

DABANE TRUST

WATER WORKSHOPS

REPORT TO TRUSTEES OF ACTIVITIES 1993-1994

ARTISAN WORKSHOPS

This has been a year of consolidation for the workshops. We have concentrated on the six groups already started, with encouragement and support given to one new group. There seems to be a definite pattern to the development of each workshop. The groups start off working together as a unit until the workshop begins to make money. Immediately social problems set in with misappropriation of funds, arguments over distribution of earnings etc, etc. This results in some people leaving the group and in the case of the Nkayi group, an almost total disintegration. There always seems to be a core group who hangs on and the next stage sees the reforming of the group, often with new members and a gradual working through of the problems. Once the workshop has reached this stage, positive development can begin. Nkayi is the best illustration of this. Having been reduced to just two members, they were visited and many discussions were held between these remaining members, members of Water Workshops staff and members of the Co-ordination Committee. They are now an active group with members.

Each workshop is now developing its own strengths and interests with products which can range from cow bells to scotch carts and fish spears to wheelbarrows! Tshelanyemba deals mainly with larger manufacturing, as in the carts and wheelbarrows, while Mzimuni is in great demand for numerous repairs and agricultural implements. Binga is in close contact with various social centres in the area and has great demands for fencing and furniture, with traditional Tonga implements as an important side line. Lower Gweru concentrates on repairs, scotch carts and window frames, while Nkayi does carpentry work. Dombodema works with security fencing while the latest workshop has its strength in carpentry and scotch carts.

All members of the groups have been given opportunities in training, either at their own workshop, or combined with one of the other groups, or at a training centre. Over the year training has been given in the following -

with Basic and Advanced Blacksmithing: (in the case of Binga this included work with a traditional Tonga craftsman.)
Security fence making, plus manufacture of machines used to make the fencing.
Welding
Tinsmithing
Carpentry
Wheelbarrow manufacture
Business Management

IRRIGATED FAMILY GARDENS

We are now involved with ten gardens, with approximately ten members per garden group. Six of these gardens are situated on the Shashane river, Matobo district. Under Water Workshops staff's guidance, the group members are able to weave and erect fences, build water sumps and tanks, help in the design of hand pumps and operate and maintain the hand pumps.

The members are almost entirely women who work co-operatively to erect the fence, prepare the garden, pump water to the tanks and then work individually with their families on their own plot within the garden as a whole. After much searching and many trials, the most suitable pump has been found to be a Rower pump, designed by a small family company in England. Richard Cansdale spent a few days in Zimbabwe demonstrating this pump and Water Workshops now manufactures these pumps and uses them in the gardens. They have been very successful and the women have found them very easy to operate and maintain. In the new year a further pump will be designed and manufactured to be used in conjunction with the Rower pump in the gardens.

The usual problems associated with gardening in Matabeleland were added to this year by the most severe frost experienced for twenty years. Despite all this the ladies have persevered and produced a good variety of very healthy and nutritious vegetables ranging from tomatoes and rape to the more traditional vegetables of elude and ideally

Again training has been given to the groups in organic gardening methods and business management. In addition to this a demonstration garden has been set up in conjunction with the Salvation Army hospital at Tshelanyemba. An organic gardening course was attended by a number of the garden groups in conjunction with Hlekweni Training Centre and some members of the PermaCulture Society of Zimbabwe.

DEVELOPMENT OF WATER SOURCES

Water development is, of necessity, becoming a more vital part of Water Workshops involvement.

In Matobo district the Tshelanyemba-Nyashongwe pipeline was completed and handed over to the local Water Committee to run. The workshop at Tshelanyemba will still be involved in ongoing maintenance work.

At Mashumba, Kezi, two boreholes were surveyed and sunk in an area where there was previously no good supply of potable water. The boreholes are both fairly good and water has been well utilised.

In another desperately dry area in Tsholotsho another borehole has been sunk in conjunction with the Holland Committee for Southern Africa. This borehole became very deep and yields were so low that a bucket pump had to be fitted as a more efficient pump would have emptied the borehole in a few days. Although this borehole is not very prolific it does provide a little potable water for a community which before had nothing.

Two tanks have been sited and built, one in the Gwanda area has been completed and partially filled from the tail rains of last season. The other, will provide water for our workshop at Manjolo, Binga. This tank will take run off from the road and has required much thought on lining and sealing. It will be a vital water supply for the workshop, as at present they have to obtain water from five kilometres away.

At Bondolfi, Masvingo, Water Workshops staff have fitted several pumps to boreholes drilled by Rural Unity for Development Organisation (RUDO). More visits will be made to this area to fit yet more pumps and also to oversee the budding gardens set up to utilise the water.

Seven Sand Abstraction schemes have been set up in the Kezi area. These have all been fitted with the Rower pumps mentioned earlier. Further sand abstraction systems are being planned in a new area of involvement along the Manzamnyama River, Bulilimamangwe.

The sand abstraction scheme at Mototi in Zvishavane has also been visited and maintenance and repairs carried out.

FOOD SECURITY

The Matobo Sorghum seed distributed before the last growing season did well in all districts where it was tried. More seed will be distributed for the 94/95 season along with other varieties of sorghum, pearl millet and the Plumtree red bean, which is particularly high in protein. At the end of the last season, after harvesting, a variety of seeds were collected from different districts in repayment for the maize given out by Water Workshops last year. This seed is being stored and will be used when needed, in order to maintain some of the more prolific local varieties.

