

Permaculture Network In Malawi

Issue #49: Community Participation

April – June 2005

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**Next Issue's Theme:
Zone Zero**

Community

Permaculture is all about community. People who use Permaculture principles and ideas in their daily lives try to learn from others, share with others, create healthier communities, and build sustainable futures for the generations that will follow us. The main ideas of Permaculture help us to see that all of our actions have an impact on the people that we live with, our environments, and the communities that we live in. A few examples of this are as follows:

- Everything works together, think co-operation not competition
- Observe, learn, and share
- No problem or solution stands alone
- Everybody lives downstream
- “Never doubt that a committed group of individuals can change the world, indeed it’s the only thing that has.” Quote by Margaret Mead
- See the whole picture

Many people think that Permaculture is just about agriculture, but they forget that it’s also about “**culture**”. We need to work together to preserve our communities and the best aspects the cultures that we’ve created. This issue will look at some of the ways that we can strengthen our communities, work with groups, and learn to recognise obstacles that may arise. The more people that are working together toward a strong, healthy, and sustainable future the more likely it is that we will achieve it! 🌍

Electronic Communities!

One way to stay in touch with your community is through electronic communication, in short known as e-mail.

If you would like to join the Permaculture Network in Malawi’s e-mail group, or get the newsletter electronically, contact Stacia Nordin at: nordin@eomw.net

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Community Organising

The role of the Community Organizer

Submitted by Kristof Nordin, original source unknown

The role of the Community Organizer is to find and train leaders and to assist the people to build or strengthen communities and organizations that will have the power to effectively act on their vision, values, and self-interests. In order to do this, the organizer uses in four central activities:

- 1.) **Active listening.** By asking questions, the organizer draws out of leaders their hopes, aspirations, fears, problems, visions, dreams, etc. S/he also finds out likes, dislikes, past experiences, what has been tried, what has worked, and what hasn't.
- 2.) **Stimulating to the point of action.** The organizer challenges people to act on their values and interests. S/he cuts through such excuses such as "it won't work here" or "we can't do that." The purpose of this is to face people with concrete choices: Are they going to act on the very things they said are important to them that came out of the active listening process?
- 3.) **Thinking through.** People may want to act but not know what to do or even know that something is possible. The fundamental task of the organizer here is to think through with the people what has to be done to allow them to address their own problems effectively and to allow them to act. The process of thinking something through is one which leads people to see that there are possibilities for action. This is also the phase where all available local resources should be considered before turning to outside assistance.
- 4.) **Training in skills.** Communities and community organizations are themselves schools for personal growth. In them, individuals have the opportunity to learn the skills necessary for effective participation and leadership. These skills can include planning, recruiting, negotiating, fundraising, mobilizing action, integrating deeply held values into daily practice, evaluation, and a myriad of other skills that are necessary for any kind of organization.

The good organizer is an educator who sees the essence of his/her work as developing in local leaders the talents and gifts that they have.

- Instead of apathy, people learn to think about how to organize to change things.
- Instead of resignation, people take the first tentative, then firm, steps towards action.
- Instead of self-blame, people begin to identify specific decision-makers with the power to do something to change conditions.
- Instead of wishing for someone else to do it for them, people begin to take the first steps to do things for themselves.

Key principle #1: Never do something for people that they can do for themselves.

Key principle #2: Have confidence in the capacity of people to determine their own destiny.

There is a Buddhist saying that goes:

**The master doesn't talk, he/she acts.
When his/her work is done,
the people say, "Amazing:
We did it all by ourselves." 🙏**

The Ambulance in the Valley

Balancing Prevention and Treatment

As the country braces itself for yet another “hungry season”, we need to ask ourselves what are we as communities doing to end this yearly problem? Every year it seems to get worse, but our responses to these problems and the solutions that we have been coming up with don’t seem to be making things any better. Are we truly addressing the root of the problems or just offering a band-aid solution to get us through to another year?

If an over-reliance on one crop is at the heart of the crisis, then will distributing food aid in the form of maize really help to end the problem? Or, would it be better to begin to focus on the over *FIVE HUNDRED* foods that could be available to us throughout the entire year in Malawi?

Permaculture shows us how planting a wide diversity of foods is good for us, for our nutrition, for the health of the soil, for the health of the environment, for our economy, for water harvesting, for dealing with the effects of droughts, floods, plant diseases, and pests and yet year after year we only plant one food.

