

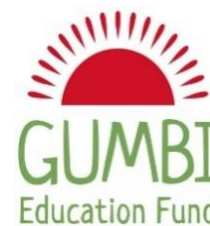


Alton Climate Action Network

FOOD EVERY DAY!

Together we can

(Patrick Kamzitu)



The Gumbi Permaculture Community Training Centre

(Formerly the Gumbi Alton Permaculture Project - GAPP)

October 2025 newsletter - achievements since July



Here is the splendid huge new hand-painted sign on the wall adjacent to the farm gate. Note the ACAN logo on the right and our partner the Gumbi Education Fund 's logo on the left. The PCTC logo is a triquetra, an ancient symbol of unity and continuity.

Thank you for your support

1. The Permaculture Community Training Centre (PCTC) is now training!

The first permaculture methods and cookery

course took place from 11 – 15 August with trainers from our core team, led by Martin Thole. A second course will be run from 13 – 18 October. Each course is for 15 homestead farmers (8 men and 7 women) from local villages. They are 5-day courses, a mix of classroom teaching and practical learning on the demonstration farm and in the training kitchen.





PCTC has a unique training kitchen with solar-powered induction stoves. Here the trainee homestead farmers are preparing and enjoying food from the farm.

2. Visit to PCTC by Group Village Headmen

A permaculture school for the community

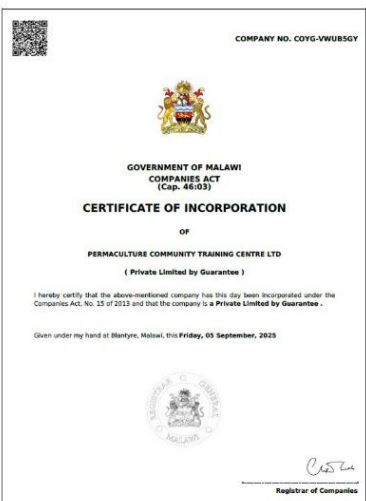
In preparation for the training, lead farmer Martin Thole and Chief Edwin Mponela (the PCTC Project Manager) hosted a 4-hour meeting for 13 Group Village Headmen from the local villages. Martin explained the purpose of the training, followed by a tour of the demonstration farm. The Village Headmen pledged their support.



Village headmen pose in front of the refurbished PCTC classroom

Why PCTC REALLY matters: permaculture can provide a secure food supply

- Malawi is the fourth poorest country in the world (World Bank data)
- 70% of its 22 million people live in extreme poverty, 80% are subsistence farmers, two thirds are either food insecure or face hunger (Global Hunger Index)
- Prolonged dry spells due to climate instability cause regular failure of harvests: the staple maize is a rain-fed crop. There is little irrigation.
- Food price inflation in Malawi is over 25%
- But permaculture offers affordable food self-sufficiency for Malawians. It is organic, compost-based, growing a wide range of nutritious food crops in layers all year round.



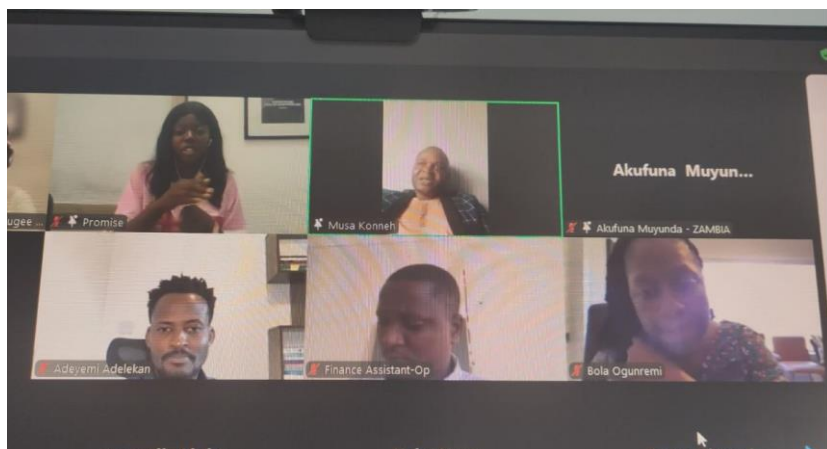
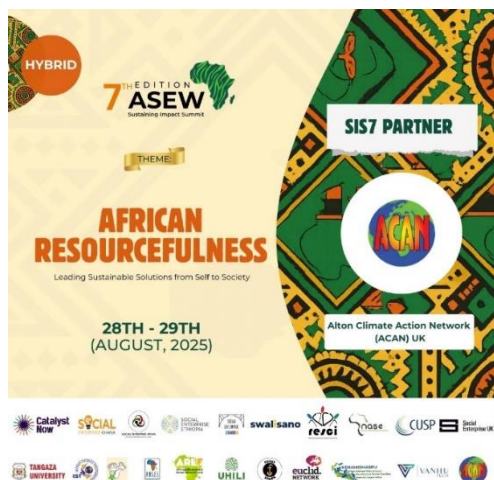
3. PCTC is now the Permaculture Community Training Centre Ltd.

