

Training farmers on the best methods for utilizing soy for household consumption is a key to increasing soybean production and utilization in regions where soybean is a new crop. There are financial and nutritional benefits if adoption is successful, as soybean is an economical and high-quality protein source.

Cooking soy at home requires knowledge of soy processing techniques for making foods like soymilk, tofu, and soy flour, and incorporating them into local foods is the way to making soy consumption sustainable. Many smallholders are unfamiliar with how to process soy at the household level and how soy can be incorporated into their local diets.

To address this issue, SIL provides intensive and interactive village-level trainings (VLT) and training-of-trainers (TOT) focused on soy processing, nutrition, and integration into local cuisines. The training provides smallholder farmers with the skills to process their soybeans using tools they already have, with minimal energy inputs.



*A Mozambican farmer stirs a soybean stew during a SIL Village-Level Training. Image credit: SIL*



*Emmanuel Alamu (IITA) presenting during the Training of Trainers in Malawi. Image credit: SIL*

In each village workshop, participants learn how to turn soybeans into soymilk, tofu, and flour, all of which can be used to enhance local dishes. Soy has a neutral flavor which makes it adopt the flavor of the dish to which it is added. The workshops also teach participants about basic nutrition, the role of protein in promoting healthy development of bones and bodies, and the value of adding soy-based protein to their families' diets.

Training sessions include food safety and refrigeration in rural environments (to prevent spoiling and food-borne illness), budgeting for dietary changes, and can include instruction on processing additional local nutritious foods, such as orange-fleshed sweet potato and groundnuts.

SIL developed this training curriculum from its investigation into village-level soy utilization in Mozambique in 2015 and 2016. After conducting trainings in three different Mozambican villages and monitoring the outcomes over a 6-month period, SIL determined the processing methods, recipes, and pedagogy that can create the most impact for village-level trainings.

SIL's TOT model involves a cascaded approach to spreading soy processing knowledge to rural farmers who need the information most. SIL directly trains staff from NGOs and development agencies who operate on the ground and have pre-existing relationships with their beneficiaries, as well as knowledge about local practices and cultures.

SIL's training empowers first-tier trainees to share the knowledge gained with their beneficiary groups. These NGOs can opt to lead another TOT session by training other village leaders, who will share the soy knowledge with the cooks in their villages.

The SIL VLT involves monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of NGO trainers, as well as a session that teaches NGO trainers how to design and conduct M&E of their own trainers. SIL has implemented this training for 8 NGOs in the Lilongwe area of Malawi, and these NGOs are projected to teach over 3000 rural Malawians about soy nutrition and processing.



Village-Level Trainees filtering soymilk during a Training of Trainers (TOT). Image credit: SIL

NGO Attendees came from:

- Save the Children
- World Relief
- United Purpose
- Feed the Children
- Concern Worldwide
- Self Help Africa
- Malawi Ministry of Agriculture
- Catholic Health Commission

SIL has an off-the-shelf curriculum which can be implemented in diverse contexts by SIL's regional trainers.

The Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Soybean Value Chain Research is USAID's only comprehensive program dedicated to soybean technical knowledge and innovation. Our international team of tropical soybean experts provides direct support to researchers, private sector firms, non-governmental organizations, extensionists, agronomists, technicians and farmer associations tasked with soybean development.

Learn more about the Village-Level Trainings on our web site: <http://soybeaninnovationlab.illinois.edu/village-level-soy-processing-and-utilization-training-courses>

Contact SIL at [soybeaninnovationlab@illinois.edu](mailto:soybeaninnovationlab@illinois.edu)

**SIL's partners on this project include:**

