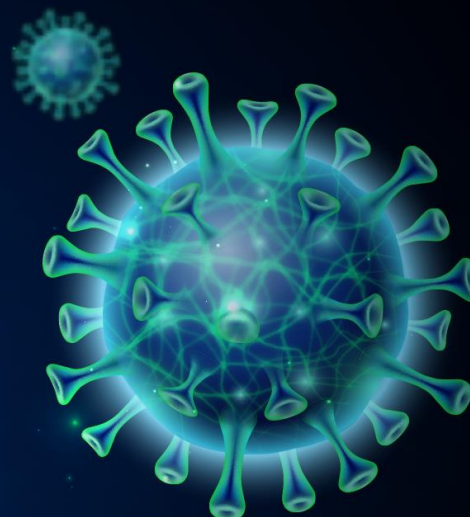


# COVID-19

ZAGP urges you to practice the preventative and precautionary advice of health authorities, such as social distancing and good personal hygiene, to reduce the spread of the coronavirus. Together we can fight the impact of COVID-19



## ZAGP News

The Newsletter for the Zimbabwe Agricultural Growth Programme (ZAGP)

ISSUE 12: APRIL 2020

### EDITORIAL

Welcome to the April issue of ZAGP News, giving you an update of the programme's activities. We hope you find value in the content and get in touch with the partners to know more about their work.

This issue comes against the background of the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic which poses a significant threat to the world economy. At the time of writing, COVID-19 cases had peaked 1.4 million cases with almost 75,000 deaths globally. Zimbabwe is currently under a 21-day National Lockdown declared on the 27th of March 2020.

Essential industries and services will continue to operate during this period, and in a statement issued by the Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement, Honourable Perrance Shiri, the agriculture sector has been designated as an essential service, with crop and livestock production activities set to remain operational. In this issue, we share how some of the activities under ZAGP will remain in operation during the lockdown.

This month, the focus is on the [Zimbabwe Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Services \(ZAKIS\)](#) project. We share highlights of progress made by ZAKIS in some of the key deliverables as the project works towards harmonising the three strategic pillars of agriculture - research, education and extension, to create farmer centric and market driven agricultural systems in Zimbabwe.

We also focus on providing updates on various activities undertaken by the ZAGP partners. Under the [Transforming Zimbabwe's Animal Health and Food Safety Systems for the Future \(SAFE\)](#) project, this issue covers the process of developing an epidemiological mapping tool to be used nationally to assess and implement the correct measures to prevent and control disease threats.

From Lupane district in Matabeleland North province, we provide insights into how the [Beef Enterprise Strengthening and Transformation \(BEST\)](#) project has successfully brought together the local community, and other key stakeholders to initiate construction of the Mathambo Cattle Business Centre (CBC).

The [Value Chain Alliance for Livestock Upgrading and Empowerment for Livestock Upgrading and Empowerment \(VALUE\)](#) project is working with pig producers to setup Pork Producer Business Syndicates. We cover the expectations of one of the participating farmers to overcome the current production challenges. Finally, from the [Transforming Zimbabwe's Dairy Value Chain for the Future \(TranZDVC\)](#) project, we track the process of the disbursement of productive assets under the Matching Grants Facility.

We welcome feedback on this, and future issues of the publication. Thank you, and enjoy reading! Stay safe and continue with the good practices which can halt the spread of COVID-19.

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## ZAGP AND THE COVID 19 PANDEMIC

In the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have analysed all our programme activities foreseen for the next three months to ensure that their implementation will not contribute, directly or indirectly, to the spreading of the disease and harm the health of all our project staff. ZAGP is also complimenting the national efforts and adhering to the recommended health and safety measures to prevent the spread of the virus. In this regard, we have identified the activities that can continue to be carried out:

- The work on developing applications and information systems will be accelerated as a lot of progress can be made on these without going to the field.
- The Focused Coordination and working group meetings will continue virtually.
- Training materials can be prepared, ready for when field training can re-start.
- Work on policy and regulatory recommendations to make the value chains work better, will also be focused on.
- Developing the details of the governance structures of the different business entities being developed will continue.
- Matching grant applications can be reviewed and approved.
- Tendering and reviewing of bids for the acquisition of green technologies will go ahead.
- Data entry for databases of beneficiaries will continue.
- The ZAGP newsletter will continue to be circulated and the website will be updated.