The following poem helps us reflect on these questions and hopefully start to think about creating more sustainable solutions so that we can end hunger in our communities and get on with the task of living long and healthy lives.



The Ambulance in the Valley

‘Twas a dangerous cliff, as they freely confessed,
though to walk near its crest was so pleasant;
but over its terrible edge there had slipped
a duke and full many a peasant.

The people said something would have to be done,
but their projects did not at all tally.
Some said, “Put a fence ‘round the edge of the cliff!”
Some, “An ambulance down in the valley!”

“For the cliff is all right if you’re careful,” they said;
“And if folks ever slip and are dropping,
it isn’t the slipping that hurts them so much
as the shock down below when they’re stopping.”

So for years (we have heard) as these mishaps
occurred
quick forth would the rescuers sally,
to pick up the victims who fell from the cliff,
with the ambulance down in the valley.

Said one in his plea, “It’s a marvel to me
that you’d give so much greater attention
to repairing the results than to curing the cause;
you had much better aim at prevention.”

“For the mischief, of course, should be stopped at its
source,
come neighbours and friends, let us rally.
It is far better sense to rely on a fence
than an ambulance down in the valley.”

“He is wrong in his head,” the majority said,
“He would end all our earnest endeavour.
He’s a man who would shirk this responsible work,
but we will support it forever.”

“Aren’t we picking up all just as fast as they fall,
and giving them care liberally?
A superfluous fence is of no consequence,
if the ambulance works in the valley.”

The story looks queer as we’ve written it here,
but things oft occur that are stranger.
More humane, we assert, to succour to the hurt,
is the plan of removing the danger.

The best possible cause is to safeguard the source;
attend to things rationally.
Yes, build up the fence and let us dispense
with the ambulance down in the valley.

- Anonymous 

The Lessons of a Community Garden

by Kristof Nordin

There is a children's story that I recall hearing as I was growing up. It went something like this: One day, Mrs. Chicken decided that she wanted to bake some bread. All of her friends said that it sounded like a good idea. So the chicken said, "Who would like to come to field with me to help harvest the wheat?" All of her friends said they were too busy to take the time to help her with this, so she did it herself. When she returned from the field she asked, "Who would like to help me grind the wheat?" Again, her friends made excuses for why they couldn't help her, so the chicken ground the wheat by herself. Each time that the chicken would ask for help, her friends refused and the chicken ended up doing all the work by herself. In the end, however, when Mrs. Chicken asked, "Who would like to help me eat the bread?" Her friends all replied in unison, "We do!" What do you think Mrs. Chicken's response was? The moral of this story is that you can't expect something for nothing.

Unfortunately, this is exactly what happens with many community projects in Malawi. Our first community garden project was definitely a "lesson learned". In the beginning everybody thought that a community garden sounded like a great idea. We had the men, women, and children of the village coming to the planning meetings and asking for not only seeds and fertilizer, but also for footballs, gumboots, etc. As the planning stages began to take hold, the numbers of people that were interested began to fade away. As we erected a grass fence to protect the garden from the chickens and goats, the children began to sit on the side and watch, and many of the men found that they had other duties to attend to. By the time we were ready to make the compost piles even some of the women began to disappear. Finally we had the beds made, channels dug at the end of the borehole to direct water, and local seeds were planted (all *without* purchasing seeds, fertilizer, footballs, or gumboots). At this point, it came down to about five women who remained to do all of the watering, tend to the plants, redirect the water as needed, and maintain the health of the garden.

When it came time to harvest we invited several people from various organizations to come and see the end results of what these few women had accomplished. Surprisingly, the women's group suddenly tripled in size with everybody wearing brightly colored *ziitenje* and singing songs about the value of working together, the men also appeared and took responsibility for guiding the tour through the garden, and the children were all there as well striking "ninja" poses for the pictures. As the garden was harvested, everybody wanted some of the food for their households. As you can imagine, this caused quite a bit of bitterness between those that did all of the work and the rest of the community. This was also the end of the community garden project.

All was not lost, however. When we went back a few months later to assess the progress of the village we noticed that many individual households now had kitchen gardens close to their homes and were applying the concepts of mulching, compost, reusing gray water, and growing local foods rather than purchased hybrid seeds.

