



**PERMACULTURE  
PARADISE INSTITUTE**

JAN-DEC 2022  
**Newsletter**



# **STORIES AND UPDATES**

# Agro-ecology Training

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
Jan 3, 2022



The training was conducted from the 20th through the 24th of December 2021 at Permaculture Paradise Institute in Mchinji District, a total of 44 participants from Zomba, Machinga and Chikwawa under CADECOM, CICODE and Government participated. The training was intensive practical based with 70 % practical's and 30 % theory.

The training covered topics which will help provide farmers with solutions to address global environmental and social issues affecting communities where the implementing partner's and government officers work, but also applicable throughout the world and across a variety of climate zones, however practical design implementation was emphasized and specific to the sub-tropical climate of Malawi. The goal of the course was to achieve a basic working understanding of ecological-based planning, site design, and management.

## The training covered the following topics

- Agro-ecology and the planetary food, energy, economic and social crises a look at global and local challenges
- Agro-ecology meaning and Definition
- Key Principles of Agro-ecology
- Agro-ecology Practical application
- Ecological Processes and Principles
- Resources in agro-ecology
- Resource scavenger hunt
- Agro-ecology Site analysis



## Cont...

- Designs for sustainable agro-ecology
- Efficient energy agro-ecological zones 1,2,3,4, 5
- Guilds in agro-ecology
- Agro-ecological Designs for sustainable water management
- Soil ecology and management
- Animal integration in agro ecology
- Integrated pest management in agro-ecology
- Propagation

## Day 1

The first day focused on the Introduction to Agro-ecology meaning and definition the different between agro-ecology and other practices, key principles in agro-ecology, ecological foundations processes and ecological principles. Practical application of agro-ecology Permaculture Paradise model farms from house hold level urban demonstration to the village level rural demonstration, quarter acre model for people with limited space, farm level in the dry land, farm level in the wetland, small and large scale as well as Observation of Resources, Global and Local Issue looking at global issues (challenges) such as: Peak Oil, Population pressures, economics, and pollution and how the global perspective is linked to local challenges: malnutrition, poverty, resource utilization, agriculture, and education.



## Day 2

Day two emphasized on observation mapping and design as well as efficient energy zone planning.

Site analysis focusing on the Importance of Site Analysis in preparing for Designing (knowing what you have) Observation of Elements: Sensory: hear, feel, see, touch, taste

Specific: Sensory: what we hear, smell, taste, feel, see Climate: temps, rainfall patterns, seasons Microclimates: fluctuations within a climate, small variations (water features, termite mounds, geological features) Elements: available resources, existing structures, utilities, adjacent influences, history of site, restrictions, boundaries, slope Soil: type, structure, organic resources, markets, constraints Water: water sources, drainage, flow, erosion, catchment, harvesting, standing water, hygiene Plants: existing vegetation, trees, gardens, landscaping, foods, medicines, building supplies, fuel, ornamentals, protectors Animals: existing animals, structures, pathways, habitat, management issues Sector Influences: sun, shade, wind, fire, animals, people, smells Human/Personal "stakeholder": work areas, recreation, access, driveways, pathways, long term plans, needs, wants, community Sectors: Directions (aspect), sun, wind, rain, storms, fire

The participants were split into groups to practice site situational analysis to understand the land before design application.

After the site analysis participants were tasked to draw individual maps of their sites as a visual representation and depiction of existing features as a starting point in designing for an agro ecological system. What is a Map?—what's there. What is a Design?—what you want to be there. Elements and characteristics of a good map (orientation, scale, depiction of elements, view, existing structures, etc.)

The meaning and definition of a Map as well as the difference between a map and design was explained to give the training participant a starting point in designing for sustainable and functional ecosystems.

Efficient energy zone planning: In the afternoon zones were introduced as a way of helping the designer think and design for the best use of the land and the energy going into the land.

