



Program Number 2

Name of program: Nkhani ya Nthaka (Stories from the soil)

Name of Radio Station: Dzimwe Community Radio

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Time of Broadcast: 13:30

Length of Program: 10 Minutes

Topic: **Vetiver, a solution to soil erosion**

Sigtune 16 seconds

Presenter:

When you just hear this song, you just know that it's time for Nkhani Ya Nthaka (Stories from the soil) program on Dzimwe community radio station 93.1 FM.

In our last week's edition of Nkhani ya nthaka program we looked at Mlera Nthaka, (Conservation agriculture) as a way of maintaining soil fertility and reduction of soil erosion.

For today, we are going to look at preventing soil erosions by planting **Vetiver grass** in steep slope areas.

"Soil Erosion has been a major issue in the past and will become an even greater issue in the future as population growth continues to expand and land resources are more intensively used, often to a point of destruction.

Increased soil erosion means loss of land, reduced soil fertility, greater rainfall runoff, lower groundwater recharge, more sediment flows in river, higher contaminants in diminishing water supplies, lowered quality of drinking water, increased flooding, and diminished economic benefits and increased hardships to both rural and urban

populations especially in developing countries, but also increasingly in developed countries too.

If applied correctly the Vetiver System could be an important tool to reduce erosion (by up to 90%), reduce and conserve rainfall runoff (by as much as 70%), improve ground water recharge, remove pollutants from water, reduce the risk of flooding, and improve economic benefits to communities“. ([The Vetiver Network International](#))

For more on these, with me in the studio is MR. Jones Kaimbwa an agricultural extension worker for Malawi Lake Basin Program.

Presenter: Welcome MR. Kaimbwa.

MR. Kaimbwa: *Thank you my name is Jones Kaimbwa from Lake Basin and I'm an extension worker.*

Presenter: We just wanted to know more about vetiver grass. For most of us, we just heard about this grass, but we don't know its details, what is vetiver grass?

MR. Kaimbwa: *Thanks, Vetiver grass is a type of grass that helps to hold soil tight so that it is prevented from the rainfall ran off that eventually causes soil erosion, since vetiver grass is composed of strong roots and it is not washed away by running water.*

Presenter: where are we supposed to plant this kind of vetiver grass?

MR.Kaimbwa: *Vetiver grass can be planted in steep slope areas with the slope of 3 percent and we measure that land by using line level or Ephraim and we then come up with a contour line on which we can plant our vetiver grass. This grass helps the contour line to be strong so that we reduce the runoff, so if we want to plant this type of grass, we should firstly consider the steepness of the land so that we maintain soil fertility. So for effectively reduction of soil erosion one must think of planting vetiver grass in three different contour lines, one from top secondly on the middle and lastly one at the end of our land that we are protecting.*

Presenter: How important is vetiver grass over other common grasses that we know?

MR.Kaimbwa: *Vetiver grass helps to maintain soil fertility, it helps to hold the soil there by reducing soil erosion and it can be also used for the production of manure.*

Presenter: Once we have planted vetiver grass, are there recommended procedures we can follow for caring for vetiver grass?

MR.Kaimbwa: *Yes, it is recommended to care for vetiver grass. Firstly it is recommended to be pruned when it is green before it matures to avoid drying.*

Secondly, we also encourage farmers to transplant this grass so as we multiply the availability of vetiver grass in our communities and we can share with our neighbors' so that they are not affected too with the effects of soil erosion.

Presenter: Where can farmers get this kind of grass if they want to protect their soils from erosion?

MR Kaimbwa: *There are a lot of vetiver grasses available with our famers, so if someone needs vetiver grass we encourage them to consult our Lake basin office so we can help them, we believe in sharing resources so we can jointly reduce the effects of soil erosion, we urge our farmers to welcome those who needs vetiver grass so they can share with them.*

Presenter: What are your conclusion remarks as we are going towards the end of this program?

MR.Kaimbwa.*Well thanks, my last remarks is that everyone must know that our soils are being washed away to the rivers, and I would like to remind our local farmers that the fertility of our soil is not maintained by commercial fertilizers, the soils fertility is maintained by the natural resources such as planting of vetiver grass in steep slope places.*

I want to encourage farmer to adopt what I have explained in the program so that they realize bumper yields in this coming growing season from the steep slope lands as we know that we are facing the impacts of climate change, since vetiver grass reduces soil erosion there by fertility is maintained in the soil.

Presenter: That's the voice of Mr. Johns Kaimbwa agricultural advisor for Lake Basin Program.

Among other things, he explained that vetiver grass reduces soil erosion with about 90% and it is widely available in our community.

If you have questions or comments, please call the producer on 0 884469147 and you will be assisted.

Remember that "This segment is part of an audio series related to the International Year of Soils. It has been produced with the support of the World Association of Community Broadcasters, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2015."

From me the producer and presenter of the program Tony Gonani I invite you to be there again on this coming Monday from 13:30 when I will come with another edition of Nkhani Ya Nthaka (stories from the soil).

Have a wonderful time, bye!

Sign tune 7 seconds out.