanjawanthu	8	23	31
5.	Kalindawalo	22	20	42
6.	Sandwe	19	17	36
7.	Mnukwa Undi	30	45	75
8.	Mnukwa Maduweni	78	87	165
9.	Chikuwe	100	104	204
10.	Ndake	18	20	38
11.	Mwape	8	20	28
12.	Luembe	6	21	27
13.	Nyalugwe Nyapili	5	18	23
14.	Nyalugwe Nyakachifu	-	8	8
	Grand Total	343	433	776

3.5 Field Days

COMACO, with support from AICCRA through Chitetezo Cooperative Federation chose ten farmers to establish field demonstration plots and supported them with legume seed (Kafue soya beans and MG8 groundnuts) and hybrid maize (ZAMSEED 606) in different districts of Eastern province of Zambia. As part of ensuring that many farmers learn more about new crop varieties and interventions being carried out to maximize the harvests without the use of chemical fertilizer the CCF organized farmer field days as part of bringing farmers together to learn through seeing what new interventions once applied correctly and consistently can improve yields.

Seven field days were conducted in seven districts of Nyimba, Katete, Chipangali, Kasenengwa, Chipata, Mambwe and Lumezi with different themes.

3.5.1 Scope of activities

The activities that were held during these field days aimed at bringing farmers together and showcasing new interventions such as the use of *Gliricidia sepium* trees and compost as natural fertilizer, cultivation of groundnuts and soybeans in rip lines as well as introducing to farmers the new MG8 groundnut variety, its potential, resistance to diseases as well as its maturity period.

The activities brought together over 900 small scale farmers of different age groups especially women and youths to learn, ask questions and indeed seek guidance on how they could access the various interventions that were highlighted to them. The representation by women was 40%, while 35% were youths of both sexes and 25% men. The host farmers showcased *Gliricidia* interventions in their local maize fields as well as in a high breed maize fields. The host farmers explained to other farmers how they have been using *Gliricidia sepium* leaves as a way of fertilizing their crops and how they manage to produce a good harvest.

3.5.2 MGV 8 groundnuts

The host farmers explained that this new variety is medium maturing, disease resistant and produces between 50 to 75 nuts per plant. They also highlighted to other farmers how they cultivated using minimum tillage methods through rip lines unlike the old method of planting groundnuts in ridges. Host farmers further explained the advantages of planting in rip lines as those of great water retention allowing the crop to thrive even when there were dry spells in the weather patterns. They also shared how they make their



Host Farmer Elizabeth Daka showcasing her MGV8 groundnuts variety.

own compost manure and how it is applied in the rip lines just before planting groundnuts. It was explained that doing so helps crops germinate with good standing as well as provide rich soil nutrient. Many farmers were stunned to see the host farmers uprooting groundnuts from the ground with ease and were happy to see the number of nuts from one plant station and that they've never heard of the use of compost manure in groundnut fields.

3.5.3 Local /hybrid maize varieties

The host farmers were at hand to explain the interventions used in both local and hybrid maize varieties. They showcased how they have been practicing agroforestry using *Gliricidia sepium* trees as well as the use of compost manure. It was pleasing to see the quality of both maize varieties grown using these interventions as most farmers wondered in disbelief as their assumptions that hybrid maize can only be grown using chemical fertilizer was proven wrong.



Just like in the groundnuts field, the host farmers also shared how they planted their crops in rip lines to retain soil moisture as well as how they used crop residues to keep soils warm and to make mulch as a way of sustaining maize crop during the dry spells.

Also highlighted were the policy gaps in conservation and agroforestry farming where the lack of serious involvement by government to compel all cooperatives that receive agricultural inputs under the Farmer Input Support Program (FISP) to engage in conservation and agroforestry farming was pointed. It was also explained that if the government

got involved, the adoption of agroforestry was going to be high and would translate into household food security enhancement in many communities. It was further explained that doing so would lead to more income at household level as the monies that are currently being spent on chemical fertilizers would be channeled to other needy areas.