So what's the moral to this story? It's difficult to say. There is great potential for Malawi to feed itself a diverse and nutritious diet on a year-round basis.

- We have access to sunshine, water, seeds, and labour.
- We have many people who now know about natural farming methods such as composting, mulching, integrated pest management, companion planting, water harvesting, etc.
- We also have wonderfully strong communities that look out for each other when times are bad, share food during periods of shortcomings, attend funerals, raise each other's children, celebrate together, and grieve together.

But, within those same communities, we also have a strong tendency towards jealousy. Whenever somebody tries to get ahead they are often held back by other members of the village or they have their projects sabotaged. We have seen entire Permaculture projects ripped up and burned by jealous community members. This is a problem that Malawi needs to sort out on its own, without

the assistance of foreign aid, NGO's or donors. If we are to survive as a nation and move towards a sustainable future then we must start taking pride in our country, in our villages, and in ourselves. We all have a part to play in this development. We can no longer afford to sit on the sidelines watching a few motivated individuals do the work and then expect to reap the rewards. Nor can we sit on the sidelines and blame the government for all our problems.

Remember: Permaculture requires our hearts to feel the land, our senses to observe how nature works, our minds to use these observations, and our bodies to put it into practice. Just imagine what this nation would be like if every family surrounded their house with fruit and nut trees, vegetables, legumes, oilseeds, root crops, and animals. This would end the problem of food security, it would end the problem of nutrition security, and it would improve the health and welfare of every member in the community.

I am looking forward to the day when there is no longer a need for a community garden because every community **IS** a garden! It's up to each and every one of us to make that happen. 🌍

A Full Life

from an e-mail sent around the world, forwarded by my apangosi, Lillian Nordin

A boat docked in a tiny Mexican village. An American tourist complimented the Mexican fisherman on the quality of his fish and asked how long it took him to catch them.

"Not very long," answered the Mexican.

"But then, why didn't you stay out longer and catch more?" asked the American.

The Mexican explained that his small catch was sufficient to meet his needs and those of his family.

The American asked, "But what do you do with the rest of your time??"

"I sleep late, fish a little, play with my children, and take a siesta with my wife. In the evenings, I go into the village to see my friends, have a few drinks, play the guitar, and sing a few songs. I have a full life."

The American interrupted, "I have an MBA from Harvard and I can help you! You should start by fishing longer every day. You can then sell the extra fish you catch. With the extra revenue, you can buy a bigger boat."

And after that?" asked the Mexican.

With the extra money the larger boat will bring, you can buy a second one and a third one and so on until you have an entire fleet of trawlers. Instead of selling your fish to a middle man, you can then negotiate directly with the processing plants and maybe even open your own plant. You can then leave this little village and move to Mexico City, Los Angeles, or even New York City! From there you can direct your huge new enterprise."

"How long would that take?" asked the Mexican.

"Twenty, perhaps twenty-five years," replied the American.

"And after that?"

"Afterwards? Well my Friend, That's when it gets really interesting," answered the American, laughing. "When your business gets really big, you can start selling stocks and make millions!"

"Millions? Really? And after that?" said the Mexican.

"After that you'll be able to retire, live in a tiny village near the coast, sleep late, play with your children, catch a few fish, take a siesta with your wife and spend your evenings drinking and enjoying your friends."

And the moral is: Know where you're going in life... you may already be there. 🌍



Are you a Training Facilitator?

Submitted by Leo Kuwani, Permaculture Network National Coordinator

In issue #44 (July-Sept 2003) of the Permaculture Network newsletter we provided you with a list of people who are self-labeled trainers for Permaculture topics. Please send in your updated information to him (he has issue #44 but any new or updated information since then). He also includes in his letter details of his training experiences which you can follow as a format for the information that he needs from you. Thank you!

