



**Fambidzanai  
Permaculture  
Centre**



# **Quarterly Newsletter January - March 2023**



# Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre



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# Youths Taking Steps to Empower Themselves

The imagination of a refugee camp and the people living in it can be completely different from what is on the ground. Common misconceptions depict squalid conditions, sad faces, and constant hunger. However, a visit to Tongogara Refugee Camp (TRC) shed light on the truth and dispelled these misguided notions.

Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre (FPC) visited Transformation Innovation Hub (TIH) in TRC to learn about the initiatives taken by young people in the camp, and the discovery was pleasantly surprising.

The residents were lively and engaged in various activities, from children attending school to adults working on income-generating activities.

Despite being situated a considerable distance from the city centre, the community is connected and thriving like any other.

During the visit, it was apparent that young people are taking charge of their futures by creating innovative solutions to challenges within their communities.

Some of the interventions include mentorship programs, skill-building workshops, and community outreach initiatives.

These programs not only provide opportunities for personal growth but also create a sense of belonging and purpose among the participants.

It was also inspiring to see how these young people can keep the-



*Youths from TIH and the team from FPC*

ir peers engaged and motivated. Through creative and inclusive approaches, they can create an environment where everyone feels valued and heard.

This sense of unity and support is essential in building resilient communities and empowering the next generation of leaders.

The visit highlighted the importance of youth-led initiatives and the impact they can have on individuals and communities.

It was a reminder that when young people are given the tools and resources they need, they are capable of achieving great things and making a positive difference

in the world.

One key takeaway from this experience is the importance of actively involving young people in decision-making processes that affect their empowerment.

They are the best judges of their needs and desires, and their participation is crucial for any effective youth-oriented empowerment initiatives.

It is crucial to recognise the potential in young people and actively involve them in creating solutions that benefit them and the community as a whole.

## Diploma In Agroecology Students Facilitating Capacity Development in Chimanimani



*A group of community members standing at their fish pond*

**F**ambidzanai Permaculture Centre (FPC) has been instrumental in promoting sustainable agriculture practices in Zimbabwe through the capacity development of extension officers and smallholder farmers under the TSASAZ project.

As part of its commitment to empowering local communities, FPC has allowed its Diploma in Agroecology students to take on leadership roles and facilitate capacity development in their respective areas of operation, specifically in Chimanimani.

This approach not only helps to build the skills and knowledge of the students themselves but also ensures that the benefits of

agroecology and sustainable agriculture are spread far and wide across the country.

Two students in Chikakara, Chimanimani have been given a great opportunity to lead two groups in their communities in fish farming.

Every group received 3000 fish to breed, starter packs for feeding, and help building ponds.

Earth ponds were constructed, and the water was sourced from nearby bodies of water, making it a convenient process for the groups involved.

As they were taught in their diploma programme, the students are responsible for instructing community members on how to

build ponds, rear fish, create feed using locally available resources, and locate markets for their products.

Through sharing their knowledge with members of the community, they are promoting sustainable practices and empowering individuals to take control of their food production.

Overall, this is a great opportunity for the students to learn valuable skills and make a positive impact in their communities.

With hard work and dedication, they can help their groups succeed in fish farming and achieve their goals.



## Human-Wildlife Interaction not Human-Wildlife Conflict

**I**t is important to recognize that human-wildlife interaction does not always have to result in conflict.

While it is true that there are instances where wildlife can cause damage or harm to humans, it is also possible for humans and wildlife to co-exist peacefully.

Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre (FPC), under the SPA2 project, had an opportunity to learn how people in Hwange co-exist with wild animals.

Brent Staplekamp, the founder of Soft Foot Alliance in Hwange highlighted that humans need to learn and find ways to live in harmony with wildlife. The work at Soft Foot Alliance is a prime example of how

people can work towards this goal as they thrive to live peacefully alongside healthy wildlife populations.

One of the greatest causes of human-wildlife conflict is the shortage of natural resources, hence habitat conservation and management are crucial for ensuring that wildlife has the resources they need to survive.

Protecting and restoring habitat can help to maintain healthy populations of wildlife and reduce the likelihood of conflict.

Soft Foot Alliance team member, Samukeliso Shoko, who resides in Hwange, explains that they work collectively as a community to preserve and rehabilitate the en-

vironment. This has resulted in a reduction in incidents of wildlife attacks on both livestock and humans.

“By avoiding competition with wild animals for resources and learning to interact with them peacefully, we have seen a decline in cases of conflict between humans and wildlife in our community. Our approach has helped foster a harmonious relationship with the natural world around us.”

Focusing on human-wildlife interaction rather than conflict can create a more positive and sustainable relationship between humans and wildlife.

## Organic Farming: The Way to Soil Health, People's Health, and Environmental Health

An agricultural field was held at Mr. Ncube's, farm in Goromonzi where farmers from the district, shared their experiences and insights on sustainable farming practices.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Ncube who is also a Diploma in Agroecology student at Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre stated that his decision to farm organically is not only a healthier way of farming, but it also has significant benefits for the environment and consumers of the products.

By avoiding the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, he can maintain the natural balance of the soil and reduce the risk of contamination of nearby water sources.

Additionally, organic farming practices often involve the use of sustainable techniques such as crop rotation and cover cropping that help to maintain the long-term health of the soil.

Mr. Ncube's commitment to organic farming demonstrates a dedication to both the health of consumers and the environment. Participants also had the opportunity to see a demonstration of Mr. Ncube's nursery and plot of organic sweet potatoes.

The agricultural field day was a valuable opportunity for farmers to learn from each other and explore new approaches to sustainable agriculture.



*Goromonzi Farmers viewing Mr Ncube's sweet potatoes field.*



*Some farmers enquiring about FPC's mobile soil testing services*



# SPA2 Encouraging Young People to Realise Their Full Potential

**Y**oung people who are in the SPA2 project in Mbire district are appreciating the confidence and change in livelihoods the project is giving them.

Speaking to the project field officer, Petronella from Mbire district highlighted the importance of trainings that focus on personal development and empowerment.

It is common for young people in marginalized communities to lack confidence and self-esteem due to various factors such as poverty, discrimination, and lack of access to opportunities.

The accountability models training provided a platform for Petronella and other young people to build their skills and knowledge in a supportive and inclusive environment.

This has not only given young

women a platform to voice their opinions, but it has also equipped them with the necessary tools to partake in community development initiatives

Petronella is a gender champion, community trainer, and a goat farmer

The project is providing opportunities for young people to gain new skills and knowledge

Many participants in the project have reported feeling more confident about their abilities and prospects for the future.

The project is also helping to improve livelihoods in the area by encouraging Mbire youths to utilise locally available Non-Timber Forest Products sustainably.

By empowering young people, the SPA2 project is helping to build a stronger and more resilient community in Mbire district



# Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre Receives Garden Tools From Tools With A Mission

Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre received garden tools from Toolw With A Mission to enhance the demonstration plots which are

meant to guide the farmers on how to properly practice agroecology. The livelihoods-creating tools will also play a critical

role in the conduction of agroecological experiments at the centre to enhance agroecology technologies.



*Some of the tools from Tools With A Mission*



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