

Southern Africa Fresh from the Field

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Southern Africa is a unique field, with only three countries. As such, we've chosen to combine the three country fields into one newsletter for your reading enjoyment.



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*IRM-RDD staff at a
research plot
in Ntengon Modzi.*



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Partner Training in Capacity Building

Since early 2014, I have been conducting some training with the Reformed Church of Mozambique, a World Renew partner (Igreja Reformada em Mozambique, or IRM). The goal of the training events is to build the capacity of IRM's field staff in four key areas that reflect World Renew's strategy of enhancing effectiveness in project implementation.

Facilitation Skills and Experimentation

As a capacity builder to World Renew's partners here, I facilitated a three-day workshop in Vila Ulongue for 12 IRM-RDD (IRM's Relief and Development Department) staff members from March 4-6. During the training in facilitation skills and experimentation, the participants were equipped to engage adults in community development and also to enable communities to carry out experimentation to test and measure new agricultural techniques such as conservation agriculture.

During the workshop, the participants visited three research centers, IIAM, INCRISAT and IITA, in Ntengo Modzi where they saw several experimental trials in conservation agriculture, sorghum, and soybean screening and multiplication.

By the end of the three-day training, the participants were excited to start implementing some of their new skills, and we hope to see them reflected in their work in the months to come.

Training for Justice Committee

I also conducted a one-day sensitization workshop at Vila Ulongue on March 20, for the IRM Justice Committee. The workshop included justice issues at the community level and how, as a church agency, the justice committee can make a difference. Six ad hoc committee members attended the training, and at the end of the day, they felt more empowered to carry out their task. They said, "We can now explain better what the Justice Committee is out to do in the communities."

Board Training

On February 21, World Renew's partner, the IRM-RDD, invited me to conduct a one-day training for its new board members about the role of the board in organizational life. Seven participants attended and expressed excitement about having greater clarity in what they are going to be doing as members of the IRM-RDD board. Most of the participants were first-time board members.

Strategic Planning with IRM Leadership and Pastors

Following an evaluation recommendation, I facilitated a two-day workshop on strategic planning for the leadership and pastors of World Renew's partner, the Reformed Church of Mozambique, Mphatso Synod, at Vila Ulongue on March 26-27, 2014. The training was attended by 31 participants who envisioned the direction they would like to take their synod in the next five to ten years. After some brainstorming and reporting out, the participants decided to focus on two key objectives:

- Administration
- Enhancing growth in membership and the congregations

At the end of the workshop participants said that they felt re-energized and motivated by the time we spent together. "For the first time, we are so encouraged that we want to stay longer to decide how we will accomplish the objectives we discussed today!" To God be the glory, and may this result in tangible actions.

Finally, may I conclude by saying that all of these events are possible because World Renew partners and supporters were faithful in praying, giving, and encouraging us. Esther and I remain grateful for your support in every way, therefore, "always remember like the scriptures say, that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." 1 Corinthians 15:58

Walking the Talk

A Story of Transformation



Istifanus Gimba
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"And the things you have me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men (and women) who will also be qualified to teach others." 2 Timothy 2:2.

Alberto André Tandamula is a young man from Lifuitchi Tulo parish. Alberto is married and has two children. He is also an "adepto" (facilitator) with a World Renew partner in Mozambique, the Anglican Diocese of Niassa. The Diocese is World Renew's implementing partner in a 5-year sustainable livelihoods project with the Canadian government's Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD, formerly CIDA).

After receiving training in conservation agriculture, Alberto decided to implement what he learnt by training target communities in what he had learned, including minimum tillage, mulching, and applying compost instead of chemical fertilizer. However, in addition to facilitating training in three communities on conservation agriculture, Alberto also set up a small portion of land where he also tries what he teaches and the farmers in the program can come to see his example.

Alberto felt that it would not be good for him to teach others without having his own farm to practice what he



Tandamula explains how he mulched his maize plot.

teaches. In November, he started to collect grasses to pile on the farmland as mulch (blanket) and prepared compost (which he applied in holes he made in November) as manure. Many of the local people laughed as they watched him, thinking it was a crazy idea.

Later however, these same people began to see the difference between the maize that is growing on Alberto's farm and that of his neighbors who did not use the conservation agriculture techniques. As a result, people visit Alberto's farm regularly to see how conservation agriculture has improved his results.

Alberto is certainly an example not only to farmers participating on the Sustainable livelihoods project, but also to his colleagues other *adeptos* of the Anglican Diocese of Niassa. Keep it up!