Qualification	Title	Days	Place	Date	Sponsor	Facilitator
Certificate	Permaculture and Nutrition Design	12	Makawa, Mangochi, Malawi	2001 August	June Walker	June Walker and McJustice Betha
Certificate	Integrated Land Use Design (ILUD)	12	Mandel, Harare, Zimbabwe	2002 May	Permaculture Network in Malawi	SCOPE and PELUM Fambizanai

Some Ideas for Bringing out the Best in People:

- Expect the best from the people you work with
- Take time to understand the other person's needs
- Establish high standards of excellence
- Create an environment where failure is not the end of the world
- If people are going in the direction that you want to go, join them!
- Encourage success
- Recognize and applaud achievements, no matter how small
- Use positive reinforcement
- Keep your own motivation and energy high

Network Update:

The Constitution is under an internal review and will be distributed to Network members in a future issue of the newsletter.



Project Highlight: Developing a Model for Low-Input Crop and Diet Diversification

by Stacia Nordin, RD

I am privileged to be a part of a very exciting project with World Food Programme Malawi. In this article, I will just highlight some of the main points for you. I will include some of the process here, since this newsletter is about Community Participation. We definitely achieved a high level of participation – without bribes (allowances!).

Why did WFP/Malawi want to develop and test this model? They have been working with partners to encourage crop diversity, but were finding that the projects needed a lot of continuous outside input and were not sustainable. WFP works with the most vulnerable households in Malawi, often those who are affected by HIV, and definitely those with very little income, labour and land. The projects that WFP were using did not help people eat better or have better food security. They want a model that will impact people's food and nutrition security and their overall livelihoods, without using outside inputs. They plan to use the Model in all their programmes and districts when it is finalized.

The design for this project started last year, and I picked it up in April to finish the planning. The implementation began in June 2005 this year. The goal of the project is to develop and test a model to improve crop and diet diversification without any outside inputs. The concepts are based on Permaculture. In a mere 4 months from June to September we were able to set up over 20 model sites to test the ideas.

The results have been incredible! I am now compiling the results into a manual that will be distributed to about 300 stakeholders for review. In November a selection of stakeholders will meet to provide feedback and finalize the ideas into a Model to follow.

Networking and Site Selection: To develop this Model, I contacted everyone in Malawi that I could think of that works with this topic. There is no need to “reinvent the wheel” and I wanted to get as much experience into the Model as possible. The national and district level partners chose 4 districts to develop and test the model, based on a set of criteria that included climate, lifestyles, cultures, etc. – we wanted a model that had basic concepts that work in any setting. The districts are Mangochi, Mulanje, Kasungu and Nkhata Bay. Within those districts, we worked with partners to select a variety of sites to develop and test the model – again we wanted to show that they ideas work anywhere! Included are schools, churches, hospitals, community based groups, model agricultural villages, etc.

Selecting Participants: To develop the model, criteria were again used to select the 75 participants. These participants all took part because they are dedicated to the idea of the model and see how it will help them and help Malawi. No one was paid to participate (no allowances or other bribes!) and everyone had to agree to take part fully, to take part in a low-input workshop that included a menu of local foods, comfortable but reasonably priced accommodation, and lots of discussions, field trips, group work and energy!

The Work of Developing and Testing: The 75 participants worked in teams in each district, about 18 per district. The teams include the Ministries of Health, Gender, Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Local Government; NGOs; CBOs; Churches; Networks (the Permaculture Network took part), and individuals. We started with low input workshops in each district which covered the basic issues, reviewed all materials and projects available, including a number of field visits, and decided on the model’s concepts: technical and implementation approaches. After the workshop, the teams worked together in the 5 model sites for that district. One of my jobs was to pull together each of the district’s ideas to keep us as one big team.

During the two months following the workshops I returned to each district 2 times to follow up with each model site and to collect feedback on the Model concepts. Not only did we work with the 75 participants, we also worked with hundreds of other people who were at the model implementation sites. I haven’t counted yet, but I am guessing that all together we have about 4,000 people from more than 70 organizations that are testing the ideas.

Results of the testing: The results of the Model have been incredible. One of the key concepts of the model is to help people understand so they can make their own decisions to improve food and nutrition security. People who participated understand so well that they’ve come up with their own creative designs better than I’ve seen in technical books! Model sites that already had ‘typical’ high-input gardens have been able to reduce their work by over half, reduce their watering by of half and double and triple their yields. Again, these figures are still being compiled, but I was astounded at how much progress the sites made in 2 months. Can you believe that many sites even reduced their sweeping area by 25-50 percent, mulching increased to hold water and soil, previous ‘waste’ is now being used creatively in designs to either improve soil or to make creative use of trash. Water is no longer wasted, every drop is used. The plants and animals are healthier. The people eating the plants and animals are happier. Some people are even richer! And most excitedly for me, people are improving diets through eating LESS staple foods and instead eating MORE of the other food groups.

