# AWARD_Milestone 4 Annexure 2_ Cluster Activity record: Principles for good farming practices workshop: Notes; 20170315-16

NOTE: These workshop notes need to be read in conjunction with the power point presentation for the workshop as well as the 5 fingers handouts and the photographic visual aids of potential problems for each of the five fingers used in the group discussions.

## Present:

Community: Oaks, Willows, Sedawe, Botshabelo, Lepelle, Finale (1) – 25 people

Team: Award, MDF, Ukuvuna: BB, Oona, Sylvester, Trygive, Richard, Kingsley, Derrick, Ancoise, Percy, Dineo, William, Taryn

## Preparation and Agenda

**Overall purpose:** The objectives of this workshop are to explore the principles and practices associated with soil and water conservation in small-scale farming in the Mametja area. Whilst climate change will not be introduced in this workshop it will provide the foundation for further activities regarding CC impacts and adaptation.

**Expected Outcomes**

- An initial collaborative vision for addressing 'the problem' that we can then work with;
- A broad understanding of the concept of principles;
- Collaborative exploration of practices associated with each principle as the basis for practice and self-assessment; and
- An agreed commitment to working with these practices

## Facilitators agenda

| Time | | Item | Who | Purpose | Process | Logistics |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Day 1** | | **15th Mar 2017** | | | | |
| **915** | **1015** | **1. Introduction and objectives** | SP | | | Projector |
| | | a. RESILIM | SP/EK | Reminder of bigger project<br>Reminder of AgSI as a soil and water conservation approach | Some slides<br>Erna to summarise major "problems" – should be area-specific (need this for Session 2) | Highlight those related to Soil and Water Conservation |
| | | b. Where we are in the process (AgSI) | | Where does todays workshop fit in? | SP to work out with Erna and BB<br>Richard and BB to bring 14th Mar | |

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| | | c. What we are going to do and why | | Describe what we are going to do and what we hope to achieve | Focus on idea of collaborative, self-assessments | |
| | | d. Objectives for the 2 days (30m) | | Ensure participants are clear on what we are going to do | Talk in 3's and give feedback | |
| 1015 | 1100 | 2. Defining a vision for our plots 45 m | | Get a BROAD idea from participants what they hope to improve in their plots (note a broader visioning process will be carried out later) | The constitution of South Africa:<br><br>Use 'problems' from session 1<br>Richard & Sylv to rank and spatialise<br>- Run The Bus exercise<br>- Participants draw pictures in response to issues from Session 1<br>- Collate these on a wall | Problems from session 1 clearly articulated / available<br>Photos-printed<br>Ring those related to soil and water conservation specifically DDT and BB to pin cards |
| | 1130 | Tea | | | | |
| 1130 | 1215 | 3. The concept of principles 45m<br>**THIS IS THE HEART OF THE WORKSHOP** | | To understand<br>a) Principles contribute to a vision<br>b) that principles should be robust enough to apply across broad areas but<br>c) practices may vary and hence<br>d) we are here today to collaboratively identify practices against principles for SWC<br>e) think about these under CC in the future | In plenary: either Theprinciples at home:<br>- Name an important principle e.g. everyone has the right to education<br>- What do you think need to be DONE (practices) to achieve that principle<br><br>Talk to your neighbourabout an important principle you have for your children | Translators to spend time looking at alternative words in Sotho beforehand |
| 1215 | 1300 | 4. Introduction to 5 principles 60 m | | Emphasise we are working on principles for soil and water conservation<br><br>1.Water: Improved Water management: METSI<br>2. Soil movement: Control soil movement and soil erosion<br>3. Crops: Practice good crop management<br>4. Soil health: Ensure we maintain and enhance soil health | Introduce the hand as a way to remember the five principles<br>Discuss on 9th March<br>• Use photographs to show poor practices- BB one for each principle<br>• William / Kin to send to SP<br>• and print 50 | Translators need to have prepared sotho words for each<br>Print copies for all<br>Make sure BLOCKS are EMPTY |

