

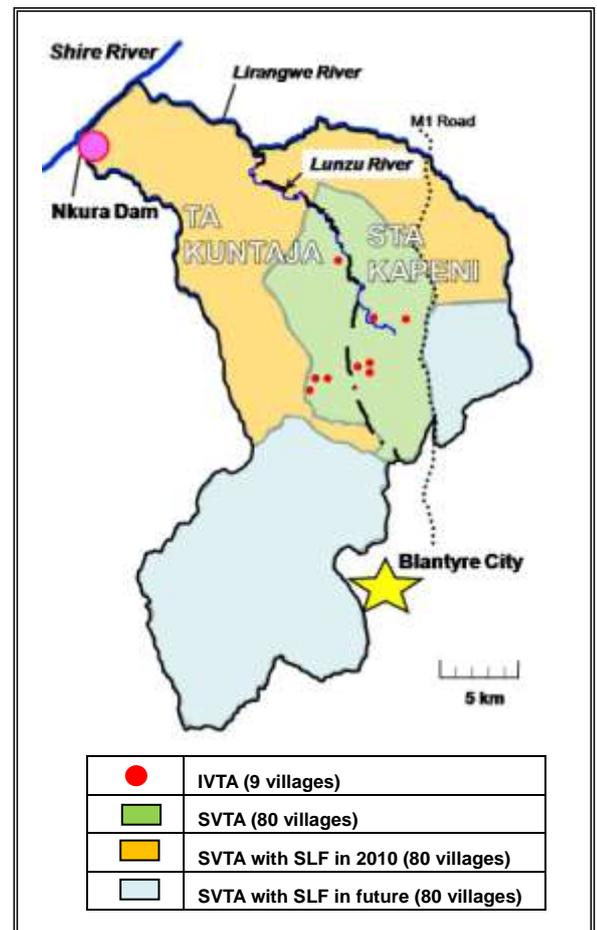


## Introduction to new training approach; Specified Village Training Approach

The Specified Village Training Approach (SVTA) was developed by extracting the training themes of soil erosion control and tree growing from Integrated Village Training Approach (IVTA). The difference between SVTA and IVTA is that there is no room for the village residents to decide the training themes but fixed on SVTA. In this sense, it can be said that SVTA is a kind of top down approach, while IVTA is the opposite. By specifying the training themes, SVTA aims at maximizing the dissemination of soil erosion control technologies and tree growing in the target areas, in order to realize mitigation of siltation in the Shire River in the soonest period.

SVTA however, may cause shortage of trainers and inadequate follow up at the farmers' fields because of rapid expansion of target villages at a time. To cope with such situation, the project opted to utilize village human resources as trainers in each target village by developing their skills in the training subjects. Besides, the limitation of training subject will make the project easy to attempt nurturing farmers as trainers.

The village human resource is named "Lead Farmer (LF)". With this LF operation mechanism, it can be expected that the aim of SVTA will be achieved.



Training Approach and Location of Target villages

## 2010 TRAINING OF TRAINERS SOIL EROSION CONTROL FOR NEW LEAD FARMERS

As the project has expanded its target and to other areas this year, increasing the number of villages to 89 and some 80 villages in other areas, totaling up to 169 villages, it has been observed that the number of extension staff under the project is inadequate compared to the expanded area, hence the introduction of LFs for activities under the specified village training approach.

**Then how does the project ensure performance by these Lead Farmers?** Considering that the Lead Farmers elected in the villages are laymen in the field of soil erosion control, the project organized TOTs on soil erosion control for these new Lead Farmers so that after the TOTs they can confidently go and help their fellow villagers on issues of soil erosion control in their respective villages.



Certified Lead Farmers

The TOTs to new lead farmers were in two categories; those conducted by PIUs for new lead farmers in the target area and those conducted by Senior Lead Farmers (SLF) for new LFs in other areas. Before the SLFs conducted these TOTs, they also received a brush up TOT on the same topic so that as they go to train their fellow LFs they have confidence in delivering the technology. For brush up TOTs, there were four sessions done by PIUs and a total of 36 LF were trained from 18 villages to which 17 lead farmers were female.

By the end of June a total of 253 new lead farmers were trained from which 119 lead farmers were trained (out of which 61 were female) in 18 sessions conducted by PIUs in the target area. The remaining 137 lead farmers are from other area who were trained by SLFs and out of that figure 67 are female.

As of now, after the TOTs, the soil conservation lead farmers are busy conducting trainings in their respective villages to their fellow farmers. With these new LFs there is surety of speed as the LFs will concentrate on helping villagers in their resident villages on activities involved in soil erosion control.

## Tree Growing Activities

Tree Growing activities of COVAMS are defined as follows: a) Tree Growing in Farmland (e.g. Agroforestry, Fruit Trees): b) Tree Growing in Any Other Land (e.g. Riverbank Afforestation): c) Conservation of Existing Vegetation.

COVAMS provides necessary training and technical information to the villagers to promote tree growing activities.

From this year, the project has introduced Tree Growing Lead Farmers into the respective target villages in the project area.

The 341 farmers from 169 villages completed Trainers of Training on Tree Growing. They were trained on Introduction of Tree growing and local seed collection in May and June. The rest of the topics such as seedling production, post emergence practice and out planting conducted in July and August. During the TOT, they reviewed and discussed what kind of problems they faced before on tree growing activity in their village. Then, they also practiced how to teach fellow farmers. Lead Farmers had started to give training to fellow farmers in their village.



Preparation of Soil for Pot Filling



Practice of Seed Pre-Treatment



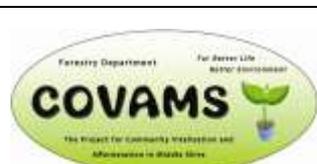
Newly Trained Tree Growing Lead Farmers

## Joint Midterm Review

Joint midterm review was carried out from 25th May to 7th June 2010 by the review team comprising JICA officials, a Japanese consultant and Malawian officials from concerned three departments of forestry, land resource conservation and community development. The review team evaluated progress of the project by using five criteria based on project cycle management method of JICA. Five criteria and their evaluation scores were 1) relevance is high, 2) effectiveness is high, 3) efficiency is very high, 4) impact is very high, and 5) sustainability is fair. It was satisfactory result to the project even though there is one 'fair' on the sustainability.

The review team left the project with eight recommendations for further improvement of the project management and activities. Among the eight recommendations, most important one was 'Strengthening of the Collaboration and Implementation Structure in GoM'. This recommendation aims to secure sustainability of the soil conservation and tree growing activities based on the operational mechanism introduced by the project.

Under the present project design, the Department of Forestry is responsible to implement the project activities with collaboration from offices of District Agricultural Development Office and District Community Development Office, however, it has not planned yet organizational set up after the project period. It is the time to think about who will bear overall responsibility to coordinate and implement multi-sector intervention within the district. Following the recommendation and the movement of decentralization, COVAMS will take necessary measures to enhance involvement of District Commissioner's office in the planning and monitoring of the COVAMS activities, at the same time, to start planning together the organizational set up for the continuous implementation of soil conservation and tree growing activities in the district.



For further information and Questions, please contact

**The Project for Community Vitalization and Afforestation in Middle Shire**  
c/o Regional Forestry Office (South) P.O.Box 5493, Limbe, Malawi

Tel/Fax: +265-1-847-432 covamsproject@gmail.com