A Manual: Now that we’ve tested the Model’s concepts to improve food and nutrition security, we are collecting feedback on the list of model concepts (see abbreviated list below). I am working toward putting all the Model’s concepts into a Manual that will go out to all food and nutrition security stakeholders for review in mid-October. In mid-November representatives will be asked to attend a meeting to provide feedback and agree on the Model, at the end of the meeting, the directors of organizations will be asked to come to a presentation of the model. The model will be used in all WFP programmes and I will recommend that it be made available to anyone who wants a copy, funding permitting. I’m using a low-input format that is easy to reproduce to aid in sharing. I hope to share more information with you on this soon!

Summary of the Low Input Crop and Diet Diversification's Model Concepts

Comments to: Stacia Nordin, RD, nordin@eomw.net 09-333-073, 01-707-213

This is a summary of the Model's Key Concepts as described in the article above. The ideas will be expanded, explained simply and comprehensively, and compiled into a Manual which will be finalized in November.

In short, this list is a summary of **what we found to work for improving food and nutrition security**:

Model's Basic Principles for Implementation:

- Aim for increasing understanding (of both teacher and participants!)
- Help people choose method(s) from a range of ideas (or create their own!)
- Encourage Creativity and use it yourself! Help people think and use common sense.
- Focus on Local Resources
- Focus on lowest input – use more brain power and less muscle power!
- Consider local cultures
- Make connections with different components – Integrate whenever possible.
- Be flexible and adapt
- Look to nature for lessons, understanding, ideas
- Focus on Solutions not Problems
- Implementation Issues to Integrate throughout: *OVCs, Widows, Gender messages; Hygiene, Sanitation messages; Effect of Disease on the community, HIV/AIDS; Mobilizing methods; Effective Communication; Education in Schools & University; Integration into permanent, Local systems*

Improved Low-Input Training / Teaching / Facilitating through:

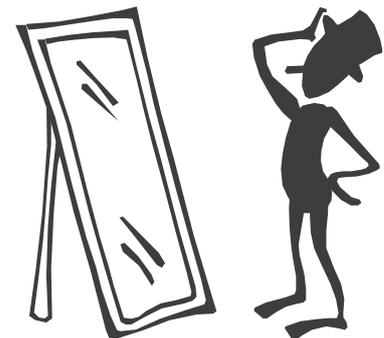
- NOT paying people to attend, allowances should NOT be an incentive, only content
- Foods and activities should send a message of food and nutrition security
- Clear communication about low-input training principles
- Explanations using locally understood languages
- Interactive: Discussions, small groups, sharing information
- Posters, pictures, handouts, books – simple, mostly pictures
- Tours, field trips, walks – local first! Farmer Field School-type activities
- Demonstrations, displays
- Asking, probing, observing, listening

Role Modelling – Start with Me!

- In own life
- In work environment

Increasing Skills: Aim for Creativity

- Improved Assessments of ALL Cropping and Diet Resources
- Improved DESIGNING skills: Putting it all together
- Trying, practicing, adapting and changing methods for continual improvement
- Follow up visits for support, mentoring, advising and two-way learning
- Advanced lessons for those understanding and applying new skills
- Increase number of Trainers and Role Models



That looks like a nice target audience!

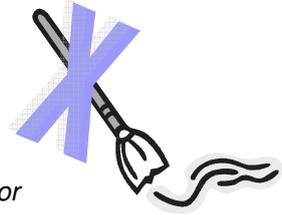
1. Diet Diversity Concepts:

- Understand Basic Nutrition Issues:** *Understand Digestion; 6 groups of nutrients; Foods as medicine – both prevention and treatment*
- Revive Local Food Resources:** *Thorough Resource Assessments; Increase awareness of Malawian Foods; Encourage pride in Malawian resources; Improve local Seed Availability - collections, multiply seeds, share seeds, food demonstrations*
- Improve meal planning:** *Availability and access of the 6 food groups - work with MoA to come up with new recommendations on how much food to save; Making and Managing Money – Creative, quality, indigenous products and marketing; Menu Planning with 6 Food Groups – Recipes, Avoid wasting foods; **Meetings and workshops – be a model for meals and snacks!***

