

INTERVIEW WITH MR. JOHN MARTIN OFFICE OF GET UP STAND UP

For a person to live a happy life, one needs to have food. If one doesn't have food she/he chooses to lead a nomadic life, every day moving around in search of food as if we are still in antiquity, the Old Stone Age. Having known that food is the most essential and basic need for the life of any living creature, Andiamo's Website Development team went to a maize field managed by Andiamo's 'Get Up Stand Up' section and met Mr. John Martin, who supervises all field work. The team learnt techniques applied to realize bumper harvests. Excerpts:

We can see that you are very busy here, what is going on?

Yes, we are really busy. We are harvesting the Maize. First, we cut the cobs and put them in one place (in herpes) so that the work can be made simple. We do this so that we should not be moving from one ridge to another.



We have just started chatting but we don't know who we are talking to. Tell us, what is your name and what is your job?

I am John Martin. I come from Toleza village, about ten kilometers from here (Andiamo). I've a family with two children; a son and a daughter. I am working here as a Supervisor (Field Assistant).

You have said that you are a Field Assistant, have you ever worked anywhere before coming at Andiamo?

No, I've never worked anywhere before. I started working at Andiamo in 2002 with Chimanga Project. After the project had phased out, I joined a newly introduced project 'Get up Stand up' which continued from where the Chimanga Project had left.

2002 is a long time. What has been your experience like?

To call a spade by its name I have learnt a lot. By the time I was coming here, I didn't know much about Agriculture. But after being assisted here, confidently, I can say that I have achieved a lot. On top of that I have improved in farming methods skills and fair knowledge that I can help fellows to realize bumper yields. I love the cooperation, which is shared among us here (among the workers at the maize field) and I hope this will grow forevermore.

We know problems are found every where. What problems do you usually face in this highly demanding job?

(Scratches his head)...There are so many problems, of course. However, I can pinpoint three main problems that we encounter here. The biggest is absenteeism i.e. most workers do not report for duties due to reasons that are known to themselves. As this is so, our work plan is greatly affected. The second problem is theft. There are some unknown folks who steal our maize here. This usually happens at night. This affects us a lot. Lastly, as you know that we practice irrigation farming, we need pipes and sprinklers to shower the crops. However, we are shot of pipes and sprinklers, a thing that limits us to producing low yields (considering the vast land that lies fallow). If pipes and sprinklers were to suffice a larger piece of land, I think we could have boosted crop production.

What any last words can you say?



Sometimes, the work seems to be tough in the sense that we are few here. If we may have more workers, so much the better. Also, if people like you i.e. the authorities, visit us now and then, this gives us encouragement. We find all means to improve so that when you will be coming again you should find a changed environment.

Thank you.