| | | | | | | |
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| | | | | 5. Indigenous plants: Look after indigenous plants as part of the farming system | | |
| 1300 | 1345 | Lunch | | | Choose groups and check numbers<br>Assign facilitators and translators and rapporteurs | |
| 1345 | 1430 | 5. In plenary – example of a good practice related to a principle 15m | | To demonstrate how practices can be identified under a principle | Facilitator chooses TWO principles<br>Ask " what farming activity, (practice) in your area do you think will make sure we achieve this principle?" | What names have been used in the process so far? Check with Erna and her reports |
| 1430 | 1630 | 6. Break into groups: Discuss and define practices for each principle 120 min | | Define good practices for each principle. May not be able to do all 5 in 2 hours. | Grouped according to areas sit together<br>Choose TWO or THREE practices | What practices has Erna done already- below<br>Use Hand with empty blocks to get discussions going |
| Day 2 | | | | | | |
| 915 | 930 | 1. Welcome and reminder of yesterdays process | | | | |
| 930 | 1100 | 2. Report backs (facilitated)- 60-90 m | | | | |
| 1100 | 1130 | Tea | | | | |
| | | Climate change | | | | |
| 1130 | 1215 | 3. Wrap-up: next steps and close | | Me the farmer | | |

## Practices that have already been explored through Mahlathini intervention

1. **Good water management and control movement**
   - 1.1. Mulching
   - 1.2. Grey water system
   - 1.3. Drip irrigation system
   - 1.4. Water flows; diversion ditches, contours,
   - 1.5. Stone bunds
   - 1.6. Trenches
   - 1.7. Tower gardens for grey water
2. **Control of soil movement**
   - 2.1. Minimum tillage – Conservation agriculture
   - 2.2. Hand hoe
   - 2.3. Mulching
   - 2.4. Water flows
   - 2.5. Stone bunds
   - 2.6. Furrows/ trenches
3. **Improved crop management**
   - 3.1. Crop diversity- some introduction
   - 3.2. Tunnels
   - 3.3. RWH options

3.4. Tower gardens for grey water

4. **Improve and maintain soil health**
   4.1. Mulch
   4.2. Manure
   4.3. Tower gardens for grey water
   4.4. Important aspects of what fertilizers are
5. **Looking after indigenous plants**
   5.1. …..

| Group # | Facilitator | Rapporteur | Translations | Principle addressed | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Water Mng | Soil movement | Soil health | Crops | Indig plants |
| 1 | BB | Ancois | BB | X | X | | | X |
| 2 | Derick | Erna | Percy | | | X | X | X |
| 3 | Sharon | William | William | X | X | | | X |
| 4 | Sylvester | Kinsley* | Kinsley* | | | X | X | X |
| 5 | Richard | Taryn | Dineo | X | | | X | X |

Small group discussions in each of the above mentioned topics/"fingers" will be done in a way that each group focuses on three topics and reports back on one, to be able to make the most of the time and people's availability. The table below outlines the facilitators, rapporteurs and topics

## Introduction

Introduction to AWARD; Non profit. Mainly work with issues of water and water resource management, natural resource management and livelihoods. Partnership with Mahlathini for community based work. All part of the same team.

2014-RESILIM-O (Resilience in the Limpopo Basin). Looking at livelihoods under the present challenges including climate change. To help people become more resilient. – A way to become strong even when things are difficult and changing.