3.5.4 Soybeans

Just like above, it was explained how farmers continue to enjoy good harvest every season because of the interventions supported and promoted by COMACO-AICCRA partnership. Host farmers were at hand to showcase how to apply compost manure and how Gliricidia is used to keep soils rich and healthy. Agroforestry using Gliricidia, minimum tillage through ripping, retention of crop residues,



Host- Elizabeth Daka explaining the interventions used in her soybeans demo plot.

creation of firebreaks and compost manure were at the center of interventions that were applied.

Host farmers also highlighted to other farmers how they took care of their crop to reduce post-harvest losses. The host showcased how soybeans performed in rip lines where compost manure was applied as most farmers are used to planting this crop in ridges. Women and youths were

encouraged to take the lead and show interest in the practices as they were the ones who take care of the family, and youths being the leaders of tomorrow, should take the lead and be in the forefront spearheading these new interventions.

3.5.5 Total rainfall recorded.

Wrapping up the field days activities, the host farmers took the crowd to the rain gauge station where they explained the amount of rainfall received in that area.



Host Elizabeth Daka Explaining the use of a rain gauge and total rainfall received in the area.

Example of Rain gauge readings

MONTH	TOTAL RAINFALL -MM
November	16.4mm
December	328mm
January	257mm
February	178mm
March	228mm
April	108mm
TOTAL	1,115.4mm

Common questions asked during the field days by the attendees

- When is the right time to make compost manure and how is it applied?
- Is planting groundnuts in rip lines not going to make it difficult when harvesting?
- Where can we get Gliricidia seed?
- Is growing Gliricidia trees alongside crops not a problem as the trees grow and produce shade to crops?
- How are Gliricidia leaves applied to crops, at what stage and how often?
- Can one use compost manure in soybeans?
- When is the right time to plant groundnuts?
- Where can we access this new MGV8 groundnut seed?
- How can one know that they've received enough rain to start planting their crops?
- When is the right time to make rip lines?

The hosts were well able to handle these questions and gave practical responses to the attendees.

3.6 Agroforestry Trainings

3.6.1 Gliricidia adoption promotion training

Trainings on Gliricidia adoption and management were conducted in M nukwa and Chikuwe chiefdoms between the period of 17th and 23rd of May 2023. The purpose of the training was to equip the farmers with the knowledge of the Gliricidia Sepium tree to promote increased adoption of the tree.

3.6.2 Summary of Achievements

1. The training was conducted by the Regional Coordinator from Mfuwe, Mr. Nathan Mulambya and the M&E Officer from Chipata Hub, Mr. Ray Chazangwe in Mnukwa while the Chikuwe one was conducted by the Regional Coordinator only.
2. The training was attended by Cooperative board Members, PLFs, SLFs and farmers from both Mnukwa and Chikuwe Chiefdoms.
 - A total of 4 trainings were conducted in four different areas of Chikuwe and Mnukwa Chiefdoms. 3 trainings were conducted in Mnukwa while one training was conducted in Chikuwe.
 - A total of 512 farmers attended the trainings.

Below is a summary table indicating the number of farmers trained by area, date and gender

Date	Training Area	Male	Female	Total Participants
17/05/2023	Mnukwa (Undi)	45	30	75
19/05/2023	Mnukwa (Maduweni)	87	78	165
22/05/2023	Chikuwe Shed	104	100	204
23/05/2023	Mnukwa (Muma)	32	36	68
Total		268	244	512

- The following topics were covered during the gliricidia adoption promotion training.
 - ✓ Closing up of gliricidia fields to protect them from fires.
 - ✓ Benefits of gliricidia Sepium to the farmer which include,
 - a. Improvement of Soil fertility by gliricidia sepium for improved crop yields.
 - b. How to Coppice the tree to maximize the benefit
 - c. Use of gliricidia as a pesticide and for preserving grain crops for storage both in bags and granary.
 - d. Use of gliricidia leaves in Compost making and how to make it.
 - e. How farmers can benefit from gliricidia through carbon credits.

3.7 Communication

3.7.1 Radio Launch

In partnership with Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA), the CCF hosted the launch of Zambia Agri-smart radio show on the 20th of March 2023. The launch was held at Chikuwe cooperative farmer support centre, in chief Chikuwe of Kasenengwa District.

