

PRO AFRICA
DEVELOPMENT
LAND PEOPLE WATER



CAPACITY STATEMENT



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Profile

Pro Africa Development is a Zimbabwean NGO that was registered as a Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO) in 2019 and has been operating as a Trust since 2000.

The organization's headquarters are located in Bulawayo, and it has additional operational annex offices spread across Matabeleland South, Matabeleland North, and Midlands provinces. Over the past 23 years, from 2000 to 2024, Pro Africa Development has been actively involved in humanitarian work, emergency response, and resilience-building efforts, focusing primarily on food security, water accessibility, water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), renewable energy, and environmental protection and Climate Change response.



The organization has implemented several projects aimed at addressing these issues. These projects have included dam construction and rehabilitation, irrigation infrastructure development, borehole drilling and rehabilitation, solar power installation for boreholes, establishment of piped water systems, WASH initiatives in schools. Construction of biogas digesters and greenhouses, activities to protect catchment areas, promotion of small-scale grain production, construction of agricultural support infrastructure, support for livestock production, value addition initiatives, urban resilience-building efforts, disaster risk reduction activities, and youth entrepreneurship programs.



BACKGROUND

The organization's origins can be traced back to the "Give a Dam Campaign," which was implemented in Matabeleland in response to the devastating droughts of 1982, 1985, and 1992. These droughts resulted in severe livestock losses and widespread food and water shortages throughout Zimbabwe. In response to the crisis, various non-governmental organizations and the Zimbabwean government, through its different ministries, formed a consortium called the "Give a Dam Campaign." This consortium was the first of its kind in Zimbabwe and aimed to address the underlying causes of droughts, food shortages, and water scarcity in Matabeleland.

Between 1995 and 2000, the consortium successfully constructed 47 dams with active participation from the local communities benefiting from them. This approach proved to be sustainable, as the communities became owners of the dams and associated irrigation schemes, taking responsibility for their maintenance through elected committees.

While the construction of dams achieved notable success, the development of irrigation systems progressed at a slower pace. By 2001, only eight irrigation schemes had been established, which did not adequately address the region's food deficit. Recognizing this gap, Pro Africa Development adopted a deliberate policy of seeking funding for the establishment of gravity-fed irrigation schemes below old dams and other dams with potential for irrigation establishment downstream. Since its inception, Pro Africa Development has completed over 100 small-scale irrigation schemes, ranging from 2 hectares to 20 hectares, up until 2024.

In addition to their focus on irrigation, Pro Africa Development has diversified its humanitarian support portfolio to include a variety of activities, as outlined below. Key focus is made to address climate change negative related impacts through addressing water and food security challenges.



DAM CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION

Pro Africa Development possesses expertise in assessing, surveying, designing, constructing, and rehabilitating various types of dams, including Earth Dams, Masonry dams, Weir and Sand Dams. Over the past three years, we have undertaken significant dam construction projects, such as the Midlo Dam in Matobo District (1,000,000 m³), Mavule Dam (70,000 m³), Mazhayimbe Dam (75,000 m³), TJingababili Dam in Mangwe District (248,000 m³), Mkhobothi Dam (280,000 m³), and Lake Alice Dam in Lupane District (350,000 m³).

These dams have played a critical role in meeting the water needs of livestock, irrigation, and various livelihood activities in the respective districts. The construction and rehabilitation of these dams have directly benefited over 50,000 households by providing access to productive water sources. Additionally, more than 500,000 livestock, including cattle and goats, have benefited from improved access to drinking water, resulting in reduced trekking distances. Given the ongoing impact of climate change, which has caused recurrent droughts in the region, dam construction and rehabilitation remain a top priority in Matabeleland.



Environmental Measures

Pro Africa has implemented measures to mitigate environmental degradation and promote soil and water conservation. It has been observed that a significant amount of fertile topsoil is lost each year, leading to ecosystem hazards and reduced agricultural productivity. To address this issue, Pro Africa has collaborated with district stakeholders to establish physical structures that effectively control erosion. These erosion control structures encompass a range of methods, including silt traps, gabions, stone bunds, contour ridges, storm drains, and biological barriers such as vetiver grass strips and trees.