Help farmers get stronger in their farming practices into the future; manage soil and water better and practice agro-ecology. We have worked before in BBR and Venda and MDF in KZN and EC. Also John Nzira is working with 200farmers in Sekukune – mainly easier to plan millet and sorghum there…

Introduced a map of RESLIM B and RESILIM O. Erna will help you do maps of your household maps

Where does the Olifants River start? – in Witbank – lots of pollution and mining (5th largest global coal producer – 90% of that from Witbank – around 680 mines in the Lepelle catchment -many illegal. A lot of irrigation around Groblersdal area – big commercial farms. Urban areas- sewage works – about 120 waste water treatment works and around 80 are giving us problems in the river. There are a lot of people suffering from water insecurity and have very little access. Other natural issues- death of crocodiles, around 2010 (Kruger, Mozambique..). Fish started developing problems- due to bad water quality due to the floods.

Then flows through Sekhukhune, comes to the mountains here at Blyde and flows into the Lowveld into Kruger National Park and then on to Mozambique. – caused some floods there recently and before – last time was 2010.But now there is drought (last two years) and now the whole environment is denuded.. Lepelle River".

How do we build people's resilience to deal with these extreme events?

## Workshop Agenda

**DAY 1**

-Defining a vision for homestead plots

-Concepts around principles

- Introduction to 5 fingers

**DAY 2**

-Plenary report backs and

-Practices

MDF AGRISI: Process so far. Land use practices – past, present future in a changing environment. Looking at good practice locally, leaning more about soil and water and introducing some new ideas/innovations e.g. Conservation Agriculture, tunnels, greywater management, diversion ditches, trench beds and so on.

## Issues; As summarised from community level discussions to date

FARMING: No longer doing dryland farming, limited land available, problems with sand mining for example, pollution and littering, drying out of wetlands, lack of fencing, not a lot of planning on the plots, pest problems, wild life (baboons and monkeys, birds on field crops – millet and sorghum). People use tractors- ploughing. It is considered expensive and causes compaction. Labour also is expensive and difficult to organise.

RAIN: less rain, not much water management, not a lot of storage of water, boreholes too expensive, over watering of plants when water is available. Ways of cleaning water for use/consumption. Some people are using water putting pipes in the river for irrigation.

POOR HARVESTS: Sometimes we put manure but the yields are still bad…..Problems with soil fertility, lack of techniques for improving soil fertility. Soil is hard and compacted, manure is not easy to come by, can't afford fertilizer.

EROSION: A lot of problems with soil erosion and erosion control, in all the areas.

SEED: People would like to know more about different seed and crop types. People harvested okra recently and gave it away. – Some people do still eat it but nowadays the taste for traditional foods is dwindling…..

## What are the problems and how are we solving them?

Exercise on visioning for each individual's plot…what we dream of and or plan to do…..So far Mahlathini has been showing you a few things so that you can start imagining a different future.

### Bus exercise

Descriptions; Driver needs to know where to go, people going to similar places should be on the same bus or the bus should have a route

*Right: The community participants analyse the bus exercise in terms of community level visioning and planning*

Analysis:

- Farmers should plan together and work with their bus drivers or leaders
- Leader should know where people want to go
- People from different places should visit each other to learn and find out new ideas
- Introduce seeds of crops for which there is a market
- But also lots of different seeds with different purposes
- Need help to apply for funding from government and know about their programmes
- But Government tends to be really slow so we think it is better to get help from the NGOs – we have issues with heavy machinery on the farms- causing problems with the soil and also theft of equipment -such as transformers
- Also, some ideas can Mahlathini help with other water sources such as making of boreholes?
- Some people are next to streams and with help we can work together to build small dams next to the streams that we can use for irrigation.

Further, if there is no plan then any destination is as good as any other- so any yields will be better than none. With a plan we can get a better idea. Also voices together are much stronger than individual voices

## Visioning

Imagine in 3 years  time what you would like your plot to look like and what would you like to get from it? And we want to change things…some ideas..

Looked at some pictures of what has been tried: Planning – drawing water flows, line levels for contours and ditches, liquid manure, pest control (sunlight and cooking oil –50 teaspoon of sunlight, and 25 teaspoon oil in 5 litres of water ) – Blue death is not healthy for us and it can cause diseases in people.

There is a worm that eats the growth point of the tree and then also eats all the leaves.