- ☑ **Utilization, processing, preparation:** *Creative recipes, demonstrations - based on 6 food groups cooked and raw; Fuel, time efficiency – Improved stoves, briquettes, food warmers, eat more clean, raw foods; Preserve Nutrients; Food & water safety - Water purification, prevent water contamination (chemicals, hormones)*
- ☑ **Preservation & storage:** *Store food in the environment - space harvest throughout year with creative crop diversification; Income generating food products - Storage*

2. Soil Health Concepts:

- ☑ **Cover the Soil:** *Mulching - Use dry organic matter; Interplant Creeping plants - pumpkins, sweet potato, etc.; Reduce sweeping the dirt - eliminate all unnecessary sweeping; Eliminate burning*
- ☑ **Soil conservation:** *Reduce tilling – use diggers (trees, animals, tubers) all at different depths; Clear land carefully – cut out and trim, slash around useful items, don't 'weed'; Consider landscape slope – permanent contours or terraces using rocks, etc.; Long lasting roots – use Perennials*
- ☑ **Fertility and Structure:** *Understand Nature cycle, Soil fertility and structure – eg, trash vs. compost; Organic production – discourage use of chemicals and explain why; Composting Simply - mixed mulching, using animals to mix compost, etc.; Animal Manure – using all manures, including human; Legume Inter-planting - legume plants / agro-forestry species; Assess Soil Type - sand, clay, dry, wet for putting crops appropriate to area*



3. Water Management Concepts:

- ☑ **Heal the soil:** *Helps water to sink into the earth instead of eroding the earth*
- ☑ **Design planting stations for site:** *Raised, Sunken, Level*
- ☑ **Select appropriate seeds / animals:** *For dry / wet situations*
- ☑ **Irrigation management:** *Understand basic Water Cycle - how water flows, spreads, sinks and how plants & animals use it; Re-use all water - grey water from wells, washing, under drying racks/lines, bath, etc.; Water Correctly - water the roots, avoid over and under watering; Use method correct to site and management resources – gravity/pump, drip irrigation with cans/bottles/clay pots; Irrigate Foods, Not Grass! – reduce water use, allow dry grass, edible landscaping; Prevent salt water – understanding, preventing and fixing salty boreholes, irrigation and evaporation saline.*
- ☑ **Rain Water Management:** *Stop / Slow – harvest and use all water roofs, roads, ngalande, drums, pits, check dams, ponds, diversions; Sink - Encourage natural Filtration; Spread - across an area, not too much in one place; Shade - Cover all soil with mulch, plant spacing, creeping plants, canopy cover*



4. Crop & Animals Health Concepts:

- ☑ **Start using soil health and water concepts for plants, diet diversity for animals:** *Well-fed plants and animals are generally healthier than poorly fed plants and animals.*
- ☑ **Selecting Appropriate Crops (seeds / animals):** *Complete Resource Assessment - For all local crops: Trees, Forests, Parks; Choose the right item for the right place - Dry, Wet, Soil type, Weather, Lifestyle, Pests, etc.; Use Perennials and things that Self-seed; Indigenous Plants & Wild Animals - are usually better adapted to conditions; Simple Nurseries - Avoid Nurseries! Use truncheons, suckers, broadcasting, direct planting, keeping eyes open for volunteer crops on compost or in mulch; Saving Seeds - for self, sharing or sale*
- ☑ **Design – put the right things in the right place:** *Interplant with correct spacing and Rotate - that help each other using Guild “Chigwirizano” concepts: food, feed soil, diggers, cover soil, climbers, supporters, protectors; No Monocropping; Save Labour & space - use live fences, structures, creativity in stacking plants, everything works in at least 2 ways; Consider Lifestyle, Habits, daily tasks; Consider Weather directions - North/South/East/West, Wind, Sun/shade, Rain; Aim for harvest all year round – spreads out work, improves annual food supply*
- ☑ **Insect / Disease Prevention:** *Understand Natural cycles - Some insect damage is natural; Local Repellent Recipes - May need local recipe repellents until area is healthy; Smelly / Flowery plants - often includes medicinal herbs); Encourage predators - Frogs, lady bugs, helpful insects; Assess reasons for high damage - If there is a lot of damage, review all concepts & assess*
- ☑ **Animal management:** *Prevent Monkeys, Goats, etc. damage - thorns, hot peppers, goat manure, community management; Prevent Human damage - thorns, magical plants, choose local plants, community policing* 🌍