Local communities are provided with training on the construction and maintenance of these environmental protection structures. Furthermore, environmental committees at the local level actively participate in ensuring the long-term sustainability of these initiatives. By implementing these measures, Pro Africa aims to safeguard the environment, combat soil erosion, and promote sustainable land and water management practices.



IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT



The gravity-fed (canal) irrigation system operates solely on the force of gravity and does not require any external power source. This system allows for the effective distribution of water to specific sections of land. To ensure full utilisation of land that could not be commanded by the gravity-fed irrigation system, Pro Africa Development drilled and solarized boreholes enabling the incorporation of drag hose irrigation. Additionally, the solarized boreholes served the purpose of addressing water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) needs within the irrigation schemes.

Various crops, including tomatoes, cabbages, onions, and maize, among others, are cultivated within the irrigation schemes. The primary objective is to address food and nutrition security challenges prevalent within the communities. These crops are either sold to local communities or consumed within households, thereby contributing to improved incomes and dietary diversity among farmers.

Regular training and monitoring activities are conducted to enhance farmers' knowledge and support them in producing crops efficiently and sustainably. The establishment of irrigation schemes has had a positive impact on over 25,000 households across different operational districts. Through these schemes, Pro Africa Development has successfully tackled food security concerns, empowering communities to become more self-reliant and resilient.

Pro Africa Development has successfully established more than 80 irrigation schemes downstream of newly constructed and rehabilitated dams. The primary focus during the initial phase of irrigation scheme development was to ensure low establishment costs, efficient irrigation, minimal repairs and maintenance, durability, and long-term sustainability. As a result, Pro Africa Development adopted a gravity-fed (canal) irrigation system supplied by the upstream dams.





BOREHOLE DRILLING, SOLARISATION AND REHABILITATION

Pro Africa Development's remarkable strides in rural development have had a profound impact on the accessibility of clean, portable water for communities. Through their efforts in borehole drilling, solarisation, and borehole rehabilitation, they have successfully provided a reliable source of safe drinking water to these underserved areas. This achievement has significantly improved the well-being and health of the communities they serve.



By implementing borehole drilling, solarization and rehabilitation Pro Africa Development has effectively reduced the distance that individuals and livestock need to travel to access water. This not only saves valuable time and energy for community members but also contributes to the overall efficiency and productivity of their daily lives. The availability of a nearby water source has a direct positive impact on the livelihoods of these communities.

Furthermore, borehole rehabilitation efforts by Pro Africa Development have resulted in the distribution of water demand across multiple access points within rural communities. This reduces strain on individual water sources, decreases the frequency of repairs and breakdowns, and enhances the overall reliability of the water supply infrastructure. The improved maintenance and sustainability of these water access points contribute to the long-term benefits experienced by the communities.

Biogas digesters



In its commitment to addressing sustainable development challenges and providing enduring solutions, Pro Africa Development undertook the construction of a 20 m³ biogas digester at Jotsholo Abattoir in Lupane district.

This initiative aimed to tackle the waste-related issues which would be produced from the slaughtering process at the Abattoir. The implementation of this technological solution has brought significant benefits to the abattoir and the community at large.

By utilizing animal waste generated from the slaughtering process, the community now obtains biogas, which serves as a cooking fuel. This eliminates the need for firewood, resulting in environmental benefits.

The stakeholders, particularly EMA, have expressed appreciation for this innovative approach, recognizing its positive impact on waste management and environmental sustainability.



Small grain Production

In light of the Matabeleland region's persistent low rainfall, the promotion of small grain production has emerged as a crucial strategy to enhance food security within the targeted districts. Over the past five years, Pro Africa has partnered with Catholic Relief Services under the USAID-funded RECOVER project, as well as with Liechtenstein Development Services through the Integrated Food Security Program. These collaborations have aimed to empower farmers in cultivating crops such as Cowpeas, Sorghum, Lablab, millet, and others.