To accelerate climate action, it was observed that it is vital that communities have access to climate smart agriculture technologies in the appropriate formats and vernacular languages, to understand the impact of climate change and improve decision making in adaptation.

The launch of this program came in as supplementary to what COMACO and CCF are already doing with Farm talk radio program. Unlike the farm talk, AICCRA weekly radio program was to broadcast climate smart innovation to rural communities through community stations in Bemba and Nyanja languages through seven community radio stations located in Lusaka, Eastern, Central and Northern Provinces of Zambia. It would contain two types of episodes.

1. Climate Information Services: Climate-informed digital agro-advisories, that are data driven and provide location and context specific information, improving farmer decisions in the face of climatic uncertainties.
2. Munda Make Over: The program that features farmers challenges and how climate smart agriculture and agribusiness solutions can address them, contents produced by the Media Company, in collaboration with multiple partners in Zambia.

The launch attracted more than 150 community participants. Several media houses were represented, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry Department and Metrological department. Other organizations supporting gender and social inclusion such as Lucy Grand Foundation were also present.

3.7.2 Outreach through Farm Talk

Farm Talk program under the segment called federation/Cooperative corner recorded and aired the following programs from January to April 2023:

Radio Station	Duration	Per Week	Programs	Airtime	Grilicidia Company		Feedback Platforms		
					Programs	Minutes	SMS	Direct Calls	
Breeze Fm	1 Hour	2	31	1860	45	675			
Explorer FM petauk	30 minutes	Nil	Nil	Nil	35	Nil			
Mphangwe FM	45 minutes	Nil	31	930	Nil	Nil			
Chikaya FM	30 minutes	Nil	Nil	Nil	35	525			
Mnkhanya FM	30 minutes	Nil	Nil	Nil	35	525			
Explorer Nyimba FM	30 minutes	Nil	8	240	35	525			
Kwenje FM	15 minutes	Nil	Nil	Nil	35	Nil			
TOTAL			70	3030	220	2250	246	237	
							Total Feedback for the first quarter 2023		
Topics covered in January	1	week 1	Hardening, root pruning and encouraging agro-forestry for 4 and 9 January 2023						
	2	week 2	Together with gliricidia for the better future for 11 and 16 January 2023						
	3	week 3	Gliricidia management and current activities 18 and 23 January 2023						
	4	week 4	Final gliricidia transplanting and general conservation farming 25 and 30 January 2023						
Topics covered in February	5	week 1	crop management and agro-forestry for 1 and 6 February 2023						
	6	week 2	Final Gliricidia transplanting and bee keeping for 08 and 13 February 2023						
	7	week 3	Farming with agro-forestry and transformation 15 and 20 February 2023						
	8	Week 4	Seed growers and Crop management for 22 and 27 February 2023						
Topics covered in March	9	Week 1	Agro-forestry management and Organic farming for 01 and 06 March 2023						
	10	week 1	Benefits of gliricidia fields for 08 and 14 March 2023						
	11	week 2	Poachers on indigenous trees and conservation for 15 and 20 March 2023						
	12	week 3	GIS activities and Protection of natural resources for 22 and 27 March 2023						
	13	Week 4	Indunas on community conservation benefits and conservation farming #compost for 29 March and 03 April 2023						
Topics covered in April	14	Week 1	CHIKUWE AND NYAMPANDE CFMGs and COOPERATIVE CURRENT ACTIVITIES for 5th and 10th APRIL 2023						
	15	week 2	Cooperatives preparedness and Gliricidia management for 12 and 17 April 2023						
	16	week 3	Conservation activities and Family Budgeting for 19 and 24 April 2023						
	17	week 4	Post Harvest, Marketing and Family Budgeting for 19 and 24 April 2023						
	18	Week 5	Marketing and conservation benefits for 26 and 1 May 2023						
Weekly Reminders	Farmer Registers update, Community protection, Bush fires, Marketing, Post production, Gliricidia management, Harvesting process, production handling, pest management, benefits of agro-forestry, Farmer register, forestry conservation, etc.								

