



Zimbabwe
**AGRICULTURAL
GROWTH**
Programme



Funded by the European Union



VALUE NEWS

TALKING GOATS AND PIGS



Co-funded by the CIPS Foundation

JANUARY – MARCH 2020



FROM THE TEAM LEADER'S DESK

VALUE Project Team Leader **NEWTON CHARI**

It is my pleasure to welcome you readers to our inaugural issue of the VALUE project Newsletter, a quarterly publication we are producing to share key highlights and achievements in the implementation of our interventions under the Zimbabwe Agricultural Growth Programme. Over the course of the project, we will be working flat out to improve production, productivity, organisational efficiencies, market competitiveness of small and medium goat and pork producers.

In February of this year, the project turned a year old, and we can look back with gratification on our achievements.

The journey we have travelled over the past year has not been easy, but the dedication and expertise of the project partners resulted in us achieving most of our set targets. We set out very early to attune our minds towards ensuring that the commercialisation thrust of our project was established on a sure foundation. I am thankful for the support we have received from our stakeholders in undertaking key processes such as identification, registration and verification of farmers in the districts, this has enabled us to initiate key processes towards commercialisation.

SOME OF OUR ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE INCLUDE

1. Registration of farmers in all districts where clearances have been granted. We have registered 7534 farmers under the goat value chain and 1090 farmers under the pork value chain.
2. Successful completion of scoping studies for both goat and pork value chains.
3. Importation of 224 top quality goat breeds from Namibia (Boer, Kalahari Red and Saanen goats).
4. Renovation of pig quarantine facilities at the Pig Industry Board (PIB) for quarantining pig breeding stock imported into the country including the project breeding stock.
5. Purchase of 245 top quality pig breeding stock from South Africa including grandparent stock, breeding gilts and sows for the duroc, landrace and large white.
6. Sensitisation and training of champion farmers, anchor farmers and government extension staff on technical and non technical courses to build their capacity to offer extension services to farmers

As we conclude the first quarter of 2020, I am excited about the prospects that lie ahead, amidst the novel coronavirus, we continue to strategically position ourselves to upgrade and empower small and medium pork and goat producers.

In this issue we present key project updates, key interventions and some inspiring stories from some of the farmers we are working with across the districts.

We welcome your feedback and comments on our project, I wish you a happy and informative reading.

VALUE PROJECT RENOVATES PIG QUARANTINE FACILITIES AT THE PIG INDUSTRY BOARD

Ahead of the importation of 245 top quality pig breeding stock from South Africa, the VALUE project spearheaded the refurbishment of pig quarantine facilities at the PIB, the public integrator for the pork value chain under the project. The facilities will house the breeding stock for twenty-one days with close monitoring from the state health bodies,

PIB and the private sector integrators – Braford farming and Shamiso Farm. After the quarantine period, some of the pigs will be transferred to the two integrator farms in Chegutu and Ruwa for breeding after which the progeny (offspring) will be passed by the integrators to the Pork Producer Business Syndicates (PPBS)

BEFORE



DURING

AFTER



PASSIONATE PIG PRODUCER SURMOUNTING CONSTRAINTS IN THE PORK VALUE CHAIN



Surrounded by lush green environs and thickets lies a modest homestead where dreams are slowly becoming reality. Driven solely by her passion for pigs, Letwinner determined early to do things right, she enrolled for training at the PIB and at Triple C thus gaining skills and knowledge that have served her well in her pig production enterprise.

I was trained on various aspects of pig production namely servicing, weaning which I do 4 weeks after birth, artificial insemination, administering medication and on farm feed formulation.

Letwinner runs a 10-sow unit in Ward 15 of Chegutu district in Mashonaland West, she is working towards expanding

her enterprise albeit amidst several binding constraints. She recently destocked due to several challenges being experienced in the value chain such as high feed cost, uncompetitive markets, expensive drugs and vaccines.

With a sombre countenance Letwinner provides an account of the difficulties she is facing; **“Pigs are highly demanding in terms of feed, which unfortunately is now exorbitantly priced, in the absence of an abattoir nearby we are forced to sell at below average prices to local butcheries and individuals in the area.”**

True to her tenacious nature and desire is to be one of the leading female pork producers in Zimbabwe, Letwinner is facing the challenges head on. In response to the high cost of feed, she planted over seven hectares of maize for feed formulation. In addition, she bought a grinding mill for processing the maize for mixing with concentrates. **“Formulating pig feed on-farm has significantly reduced our running costs especially given that maize**

constitutes the major percentage of feed” added Letwinner.