Zone One (high energy, high utilization, irrigation, and daily functions) Zone Two (high energy, less irrigation, more perennials, daily/weekly functions, small animal management) Zone Three (rain fed annual and perennial, grains and staples) Zone Four (woodlot management, animal grazing, low maintenance) Zone Three Transition

Global shift from industrial/mono-cropping to diverse sustainability Diversifying agriculture Zone 5 "Forest Systems" Description of Zone 5 and its importance "What is a forest?" looking at relationships and natural functions



## Day 3

Day three focused on designs for sustainable water and soil management looking at the Water cycle & water tables well as Human impact on both in Malawi and globally. Water management main principles Water Walk Observation, Observation of water processes Drainage and destination Estimating water catchment and harvesting needs ( $1\text{mm} \times 1\text{m}^2 = 1\text{ liter}$ ) The participants were split into four groups to practice on how to manage and use water at a household, on drive ways and ways as well as at a farm level. Since agro ecology is site specific each group was supposed to conduct a situational analysis of their land and propose management techniques specific to their land which they were given to work on. This served as a lesson that every agro-ecological approach when managing systems so that they must be specific to addressing specific issues, hence not all techniques are applicable everywhere.



On soil ecology and management principles participants were introduced to how soil work, how soil quantity and quality is produced ecologically, nature cycle, human impact and solution oriented discussions.



The participants were then split into four groups and were given different gardens to conduct real time situational analysis and propose the best technique to manage the soils within the specified micro spaces given. Each groups applied the techniques practically based on their observation.



Later participants were tasked to draw proposed designs to the maps which they drew of their farms.



## Day 5

Day five focused on ecological pest management simple and easy ways to propagate plants animal integration and presentations of their designs



### ***Learning about animal integration***

The training went well with no major challenges

It was recommended that all the trainings should be conducted at Permaculture Paradise Institute since it gives more practical experience to the participants as the participants are able to translate things on their own and relate to their situations.



# Food Security with sustainable Development

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
Jan 25, 2022



During the first half of January of 2022 we were in Madisi, Dowa District north of Lilongwe City where we gave startup investment to the local farmers in the form of domestic animals that included ducks and chickens; the farmers we reached out were 200 in total. This was done under the food security project which is being funded by Vocation Bible Camp (VBC). Each farmer got a pair of a chickens and ducks.

The main objective of this project is empower farmers to be able to produce free fertilizer every year produced through these animals which is free from chemicals as compared to chemical based fertilizer which can only be used once and also having a negative implications on both humans and the environment which is contrary to carbon Zero policy by the UN. As the price of fertilizer gets high each year, these farmers will be getting more animals over time. This will also help address hunger and Malnutrition as well as poverty. The animals will be used to help prepare their gardens help break pest and diseases cycles when scavenging on feed.



We give farmers the right tools and resources, specific to their needs; tools which are not just ecological acceptable but sustainable. This will enable farmers to create resilient systems which will help address their challenges even when the project phases out.

It is our greatest wish therefore to reach more farmers in our catchment area but with limited resources we cannot manage to reach as many people but with your support we can. If you wish to partner with us on this noble project please reach out to us, we are always looking for partners to work with us to take this work to as many beneficiaries as possible.



# Thriving Homestead Gardens in Mchinji: Cultivating Abundance Through Permaculture

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
April 7, 2022



In the heart of Mchinji district, a captivating transformation has taken place within just three short months. Here, we find the faces of our determined farmers who embarked on their very first Permaculture journey in January 2022. These remarkable home gardens have sprung to life through organic practices, wrapped lovingly around their homesteads. The result? A vibrant tapestry of diverse crops within arm's reach, providing families with a cornucopia of homegrown foods, sourced both from around their houses and the seasonal farms.

This unfolding narrative in Mchinji district is a testament to the magic of sustainable agriculture and the power of Permaculture. It's a story of tenacity, where local farmers have harnessed the wisdom of the land and nature to yield an abundance of nourishment. In the span of just a few months, they've redefined the landscape, not only beautifying it with lush greenery but also ensuring access to a wide variety of fresh produce. It's a transformation that holds a promise of better nutrition, reduced dependency, and a brighter, more sustainable future for these farming communities.





