

# DABANE TRUST

## WATER WORKSHOPS

ANNUAL REPORT 2001-2002

### Administration

During the year three new members of staff have been appointed and three workers re-appointed on a contract basis. Of the permanent staff, Lungile Ncube took over as Business Management Trainer from Joyce Dube who has become Administrator for Dabane. An extended Training Unit with Lungile and Bussie Mabandla has become the responsibility of Thelma Ntini. Shepard Moyo joined Douglas Nleya in the Feasibility and Monitoring Unit with responsibilities for Watershed management and Environmental conservation. City Moyo took over as mechanic from Jabulani Sibanda who has stayed in the U.K. The three contract workers are attached to the Water Source Unit.

The new office block has been completed and is now in full use by the Training Unit, Feasibility & Monitoring Unit and Water Source Units. Two computers which are linked to the main system in the administration building have been installed in the new office. The office previously occupied by these units has been converted into a meeting room for small gatherings.

The accounts system is now working efficiently, it is currently maintained and is providing us with the accounting and analysis which we require. It is good to report that the accounts are up to date and the audit is complete.

Our vehicle fleet is aging with two vehicles which have both travelled over 300,000 kilometres and the Land Cruiser which has now done over 400,000 kilometres. After some initial problems the Land Rover is now proving its worth on the deteriorating roads. We have presently paid for a new Toyota Land Cruiser to replace the Hilux 4x4 which is costing us too much – we hope to take delivery in September. We were unable to replace the mini-bus as a new vehicle is expected and delivery cannot be guaranteed until next year, hopefully we will be able to replace it at the end of this financial year – bearing in mind that the Hilux double-cab will then be way past its ‘sell by date’! In the present situation it would be prudent to replace this with a longer lasting Land Rover as soon as we are able.

The administration unit has continued to facilitate the smooth running of the programme through the procurement of materials as well as organising workshops for staff members to attend to keep them abreast with other NGO’s as well as network with them.

## Water Source Unit

Meetings with communities about construction, conservation, management and garden development are ongoing at all sites. The building of silt traps above each dam and continual training of dam committees is helping to keep erosion around the dam sites in check.

The new policy of building one dam at a time with all equipment gathered at one site has paid off and with four tractors currently in use, the construction of dams and ferrying of materials has been speeded up considerably. The three spillways, which had been damaged by the Cyclone Eline floods were repaired, Madzibe, Silikwane and Ndwane. In addition the reconstruction of Chinenga dam has just been completed. The Mpande and Nyanke dams have both been completed and the early water collected in Nyanke benefiting the local livestock. Many of the dams started filling with the early rains but unfortunately did not fill due to the short rainy season this year. The dams in Beitbridge have been a particular disappointment with Mpande not filling for a third year.

The team is about to move into the Lupane area to start construction on a long awaited and much needed dam in the Dongamuzi area. The present contract staff have proved their worth and with the assistance of our own mechanic work proceeds smoothly.

### **Disaster Relief – Lutumba Housing Project**

Dabane's target was to assist 125 families to reconstruct their homes, which were destroyed by Cyclone Eline floods is almost complete. Each of the families is being assisted to build a two-roomed housing unit. The project is being completed in three phases. Under the first and second phases 66 units have been constructed and each of these are now all occupied. We are now in the final phase with fifty-nine units under construction.

### Gardens – Rural livelihoods - Seeds

Dabane Trust continues with its aim to improve the production of vegetables, cereals and protein by establishing more irrigated family gardens. Training is ongoing in organic gardening, marketing, fruit tree production, food preservation, pump maintenance and business management. Unit staff make regular visits to garden groups and have been disappointed this year to see how few gardens were kept going during the rainy season. In this year of extreme food shortage a great opportunity was lost as gardeners watched their early planted dry-land crops wither and die. Those that did use their gardens to plant maize at least harvested something. It is obvious that more emphasis must be put on the benefits of using the gardens year round. Now that the rains have finished all the gardens are back in full production but had they kept going they could have benefited from a harvest of much needed maize. Another area which needs more input is pump maintenance. When the pumps break down group members are too ready to give up and carry water on their heads rather than put into practise the simple repair methods they have been taught in so many courses.

The watering troughs established at Huwana are serving the community well. This has been a popular development with both communities and local officials.

The sanitation programme continues with most gardens now benefiting from a toilet. In all 59 toilets have been set up.

At Siyansundu, Binga about 100 farmers have seriously embarked on food security projects. During the 2000-2001 harvesting season, the farmers managed to store 50kgs of Marcia seed, 20kgs of beans and round nuts for planting this season. Unfortunately the poor rains at the beginning of this year meant that very little seed was harvested in any of the seed distribution areas. Binga, Beitbridge and Tudi 2 farmers did not realise much of a harvest with only one farmer managing to get nine buckets of Marcia seed and six buckets of pearl millet. In Beitbridge only two men and one woman harvested a little seed grain for the next season. More seed has been sought from Matopo Research station for the next season (2002-2003) which will hopefully bring much more rain.

### Training Unit

Work is ongoing with field visits and training sessions with both garden and workshop groups. In addition two leadership training sessions were held and a community workshop at Mpande. A leadership workshop was also held with Dabane staff to enable them to help groups in trouble. Artisan workshop groups continue to be beset by mismanagement of finance problems. Yet more work needs to be done on this in forthcoming training sessions.