Letters to the Editors:

Mr. MK Mutefya* from Chitipa writes:

My garden is now commercial and called 'Mulindima'. I now get four harvests per year of maize, ie, I harvested March; planted on 20th May. I sold May to June greens. I never stop planting after February. To date I am delivering to Chitipa Hospital green maize. My garden now is competing the equatorial forests in greenery. The garden here is a spring of new learning and schools around bring in pupils and students to learn. I have ten fish ponds teeming with chambo. Talk of pawpaws, bananas, onion, tomato to name but a few, feature in the plots. I use water harvesting to the best of my ability. Expect some photos next mail. (*I hope I spelled this right, it was hard to read)



A change, A pure Change, A Success Change After 2 years

By Leo Kuwani, National Coordinator

Traveling, seeing and observation are some of the key elements of learning and appreciating nature – the earth our mother if one is to follow developmental participation. It was in August 2002 when I held a 12-day training of trainers workshop at Moyo Wathu Centre Chiringa in Phalombe. A number of people attended such as Group Village Headman Yuwa, Primary Education Advisor Mr. Somanje Mbewe, and the Moyo Wathu Programme Coordinator Mr Eric Manjolo.



On 5 December 2004 I visited Eric Manjolo at his home in Ulolo Village, TA Kaduya, Phalombe District where he was practicing Permaculture. (*Unfortunately, Eric passed away earlier this year, see death announcement below*). After a two-year practicing period in Permaculture, Mr. Manjolo improved his land and life tremendously. It was difficult to recognize his land since our last visit with June Walker in October 2002 when we were on the Great Trek (see issue #42, Jan 03 for details). There was a lot happening at this place. Amongst the notable ones are:

- There is companion planting with very dark green maize above my head grown on organic farming with less input or non at all and growing other plants without artificial fertilizers and pesticides, but instead with natural manures and integrated pest management.
- The land had various designs fed with compost to protect and enrich the soil. Mulching was used to witness dig less mulch more.
- There are sugar canes and various kinds of fruits such as bananas, oranges, lemons, pawpaws, apples, guavas, peaches, and granadillas, just to name a few!
- There is integration of farming such as cattle, goats, pigs and poultry.
- The forest has established so that there are 5 pots of bees – apiary is being practiced!
- Lemon grass is planted and other herbal plants.

I was very excited, and as National Coordinator, I could not hesitate to call June Walker, Patron of the Permaculture Network in Malawi and have Eric talk with her. It was very good indeed! This was a very good day in my experience of seeing the outcomes of the trainings. If you have or need something related to training, please let me know! 🌍

Death Announcement for Mr. Eric Manjolo

submitted by Leo Kuwani

Permaculturists, health and NGO friend have lost an activist and Practitioner Mr. Eric Manjolo some months ago. Mr. Manjolo was a very hard working person and a man of deeds. He was an Laboratory Technician at Holy Family and Chiringa Hospitals before his retirement. He passed away while working at Moyo Wathu Chiringa NGO in Phalombe. Mr. Manjolo will be missed by all members of different walks in Life.

May his soul rest in peace. (Eric R.I.P.)

Resources on Community Participation



- **YOU!** – Participation starts with you! Once you are participating in the community, others may take your lead just by your example. If they don't just follow, encourage them to join in, explaining why. If you don't know where to participate, ask your extension worker or non-governmental organization what groups there are for you to join. I'll include a few ideas below on Networks, Associations and Groups in Malawi.
- **WHY?** Being part of a group is more than just helping to improve your community (local, national or global). It is also part of gaining EXPERIENCE in working with people, planning, assessing, organizing, evaluating and managing – all great skills to include as part of your CV! Many people in Malawi approach me for a job, saying they are unable to get the experience they need to get a job, my reply? Join a Group!

Groups:

- **Religious Groups, Youth Groups, AIDS committees, School Groups, Wildlife Clubs, Environmental Groups** – an endless list in Malawi! Really examine what your group is doing and integrate some sustainable solutions that relate to your group's work. Permaculture covers EVERY topic there is.

