



# MALAWI

## COUNTRY PROFILE

# 2020-21



Stella Malaiitha, Kuma village, Malawi

**S**elf Help Africa directly implements projects in Malawi. The overall programme goal, to support smallholder farming communities to achieve sustainable livelihoods, is in line with the Malawi government's current Growth and Development Strategy II.



	Programme	Donor	Total Budget	Time Frame	Implementing Partner	Programme Area
01	Climate Change: Better Extension Training Transforming Economic Return (BETTER)	European Commission	€ 14,697,478	2018 ▼ 2022	ActionAid, ADRA, Plan International, and Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM)	Chitipa, Karonga, Mzimba, Nkhata Bay, Nkhotakota, Kasungu, Salima, Mulanje, Chiradzulu and Thyolo Districts.
02	Developing Remote Sensing Technology to Monitor Fall Armyworm	World Bank, The Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR)	€ 127,000	2018 ▼ 2020	Malawi Ministry of Agriculture, Orbas Consulting, UCD School of Biosystems and Food Engineering	Balaka Dsistrict
03	Strengthening farmer-managed seed systems for improved seed quality and access to preferred varieties in Malawi	The McKnight Foundation	€ 20,000	2020 ▼ 2022	LUANAR, Gene Bank, Michigan State University	Mzimba, Kasungu, Ntcheu and Chiradzulu Districts



Nellie Mhango, Mabalani Village, GVH: Mwamtawali

## Objective: To increase resilience, food, nutrition, and income security of 402,000 smallholder farmers through sustainable agricultural growth in Malawi.

Smallholders produce approximately 80% of Malawi's food, and most of the population of rural Malawi are dependent on rain-fed agriculture.

The food situation in Malawi has been worsened by El Niño, which heavily affected the 2015-16 agricultural season. Maize is the most significant crop for food security, but recent outputs have been well below the amount required to meet national needs, underlining the need for crop diversification.

Up to 40% of the population of Malawi live with the threat of food-insecurity, with estimates in 2017 suggesting that 6.7 million people would not be able to meet their food requirements that year.

Female smallholders are especially vulnerable to food insecurity due to their unequal access to land and credit and their disproportionate burden of labour.

The European Union-funded Better Extension Training Transforming Economic Return (BETTER) project is a collaboration between Self Help Africa, ActionAid Malawi, Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Plan International UK and the Evangelical Association of Malawi.

Crop diversification and improved adoption of alternative crops has been one of the government of Malawi's key strategies to achieving food and income security. Malawi depends mainly on maize and tobacco for food and income security.

SHA are undertaking a number of activities to build capacity among smallholder farmers to increase production and efficiency.

These include: supporting Farmer Field school groups to promote sustainable agricultural practices, including conservation agriculture and soil and water conservation; promoting the adoption of legume and small-scale vegetable production including backyard gardening, integrating nutrition training and appropriate small-scale irrigation technologies; and training of smallholder farmers on diversification of crops, including early maturing varieties, drought and flood tolerant crops.

A key constraint for many farmers is access to information to guide their production decisions. Improved agricultural extension services provide farmers with the information that they need to address their challenges and to exploit opportunities. They are important to enable Malawi's farmers to significantly raise their productivity levels through sustainable agricultural practices.

Self Help Africa is also adopting new technologies to make farming more efficient. To achieve this, farmers are being organised into Farmer Field School groups. These groups involve farmer-led research to document and share best practices, training farmers in data collection and record management, linking farmer groups to mobile phone-based information services on sustainable agricultural methodologies, and developing community Early Warning Systems (EWS) in flood and drought-prone areas.

These actions have been designed to contribute to improving agricultural productivity in the targeted 10 KULIMA districts by improving capacity of smallholder farmers to farm in a more effective manner, thus reducing their vulnerability to shocks.

**402,000** smallholder farmers  
(including 241,201 women)



Minus Nierenda, Zinganjara Village, Malawi.



Maize infected by Fall Armyworm, Malawi.

02

## DEVELOPING REMOTE SENSING TECHNOLOGY TO MONITOR FALL ARMYWORM

**Objective: To contribute to the solution of the Fall Armyworm (FAW) problem by developing a tool for the detection of its hotspots.**

Food security in Malawi has been worsened by the increasing prevalence of pests and diseases, including the emergence of the FAW affecting over 600,000 smallholder farmers.

The emergence of the FAW across Malawi and sub-Saharan Africa poses a critical continuous and recurrent threat to smallholder farmers across the continent.

The Developing Remote Sensing Technology to Monitor Fall Armyworm is being delivered by an innovative collaboration between: Self Help Africa, University College Dublin, and Orbas with the support of the relevant local government district authorities in Balaka district in Malawi.

The aim of the project is to create a model to detect and monitor Fall Armyworm outbreaks and severity.

This model will then be developed into a software tool to help public institutions, NGOs and commercial farmers to maximise the benefits of insecticide, manage yield losses, and adapt to climate change challenges.

In the initial stages of this project, data will be collected at both satellite and field levels, this data will then be processed and cleaned, and the model will then be built and optimised based on the baseline data to monitor any changes.

**3,500 households**  
in Balaka district (21,000 people)

**50% women**

**Objective: : To build capacity of smallholder farmers to produce and distribute quality seeds of selected food crop varieties (including maize, finger millet, common bean and chickpea) with preferred traits in their farming communities.**

This is a research project which aims to evaluate farmers' preferences in their selections of seed, genotype seed varieties and assess farmer-managed seed system.

Through this research SHA hopes to acquire a better understanding and awareness of farmer preferred crop varieties while increasing knowledge and skills for identification of preferred crop varieties by the farming communities.

The project also aims to improve the quality of farmer managed seed and enhance their availability and distribution within the local farming communities.



Queen Masukwa and her brother Edward, Zinganjara village.



Patricia Twibe and daughter Sofiat Adam pictured in Mabanda village, Malawi



Yohane Mboma- Karonga district, Malawi

## MALAWI

PO Box B-495

Lilongwe,

Tel. +265 175 0568

E-mail: [malawi@selfhelpafrica.org](mailto:malawi@selfhelpafrica.org)

.....  
2020/2021

Tamara Kaonga, Mambero village, Malawi, 2017. Photo  
credit: Richard Nyoni. 2017