Then also looked at types of soil and organic matter in the soil… also suitability of soil for planting, And then conservation agriculture (using lime and bone meal). Making the basins in a zig zag to save space and harvest water. Also use your leg for spacing.

Then also did a trench bed- put some old tins in the bottom – then dried and green plant materials, manure, ash. Tins add iron and also help to hold the water in the bottom of the trench. Also, can add stuff such as cardboard- green stuff provides nitrogen. To save water, Creates compost under the ground to provide fertility for the soil. Can use it as a seedling bed and then transplant…Takes time for it to decay and soil will stay fertile for a long time.

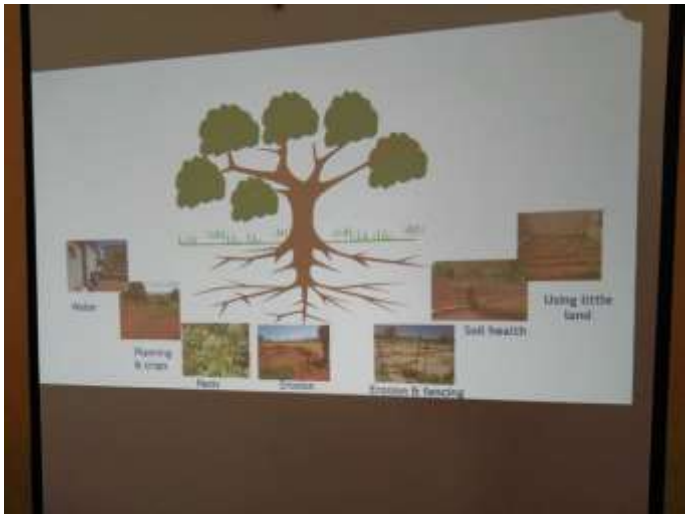
Then building diversion ditches and cut off drains to direct water into the garden, and to slow down water across a slope. And then added the trench gar den.

Then crop diversity for including traditional greens and traditional fruit trees – Mabilo, and then mixed field crops – sweet potatoes and maize, and then spinach and intercropping…

## Problem trees

Issues at the base: water, planning and crops, pests, erosion, fencing, soil health, using little land for example

Then practices will be the vision.




*Right: A slide that was put up as a summary of issues mentioned by farmers to date, that was ratified and further discussed in the workshop setting.*

## Report backs on visioning

Lepelle: Mangoes – as business for atjar and fruit for eating and selling.

Sedawe: Indigenous trees and crops such has jugo beans, mabele, millet – has good nutritional value, better nutrition for us

Botshabelo: Tomatoes, spinach, beans, for eating and want a large variety of things including sweet potatoes to be able to sell. Lots of different kinds of crops

Willows: Proper place with fencing, stop thieves and livestock and dogs. And within that can have chickens – layers to sell to the community and provide to orphans within that village.

Oaks and Finale: We want to have as many trench beds as possible as we have less rain and water- to store the water in the beds ot plant enough vegetables to provide food and support those in need.

## Principles and practices

People battled to come up with a definition for practices; they came up with exercise, ways of learning, practicals.

Principles are those things that underlie practices. The reason for the practices… Principles are what guide us in our lives- there are for example rules/principles for how to behave in your household, for example the need for mutual respect.

What are the things that people need to do (practices) in your family to show that they are showing respect? Examples: When we grew up we learn that our neighbours are our uncles, sisters, brothers. You could go to them and they will help you. Elders also have to have respect so that children can learn this. Teach elders to write down letter to inform others of who came to visit. When women give food to the husbands, they have to kneel.

A principle such as show respect will have different practices associated with it in different places. So, principles may stay the same, but practices may change between the villages.

