



GROWING NATIONS

Video Projects 2013 & 2014

Filming location with example of soil erosion (lower right) problems farmers are facing. Photo by Rod Dixon

A Field Report

By Rod Dixon

December was a very busy month and not just because of the normal holiday bustle. I returned to Lesotho to begin work on filming this current set of projects for Growing Nations. As announced in my last report, we have embarked on an ambitious opportunity to create media resources to support conservation agriculture (CA) training and promotion of this ministry. These efforts include a series of *Farmers' Stories*, the *Growing Nations Showcase the CA Broadcast Documentary* for Lesotho National TV and the *Haraka Planter Overview* to introduce a planter technology for women farmers currently being developed by Growing Nations.

Lesotho has suffered from a lack of rain this year delaying the growing season so the team was busy planting when I arrived in early December. Our days were filled with filming various no-till planting technologies in action including digging holes with a hoe, the Haraka Planter, ox drawn and tractor drawn planters. We interviewed farmers, the engineer who is developing the Haraka planter and eight young people from Experiencing Missions who were wrapping up a 6-week visit. We also filmed the assembly of the Haraka planter and the material for the *Growing Nations Showcase* project.

For the most part, our days were long, starting a little after sunrise (5:00 AM this time of year) and wrapping up with media management tasks late into the evening.

Field Trip - Part Two

A lot of filming remains to be done so a return trip to Maphutsang, Lesotho is currently planned for late February 2014 and preparations are already underway. We plan to visit a remote village – accessible only on horseback – to film the stories of farmers who have been employing CA technologies after their chief sent them to Growing Nations for training in these farming methods. Extension trainers have been visiting this village to continue the training on their own fields. The bulk of the *TV Documentary* project will also be filmed during this trip.

Stepping out in faith to produce projects like these can be much more of a challenge than expected because of the Biblical world view and Gospel message that form the foundation of the Growing Nations training. You can be sure that obstacles have been thrown in our path that require focus, personal sacrifice and difficulties on the home front while this work is under way.

Please keep us and these projects in prayer and consider becoming a project sponsor. Contact me so I can provide you with additional information.

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Photo Key:

Top Left - This field was planted with a cover crop called Teff at the end of the last growing season. Over the winter, it died off but provided protection for the soil. This season, it retained enough moisture after 9-months of drought to be planted before the rains came. Here you see the maize a month after planting. They are calling it the "Miracle Field".

Bottom Left - Farmer proudly told us about his land and the improved crop yields he has since employing CA. Watch for him in our documentary.

Top Right - Me filming the interview with this farmer.

Middle Right - The team of volunteers from Experiencing Mission.

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Bottom Right - I took this photo to illustrate the severity of soil erosion in Lesotho. This gully – or donga as they call it – is about 40-feet deep! That's a lot of soil that is lost forever to this farmer's land. CA farming helps prevent this and preserves the land for future generations.

