

IPSI Case Study Summary Sheet

Basic Information

Title of case study	Natural Agriculture in Zambia: Empowering Farmers, Strengthening Communities and Regenerating Ecosystems		
Submitting IPSI member organization(s)	Shumei International		
Other contributing organization(s)	Mbabala Women Farmers' Cooperative Union, Natural Agriculture Development Program Zambia		
Author(s) and affiliation(s)	Alan Imai and Masahide Koyama (Shumei International) Barbara Hachipuka Banda (Natural Agriculture Development Program Zambia)		
Format of case study	manuscript	Language	English
Keywords	Ecological agriculture, women's empowerment, traditional knowledge, community development, resilience		
Date of submission	2 March 2018		
Web link	www.shumei-international.org		

Geographical Information

Country	Zambia	Location	Mbabala Constituency, Choma District, Southern Province						
Longitude/latitude or Google Maps link	Google map link to the region								
Ecosystem(s)									
Forest		Grassland	X	Agricultural	X	In-land water		Coastal	
Dryland		Mountain		Urban/peri-urban		Other (Please specify)			
Socioeconomic and environmental characteristics of the area									
Mbabala, located in Southern Zambia, is home to approximately 20,000 people with the Tonga accounting for the largest ethnic group. Agriculture in the area is a mix of small-scale and commercial farming. The main cash crops are Maize and tobacco. Livelihoods also depend on livestock, mainly cattle, goats and chickens.									
Description of human-nature interactions in the area									
The Southern province of Zambia is one of the main agricultural regions of the country with 85% of the population relying on agriculture for their livelihood. The greatest threats to biodiversity in the area are deforestation and habitat destruction due to agriculture, cattle grazing and wood for fuel.									

Contents

Status	Ongoing	Period	2004 to present
Rationale			
The increasing impacts of climate change, food insecurity and deforestation present growing challenges to local small-scale farmers and the high cost of inputs adds a considerable financial burden. The majority of small-scale farmers are women who are especially vulnerable as they lack access to land, finances and other resources.			
Objectives			
The goal of the project was to improve the livelihood of small-scale farmers in Zambia through Natural Agriculture. The project aimed to increase crop yields and incomes while reducing reliance on agro-chemical inputs, and protecting biodiversity and long-term health of the land for future generations.			
Activities and/or practices employed			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporated traditional knowledge and cultivation methods practiced by farmers • Introduced ecological farming techniques, such as use of indigenous seeds, mulching, mixed planting • Re-introduced 5 local indigenous maize varieties • Established demonstration farms and seed saving and distribution system 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded the program through “train the trainer” workshops and Natural Agriculture fair. 	
Results	
The program has grown from 25 farm families to 3,000 farmers in Mbabala and an additional 2,000 farmers in the surrounding districts. Farmers have enhanced their farms’ resilience, ecological health and productivity, while significantly reducing costs. The program has contributed to poverty reduction, food security, sustainable livelihoods and community cohesion.	
Lessons learned	
The establishment of a training center, demonstration farms, workshops and an instituting an annual agriculture fair were effective tools in empowering farmers and building community cohesion. On-going capacity building and inclusion of all stakeholders, especially youth is key. Long-term investment is needed.	
Key messages	
Ecological agriculture practices, empowering women and integrating traditional knowledge enhance the health of ecosystems, reduce poverty, increase climate resilience and empower local communities.	
Relationship to other IPSI activities	N/A
Funding <i>(any relevant information about funding of activities or projects described in the case study)</i>	
Shumei International provided financial and capacity building assistance, with in-kind support from the Zambia Ministry of Community Development and local traditional leaders.	

Contributions to Global Agendas

The table below shows based on the self-evaluation by author(s). ● and ■ indicates the “direct” or “indirect” contributions to the following global agendas respectively to which the work described in this case study contributes to.

CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets (<https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>)

Strategic Goal A				Strategic Goal B					
●		■	■	●		●	●		■
Strategic Goal C			Strategic Goal D			Strategic Goal E			
■		●	●	●			●	■	

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>)

●	●	●	■	●	●	■	■	
■	■	●	●		●	■	●	