Networks:

- **Permaculture Network in Malawi** – I hope you are already a part of this group! We need people to participate by writing in the newsletter, suggesting local activities, getting local Permaculture Groups going in your area, and participating in the committee. The newsletter often looks like the Kristof, Stacia and Leo Newsletter! Come on and write something about what you are doing!
- **Civil Society Agricultural Network (CISANET)** – This network has gained a lot of credibility over the past year and is regularly invited by Government Ministries to provide input on policy and programme direction. Contact: Vic Mhoni at: CISANET, PO Box 203, cisanet@globemw.net
- **Participatory Land Use Management (PELUM)** – Malawi just joined PELUM this year! PELUM is a civil society network in east, central and southern Africa. They aim to see these communities become self-organized to make choices towards and improved quality of life that is socially, economically and ecologically sustainable. The Network was unable to attend the launching, but we did write to let them know we are interested in the network. Co-ordination Unit for the Rehabilitation of the Environment is the host for PELUM in Malawi, so contact CURE at: Box 2916, Blantyre. 01-645-757 or cure@malawi.net
- **Network of Organizations for Vulnerable & Orphaned Children (NOVOC)** – I believe that this includes almost a hundred organizations working with OVCs. They can be reached through SOS Children's Village Director at Box 2359, LL or 01-756-667 or 01-724-195.
- **Electronic Networks:** Are endless, seriously! I'm on a number of these 'listserves' where we all discuss issues on food and nutrition security, the environment, etc. There are listserves for all topics, in fact I manage a few myself. Another networking method is a 'web blog', which is a generally one person with something to say and others make comments along the way. I'm not too up on blogs! If you are an electronic person like myself, contact me and I'll link you up with some of my favourites. nordin@eomw.net



Associations:

- **Nutrition Society of Malawi** – A group of over 100 nutritionists who are there to advocate for you! If you have an issue on Nutrition, I am a member and can post a message to the group. Contact Stacia at: nordin@eomw.net
- **National Smallholder Farmers Association of Malawi (NASFAM)** – they have offices all over Malawi. The contact for the head office is: Box 30176, Lilongwe. 01-775-866 or nasfam@nasfam.org
- There are many Professional Associations in Malawi, such as for Nurses, Economics, Farmers – if one doesn't exist for your Profession, start one!



**Permaculture Network in Malawi
Quarterly Newsletter**

Newsletter Editors, Kristof & Stacia Nordin
Post Dot Net X-124 Crossroads,
Lilongwe, Malawi

*“See the world through the eyes of
Permaculture”*

Place Stamps Here

To:

Chikuni chimodzi sichipsetsa mphika
(One piece of firewood is not enough for cooking)

Tiyeni, Join the Permaculture Network!

- **Benefits** include quarterly newsletters with advice on Permaculture, improving nutrition, local food & medicinal plants, resources, creative ideas, and contacts of people in Malawi who are also trying to live a sustainable life.
- **Fees** are 400 mk for the calendar year. Paying more sponsors groups who can't afford the fees. Paying less is also an option for those who write and explain how they are using Permaculture in their life.
- **Memberships** are for the calendar year. If your mailing label includes **“Payment Due!”** *please* send your membership fee for the years written on your label. If you can't afford the fees, write us explaining why you are unable to pay, why you want the newsletter, and what you are trying with Permaculture.
- **Send payment** in the form of a Malawi Kwacha check or postal order **addressed to Stacia Nordin**, or Malawian postal stamps. Include your name, address, all contact details, profession & specific permaculture interests and send to: Permaculture Network in Malawi Newsletter Editors: Stacia & Kristof Nordin, PO Box X-124 Post Dot Net Crossroads, Lilongwe, Malawi

Submissions to the Newsletter:

Each Permaculture Network Newsletter has the sections: Permaculture Highlight, Resources & Member News. The other articles are based on a theme that is always posted in the previous issue so that you can prepare articles along the theme. ***We welcome submissions*** and would love to see articles from new people! Send your submissions to: Permaculture Network in Malawi Newsletter Editors, Stacia & Kristof Nordin, Post Dot Net X-124 Crossroads, Lilongwe. Or via e-mail at: nordin@eomw.net

Next Issue: Zone Zero