### Principles in farming – 5 fingers

We have spoken about this in some of the villages. They talk about the principles, is a guide to do good farming,

Makes remembering the practices a lot easier:

- Good water management: e.g stone bunds, using greywater. It relates also to how you abstract, use, store water, thus including irrigation drip irrigation, water filter….
- Soil movement: e.g. Mulching
- Crops: good crop management; diversity, pest and disease control, mulching…
- Soil health: organic matter
- Indigenous plants: When cut down a tree, I have to replant another one, Furrows, windbreaks - plant a row of trees and cover soil with mulch. Could use pigeon pea…

Could also include livestock management – which has a lot to do with balancing the need for resources. Also about sharing and working together- which could be the palm or the whole hand…

## Best practices in village groupings for the 5 principles

The workshop participants then divided into the village groups and discussed potential best practices for 3 principles. Each group was to report back on one of the principles.

Below are summaries of the report backs.

### SEDAWA: Crops, soil health, indigenous plants

Percy, Trygive, Derick, Percy, Oona, Erna

Magdalena Malepe. Lawrence Mstshali Elssina Malephi, Christina Tobejane, Alex Moropa,

*Right: the Sedawa small group look a pictures or visual aids as discussion points for their best practice topics.*

CROPPING:

- Trench beds:
- Seeds: Different types according to season.
    - Spray seeds with ashes before you plant
    - Seed banking-seed saving for re-planting
    - Maize seed: dust this chemical on seed to kill any soil borne pests
    - Dip seeds in paraffin and sunlight liquid…
    - Soak maize and beans overnight before planting.
    - Seed choice:
        - In the shop- we just buy what is available
        - E,g Bambara nuts- eat bigger ones- keep smaller ones for seed.
- Pest control: Common pests- red spider, moths, caterpillars, cutworms, locusts, borers.
    - Fish oil and sunlight, paraffin and sunlight
    - Some of the weeds attract insects and these can become pests- must remove the weeds.
    - Bury weeds in holes and water that as a way of composting
    - Bury ash in small holes around the seed to control cutworm
    - Traditional: take the insect causing problem. Fry, dry, crush and then spray it onto the plants…
    - Companion plantings to repel insects; such as onions, rosemary, marigold, garlic
- Nutrient deficiencies; leaves turn purple and yellow
- Weeds;

    - Pulling out – weed 2-3 times per season. And more if it is raining heavily
    - Only irrigate the planting basins – to control weeds in between
    - If the weeds are big slash them to make a groundcover and make sure they do not make seed. Can then later, make small holes and plant seed in there. This also increases the soil fertility
    - People weed early morning, and late afternoon when its not too hot
- Micro climates: Protection from birds, too much heavy rain, heat, sun....
    - Bananas planted in lines next to beds provide shade in the afternoon when it's hot
    - Fencing
    - Netting – greenhouse/tunnel,
    - Windbreaks and hedges
    - Ridges for planting
    - Natural fencing; num-num, strichnos, - or placing thorny branches around the fence.
- Mulching to control weeds and retain moisture
    - Dry grass
    - Leaves, from mangoes and other trees
    - Canopy cover
- Planting practices:
    - Trench bed (1mx1mx1m) – retain a lot of water
    - Depth of planting of seed : Maize 5-10cm. if it' s too deep the seed will not germinate. The bigger the seed, the deeper, the smaller the more shallow. (10x diameter of the seed)
    - Plant in the afternoon
    - Seasonal calendars, crop choices
    - Crop rotation
        - To control pests and weeds
        - To avoid depletion of the soil nutrients
        - Plant vegetables in winter and maize in summer..
        - Should not plant cabbage successively as it will deplete the soil Rotate with beetroot and carrots. Also plant legumes to provide some more nitrogen.
    - Intercropping/companion planting
        - Three sisters; maize, bean, pumpkin
        - New idea will try out (rule: mix tall with short, big with small,
    - Diversification; inclusion of fruit, multipurpose species, fodder, medicinal plants.
        - Strawberries, green pepper, garlic,
        - Multipurpose plants; herbs, medicinal species,
- Propagation
    - Corms, root division, cuttings, grafting, slips,
    - E.g banana, cassava, sugarcane.