# Blossoming Dreams in Madisi: An Oasis of Hope and Transformation

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
April 25, 2022



In April 2021, we embarked on a remarkable journey in Madisi, extending a hand to local farmers by gifting them papaya, passion fruit seedlings, and banana suckers to sow the seeds of a food forest. A year later, in April 2022, the fruits of our labor are ripening simultaneously, heralding an incredible transformation. Bananas, strategically planted behind shower rooms, now thrive on the nourishing greywater, while passion fruit vines form enchanting gazebos around homesteads, offering families a tranquil haven for leisure and therapy.

Today, our hearts swell with pride as we unveil the incredible achievements of our efforts. Not only has this initiative alleviated the nagging mosquito issue by eliminating stagnant water sources, but it has also diversified the farmers' diets, extending beyond the monotonous maize staple. Most importantly, our primary objective, to combat hunger, malnutrition, and poverty, is being realized. We're nurturing local, passionate leaders who are uniting to confront these challenges head-on, using their innate

resources and innovative solutions. Together, they are redefining the Madisi landscape and scripting a new narrative of hope, resilience, and community strength.

"Blossoming Dreams in Madisi: An Oasis of Hope and Transformation" is a story of perseverance, sustainability, and empowerment. It reflects how a simple act of generosity can catalyze profound change in a community. Our journey in Madisi is a testament to the potential of local leaders, united in a common cause, using indigenous wisdom and resources to overcome adversity. It's a beacon of inspiration for regions facing similar hardships, offering a blueprint for positive change and resilience in the face of adversity.





# Thriving Pigeon Peas at the Permaculture Demonstration Farm in Madisi

Written by Biswick Luwayo

July 19, 2022



In the heart of Madisi, our Permaculture Demonstration Farm has become a testament to the remarkable potential of pigeon peas. While commonly associated with the southern region of Malawi, this resilient crop has defied expectations and is flourishing in our central locale. Not only is it a beacon of drought resistance and a champion nitrogen fixer, but its edible beans and medicinal leaves offer sustenance and healing. Even more, as the years pass, the pigeon pea plant transforms into valuable firewood.

Here, we challenge the notion that certain crops are limited by geography, showcasing the incredible adaptability and multifaceted benefits of pigeon peas.



# Cohort 4 Mchinji Training highlights

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
Sep 15, 2022



Cohort number 4 which had 65 farmers from around Mchinji district just finished their permaculture training at the paradise, it was a marathon of 5 days and the farmers trained will now become lead farmers for other new farmers. The training run from the 29th August to the 2nd Sep 2022. We are expecting to produce 650 more farmers from this group. We are very excited to have finished this training as scheduled. Below are the highlights of the journey from day one to day five of the training.

Day 1 of the 5-day Permaculture Training where 65 new farmers are being trained to establish train other farmers and establish more food forests in the Mchinji district. We are expanding the food forest project and the goal is to have 2500 farmers establish 2500 food forests by January 2023. The long-term goal is to help farmers establish 100,000 food forests within 5



**Brief introduction of PPI to the trainees | Day 1**



**Trainees doing theory work, day 1**



## Cont...

Day 2 of the training was intensive practical based on soil science and management, 65 lead farmers who are participating said this is their first time to learn something which makes much more sense in addressing the challenges they thought could not be addressed.



***Trainees learning soil science  
| Day 2***



***Trainees learning how to make  
compost to treat their soil | Day 2***

Day 3 training update where 65 lead farmers are participating. Today we focused on designs for sustainable water conservation. Knowing that we have rain once a year, we taught our farmers modern and sustainable ways to conserve water to irrigate and keep the soil moist for a long time. this would have a very good impact on production because the plants will not go long periods without water in return increasing the chances of harvesting more even with fewer spots of rain.



***A trainee learning a water  
conservation skill from a PPI trainer***



***Trainees applying some of the skills  
learned***



## Cont...

### Day 4 of the training Tree Propagation

Nursery establishment and management practices. Today we focused on Tree propagation and nursery establishment. One of the key elements of our training is to teach our trainees how to conserve land and water. And these are impossible without trees that is why we teach our farmers and encourage them to establish their nursery where they can plant their trees for sustainable purposes.



