

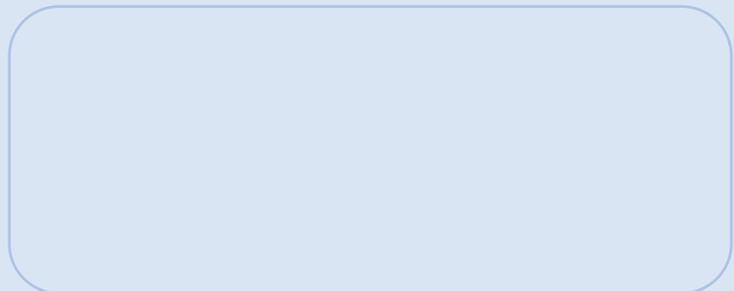
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# PEACEMAIL

VOLUME 11 • ISSUE 7

SEEDS OF NEW LIFE GROWING IN ZIMBABWE



**ACT FOR PEACE**  
CONFRONTING INJUSTICE TOGETHER  
THROUGH THE **actalliance**

The international aid agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

Peel gently to open

Peel gently to open



Masvingo Province is one of the most drought affected provinces in southern Zimbabwe. Large portions of the community rely on food handouts for 6 to 9 months of the year. This year, the number of people in Zimbabwe who need food aid is expected to increase from 1.6 to 2 million.

Act for Peace's Conservation Farming program empowers smallholder farmers to enhance soil fertility. The program also focuses on mentoring so that farmers have the confidence and ability to increase their yields and strengthen household food security.

The Conservation Farming program works on a three year training cycle. Farmers graduate from beginner to lead farmers, and then many go on to encourage other farmers to join the program. Thanks to your support, more than 1,900 people have taken part in the Conservation Farming program so far.

## Your support is making a difference:



**A maize starter pack to help first year farmers to begin to become self-sufficient.**



**A training workshop on the safe use of pesticides and organic options so soil and crops retain their life-giving nutrients and food is safe to eat.**



**A workshop to train new farmers in conservation farming to provide families with a source of income and transform entire communities.**

All gifts of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

Welcome to a new year! Thank you for your on-going support, you are truly making a lasting difference to people around the globe - just like Tonderai and his family.

In 2016 we will be introducing you to some new programs that are just commencing. Look out for these in your upcoming Peace Mails!

If you have any questions or feedback about Act for Peace, we would love to hear from you. Please call Claire on **1800 025 101** or email **info@actforpeace.org.au**.

## Act for Peace

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## SEEDS OF NEW LIFE GROWING IN ZIMBABWE

Dear Friends,

I am Tonderai\* and with my family, I live in south east Zimbabwe. There are very few jobs here. Every year more and more men, and also some women, leave to find work in cities in South Africa. Families are separated and it's hard on husbands and wives, parents and children. I have a family that I need to provide for and I don't want to leave them alone. I decided to stay in Zimbabwe to work the land. It is tough to be a farmer, we need to grow enough food for our families and also sell surplus to pay fees for my kids to go to school.

Zimbabwe is now in a severe drought. In earlier droughts I got very little food from my land - only enough for one meal a day. Much of the livestock would die and farmers would have to give up their fields as they couldn't produce any food. It would take years to recover; we frequently depended on food aid just to get through. Many of us would find work on rich people's farms to earn some income to buy food, but we could never get ahead.

Act for Peace's partner Christian Care has been in my area since 2011. Thanks to your support, I have received training in a new technique called Conservation Farming - and this has changed my life. Previously, in conventional farming I would plough the land then rain would wash away the top soil. It was difficult to get a crop. Through Conservation Farming I know to use mulch to stop erosion and retain moisture. I now produce enough to feed my family, pay school fees and buy other essential items like medicine.

We have a saying here in Zimbabwe that makes me smile: "If you work on a small plot you won't get old." I have learned techniques to improve my crop yield. I now dig individual holes ready for seeds, rather than using draught animals to plough the whole field. Before Christian Care's training program I would spread manure and fertiliser across my entire field but weeds would grow as fast as crops. Through Conservation Farming I know to only put manure directly on the crops.

In the past, I had to use all my land for my crops but the yield wasn't even enough for my family. Now I use a much smaller plot and it produces more. With the land I have spare I raise some livestock. The result is that my family is self-sufficient for food and I even have some to sell for income.

Although we are in a bad drought, thanks to your generous support I can now promise my family that they will have enough food. I am very happy that you have helped us and I am proud to be a good father and husband and to provide for my family.

Tonderai

\*Names have been changed to protect identities



Tonderai and his family



Tonderai and his wife working the land

### Prayer Points:

- Give thanks for the community spirit in rural Zimbabwe that prevails through the drought.
- Pray for an end to the drought and the blessing of rain to water the soil and make the land come alive again.