SOIL HEALTH

- Keep the soil covered; avoid erosion, saves water, shade to keep it cool,
- Soil nutrients; manure, compost, lime, dry leaves, grass, ash, tins for iron, bones,

- Minimum tillage
- Till when the soil is wet…

## Day 2:

- Report backs; discussions
- Short input on seedbanks and CCA
- Next steps

### Report back: Group Oaks & Finale: Principle: Soil health

*Right; The Oaks and Finala small group discuss their practices around soil health for reporting back to plenary.*

- Understanding of soil types; percentages of clay, silt and sand (should be equal- then it's fertile – ***MDF to give input on this***
- Bed design; e.g. trench beds – that hold water and have a lot of organic matter, control soil temperature. Trying to build up a 'house' for the earthworms
- Mulching; also serves as food for the worms,
- Shade for the soil; mulching and CA
- Good infiltration and good water holding capacity through water management, reducing run-off, infiltration ditches/diversion furrows, increased organic matter, promotion of presence of earthworms
- Small dams
- Conservation Agriculture
- Manure, compost; Find ways to increase decomposition
- Crop diversification; different types of crops together
- Most of our fields are steep – must store water in the soil . Furrows to diver water into small ponds/ infiltration pits, to store the water there.
- Add rock walls to the edges of fields.
- Use indigenous plants as buffer strips for S&WC.

### Report back: Group Willows: Principle: Protection of indigenous plants

- Problems of soil erosion,
- In times of hunger and drought people will depend on indigenous plants for food and other resources.
- Plant indigenous trees- close to households to protect them.and use water conservation and harvesting to help the trees grow- similar methods to what we have used in our fields. Thus, look after the trees.

- In the fields there are buffer zones of around 3m to leave grass and bushes to assist in the natural balance- works as a water conservation strip.
- Want the indigenous plants so that they are conserved for future generations…
- Some trees are useful; for traditional beer and even selling. Some trees' function is calling rain, but now people are cutting those trees – Mhlumi – "Waterberry".
- Expose and educate the youth to protect our history/culture, tradition and values.
- Marula tree (fruit, juice, nuts, beer), sawa milk, Magaba for high blood pressure, aloes (ash of leaves for storage of seeds), herbs,
- Barakitchaune – helps maize????
- Moringa: nutrition, protection from lightening and medicinal uses.

## Report back: Group Sedawe; Principle: Crop management

- Seeds: traditional seed treatment, seed choices, seed selection, soaking before planting, seed saving ***MDF to give input on this***
- Pest control: natural/ organic sprays, remove weeds that attract insects; plant garlic on the sides of the beds, ash for cutworms, rosemary,
- Weed management; Pull weeds out, but use as mulch. Or cut and provide mulching.
- Planting practices: Bed design – such as trench beds, depth of planting of seed, planting times and calendars, _ ***MDF to give input on this***
- Physical protection: nets, green house, wind breaks, fences, natural fences (num-num- pigeon pea,…)
- Diversification: fruit, multipurpose plants..
- Crop rotation, intercropping- ***MDF to give input on this***
- Plant propagation; cutting, slips, root division, corms.

## Report back: Group Botshabelo; Principle: water management

- Must store water during rainy season as much as possible. ***MDF to give input on this*** Water infiltration: look at slope, dig furrows and ditches
- Mulching to keep moisture in the soil
- Greywater system and management; wood ash in containers, remainders in containers can go into toilet to help it sink down. We use soap in the water- which will not make people sick… – ***MDF to provide input on Moringa seeds and Sand filters and health concerns***
- Manage water flow: diverted to fruit trees and store water in the soil

## Report back: Group Lepelle; Principle: soil movement

Group felt there was not much of a problem with erosion, soil health, water management (want to abstract from the river)

Seeds (GMO), seed saving, water flow and management

- Seeds are expensive to buy: used to go to commercial farmers and buy seed form them.
- Learnt that they come from overseas- give seeds to our government who then gives them to communities. Once you planted seed you cannot save it, have opt buy every year. We were informed that they provide bigger fruit, drought resistant- will provide food whether it rains or not. Bees that do pollination can move the pollen and then

those characteristics can change and it changes the characteristics… ***MDF to give input on this***

Tsepo from Ukuvuna provided a short input on: Seed banking: heirloom seeds.

