

Conservation Agriculture: A Strategy to Building Resilience and Fighting Poverty

A case of Joseph Bello, GookeVge and Mrs SigilesiChinai from Kalongavge in Nsanje

Conservation agriculture is one of the key interventions that ECRP is using to build poor people's resilience in the face of climate change. With ECRP's support, over 12 000 farmers are now practicing conservation agriculture across the 7 districts that ECRP is targeting. One such beneficiary is Joseph Bello, 32 years old. Joseph is a lead farmer and he comes from GookeVillage in Traditional Authority Mlolo. He was trained on conservation agriculture by Ruo CBO, a partner to Action Aid under ECRP. Just within the first year of practicing conservation agriculture, Joseph Bello has seen positive results in terms of high crop yield and reduced labour inputs.



Ernest Chipata, a government extension officer explaining how Joseph Bello has adopted the conservation agriculture practice

Picture: Action Aid, Feb 2013



Joseph Bello explaining his experiences and benefits he has seen from conservation agriculture. This was during a field day in his village, Gooke

Picture: Action Aid, March 2013

Joseph Bello explains, '... with conservation agriculture, I am now spending less time in my field and saving labour as wellI now plan to engage into bicycle taxi business as I have spare time to use on other economic activities...'. Joseph's field under conservation agriculture is approximately 0.5 hectare and he plans to increase this to 1 hectare in the next growing season.

Another conservation agriculture beneficiary, Mrs SigilesiChinai (a female and 43 years old) from Kalonga Village, Nsanje district, also narrates positive results from conservation agriculture "...the introduction of conservation agriculture is a great relief especially to us women ... it is a common custom here in Nsanje that women do most of the farming while men venture into fishing business, this leaves the burden of farming in the hands of women.... but with conservation agriculture, the labour requirement is drastically reduced...the only setback is that it takes a while to start seeing tangible benefits from conservation agriculture .."



Mrs SigilesiChinai(right hadside) with MrJimmy Simeon attending to her maize field under conservation agriculturePicture: Action Aid, Jan 2013 in Nsanje