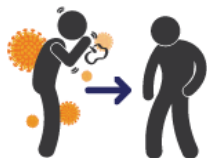
We will continue to monitor the situation and make adjustments in relation to changing circumstances.

The [Inclusive Poultry Value Chain \(IPVC\)](#) project has developed a COVID-19 brochure. Download [IPVC Against COVID-19](#) for basics about the disease.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

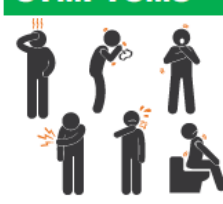
**TRANSMISSION**    Investigations are ongoing

- Mainly spread by sick people to others – through droplets which are created when infected people talk, cough and sneeze (like colds and flu).
- Touching contaminated objects puts the droplets onto your hands. If you touch your face the droplets can enter your nose / eyes / mouth.



Travellers have spread the virus into other countries. **Screening at entry points** helps to detect sick travellers.

**SYMPTOMS**




- Fever
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Muscle aches
- Diarrhoea


Most cases are **MILD**, but some are **SEVERE** and can be fatal.

Symptoms may appear within 14 days of probable exposure. **Monitor your health!**

**Seek immediate medical attention** if you think you have been exposed or develop symptoms.




**PREVENTION**



**Maintain good personal hygiene and ensure safe food practices:**

- Wash your hands frequently. Carry hand sanitiser for use when soap and water are not readily available.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Ensure food, including eggs, is thoroughly cooked.




**Avoid potential exposure:**

- Keep some distance from people who are obviously sick.
- Do not travel if you are sick.
- Avoid direct contact with animals (live or dead) and their environment.
- Do not touch surfaces that may be contaminated with droppings.

**TREATMENT**

**There is no specific treatment. Supportive care helps relieve symptoms.**



**There is no vaccine against COVID-19.**



## ZAGP NEWS FOCUS

### Zimbabwe Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Services (ZAKIS)

#### Background to the ZAKIS Project

**ZAKIS** seeks to harmonise the three strategic pillars of agriculture comprising of research, education and extension to create farmer-centric and market driven agricultural systems in Zimbabwe. The project seeks to deliver this mandate through demonstrating strategic collaboration between the three pillars at two Agricultural Centres of Excellence (ACEs) located at Chibero College of Agriculture and Matopos Research Institute. These flagship centres are each mirrored by smaller District Agricultural Centres of Excellence (DACEs) located in Insiza, Matobo, Chegutu and Mhondoro Ngezi districts to ensure that all activities happening at the two national centres of excellence are brought closer to the farmers.

The centres of excellence demonstrate climate sensitive and market focused best practices in crop and livestock production through demonstration trials. The ACEs showcase modern technologies such as how best to utilise low cost digital devices to enhance farm yield, how to be adaptive to climate change, and illustrate business models amongst many other functions.



ZAKIS is working with the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement (MoLAWRR) to ensure that a new and up to date agricultural education curriculum is developed to prepare students for the current Zimbabwean market.

Having been incorporated into the National Agricultural Policy Framework (NAPF) formulation process, the project is working closely with the Ministry to contribute to research, education and extension policy, as well as providing support for the development of a trade and marketing policy.

[Download the ZAKIS brochure to learn more about the project.](#)

#### Key Project Highlights

##### Private Sector Engagement and strategic Collaborations in the Agriculture Centres of Excellence

Global best practice for establishment of sustainable agriculture centres of excellence has shown the need to partner with the private sector. Currently at the core of the activities for ZAKIS at the ACEs, is private sector engagement with reputable companies such as Prime SeedCo, National Foods Limited, Superfert (FSG). As agro-input suppliers, the companies are setting up demonstration sites for crops and livestock production. These will enable trainings and field days where farmers from all sectors can come for private sector based extension on production techniques, input usage and selection.

Social enterprises such as RAIZCORP are also actively engaged with the centres with a desire to establish agribusiness incubation facilities for dairy and other livestock value chains. This will enable ACEs and DACEs to demonstrate agribusiness best practice and also to incubate smallholder farmers and develop them into commercially viable farmers. The prospect of this partnership comes at an ideal time, especially for farmers in the vicinity of the Chibero ACE, as RAIZCORP, through the supplier development (ESD) programmes, focuses on incubation and acceleration programmes for entrepreneurs, which in this case, will be dairy farmers. This has the potential of transitioning subsistent farmers into full-scale agriprenuers.