Pray for Mozambique

- Praise God for good rains this year (even though it has caused flooding in some places across Mozambique). Many farmers are hopeful for a better harvest.
- Praise God that normalcy has now been restored after last year's political tensions.
- Praise God for an extension of the Mutarara food security program by FRB that will continue the good work there for another four years. Pray for an effective start for this project.
- Pray that peace will continue here, especially as the approach to the general elections at the end of 2014. Pray for free and fair elections in Mozambique.
- Continue to pray for World Renew's partners in Mozambique, the Anglican Diocese of Niassa and Reformed Church in Mozambique (Igreja Reformada em Mozambique), for wisdom and grace as they facilitate development programs in their target communities.



IRM Mphatso synod leaders and pastors pose during a training in strategic planning.

On Fathers and Sons



By Peter Timmerman
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Mr. Phiri and his boys

As I write, I have just dropped off my son Nathan at the airport again. He is headed back to Canada to complete Grade 12 there. I feel that living in Malawi is a blessing; but I must concede that living 12,000 miles away from my son is a great sacrifice for us and one that we find very difficult to make. Watching my tall, strong, and intelligent son walk out of my sight at the gate made me reflect on some fathers and sons that I have visited the past few months....

Mr. Pendikani Phiri is a diminutive man, not much over 5-feet tall. But he has an energetic and passionate manner that belies both his size and his age. I was visiting Mr. Phiri with our partner staff in the Katete region of Zambia. As we toured his fields, there were four young men trailing along with us. I found out that two of them were his sons, Samson and Edward. They were what some might call "strapping lads." Tall, strong, and healthy. You could see

Pendikani's fatherly pride as they moved through his expansive fields with him. He was a farmer and his sons were farmers. The fruits of their labors were evident in the rows of 7-foot-high maize and lush soya beans. They had adopted or were experimenting with all of the new farming methods being introduced by World Renew. They were even trying new methods of their own, some of which worked and some which did not. Pendikani talked passionately about how he had dug more than 50 "fertility ditches" which are one-meter-deep holes filled with organic matter and planted intensively with maize. When I asked if his sons had helped him with the task, he said, "No, they have their own fields to plant."

The previous day I had met another farmer, Mr. Daniel Banda, who showed me several of his fields of maize as well. In this part of the country, the window of opportunity for planting



is very narrow as the rainy season is not long. The key to a successful harvest is getting as much planted at the start (or just before the start) of the rains. Daniel showed us several fields. They all looked excellent. I asked him on each occasion when he had planted them... "On December 23," he responded each time. I wondered if he was confused, so I asked him to clarify. "I have eight sons," he said with a wry smile. No other explanation was needed. Daniel had incorporated the trainings from World Renew including the use of compost and manure with better plant spacing, and improved seeds that were provided through seed loans. That, along with his 8-son family, will assure him of food security as well as income this year. As we left his farm area, we passed

through a new field of sweet potatoes. It was clear that this field was still being expanded. He looked at me and said that the boys were working on this field after school each day. Somehow he had convinced his boys that the more they plant, the better their lives will get.

And so they will.

In Zambia, labor is one of the most important constraints to successful farming. When everything is done by hand, and all work must be done in a very short period of time, the availability of strong arms and solid backs is crucial to success. In both of these farm families, I was impressed by how hard farmers work in Zambia and how their families, especially their sons, pull together to ensure the success of their farming ventures.

Prayer Requests

- Praise for the safe arrival of our region's newest staff, Ruairidh (pronounced Rory) Waddell and Faye Yu.
- Pray for Ruairidh's and Faye's transition to Malawi and the region as they set up houses and Ruairidh prepares for his family's arrival in June.
- Pray for Malawi as the country prepares for an election in May. There have been several instances of violence in the run-up to the election so far, and it appears to be quite hotly contested between several candidates. Pray that democracy will be understood and that those who vote will do so in an unrestricted and safe environment.
- Pray for the safety of our staff as they move around the region on difficult roads and sometimes treacherous conditions.
- Pray for our many new partnerships that are just taking shape. May our vision become one with these new church partners. Specifically pray for our potential partnerships with the United Church of Zambia, Living Waters Church in Malawi, and Word Alive Church in Malawi. Also pray for potential new partnerships with the Blantyre Synod of the Presbyterian Church. We hope that these new partnerships will reap great rewards as we expand our programs in the region.