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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mudumu Landscape Celebrates the Agricultural Development Working Group

24 September 2021, RUNDU | Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) and together with The Namibia National Parks Programme (NamParks), acknowledged and celebrated the perseverance and hard work of far over 200 farmers/community members in the Mudumu Landscape who enabled, facilitated and managed activities such as Agricultural Development at complex and landscape level.

The Mudumu Landscape was established in 2005 and consists of the Mudumu South and North complexes, both of which are the implementation units of the landscape. They are managed by a management committee consisting of representatives from conservancies, community forests, traditional authorities, NGOs and public service agencies. The North and South complexes have a strategic work plan focussing on the key strategies required at the landscape level to enable and facilitate the more detailed management activities such as natural resource management, agricultural development and land-use, and community awareness.

The 3 community members/farmers from Mashi, Balyerwa and Dzoti conservancy received certificates of participation for outstanding commitment and their active engagement in the Namibia National Parks Programme – Phase IV (NamParks IV). This is a development programme of the Government of the Republic of Namibia, executed by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and co-financed by the Federal Republic of Germany through KfW Development Bank programme.

NNF field coordinator, Vasco Samwaka stated that: “The project aims to strengthen existing Conservation Agriculture (CA) lead farmers outreach and effectiveness to bring about adoption of CA in areas bordering the Sobbe Wildlife corridor. Adopting CA can increase yields and reduce crop losses through use of agroecological cultivation methods. This project additionally facilitates access to inputs, tillage/manure services and markets. Awareness creation amongst community members on their family’s nutrition is another focus of the project”





As the project continues, the number of farmers doing conservation agriculture (CA) every year increases, this event is vital to highlight the benefits of CA, to encourage more farmers to join and to motivate the farmers that have done well to continue convincing others to also adopt these techniques in their fields.

The Sustainable Communities' Partnerships is funded through World Wildlife Fund Namibia and financed by the Morby Family Charitable Foundation. The conservation agriculture component of this project is part of the Outcome 1 which is enhanced management capacity and diversified livelihood activities of target conservancies. The project supports the design, development, piloting and scale-up of a series of targeted CBRNM and livelihood support modules. The Conservation Agriculture component supports Training and capacity development for business, enterprise and livelihoods and is implemented in the Zambezi region of Namibia. It aims at strengthening existing Conservation Agriculture lead farmers outreach and effectiveness to bring about the adoption of Conservation Agriculture in areas bordering the Sobbe Wildlife corridor, covering six conservancies (Mashi, Sobbe, Dzoti, Wuparo, Balyerwa and Kwandu).

The project has reached over 450 farmers for the past four years and over 200 farmers are currently practicing CA in the own field. There are 4 captured success stories of farmers that have employed CA in an exceptional manner and have been able to increase their yields significantly, leading to higher food security of their households. 400 farmers have been trained in nutrition, e.g. for making use of new food groups such as molinga oleifera leaves and sweet potato leaves. In 2020/21 season, a total of 5,530 kilograms (5,5 tons) of seed was sold by six (06) input agents from all 6 conservancies. The sales represent a total value of N\$264,480.00, and input agents received a commission of N\$ 26,448.00. This intervention continues to improve farmers lives by increasing income and food security. Three manuals targeting farming instructors and project coordinators were developed: (1) Introduction to CA, (2) CA and nutrition and (3) Doing business in CA, together with a flyer for CA for farmers. This material will be very helpful for future CA projects to work more systematically considering the lessons learnt over the past three years.

Amongst the people that were invited to this event were farmers, conservancy chairpersons, traditional authority members, and partner organisations. The conservancy chairperson and traditional authority representative that joined the handover of the awards stated that after learning about the benefits of CA and seeing the award ceremony today convinced them, that they should also practise CA on their fields.





“Farming with conservation agriculture principles is sometimes hard work, but I see the great benefits. My yields have been exceptional and I am able to increase the food security of my family. I can also teach other farmers to follow this route” said Mr Mubitelela Malumo from Balyerwa Conservancy. Mrs Kazi Kumukwake from Dzoti Conservancy also expressed her gratitude and said: “ I am grateful for having received this price today. With the seeds received we can grow plants in order to improve our health and that of our family. With the tools received we can cultivate our fields more efficiently.

With this programme, the working group looks forward to further promoting CA and expand to new conservancies. They also wish to identify new activities that will improve livelihoods, increase farmers revenue, recognise the benefits of biodiversity and target livestock and rangeland management within conservancies.

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Notes to editor:

Photographs File Number: Image1

Group photo: People (from left to right): Mareike Aufderheide-Voigts, Michael Iyambo, Emelie Abraham

Caption: Mudumu Landscape working group receiving certificates of participation

About

The **Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF)** is a registered non-governmental organisation founded in 1987. It is a charitable and funding institution with an independent board of trustees. The foundation initiates, supports and promotes activities that conserve the environment, protect biodiversity and foster the sustainable and ethical use of natural resources. www.nnf.org.na

The **Namibia National Parks Programme (NamParks)** is a development programme of the Government of the Republic of Namibia, executed by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and co-financed by the Federal Republic of Germany through KfW Development Bank.

