

Training of Trainers (ToT) in Malawi

N2Africa Malawi conducted ToT covering 39 Agricultural Extension Development Officers (AEDOs) 7 (women) and 71 Lead Farmers (22 women) from 5 (Salima, Dedza, Ntcheu, Lilongwe and Mchinji) of the 6 implementing districts. The ToT program was conducted for AEDOs and lead farmers that will be implementing N2Africa's technology dissemination and extension activities. The training topics included:

1. Objectives and expectations of N2Africa
2. Legumes, nitrogen and rhizobia
3. Increasing legume productivity in cereal-legume cropping systems
4. Inoculants and inoculation (handling and use)
5. Practical demonstration of inoculation (handling and use)
6. Demonstration plot layouts and data collection (practical)
7. Expectation from farmer groups and lead farmers
8. Mid season and end of season evaluations
9. Marketing and processing of soybean, cowpea and bean

The main resource persons were N2Africa Staff, and the 4 Senior Technicians trained by N2Africa in Kisumu, Kenya and the IITA agronomist in Malawi.



The technical training used local memory aids like folk culture comparisons and associations to help participants easily remember some of the technical knowledge being learned. Farmers testified that they had gained tangible understanding of technologies such as inoculation and nitrogen fixation. They explained that since they understood the more fundamental aspects of nitrogen fixation they could explain this to farmers and that more adoption of inoculant technologies would be achieved.

During the soybean processing and marketing section of the training the participants explained that the main constraint to soybean processing technologies introduced earlier was affordability since most equipment is expensive and they can only manage to procure it if they work in farmer groups. They said the farmer group approach achieves high productivity for the whole group but the individual gains are much lower hence most prefer individual home-based value addition which can increase individual incomes. The N2Africa Southern hub Coordinator informed the farmers that N2Africa had partnered with the Department of Agric Extension Services to train farmers in new recipes of cowpea and soybean in the 6 participating districts.

The farmers were highly motivated and the project has triggered much enthusiasm. With just one more mandate District to go; the ToT has been a successful and informative experience.