Because of these weekly topics:

- The cooperative members were sensitized to spearhead the conservation activities in their chiefdoms e.g., land preparation, composting and Gliricidia Management
- Cooperatives were sensitized on the importance of affiliating to the Federation.
- Cooperatives were also informed on the best systems to be used during seed loan recoveries and seed mobilization and other entrepreneurial activities.
- Some cooperative members also received free radios to enhance the listenership of Farm talk radio.

A total of 300 radios were procured this year under farm talk and have been distributed to farmers.



Chitetezo Cooperative Federation board members after receiving radios

4.0 OVERALL ASESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Challenges	Recommendations	Responsibility	Comment
It is very costly to provide these trainings to all our farmers in all the 62 cooperatives	To reach out to all our farmers we are currently working with the Farm talk coordinator to come up with radio Lessons that can be recorded and stored on memory cards that will be given to all the	Communication Coordinator	This remains a challenge despite procuring more radios that are being given to farmers.

	cooperatives to be listening to during their monthly meetings.		
Most cooperative leaders have very limited knowledge in financial literacy and management	Capacity building workshops	COMACO/Federation	A number of trainings were conducted on financial management but only 12 cooperatives out of 62 benefited from these trainings last quarter. Need for continued capacity building
Poor record keeping from producer group level to Principal Lead farmer or cooperative level.	Trainings in record keeping are needed among cooperative leaders	Extension Manager/CCF General Manager	50 Tablets have been procured and given to cooperatives to help with record keeping. The tablets have the updated register on it and the reporting form.
Transport	Federation leaders need motor bikes to make them more efficient	COMACO/Federation	This remains a huge challenge for the federation

			board members to easily coordinate with other cooperative leaders.
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5.0 CONCLUSION

During this reporting period we saw Objective 1 that is “Enhance cooperative leadership to address such challenges as grain quality, crop bulking and transport logistics, and local adoption of mobile banking” being addressed with several trainings conducted targeting twelve cooperatives that went into crop buying themselves.

Generally, the period under review was a success because several trainings were done, in financial literacy and management, agroforestry practices through field days that were conducted and the launch of the radio program by AICCRA to supplement what COMACO is already doing with farm talk.

COMACO extends its gratitude to AICCRA for the partnership and financial support that has enabled the Chitetezo Cooperative Federation to achieve positive strides thus far. It is hoped that there will be continued collaboration to ensure continuity of programmes that have already been set in motion.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 Quarter Work Plan for the next Reporting Quarter

Activities	Jun	July	Aug
<i>Objective 2: Improve farmer cooperative commitment to agreed conservation regulations for soil and forest protection and opportunities for markets</i>			
Outcome 2.1 Sustainable agriculture adoption supported with improved market and yield benefits			
Output 2. 1.2 Agroforestry adoption reaches 80% of cooperative members			
Activity 1. Enhance farmer trainings in agroforestry (Gliricidia management from nursery to field)			
Activity 2. Increased establishment of woodlots for production of agroforestry seeds, firewood for cookstoves and carbon credits			

Activity 3. Establishment of Gliricidia field schools			
Objective 1: Enhance cooperative leadership to address such challenges as grain quality, crop bulking and transport logistics, and local adoption of mobile banking.			
Outcome 1.2. Cooperative seed multiplication model developed into a viable business approach.			
Output 1.2.1 Cooperative seed growers supporting 50% of local legume seed requirements			
Activity 1. Training in seed multiplication			
Activity 2 Training in Warehouse receipt system			
Objective 4: Transform innovation ideas into full scale solutions for cooperative-run services to support farmer training			
Outcome 4.1 Cooperative federation fund-raising strategy developed			
Output 4.1.2 Farm Talk Radio programming improved.			
Activity 1. Increase Federation visibility of its role and impact through social media and web-based communications supported by COMACO's communications department			
Activity 2. Support special guest speakers from the cooperative federation to broaden local technical knowledge for farmers.			
Activity 3. Include federation members in program production to improve sense of ownership			