## ZAGP NEWS FOCUS

### Zimbabwe Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Services (ZAKIS)

#### Matopos Research Institute ACE Nutritional Laboratory Renovated

ZAKIS also seeks to ensure the establishment of adequate state of the art and internationally accredited infrastructure at the ACEs, to ensure delivery of quality service to farmers and other value chain actors. A notable development has been the refurbishment and the upgrading of the Nutrition Laboratory at Matopos Research Institute in Matabeleland South province.

This is key for the Matopos ACE which is a service centre for thousands of livestock farmers in the southern region. A recently concluded farmer needs assessment by ZAKIS established that farmers are facing recurrent feed shortages for their livestock, particularly in the dry season. The assessment also revealed that the cost of commercial feed is prohibitive, identifying a need for good quality, low cost, on farm feed formulations of affordable feed. The Nutrition Laboratory will lead in nutrition and digestibility analysis for various on farm feed formulations.

#### BEFORE THE RENOVATIONS



#### AFTER THE RENOVATIONS



The laboratory will provide testing and advisory services on animal feeds, agricultural chemicals, seeds and crop management technologies to farmers, students (colleges and universities), feed companies and other stakeholders. The next steps for the Nutrition Laboratory involve international accreditation and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 17025 certification of the laboratory; to ensure the testing laboratories operate a quality management system, are technically competent and generate valid results. The ISO 17025 accreditation is the most important standard for testing and/or calibration laboratories. It confirms that a particular laboratory is able to produce precise and accurate test results and calibration data.

## ZAGP NEWS FOCUS

### Zimbabwe Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Services (ZAKIS)

#### Revision of the Agricultural Education Curriculum

As part of the process of strengthening the relationships between Research, Education and Extension, ZAKIS aims to deliver an improved agricultural education curriculum. The project has embarked on curriculum review activities to ensure that students master the science of agriculture, get a full appreciation the market demands and are well rounded to cover all sectors of agricultural productivity.

The review is being led by a senior team of experts in agriculture, education and training, and is guided by a number of steps;

01

A preliminary desk review was conducted to map out the current state of the curriculum and appreciate the perspectives of various stakeholders who interact and directly benefit from it one way or the other. The review also informed the development of tools that would be later used for primary data collection.

02

A capacity building workshop attended by representatives from the Department of Agricultural Education and Farmer Training (DAEFT), academia and NGO partners was convened. The workshop was to inform the participants on the ZAGP motives in curriculum revision, engage the facilitatory roles of the Academic institutional leadership and streamline the capacities needed in getting valid and relevant data.

03

A data collection process was launched and to date has held consultative workshops in Bulawayo and Harare and data collection at ministry of Agriculture departments and tertiary institutions. A total of 1297 questionnaires have been completed from these multi sectorial stakeholders. The data is currently being analysed and is planned to be publicized before the end of June 2020. The expected output from this process is a market-oriented agricultural education curriculum supporting Zimbabwe's agricultural recovery and transformation. A first draft report of the full process has been produced.

#### National Agriculture Policy Framework Support to the Government of Zimbabwe

The Government of Zimbabwe, with the participation of various agricultural stakeholders, developed the National Agricultural Policy Framework (NAPF 2019-2030). The NAPF provides guidance and is the basis for coordination in the development of policies in the agricultural sector.

As part of the fulfilment of the NAPF towards the development of sector specific policies, ZAKIS has been mandated by the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement to spearhead the policy development focusing Agriculture Knowledge, Technology and Innovation Systems and Agricultural Marketing and Trade Policy. ZAKIS is leading in the formulation processes with the aim of developing a new service and business model for market oriented and demand driven agriculture knowledge and innovation service. As an output of this process, ZAKIS will deliver an Education, Extension and Research Policy, and Agriculture Markets and Trade Policy.