## Discussion

Processes of change can be uncomfortable. We need to look at what we're doing and accept that maybe things need to change. This is a very important step in learning. Uncomfortable is different not necessarily bad…. Let's undertake to trust each other and walk together.

The five fingers is a way for remembering the important things to do in terms of farming. It's like a book.

How do we decide if we are successful? Use the practices as criteria, to assess whether you are doing well or not. There are some things that will be difficult to deal with alone, as they are part of the group/village. These include from plenary discussion:

- Land pollution – rubbish and pollutants
- Theft;
- People who assist farmers take a long time to come and visit them. Lima for example- has not come for 2 years….
- Household is not fenced as animals destroy crops; even with fencing chickens and pigs can be a problem.
- Unemployment
- Water shortages
- There is water, but abstraction of water from the river is not happening.
- With cutting trees, people burn trees instead.
- Birds; eat crops, fruit and seed
- Heat; high levels
- Not having land to farm- or may have land but no capital to farm
- Young people not that interested in farming –
- Most of these issues are within our control but there are bigger issues – want to be helped to dam water so that we can have access. Individuals will need to have a water use licence if you want to dam the river….

We must take ourselves seriously as farmers. Keep records and remember in terms of experiments which worked and which did not and why. Get organised.- better to work in groups to deal with the village level issues. Work with leaders.

Comments: You talk about coming together as farmers. Some farmers have pumps, some wait for rain, some get water from the mountains. This makes it difficult for them to work together as a group as they are doing different things. We must be clear as to what support you will be providing. People are pulling away now as it is not clear. Can you assist us with RWH tanks for example.

We want help also with being referred to organisations that will help us.

Obed (Willows): Some people here do have the answers- if someone does not have land they can go to the tribal council. There are other issues raised – once you have started farming. Where do you start- I can't call myself a farmer without a tractor- we have gone through workshops, but we go in circles as you cannot help us do this. You talked about RWH to be able to assist in certain capacities- what is the easiest way to channel and harvest water. It there is training without something tangible then we will not stay interested. We are not interested in just meetings and workshops.

George (Lepelle): Some sort of assistance is better than no assistance at all. By ourselves on our own our voices are not loud enough for others to hear us… Maybe others will see and be able to help us… Back in the days just pumping seeds and tractors to people did not really help. Hope we are going through some of the steps to do this better. Farmers can become more profitable to be able to improve to hire labour and stay stagnant.

Fanuel (The Oaks): Clear now what support you are providing- doesn't provide the impression that you are helping some people and marginalising others…

**Demonstration;** of breaking sticks and then adding them together- they are stronger and harder to break…

# Team Reflection on Mametje workshop_ 20170316

## AGENDA:

1. Reflection on cc w/shop
    a. -dealing with 5 fingers
    b. -other implications – for AgriIS
2. Baseline homestead assessments; completion, translation
3. Sensitive topics: water abstraction, NPK, GMO, municipality relationship
4. INR meshing

## REFLECTION ON 5 FINGERS workshop

What went well:

