



RADIO : NKHOTAKOTA COMMUNITY RADIO
PROGRAM : ZACHILENGEDWE TSOGOLO LANGA
THEME : CONSERVATION AGRIC AS ONE WAY OF CARING SOIL
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Sigh tune fade under narrator voice

Narrator : I am John Kisewe Mpakani, your fellow farmer. I welcome you to today's edition of the programme *Zachilengedwe Tsogolo Lathu* here on Nkhotakota Community Radio station. In this programme today, we will discuss about taking care of the land that we use every year for our agricultural businesses.

Today, we are in Mphonde EPA where we will discuss with farmers who are practicing conservation Agriculture as way of taking good care and remaking the soil fertile.

INSERT MALE FARMER FROM VITEKETE, MPHONDE EPA, NKHOTAKOTA

My name is Josephy Chavunja here at vitekete, Chinguwo village, Traditional Authority Mphonde. When we saw that things are changing because of climate change, with the coming of this programme of Conservation Agriculture, we

thought it wise to receive the new agricultural practice because it is a good thing that can bring fertility to our soil and change our lives.

The problem of sequential rains is one of the major problems that is giving evidence that poverty can come but with the coming in of this technique of conservative agriculture we are able to conserve water and moisture and fertility in the soil and this is big thing that we need to partake and use

Narrator: Why do you think is the benefit of practicing conservative Agriculture to a farmer in this business?

Farmer: For a person to be successful in agribusiness, you need to follow instructions and be able to perceive the problems that are facing your community and the problem that we have discovered here in our area is that we are receiving inadequate rainfalls. So we received these new practices / programme so that we should harvest more and see a difference.

Insert Local Music

Insert Female Farmer from Vitekete, Mphonde EPA, Nkhotakota

Farmer: My name is Marietta Mkandawire from Vitekete cluster Traditional Authority Mphonde. For me to develop my interest in this type of farming, I met problems because the soil that our forefathers used to produce a lot of yields, has been degraded, also rains used to come as required for about 4 to 5 months. Now the same land has lost fertility and hunger never goes away but with the coming in of conservative agriculture, I thought it wise to take part so that I should be able to live as our parents did in the past.

I am also advising everyone who is listening, country wide, that we should stop following cultural methods of farming because many people do not understand

them. As I am talking I have already prepared half hectare of my land and I have already applied manure. So to all who are listening you can learn and start doing what I am doing.

Reporter: For how many years have you been practicing Conservation agriculture?

Farmer: This is the second year because this project was introduced last year and last year I did this on a 10 by 10 pilot and I was one of the participants where I lay maize stalks and glasses on my quarter hectare land to see how it would go.

Reporter: What has made you to practice conservative agriculture again on a large land this year?

Farmer: I saw the produce that I got on the 10 by 10 plot. From that plot, I produced more than a bag of 50kgs and I discovered that farming on a large land without following right procedures is just a waste of human power as compared to farming on a small land but following right procedures where large produces (yields) are gained.

Reporter: people might be surprised that we are discussing issues about Conservative agriculture. So tell us, what is conservative agriculture?

Farmer: conservative agriculture is when you practice good agriculture farming, for example, covering the land with glasses, after sometime the glasses decompose and they add fertility to the soil, in so doing you start harvesting more yields on small land.

Insert Music

Narrator: we have heard what our fellow farmers are doing to conserve, take care and restore the soil fertile. This is at vitekete village, TA Mphonde, in Mphonde EPA in Nkhotakota District. Now let's go to Mwala wa tongole where I met with some farmers in their garden there.

Insert Male Farmer from Tongole, Mphonde EPA, Nkhotakota

Farmer: I am Davide Nguluwe from Mnthyoka village Traditional Authority Mphonde. Soil really needs to be conserved. In conservative Agriculture we lay maize stalks in the field and when rain comes, the field always has moisture even if it the rains comes in small amounts and we don't experience soil erosion problem. I have discovered that conservative Agriculture is good and I started practicing it last year.

In some parts of the field where I did not lay stalks, maize was wilting unlike the parts where I laid the stalks. However when we are laying the maize stalks in the field, we should select those that are around our field because stalks from other fields may bring diseases which may be transferred to our fields. There is also need for constructing fire breaks around our fields to prevent fire from destroying them, especially those fields that are surrounded by bush.

I observed the advice that was given and that is why I am speaking cheerfully. I am old but farming is not becoming a problem to me and I would like to advise my fellow farmers that please let us always take heed and observe all the instructions and advice that our advisors give us so that we should be successful.

Insert local music

INSERT FEMALE FARMER FROM TONGOLE, MPHONDE EPA, NKHOTAKOTA

Farmer: I am Royce Mkundi of Mnthyoka village group village headman Tongole, Traditional Authority Mphonde in Nkhotakota. I am a farmer and I practice Conservative Agriculture. This system of farming is very productive and when I harvest my produces, I just slash down the stalks and lay them in the field and wait for the rains to come. I do not plough and this is the third year since I started practicing conservative Agriculture.

I harvest a lot when I lay stalks in my field because the sun is not a problem anymore and there is a lot of moisture in the field and I also reduce soil disturbance. I can assure you that once you lay the stalks you forget about making ridges that destroy soil particles. As I am talking right now, I am enjoying and I am encouraging my fellow women, my fellow farmers that conservative Agriculture is very productive.

Narrator: We have heard what our fellow farmers are doing to conserve the soil they are farming on every year. They have also explained the benefits especially through their harvests because their soils are now fertile as compared to the previous years. If there is a question that you would like to ask or any comment you would like to add, you can send an SMS on 0995 038 111.

Now I am with the agricultural expert and he explains briefly the benefits of conservative agriculture.

Insert Expert Mr. Wankhalira, Nkhotakota

Expert: I am Wankhalira, Agriculture advisor in Nkhotakota District. I just wanted to explain briefly on the benefits of conservative Agriculture which are; making field work less and easier. When you have laid down stalks in your field, there is no need for you to make ridges and weeding. The only work one can do is applying fertilizers. Secondly there are fewer expenses because there is no making

of ridges, weeding and others works, which means you do not have pay money on such preparations.

Another thing we need to know is that the soil has been used for quite long time and it has now become infertile. Soil Fertility cannot return in a day and it is my plea to farmers that they should continue practicing conservative Agriculture every year so that in five years to come we shall see that our fields have transformed in terms of fertility.

Narrator: That is all we had in today's programme of *Zachilengedwe Tsogolo Lathu*. This segment is part of an audio series related to the International Year of Soils. It has been produced with the support of the World Association of Community Broadcasters, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2015. If you have any question or comment you would like to ask or anything to add, send an SMS on 0995 038 111, I am John Kisewe Mpakani, Thank you.