Here is PCTC’s Certificate of Incorporation from the Government of Malawi as a company limited by guarantee. As a social enterprise, PCTC will generate income e.g. from beekeeping and selling surplus produce.

4. Jobs success!

Samuel Martin and Gideon Mkomba, two of PCTC’s core team of trained permaculture farmers, now have farming jobs through Luwayo Biswick, the Founder/Director of the Permaculture Paradise Institute where our farmers were trained.

5. PCTC on the international stage!



In the bottom row centre in this screenshot is James Gomani, PCTC operations manager. On 28 August, he presented PCTC's story and its social, economic and environmental impact at a major online international conference, "African Resourcefulness" organised by the African Social Enterprise Workshop. To the left of James is Adeyemi Adelekan, the Director of ASEW and Chair of the conference.

"I am over the moon" (James Gomani)

As a direct result of James' presentation, 15 Catholic Sisters from Strathmore University Business School in Kenya will be coming on a learning visit to PCTC on 12th November 2025. The Sisters are from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi.

Sr. Peris Muchiri wrote, "...I was truly inspired by your presentation and the transformative work being done at PCTC in Malawi. Your innovative approach to tackling food poverty and empowering young farmers through sustainable, hands-on training resonated deeply with me."

6. The circular economy in action at PCTC

Martin, the lead farmer, made fuel briquettes from the waste flipchart paper from the first PCTC training course



"The photos and story from PCTC are truly uplifting. What Martin has done with the briquettes is such a powerful and practical example of the circular economy in action. It perfectly captures and kind of innovation and resourcefulness we hope to spotlight at SIS7. Please do extend our congratulations to him and the team for this inspiring initiative."

Dr Adeyemi Adelekan, Director, African Social Enterprise Workshop (ASEW)

www.aseworkshop.com



7. PCTC is now a solar energy centre for the local community, thanks to a gift of power extensions and phone chargers from James Gomani. People in the Gumbi villages do not have electricity. PCTC has an abundance of solar power thanks to a very generous donor. People can now come to PCTC to charge their phones and other appliances for a nominal charge.

8. Vision, mission and action plan

Email Jenny to receive the new PCTC action plan, based on 8 goals. The PCTC team have developed the following:

Vision

A future where resilient, self-reliant communities thrive in harmony with nature, with self-sufficiency in food supply from locally and organically-grown food, powered by clean energy, and actively contributing to a healthy planet for generations to come.

Mission

Empowering communities with knowledge and skills of permaculture, fostering sustainable living through organic food production, biodiversity enhancement, re-afforestation, clean energy adoption, and climate-resilient agricultural practices for lasting food security and ecological harmony.



The new fish pond has been stocked with Chambo and Mbama. Jenny G. ate Chambo during her visit in 2024 – it is delicious.

All donations, large or small, will be used carefully and go directly to PCTC, which has no administrative overheads.

<https://altonclimatenetwork.org.uk/donate/>

Fundraising priorities include: a motorbike for outreach visits to homestead farmers; funding for 4 more training courses in 2026; irrigation for homestead farmers; a borehole at PCTC itself.

“We have proper financial

management systems here for PCTC, and are keeping careful financial records. The team would like to assure ACAN donors that every penny sent is accounted for.” James Gomani, PCTC/GEF finance and operations manager.

And finally, an unsolicited message received on 23 August 2025 from Chief Edwin Mponela, Gumbi Group Village Headman, “On behalf of the community I do not know how we can come together and thank you all for the efforts you are putting to uplift PCTC to a higher level. We are all very thankful.”