**NKHOTAKOTA DISTRICT AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE KULIMA PROGRESS REPORT PRESENTED TO SALIMA ADD SUPERVISORY TEAM**

**23rd  April, 2019**

1. **INTRODUCTION**
2. **Profile of the District**

Nkhotakota is one of the two districts under Salima Agricultural Development Division (ADD). It has seven Extension Planning Areas (EPAs) namely Kasitu, Nkhunga, Mphonde, Linga, Zidyana, Mtosa and Mwansambo. The EPAs are further sub-divided into 77 extension sections, which are the lowest level of administration and are of relatively homogeneous agro-ecological conditions. The district has a total of 105943 farming households with 69 094 being Male Headed Households and 36 827 Female Headed Households.

On the 77 sections, 46 are staffed 31 are vacant such that on average AEDO to farmer ration is1: 2535**.** Nevertheless, vacant sections are manned by nearby AEDOs and in some cases Agricultural Enumerators.

The main crops grown in the district are maize, cassava, rice, cotton, tobacco (burley). Cassava and maize are the main food crops while tobacco, rice, and cotton are cash crops. Livestock species reared include cattle, goats, sheep, pigs, chickens, guinea fowls, ducks and pigeons.

Nkhotakota district happens to be one of the 10 districts in Malawi implementing KULIMA/AFIKEPO Project. In Nkhotakota the project is being done in almost all 7 EPAs. Due to other challenges, KULIMA is not for the time, being implemented in the two of the seven districts, namely Kasitu EPA and Mtosa EPA.The Two mentioned EPAs will start implementing in the coming season after the graduation of the Lisasadzi Second Co hort Master Trainers.

KULIMA farmer field School implementation started with trainings of the Master Trainers that were conducted at Lisasadzi from January 2018 to June 2018. The district managed to train and graduate 10 Master Trainers under Kulima farmer field schools, at the same time, 10 Community Based Facilitators on farmer field schools were also being trained, to support the Master Trainers on the ground.

To date, the district has 9 Master Trainers, one master trainers was posted out to Salima District.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF FARMER FIELD SCHOOLS MODEL.**

Each master trainer with support from the CBF was requested to mobilise and form a group of CBFs totaling to 30, who in turn, each one of them would mobilise communities and form farmer field schools at community level, with membership of 30. In total, the target number of Kulima ffs is 310 farm field schools. The district has managed to run 288 ffs, with total participation of 2773m and 4474females and 2742 youths, totaling to 7246 participants.

Farmer field school established

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **EPA** | **Number of FFS** | **Participation** | | | |
|  |  | **M** | **F** | **Youth** | **Total (M+F)** |
| Zidyana | 55 | 626 | 811 | 685 | 1437 |
| Nkhunga | 48 | 603 | 584 | 307 | 1187 |
| Mwansambo | 58 | 485 | 858 | 691 | 1343 |
| Mphonde | 63 | 574 | 1027 | 589 | 1601 |
| Linga | 62 | 485 | 1194 | 470 | 1678 |
| **TOTALs** | **288** | **2773** | **4474** | **2742** | **7246** |

**SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS**

FAO, through the project is supporting Farmer field schools at MT and CBFs level in providing all the necessary farm inputs for CBF ffs, mobility support of 20 motorcycles, to the Master Trainers, and working gear, to Community Based Facilitators. It is expected that , FAO is going to support the CBFs with bicycles for the implementation of FFS.

Evangelical Association of Malawi is also supporting the KULIMA FFS implementation in the district by providing the all necessary farm inputs, based on the validation studies identified by the outreach community farm field schools and also providing all trainings to outreach community based ffs.

The Ministry of Agriculture through the DADO office is implementing the ffs through the front line staff trained as master Trainers and providing policy direction in the implementation of ffs through supervisions.

**KEY PROGRESSES MADE**

Sensitization meetings at Village Development Committee level were conducted about Kulima project. That was followed by mobilization of farmers and identification of Community Based Facilitators. This followed establishment of farmer field schools in all EPAs by trained MTs and CBFs where needs identification for the communities in terms of crop and livestock production challenges was concerned. Based on the community needs identification, the ffs groups came up with validation studies that would give answers through ffs, to their challenging identified needs. Each ffs was required to select enterprises for its studies.

**COMMUNITY BASED TRAININGS CONDUCTED IN FFS**

During the period farmers have been trained in various areas of knowledge and skills ranging from,

* FFS methodology for the seasonal long calendar
* Agronomic practices for all field and horticultural crops
* Post-harvest handling crop losses
* Integrated pest management
* Food and nutrition
* Household approach
* Agribusiness
* Cross-cutting issues (gender mainstreaming)
* Fruit production (Bananas)
* Commercial enterprises, eg Soya,
* Household Food budgeting

**FIELD DAYS CONDUCTED**

50 % of the farmer field schools in the district have managed to conduct field days in the areas,.

**MAIN STUDIES BEING IMPLEMENTED**

* Plant population in maize, soya beans, Ground nuts, and rice.
* Variety comparisons in maize and groundnuts and soya and rice.
* Time of fertilizer application
* Type and amount of fertilizers application
* Effects of manures,
* Comparisons between manure application and non applied.
* Comparison between ridges and conservation agriculture and

**CHALLENGES**

In implementing these activities, MTs/AEDC faced a number of challenges. Some of the problems encountered include:

* Late distribution of farm inputs
* Input given not according to validation studies as all were given uniform packages
* Inadequate inputs for FFS under FAO
* Poor coordination among implementing stakeholders
* Drop outs of farmers due to dependence syndrome
* No transport for CBFs in the first year of 2018-2019 season
* Low literacy levels which is necessitating the translation of implementation manuals and coming up with simplified topics for CBF to understand.
* There was little time to prepare for farmer field schools
* CBF failing to articulate the FFS designs
* Farmer had high expectations
* Some validation studies were not needs of communities but were top down.
* Internalization of the methodology by the MTs and CBF before transferring the knowledge to others is required.
* Too many ffs for a volunteer CBF to oversee and monitor other ffs, (30) is too much.

Attached is the list and details of farmer fields schools