

SAFE-World Project/Initiative Summary

Country: Malawi

Project/Initiative Title: Malawi Agroforestry Extension Project – Undersowing Tephrosia vogelli with crops
1992

Scale: many communities Nos. farmers: 20,000 Hectares:6,200

Agro-Ecological Zone: III

Improvement types

1x	2	3x	4	5x	6x	7	8	9
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Success and Limits to spread

Success 4a,6a,7	Limits 3a
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A. Key Impacts

A1 – Productivity

	Before/Without	After/With	% change
Maize	700 kg/ha	1500-2000 kg/ha	114-185%

A2 – Impacts on natural capital

- ?? Increased soil fertility and reduced surface run-off and erosion (6,154 ha established with vegative barriers, involving 19,594 households)
- ?? Reduced pressure on natural forests
- ?? Reduced pressure on natural resources as more people plant trees (6.98 million trees planted in 1999 involving 115,913 households)

A3 – Impacts on local community (social capital)

- ?? Farmers groups/associations formed to manage their own course of action with service units only facilitating
- ?? Empowerment of communities through training, self-sufficiency in inputs

A4 – Impacts on households and individuals (human capital)

- ?? Increased wood supply for household use
- ?? Farmers adopting practices eg: Lino-frame (“A” frame/ line level adaption)
- ?? 711 farmers trained directly by project but thousands more trained by 473 field staff trained as trainers by project in 1999

A5 – Key changes in farm / regional system

- ?? Less use of inorganic fertilizers which are in any case out of reach for the majority of small holders
- ?? Locally farmers are becoming more and more food secure as a result of adopting NRM practices

?? Strong partner collaboration established among stakeholders, resulting in improved communication, reduced inconsistencies and conflicts in technical messages and extension approaches

B. Types of Sustainable Agriculture Improvements

Type 1: Better use of available renewable natural capital

Type 2: Intensification of single sub-component of farm system

Type 3: Diversify by adding new productive natural capital and regenerative components

Type 4: Better use of non-renewable inputs and technologies

Type 5: Social and participatory processes leading to group action for making better use of natural capital

Type 6: Human capital building through training-learning programmes

Type 7: Access to Finance

Type 8: Add value by processing to reduce losses and increase returns

Type 9: Add value by direct or organised marketing of produce to consumers

	Yes/No	Narrative
Type 1	x	?? Soil and water conservation practices – especially contour grass hedges
Type 2		
Type 3	x	?? Agroforestry – dispersed systematic tree interplanting with crops (species include <i>Faidherbia albida</i> , <i>Acacia polyacantha</i> , <i>Acacia galpinii</i>) ?? Undersowing <i>Tephrosia vogelii</i> , pigeon pea (<i>Cajanus cajan</i>) or sisbarna sisun with maize for soil fertility improvement
Type 4		
Type 5	x	PRA and Participatory technology development
Type 6	x	The approach is to provide a service to the community through partnership with over 40 Government and NGOs
Type 7		
Type 8		
Type 9		

C. Key Lessons: Success, Spread and Constraints

C1 – Key Lessons Learned

?? Donors, implementing partners (farmers inclusive) must agree on desired outcomes and strategies to achieve them to avoid delays and interruptions. This agreement must be reached early and reconfirmed periodically as partners and conditions change

?? Planned outcomes must be feasible and sustainable within the time and resource constraints of donors and partners

?? Farmers and other resource users will not undertake NRM practices simply for the sake of conservation, - there must be tangible returns with direct benefits to their lives

C2 – Aspects of local/national context contributing to success

?? High farmer interest in the technologies developed

- ?? High farmer awareness of the problems of land degradation
- ?? Increased cost of inorganic fertilizers

C3 – Limitations preventing spread

- ?? Weak extension service, particularly disgruntled Govt. extension agents who are poorly paid
- ?? High bureaucracy in getting resources to the beneficiaries

C4 – Policy issues

- ?? Institutionalization of participatory extension methods within Government service units which includes training of frontline staff not done
- ?? Lack of strong policy and strategies and germplasm supply – especially tree seed
- ?? Lack of value adding technologies being promoted

C5 – Scaling-up

Needed:

- ?? Stronger partnerships with the community and the service units
- ?? Empowerment of communities with knowledge and tools, making them managers of their own plans and actions
- ?? Adding value to the technologies ie by-products processed, marketed for income and other uses

D. Contact Point for Project/Initiative

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E. Project Narrative

Malawi: Agroforestry Extension project (MAFE)

This participatory extension project work with some 20,000 farmers on 4200 hectares to encourage the adoption of various agroforestry practices within farms. These include i) undersowing of *Tephrosia vogelii*, pigeon pea and *Sesbania sesban* in maize for soil fertility improvement; ii) dispersed tree interplanting (eg *Faidherbia*, *Acacia polycantha*, *A. galpinii*); and iii) soil and water conservation practices, especially contour grass hedges.

The project uses participatory approaches to bring a wide range of government and non-government organisations together with farmers to ensure that these technologies are well-adapted to local conditions. Farmers are formed into farmer associations, which can then draw down on these external bodies for specific services. The project has trained farmer trainees, who pass on their expertise to colleagues. As a result of these social process and

new technologies, maize yields have improved from 700 kg/ha to 1500-2000 kg/ha. Farmers have become less dependent on fertilizers (many of which are too expensive for smallholders), and the project reports more households becoming both food and woodfuel secure. Some 6.98 million trees were planted in 1999 by 1155,913 households, and the project expects to see reduced pressure on natural forests as these mature.

Source: Zwile Jere, MAFE project