Riding on the impetus provided by the project, Letwinner is seeking to commercialise by improving and expanding pig housing, installing a biogas digester, work with other farmers in the area in procuring drugs and vaccines and setting up a solar powered borehole.

To address slaughter and marketing related constraints in the Mashonaland West corridor, the project is setting up an abattoir near Halfway along the Harare -Bulawayo highway, this will certainly alleviate the marketing challenges that have for long affected farmers in the production. To complete the chain, the project is profiling territorial and main consumer markets of Bulawayo and Harare in which direct marketing will be piloted to connect producer syndicates directly to the end consumers, hence farmers like Letwinner maintaining a fair share of the value.



Letwinner is expecting a bumper harvest from her over seven hectares of maize which significantly reduce the cost of feed



Oliver Chimwendo seen here posing with his Sorghum crop planted as fodder supplement

TRAININGS ON COMMERCIALISATION FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE FARMERS YIELDING POSITIVE RESULTS.

Revelling in his blossoming goat herd, Oliver Chimwendo of Mudzi District, Ward 2 in Mashonaland East is a man on a mission. With a little over a year since he began goat rearing, it is a marvel that Chimwendo has already grown to be one of the leading goat farmers in the district. He speaks of his journey so far with pride and great expectation for the future.



I have always had a passion for goats and began this project in 2018, I have now 208-goats consisting 152 does, 3 bucks with the rest being kids. I recently sold 50 in December for an equivalent of US\$ 1200, which I used to put a fence around the goat pens and buying vaccination drugs. My greatest desire is to see the growth of goat producers in my area.

Chimwendo was selected to be one of the 1000 anchor farmers under the project and will have an opportunity to contribute to the growth of goat production by leading small and medium scale goat producers in his area towards the goal of commercialisation.

In an area like Mudzi, a drive towards commercial goat production is not without its challenges, due to rampant retreating of veld, scarce water sources and unviable markets. **“Since embarking on goat production, one of the challenges I have faced is struggling to find adequate forage, supplementary feed for the goats coupled with shortages of water, use of inferior genetics and lack of access to viable markets as well as high costs of veterinary drugs”** says Chimwendo.

On the back of these binding constraints in goat production, the project comes in as a breath of fresh air raising the hopes and expectations of farmers like Oliver across the districts.

In 2019, Chimwendo was part of anchor farmers who participated at a look and learn visit at Amato goat stud farm in Beatrice where they received lessons on commercialising goat enterprises. Furthermore, he took part in the project supported inaugural goat indaba with GBAZ in which many topics ranging from animal health, marketing and feeding were discussed.

In a bid to imbue in the farmers the sense of commercialisation, the project has begun undertaking commercialisation trainings at district and ward levels. At the onset of the 2019/20 farming season, Chimwendo participated in trainings on commercialisation where various topics such as accessing viable markets, good farm management and fodder production were conducted.

For the first time in his goat enterprise, Chimwendo planted over three hectares of fodder plants for the purpose of providing supplementary feeding for his goats. The plants consist of sunflower, sorghum, sunhemp, velvet bean and cow peas, he also intends to sell excess fodder seeds to other farmers in his locality.

Having already purchased a grinding mill, Chimwendo is looking forward to supplement goats to improve their live weights. He has made a commitment to cascade the trainings he has received and invite other farmers in his producer group to learn and benefit from his experience.

“I am grateful for the trainings that I have received and am looking forward with hope and expectation to fully commercialising my goat enterprise through participation in the VALUE project,” added Chimwendo.

PROJECT EVENTS

The VALUE project conducted a Training of Trainers on commercialisation for government extension workers from Mashonaland West province in Chinhoyi from 11 to 13 March 2020. The training was attended by 67 extension staff drawn from Chegutu, Mhondoro-Ngezi, Makonde and Zvimba. During the training, there was a visit to a champion farmer in Chegutu district, Talana farm where practical sessions were undertaken. An action plan was developed for cascading trainings to Anchor, Champion & Small-to-Medium Pork Producers across the VALUE project districts and wards. The plan will see PVC capacity development trainings being cascaded over the next six (6) weeks.

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This publication has been produced with the financial support of the European Union and the CIPS Foundation, its contents are the sole responsibility of the VALUE project.

