

Tugwi Mukosi Dam and Climate Change: Unlocking Economic Value from Field Cropping for Chivi and Masvingo Rural Districts

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Abstract

Climate change is real and water harvesting is a promising strategy for food and income insecurity for struggling communities. This study proposes how crop agricultural crop value can be unlocked by Masvingo and Chivi rural district communities around and downstream Tugwi Mukosi Dam (TMD). The TMD is Zimbabwe's largest inland water body is located at the confluence of Tugwi-Mukosi rivers. The dam is on the boundary of in the two districts of Masvingo Province. The study applied both qualitative and quantitative data from Zimbabwe's Ministry of Lands, Water, Agriculture Fisheries and Rural Development, Tongaat Hulett Zimbabwe Limited, local leadership (elected and traditional), development agencies in Chivi, and Masvingo districts, the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA), as well as agronomists from a local university. Study participants were purposively selected. Interviews, observation and questionnaires were the main data collection instruments. Findings from this study established that local communities around and downstream this dam still suffer severe food and income insecurity despite being on the fringes of this mega water body. It also established vast agricultural crop potential for local communities given supportive national policy and capital investment by the government. It established that the dam was planned and constructed to serve economic interests of corporates only. The study recommends liberalisation of the ZINWA policy to allow local communities to benefit fully from the dam, particularly now as the districts suffer the effects of climate change.

Keywords: climate change, agricultural value, Tugwi Mukosi Dam, economic opportunities