- Participation from farmers was great. E.G Miriam from Botshabelo - see some farmers are internalising the training and the tools are good.
- Local participation good. Translation helpful. Enough trust to raise their issues towards the end
- Programme was well planned for timing
- Farmers have a wealth of stuff going on that we can enrich it, but they really got it…
- Think farmers really understood the concepts
- Principles vs practice was nice
- Feeling that there is a partnership going on
- Good venue
- Loved the photos
- Within the groups, they showed there was a lot done before and that they can remember and relate to all the activities
- People showed they understood things- now can try more on the ground.
- Working together to create a good picture
- Love the way farmers talking to others and teaching each other. Their attention was very good. Happy to hear them talking about mulching, companion planting,
- Worked well at this point in the process – this ended up being a good consolidating day. People have learnt quite a lot. The repetition and re-enforcement was not too much. Really helped that they have actually done some of the practices

Not so good

- Good practices within the management practices ?
- Lepelle; based on the group's discussion and what Erna and Sylvester shared there was a mismatch…
- Same people talk in the groups
- Not enough time for feedback from the groups – as people could help each other learn and do more sharing

- Would have been better if they could have covered all the 5 fingers
- How to stop people from dominating…….
- Thought we were just capturing their own practices; and or sharing how we do the practices.
- Should have focussed a little more on good practices towards improvement and also' de-focus' somewhat a little on the training form Mahlathini to surface local practices that are good.
- How are we handling the community based expectations around inputs and equipment
- How does this mesh with the AgriSI and implications for going forward. Is needs to be further linked to a learning process. What are we going to do with the visioning. How will it become a group vision? These workshops are largely an opportunity to put people in a discomfort zone,
- Need to make clear at the beginning of the workshop what people can gain from it.
- Managing group conversations to stay on track.
- Farmers have expectations, still testing the waters of what they can be getting. Worrying that they are doing 'wait and see".
- There is a dynamic in Lepelle – whether we go ahead – but there are issues there… Do not like the idea that we went and said there is a problem after they said there isn't one. But perhaps it's ok to cause discomfort… we need to watch what is going on there…
- Managing expectation is central; but we do say it.. but maybe need to say it more…but can't just put it aside. As those are potentially also real needs. Need to engage some of that discourse…
- Six villages with amount of resources is quite ambitious – possibly can allow ourselves to change…

## Implications for AgriSi

- The fact that they said they want to meet is a good thing and also that the expectations are now on the table.
- The implication I to engage with the energy that people are prepared to meet and we should take it further. How to work together, should we work together.
- We need more time on understanding before we start on the activities
- We ran parallel process of setting up the talking and doing at the same time. It means that the process side of things has felt a bit haphazard.
- The visioning process can't be left too long. Wider visioning about the future is potentially interesting. Not just specifically around what they plan to do in the gardening.
- Link to INR – maybe do the farming together with the INR
- Be realistic about what is possible in the time frame of a year.
- If they take on an experimental process they will learn new things every year…
- Let's situate the visioning within change and climate change and how can we best adapt to this.

## Self assessments:

- -Each farmer now has practices… from which the garden monitoring can be done.

- Dearick:What is your baseline? - simplify it. The individual homestead based assessments are way too complicated for this process – even though they could provide information related to some of the indicators against which reporting needs to happen. Work rather within an internal contextual profile – first level of assessment: that is the baseline context. Then do the evidence building.
- Derick: What you choose as your baseline it is your own cross that you will bear. If you do a forensic baseline process, then you will have that complexity throughout.
- Sharon: This is not a tenable approach…which is why they do it themselves, the groups decide. They assess and gather evidence – cluster based evidence…
- DericK: A baseline is a pretty standard requirement. There should not be a problem here
- Choose the key practices under each principle and use that. Group based assessments with the five fingers and traffic lights.
- Farmers can do their own assessments. Farmer make their own judgement calls about how they are doing. That is not as arduous a task.

Some verifiables that are causing problems in the milestone deliverables: Farmer work plans, individual experimentation plans, garden monitoring and training manual. These will be sorted out and provided before the end of March.

Timeline of activities; in the progress report- and documentation- mention every one of the documents.

Erna misunderstood documentation as ways to verify… not as verifiable indicators…this difference in understanding was somehow missed in the whole contracting process.