***Trainees preparing nursery tubes***

### Day 5

■ Organic vegetable production

■ Tree out planting practicals

■ Integrated pest management theory

■ Integrated pest management practicals



***Tree planting practicals***



***Tree planting practicals***



# Nurturing and Empowering Agriculture in Mchinji

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
Oct 2, 2022



## Equipping Field Technicians and New Lead Farmers for Sustainable Progress

In the heart of Mchinji district, a transformative wave is sweeping through the agricultural landscape. Today, our dedicated field technicians received motorbikes and smartphones, enhancing their efficiency and connectivity as they support our 2,500 farmers. Meanwhile, we welcomed a fresh cohort of lead farmers with wheelbarrows and shovels, symbolizing their commitment to sustainable farming.





# First Half of November 2022 Highlights

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
Nov 10, 2022



## The resiliency of permaculture

Permaculture is resilience and sovereignty in a dry but productive environment. As most farmers await the rainy season, this is the driest month of the year; fields are bare and dormant, trees have been cut and grasses slashed and burned, and maize harvested from the previous season is nearing completion. This is when we get all of these fruits with no extra effort. We have over 300 food plants, 90% of which we did not grow. This is the power of regenerative systems, practical agroecology, contextualized agroforestry





## Academic visit By LUANA

On 5th November permaculture had over 90 students from Lilongwe Universities of Agriculture and Natural resources faculty of extension. These students were interested to know more about Permaculture practices, how permaculture engages with its farmers, and their extension model to achieve a higher farmer adoption rate. Lastly, the students were led to meet permaculture farmers where they learned more about the tree nurseries and food forests established in the communities.



## Kasungu Trainings

Permaculture conducts a vital development project at Nguwe community in Kasungu and the training will be held for 5 days from 7th to 11th November this week. On the first day, 15 lead farmers participated and the main objective was to assist the farmers in redesigning their current commercial garden so that it becomes more resilient and productive. And at the same time, permaculture was responsible for aiding farmers in the establishment of integrated homestead permaculture systems. This was a journey working towards to the improvement of farmers and a contribution to a more sustainable way for agriculture, water management, practical soil science and management principles. Be on the lookout for updates





# Week 3 of November, Updates from the Paradise

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
Nov 18, 2022



## Permacultures' New development plan along M12 road Lilongwe – Chipata Zambia

Lately, permaculture is working on constructing Malawi's leading organic Farmers Market, Cafe, Permaculture and agroforestry training center, Kids recreation center, public events space, Leisure and workspace, Gym, for our farmers, clients, children, and people of all ages. This will give our farmers a fantastic opportunity to sell their organic raw and processed foods and generate income to support their families. Our customers will have access to fresh organic foods from their main PPI Center, the new farm along the M1 road from Lilongwe to Chipata Zambia, and free WI-FI for all. In addition to this, events such as weddings, birthday parties, and monthly farmers market days will be held here. Stay tuned for more information.





## Consultancy project at Chichere farm in Mchinji

Permaculture is genuinely flattered to be part of a big group that will partake in the process of redesigning a 180-hectare at Chichere farm in Mchinji. Be on the lookout for more updates as the plan is being executed



## Nguwe village Trainings

After permaculture trained the farmers for an intensive week, they finally conclude on efficient energy zone planning practicals, which led to all 15 lead farmers from Nguwe village graduating from their training sessions.





# Last week of November 2022 run-down

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
Dec 1, 2022



## VISITATION FROM CARD

On 24th November 2022, permaculture had visitors from CARD, they specifically came to learn practical agroecological Malawi examples. They were extremely amazed by the way permaculture gardens are lush and green yet it is just the beginning of the rainy season in Malawi. Permacultures' food forest is not only abundant but also resilient





## NEW TREE NURSERIES

On 28th November 2022, new tree nurseries were established by farmers in the southern region of Malawi from Chisi Island, Jali, and Thodwe in Zomba who just got their Permaculture training. The goal is to plant at least 400,000 trees in Zomba alone this growing season. Be on the lookout for more updates.



## Agriculture Vs Permaculture

These photos were taken in the same month same year. Who is ready to join us as we envision planting 100,000 food forests by 2025?

The first photo results from poor policies and decisions which seem to enslave most conventional farmers. The following PICTURES are from permaculture's cultivated Paradise, a food forest with over 300 food plants with 90 % wild plants which they did not plant.

