

Terrafina Ag Resource Group Notes

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For those of you who live or have lived in developing countries, hunger and scarcity are overwhelming. These conditions caused by brokenness feed the false worldview of fatalism.

When we look at creation, however, we see God's goodness and love in His design for abundance.

One fruit tree can produce hundreds or even thousands of

seeds a year, each with the potential to grow into a tree which, in turn, produces hundreds or thousands of seeds. Pioneer species of plants are ready to grow in harsh conditions to prepare the soil for food producing plants.

In Haiti, many farmers are resigned to eking out an existence. They have no hope for abundance. But there is hope in a message of God's love combined



with better farming practices. Abundance is possible!

Broken relationships with God, others, and creation, leave us in a place of scarcity. But through Christ, all of these relationships can be redeemed, and abundance be restored to a measure, even as we wait for the full restoration at the Second Coming.



What is transformational community development?

Biblical perspectives replace people's corrupt worldviews. As this transformation takes place in a community, lives are changed on every level, which leads to true development.

Transformation is a process. It is the Holy Spirit, not us, who can transform people. In this process, he can use our interactions. How can we make ourselves available to be used by God as a catalyst in transformational community development?

First, we come to the community as learners; we learn from and with them in a spirit of humility. We ask questions to understand the context in which the community operates, to understand the root causes that are hindering abundant life. We facilitate discussions in which we explore ways with the people to improve the situation. We point people to Christ, knowing that true development comes only when people accept Jesus' cure for fear, shame, and guilt.

Stewarding The Water Cycle

"Our main problem is lack of rain! We need irrigation!" This is the common response when asking farmers in Haiti what is causing low yields in their fields. Yields are, indeed, very low. A normal harvest for black beans is only threefold. But is this caused by lack of irrigation, or by the way we steward the soil and water we already have?



Deforestation has changed rainfall patterns and loss of soil organic matter (SOM) has destroyed the soil's ability to capture and retain rainwater. Much water and soil are lost every time it rains. Live terraces are an ideal solution to this problem. Farmers are learning to plant vetiver grass on contour to slow down the water so it can infiltrate into the soil, and to stop the water from carrying off their soil. As the soil builds up behind the row, the vetiver grows creating a step in the field.

In addition, many farmers have stopped burning their crop residue. They are learning to cut the vetiver grass rows for mulch. This increase in SOM gives the soil the ability to hold moisture. Surface residue cools the soil and reduces evaporation.

God has called us to be good stewards of the water cycle. The rainfall we receive, whether it be much or little, can be managed in ways that truly bring abundance.

If you would like to connect with the Terrafina team about Christian agricultural development email us at info@terrafina.org or call us at 419-528-8391. We love to network with people interested in ag missions and community development. Sign-up for these quarterly notes or to join our quarterly zoom call at www.terrafina.org.