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## “I have never seen such an amazing harvest!” A Story of Transformation



By Paul Kaufman  
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A Canadian Foodgrains Bank-sponsored conservation agriculture program in the Tarime district of Tanzania is celebrating an amazing story from **Mr. Charles Muhabe**.

Mr. Muhabe lives with his wife and five grandsons in the village of Kolotambe, where he has farmed about an acre of land since 1998. They normally harvest a maximum of 2-4 bags of corn each season, depending on the rain. **Not this year.**

This season was different. This year, he and his family used conservation agriculture methods in preparing their land. “This year,” says Mr. Muhabe joyfully, “I have harvested 18 bags of corn!! It is an amazing thing for my family to see, because for more than 15 years I have never harvested even HALF of what this season produced. **I have never,**” he exclaims, “**seen such an amazing harvest from this portion of land since I was born in 1949!**”

Mr. Muhabe explains his success: “First of all, I attended the CFGB conservation agriculture training last year (hosted by World Renew partner African Inland Church of Tanzania). **We then began to practice some principles of conservation agriculture.** We learned that soil cover is a good way to preserve moisture in the soil and provide long-lasting compost on farms.” So he planted Lab Lab intercropped with his maize, which provides good ground cover and helps to fix nitrogen into the soil.

Conservation agriculture also recommends the preparation of land immediately after the season’s end. “So last year,” Mr Muhabe says, “I had prepared my farm two months before the rainy season.” Mr Muhabe now believes that to prepare land early for maize and other agriculture activities is wise, because it gives time for microorganisms to decompose into “green manure” and plants can receive all rains, rather than preparing the land after the rains have started.



Finally, Mr. Muhabe learned about the conservation agriculture principle of minimal tillage and learned to use planting basins in preparing his fields. In years past, says Mr. Muhabe, “I did not dig holes for planting corn, but used a stick or heel to put seeds in the ground without breaking the hardpan.” Hardpan is an impenetrable layer of dirt just below the soil surface that results from traditional tillage methods and prevents moisture collection and deep-rooting of plants.

It was hard for Mr. Muhabe to try these new farming methods, but now he sees the benefits and is promoting conservation agriculture to his friends and neighbors. **With a success like his, that shouldn’t be too hard a task.**

## Pray for Tanzania

- Rains to come at the right time and in the right quantity. Farmers have struggled in past seasons with poor rains. Seasonal rains should be arriving soon here in the Lake Zone, and enough rain at the right time ensures that families will have enough nutritious food to eat, with more to sell for extra family income.
- The chief accountant of our partner organization, the African Inland Church of Tanzania, Diocese of Mara Ukerewe. He has been seriously ill for a number of weeks now, hospitalized on and off, and unable to work.
- Good health and safe travels for World Renew Tanzania and AICT partner staff, who spend a lot of time on the road visiting communities, and participating in workshops and learning visits to other regions and countries. Pray as well for good health and safety for families left behind at home during these absences.