

Non-Technical Solutions

Countries: USA, Honduras, Madagascar
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Land for Life: farming communities develop innovative agroforestry system preserving the rainforests and ensuring better livelihoods

Description of the project: Inga-alley cropping is a simple but revolutionary agroforestry system that provides sustainable alternatives to old subsistence farming practices destroying the rainforest. Inga trees are planted in hedgerows between rows of food crops. Growing rapidly, the trees essentially recreate a rainforest that is managed by a virtuous cycle of yearly pruning after cropping, yielding protective thick mulch from leaves as well as vital firewood from branches. The pruned trees allow sunlight to reach the food crops. Working in harmony with nature, small farmers are empowered towards climate resilient food sovereignty.

Climate impact: Loss of biodiversity, forest ecosystem destruction and the resultant loss of habitat are among the first causes of global warming. Inga-alley adoption is a model for climate mitigation and adaptation through organic and sustainable regenerative agriculture, saving N2O emissions. By preventing slash & burn practices, this project has preserved 600 ha of rainforest and saved 12,300 t CO2 in 4 years. Since 2013, it has helped 40 to 300 families withstand Honduras' terrible floods and droughts and ensured their food security.

Gender impact: Land for Life is a debt-free program that transforms livelihood options for the entire family. Agroforestry trainings are offered to women and men equally, enabling women to access new agricultural resources: women have been trained as foresters or tree-nursery managers. Women in the beneficiary communities have gained decision power regarding the family land. This reinforces their land inheritance rights, secured by a favorable legal environment in Honduras.

Scalability / replicability: Started in 2012 with 40 families, the project expanded to 300 households in Honduras and has been successfully replicated in Madagascar. Inga-alley agroforestry system is simple and cost effective; the model can be easily replicated. As farmers work cooperatively, they can access larger markets where demand for organic food is raising. The Inga foundation is looking into opportunities to access regional channels while keeping their bottom-up approach.



The Inga Foundation
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