Initial contact visits were made to three prospective garden groups at Kana following surveys from the water supplies unit

Much time has been spent on the internal evaluation of the gardens at Huwana, Masvingo and Zvishavane. It became obvious once again that although pump maintenance courses are held frequently, group still lack the sense of ownership and responsibility for their pumps. Preparations are now under way for the artisan workshops evaluation.

### Feasibility And Monitoring

Many community meetings have been held, some of these being initial contact meetings with communities. We also managed to maintain good networking relations with other organisations such as KMTC, ZimPro and Zvishavane Water project and to maintain good links with local government and with Agritex. Our work in Siachilaba much impressed the chiefs of the area who encouraged us to continue working on food security in the area. Dabane Trust is now an active member of the Matebeleland North Nutrition, Water and Sanitation Forum through invitation by the Provincial Medical Health Department.

We are in the process of implementing a new a soil conservation programme at Siyachilaba, to prevent the riverbank cutting back and destroying cropping area. A vetiver grass nursery has been established at Nyanke Dam which will help protect the embankment. The Ndwane dam community has also been encouraged to plant grass to protect their dam wall.

During the wet season work continued in Binga with spraying against mosquitoes.

Four meetings have been held so far with the community in Tshelenyemba, which has received eighteen donkeys to assist in ploughing. This group that intends to buy more donkeys or cattle has so far contributed \$62 000 and has already started sourcing the livestock.

### **Sand Abstraction**

Sand abstraction research work continues at all four sites with regular visits being made to each site. A further sand abstraction workshop was held in October with all research assistants. The research information has been much disturbed by the changing weather patterns. At the beginning of the rainy season floods washed away some of the equipment and yet now, when there should be enough water in the rivers to last until the end of the year, it is beginning to look as if some of the rivers will actually completely dry up.

Research assistants have been encouraged to involve the community as much as possible in any work they undertake. In addition the installations closely associated with the research work have proved to be very popular. For instance the cattle drinking troughs using Rower pumps, which were installed in the Manzamnyama River, and the new pump and infiltration gallery at Dongamuzi. Further to this a donkey driven pump is being designed and tried out at the Dabane premises. Also at Dabane a tank has been built to test trial well-points under control conditions. At present 10, commercial and Dabane-made, are being tested before the most promising are moved out for experimentation under field conditions. If they are proved to be effective, it is hoped that local artisan will copy the well points and pumps and make them available for sale at the rural village level.

### **Water Supplies**

The Unit has continued installing new water systems, upgrading existing gardens and setting up irrigation tanks, in addition to the usual visits and maintenance work. Pump service and maintenance workshops have been held with individual and mixed garden groups. Several new groups are being helped including 13 families in the Hingwe area who intend to grow vegetables for people in the Bulilimamangwe areas. The unit has also been involved in setting up dam gardens, in particular at Dambashoko and Silikwana.

Three technical water surveys were carried out at three new possible groups in Matebeleland North along the Kana River, two proved to be good sites.

A week was spent with at least thirty members of the Dongamuzi community installing a fourth pump in the Dongamuzi River. This was an experimental pump which was an immediate success and has been called the Patshapatsha pump.

Another new development was the installation of a subsurface water-harvesting tank at Godzo Business Centre in Tsholotsho. This tank will be supplying about 50 families with water but as it is an experimental tank it will be closely monitored.

## **Njabulo 2001**

This event turned out to be a tremendous success thanks to the hard work of all staff and the communities who took part. The week long event included visits to all aspects of Dabane's work, meetings between donors and groups and general celebrations. A definite tribute to the first ten years of Dabane's work with the rural communities of southern Zimbabwe.

## **Drought**

The survey on food availability was undertaken in December 2001 in order for Dabane to form an accurate assessment of the situation and its likely impact on the programme in the forth-coming year. A serious food shortage was indicated in four areas surveyed in Matabeleland South and North, particular in the more remote areas. Since then the food situation in the whole country has deteriorated rapidly. The recommendation of the staff who undertook this is that in view of the organisations, which are already involved in drought relief schemes, coupled with Dabane's inexperience with drought relief and lack of capacity, Dabane should not be directly involved. However, it was acknowledged that the situation is becoming increasingly acute and Dabane acknowledges that it may have to be involved in food-for-work schemes, particularly in dam construction and conservation work which are physically demanding on people who may not have sufficient nutrition.

A forum on food relief and disaster preparedness by NGO's is already established in which Dabane is a member. The forum seeks to find ways of helping the poor communities either through food for work, handouts or food relief to the vulnerable groups, namely school children, the aged, and the pregnant.

## **2003 – 2006 Programme Proposal**

This year the annual STA focussed mainly on the development of the 2003-2006 period. This proposal is now complete as a Strategic Drought Recovery Programme. The present situation in the country has dictated the direction this new programme period must take. All new developments will be geared towards drought recovery and coping mechanisms.

Overall it is pleasing to be able to report that throughout the year Dabane has been able to maintain its involvement in 'development activities'. Unfortunately not every NGO is able to report that they have continued to work with rural people, developing water sources and establishing water and food security systems.

The prospect for secure funding for the 2003 – 2006 period cannot be taken for granted, but thankfully present indications for Dabane are somewhat encouraging.

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