The policy formulation process led by ZAKIS is in eight steps, detailed below;

1. **Inception Meeting** - held with relevant stakeholders and a roadmap was produced, which detailed the next stage of the process to produce Issues Papers for both pillars
2. **Issues Papers Development Process** - consultants were recruited to lead this process, as well as facilitate a validation exercise for both papers. Full versions of the papers are available upon request.
3. **Issues Paper Validation** – over 80 stakeholders from the agriculture sector participated and there was a simultaneous launch of the policy development process by the Permanent Secretary of the MoLWARR.
4. **Stakeholder Consultations** - the MoLWARR requires that wider consultations need to be done and this is currently the stage that ZAKIS is implementing. These consultations will take place across the country's 10 provinces. To date, Mashonaland West province has been completed, all other scheduled meetings are on-hold as a precautionary measure in response to COVID-19.
5. **Consolidation of all Stakeholder Contributions** - this will follow soon as the provincial meetings are complete.
6. **Drafting of the Policies**- this is the next activity once consolidation is done, and draft policies will be the output of this process.
7. **Validation of Draft**- a workshop with key stakeholders to discuss and make final contributions to the draft.
8. **Submission of Draft**- this is the final step when the draft is submitted to Minister for cabinet proceedings, for approval and enactment.

ZAKIS and the MoLWARR plan to have this process completed by the end of 2020. All workshop proceedings, meeting and consultancy reports will be available upon request.

## PROJECT UPDATES

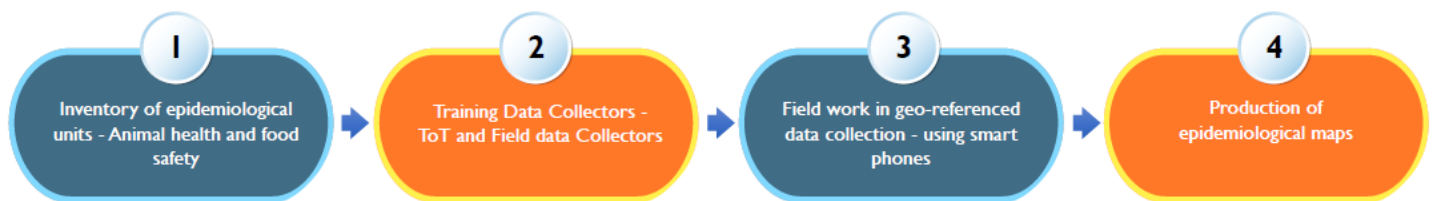
### Transforming Zimbabwe's Animal Health and Food Safety Systems for the Future (SAFE)

#### SAFE Undertaking Epidemiological Mapping for Improved Animal Health and Food Safety Delivery

Epidemiology is the study of how often diseases occur in different areas and why. For the SAFE project, this applies to livestock diseases and animal food borne related illnesses. The epidemiological information is important for planning and evaluation of strategies to prevent disease spread and help in the management of disease outbreaks that may have already developed. In livestock, diseases reduce the productivity of animals thereby causing losses to the farmers. The SAFE project aims to build the capacity of the Department of Veterinary Services and the Department of Environmental Health to be able to deal with disease challenges for improved productivity and food safety.

In this regard, epidemiological mapping is a tool used to assess and implement the correct measures to prevent and control disease threats. To make important decisions relating to production, trade and consumer safety, all stakeholders will use this tool. This article provides a summary of the progress made so far in the production of the epidemiological mapping tool.

The mapping exercise involves four major stages as indicated in the flow diagram below:



#### Progress to Date

A	B	C
Production of the national inventory of epi units important for tracking incidence of animal health and food borne illnesses.	Production of the national inventory of epi units important for tracking incidence of animal health and food borne illnesses.	Production of epi-unit maps
This is almost complete. Sites of important epidemiological units critical for animal disease surveillance were received from all the eight target provinces. These included all animal aggregation points and infrastructure along the value chain.	Training of Trainers for data collection conducted in February 2020. A total of 20 officers (2 per province) from the Department of Veterinary Services were trained and equipped with skills to download and install an open source data collection tool using smart phones. The participants were also equipped with basic skills to produce epidemiological units location maps using the data they would have collected.	National geo-referenced epidemiological -maps for each category or disease will be available by end of August 2020. Priority will be given to theileriosis maps to assist in the vaccination programme before the onset of the rainy season.

The provincial trainers are responsible for organising the data collection programme for their respective provinces. The major benefit of the epidemiological -unit mapping tool is building in-house capacity to produce the maps for reporting and prompt decision making which will be a great advantage to the stakeholders. The cattle business centres and the goat aggregation centres are part of the epidemiological units to be mapped and will therefore provide support to the ZAGP projects. The information generated will also be helpful in future programming for the livestock sector.

