

SHIFT Prize – Award for Transformative Agroecological Research

MALAWI FARMER-LED AGROECOLOGY INITIATIVES



Program title Malawi Farmer-led Agroecology initiatives
Estimated duration 2000-2021
Project country Malawi
Implemented by Soils, Food and Healthy Communities (SFHC) organization, Malawi



CONTEXT

Deforestation, land degradation and soil quality are major food system challenges in Malawi, increasingly exacerbated by climate change. Another challenge is the reliance on synthetic inputs, which depend both on fossil fuel and on global distribution networks. Furthermore, food insecurity and low dietary diversity are persistent problems for the majority of smallholder households in Malawi. All those challenges include questions of justice and equity, both in research and in practice.



APPROACH

Originally designed as a participatory research project, the SFHC organization is now a farmer-led non-profit organization that aims to support rural Malawians in building sustainable, healthy, equitable, and resilient communities. Adopting a transdisciplinary approach, farmers experiment with agroecological methods, alongside participatory educational activities related to nutrition, climate change, biodiversity, gender and social equity.



IMPACT

The long-term project has provided scientific evidence that a participatory approach, combined with agroecology and attention to inequality, improves food security, nutrition and livelihoods of smallholder farming households, while increasing sustainable land management practices, improving farmer knowledge, social capital and addressing gender inequity. It furthermore inspired transformative processes in other national contexts and was discussed in various international formats.



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Soils, Food and Healthy Communities (SFHC) organization

