



COMPLETION REPORT FOR RUZAMBU IRRIGATION

Introduction

This project was initiated on paper in 2019 but only began being implemented in April of 2021. Initially it was part of a garden twinning system where the FFM helped establish two gardens at a time. The year 2020 was given to re-mobilising and re-organising the gardeners with a view to standardise operations across the FFM-supported gardens and minimise risks related to neglect. The twin of Ruzambu Garden is Kotamaurime garden. Work at Kotamaurime got far ahead of Ruzambu due to a few factors: among them the fact that Ruzambu Garden was fenced on contested land and that its initially drilled borehole did not yield water.

How the project went on

Urgent actions such as garden constitutions and the idea of building toilets ahead of irrigation prevented irrigation work from being implemented in 2019. Another activity which consumed much much time was the hunt for a replacement contractor since the initial contractor was having a fracas with the community. During the long pause, the community decided to ditch the idea of tapping irrigation water from Runde River and instead requested for boreholes. When this request was granted in September 2020, only Kotamaurime Garden met the new criteria for irrigation support. Ruzambu irrigation was not to be until mid April 2021.

The total fund for Ruzambu Irrigation was 10,555 USD. Of this, 3,723 USD was earmarked for borehole surveying, drilling and capacity testing while 6,832 was for the installation of the drip irrigation system. Efforts to drill a productive borehole at Ruzambu did not produce any pleasing results for close to a year, with the contractor giving a series of unreliable assurances. The FFM Trust then threatened to re-advertise the job. At that time the failing contractor was quick to mention that he had bought all the materials for the irrigation setup – only the drilling part was preventing progress. Therefore, the FFM instructed this contractor to subcontract, and it did the trick. The subcontractor successfully drilled the Ruzambu borehole between 18 and 20 February and yielded plentiful water.

The borehole was drilled at the time when the gardeners had ripe crops in the garden beds. The irrigation setup would not take place immediately due to this. An arrangement was made for the gardeners to inform the contractor as soon as they finished harvesting. The digging of trenches from the boreholes to the tank site was begun on March 20th, lasting about 5 days. In the next 5 days the contractor mobilised the materials and began the installation. A 5,000-litres tank was erected on a 3-metres iron stand anchored by 1,5-metres concrete footing. The final product was inspected by Zebert Choga, an agricultural extension officer in



the area. The gardeners arranged for a night guard who will receive 50 USD monthly to protect the precious equipment from vandals and thieves.

Lessons learnt

- It is better to spend more on boreholes than to spend relatively less on a system with unreliable water sources
- When a contractor faces a challenge, it is sometimes good to subcontract the challenging part of the work for the sake of progress
- It is good to build a lasting relationship with reliable borehole companies such as the one that drilled Ruzambu borehole
- The FFM principle to pay contractors only after work completion is proving helpful

Conclusion

This project is serving a group of hardworking farmers, demonstrated by the great yields that were harvested just before the irrigation was set up. For all the past years, the garden was only productive during the rainy season. The trend was that of underproduction and distress for the rest of the year when water was scarce. With the just installed irrigation system, the predominantly women gardeners no longer have to break the production cycle due to water shortage.