

FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT

Coordinator: Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences, Finland

Partners: Mzuzu University, Malawi

Study areas: Agricultural Sciences



Collecting firewood, Malawi. Photo from the archives of Henrik Luikko.

What are the main aims of your network?

ForDeve supports the goals of the Finnish Development Co-operation Policy and United Nations Millennium Development Goals. The network:

- assists in developing sustainable forest and environment management practices in Malawi through improving professional exchange and education.
- helps to eradicate poverty and hunger by improving management skills of forest resources.
- enhances appropriate skills and technology transfer in mechanical wood industry in particular.
- strengthens the Finnish development co-operation resource base.

In Malawi forests are disappearing at a very fast rate. Scarcity of forest products and services directly affects millions of people who depend upon these forests for their daily livelihood. Deforestation also indirectly causes loss of fertility on farmlands, shortage of water etc.

We have set specific, more practical goals for both participating institutions. This has proved to be successful in practice. For the Malawians the goals are:

- to acquire know-how concerning sustainable forest management and forest industry.
- to improve the institutional capacity for curriculum development.



- to strengthen appropriate technology know-how.
- to develop and create co-operation and business contacts to Finland and Europe.
- to build institutional capacity through collaborative research/projects/consultancy between Malawian and Finnish institutions of higher education.

For the Finns the goals are:

- to strengthen the orientation of Finnish students towards development co-operation.
- to widen the knowledge of forestry cluster to tropical countries.
- to widen multicultural knowledge and attitude of Finnish students and lecturers.
- to strengthen internationalisation of Finnish students and lecturers at their home institution.

Student and teacher exchanges have proved to be efficient tools for reaching these goals.

What kind of activities are there in your network?

The activities in the network are teacher exchange, student exchange and intensive courses. We organize 2–4 student exchanges from each institution annually. With the help of the North–South–South programme, around 25 students have been able to participate in student exchanges in Malawi and in Finland. The first attendees of the program have already entered the working life in forest management in their home countries. So far 9 teachers have participated in teacher exchanges.

The intensive course includes lectures by Finnish and Malawian experts, workshops consisting of lecturers and students, and study tours. The objectives of the course are to analyse the reasons of deforestation and to find practical means to prevent deforestation, and promote reforestation at the local community level in Malawi.

Your advice to forthcoming networks

Learn to know your partners well and make concrete plans.