In the first photo, the soil is not covered, no crops are left after harvesting season, no diversity, and no succession. This is what the world thinks will help address hunger, malnutrition, poverty, climate change, and many challenges only if it's done at a larger scale with lots of chemicals and synthetic fertilizers.





## Cont...

The following photos are a great example of a practical productive food forest with soils well covered and protected, more diversity, more functions, production, more harmony and resilience, and easy to manage with very minimal inputs required



## EDUCATION VISIT

On The 30th of Nov permaculture had 70 form four students from Bua secondary school came to learn practical Permaculture on sustainable agriculture, organic farming, biology, soil, plants and animal science, biogas systems, native plants and functions, waste management, organic architecture as they prepare for their examinations.

Permaculture as a design science provides practical examples for students as it presents formal education which is theory-based. Its training institute does not only provide solutions to teachers who fail to explain complex topics, but it also provides an opportunity for students to practically try some things instead of copying notes of the lessons which they do not know.

The students were exposed to both urban, pre-urban, rural, dry land, and wetland permaculture demonstrations, and herbal teas were prepared so that the students could feel the taste of paradise.





# first Week of December

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
Dec 9, 2022



## wetland permaculture

Permaculture farmers in Mchinji are now able to extend growing and harvesting seasons by application of Permaculture principles into their wetlands which used to be spared for grazing animals. Agroforestry trees have been planted and are still small, sugarcane and bananas have been incorporated as well, the trees will help drop biomass, fix nitrogen as well as create conducive microclimates for soil biology. Wetland Permaculture agroforestry productive systems is one way of addressing the issue of hunger in an organic way. This is our new demonstration farm where we are building the farmers market place in Mchinji.

## Visitation from Minister of Agriculture

### Together we can

On 3 December 2022, the minister of Agriculture visited permaculture Paradise to talk all about Permaculture, it is an honor that permaculture was visited by the minister who after learning more about permaculture uncovered hidden secrets that can server Malawi from hunger, malnutrition, poverty, climate change etc.





## Visitations

Permaculture had the heralds singing group from Mchinji Seventh-day Adventist central church who came to celebrate with family and friends. The farm does not only provide food but also space for public events. After the party, the families were led on a tour around the farm to learn more about the capacity of Permaculture to help Christians grow spiritually, with the love of God and his creation.

## New Farmers, New Challenges

These are newly recruited farmers in Mchinji district under the food forest project who are ready to farm the Permaculture way this year. Their farms are completely bare, the land is degraded, with no protection. This is where we start from and keep you posted on how we are going to help them heal the soil and boost production, introducing diversity and cover the soil. We cannot share the results without the basis. Be on the lookout.





# Second week of December

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
Dec 16, 2022



## Permaculture farmers vs Conventional Farmers

when planting in Malawi's Planting all farmers are planting their seasonal crops which includes maize / main staple crop which most farmers depend on. These photos were taken on the 10th of December in Mchinji district where farmers are practicing permaculture, and their fields are green with lots of biomass while their neighbors who are still practicing conventional farming their fields are bare, the soils are depleted, no ground cover, no protection. Farmers practicing the ways of permaculture have a chance of harvesting more than just maize while reinstating the soil fertility.

On 12th December 2022 permaculture conducted their first supervision visit to farmers of Nguwe community in Kasungu, to provide a starter pack of seeds and seedlings and provide onsite technical support on implementation of Permaculture gardens. It has been one month after 15 farmers graduated from an intensive 5 days Permaculture training course which was conducted in Nguwe village. So far 450 seedlings have shared the farmers to help them establish homestead food forests.





# Innovator of the Year 2022.

Written by Biswick Luwayo  
Dec 31, 2022



Embarking on this arduous but rewarding journey, we are thrilled to announce that our vision for rural communities has earned us the prestigious title of "Innovator of the Year 2022." This recognition solidifies our commitment to tackling the persistent issue of hunger. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mudzi wathu community radio and the entire Mchinji district for embracing our relentless efforts in propelling the development of not only the district but the entire nation. This accolade motivates us to continue forging a brighter, hunger-free future for all.







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