Farmers have received comprehensive training on various aspects of small grain production, including integrated pest management, Conservation Agriculture principles, weed control, pegging of dead level contours, seed production, harvesting and post-harvest management. As part of the Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund (ZRBF) and the Liechtenstein Development Service programs, Pro Africa has assisted farmers in constructing improved granaries with a capacity of 3.2 tonnes to enhance storage capabilities. Additionally, seed banks have been established to preserve a diverse range of seeds and improve seed availability within local communities.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the project, Pro Africa has implemented the lead farmer model, which involves identifying and training exemplary farmers to serve as mentors within their communities. Furthermore, the creation of seed banks plays a vital role in promoting seed preservation and accessibility. Through these initiatives, Pro Africa aims to strengthen food security by equipping farmers with the necessary skills and resources to cultivate small grains successfully in the face of challenging climatic conditions.



SMALL LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

Goat production has emerged as a resilient and viable project for implementation in the arid regions of the country. Recognizing this potential, Pro Africa, in collaboration with Liechtenstein Development Services, embarked on a goat production project starting from 2016 up to the present. The project specifically targets the participation of youth, enabling them to generate income and acquire valuable assets. So far, over 180 youth in Matobo and Gwanda Districts have benefited from the project. Entrepreneurship training has been provided to empower the youth with the necessary skills for sustaining their projects.

To ensure the success of the project, comprehensive youth training programs on goat management and fodder production have been conducted in partnership with the Veterinary Department and ARDAS (formerly known as AGRITEX). Furthermore, paravets have been trained to assist the youth in effectively managing their goat projects. Through this initiative, Pro Africa aims to create economic opportunities for the youth in the targeted regions while promoting the resilience and sustainability of goat production in drier areas.

Capacity Building Workshops

To enhance the sustainability and performance of project participants, Pro Africa organizes capacity-building workshops covering various topics. These workshops address cross-cutting subjects such as project management, dam management, catchment area management, constitution writing, team building and leadership, conflict resolution, and gender issues. Moreover, practical demonstrations on topics like compost making, dosing, vaccinations, dehorning, contour pegging as well as entrepreneurship are conducted during these workshops. Relevant government departments collaborate in delivering these training sessions. Through these workshops, project participants gain valuable knowledge and skills. They are empowered to establish and elect various working committees for their projects, enabling effective project management even without close supervision from the organization. As a result of the trainings, some groups have successfully registered as co-operatives, which enhances their eligibility for obtaining loans from banks to support further growth and development.

Water User Associations

Water User Associations (WUAs) are community-based organizations that play a crucial role in the management and governance of water resources. They are formed by water users, such as farmers, irrigators, or other stakeholders, who collectively manage and make decisions regarding the allocation, distribution, and use of water within a specific area or water system. WUAs are commonly established at the local or regional level and operate under a set of rules and regulations agreed upon by their members. Pro Africa Development adopted this concept to ensure sustainability of water infrastructure which includes dams and boreholes. Through this concept there has been sustainable water management practices, equitable water distribution, and enhanced community participation and ownership in water resource management. These WUAs have facilitated the sharing of knowledge and best practices among water users. They have also provided a platform for resolving conflicts and addressing disputes among water users.

Past and Current Donor Projects

UNDP-ZRBF

- 2017-2023 Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund Under SIZIMELE Consortium led by Danish Church Aid (1.2 Million)

DANIDA-DCA

- 2018-2023 Institutional strengthening USD 105,000.00

MISERIOR

- 2023-2026 (Integrated water and food security in Matabeleland South Province – USD 536 000.00)

HIVOS

- Matobo Green Society (USD 150,000.00)

LEICHESTEIN DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

- 2022-2024 (Integrated water and food security in Matobo and Mangwe District USD 565 000.00)
- 2019-2021 (Integrated food security program in Matabeleland South District – USD 505 000.000)
- 2016-2018
- 2013-2015 (Integrated Food Security Program in Matabeleland South, USD 390 000.00)

CRS-USAID

- RECOVER PROJECT (Climate Change Response) USD 226,893.00