

Global Programme “Sustainable Aquatic Food”

BMZ Special Initiative Transformation of Agricultural and Food Systems

What are the challenges?

Billions of people around the world depend on aquatic foods for their daily food supply. In addition to animal proteins, fish provide important nutrients like fatty-acids, vitamin and minerals. Aquatic foods can be a key component of a sustainable and healthy diet.

While the worldwide fish supply is growing, Africa experienced in the last years a decline in per capita consumption. Current projection shows that this decline could continue, if nothing is done to increase local production of aquatic foods. Stagnating fish supply from capture fisheries and insufficient aquaculture production are contributing to the decrease in food and nutrition security. The number of undernourished people is already dramatically increasing, from 598 million in 2010 to 735 million in 2022 worldwide. In Southern Africa, the prevalence of undernourishment has more than doubled from 5% in 2005 to 11% in 2022.

Small-scale fishers are crucial for livelihoods and nutrition in most coastal and lake regions in Africa, but they are often threatened in particular by the consequences of competitive use of fishery resources, overfishing and illegal fishing. They organize themselves to defend their interests at national and regional level.

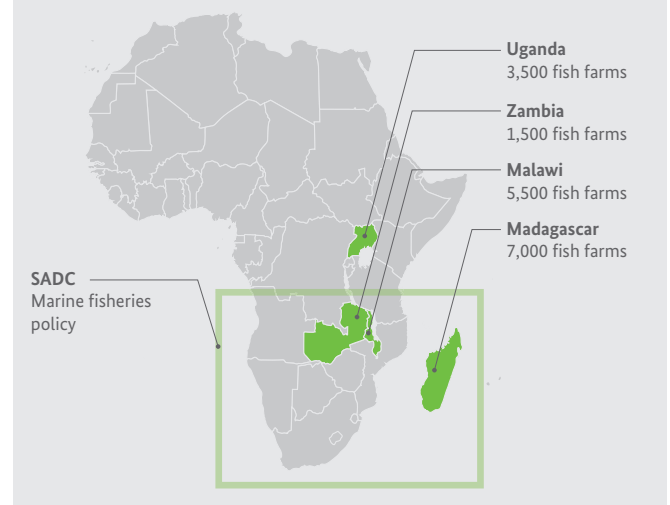
Food security for all is possible but requires a real transformation of food systems. Aquatic food is increasingly recognized in international policy discussions as a crucial factor for improving nutrition at large-scale. Fish value chains contribute also to income generation and poverty reduction.

Project name	Global Programme “Sustainable Aquatic Food”
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Malawi, Madagascar, Uganda, Zambia, SADC
Duration	01/2024 – 12/2028
Budget	EUR 17 million

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS The programme contributes to achieving these sustainable development goals:



Where we work



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Left: Farm manager Malase Mwangonde and a farm worker preparing the seine net for harvesting.

Middle: Rose Grey Sports scooping fingerlings to show to other farmers and interested buyers.

Right: Rose Grey Sports keeping records about her sales.



Malase Mwangonde and a farm worker scooping fry to assess the population of fry in the pond.

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Producing enough food for a growing population within planetary boundaries requires low-carbon techniques with less impact on local ecosystems. Small-scale aquaculture based on agroecological principles is one of the most carbon-efficient ways for supplying proteins and has very limited impact on aquatic environment.

Droughts, storms and increased sedimentation of fishponds are some of the major risks that are exacerbated by climate change and can wipe out years of effort by fish farmers. More resilient aquaculture contributes to the stability of the whole food system in the event of shocks.

How do we work?

In Madagascar, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia 17.000 small-scale fish farms are empowered through technical and financial trainings to increase productivity of their aquaculture ponds. The chosen no-subsidy approach and knowledge-sharing among producers contributes to the economic viability and durability of the projects impact well after the end of the project.

National institutions are supported to strengthen their regulatory frameworks on cage aquaculture. This support aims to prevent potential negative environmental impact of these medium- and large-scale production systems which can be an economic opportunity but require substantial investments and inputs.

The programme supports the fight against illegal fishing and enables artisanal fishers to participate in policy dialogues, in cooperation with the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Reducing illegal fishing is an important contribution to secure livelihoods for artisanal fishery communities along the African coasts. Strengthening the voice of small-scale fisheries organizations contributes to more equitable policies.



Mr. and Mrs. Mwangonde weighing some of the fish and recording the results to estimate the total harvest to be sold on the market.

My community, my responsibility: An inclusive approach to fish farming

Mr. and Mrs. Mwangonde are fish farmers in Mzuzu in the Northern Region of Malawi. Their fish farm has 13 ponds stretching 3.5 hectares. To support operations, they received training in aquaculture practices and business development which has helped the family to plan more efficiently, reduce costs and increase revenue. Mr. and Mrs. Mwangonde have taken the initiative of integrating banana plantations in their farm, using pond water for irrigation.

“Every time we hear a baby is born in our community, we are very happy because we know that we have one more mouth to feed. We are proud to be part of a journey to provide affordable protein to our community,” says Mrs. Mwangonde.

“Change starts at home and with me,” explains Mr. Mwangonde, *“we cannot talk about equality at community level if at household level these issues are neglected. I involve my wife in all processes as an equal to allow contribution of all her efforts and skills for the benefit of our business and family.”*

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