



Home > Local News

LOCAL NEWS

Binga inches closer to food security

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Story by Tichaona Kurewa

FOOD security is increasingly becoming a reality for Binga District of Matabeleland North Province, with a new 20-hectare irrigation scheme and horticulture gardens having been established.

The transformative project, covering 20 hectares and the Bulawayo Kraal Irrigation Scheme are expected to contribute significantly to the much-needed food security in Binga.

A thriving sugar bean and a wheat crop at varying stages of maturity form part of the 64-member Saba Green Valley Irrigation Scheme.

“Food has been a challenge in this area but the coming in of this scheme has changed the narrative, we can now feed ourselves,” said one of the scheme members.

“From this scheme, we can now even have money for school fees and other developments at home,” added another member.

The traditional leadership agrees with the chairperson of the scheme on the expected benefits after getting the necessary support from the government.

Saba Green Valley Irrigation Scheme’s chairperson Mr Molinah Mudimba said, “We thank the government and its partners for this project, this is now a green valley, and we can now grow crops all year round. Our lives will not be the same again.”

"This scheme will certainly help in improving food security in this area. When people have food, there is always peace. Even the crime rate will go down and people have something to do. This scheme has also contributed to employing the local people," said Chief Saba, Mr Charlse Mudenda.

The scheme, which runs entirely on solar and draws its water from the Mlibizi River 10 kilometres away has modern irrigation equipment, including a solar-powered centre pivot and drip irrigation.

"The irrigation scheme aims to upgrade and climate-proof existing systems, to ensure they are sustainable in the face of a changing climate and cater for the social and economic needs of the growing population," said UNDP's communications officer Mr Anesu Freddy.

The irrigation scheme feeds into the government's vision of establishing at least one nutritional garden in every village as part of efforts to improve food security countrywide.

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