## PROJECT UPDATES



### ADDRESSING PORK VALUE CHAIN CHALLENGES AT THE CENTRE OF INTERVENTIONS BY THE VALUE PROJECT

*The escalating costs of feed and unfavourable markets are forcing pig producers like Hillary Mudzekenyedze to scale-down production.*

Buffeted by the ever-changing feed prices in the pork industry, small scale producer, Hillary Mudzekenyedze of Nyabango farm in Chegutu district, Mashonaland West province recently destocked his sow unit reducing it from sixteen to a nine-sow unit. Coupled with the absence of an abattoir in the district, lack of access to viable markets and low returns on investment; Hillary is expecting a change in fortune as a result of the Pork Producer Business Syndicates (PPBS) being established under the [Value Chain Alliance for Livestock Upgrading and Empowerment \(VALUE\)](#) project. Working with integrators VALUE is establishing PPBS in Mashonaland East and West provinces for efficient delivery of value-adding business services to members through collective business strategies.

“The prices we are being offered by the butcheries are very low and do not match the input cost. For instance, in March, I sold porkers for ZWL\$45 per kilogram and sows for ZWL\$35 per kilogram and the butcheries were selling at ZWL\$110 and ZWL\$115 per kilogram respectively, therefore getting a bigger share of the profits,” bemoaned Hillary.

His expectations from the project include setting up of an abattoir in the district, access to viable markets and a reduction in the cost of feed.

“Having an abattoir nearby would greatly reduce costs of production as we are currently paying ZWL\$100 per unit at abattoirs which is grossly exorbitant, and this does not take into consideration the transport costs of getting to the abattoirs.”

In the absence of an abattoir in Chegutu, Hillary is forced to take his pigs to Marondera over 150 kilometres away.

To address challenges being faced by Hillary and other pig producers in the province, the project has begun work on establishing an abattoir in Selous which will service farmers in Chegutu, Mhondoro Ngezi, Zvimba and Makonde districts. In addition, efforts are underway to profile butcheries and supermarkets to off-take pig products from the farmers. This will bring fair value to the farmers as they are brought closer to end consumers.

#### ONLINE RESOURCES

- [Watch Hillary Mudzekenyedze narrating his experiences as a pig producer](#)
- [Download the inaugural issue of VALUE News, the newsletter for the VALUE project](#)

## PROJECT UPDATES

### Transforming Zimbabwe's Dairy Value Chain for the Future (TranzDVC)



Window one of the Matching Grants Facility (MGF) seeks to co-finance investments with private sector actors, including large-scale processors and large-scale farmers serving as integrators. This window aims at securing the long-term commitment of integrators to act as value chain promoters. This way, the matching grant facility (MGF) will be used to share the cost and risk and, in so doing, leveraging investment from a commercial partner to promote small-scale farmer entry into markets.

The following were the productive assets disbursed:

#### a) Labour Saving Productive Assets

Silage cutters purchased for Portlet Farm in Makonde district, Mashonaland West province and United Bush Dairy Farm in Seke district, Mashonaland East province, under the Window one MGF have been useful to the respective communities as they are now able to cut their silage in a short period.

Previously, farmers used small choppers which had an output of 5 to 7 tonnes per hour and incurred losses as the maize would go beyond soft dough stage as they took turns to use the slower group chopper. The newly acquired chopper grinder cuts 2ha (100 tonnes) per day versus 40 tonnes per day with the smaller chopper. Access to efficient machinery gives the out growers an opportunity to collect and preserve enough silage for their cows thereby ensuring improved productivity.

The United Bush Dairy Farm's model is to hire out tractors to grow maize silage and the silage chopper cutting services. Such equipment which is necessary for efficient feed production would not be economically viable for individual farmer ownership who is producing less than 200 litres per day, but the farmer will be able to access these through out-grower models promoted by TranzDVC.

#### b) Innovative Solar Technologies

Smallholder beef-dairy farmers are located in remote areas off the national electricity grid with poor road networks far from sustainable markets. In addition to producing very low milk volumes from their beef cows, these farmers lack access to and knowledge of alternative sources of affordable chilling or refrigeration technology, making participation in the mainstream dairy value chain unviable.

To address these challenges, the TranzDVC project is recommending investments in solar energy as a reliable and viable off-the-grid cold chain facility. Improved cold chains will allow aggregators and suppliers to milk twice a day and provide the capacity to produce and aggregate critical volumes over two – three days, reducing milk spoilage and daily transport costs to ultimately increase incomes.

