

2006 was a busy and exciting year for all of us at SHDF-TAS. There were also a lot of challenges that had to be overcome for the organisation to achieve its mandate. Of note, is the hyper inflationary economic environment that savings club members and the organisation at large found themselves operating under. Since savings and thrift are values instilled in the members, with the harsh economic conditions most found this to be challenging.

Such challenges were overcome by developing and implementing cutting edge development strategies that would counter the unfriendly conditions, such as investing savings in the purchase of livestock, household assets or even household foodstuff (*dura*).

On a sad note, three field trainers passed away. Mrs. Josephine Mzulu, one of the oldest serving members of SHDF died, leaving a gap in the Marondera district which will be difficult to fill. Diana Taru, who was the field trainer of Mrewa District and Tambudzai Dakarai who was based in Gokwe (Nembudziya) also passed away in the last quarter of the year. Our heartfelt condolences go out to their families.

2006 Highlights and achievements

- A major achievement of 2006 was the design and launch of our website, whose domain is www.shdf-tas.org.zw. This has seen us joining the world wide web and other world leaders with regard to the empowerment of women and the development of rural communities.
- A highlight of the year was the participation of SHDF-TAS in Namibia at the SADC Conference on Violence against Women & Girls hosted by Women's Action for Development (WAD). The conference ran from the 22nd to 23rd of November 2006 in Windhoek. The organisation was represented by Executive Director, Mrs. Wadzanayi Vere, Training Manager Charity Chirara and Gweru region Regional Training Officer (RTO), Jennifer Makombe.
- The first phase of the Strategic Refocusing Workshop was held from the 3rd to the 6th of October. Issues to deal with gender, development, democracy and human rights and how the SHDF-TAS can incorporate them in its operation were brought to the fore by development consultants who include Unity Chari, Ignatious Musona, Dr. Ranga Zinyemba and Alice Zinyemba. This set the ball rolling for the implementation and mainstreaming of gender, democracy and human rights approaches in SHDF-TAS programmes.

- 2006 was indeed a happy year for Savings Club Members in Glen Norah who received a sewing machine courtesy of Dr. Schlee's family who had been impressed by their efforts in improving their standard of living.

Marketing

Most if not all of the club members make their living through selling products they produce such as agricultural produce, batiks, doilies and various artifacts. It is imperative therefore that these products are adequately marketed within the country and outside so that high profits are realised in order to sustain the income generating projects. The following are some of the opportunities SHDF-TAS afforded club members with to showcase their products.

- Two trips were undertaken to Mozambique and Botswana as a marketing initiative. The first trip was to Mozambique and 25 Club members from Mutare managed to showcase their products in Chimoio and Beira and strike lucrative deals in the process. They were accompanied by the Training Manager, RTO for Mutare region and the Finance and Administration Officer. SHDF-TAS also managed to meet with other organisations in Mozambique which work in the areas of rural development, with a particular focus on women, e.g. SNV, Africare, Kwaedza-Simukai, among others.
- 20 women from Bulawayo went to Kasane in Botswana and they were accompanied by their RTO, the Training Manager and the Finance and Administration Officer. There they met up with various women's organisation who they introduced the savings concept to. These women were impressed and are working on launching SHDF Botswana this year. They also managed to find regular markets for savings club members' products. Plans are underway to secure permanent market stands in Kasane.
- Besides the regional trips, SHDF-TAS managed to participate in a number of local exhibitions such as the ZITE, Harare Agricultural Show and at the Mukuvisi Woodlands. This was to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Mukuvisi Woodlands. SHDF-TAS also participated at the NANGO expo.
- Displays were held in various districts and these were supported by government and local leaders such as chiefs. These displays were staged to showcase what the club members were doing and to afford members of the public to buy various goods and products.

Community Development and Empowerment

SHDF-TAS works in the community, empowering club members to be self-reliant. Self-reliance is made possible by training in various skills such as savings management, project management, practical skills training and marketing. In 2006, 7 907 people were trained in various skills throughout the country. 344 training workshops were conducted and over 500 new clubs were registered.

We are certainly pleased with the above as it illustrates that SHDF-TAS is still a viable entity in terms of development in Zimbabwe.

Vote of thanks and acknowledgments

All our successes and achievements were made possible by financial, technical and moral support that was given to SHDF-TAS. We especially thank the following:

Donors and strategic partners

Our sincere thanks and gratitude are extended to KAF and GTZ for helping us realise our objectives through the funds made available to SHDF-TAS in 2006 and previous years. We are indeed grateful for sharing our vision and mission with us and we look forward to many more years of partnering in the development of Zimbabwe.

Amongst our strategic partners are the Manicaland Governor and Resident Minister, Cde. Tinaye Chigudu, who through good relations with his counterpart in Mozambique, facilitated the trip to Mozambique for club members. Some of them did not have passports and visas and Cde Chigudu assisted in procuring a document that made it possible for them to cross the border.

Special thanks go to SNV (Mutare and Beira) for the support rendered in the planning and organizing of the marketing trip to Mozambique.

We also take this opportunity to air our appreciation to the Board of Directors, namely Mr. Peter Mukwena (Chairperson), Mr. P.Z. Khumalo, Dr. Ruvimbo Chimedza and Mr. T. Sithole. Their contribution towards the growth and maintenance of SHDF-TAS is invaluable. Thank you very much.

SHDF-TAS Associates

Over the years, SHDF-TAS has worked and collaborated with many individuals and organisations in the area of rural development. As most of the club members are women, we have also formed alliances with women's organisation in the country and the region. Individuals and organisations that helped make 2006 a remarkable year include the Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe, EMCOZ, NANGO, Jekesa-Pfungwa, WASN, UNDP-GEF, among others.

SHDF staff

SHDF-TAS operates in more than 40 districts in Zimbabwe. For all these areas to be effectively serviced, a lot of work and dedication is contributed by a number of people. We thank the 35 field trainers who are working with the club members from a grassroots level. We also extend gratitude to the following people whose dedication has helped SHDF-TAS achieve its objectives:

Mrs. W. Vere	Executive Director
Mr. C Chumbu	Finance and Admin Officer
Ms C. Chirara	Training Manager
Mrs. A. Noko	R.T.O. Bulawayo Region
Mrs. J. Makombe	RTO Gweru Region

Ms. E. Zimbati	RTO Harare Region
Ms. E. Zembe	RTO Manicaland Region
Mrs. M. Nyamukunda	RTO Mashonaland East Region
Merit Rumema	Information and Marketing Assistant
Nyarai Motsi-Savanhu	Administration Assistant
Mendy Mkondwa	Mutare Region Secretary
Vongai Matonhodze	Bulawayo Region Secretary
Feziwe Vhondla	Gweru Region Secretary
Mr. S. Sigauke	Driver

Upcoming Events

- The second phase of the Strategic Refocusing Workshop will be held in January and this will see SHDF-TAS mainstreaming gender, democracy and human rights in all its programmes, thus upholding the latest trends in development approaches.
- We also look forward to an expo to be held on our behalf by partners in Mozambique where members products will be showcased.

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