

DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS

3-year doubled-up legume cropping cycles for contrasting farms in Malawi

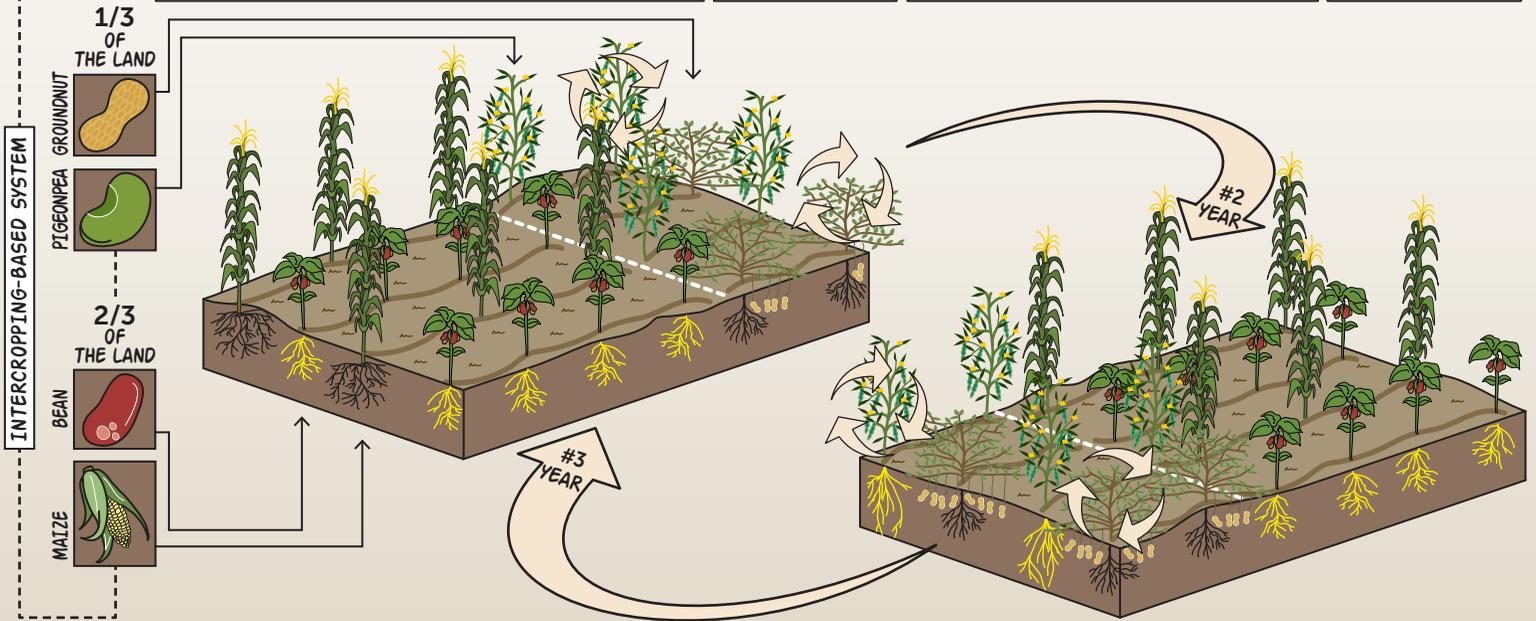
RESOURCE CONSTRAINED FARMS < 0,6 Ha

RESOURCE CONSTRAINED FARMS CONSTITUTE 74% OF THE FARMING HOUSEHOLDS IN DEDZA AND NTCHEU DISTRICTS OF MALAWI WHERE AFRICA RISING IS IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE INTENSIFICATION ACTIVITIES. DOUBLED-UP LEGUME TECHNOLOGY ENTAILS INTERCROPPING TWO GRAIN LEGUMES, EXPLOITING THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED BY COMPLEMENTARY GROWTH HABITS AND PLANT ARCHITECTURE.

THIS SYSTEM HAS 'DOUBLE' LEGUME GRAIN AND 'DOUBLE' SOIL FERTILITY BENEFITS FROM BIOLOGICAL N₂-FIXATION.

PIGEONPEA GROWS VERY SLOWLY FOR THE FIRST 2 MONTHS AFTER PLANTING AND ONLY STARTS RAPID GROWTH WHEN THE GROUNDNUT IS APPROACHING MATURITY. AFTER BEANS, MAIZE AND GROUNDNUT HARVEST, THE REMAINING PIGEONPEA CONTINUES TO GROW AS A SOLE CROP UNTIL MATURITY.

AFTER HARVEST, CROP RESIDUES ARE EITHER LEFT IN THE FIELD AND INCORPORATED AT LAND PREPARATION OR FED TO LIVESTOCK.



RESOURCE ENDOWED FARMS > 2 Ha

THIS SYSTEM REQUIRES MODEST AMOUNTS OF FERTILIZER, YIELDING AN AVERAGE OF 3 TONNES PER HECTARE OF GRAIN WHEN RAINFALL IS NOT CONSTRAINING.

FARMS MAINLY PRODUCE FOR SALE AT THE MARKET, THEY THEREFORE ARE FOCUSED ON MAKING A PROFIT AND CAN AFFORD FERTILIZER INPUTS.

FARMERS OWN MORE RESOURCES INCLUDING CATTLE, HAVE LARGER FIELDS, HIRE LABOUR FOR TIMELY FARM OPERATIONS, EARN MORE INCOME AND INVEST MORE IN SOIL FERTILITY IMPROVEMENT.

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