The rains of 1993/4 began well but basically finished in January, too early for most crops. Thus the harvest was once again down and many people harvested only a little sorghum but virtually no maize. Long range forecasts for 1994/5 season have been varied but hopefully people will plant a little seed throughout the season to try and catch at least some of the rain.

FOOD PROCESSING

Initially Water Workshops staff were servicing 17 grinding mills. Ongoing training of operators in daily maintenance and cleaning has paid dividends and most mills are now operating well with the two monthly servicing visit being sufficient. The ZFU mills in the Binga district now feel confident to move out of the Dabane Trust programme and are maintaining their own mills. This has left us with 13 mills requiring regular visits to check on maintenance, carry out major services and supply any spares required. Of these mills four are in the Binga area, three in Omay (Mashonaland West), one in Filabusi, two in Kezi, one in Tsholotsho and two in Bulilimamangwe.

FEASIBILITY STUDIES

It was the intention of the programme to carry out two major surveys per year. This year this has been done at Makorokoro, Bulilimamangwe and Silwane, Lupane. Both surveys have been done with a view to setting up a workshop and developing water supplies. In the case of Makorokoro, there are good possibilities for sand abstraction schemes and garden development similar to those in the Kezi area.

Thorough surveys have been carried out and data stored and interpreted in the computer programme originally set up by Giles Smith and later developed by Peter Lamb..

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

This part of the programme has become very important and essential to the survival of all the groups, whether workshop or garden. Six courses have been held this year. Some of have been purely business management but some have been held in conjunction with other courses, for instance, with wheelbarrow making or with organic gardening.

This side of the programme was originally carried out by Nompilo Sibanda and since May by Joyce Dube with inputs from Douglas Dube and James MacBain, the agricultural business consultant who joined us for a short time in January and again in June. Training has been given in all aspects of business management with particular reference to bookkeeping and accounting. As this programme has developed it has been discovered that training has to be at a very basic level as most of the group members have had no experience whatsoever with this type of work. Mrs Dube, with her teaching experience has been particularly good for this aspect of the programme.

NETWORKING

Water Workshops has continued to co-operate with a number of other organisations, both national and international.

YWCA	- extension work
SARDEO	- water programme in Gwanda
Salvation Army	- pipeline, water for the hospital, demonstration garden
Catholic Church, Binga	- closely linked with our workshop at Manjolo.
RUDO	- water and garden project at Bondolfi
Hlekweni	- training courses
ITDG	- blacksmithing and training
ORAP	- grinding mills
ZFU, Binga	- grinding mills
PermaCulture	- organic gardening
Africa 2000	- gardening course
AGRITEX	- animal traction seminar
UNICEF	- visit of NGO's and farmers from Mozambique

We have also received visits from various international donors and organisations -

OXFAM, ICCO, Brot fur die Welt, NORAD, QPS, FOS, ITDG, SWS Filtration Systems to name a few.

STAFF

There have been a number of changes over the year, but the core staff has remained unchanged. Nompilo Sibanda, the Business Advisor, was with us for three months but decided that the work was too demanding. She was replaced in May by Mrs Joyce Dube. A new Secretary was appointed in January 1994, Nothando Moyo, who has since married and is now Mrs Dube.

Short Term Staff

James McBain, an agricultural economist joined us in February and June. It was hoped that he would take on a one to two year contract to help with the business management and administration but unfortunately, for personal reasons, he has been unable to join the programme.

Peter Lamb has spent two valuable periods one in February and one September, with programme staff. During this time he has set up the computer, introduced several useful programmes, helped develop the individual accounting system we are now using for donors, and trained several staff members in the use of the computer and programmes.

Jeremy Gibberd, a newly qualified architect from London, spent a short time with us discussing and later designing a cottage for Water Workshops staff.

Staff Training and Conferences

Several members of staff have attended conferences, workshops or training courses:-

ITDG	- Blacksmith wheel, rim making course
	- Blacksmith seminar
PermaCulture	- organic gardening course
SEDCO	- courses in small business management
eSikhoveni Centre	- community development training
AGRITEX	- Animal traction seminar
Westgate Vocational Centre	- Welding course
African Water Network (AWN), Nairobi	- conference on Africa water needs
OXFAM , Kisumu, Kenya	- water development seminar for field workers

TRANSPORT

All the vehicles obtained in 1992 have put in very good service with mileage averaging 4 500 kilometres per month for the smaller trucks.

The Nissan seven tonne truck has proved very useful, ferrying anything from drought relief food to bags of cement.

In June 1994, we welcomed the arrival of a Toyota Hiace Minibus. This vehicle has proved invaluable for transporting staff members and moving workshop and garden group members to other areas for inter-group meetings.

A second trailer was designed and manufactured by Noble Moyo for transporting the welder/generator to the various workshop groups.

INTER - GROUP ACTION

In August 1993 a successful staff retreat was run at Willow Park, Esigodini. This was attended by all staff members and enabled us to take a close look at each others work, the successes and failures of the programme as a whole and to take part in a concerted planning session for the next years work.

Following this an inter group conference was held for a week in September. This was attended by 90% of the programme's members. Each group was able to report on their years work and the whole conference was able to discuss any problems that had arisen and to help in planning for the next years work. These conferences will become an annual event and will ensure that each member of a group has some input into the work of the Water Workshops programme.

As a direct result of the conference a Co-ordinating Committee was formed with members taken from each workshop group. The duties of this committee are to help with any problems affecting the work of the programme, particularly where it affects one of the groups performance or social problems. They will regularly visit groups and can then make reports to Water Workshops to ensure approved action on any problem areas.

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August 1994.

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