For example, Chitomborwizi Dairy Group in Mashonaland West province, had its milk bulking point at Portelet Farm would sometimes incur milk losses of up to 2,000 litres of milk per collection following intensive power cuts. This is now a thing of the past as the group is no longer facing this challenge since the installation of a solar system as an energy source to their milk bulking point. The large-scale farmer and the 19 smallholder farmers are now also saving 50 litres of diesel per day which they used for their generator back up before the installation of the solar unit.

### Window One Procurement Update

<p><b>Wonderklip Farm, Seke district, Mashonaland East province</b></p>	<p><b>Watershed Dairy, Wedza district, Mashonaland East province</b></p>	<p><b>Portlet Farm, Makonde district, Mashonaland West province</b></p>	<p><b>Lamour Estates, Mutasa district, Manicaland province</b></p>	<p><b>Red Dane Farm, Seke district, Mashonaland East province</b></p>
<p>Forage cutter and irrigation equipment delivered. The other equipment comprised of a baler, plough and planter will be delivered in April 2020.</p>	<p>A milking machine and related equipment including a harrow and plough were procured. A tractor was paid for and awaits delivery. Borehole drilling will commence after the delivery.</p>	<p>A forage harvester was delivered, and the solar equipment installed; borehole drilling will commence shortly.</p>	<p>Payment for the centre pivot was done and awaiting April 2020</p>	<p>Two tractors were paid for following the tender procedures. The tractors are being imported from South Africa. Delivery expected in April 2020.</p>



### PROJECT UPDATES

## COMING TOGETHER FOR THE GREATER GOOD



*Site works at Mathambo CBC. The community has been actively participating through contributing labour and locally available resources*

Lupane district is located in Matabeleland North province, which falls under Agro-Ecological Regions 4 and 5, characterised by low rainfall ranging from 300mm – 600mm annually. As a result, Lupane experiences frequent dry conditions. It also borders Hwange National Park, the largest game park in Zimbabwe, where cattle-buffalo interactions can expose animals to diseases like Foot and Mouth. Pastures are scarce for almost eight months of the year. Despite the limited access to grazing, Lupane has one of the best herds of cattle in Zimbabwe, a carryover from cattle ranching operations that were the dominant economic activity in the area in the past.

Cattle farmers in southern Lupane district are faced with very few, poorly maintained cattle marketing facilities. As a result, there has been limited interaction with the formal buyers as farmers have not been involved actively in structured marketing of cattle. This has partly contributed to the low incomes being received by the beef producers as they are forced to deal with middlemen. Limited access to cattle marketing infrastructure has limited the exposure of the beef producers to private sector players, and built resistance to formal local and national government initiatives, resulting in low community participation.

The BEST project has successfully brought together the local community, Outback Safaris (the main private sector player), local and national government stakeholders to initiate the construction of the Mathambo Cattle Business Centre (CBC).

Lupane has an uneven distribution of cattle marketing infrastructure with previous projects concentrating primarily in the northern and eastern sides of the district.

With the advent of the BEST project, the southern part of Lupane is also benefitting from the establishment of cattle marketing infrastructure which will improve access to markets and ultimately improve the incomes of local beef producers.

The high level of coordination has seen the community participating from the start and being actively involved in the project, through contributing labour and locally available resources towards construction of the CBC infrastructure.

The Mathambo CBC successfully brought together all the players in the project and has set the tone for continued engagement as the project progresses.

Having the private sector partner on board and visible to the local community reinforces their integration into the area and enhances the value addition they bring to the local farmer as they transition into fully fledged beef producers. The Lupane Rural District Council (RDC) has pledged to offer tractors to facilitate collection of river sand and quarry stones to be used for construction, a sign of appreciation, commitment and relevance of the infrastructure to the local government.

Mathambo is bringing back the ethos of community participation. Their appreciation of the CBC model will increase their participation and hence benefits from the interventions under the project. The high level of participation by key stakeholders at all levels indicates ownership and relevance of the CBC by the local stakeholders.

The community is now looking forward to improved involvement in local economic development of their cattle businesses. They hope that this will translate to an improved wellbeing of their families, most of which depend on agriculture. It is impressive how women have taken up the task, as they have vowed to use cattle production to transform their lives and the lives of their families for the better.

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