

# Strengthening Agroecology Regional Networks

## Strengthening Agroecology Regional Networks with a Thematic School

### ABSTRACT

This proposal addresses all 3 axes, namely agriculture & climate change adaptation; biodiversity conservation and responsible production/consumption. Led by the Soils, Food and Healthy Communities (SFHC) organization, an innovative farmer-led research and development organization in Malawi, this thematic school will provide relevant training on actions to support agroecology and be an opportunity to share approaches amongst relevant stakeholders and strengthen the regional food system for the long-term. The overarching goal is: Share results and impacts (social, economic and environmental) from agroecological approaches, and to identify institutional barriers and incentives to support agroecology at a regional and national scale in eastern Africa (Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania) We build on long-term participatory research using agroecology with smallholder farmers in Malawi. Our focus to date has been at the household level, where we have shown significant improvements in sustainable agricultural practices that build resilience, gender equity, income, food security, health and nutrition outcomes. Each partner is currently undertaking relevant research/development projects that connect to this proposal.

Cornell leads a project with SFHC, FARMS for Biodiversity which examines the impact of agroecology at a landscape scale on biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services. SFHC and Cornell have a second project, in which they are one of 12 case studies across Africa examining the socio-economic viability of agroecological practices, including labour and income impacts. CIRAD researchers are involved in a development project including a research component IABA: Institutional Innovations for Organic Agriculture in Africa. This new project is working with national networks in Tanzania and Uganda, to identify institutional innovations to support agroecological and organic agriculture, and how to promote them at the national and regional levels. This proposal for a thematic school will move to share our findings and scale these results out to the regional and national level, recognizing the continued vulnerability of households if wider-level change is not implemented. We propose having a thematic school on agroecology, to share our results and impacts with relevant Malawi stakeholders, and to learn about efforts to build supportive policies to agroecology in Uganda and Tanzania. In turn, the proposed action will generate options for policy makers and stakeholders such as farmer organizations and cooperatives for developing resilient food systems in the context of climate change in Malawi and in eastern Africa.

**Keywords :** Policy, Agroecology, Participatory research, Training, Gender, Institutions

**Year :** 2020

**Project number :** 2002-229

**Type of funding :** AAP ICL

**Project type :** AAP

**Research units in the network :** MOISA

**Start date :** 2022-01-01

**End date :** 2022-12-31

**Flagship project :** no

**Project leader :** Arlène Alpha

**Project leader's institution :** CIRAD

**Project leader's RU :** MOISA

**Budget allocated :** 20000 €

**Total budget allocated ( including co-financing ) :** 47000 €

**Funding :** Labex

## GOAL

Share results and impacts (social, economic and environmental) from agroecological approaches, and to identify institutional barriers and incentives to support agroecology at a regional and national scale in eastern Africa (Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania)