

# **Mid-term Review of: Enhancing Food Security and developing Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project**

Mid-term Review

NORAD COLLECTED REVIEWS 11/2009

Tore Laugerud, Nordic Consulting Group (NCG), Norway (team leader); Sera Rose Mkandawire, Bunda College of Agriculture, University of Malawi; Emmanuel James Kantchewa, (National Project Coordinator) Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security

Commissioned by the Government of Malawi, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security; FAO (UN Food and Agriculture Organization); Royal Norwegian Embassy, Lilongwe

### **Norad collected reviews**

The report is presented in a series, compiled by Norad to disseminate and share analyses of development cooperation. The views and interpretations are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation.

#### **Norad**

Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

P.O. Box 8034 Dep, NO- 0030 OSLO

Ruseløkkveien 26, Oslo, Norway

Phone: +47 22 24 20 30 Fax: +47 22 24 20 31

ISBN 978-82-7548-438-1



Republic of Malawi  
Ministry of Agriculture and  
Food Security



ROYAL NORWEGIAN EMBASSY



United Nations Food and  
Agriculture Organization  
(FAO)

Mid-term Review of:

# Enhancing Food Security and Developing Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project

(FAO No.: GCPS/MLW/030/NOR)

Norad No.: MWI-05/029)

## Final Report

23 October 2009

**Mr. Tore Laugerud**, Nordic Consulting Group (NCG) Norway (Team Leader)

**Ms. Sera Rose Mkandawire**, Agribusiness Expert, Bunda College of Agriculture, Univ. of Malawi

**Mr. Emmanuel James Kantchewa**, Economist/National Project Coordinator, Min. of Agriculture  
and Food Security

## PREFACE

The report in hand covers the Mid-term Review (“the Review”) of the:

*Enhancing Food Security and Developing Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project (GCPS/MLW/030/NOR)*

hereafter also referred to as “the Project”. The Mid-term Review (MTR) was undertaken in August-September 2009, by an Environmental Expert/Team Leader from Nordic Consulting Group (NCG) Norway, supported by a national consultant from Malawi appointed by FAO and a representative from the parent Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (“the Ministry”, jointly referred to as the Review Team - or “the RT”).

Such a Mid-term Review is part of the normal project cycle in development projects supported by the Norwegian Government. The Project was reviewed based on desk study of written documents and interviews with the Malawian project staff and other stakeholders in Lilongwe and the project area during the period 31 August - 11 September 2009.

The report contains a brief introduction to the project features and a systematic review of the most significant aspects of the Project; together with the Review Team’s own assessment of the project achievements and performance. The aim of the MTR was largely to see if the Project was “on track” and to give recommendations for further implementation of the Project, if required. The elements reviewed, in addition to the appropriateness of the project design (including the LFA elements) and the project progress at large, were relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the Project.

The Draft Review Report was submitted 9 October 2009, and the final version in hand was prepared with regard to the comments from the key project partners (enclosed in *Appendix 8*).

The Review Team comprised the following members:

- ◇ Mr. Tore Laugerud, Environmental Expert/Team Leader from Nordic Consulting Group (NCG) Norway
- ◇ Ms. Sera Rose Mkandawire, Consultant/Agribusiness Expert, Bunda College of Agriculture, University of Malawi, Lilongwe
- ◇ Mr. Emmanuel James Kantchewa, Economist (& National Project Coordinator for all FAO projects), Min. of Agriculture and Food Security, Lilongwe

The Review Team wants to thank all the involved project partners for their open and kind contribution during the Review. In specific should be mentioned the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Lilongwe, Norad, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and FAO for having trust in the RT to undertake the Mid-Term Review of a relatively comprehensive and multi-faceted Project.

A special thanks goes to the FAO Project Manager, Mr. Blessings Mwale and his key staff, who with never-failing positive attitude and prompt effectiveness was responsible for arranging the meetings and logistics during the RT’s work in Malawi.

*23 October 2009*

*Tore Laugerud*

*Senior Advisor, Environment Sector (Team Leader)*

*Nordic Consulting Group (NCG) Norway*

*The conclusions and recommendations in this report are clearly those of the Review Team, and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the Royal Norwegian Embassy, Norad, the Min. of Agriculture and Food Security or FAO, or any of the persons and institutions consulted, and are thus not in any way binding for the Project.*

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADD	- Agricultural Development Division
ADP	- Agricultural Development Programme
ADP-SP	- Agricultural Development Programme Support Project
AEDC	- Agricultural Extension Development Coordinator
AEDO	- Agricultural Extension Development Officer
AIDS	- Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AM	- Annual Meeting
APL	- Adaptable Programme Lending
AR	- Annual Report
ARDEP	- Agricultural Research and Development Programme
A-SWAp	- Agricultural Sector Wide Approach
BA	- Black Australop (chicken)
CA	- Conservation Agriculture
CADECOM	- Catholic Development Commission in Malawi
CARD	- Centre for Agricultural Research and Development
CB	- Capacity building
CBO	- Community Based Organisation
DADO	- District Agriculture Development Officer
DAESO	- District Agricultural Extension Services Officer
DC	- District Commissioner
DCAFS	- Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security
DCPO	- District Crop Production Officer
DFO	- District Fisheries Officer
DLRDO	- District Land Resources Conservation Officer
EC	- European Commission
ECOSOC	- Economic and Social Council (of UN)
EIA	- Environmental Impact Assessment
EPA	- Extension Planning Area
EU	- European Union
FAO	- Food and Agricultural Organisation (of the UN)
FISP	- Farm Input Subsidy Programme
FBO	- Farmer Based Organisation
FBS	- Farmers Business School
FFS	- Farmers Field School
FICA	- Flemish International Cooperation Agency
FIDP	- Farm Income Diversification Programme
FUM	- Farmers Union of Malawi
FY	- Financial Year (in Malawi 1.07-31.06)
GDP	- Gross Domestic Product
GEF	- Global Environmental Facility
GoM	- Government of Malawi
GSL	- Group Saving Loans
ha	- Hectare (measure for land area, 1 ha= 10,000 m <sup>2</sup> )
HIV	- Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HQ	- Headquarters
HS	- Highly Satisfactory
HU	- Highly Unsatisfactory
IC	- Institutional Cooperation
IGPWP	- Income Generation Public Works Programme
IMF	- International Monetary Fund
IR	- Inception Report
IRLADP	- Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture Development Programme
LAF	- Local Authority Fund

LDF	- Local Development Fund
LF	- Lead Farmer
LFA	- Logical Framework Approach
LTU	- Lead Technical Unit
LVEMP	- Lake Victoria Environmental Management Programme
MASAF	- Malawi Social Action Fund
M&E	- Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	- Millennium Development Goal
MFA	- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MGDS	- Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MIRTDC	- Malawi Industrial Research and Technology Centre
MLBDP	- Malawi Lake Basin Development Programme
MoU	- Memorandum of Understanding
MoAFS	- Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MoIWD	- Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development
MoLGRD	- Ministry of Local Government and Rural development
MS	- Marginally Satisfactory
MTR	- Mid-term Review
MU	- Marginally Unsatisfactory
MUSCCO	- Malawi Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives
MVP	- Marianist Volunteer Programme (an NGO)
MWK	- Malawi Kwacha
NAPHAM	- National Association of People Living with HIV and AIDS in Malawi
NASFAM	- National Smallholder Farmers` Association of Malawi
NCG	- Nordic Consulting Group
NEPAD	- New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	- Non-Governmental Organisation
NOK	- Norwegian Kroner
Norad	- Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NPC	- National Project Coordinator
O&M	- Operation and maintenance
PC	- Project Coordinator
PD	- Project Document
PLWHA	- People living with HIV and AIDS
PM	- Project Manager
PP	- Project Proposal
PRA	- Participatory Rural Appraisal
PSC	- Project Steering Committee
QA	- Quality Assurance
RNE	- Royal Norwegian Embassy (in Lilongwe, Malawi)
RT	- Review Team
PIU	- Project Implementation Unit
S	- Satisfactory
SAR	- Semi-Annual Report
SCC	- Swedish Cooperative Centre
SCUS	- Save the Children US
SPSF	- Special Programme for Food Security
STS	- Supervisory Technical Support
TA	- Traditional Authority
TCDC	- Technical Cooperation between Developing Countries
TF	- Task Force
ToR	- Terms of Reference
UN	- United Nations
UNDP	- United Nations Development Programme
USD	- US dollars

- WFP - World Food Programme
- WS - Workshop
- WVI - World Vision International (an NGO)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 1. INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW MANDATE

- The Agreement between Norway, Malawi and The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO) was signed 23 August 2006, the Project was launched ultimo March 2007, and was fully operational from June 2007.
- The Review Team (RT) undertook the joint fieldwork in Malawi during 31.08 - 11.09.2009, and also communicated with the NASFAM review team.

### 2. THE PROJECT DESIGN

- The nominations given to the project objectives in the various project documents are not consistent. This has however not hampered the implementation of the Project.
- There are three project components (named “immediate objectives”), with altogether 12 outputs:
  - Small scale irrigation, water control and watershed development.
  - Intensification and diversification of farm production.
  - Empowerment of communities to sustain projects benefits.
- The initial list of activities, as presented in the Inception Report, is not consistently followed throughout the project reporting, making progress difficult to follow for outsiders.
- Seven relevant easily quantifiable main indicators have been formulated, and these are being reported against in the Project. The revised list of targets was formally approved by the project partners in November 2007 (and the list was presented in the 2008 Annual Report).
- Notably, the Project was initially designed to reach 40,000 households, but this was later reduced to 23,500 due to a serious calculation error in the initial FAO budget, leaving fewer funds for implementation.
- It is assumed that the revised activity level and planned outputs comply with the revised budget framework, and that this is mutually agreed between all project parties, including the project management.
- The assumptions/risks identified early in the project planning were all relevant, although the issue of increased feed prices, being so detrimental to some project activities, was not listed. Risk management has been satisfactory.
- There seems to have been no incidents, or even indications, of fraud, corruption or unhealthy business practices within the Project.

- The managerial set-up of the Project seems relevant under the prevalent circumstances in Malawi at project start-up.

### 3. ASSESSMENT OF OVERALL PROJECT PROGRESS AND IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE

#### 3.1 Overall Activity Progress and Performance

- The rating scale of the RT follows a six points scale, ranging from Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory.
- Component 1: Small scale irrigation, water control and watershed development. Rating: Marginally Unsatisfactory-Satisfactory (treadle pumps successful, but motorised pumps not; other water harvesting techniques just started).
- Component 2: Intensification and diversification of farm production. Rating: Marginally Unsatisfactory-Satisfactory (Conservation Agriculture, pass-on of livestock programme and cross-breeding of chickens successful, but diversification of crops not).
- Component 3: Empowerment of communities to sustain project benefits. Rating: Marginally Satisfactory-Satisfactory (all activities mainstreamed, close cooperation and interaction between project and district governmental staff, extensive training at all levels).

#### 3.2 Standard Evaluation Elements

- On the standard evaluation elements, the RT gave the *overall* Project the following ratings:
  - Relevance: Highly Satisfactory. (The Project is fully conforming to the national food security and climate change strategies, policies and programmes).
  - Effectiveness: Marginally Satisfactory-Satisfactory (CA, treadle pump irrigation and livestock pass-on most successful; agri-business groups being least successful).
  - Efficiency: Marginally Satisfactory-Satisfactory. (Difficult to assess. Project management outside the government system, but commendable close cooperation and successful interaction. Combining transport. Transaction costs are difficult to verify).
  - Impact: Satisfactory. (Tangible impacts in household livelihood, food security increased. Diversification of crops lagging behind, appropriate capacity building of governmental staff and local offices).
  - Sustainability: Technical-Marginally



Satisfactory; Environmental-Satisfactory;  
Institutional-Satisfactory; Economic/  
Financial-Unsatisfactory (being the decisive  
factor for sustainability). Too early to expect  
sustainability in a developing country like  
Malawi, also knowing that in Malawi  
sustainability is affected by a number of  
external factors outside the Project.

### **3.3 Financial Management. Expenditures and Auditing**

- Project expenditures by August 2009 are around USD 3.9 million, being 75% of the total Norwegian allocation, which is according to the expenditure schedule in the Agreement.
- The Agreement states that the FAO administration costs should be maximum 9% of the Direct Project Costs, but the budget breakdown in the Agreement in fact shows 13.2%. The real administration costs are impossible to assess, based on the prevalent project accounting.
- The project accounting refers to items with other nominations than the budget in the Agreement, so it is impossible to compare the real expenditures on various items with the initially planned ones.
- The expenditures for Consultants, Travel and Operating Expenses by far exceed the budget in the Agreement.
- The cash flow through FAO HQ to the Project has largely been satisfactory.
- The project funds are audited as part of the total FAO portfolio, and not as a separate project, which is formally required in the Agreement.

## **4. ASSESSMENT OF OTHER RELEVANT PROJECT ASPECTS**

### **4.1 Project Document Management and Reporting**

- Document front pages largely contain adequate information for easy orientation. Some documents lack headers and footers, and opening of acronyms.
- The progress reports with photos inserted in the text are too heavy and thus difficult to send by email and “heavy” to handle.
- The progress reports are detailed, but do not report on achievements related to the initial list of activities, so progress from one period to the next is difficult to comprehend.
- The heading and bullet hierarchy in the reports are difficult to relate to in a logical way.

### **4.2 Interaction with other Programmes and Projects**

- The Project has liaison with several other programmes and projects in the area to avoid overlap of interventions. Information exchange in regular stakeholder meetings.
- The Project has no direct cooperation with the Lake Basin Development Programme (also supported by Norway). Approach to village funding somewhat different in the two programmes, which poses no major problems.

### **4.3 FAO's Role in the Project**

- While waiting for the rather weak governmental system, at district level, to be strengthened and capacitated to handle larger donor-supported projects, an appropriate solution at start-up (2006) was to ask FAO undertaking the project management. This has secured appropriate actions and tangible results at grassroots level.
- The achievements of the Project are to the most extent attributed to the dedication and skills of the project management (as in most projects).
- The technical assistance from FAO through the STS (Supervisory Technical Support) and the TCDC (Technical Cooperation between Development Countries) has been highly appreciated by the project staff.
- The One UN system has not really taken off in Malawi and has had no influence on the Project as such.

### **4.4 The Gender Aspect**

- The gender aspect is well taken onboard in the Project, with 64% of the beneficiaries being women.

### **4.5 The Revolving Funds**

- The low repayment rates of both the Farmers Group Revolving Funds and the Village Banks might be attributed to i.e.: the “hand-out syndrome”; small intervention packages; and low literacy levels. The positive attitude of the traditional leaders is important to achieve ownership, influencing sustainability.

## **5. OVERALL CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

- In general, the RT considers the Project to be on the positive side, although some elements definitely have a potential for improvements. This impression results mainly from the relevant and mainstreamed activities at community level, being clearly in line with the A-SWAp. The project management has very close cooperation with the governmental system at all levels, which

is commendable.

- CA, irrigation with treadle pumps and livestock pass-on are the most successful activities. The project activities at large will however not be sustainable when the Project ends (economic/financial sustainability lacking).
- The Review Team highlights the following recommendations for the Project:
  - The successful activities in securing food for the population all year around should continue according to plans (especially CA and livestock pass-on programme). It should be considered to increase the area of support from 0.2 to 0.4 ha on a trial basis.
  - The irrigation programme with treadle pumps should continue as planned.
  - The starting of new irrigation schemes with motorised pumps should be discontinued, but efforts should be made to make the existing motorised irrigation groups properly operational, including the brick canals.
  - The design of unlined irrigation canals dug in soil must reflect the type of soil in the area.
  - The Review Team will advice against starting new agro-business groups, but rather put efforts into making the existing ones operational and sustainable.
  - The marketing aspects must be instigated as an integral part of the Farmers Business Schools` curriculum.
  - It is not recommended to make any drastic changes in the project management set-up during the remaining two years of the project period, as this will confuse all parties and be detrimental to some activities.
  - The project management must formulate an Exit Strategy of the Project, aiming at alignment with the A-SWAP as far as possible.
  - The layout of the progress reporting should be improved in order to make the report more readable.
  - The RT strongly recommends that the equipment and especially the vehicles bought for the Project, remain in the districts after the Project ends.
  - In order to strengthen sustainability, the RT recommends the project partners to seriously *consider* the continuation of the successful project *activities* in one form or the other, with support from i.e. Norway (and/or the GoM). In case such support is agreed upon, it will have to be aligned with the A-SWAP efforts (depending on the status at that time). The One UN system could also be considered as a possible (but less preferred) routing for funds, earmarked to certain activities and areas. In any case should the present managerial and administrative set-up of the Project be discontinued.
- The following lessons learned can be listed:
  - Before starting production in any new agro-business groups, the market potential for various products must be properly explored. Business support should only be given to the farmers being above the minimum subsistence level.
  - The success of any intervention is fully dependent on the wholehearted participation of the governmental system at local level. Incentives for the government staff to identify with the actions must be carefully considered, like transport facilitation.
  - The reporting requirements of the various partners should be discussed at the start-up of a project and a common format should be agreed to.
  - The technical standard of infrastructure development must not be relaxed, which might mean closer technical supervision during the construction phase.
  - Motorised pumps should be avoided as they make the communities much more vulnerable to breakdowns and lack of operational funds. Simpler and more appropriate technology should be encouraged, e.g. the treadle pumps.
  - Awareness raising and capacity building at farmer level is a never-ending undertaking and must be re-addressed at certain intervals.
  - Careful considerations should be made to either going “deep” or “wide” with the interventions in a project. Although both approaches could be tried, the RT believes that going “deep” will give the best learning effect and sustainability.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW MANDATE .....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 BRIEF INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND .....	5
1.2 THE REVIEW CONSULTANT'S MANDATE AND APPROACH .....	6
1.3 PREVIOUS PROJECT REVIEW .....	7
<b>2. THE PROJECT DESIGN.....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES .....	8
2.2 OTHER RELEVANT PROJECT DESIGN ELEMENTS.....	10
2.3 PROJECT ADMINISTRATIVE/MANAGERIAL SET-UP.....	13
2.4 PROJECT STEERING DOCUMENTS .....	14
<b>3. ASSESSMENT OF OVERALL PROJECT PROGRESS AND IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE...15</b>	
3.1 OVERALL ACTIVITY PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE .....	15
3.1.1 <i>Introduction. Rating Scale</i> .....	15
3.1.2 <i>Assessment of Outputs</i> .....	15
3.2 REVIEW OF STANDARD EVALUATION ELEMENTS .....	18
3.2.1 <i>Project Relevance</i> .....	18
3.2.2 <i>Project Effectiveness</i> .....	18
3.2.3 <i>Project Efficiency</i> .....	20
3.2.4 <i>Project Impact</i> .....	21
3.2.5 <i>Project Sustainability</i> .....	23
3.3 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT, EXPENDITURES AND AUDITING .....	25
3.3.1 <i>Overall Budget and Project Expenditures as per Time of Review</i> .....	25
3.3.2 <i>Financial Flows. Invoicing and Cash Flow</i> .....	27
3.3.3 <i>Project Auditing</i> .....	27
<b>4. ASSESSMENT OF OTHER RELEVANT PROJECT ASPECTS .....</b>	<b>27</b>
4.1 PROJECT DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING .....	27
4.1.1 <i>Document Layouts and Formats</i> .....	27
4.1.2 <i>Technical Work Plans and Progress Reporting</i> .....	28
4.1.3 <i>Financial Reporting</i> .....	28
4.1.4 <i>Other Reporting</i> .....	28
4.2 INTERACTION WITH OTHER PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS .....	29
4.2.1 <i>Various Interventions</i> .....	29
4.2.2 <i>Malawi Lake Basin Development Programme</i> .....	30
4.3 FAO'S ROLE IN THE PROJECT .....	31
4.4 THE GENDER ASPECT .....	33
4.5 THE REVOLVING FUNDS .....	33
<b>5. OVERALL CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED.....</b>	<b>34</b>
5.1 OVERALL CONCLUSION .....	34
5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	35
5.3 LESSONS LEARNED .....	37

## **APPENDICES:**

Appendix 1: Maps, figures and tables

Appendix 2: List of project activities

Appendix 3: Progress updates presented to the Review Team

Appendix 4: List of persons met and contacted. Team itinerary.

Appendix 5: List of documents reviewed

Appendix 6: The Review Team's Terms of Reference

Appendix 7: Illustration photos

Appendix 8: Comments to the Draft Report

# 1. INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW MANDATE

## **1.1 Brief Introduction and Background**

Malawi (see map in *Figure 1.1* in *Appendix 1*), a land-locked country bordering to Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, was British Protectorate until 1964 when it became independent. The population is about 14-15 million, and the high population growth, increasing pressure on agricultural lands, corruption, and the spread of HIV/AIDS pose major problems for the country. As the country is poor in natural minerals, the economy is predominately agricultural with about 85% of the population living in rural areas. Agriculture accounts for more than one-third of GDP and 90% of export revenues. The economy depends on substantial inflows of economic assistance from the IMF, the World Bank, and individual donor nations. The administrative division of the country into districts is shown in *Figure 1.2* (with the three project districts indicated). *Figure 1.3* shows only the three participating districts - Balaka, Machinga and Mangochi, with the division into agricultural Extension Planning Areas (EPA), with project areas marked in red colour.

The Project, “Ensuring Food Security and Developing Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project”, was initiated in 2006 when an Aide Memoir was signed in April, following a Project Proposal by FAO the same month. The Project is a direct follow-on of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS, Jan02-Dec04), and is completely complying with the Food and Nutrition Security Policy from June 2005. *Figure 1.4* in *Appendix 1* shows key milestones within the Project and also some important pre-Project events. The Agreement between Norway, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO) and Malawi regarding the Project was signed 23 August 2006.

The Project is managed by the FAO and implemented by a Project Office (Project Implementation Unit - PIU) in Liwonde Town in Machinga District, in close cooperation with the local offices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS), Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development (MoIWD) and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MoLGRD). The Government of Norway has provided support to FAO since 2006 with a frame of NOK 33 million, of which around NOK 22 million have been disbursed by Mid-2009.

In line with the national policy to promote irrigated agriculture, especially through the Green Belt irrigation project, to boost food production and combat hunger, the Project adopted an approach of supporting various irrigation initiatives. The Project attempts to provide small-scale farm households, with less than two hectares of land, with the skills and technologies in irrigation to increase food production and increase household incomes in three districts. Special attention is made to target marginal farmers, female-headed households, HIV and AIDS affected people, and the disabled. The Project also supports production of rain-fed cropping and income generation through crop and livestock diversification.

### **Box 1: The Green Belt**

The Green belt is a GoM programme aimed at reducing the country's dependency on rain fed agriculture. Plans are underway that from 2009/2010 financial year government is expected to start implementing the scheme that is targeting to bring up to 1,000,000 hectares of land under irrigation.

The programme will utilise water from Lake Malawi, Lake Chirwa and from the perennial rivers, scattered across the country, to enhance production of a variety of crops all year round. Special attention is given to rice production, which would help alleviate food shortage. Livestock and fish production will also be part of the initiative.

The president of Malawi, Dr Bingu wa Mutharika, at the UN general assembly in 2008, appealed to the G-8 countries to support Malawi to create a green belt around lakes and along rivers to irrigate land of up to 20 km from the shores.

*Info compiled by the RT*

The Project was originally designed to reach approximately 40,000 households but this target was later revised downwards to 23,500, when a serious calculation error in the FAO budget EXCEL sheet was revealed during the first appraisal by the project management. The intention was for the Project to work very closely with the local governments in the three districts.

The overall goal of the Project is to alleviate the immediate problems of poverty and food security amongst the resource-poor rural households, addressing their needs by better water control and

sustainable use of the environment. The purpose is to support the efforts of Government in implementing its Food and Nutrition Security Project and mitigate the food crisis facing the many vulnerable households. The project activities were launched in March 2007 and the PIU was fully operational from June 2007.

**Box 2: Food and Nutrition Security Policy**

The goal of the Food and Nutrition Policy is to significantly improve the food and nutrition security of the population of Malawi by ensuring that all Malawians have physical and economic access to sufficient nutritious food required to lead a healthy and active life. Recognising the challenges that are present on the ground, the policy looks for rapid and substantial reduction in the severity of hunger and issues related to malnutrition that impact the nation in many critical areas such as health, education, and the economy at large.

*The Review Team*

## **1.2 The Review Consultant's Mandate and Approach**

The Agreement of 23 August 2006 between Norway, FAO and Malawi states: “A *mid-term review focusing on progress to date and the effectiveness of the Project, i.e. the extent to which the Purpose is being/has been achieved, shall be carried out within the second quarter of 2009*”. The Royal Norwegian Embassy (RNE), FAO and the MoAFS therefore decided to undertake such a joint review during second half of 2009, and the review team composition was mutually agreed between the parties. It was decided that the Team Leader would be an independent Norwegian consultant, and this position was finally contracted to Nordic Consulting Group (NCG) Norway, following a tendering amongst selected Norwegian consulting companies.

The purpose of the Mid-term Review (hereafter also referred to as MTR or “the Review”) was largely to take stock of the Project and assess whether it was on the right track as planned and intended. The Team assessed the overall implementation status of the Project so far with reference to the standard evaluation elements used by Norad in the Development Cooperation Manual: effectiveness, efficiency, impact, relevance and sustainability. The Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Review Team (hereafter referred to as “the Team” or “the RT”) is enclosed in *Appendix 6*. The Review is named “mid-term”, which in this case, as opposed to in most other projects, is appropriate because it simply came in the very middle of the Project.

The Team studied relevant reports and information prior to the joint fieldwork in Malawi. In Lilongwe, prior to starting the meetings in the project area, the Review Team had a kick-off meeting with the RNE, followed by meetings with key departments in the MoAFS and MoIWD. The Team had an appointment with the World Bank representative in Malawi, who also is the chair of the Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security (DCAFS), but unfortunately he could not meet the Team. This mishap did however not alter the main conclusions of the Team.

The Review Team had meetings with representatives of several village groups in the three project districts, in addition to meetings with representatives of the District Councils and especially the agricultural sector staff both at district and Extension Planning Area (EPA) level. In all meetings the RT was received with openness and a positive attitude from the project staff and the village beneficiaries, and all pertinent and impertinent questions from the RT were answered to their best ability. Names of the persons met with are listed in *Appendix 4*, together with the preliminary itinerary of the Team. The field visit programme was altered during the course of events to allow for more in-depth meetings with the stakeholders, but most of the sites indicated in the itinerary were visited. At the end of the joint fieldwork (on 11 September) the Review Team presented the main observations and preliminary recommendations to representatives from the RNE, FAO, the project management and the district authorities, who were then given an opportunity for immediate comments to the RT's findings and input to the further reporting.

The Review Team was specifically asked by RNE/Norad to make close contact with the team reviewing the Norwegian support to National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM), ongoing simultaneously with the FAO Review. The FAO project Review Team therefore initially postponed their timing of the Review to secure such overlap. The Team Leader of the FAO Review met with the NASFAM Team Leader in Oslo (Norad office), and had a telephone conference with him thereafter. Also the two team leaders met in a hotel in Lilongwe and the two teams met jointly with the responsible staff at the RNE for de-briefing and exchange of views. The report of the FAO Project Review Report was also

given to the NASFAM team for information.

The Draft Report was submitted 9 October 2009, and the Final Report in hand was prepared with due regard to the comments from the project partners to the Draft Report. In the name of transparency, the comments are enclosed in *Appendix 8* to this final version.

### **1.3 Previous Project Review**

No other external in-depth review of the Project has taken place earlier. However, in 2007 a team contracted by Norad undertook a review of the Norwegian support to FAO and Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC) in Malawi, with findings presented in the report: “Climate Change and Rural Livelihoods in Malawi. Review study report of Norwegian support to FAO and SCC in Malawi, with a note on some regional implications”<sup>1</sup>, submitted in January 2008. The review team in November 2007 visited a couple of the project sites of the FAO Project during their field trip in the area, both where activities had just started but were in full swing.

The review team visited two Norwegian-sponsored sustainable livelihood projects in Malawi (undertaken by FAO and SCC) and three programmes (Agricultural Research and Development Programme-ARDEP, Centre for Agricultural Research and Development-CARD and NASFAM) to ascertain their relevance to adaptation to climate change in Malawi. The team found that since adaptation to climate change was not a project design feature, the relevance of the activities regarding adaptation to climate change was incidental, but that many relevant activities undertaken in the projects aimed at better land management, more robust agricultural production systems, and community awareness and participation. The report also concluded that production-oriented interventions, e.g. higher production rates from long duration maize or specialized maize production at the expense of subsidiary crops (sorghum, millet, legumes, and vegetables) may render the farming systems significantly more vulnerable to adverse weather. It concluded that diversification into small livestock production could, if properly managed, offer increased food security under adverse climate conditions, as this was important to reduce rampant child under-nutrition. The predominance of female-led households in the project areas indicates that remittances will be important elements of household incomes.

Further, the report concluded that rural livelihoods projects should seek opportunities to make better use of natural resource assets, pools and flow, to allow the communities adapt to climate change. For example, better technologies could be introduced to conserve rainwater at catchment level. In this case, both FAO and SCC could promote diversification of programmes including the promotion of fruit trees, leguminous plants, folder crops and other small ruminants including rabbits. Post harvest technologies could be considered for improved food security and household income, in particular drying of meat, vegetables and fruits. Waste resource management could be promoted to a larger scale involving organic materials from hospital and education institutions, especially in Mangochi district.

The report also urged the two livelihood projects (FAO and SCC, in this case basically meaning the Lake Basin Programme, see info later in this report) to work together and collaborate with other organisations to create market, improve efficiency and promote specialisation of specific programmes. Physiographic and socio-economic conditions must be factored into their interventions at planning level and communities’ knowledge must be considered for better implementation of the projects. The review team additionally raised concern about the technical standard of some irrigation schemes visited, and the quality of the technical assistance rendered.

The MTR Team for the FAO Project has some of the same concerns almost two years after, especially regarding the technical quality of the irrigation efforts and the limited focus on marketing in the Project. Obviously, a closer cooperation between the FAO project and the SCC did not materialise as proposed following the climate adaption review team.

---

<sup>1</sup> Noragric Report No. 41 (Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Dept. of International Environment and Development Studies). Stein W. Bie, David Mkwambisi and McDonald Gomani

## 2. THE PROJECT DESIGN

### 2.1 Project Objectives

As a useful backdrop for the assessment below, the below boxes give the explanations of the long-term and short-term objectives (*goal* and *purpose* respectively) as outlined i.e. in the “Handbook for Objective-oriented Planning” produced by Norad, being commonly used in all development cooperation project assisted by the Norwegian Government since the beginning of the 1990s.

**Goal:** In a logframe context, the goal (also referred to as the “development objective” or “overall objective”) of any Project is defined to be the long-term objective to which the Project will significantly contribute. The achievement of the goal will, however, also depend on other factors and Projects beyond this particular Project. Formulation of the goal should ideally be clearly defined and used as a main point of reference by all involved parties during Project implementation. This means that a narrow, specific goal normally should be formulated (close to the purpose), also increasing the probability of “success” when evaluating the Project achievements against the goal later on. The goal must represent a sufficient justification for the Project, should be formulated as a desired state (not as an activity), it must not be too ambitious, it should preferably mention the target groups, and should ideally be expressed in verifiable terms.

**Purpose:** According to the logframe methodology, the purpose should be the state (or situation) that is expected to prevail as a direct consequence of the Project, also meaning the outcome (or intended impact) of the Project. The achievement of the purpose is clearly *outside* the Project and *cannot* be guaranteed by the Project Management. However, when the results (outputs) are delivered as planned, there is a high probability that the purpose will prevail. Any project should have *only one* purpose, which ideally should specify the target groups, should be formulated as a desired state (not as an activity), should be precise and verifiable, and should be realistic. The purpose should be as “close” as possible to the guaranteed results.

Below follow references to important project documents where the objectives of the Project are presented:

#### **a) *The Agreement***

The main steering document for the Project, the Agreement between MFA, FAO and MoAFS signed 23 August 2006, lists the following objectives:

Goal (development objective): “*To support the Government in implementing its Food and Nutrition Security programme and mitigate the food crisis facing the many vulnerable households in Malawi*”.

Purpose (primary purpose): “*To alleviate the immediate problems of poverty and food security amongst the resource poor rural households, through water management for irrigation and sustainable use of the environment*”.

Immediate Objectives: “*i) to expand the area under small scale irrigation, water control and watershed management; ii) to improve incomes and social conditions of rural communities through intensification and diversification of farm production; iii) to promote capacity building and institutional strengthening at district and community levels*”.

#### **b) *The Project Document***

In the Project Document (undated, but from sometime in 2006), the objectives are listed as:

Development Objective: “*To alleviate the immediate problems of poverty and food security amongst the resource poor rural households, addressing their needs by better water control and the sustainable use of the environment*”.

Immediate Objectives: “*1. Small scale irrigation, water control and watershed development; 2. Intensification and diversification of farm production; 3. Capacity building and institutional strengthening*”.

#### **c) *The Inception Report***

The Inception Report (IR) from May 2007 lists the following objectives under the heading “Development

Objectives”:

Overall Purpose: “*To support the efforts of the Government in implementing its Food and Nutrition Security programme and mitigate the food crisis facing the many vulnerable households in Malawi*”.

Primary Objective: “*To alleviate the immediate problems of poverty and food security amongst the resource poor rural households, addressing their needs by better water control and the sustainable use of the environment*”.

Under the heading “Immediate Objectives” (“supporting the development objectives and aims”) is stated:

Specific Immediate Objectives: “*1. Small scale irrigation, water control and watershed development; 2. Intensification and diversification of farm production; 3. Capacity building and institutional strengthening*”.

#### **d) The Progress Reports**

It is noted that in the 2007 Annual Reports (AR), the 2008 AR and the 2009 Semi-Annual Report, produced by the project management, the objectives listed are identical (also in nomination) to the ones presented in the Inception Report.

#### **e) Other Project Documents**

The wording of the objectives to some degree varies in the other written material produced under the Project. It should be mentioned that in the “Project Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy & Planning Matrix” of June 2007, we find the “*development objective*” to be defined as: “*To alleviate the immediate problems of poverty and food security amongst the resource poor rural households, addressing their needs by better water control and the sustainable use of the environment*”.

#### **The Review Team’s Assessment:**

Reference is made to *Figure 2.1* in *Appendix 1*, where the inter-relationship between the various elements in a project (the Project’s LFA matrix, also referred to as *logframe*) is illustrated, for easy reference to the reader.

As seen above, the formulation of project objectives are not exactly according “to the book” and the nominations given to the two levels of objectives are not at all consistent. Notable, the listing under the term “Specific Immediate Objectives” is bulleting the main *activities* of the Project, and this has nothing to do with the objectives per se, as the objectives are clearly *outside* of the Project, hopefully materialising *after* the outputs (results) of the Project have been delivered as planned.

In principle, the formulations in the Agreement should be the decisive ones guiding the Project, and the goal and purpose are clearly enough formulated therein. However, the term “primary purpose” in principle does *not* exist, and clearly the “immediate objectives” should be the “purpose” itself. Here, even the Agreement flaws on the terminology (by listing the main *activities* as “immediate objectives”), hence no wonder the subsequent documents in the Project are confused on the terminology.

Another feature about a project logframe in general, is that the formulations should be well considered and formulated in the Project Document, and should *not* be altered or re-formulated during the Project, but maintain the exact same wording throughout in all written documents produced by the Project. The formulation of objectives is indeed an “art of semantics”, as it gives the rationale for *why* the project activities are undertaken in the first place. Notably, the logframe in the Project Document was construed as *preliminary* as indicated in the Agreement. Following the feedback from three district stakeholder consultative meetings (District Executive Committees) before project start-up, the Project Launch Workshop and the first District Work Planning and Budgeting and strategic session, the project logframe was reviewed and revised. In particular, the stakeholders felt the need to state the outputs in a much clearer and simplified version, to be easily understood by all stakeholders. The revised and final version was presented in the Inception Report. The project management is commended for their formulation consistency in the progress reports following the inception re-formulation.

The lack of consistent objective formulations in the logframe does *not* seem to have hampered the



implementation of the Project, has not created any confusion amongst project staff, or does not seem to have been a project issue at all since the implementation started. The course in which the Project has been moving since the start-up has been steady towards the initial *intentions* of the efforts. It would however appear that little guidance was given to the formulation of Project Document and Inception Report logframes at the start-up of the Project. It should be mentioned (merely as a curiosity) that formulation of consistent project logframes has in fact been a requirement in Norwegian development assistance since the early 1990s, but in this case FAO had had the main responsibility of the document preparation, and the Norwegian side only missed out on the quality assurance (QA) of the Agreement.

## **2.2 Other Relevant Project Design Elements**

### ***a) Outputs and Activities***

Outputs (or results) are the direct deliverables of the Project. The results are following from the successful implementation of the *activities* and these will be guaranteed by the project management.

It is noted that the three “Immediate Objectives” defined under the Project in reality are main Project Components (having been formulated as such and not as *objectives* per se), reflecting the three key areas of intervention:

1. Small scale irrigation, water control and watershed development
2. Intensification and diversification of farm production;
3. Empowerment of communities to sustain projects benefits (in the Project Document referred to as “Capacity building and institutional strengthening”).

These components (“objectives”) have several *outputs* linked to them, altogether 12 as outlined in the Inception Report and reported on later. It is noted that the Project Document had only seven outputs, but the RT appreciates that the full overview of the needs in the Project were not clear at the time of preparing the PD, and that the complete list of outputs were formulated in the Project Launch Workshop where all the stakeholders were present. This process is commendable and appreciated by the RT. The following outputs were defined under each of the project components (“objectives”):

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>1. Small scale irrigation, water control and watershed development</b></p> <p><b>Output 1.1:</b> Small scale irrigation systems promoted  <b>Output 1.2:</b> Water harvesting techniques promoted  <b>Output 1.3:</b> Watershed management improved</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2. Intensifications and diversifications of (smallholder) farm production (systems)</b></p> <p><b>Output 2.1:</b> Food crop productivity and production increased  <b>Output 2.2:</b> Access to food through diversified income opportunities promoted  <b>Output 2.3:</b> Livestock production diversified  <b>Output 2.4:</b> Fish farming promoted  <b>Output 2.5:</b> Linkages established between farmer groups and agribusiness service providers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3. Empowerment of communities to sustain project benefits</b></p> <p><b>Output 3.1:</b> Formulation of Farmer Based Organisation (FBOs) enhanced  <b>Output 3.2:</b> Capacity of staff, farmer based Organisations and households strengthened  <b>Output 3.3:</b> Effective partnerships between FBOs and services providers strengthened  <b>Output 3.4:</b> District planning and management reinforced through information and lessons based on project experience</p>
---	---	--

Notwithstanding the fact that the components (“objectives”) are formulated as “activities” in the Inception Report and progress reports (starting with “to...”), these are well intended and indeed constitute a good thematic distribution of the topics at stake in the Project.

Under each output, several activities have been identified, all listed in the Strategic Plan of Action (for May to July) in the Inception Report (table 1, which is enclosed as *Table 2.1* in *Appendix 1* to this report). This initial list of activities adequately reflects the various steps in the project development process under each component. It is however noted that this list is not consistently following the Project throughout. This is a pity indeed, as the progress of the various elements of the Project would have been much easier to follow by non-project people, as commented upon later in this report.

The *outcomes*<sup>2</sup> of the Project are formulated as:

- Improved on-farm productivity through rehabilitation and development of small scale irrigation and the design of improved agricultural practices,
- Improved food security in terms of availability of food crops and access to food,
- A broadened range of income generating options particularly for vulnerable households,
- Reduced rate of land degradation, soil erosion and deforestation through the sustainable use of the natural resource base,
- Emergence of self-sustaining communities and self help groups including women, and marginal farmers contributing to resource mobilisation and capital formation,
- Improved wellbeing of women through providing income opportunities, employment and reducing labour demands,
- Strengthened capacities of rural community members and village extension workers.

### ***b) Monitoring Indicators***

In an LFA modality the indicators define the performance standard to be reached in order to achieve the objectives or outputs.

The formulation of indicators for practical use in the monitoring of any project is normally a challenging exercise. Annex 2 to the Project Document (PD) lists “Selected Performance Indicators and Targets”. In addition to listing some “Impacts”, the “Performance” targets are mentioned in general terms (increased land under irrigation, increased yields, increased savings, etc.). Also the *qualitative* indicators of the outputs are quite adequately listed (area of land: irrigated, cultivated, treated, etc.; number of households involved in various activities, being trained, etc.). In the logframe table both in the PD and in the IR, “Objectively verifiable indicators” are listed for each output. These indicators are however very general in nature and not directly useful in the monitoring of achievements in the Project. In Annex 1 to the Agreement, the same indicators of qualitative nature are listed.

Finally, seven indicators were *quantified*, but due to some serious mis-calculations in the initial project budget, the target values listed in the PD later had to be reduced to comply with the final available budget. The official endorsement on the revision proposal was made on 27<sup>h</sup> November 2007 by the Embassy following the annual review meeting:

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Initial Target</b>	<b>Revised Target</b>
Area of land under irrigation (ha)	1,000	500
Area of land treated by improved land husbandry methods (ha)	5,000	4,000
Area of land brought into cultivation (ha)	500	0
Area of land under community forestry (ha)	500	500
Number of households with improved packages of inputs	30,000	23,500
Number of households with small scale livestock	10,000	6,666
Number of households with other income generating activities	5,000	1,800

The project management has after this revision been reporting against the revised targets. The RT believes the indicators listed are relevant and key to the challenges at stake. It is also commendable that the number of indicators is limited to realistic numbers, possible to measure by simple means. The RT also wants to commend the Project Manager (PM) for reviewing the budget in detail when he arrived, discovering the serious (and unbelievable!) mis-calculations undertaken by FAO in the preparatory stage. In case this had not been revealed at an early stage, it would have created a lot of unnecessary confusion and serious breach of expectations with the stakeholders and beneficiaries in the communities, undermining the confidence to the Project already from the start.

Having said this, the RT however observed that at several instances the project management complains that there were “*not enough funds to implement all the efforts as planned*”. This is not properly understood by the RT, as the activity level and project ambitions were in fact scaled down following the

<sup>2</sup> The term “outcome”, although widely used, is indeed an un-precise term largely reflecting the *effect* or *impact* of the interventions. In any case, the outcomes are outside “the Project” per se, being revealed *after* the results (outputs) of the Project have been delivered. As such, outcomes are clearly part of the *objectives* of any project and should be termed as such in order to avoid confusion and mix-up with the term *output*.

discovery of the calculation error in the initial budget. It is therefore assumed that the revised activity level and planned outputs comply with the revised budget framework, and that this is mutually “agreed” between all project parties, including the project management.

**c) Risks**

In an LFA modality, risks pertain to possible impacts on the Project from actions/happenings *outside* the control of the Project Management. There might also be “internal risks” within the Project itself, but these should merely be looked upon as “managerial challenges” that a competent management will be able to tackle.

The Project Document in Section F analyses the “Risks and Assumptions” briefly listed in the table below:

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Effect (Impact)</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
1. Unpredictability of rainfall and high incidence of drought is the principal risk associated with rain-fed farming	High	The harsh conditions create economic distress for many farmers and severe social hardship: shortages of seed, a reduced cropping area and low yields. Small farmers are reluctant to change to producing potentially higher income crops if their perception of risk of failure is too high.	Focus on ways to replenish water sources and select low risk activities to ensure greater security of livelihoods. Reduce the risk perception among farmers and the landless by subsidising risks and providing support (for the first cycle) for selected high-risk activities i.e. where on-farm experimentation or demonstration is required
2. Lack of capacity of counterpart staff at decentralised level to undertake project activities and in particular engineering design and construction works for rehabilitation of irrigation schemes and layout of soil and water conservation activities.	High	Poor physical construction and maintenance of rural infrastructure	Recognise that NGOs and the private sector should play an increasingly important role in the construction of irrigation schemes and ensure that responsibility for scheme O&M is equitably shared between the Ministry of Irrigation and farmer groups
3. Government staff at local level unable to work with the project as their time is divided between other projects and regular day to day tasks.	High	This would reduce the ability of the project to influence local capacity in a comprehensive way limiting the overall effect on the project recognising the failure of the support services to address farmer’s needs.	Involve senior and mid-level officials in familiarisation and management training. This may influence managers and mayors and ensure the support necessary to introduce new methods of extension.
4. Limited time frame to effectively show impact at grass roots level	Low	This would reduce the ultimate impact of the project on the rural community and owing to the short time frame might jeopardise sustainability of the CBOs. In short the full effects of the project could be severely hampered.	The project should negotiate with potential donors for a follow up phase of the project as soon as positive signs of impact appear to surface.

All the risks listed are relevant. The table shows that the risks in average have a high likelihood and would have serious impact on the Project. In addition to the ones listed, the issue of price increases that would impact on the available budget could have been mentioned. Especially the price increase on input material, as feed to livestock, has proven to be a decisive factor for the lack of full success of livestock enterprises in the areas. In the agri-business activities, the selling price of produce also could have been mentioned, because this affects the profit margins for the farmers, being small to start with.

The Project Document also mentions “risks internal to the project”. Such risks are not really “risks” in the formal sense of the logframe modality, but merely “managerial challenges“ that are *within* the control of

the project management. Having said that, one of the risks, “Untimely disbursement of funds” could be listed as an external (and real) risk dependent on FAO’s payment routines in general, but outside the control of the project management per se.

The project logframe table in the PD and in the IR have columns of “Assumptions”, which directly reflects the risks. In the RT’s opinion, the listed assumptions are all relevant. The RT also notes that the handling of risks by the project management during project implementation has been rather good, and that relevant and pragmatic measures have been instigated once a challenge has occurred. There seems to have been no incidents or even indications of fraud, corruption or unhealthy practices within the Project and no other risks have surfaced in connection with overall governmental policies and framework conditions. The Project is well in line with mainstream governmental strategies and thinking, complying fully with the ADP/A-SWAp framework.

So far in the Project there have been no non-expected challenges (or risks) facing the project management directly related to socio-related or gender issues, as such were carefully planned for. The gender aspect is an integral part of the Project. Neither have any disturbing risks been revealed connected to institutional and organisational factors, the two National Experts resigning this year<sup>3</sup> being the most “dramatic”. The project management handled this situation appropriately, and has not employed new staff as the district experts will take over more of the National Experts’ responsibilities, thus being part of an already started Exit Strategy. Any risk of non-integration into the local governmental system seem to have been handled appropriate by the project management, with for example all projects plans being discussed and agreed with the local officials and the project making sure transport facilities are made available to all working in the Project (project staff and officials alike). No risks regarding environmental issues have been highlighted by the project management so far, and very few are expected during this Project, as such will often be seen much later. The interventions targeted at working with people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) through (NAPHAM) has just started at the time of the Review, so no experience is gained on possible risks here.

### **2.3 Project Administrative/Managerial Set-up**

Section B.5 in the PD describes the institutional framework in which the Project will operate and outlines the managerial set-up and the roles of the main actors. *Figure 2.2 in Appendix 1* tries to capture the main elements of the managerial and administrative structure, to most degree complying with the description in the PD. The following is noted:

- The government staff at district level are key in the planning and implementation of the efforts in the communities, in line with the decentralisation efforts of the GoM.
- The Assistant Project Manager position designated by the MoAFS, being the local coordinator at the ground, has not been established and there seems to be no need for such position.
- The National Project Coordinator (NPC) for this Project is also the NPC for all other FAO projects in the country (and in fact one of the members of the MTR Team).
- It is noted that the description is not totally clear to the RT as to the responsibilities and roles of all the parties in the Agreement, as it states: “*The Project will be executed by Government and implemented by FAO in collaboration with MoAFS as counterpart ministry*”. Whereas “implemented” and “executed” normally are synonyms, this ambiguity does not seem to have created any confusion as to the roles in the Project.
- The Project Steering Committee (PSC) was never established, as it was found superfluous. The Annual Meetings serve as some sort of PSC, where the main stakeholders are meeting. Notably, there are not “meetings in May every year” as stated in the Agreement, but in October, which seems to be a more practical timing (instigated the first year when very little action on the ground had taken place in May 2007).
- The Technical Advisory Committees at district level were not formed, as the close daily cooperation between the project officers and the district staff made this superfluous. This contact is strengthened even more during 2009 through three of the National Experts in the PIU being allocated the roles as District Coordinators half way through the Project, and being located physically in the district local government headquarters (except the District Coordinator in Machinga, who lives and sits at the

---

<sup>3</sup> Obviously due to private reasons, as this had nothing to do with the Project per se.

DADO's office in Ntaja, whereas the DADO and Ass. DADO still lives in Liwonde<sup>4</sup>). This decentralisation is indeed a commendable action by the project management.

- The “coordination meetings” mentioned in the PD are not formalised, but meetings are conducted according to needs at district and EPA level. The Programme Manager (leader of the ADD) is calling semi-annual Stakeholder Meetings where all actors in the agricultural sector in the ADD meet and exchange information to secure synergy and avoid overlap of efforts in the villages.
- Two of the PIU staff, the National Water and Irrigation Expert and the National Farm Business Management Expert, resigned during first half of 2009. No replacements have been recruited, as the tasks of these two will to a larger extent be taken over by the government staff, strengthening further the ties between the Project and the government structure. This move is indeed commendable, as it de facto is the start of an Exit Strategy, although such one has not been explicitly formulated.
- In each of the DADO offices in the three districts, a Desk Officer, with an established position at the district, is appointed to be the contact person for the Project.
- Seven Community Assistants have recently been employed (and paid) by the Project in all the participating EPAs. Their main task is to assist the project management in reporting on project achievements and challenges, but they will also support in the community project activities at large and as required. (These positions will cease to exist when the Project ends).
- *Figure 2.2* also shows the main partners *outside* the Project, with whom the Project is interacting in one way or the other. This is described in a later section of this report.

The figure is largely assumed to be self-explanatory, and the RT finds the set-up to be appropriate to serve the activities of the Project.

The interaction between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS) and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MoLGRD) at various levels is illustrated in *Figure 2.3*. It should be noted that the District Agricultural Development Officer is part of the District Assembly (together with officers representing all the other sectors - environment, water/irrigation, health, education, etc.) through his representation in the District Executive Committee (which also comprises other stakeholders like NGOs, Senior Chiefs, etc.). *Figure 2.4* shows the organisational structure of the MoAFS, with the project districts and EPAs also listed.

## **2.4 Project Steering Documents**

The “steering documents” are the officially signed documents that contain the main outline and scope of the Project and its main objectives, guiding the direction in which the Project is heading. These documents should be used as reference documents in any new project or efforts that are taken onboard an already established project, and act as a “guiding star” for correct “navigation” at least once a year (in connection with the joint Annual Meetings - AMs). Seemingly, the RT has not seen the term “steering documents” used in any written project material, and there is no feel for the term as such in the Project. This has however not hampered the implementation of the Project in any way, and neither has it created any confusion with the project actors. The following documents are steering the Project, in priority order:

- The Agreement between FAO-Norway and GoM of 23.08.2006.
- The Inception Report of May 2007
- The Project Document of ??? 2006.

Normally, the Project Document has preference before the Inception Report, but in this case the roles are swapped, as stated in the Agreement. The former is used as the starting point to guide the implementation activities, and due to the serious mis-calculation of the budget in the PD, this also proved to be a pragmatic solution. The IR builds on the participation of the key stakeholders in the Kick-off Workshops and as such reflects the mutual approach and content of the Project.

---

<sup>4</sup> With the Machinga District Assembly sitting in Machinga Boma, and the ADD being located in Liwonde, where the PIU is also located, there are some logistical challenges to be overcome, especially transport-wise. The set-up is a remainder from the “old days” and there are plans of moving both the DADO's office and the District Assembly to Liwonde in the foreseeable future.

### 3. ASSESSMENT OF OVERALL PROJECT PROGRESS AND IMPLEMENTATION PERFORMANCE

#### 3.1 Overall Activity Progress and Performance

##### 3.1.1 Introduction. Rating Scale

In this section the RT briefly assesses the project progress, status and performance related to the standard evaluation elements: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. It should be clear that some of these issues are not possible to fully assess in a mid-term review, as this could only be undertaken once the Project is completed, and in fact some time *after* completion. Thus, a mid-term review of some of the issues has to assess the *likeliness* of degree of success/failure at the end in addition to observing the *real* successes or failures to date. This is commented upon under each of the below main headings.

There are various options of valuating the different aspects of the Project, and different institutions have various systems<sup>5</sup>. The World Bank previously had e.g. a system with *five* different scores, but has now (according to verbal information to the RT) changed to a six-level system. A five-level scoring system is not fully appreciated by the RT, as it does not force the assessors to decide whether the aspect at stake is on the positive or on the negative side of “the middle line”. UNDP and FAO in their Annual Performance reporting has always six ratings, which is more appreciated by the RT and will thus be used as far as relevant in the following assessment (with the RT’s refined definition of the meaning of the ratings):

- Highly satisfactory (HS): Project/project has delivered (or is highly likely to deliver) all of its planned results, and has achieved or exceeded *all its major* relevant objectives.
- Satisfactory (S): Project/project has delivered (or is expected to achieve) satisfactory most of its planned results with only a few shortcomings, and has achieved *most of its major* relevant objectives.
- Marginally satisfactory (MS): Project/project has achieved (or is expected to achieve) some planned results, and has achieved some of its major relevant objectives.
- Marginally unsatisfactory (MU): Project/project has achieved (or is expected to achieve) only few of its planned results, and has achieved *only a few of its major* relevant objectives.
- Unsatisfactory (U): Project/project has not yielded and is not expected to yield its planned results, and *failed to achieve most of its major* relevant objectives, and thus has significant shortcomings.
- Highly unsatisfactory (HU): Project/project has not yielded (and is not expected to yield) any worthwhile development results, and has *failed to achieve any of its major* relevant objectives.

(Under the terms “planned results” and “objective” above is also understood the compliance with planned time schedules, meaning that e.g. unintended delays could be considered a shortfall).

##### 3.1.2 Assessment of Outputs

In order to be able to assess the *overall* performance of the Project it is necessary to briefly assess the performance and status of *each* of the components and outputs in the Project. Without such assessment at output level, the overall project assessment would be based on too vague speculations. In this section therefore, assessment of the status and performance of the outputs under each component (“objective”) are briefly presented, as far as this has been possible in the rather short and hectic review period. It has not been possible for the RT to assess each and every activity and sub-activity under each output separately in more detail. The ratings given are entirely given based on the subjective overall impression by the RT, and are clearly not based on any structured and objective *scientific* rating and weighting process. The ratings thus only give some *indications* as to the “real” and relative performance and progress of the outputs and components, and should clearly *not* be read and construed as a “final objective verdict” of the Project.

It should be noted that the Inception Report lists only seven outputs, and obviously five more outputs

---

<sup>5</sup> The RT has deliberately chosen a system with rating *scores*, although it might be argued that this is a bit “tabloid”. However, in the assessment of so many activities in one project, it should be appreciated that the *relative* “success” of the various activities is interesting to establish, and this would hopefully also be useful for the Project Management to take onboard in their further discussions on the implementation of the Project.

were introduced during the first year following the IR submission, ending up with 12 (thereafter and still referred to). This change in number of outputs “suddenly” appears, without, to the RT’s knowledge, any formal information to or discussions with the partners beforehand. It is also noted that the IR contains a Table 1 showing the “Strategic Plan of Action for May to June”, with 125 activities (enclosed as *Table 2.1* in *Appendix 1*), whereas the narrative text in the same report (Section 4.3) only lists 39 activities. This discrepancy is not fully understood by the RT.

For easy reference and more detailed reading, *Appendix 3* gives the summaries of achievements at the time of the review for the Project aggregated and for each of the districts separately. These overviews were prepared specifically for the RT and were very much appreciated by the Team. Below follows a brief review of the Project with the main observations listed. (The listing is not intended to be exhaustive in any way).

**a) Component 1: Small Scale Irrigation, Water Control and Watershed Development**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Assessment of progress and performance</b>
<b>Output 1.1:</b> Small scale irrigation systems promoted	205 ha developed for irrigation. Increased crops production, mostly maize and rice (high demand), already materialised. 75% women involved. District staff training in computerized design. Treadle pumps: appropriate technology, easy to maintain, spare parts available locally, affordable. Some spares could have been supplied with pumps. (S) Motorized pumps: not properly installed (in sheds), so will wear out quickly. More costly spares and frequent O&M, cost of fuel high. Back/up treadle pumps needed. (MS-MU) Brick canals need improvement (embankment) and maintenance. Dug canals in sandy soil needs large slopes (avoid cave-ins). (MU)
<b>Output 1.2:</b> Water harvesting techniques promoted	Started Kuthambo scheme only. Dam and weirs in dried river beds to withhold water in rainy season (see photos). Construction of earth reservoirs. Very costly and lagging behind schedule (not ready for this growing season). Technical challenges to reduce erosion and silting. More similar schemes planned. Cost – benefit? (So far MU)
<b>Output 1.3:</b> Watershed management improved	Restoring degraded lands. Local nurseries and forestation at communal lands and private plots. More sensitization needed on protection/maintenance of trees in general. Grafting of fruit trees needed, not yet started. Enforcement of Forestry Management Plans needed. Construction of contour ridges and bunds, planting of Vetiver grass to prevent erosion, started at a small scale, but potential assumed to be large. (So far MS)

Comments:

- It is noted that the demand for firewood (and charcoal) for household cooking is high, and the Project should discourage extensive cutting of trees. One way is to introduce alternative and cheap cooking stoves that use less firewood or charcoal than “ordinary” stoves, and which can easily be produced locally. Good references for further exploration into this topic could be the “Guideline for Energy saving Stove Provision” – given to the RT by the Project Manager (author unknown), and/or the efforts under the Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project (LVEMP, a World Bank supported programme) and its success story in Kalemera village in Tanzania (see photos at the end of *Appendix 7*).

**b) Component 2: Intensifications and Diversifications of Farm Production**

<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Assessment of progress and performance</b>
<b>Output 2.1:</b> Food crop productivity and production increased	The Conservation Agriculture (CA) component especially successful, almost replicating by itself and “seeing is believing”. Establishment of Lead Farmers (LF) and Farmers Field Schools (FFS) around the LFs relative successful. Farmer to farmer learning effective. Food security improved through more in stock. (S) Need to encourage more energy foods, not only maize. Diversification of crops needs more attention (cassava, sorghum, sweet potato, Irish potato, where suitable) for nutrition purposes. Production of high quality feed not a success so far. (MU) Cotton experience large challenges (low prices etc.).
<b>Output 2.2:</b> Access to food through diversified income	Aiming at support to socio-economic needs for poor families. Small business enterprises: Price of feed stopped chicken enterprises (broilers and

opportunities promoted	layers), production of local feed started. Bee keeping, fish processing (drying) and bakery seem successful, but all production is sold outside (nothing consumed in families). More emphasis must be put on marketing training, and possible value addition through local packaging (rice). Commended for the marketing oriented planning training conducted for district staff, needs to extend the knowledge to farmers. Payback rate to group revolving funds too low. <i>(MU-MS, leaning more on the negative side)</i> Village Banks (Village Revolving Funds): some success stories with good repayment rates seen (average 64% first half of 2009), but some obviously show bad repayment rate. The attitude of people in addition to relatively high illiteracy levels might be reasons crippling this good initiative. More sensitization needed. <i>(MS-MU)</i>
<b>Output 2.3:</b> Livestock production diversified	Diversification elements (pass-on system of goats and chicken seems successful), likewise introduction of drug boxes. Local cross/breeding of Black Australop (BA) and local Hyline show good results. <i>(S)</i> Business side of production, especially layers and broilers, not successful due to external factors (feed prices) and lack of marketing training and market intelligence. Scarcity of pig feed creates problems. <i>(MU)</i>
<b>Output 2.4:</b> Fish farming promoted	Great interest and high local demand, but all production sold outside (not eaten in families). Not a large-scale activity so far. More sensitization and cheaper feed needed, activity not suitable in all areas. What about giving treadle pumps for easy replenishment of water in ponds? <i>(MS)</i>
<b>Output 2.5:</b> Linkages established between farmer groups and agribusiness service providers	Have started but not gained proper momentum so far. In general, marketing training and intelligence should be better integrated in the training of farmers, being decisive for success. Exposure through exchange visits to be intensified. <i>(So far-MU, but clearly having potential for improvements during the remaining project period)</i>

Comments:

Sensitisation campaigns should be intensified in the areas to help change the “hand-out dependency syndrome” that still prevails, and this could potentially help improve on the repayment rates for the revolving funds. Existing livestock business groups should be guided on how well they can utilise the remaining funds they managed to salvage from the previously failing activity (especially broiler/layers failures due to high price of feed), for example up-scale the existing cross-breeding programme to the farmers through farmer-to-farmer capacity building and exchange visits.

**c) Component 3: Empowerment of Communities to Sustain Project Benefits**

Outputs	Assessment of Progress and Performance
<b>Output 3.1:</b> Formulation of Farmer Based Organisation (FBOs) enhanced	The several groups form the basis for the village activities at large. Continues follow/up and additional awareness raising and sensitization required in several places, especially on the revolving fund issues to secure sustainability. <i>(S)</i>
<b>Output 3.2:</b> Capacity of staff, Farmer Based Organisations and households strengthened	Extensive training has been undertaken in the Project, and more is required. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) undertaken as start/up activity in all locations. Involvement of local leaders from the beginning creates ownership and local support. Community Assistants recruited and paid by the Project (not sustainable), mostly for data collection on progress in Project! FFS doing well, but more marketing training into Field Business Schools (FBS) needed. <i>(S)</i>
<b>Output 3.3:</b> Effective partnerships between FBOs and services providers strengthened	Farmer to farmer visits and training successful, and more should be instigated. Participation in agricultural fair positive and more should be encouraged. ADD stakeholder meetings important for dissemination of project info. Relatively little cooperation with NGOs (see other section in this report). Cooperation with NAPHAM has just started. Contacts and interaction with service providers must be strengthened, especially buyers of agricultural products. <i>(MS)</i>
<b>Output 3.4:</b> District planning and	All project activities mainstreamed with government strategies. Work plans coordinated with the district work plans, and planning and budgeting done



management reinforced through information and lessons based on project experience	jointly with districts to avoid overlap and secure synergies. District and EPA staff taking part in trainings and implementation of activities in the field. Project provides additional transport and subsistence. Impact survey under the Project, MoU with Ministry. Group exchanges with other projects/areas should be encouraged. (S)
---	---

### **3.2 Review of Standard Evaluation Elements**

Below, the RT has attempted to assess the standard evaluation elements that are normally assessed in any evaluation and review. The assessment follows mostly from observations in the field and partly reported progress on the activities as listed above. It is however difficult to make “weighted” aggregated assessments of the various activities, as they vary in size, characteristics and importance. An attempt has however been made based on pure subjective judgement from the information that has been made available to the RT, and the RT’s own observations and judgements.

#### **3.2.1 Project Relevance**

Relevance is a measure of whether the original rationale behind the Project and the objectives still are in keeping with the priorities and requirements of the national and local policy, priorities and needs, and the usefulness of the Project in this respect. The aspect covers the direction of the Project and its objectives as compared to possible social and political changes that have materialised since the Project start-up.

The Review Team concludes that the Project is fully conforming to the national food security and climate change strategies, policies and programmes. This also includes all activities under the Project, which are well in tune and fully aligned with the national development policy, including the Food and Nutrition Security Policy from 2005, Malawi Growth and Development Strategy 2006/2011 (MGDS), and in specific the Agricultural Sector Wide Approach (A-SWAp). There is also a project supported by the Norwegian Government called Agricultural Development Programme-Support Project (ADP-SP). It also complies with the Green Belt approach in the country, enhancing irrigation schemes within 20 km from the nearest water source.

The Project is (almost needless to say) also well in line with Norwegian development assistant policy and strategic goals, and the RT also concludes that these are in compliance with the high-level agreements signed between the two countries. *Overall rating: HS.*

#### **3.2.2 Project Effectiveness**

The effectiveness largely describes the Project progress as compared to the work plans and budgets, and the extent to which the targets (outputs) and objectives have been achieved so far. The prospect of achievement within the remaining project period is also relevant in this case. Effectiveness is also used as an aggregate measure of (or judgment about) the merit or worth of an activity, i.e. the extent to which an intervention/project has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives effectively in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional development impact.

It is noted that during the internal appraisal of the Project Document in the start-up stage of the Project, the Project Manager discovered that the initial budget, on which the FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security had obtained grant support from Norway, had some serious mis-calculations in the EXCEL sheets:

1. In the worksheet "General Operating Expenses-field level activities", the irrigation development picked cell B34 instead of Cell B33 i.e. it used USD 1,000 per ha instead of USD 5,000.
2. Although the Project envisaged another 500 ha of land developed for irrigation through water harvesting, there was no attached budget specifically for this activity.
3. Error in the worksheet 'Contract' - programme execution: Cell I38 wrongly picked figures from I35 instead of J35 and I37 instead of J37.
4. Error in worksheet 'Staff'- Sub-total staffing missed to add 'International Professional staff sub-total costs. This was also reflected in the 'Summary worksheet', where professional staff is only reflecting National Professional staff.
5. In the training component for CBOs, the cell calculating person days per year left the number of courses to be conducted and only picked the number of persons and days of training i.e. 80 person

days instead of 360 person days for CBO development

When all these errors were corrected with the correct formula links, consequently the project budget should have been USD 11,242,716. The approved budget was however not changed and remained with the initially requested and approved USD 5,290,191 from the Norwegian Government. Consequently, the scope of activities had to be downscaled to adapt to the approved budget frame, and this final list was approved by the project partners in November 2007. The table below lists the indicators, and the initial and revised target values, in addition to the achievements as per September 2009:

Indicator	Target in approved PD	Revised Target	Achievements (as per September 2009)	
			In numbers	In %
1. Area of land under irrigation (ha)	1,000	500	205	<b>41</b>
2. Area of land treated by improved land husbandry methods (ha)	5,000	4,000	1,354	<b>34</b>
3. Area of land brought into cultivation (ha)	500	0	N/A	<b>N/A</b>
4. Area of land under community forestry (ha)	500	500	357	<b>71</b>
5. Number of households with improved packages of inputs	30,000	23,500	11,551	<b>49</b>
6. Number of households with small scale livestock- include pass-on	10,000	6,666	1,812	<b>27</b>
7. Number of households with other income generating activities	5,000	1,800	1,101	<b>61</b>

(Source: PIU, Project Brief for MTR Mission, September 2009)

As seen from the above table, the Project has achieved the expected or more than the expected targets mid-term (around 50%) notably for Indicators 4, 5 and 7, and less than targets for Indicators 1, 2 and 6. Especially the target for the pass-on of livestock seems to be lagging behind as compared to the time elapsed, but then this will hopefully catch up faster once the secondary and tertiary beneficiaries pass-on further (direct beneficiaries are planned to be 600 per year in three years).

In general, the RT was during the field visits to the numerous farmer groups ascertained beyond doubt that the Project had contributed to improved food security and food producing capacity in the project areas in specific and thus also in the country at large. As the project interventions are well coordinated with the district authorities and other main agricultural development actors in the districts, to avoid overlap and duplications, the reported achievements of increased agricultural production and improved livelihoods are with high likelihood the result of project efforts. The only factor disturbing this picture might be that it has been impossible for the RT to ascertain that the farmers involved in the Project have *not* received additional fertiliser from the Government-run Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP), which selection and distribution modalities keep changing depending on the political leadership, amongst other factors<sup>6</sup>.

The activities with the best effect is beyond doubt the ones on Conservation Agriculture (CA), where the good demonstration effect has made some additional farmers adopting the techniques without support from the Project, buying input materials from own funds. Also the pass-on activities of goats and chicken seem to have been a success (in spite of lagging behind on results) and have strengthened the food security in the area. Notably also, irrigation with treadle pumps shows tangible results, and this technology has proven to be viable. The motorised pumps are also giving results at a larger scale when operated properly, but this technology is not so successful in a sustainability perspective.

The least successful activities are the ones connected to the agri-business groups, where the marketing element has not gained the required momentum. The training in such skills has not been properly integrated into the coursing curriculum, and this must be done to make the Project more effective. Markets must be identified before production is started. Agribusiness initiatives need to be promoted ideally in communities where beneficiaries have enough food to sustain themselves throughout the year,

<sup>6</sup> See comments from PIU in Appendix 8.

otherwise all business efforts will end up being utilised as food by the concerned households.

It is noted that the activities in the Project are mainstreamed nationally, and several similar activities are taking place all around the country under other projects and programmes. However, the added value brought by FAO to the sector development is the *concentration* of activities to certain selected EPAs, whereas the Government if having the same resources available would have had to spread the resources more thinly out in order to cover (and “satisfy”) all the inhabitants in the area. Concentration in this case means inevitably more effect of the efforts taken on board in the project areas.

The above means that the Project is well on the way to fulfil the purpose of the Project in terms of effectiveness, but with some challenges still ahead. *Overall rating: MS-S.*

### 3.2.3 Project Efficiency

Efficiency is a measure of productivity, meaning comparing inputs against outputs. The term involves the assessment of achievements/results as compared to the input of resources, meaning how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into results.

Efficiency is in general the most difficult element to assess in any project. The project management was left to the FAO system to organise, which according to their normal procedures recruited staff to man a Project Implementation Unit (PIU). The PIU was set up as a separate entity clearly *outside* the normal governmental structure, with funding directly from FAO and reporting in the opposite direction (down-up). This is following the normal implementation modality of FAO in any country and is not at all unlike set-ups of other UN institutions.

The RT is not surprised to find that the efficiency of this separate project managerial setup seems to be relatively good. The project management, handpicked and directly paid by FAO amongst Malawi’s most prominent human resources in the sector, has had a much freer position than their government counterparts to concentrate on the activities in the project areas. The fact that the Project has not been hampered by lack of transport means or funds for operations, coming in time as needed for un-abrupt activity proceedings, has been a key reason for the achievements. The Project is de facto efficiently by-passing the bureaucratic governmental system, something that the Norwegian Government supported in other countries up to the mid-1980s, when “integration” and “working through the established governmental system” became the preferred working modality (on bilateral projects). In the case of Malawi, where the governmental system was relatively “weak” and lacking resources, the arrangement of implementation through FAO and a separate PIU however seemed as a pragmatic solution at the time of initiating the Project (2006). Whereas since that time, the ADP-SP has been launched (also supported by Norway), gradually strengthening the governmental system to be able to handle such projects in the future.

Having said that, the project management has indeed cooperated closely with the ADD Programme Manager and especially the district agricultural and water resources authorities. All work plans have been fully in line with the district plans, and activities are discussed in monthly planning meetings with the authorities and other prominent sector players (notably NGOs), in order to avoid duplications and secure synergy where appropriate. It is also clear that the district and EPA officers have been actively participating in the project activities on equal terms with other governmental activities in the areas. Transport with project vehicles has been coordinated in the project areas benefiting both project and governmental staff alike, and the Project has provided motorcycles to the governmental extension workers in all the three districts (where fuel is paid by the Project for travel to “project villages”). Notwithstanding the fact that this mostly is to increase the mobility of the governmental staff solely in the project villages, this has also inevitably improved the mobility of the staff also in other non-project areas (where the government is paying for the fuel).

The Project is one of many projects being implemented in the agriculture sector by the Government through the Ministry, NGOs and Civil Society Organizations. Implementation methodology varies from project to project, from using their own staff, mainly recruited or “poached” from the Government, to the system of external recruitment used by the FAO project. The Farm Income Diversification Programme (FIDP) funded by the European Union and implemented in 11 districts including Balaka; the Irrigation,

Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture Development Programme (IRLADP) funded by the World Bank and being implemented in 11 districts; the Agricultural Development Programme-Support Project (ADP-SP) funded by Norway and the World Bank implemented in 16 districts across the country are the largest ongoing projects that are using government structures to implement activities. FIDP and IRLADP nevertheless have coordinators in their respective districts that are responsible for overall coordination of activities at the districts. Similar to the FAO projects these coordinators are based at DADO's offices. The differences arise when comparing the offices of the PIUs; while the FAO project PIU is based *within* the Machinga ADD offices, FIDP and IRLADP have *separate* PIU offices outside. ADP-SP is implemented by government staff using government structures and the coordinator's office is within the Ministry headquarters in Lilongwe. The ADP-SP is the desired implementation methodology as indicated in the A-SWAp document, but this modality has just started. The FAO project implementation methodology is in general less preferred today than the desirable methodology of ADP-SP but more preferred than the two of the other largest projects in the sector - FIDP and IRLADP, according to the MoAFS.

The RT concludes that in case the project management had been left entirely to the governmental system from the very start (2006), the efficiency (and effectiveness and achievements) would most likely have been less than observed today. As the districts were lacking competent staff, more efforts would have had to be put into training of staff in the start-up, and in case additional manpower was not brought onboard the project districts, the project period most likely would have had to be much longer and the implementation plan much less progressive. Indeed, this could have been a *theoretical* solution, but obviously both Norad and the Ministry at that time considered the risk of failures and implementation complications too high with such model and decided differently. If the Project had been planned from scratch *today*, the assessment would most likely have been different, with the Project more embedded in the governmental structure aligned with the A-SWAp, but still with a clear need for technical assistance from outside.

District and EPA staff have participated in trainings arranged under the Project, and information about project activities seems to have been disseminated on regular basis to other stakeholders. Notably, the efficiency varies from activity to activity in the Project. Whereas the CA activities and the pass-on model of livestock have been very well received by the beneficiaries, the business groups on livestock and agricultural products have not had the same success. This is partly due to factors *outside* the control of the project management (i.e. price of feed), but as much due to lack of emphasis on marketing intelligence and considerations prior to starting the production. Whereas the latter must be more efficiently taken on board the Project as an integral part of the business training, the RT advises against starting new business groups, but rather to concentrate on strengthening the existing ones. The CA and pass-on activities should continue as planned and be scaled up if possible within the available funding. These activities could definitely absorb more resources (if they were available) in order to reach more farmer groups with training, sensitisation and input materials.

As indicated earlier, CA has proven to be one of the most useful technologies as evidenced by the up-take rate by farmers, because of its labour-saving attribute and increase in yield per area. However, the area which is being supported by the Project is only 0.2 ha which is not enough to produce enough food crop plus surplus for sale for an average household. The RT advises the Project to *consider increasing the area supported to 0.4 ha as is being advocated by some quarters, at least on a trial basis.* This revision would in case have to go with some tough decisions of reducing the number of targeted households or continue with the current 0.2 ha and reach more households. The danger with producing just enough for food implies that farmers would not be able to repay their loans to the revolving fund and in the long-run sustainability would be affected. It was observed that beneficiaries were not using part of the profits realised from other enterprises to repay loans for a different enterprise, which is a mindset issue to be dealt with. *Overall rating: MS-S.*

### 3.2.4 Project Impact

Impact is a measure of all positive and negative consequences/effects of the Project, whether planned for and expected, foreseen or not foreseen, direct or indirect. Such effects could be economic, political, social, technical or environmental, both on local and national level.

#### Box 3: Impact of the funds

*"We are satisfied with the Project being implemented through FAO, as they can concentrate the efforts in a limited geographical area. Had the funds been channelled through the governmental system, the district authorities would have had to satisfy all the EPAs in order to satisfy everybody, and the impact would have been smaller".*

*A Balaka district department head*

At the time of the Mid-term Review it is very difficult to assess the full impact of the Project, as such will mostly be seen some time *after* the completion of the Project. Especially capacity building and sensitisation efforts might show tangible impact after some time. It is also understood that the impact is closely related to the *effects* of the Project, measured in "the effectiveness", and as such has partly been accounted for under that heading. Although the assessment therefore might be mostly based on perspectives and present *probability* of future impact, the RT observed some clear "evidence" of impact on the ground, resulting from the Project.

First of all, the Project has clearly through its gender focus improved female participation in agriculture in the project area, and as such in Malawi as a whole. Whereas women always have played an important role in Malawian (and African) agriculture at large, the Project has pro-actively involved women in the farmer groups, and through this boosted the notion of females as key sector players, in addition to involving them more in the local decision-making process. It was observed that a majority of the Lead Farmers are women. Overall in the three districts, female participation in the project activities is on average around 63%, with 51% in Balaka, 68% in Machinga and 64% in Mangochi.

At the same time, the Project has made successful efforts in improving community participation in agricultural activities at large through the mere formation of all the farmers groups in the participating villages. Through the Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs), being a standard procedure at the start-up of any activity under the Project in all villages, the communities are given the full opportunity to bring their own needs and concerns to the table and participate in the planning of own future and developments. This approach is successful and very much appreciated by the RT as it empowers the communities to improve their own situation.

The most prevalent intended impact of the Project is the increased food security in the project areas. Many farmers explained that they now had enough food (read: maize) in store to take them through the lean months (December to March), whereas before they did not have enough food. This is indeed very promising and a direct result of especially the CA and irrigation efforts. Some groups have even sold crops and livestock and had additional monetary income to the families, for which various household goods have been bought: Iron sheets on the houses, cellular phones, clothes, TV, to mention but a few. Additionally, several mentioned that they now could pay school fees, and a couple told about now affording to send children to secondary boarding schools. Additionally, some mentioned that they have started small businesses in the villages (e.g. shops), or could simply afford buying food in times of scarcity.

Of the "unintended" impacts of the Project, the RT noted the ability of the participants to payback the loan from the revolving funds or village funds in "kind", being labour or more commonly in crops (e.g. bags of maize). Another impact under this heading is the fact that other projects have come on study tours to the project areas to observe the lessons learned under the Project. The RT appreciates such initiatives as they bring benefits both ways, knowing that "seeing is believing". A couple of cases of crossbreeding of Black Australop (BA) chickens with the Hyline have been initiated during the course of the Project, although not planned from the beginning. Such crossbreeding has proved to be successful as it brings the high egg laying traits of the Hyline together with the less feed-demanding and locally adapted characteristics of the BA.

The positive impact on the governmental system at district and EPA level has been mentioned, partly through the Technical Assistance brought by the Project, but especially through the capacity building efforts in training of the governmental staff, and the "working together" at all levels. It also should be mentioned the increased mobility of the district and EPA staff through provision of motorbikes to extension workers and offering of joint car transport to involved parties when working in the field. It is imperative that this impact is maintained also after the end of the Project, with the vehicles bought and used under the Project being allowed to stay in the districts post-project. *Overall rating: S.*

It is noted that the Project, encouraged by the Ministry and the Norwegian Embassy, has undertaken an “Impact and Output Indicators Survey and some Project Programmatic Implications” in April 2008, which is in accordance with the Agreement. The survey was undertaken almost a year after the launch of the Project, hence the results *might* have been influenced by the interventions to a certain extent.

### 3.2.5 Project Sustainability

Sustainability is a measure of whether the positive effects (or assumed measurable effects) of the Project is likely to continue after the external support is concluded, meaning: will the Project process lead to long-term benefits. This is indeed for most projects may be the most important element to be assessed, so also in this case. The sustainability of a project is a measure of how the partner country will continue to pursue the objectives following termination of the project assistance, and the *probability* of continued long-term benefits.

The assessment of sustainability is split in four major topics and thereafter the scoring is aggregated.

#### *a) Technical Sustainability*

This is mainly related to the purchase, installation and use of hardware materials and technical approaches used at large. As mentioned earlier, the *techniques* used in the CA seem to be successful and is mainstreamed with national techniques. (The *approach* could probably be improved by increasing the area with CA, the 0.2 or 0.4 ha discussion mentioned elsewhere in the report). The use of treadle pumps in irrigation also seems to be a success. This technology is appropriate, easy to operate and spare parts are available in the nearest towns. The RT would however have liked to see that a certain amount of easily wear and tear spares were supplied with the pumps in order to keep them in operation the first couple of years.

The use of motorised pumps however, is clearly *not* sustainable. The pumps operate satisfactorily when they are new and as long as start-up fuel is supplied by the Project. However, the irrigation groups seem to have some difficulties in buying the required fuel thereafter. The loans given to the group members from the revolving funds show too low payback rate, leaving little to buy additional inputs, including fuel. Also, the *installation* of pumps is clearly not up to standard, as they are just placed in the open air with only a thin and small ramshackle straw roof covering them (see photos in *Appendix 7*). With the pumps being exposed to sun, rain, dust and intended or unintended vandalism and close contact with animals and humans, they will wear easily. This shortcoming must be improved in the Project.

It is also observed that the canals built for irrigation are not fully complying with the standards required. Inlet canals from i.e. rivers excavated in soil must have slope angles of the banks suitable for the local soil conditions in order to prevent cave-ins. The RT visited a scheme where such problems in a sandy soil area prevailed and constituted a continuous headache to the irrigation group (see photos). The technical supervision by the project staff and/or district experts has obviously not been good enough. Also, the plastered v-shaped brick canals (mostly used with motorised schemes) made by local artisans based on standardised design, are not always constructed according “to the book”. The minimum 45 cm walking path at the top of the embankment are not always established and the slopes of the sustaining embankments are often too steep and will thus easily be eroded during heavy rains. Vetiver grass is planted on a few embankments, being commendable, and some plants obviously need replanting. Such planting needs to be done with all embankments to stabilise the slopes. Some canals showed clear evidences of leaking (ponds of water next to the canals). (*Marginally Satisfactory*).

#### *b) Environmental Sustainability*

The Project is directly related to the sustained effects on environment, but such effects were not seen by the RT as it is too early in the process to observe the tangibles. Some activities clearly aim at improving the environmental conditions in the watersheds through planting of trees and preventing soil erosion through planting of Vetiver grass, building of contour ridges and bunds, etc. The Project is establishing school clubs so as to expose children to issues of environment and its importance at a tender age. Notably, the RT was shown two areas with trees planted, but the efforts are mainstreamed interventions in land and water management in several watersheds, and as such assumed to be *Satisfactory*.

#### *c) Institutional Sustainability*

This is amongst others related to the capacity building, training and awareness raising of the

governmental system staff especially at district and EPA level, where a lot seems to have been achieved. The close working interaction and cooperation in the villages between project and governmental staff at various levels has additionally boosted the institutional capacity to sustain the efforts post-project. There seems at present to be ownership of the efforts both at district and EPA levels, in addition to the ownership in the communities to the activities built through the farmer groups. As mentioned, the PIU will cease to exist when the Project ends, and this set-up is as such not sustainable, and was as per definition never intended to be. The system with the seven Community Assistants employed by the Project in all the participating EPAs is clearly also not sustainable, as the positions are not part of the government's normal structure and their salaries and backup support will abruptly be discontinued when the Project ends.

(The project managerial and administrative setup is as mentioned similar to other interventions by FAO elsewhere in the country. The structure is not in any way influenced by the One UN process that is ongoing at a much higher level in the country (see later section). Theoretically, in case the funds had been channelled through the One UN system in the future, the activities at grassroots level would most likely be exactly the same as today, as it would be the FAO that had been given the sector responsibility to support actions in agriculture).

At community level, it is assumed that a limited number of the farmer groups will survive the Project without a large degree of coaching and exposure from outside, notably the groups doing CA, and the ones involved in the pass-on activities. The extent of expected success is however difficult to assess at this point in time. Other groups, notably the ones involved in business (livestock and crops alike) will hardly survive without more training and close follow-up from outside, especially regarding the marketing aspects. In spite of these shortcomings, the institutional sustainability is seen as *Satisfactory* by the RT, referring largely to the governmental district and EPA levels.

#### ***d) Economic/Financial Sustainability***

Surely, the Project has started activities and farmer groups in the seven EPAs that under normal conditions would not have been started due to lack of governmental funds. As such, the momentum given to project activities is stronger than the "normal" momentum due to lack of government resources. This has resulted in boosting the activities to an "artificially" high level. However, this modality has also been clear from the very beginning of the Project where the increase in food security (at any cost) was the overruling aim. The districts have clearly stated that they will not be able to maintain the activities at the same level once the Project is gone, and not even follow up all the established groups in the villages. The reason is simply the lack of governmental funds to fill and sustain all the extension worker and community assistant positions established, and the lack of operational funds to sustain frequent visits to the areas (subsistence allowances and fuel). Of the three districts, Mangochi District stated they believed they could sustain "*some of the activities*", but varying from village to village, without being too specific about it.

The RT observed that there is a very high vacancy rate in the extension services especially at grassroots level. It was clearly mentioned to the RT that this was attributed first and foremost to the lack of funding to sustain all the positions. At district level on average just over 50% of the established positions in the technical departments (crop production; extension; livestock production; land resources management; fisheries and irrigation) are filled. At EPA level the situation is even worse. For instance, in the districts where the Project is operating the vacancy rates of AEDOs is 78% for Machinga, 57% for Mangochi and 57% for Balaka. On average the ratio of AEDO to farmer is 1 to over 2,000 farmers, whereas the "norm" given by the Government should ideally be around 1:800. Government has therefore introduced crash programmes to train extension workers, some of which are expected to have graduated already at the time of preparing this report (500-600 educated in 2009 was mentioned to the RT). It is however not very clear as to *where* these graduates would be deployed and whether funds will be found to sustain them in the governmental system, so the Project cannot be too hopeful to benefit from this since it has only a couple of years to go. Additionally, to ensure that resources do not go to waste at ADD level there are deliberate efforts to increase number of personnel to EPAs in which projects are being implemented with a strategy of creating village models. In this view, the extension department advocates for use of lead farmers to try and work around this challenge.

As mentioned, the RT noted some positive signs indicating that some of the activities would hopefully

continue with little support from outside the village. This especially applies to some of the CA groups who through the positive benefits experienced claim they will continue the CA and even expand it to other areas. Also, individual farmers have started CA activities on their own based on input paid with own funds. It is therefore believed that these activities will go on as long as there is shortage of food in the area, but clearly *not* at a pace that could be maintained under the Project. Other farmer groups involved in business, as mentioned, will hardly survive the Project. The overall assessment of the RT is therefore that the financial/economic sustainability largely is *Unsatisfactory* at present, but as the Project is addressing some of the issues mentioned, there is a potential of slightly improving the sustainability, however in any case ending up on the negative side.

#### ***e) Joint Assessment***

The approach used for grant management in the Project is not part of Malawi's normal financial or institutional structure, but an artificial and temporary set-up in order to boost food security activities during a limited period of time. The intention is that all such activities will be undertaken by, and funds routed through, the normal governmental system in the (foreseeable) future. The ADP, supported by the ADP-SP, now leading into the A-SWAp, is built on this notion. Notwithstanding the fact that *today* the government is not able to take responsibility of all such efforts, it is clearly observed that all the community activities ongoing in the Project are without exception *mainstreamed* under the ADP, and the capacity building efforts in the Project are fully in line with the ADP-SP intentions through training and involvement of district and EPA staff to the extent possible.

The Project is generously sharing experience with other livelihood projects in the area (supported by the government, other donors and NGOs alike), both through joint meetings arranged by the ADD and the districts at regular intervals, but also through the mentioned field exchange visits by project staff and farmers in the target villages. Considering all the above sustainability elements, the basis for sustainability should therefore *in theory* be present. However, needless to say, the lack of finances to follow up and roll-out the activities is the decisive sustainability element, all other intentions being good. This in spite of the new Local Development Fund coming up, which could take onboard some of the financial obligations (see *Box 4* below). The overall rating of the sustainability is therefore set in the area of *Marginally Unsatisfactory –Unsatisfactory*, clearly with some potential to move towards the “upper side”.

#### **Box 4: Local Development Fund (LDF) Mechanism**

This is part of the *Malawi Third Social Action Fund (MASAF 3)* under the Adaptable Programme Lending (APL II), 2008-2013 (USD 51 million). The objective is to improve the livelihoods of poor households within the framework of improved local governance at community, local authority, and national levels. There are three components to the project:

The first is the Community Livelihoods Support Fund. This component will have two sub-components implemented through the Local Development Fund (LDF) to finance: (a) public works sub-projects under the Local Authority Fund (LAF); and (b) investments for improving functionality of existing facilities and creation of opportunities for community savers and entrepreneurs to increase their participation in Local Economic Development under the Community Fund.

The second is the Local Authority Capacity Enhancement. It will focus on support for the development of a comprehensive framework to address capacity needs for local authorities in the effective management of grants they are already receiving, performing the functions allocated to them under this project, and preparing them to perform anticipated responsibilities as devolution proceeds and more resources are available under the LDF or any other longer-term Government of Malawi grant arrangement. It will systematically assess current capacities and establish capacity benchmarks within government systems for regular assessments, provide capacity building support to Local Authority to prepare them for the tasks and support the design and piloting of a grant mechanism.

Finally, the third is the National Institutional Strengthening Fund. It will finance national-level crosscutting issues aimed at improving accountability and transparency in the use of project resources.

*From the World Bank website*

### **3.3 Financial Management, Expenditures and Auditing**

#### **3.3.1 Overall Budget and Project Expenditures as per Time of Review**

All financial transactions are facilitated at the PIU in Liwonde. Financial requests are made by relevant districts and sent to PIU for approval by the Project Manager. Financial records are handled by the Finance Officer, who also doubles as project Administrative Officer. The FAO Country Office headquarters in Lilongwe has an officer who assists the Finance Officer based at the PIU. Further, records



are sent to FAO headquarters in Rome for consolidation. There were no indications by District Agricultural staff of possible challenges regarding the financial arrangement the Project uses. It was noted by staff that the arrangement used facilitated easy implementation of project activities, which was (needless to say) very welcomed.

The total allocation from the Norwegian Government to the Project is NOK 33 million (or around USD 5.5 million in August 2006). According to Annex I of the Agreement, the provisional budget breakdown was as follows:

<b>Budget Item</b>	<b>NOK</b>	<b>% of I</b>	<b>% of II</b>
Staff costs	6,835,000	23.4	20.7
Consultants	120,000	0.4	0.4
Irrigation and Natural Res. Man.	12,376,000	42.5	37.5
Travel	743,000	2.5	2.3
Training	2,620,000	9.0	7.9
Equipment	3,884,000	13.3	11.8
Support costs	602,000	2.1	1.8
Operating expenses	1,960,000	6.7	5.9
<b>Total Direct Project Budget (I)</b>	<b>29,140,000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>88.3</b>
FAO Administration costs	3,860,000	13.2	11.7
<b>Total Grant (II)</b>	<b>33,000,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: Annex I to the Agreement between Norway, Malawi and FAO)

It is seen from the table that the FAO administration cost is 13.2% of the Total Direct Project Budget, whereas it is 11.7% of the Total Grant. At the same time the Agreement states in Article III.1: “*The administrative costs to be charged by FAO are included in the Grant and shall be limited to 9% of direct project costs*”. The RT does not understand this discrepancy.

As of August 2009, the project account reported expenditures of USD 3,953,374 against total budgets of USD 5,290,257 (equal to NOK 33 Million<sup>7</sup>), where USD 4,632,033 had been disbursed, remaining with USD 678,659. This means that halfway through the implementation of the Project, around 75% of the total project allocation from Norway has been spent, which is according to the assumed expenditure at this point in the Agreement. The project expenditures therefore seem to be as planned in time.

According to the financial report given to the Review Team, of the expenditure distribution of the USD 3,957,374 was: 24% was used for Expendable Procurement; 18% was used for Consultants while 11% went to Training. General Operating Expenses used up 9% of the funds, Travel 9%, Support Costs 8%, Contracts 7%, Salaries General Service 6%, Non Expendable Procurement 6%, Technical Support Services, General Overhead Expenses, and Locally Contracted Labour accounting for the remaining 2%. This is illustrated in *Figure 3.1 in Appendix I*. It is noted that the expenses for Consultants, Travel and Operating Expenses by far exceed the provisional budget figures. However, it is impossible for the RT to directly compare the expenditures against the initial budget in the Agreement, as the accounting is done on different accounting items than the budget.

The Project Manager provided the RT with a breakdown of expenditures from January 2009 to June 2009, with project expenditures amounting to USD 809,898, which at that time represented 84% of the operational budget. This, according to project management, was a positive sign because it represented “*an improved capacity for the Project to absorb resources*”. This capacity differed slightly if compared to the previous six months where project activities were affected by other equally important activities at districts such as the Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP), as the very same staff were used in implementing activities for the Project. The FISP took/takes priority over all other activities in those particular months.

The expenditure breakdown by component given by the Project Manager to the RT show that the “agricultural and land management” component is where most of the funds were used, approximately 21% of the funds. Activities under the “irrigation” components were next with approximately 17% of the

<sup>7</sup> Notably, in the Agreement, the total figure is indicated at USD 5.5 million, and the discrepancy could be caused by exchange rate fluctuations.

funds being used. “Social mobilization”, “livestock”, and “agri-business” activities expended 14%, 12%, and 9% respectively. (It is noted that the nominations of the breakdown does not follow the main project components (“objectives”) as presented in *Section 2.2*, so the RT does not fully understand how the given figures are distributed on the various outputs).

Reference is also made to the Agreement where it says: “*the administrative costs to be charged by FAO are included in the grant and shall be limited to 9% of direct project costs*”. It is however impossible from the given accounting figures to single out the magnitude of the administrative costs, as such costs could be hidden as part of the following accounting items: Salaries and General Service (6%); Support costs (8%); General operating expenses (9%); Technical Support Services (1%); whereas it is at the same time noted that “General overhead expenses” is given as 0%. This means in fact that the administrative costs could be up to around 24%. However, as the Agreement does not define which costs are included in the “administrative costs” item, this is left to individual interpretations, which is clearly a shortcoming that could create misunderstandings. Also, as the Agreement mentions the ceiling on “administrative costs” specifically, the financial reporting should also make a point of specifying this separately (with the same nomination), explaining what it includes. It is noted that in connection with the revised budget following the initial miscalculations by FAO, nothing is said about *how* the administrative costs and the percentage of the total costs are influenced, which also makes assessment of agreement compliance impossible.

### **3.3.2 Financial Flows. Invoicing and Cash Flow.**

Since most of the activities implemented by the Project are seasonal it was stressed by the project management that the flows of funds should not be disrupted. It was briefly mentioned by the Project Manager, and highlighted in the progress reports, that flows have largely been steady but there have been some occasions where funds have been delayed, and consequently this has interfered with the achievements of some results. However, such problems are *not* seen to have been significant during the Project. There were various reasons why flows were disrupted including the system used by FAO where funds are disbursed from Lilongwe on a bi-weekly basis, or the implementers at the district failing to reconcile expenditures and return to PIU within the required time. For the second half of 2009 the Project had already submitted budgets to the Embassy and the Ministry and a call for NOK 5.29 million funding was submitted at 20 July 2009.

### **3.3.3 Project Auditing**

The Project is audited as part of the FAO system, following those internal routines. The organisation’s activities are audited annually and there are no specific audits for the various projects that are being implemented in the country. This seems somehow contrary to Article IX.1 in the Agreement: “*FAO shall submit annually certified financial statements showing expenditures for the project, as of the end of the preceding budgetary year*”. The RT realises that many organisations conduct audits for all its activities jointly once a year, and the RT appreciates that it would be cumbersome and expensive to only conduct audit for one component (project) at a time, especially in the case reputable audit firms are doing the job. It is also noted that the Agreement does not say how long time after the end of the preceding budgetary year the report should be submitted. The last audit was conducted for 2008 and the report has been finalised but it has not been circulated at the time of preparing this report.

## **4. ASSESSMENT OF OTHER RELEVANT PROJECT ASPECTS**

### **4.1 Project Document Management and Reporting**

#### **4.1.1 Document Layouts and Formats**

The RT was given a large number of documentation in connection with the Mid-term Review (*Appendix 6* refers). In general, the documentation from the Project is very detailed indeed and the PM is commended for this. The following is noted:

- All documents clearly indicate on the front page the responsible institutions, the title of the Project (and FAO number), and the contact address of FAO. Most reports also have the date of submission on the front pages, which is orderly.

- A couple of reports do not have the date of submission on the front, notably the Project Document from FAO (where the date is nowhere to be found in the document).
- Some documents have a header and footer on every page indicating which report it is, making identification easier when for example copying only selected pages of the reports. However, some documents are lacking this (notably the "Impact and Output Indicator Survey and some project implication" and minutes from the Review Meetings, to mention a couple).
- Almost all the documents are lacking explanations to some abbreviations/acronyms.

#### 4.1.2 Technical Work Plans and Progress Reporting

The Work Plan is presented every half year, and the budget expected spent on the various activities are shown.

The RT was given the 2007 Annual Report, the 2008 AR and Semi-Annual Report (SAR) for the first half of 2009. The reports are voluminous and detailed, and reflect the activities having been undertaken to a satisfactory degree in the narrative parts. The narrative text is accompanied by many tables in an orderly manner. The following is also noted:

- The reports contain some illustration photos in the text, which indeed makes the reading more interesting. However, this also makes the reports very "heavy" in terms of megabits. Especially the 2009 SAR was too heavy to distribute by email (around 220 Mb), and the photos even had to be taken out when the report was printed on a normal printer. It is therefore strongly advised to present most of the illustration photos in separate appendices, and use reduced photo size for the ones remaining in the text.
- The reports are presenting the achievements under each output, but do not report on the initial list of activities as presented in the IR, and the nomination of the various activities varies from report to report. It is therefore very difficult to readily understand progress from one period to the next, being a serious shortcoming in the reporting.
- ✚ The heading hierarchy is very difficult to follow, as too many types of bullets are used. In the 2009 SAR, the following bullets are used: ◆, ❁, ➤, ❖, ○, ■ plus the special bullet shown in front of this paragraph. On the other hand, the numbered headings stop at three digits, which is commendable.
- The 2007 AR has a footer showing that it is an "End of year progress report" without indicating the year. The 2008 AR has adequate footer information "Annual report January-December 2008". The 2009 SAR has no footer at all. Consistency is therefore needed.
- The ARs are *not* reporting directly on the work plan in terms of expenditures and input/outputs, which makes it difficult to assess whether what was planned every half year was really achieved.

#### 4.1.3 Financial Reporting

Project financial reporting follows the system of other reporting styles, where all records are consolidated at the PIU and forwarded to the FAO Country Office in Lilongwe and the to FAO headquarters in Rome. Annual Financial Reports are produced and shared with the stakeholders, specifically the Norwegian Embassy. The most recent reports were for the half-year period ending on 30 June 2009. As stated above this reported was submitted timely to Norwegian Embassy and the Ministry. The Project also shares with the Embassy and the Ministry operational budgets where funds required for various activities are stated.

#### 4.1.4 Other Reporting

Amongst other reports should be mentioned the "Impact and Output Indicator Survey and some project implication" from April 2008. This reporting is harmonised with the Task Force (TF) on Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNSP) under a conform monitoring and standardised data collection modality. The three project districts have signed a MoU with the MoAFS confirming that they are willing to be part of the harmonisation process. The impact registration is done based on random sampling and interviews of households. This reporting is indeed commendable as it makes assessments of various interventions in the food security sector easier to compare with other areas. Systematic sampling was used to select a representative sample of a total of 315 households from all the villages where the Project is being implemented. The data was collected using a questionnaire.

From the findings it was noted that there was a need for much efforts to be done into improving crop and

livestock production through various interventions, and to make use of the Lead Farmer Concept that the Project is currently doing, having an impact subjectively. In line with findings by the RT it was noted that in order to improve farm outputs there is a need to promote relatively low-cost technologies like CA to boost production followed by corresponding improvements in business and marketing skills. Additionally, it was further pointed out the crucial need to develop business acumen in communities alongside a market strategy where enterprise selection is dictated by market demand.

## **4.2 Interaction with other Programmes and Projects**

### **4.2.1 Various Interventions**

With reference to *Figure 2.2* showing the interaction with various outside partners and sector stakeholders, short descriptions of each of the most important institutions are listed below, with emphasis on the interaction experienced with the Project:

- Malawi Lake Basin Development Programme (and SCC): See below
- National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi (NASFAM): NASFAM is an association made up of smallholder farmers with the aim of strengthening and empowering the farmers and enable them to easily find markets for their produce. There has been little interaction between the Project and NASFAM, but it is envisioned that the Project will link project beneficiaries especially those that grow cotton in the district of Balaka.
- National Association for People Living with HIV and Aids in Malawi (NAPHAM): A Liwonde based organisation working with people infected and affected with HIV/AIDS where it provides counselling support. An opportunity was seen by the FAO Project to work with this organisation and provide groups there under with inputs so that they are independent. The Project has just started cooperation with such groups, and so far has provided some chickens and goats, and involved them in small-scale irrigation where treadle pumps are used. People living with HIV and AIDS are among some of the members of the community who are classified vulnerable. In the irrigation schemes, these members are especially being encouraged to grow nutritious crops to help improve their nutrition.
- Farmers World: is an agro-dealer with many depots in all parts of Malawi (exports e.g. to South Africa). The Project benefited from subsidised sweet beans seed (200 kgs) that was provided to project beneficiaries in irrigation schemes with an arrangement that Farmers World was going to purchase crop from the farmers and the company would export to their already identified market. Although the arrangement was clearly going to be beneficial, farmers faced challenges where the sweet beans did not do as well and production was less than expected (claimed to be due to too hot weather and late planting). Will try again next growing season.
- World Food Programme (WFP) and Emmanuel International: WFP, through Emmanuel International (an NGO), and the Project collaborated in areas where the two programmes implement similar activities such as access road improvement, tree planting and irrigation canal excavation through Food for Assets, where WFP provided 50 kgs of maize and 5 kgs of beans during the lean period between January and April. The same arrangement has been made for promoting fruit tree production, an attempt to promote improved nutrition.
- Total Land Care (TLC): TLC is an organisation that is involved in promoting technologies that address climate change issues. Together with SCC, the Project is involved in developing a Framework for Adaptation to Climate Change. In addition, the Project has organised field tours to TLC sites in other districts on activities such as sustainable land, management activities, including Conservation Agriculture.

Of others can be mentioned:

- Income Generating Public Works Programme (IGPWP): IGPWP is a programme funded by the European Union that provides funds to beneficiaries for performing various infrastructure-improving activities within their communities. The Project collaborates with this programme by conducting field days for irrigated agriculture. Project staff from both sides have participated in these field days. The Project has also taken farmers to interact with their counterparts in IGPWP irrigated activities. IGPWP has river diversion irrigation schemes in other nearby districts where water is tapped from various streams and rivers originating from mountains and surrounding hills. These field visits have helped increase the enthusiasm among farmers as they have shown excitement to hear and see success stories from fellow farmers.

- World Vision International (WVI): WVI is an NGO assisting farmers with various agricultural interventions in Malawi. The NGO linked with the Project on market issues and facilitated by the sale of Kilombero rice (about 12 metric tonnes) in Machinga to Tambala Food products, an established food processing company based in Blantyre. WVI farmers and Project-supported farmers were brought together to meet the volume of rice demanded by the company. The Project and the NGO are collaborating to form an umbrella Kilombero Rice Marketing Association made up of farmers from the Project and WVI in Machinga district
- Oxfam: An Oxfam project in Mulanje has visited the Project to learn more about small-scale irrigation.
- Concerned Universal (CU): Visited the Project to study motorised irrigation schemes.
- Malawi Industrial Research and Technology Development Centre (MIRTDC): Does research within food processors and machinery, and came to the project area and demonstrated the use of such.
- Others: are providing support to the agriculture sector in the three districts and basically interacting with the Project during the semi-annual stakeholders meeting facilitated by the Programme Manager of Machinga ADD. The Project plans to collaborate further with some of them and use their expertise provided by these organisations and institutions in order to enhance the capacities of the project beneficiaries. Amongst others: Millennium Village Project (MVP, produces mushrooms and juice from yellow potatoes); Save the Children US (SCUS, participated in farmer field days), Catholic Development Commission (CADECOM, forum for food security); Water Aid (drilled borehole for drinking water in FAO-supported village); Marianist Volunteer Programme (MVP, US-based religious order of brothers and priests).

It is no cooperation or connection between the Norwegian-funded ARDEP (see *Box 5* below) and the Project.

**Box 5: Agricultural Research and Development Programme (ARDEP)**

This is a 5-year research and development programme jointly funded by Malawi and Norway. The programme started in 2005 with a goal to reduce poverty and vulnerability amongst the poorest groups and improve quality of life and social wellbeing of Malawians through a powerful, effective, and efficient national research and outreach system for the agricultural sector of Malawi. The programme is governed by ARDEP Management Group and ARDEP Board and coordinated at Bunda College in collaboration with University of Life Sciences in Norway and other organisations. There are no linkages between this programme and the FAO Project.

*The Review Team*

#### **4.2.2 Malawi Lake Basin Development Programme**

Of special interest is the Malawi Lake Basin Development Programme (MLBDP), which is largely supported by Sweden and Norway in addition to the GoM, and implemented by the Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC) with HQ in Lilongwe. The RT had an opportunity to meet a representative from the local programme office in Monkey Bay, and got a brief introduction to the programme. The programme is partly undertaking similar activities as in the FAO project, but in different villages (<http://www.sccportal.org/projects/Malawi-Lake-Basin.aspx>). In addition to adult literacy training, the programme has components of market-oriented agriculture, integrated and conservation agriculture (model farms), group saving and loans, just to mention a few.

It is noted with interest that the approach on revolving funds in the villages is somewhat different from the FAO approach. The so-called Group Saving Loan (GSL) is based on collection of various non-fixed contributions from each member and the programme is providing a metal cash box for the village to put the savings in (see photos in Appendix). Whereas the FAO project requires the revolving fund to be equal to the value of the input from the Project, the Lake Basin Programme has no such minimum limit. The programme is giving some input to the forestry groups (seeds, poly tubes, wheelbarrows, water cans), but the livestock groups has to pay back (give back or pass-on) i.e. the goats (equal numbers as given), and the agricultural groups have to return the equal amount of i.e. soya beans as given. The groups have to pay for the treadle pumps (MWK 5,000 up front and two instalments of MWK 10,000 each thereafter, a total of MWK 25,000), and the programme management has got questions from some villagers as to why *they* must pay the pumps back when the FAO groups are getting the inputs free of charge.

There is no direct cooperation between the Lake Basin Programme and the FAO project. The MLBDP has however interacted with the Project by having a joint field visit with the Programme Director, to

discuss the topic of “snake irrigation” in and around Mangochi District. Further, the PIU of the FAO Project visited the programme’s site office to learn and share experiences on village savings bank and afforestation activities. As regarding the latter, the major difference is noted in the area of nursery management where the MLBDP purchases tree seedlings from beneficiaries, something that is not performed under the FAO Project.

The FAO Project got information, education and communication (IEC) material from MLBDP for study circles, various teaching materials which were shared with field staff in the area where the Project is implementing activities, in order to strengthen service delivery. Annual reports, which highlights on achievements and best practices of the Project, were also shared with the MLBDP.

The RT will not assess the two programmes against each other. Although the approaches are somewhat different at village level, the interventions are not overlapping in any village, and they both contribute to cover a vast need for support to improved livelihood and food security in the area. The packages offered the villagers are as mentioned different, and it is not right to singly out smaller parts of them when comparing. Only time will show which approach is the most sustainable one (i.e. to pay back inputs or to get some free of charge), and it will eventually be up to the GoM to decide on the long-term approach as part of the A-SWAp.

For the time being the RT recommends that the two programmes continue operating in parallel for the remaining time of the FAO project, and that no specific efforts are made to try to blend the approach of the two or to streamline the approaches. It is assumed better to consolidate the FAO project approaches and strengthen the components in need to secure sustainability, rather than making haphazard changes during the last two years, which will only confuse the beneficiaries. A possible post-project continuation (not discussed at this point in time) of the FAO Project could have a modified approach. The information dissemination and exchange of lessons learned between the two programmes, and with other interventions, should continue mainly in an ADD setting as already being done.

### **4.3 FAO’s Role in the Project**

The role of FAO in the Project has been touched upon earlier in the report, and is to some extent elaborated on hereunder. FAO is *the one* UN institution concerned with agriculture, having long-term experience in Africa and the rest of the world, and presumably bringing such experience on board in any new programme they involve in. There are surely good reasons for why the Norwegian Government in the first place decided to channel the funding through and leave the implementation of the Project to this institution from the start, mainly the limited capacity of the governmental system to handle such interventions. Notably, the Norwegian Government since the mid-1980s changed the development policy to one encouraging to the most degree working through and within the established governmental system in the cooperating developing countries (the changing of management set-up in Rukwa Region in Tanzania in the 80s being a typical example, see reference in *Appendix 5*).

As indicated earlier, there is a high vacancy rate at district level, which could potentially contribute to inefficiencies in implementation of project activities. Therefore, the most pragmatic solution at project inception (in 2006) was no doubt for Norad and the Ministry to ask FAO (or in principle another agricultural-related NGO) to implement the project activities while also building capacity at that level. At that time the food security issue was the overruling one. However, with the ADP moving into an A-SWAp and with the capacity building of the governmental system through the ADP-SP, this approach will hopefully soon become history. Even with such optimism, it would *not* be advisable to disrupt the current status quo in the Project as far as administration and managerial setup is concerned as this could potentially negatively affect implementation of some activities in time.

As described in an earlier section, FAO established a PIU in parallel with the governmental system at ADD and district levels, and evidently has run a rather effective (and efficient) project organisation. Anything else was clearly not expected by the RT, as avoiding frustrating and time-consuming governmental bureaucratic procedures (i.e. for disbursement of funds) obviously ease the daily operations of the efforts. In addition, the PIU has benefitted from “unlimited” availability of funds for project operations coming directly from the Norwegian Government through the FAO system, making operations much easier.

Would another institution rather than FAO in the lead have done a better job? May be - and may be not. Obviously, there are several NGOs working at the grassroots level in the country and in the area, and the RT believes that these could also have shown some success stories (and failures), and *may be* even with lower transaction costs (administration and management) than the FAO system (no analysis done on this by the RT). On the other hand, some NGOs tend to use own staff in implementation and not involve governmental staff to the extent preferred by the Government. The FAO system, according to their mandate as understood by the RT, should in principle operate more on an overall policy and strategy level supporting programmatic issues at a national scale, rather than dealing with “nuts and bolts” at the village level. Having said that, it is obvious that the success of any project is, whatever organisation being behind, mostly depending on the dedication and skills of the project management in charge of the daily operations and the enthusiasm instigated amongst the beneficiaries. The RT believes that the PIU team in the FAO Project has been relatively successful in this respect, even though it is somewhat unexpected that FAO should be running grassroots level projects at this scale. It is expected that the same project management staff would have done a similarly good job also working under other institutions (e.g. an NGO).

The added value of the FAO system in the Project however, as opposed to other implementing agencies, is largely the recruitment procedures getting the right persons in place and not least the technical backstopping and support services through the STS (Supervisory Technical Support) and the TCDC (Technical Cooperation between Development Countries), which according to the project staff was very much appreciated. There has been four STS visits (February 2007, December 2007, March 2008 and April 2009 as seen in *Figure 1.2*) and three long-term TCDC support missions (April-December 2007 - Irrigation and Water Development Advisor, April-October 2007 – Agriculture and Land Management Advisor, and April-December 2008 - Irrigation and Water Development Advisor). Such advisory services can bring to the Project the lessons learned from other countries in the region and the world at large, and can keep the Project updated on the latest development and prevalent strategies internationally.

Contrary to what is indicated in the ToR of the Review Team, the Project is *not* “fully rooted in the governmental system” (in the meaning “integrated”) as the funding bypasses the governmental system and the outside PIU is responsible for the daily operations, not the sector officers at district and EPA levels. However, the project management is explicitly endeavouring that all the activities are mainstreamed with government priorities and the work plans are very closely coordinated with governmental plans at district level. There is a large degree of combining transport and blending logistics at the local level. This cooperation and coordination has been fairly successful in the RT’s opinion, taken the framework conditions under which the Project is working. A well functioning project management at local level is given the credit for this success.

As mentioned earlier, the various UN institutions are seeking closer coordination through the One UN set-up, now also being established in Malawi (a voluntary pilot country, see *Box 6*). This process has, as the RT understands it, not reached very far and some natural internal built-in resistance within the various UN institutions against drastical changes in the modus operandi has obviously surfaced (although all “agree” that close coordination and resources utilisation is needed). This process obviously takes time, and the RT does clearly not foresee that there will be any changes in the implementation or managerial set-up of the Project during the remaining period (2 years), due to significant changes in the UN system. Trying to squeeze the Project into a premature setting would just confuse things at this stage, and in any case it would have been FAO that would have taken the responsibility of the agricultural activities in UN anyway, so no difference would probably occur at the practical level in any case<sup>8</sup>.

**Box 6: UN delivering as One (\*\*the One UN\*\*)**

The United Nations launched the “Delivering as One” pilot initiative in 2007 to test how the UN family can provide development assistance in a more coordinated way in eight pilot countries (Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay, and Viet Nam). Notably, Malawi has also voluntarily of own initiative initiated this process.

The pilot countries agreed to work with the UN system to capitalize on the strengths and comparative advantages of the different members of the UN family. Together they are experimenting with ways to increase the UN system’s

<sup>8</sup> According to (unofficial) information from the Ministry, the A-SWAp will not immediately phase out all projects that have PIUs but rather ensure that all new projects use the governmental structures.

impact through more coherent programmes, reduced transaction costs for governments, and lower overhead costs for the UN family. The changes respond to varied needs while drawing on all parts of the UN system, whether based in the country or not, and the intention is to help align programmes and funding more closely to national priorities and strengthen government leadership and ownership. It's ensuring that governments have access to the experience and expertise of a wider range of UN organizations to respond to their national priorities. In the pilot countries the UN agencies that aren't physically present in the pilot countries have been able to spend more time advising their governments without having to set up costly offices.

Recommendation for the UN to deliver as One:

1. The UN should "deliver as one" at country level, with one leader, one programme, one budget and, where appropriate, one office. (An empowered Resident Coordinator would manage the "One UN" Country Programme. UNDP will be restructured to focus and strengthen its operational work on policy coherence and positioning of the UN country team, and withdraw from sector-focused policy and capacity work being done by other UN organizations)..
2. A UN Sustainable Development Board should be established to oversee the One UN Country Programme.
3. A Global Leader's Forum (L27) should be established within ECOSOC to upgrade its policy coordination role in economic, social and related issues.
4. The Secretary-General of the UN, the President of the World Bank and the Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund should set up a process to review, update and conclude formal agreements on their respective roles and relations at the global and country levels.
5. A MDG Funding Mechanism should be established to provide multi-year funding for the One UN Country Programme. (A new MDG Funding Mechanism, for donor funding would provide multi-year funding for the One UN Country Programme, governed by the Sustainable Development Board. Contributions would be voluntary and could be specified).
6. The UN's leading role in humanitarian disasters and transition from relief to development must be further enhanced.
7. International environmental governance should be strengthened and made more coherent in order to improve effectiveness and targeted action of environmental activities in the UN system.
8. A dynamic UN entity focused on gender equality and women's empowerment should be established.
9. A UN common evaluation system should be established by 2008. Other business practices, such as human resource policies, planning and results-based management, should be upgraded and harmonized across the UN system as a driver for better performance and results.
10. The Secretary General should establish an independent task force to further eliminate duplication within the UN system and to consolidate UN entities, where necessary.

*From the web (<http://www.undg.org/?P=7>)*

#### **Box 7: Support from One UN in Balaka**

The One UN Fund has positively considered funding the "One Family One Fruit Tree" initiative in Balaka and this is an opportunity that has opened the window for leveraging more resources to the ADD, though not necessarily the same villages as the FAO Project activities.

*Info from the PIU*

## **4.4 The Gender Aspect**

The gender aspect has been well articulated in the Project, to the point of having a gender imbalance (in favour of the women) in certain cases. As indicated earlier, the RT observed that a greater number of beneficiaries participating in the various interventions are women (in average 64% of all beneficiaries according to June 2009 SAR are women). This percentage could be slightly higher in some districts where culturally agricultural activities were mainly done by women. In addition, most participating households are female headed or elderly headed because most of the young men in these areas prefer to go to other areas outside the district to look for employment.

## **4.5 The Revolving Funds**

Access to capital is one of the major challenging factors for improved agriculture productivity in Malawi. One way of improving access to capital was to set up revolving funds attached to all the initiatives taking place in the Project. Unfortunately the repayment rates still leave much to be desired. Some crucial factors that are contributing to the low repayment rates are: the "hand-out syndrome" (also referred to as the "grant dependency syndrome") set among the beneficiaries; small intervention packages given that only manages to improve the food situation on the household without any surplus that could be used for repayments (the 0.2 ha against 0.4 ha discussion within CA); and finally low illiteracy levels in some communities which deters the quick comprehension of initiatives being promoted (new ideas take time to be comprehended). At the rate the repayments at present are going, and if the status quo continues in a couple of years when FAO pulls out, there will be little funds left to revolve<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Another issue observed by the RT was that there was a perceived fear amongst some villagers of the donor calling the money back after project completion. That was why some villagers insisted on the Project continuing with FAO



The situation prevails for both Farmers Groups Revolving Funds (the mechanism illustrated in *Figure 4.1*) and the so-called Village Banks (*Figure 4.2*). Survival rate and sustainability of the funds seemingly depends largely on the zeal and enthusiasm by the traditional leaders in the communities, as the payback rate is higher with leaders pushing and encouraging villagers to comply with the fund rules. This involvement also strengthens the local ownership when coupled with personal and communal benefits being derived from the intervention.

## **5. OVERALL CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED**

### **5.1 Overall Conclusion**

As seen from the above sections, the Review Team believes the Project in general has more positive elements than negative ones, and as such is relative successful as an overall rating. The main reason for this is that the efforts undertaken at community level are highly relevant. The activities are broadly mainstreamed with the key issues at stake in the Government's policies and strategies for food and nutrition security, and fits well into the ADP, which is in a process eventually leading into the A-SWAp. This overall impression remains in spite of the fact that some interventions under each of the components are singled out and highlighted in the report as *not* doing that well. This is a common nature of such reviews, where the improvement potentials are lifted up to be taken onboard in the continuation of a project.

Although having a project managerial set-up that is not fully integrated institutionally in the governmental system at district and EPA levels, this solution still seems to be the most pragmatic solution in order to “get things done” during the remaining project period. . The main aim of the Project is to reach the communities and enhance improved food security, and the Project has to a large extent achieved this with the targeted beneficiaries, although this being in a limited geographical area. The cooperation with governmental staff at district and EPA level is very close and the project plans are fully aligned with and strengthening the district plans. The district/EPA governmental staff are actively participating in the implementation of the Project, and logistics are coordinated well with the district staff, especially transport. Although ideally the Project should be fully integrated into the governmental system at local level, the RT will advise against tampering with the present managerial and funding set-up during the remaining two years of implementation. This because there is a fear that such “sudden” changes, not planned for initially, would surely lead to confusion amongst the project staff, the governmental official at local level and not least the beneficiaries in the villages, and would hamper/delay implementation of certain activities. Disturbing the current and predictable status (especially financial) of crucial components after so short implementation time would surely be a recipe for disaster. The interventions in the Project are intended for the poor, so uplifting them simply to be food secure during the project period without trying to make it a permanent “uplifting” would make them drift back to poverty easily (with reference to the discussion of “depth and width”).

It is noted that the most successful components are the CA and the pass-on system of chickens and goats. Also, the Village Banks and some Farmers Groups are showing positive developments, although in general the payback rate of the revolving funds is lower than would have been hoped for. The diversification of crops (nutrition element) have not gained proper momentum, as there seems to be an in-built resistance in the area of introducing new crops, rather than the common maize and to some extent rice. The livestock groups in general are facing big challenges due to high price of feed.

The Project has so far also shown some positive impacts, both regarding food security all year around for some families who before had to buy food during some periods of the year, and regarding increased livelihood through procurement of household goods (iron sheets, school fees, cellular phones, etc.).

However, the Project as a whole is clearly *not* sustainable in its present form, although there are a couple of activities that could be sustained in the communities if the beneficiaries properly grab the concept and act accordingly (i.e. revolving fund payback). The government system/district authorities today are not able to properly follow up many of the ongoing activities started under the Project mainly due to lack of

---

staying in the lead in the foreseeable future.

funding to sustain the operations (fuel, subsistence allowances, grant input factors for farmers groups, etc.). As the government system also is understaffed (many position vacancies), the capacity and ability of the districts and EPAs at present to rollout the activities to new areas is considered limited, in spite of the national strengthening of the sector in the A-SWAp. Such capacity building takes time, and only two years remain of the Project.

An appropriate question in general is therefore if it really could be expected that the Project would be sustainable only after 4 years in a developing country like Malawi? Experience from other countries, notably Rukwa Region in Tanzania in the 80s, with some similar problems as Malawi today<sup>10</sup>, shows that such rural development processes take longer time than four years to “take grip” at some magnitude of scale with the local ownership properly embedded. Consequently, the RT believes that it is *not* fair to expect full sustainability of all the existing and planned activities during the two years remaining of the Project, as this is simply considered a too short a period. The RT might seem on the pessimistic side when claiming that it is not expected that the ongoing ADP-SP process and the planning for the A-SWAP has reached a state which will *directly* benefit the local activities in the project areas to the extent wanted two years ahead. The RT therefore dares to conclude that more time and resources are needed to make the efforts sustainable, and would urge the parties to seriously consider extending the efforts in one form or the other post-project.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

Following from the analysis and conclusions above, the Review Team has the following recommendation for the Project:

1. The successful activities in securing food for the population all year around should continue according to plans (and available budget).
  - a. This includes the Conservation Agriculture (CA) activities, where some existing groups need more exposure and awareness raising in order to be sustainable (revolving fund repayments), but also roll-outs to new groups in the project EPAs need being boosted. In general, the RT in general advises the Project to go “deep” rather than to go “wide” as a principle, meaning not to spread the efforts too thinly out, but rather make sure that the efforts started in one place are made sustainable before spreading. In this context, the project management should at least seriously *consider* also in some cases (on a trial basis) increasing the area of support from 0.2 ha to 0.4 ha, in order to compare the impact between the two approaches. (There are basically two ways of doing this: re-allocating funds from another activity which is not so pressing or has been discontinued, or to increase the project budget by additional grants from Norway, the government or other donors. The RT assumes the first option to be the most viable under the prevailing circumstances).
  - b. This also includes the pass-on programme for chickens and goats, as this seems to be rolling out well once people see the benefit of it. Continued sensitisation and awareness raising is however needed in order to secure that this programme is not slowly stopping up by itself due to human sloppiness decreasing enthusiasm and momentum to keep things going. It is also a fear that in times with draughts and shortage of food, people would tend to concentrate on their own family and not so much on helping the neighbouring farmers.
2. The irrigation programme with treadle pumps should continue as planned. This is an appropriate technology that can be handled by children and adults alike. Availability of additional lengths of plastic pipes should be secured (in the local shops/district governmental stores), as some fields are further away from the water than the “average” package with a fixed no. of pipe metres given to the farmers will allow. Such additional lengths of pipes can preferably be purchased by the farmer groups as needs arise. Spare parts that easily and normally wear and tear the first couple of years should be supplied with the first pumps to a group.
3. The starting of new irrigation schemes with motorised pumps should be discontinued and indeed

---

<sup>10</sup> The RUDEP programme was notably much wider than the FAO Project in Malawi, covering more sectors. Even after 10 years of interventions, there is in retro perspective a general consensus that the programme ended too quickly (especially as comparer to the 20-year horizon that was envisaged at the start-up).

discouraged. Such schemes are rather expensive to construct and to operate (fuel and spares), depend on relatively complicated mechanical/electrical equipment and are vulnerable to breakdowns. Efforts should however be made to make the existing motorised irrigation groups properly operational, amongst other by supplying backup treadle pumps in case of motorised pump breakdown, thus at least securing *some* irrigation effect at critical times. Sheds must be built around the motorised pumps to protect them from sun, rain, dust, and vandalism/damage by humans and animals (preferably brick walls with proper roofing). The soil embankments of brick canals must be made stable and built with appropriate sloping to prevent erosion, and Vetiver grass must be planted along the canals. More exposure to the irrigation groups is needed in order to secure that members are paying back the loans to secure next season's operation of the schemes (e.g. fuel). The "syndrome of dependency" of donors must be fought, and proper ownership to the assets must be built and maintained.

4. The design of unlined irrigation canals excavated in soil must reflect the type of the local soil. Sloping of the embankments must comply with the prevalent soil characteristics in order to prevent the sides from caving into the canals, leaving unnecessary and a never-ending maintenance burden on the groups.
5. The Review Team will advice against starting new agri-business groups, but rather put efforts into making the existing ones operational and sustainable, especially those still having funds and assets that could be used. Innovations might be required to re-vitalise some of the groups where the momentum is totally lost. In specific, the local production of animal feed (for chickens and goats) should be encouraged and assisted. Additionally, the marketing elements must be strengthened in these groups, and new ways of selling/distributing the goods must be sought, included contacts with buyer companies.
6. In general, the marketing aspects must be instigated as an integral part of the Farmers Business Schools` curriculum. In general the market must be explored before any production is started, not the other way around as today. Good professional coaching of the opportunities for the individual villages must be provided by the Project, based on geographical locations and nearby markets.
7. It is not recommended to make any changes in the project management set-up during the rest of this project period. Such changes will only confuse the stakeholders/beneficiaries and might make the activities suffer before they have been properly rooted in the communities.
8. The project management must formulate (in writing) an Exit Strategy of the Project (and one strategic move has already been taken with the two staff not being replaced). As Mangochi seems to be the district most capable of carrying forward some of the activities themselves, the gradual phasing out of project support could preferably start there. The Exit Strategy must to the extent possible elaborate on an approach where the harmonisation and possible integration into the A-SWAp could be facilitated post-project, and at the same time keeping up the momentum of the successful activities. (As any possible continuation of the project interventions in one form or the other has not been discussed between the partners, the project management must stay in close contact with the RNE and the Ministry in the formulation of the Exit Strategy).
9. The layout of the progress reporting should be improved in order to make the report more readable. The heading hierarchy must be clear (the hierarchy in this review report could serve as an example), and the reported progress should be related to the work plan in order for outsiders easily to understand both the progress during the last reporting period and the aggregated progress from project start. Photos in the report text must be reduced in size or put in separate annex.
10. The RT strongly recommends that the equipment and especially the vehicles bought for the Project remain in the districts after the Project ends. This is absolutely a prerequisite for at all having a chance of sustainability of the activities in the farther future. Although the Agreements states that it is up to the GoM to decide of the post-project use of the equipment, the RT urges the Norwegian Embassy (and FAO) to put pressure on the Government to decide as recommended.
11. Based on the fact that some activities are likely to have poor sustainability (lack of funding post-project), the RT recommends the project partners to seriously consider the continuation of the

successful project *activities* in one form or the other, with support from i.e. Norway, alternatively only with governmental funds. The RT has not been asked to speculate on the form of such possible continued support, as this of course will mostly depend on the status of the A-SWAp preparations and ADP-SP status some 1-2 years down the road. Any support will in any case have to be aligned with the A-SWAp and the governmental system will have to take a more active part in the efforts (including routing of finances through the system if possible at that time). Another possibility that has to be considered, again *if* a further sector support in the project areas is agreed to, could be basket funding and assistance through the One UN system, where some funds perhaps could be earmarked by the donor to such specific activities. In any case should the present managerial and administrative set-up be discontinued. The project partners are recommended to study the FICA-supported project (see *Box 8* below), which has adopted an implementation model that somehow goes further in the governmental integration process than the FAO Project. (The RT will not elaborate more on this issue, as it will merely be speculations under the prevailing circumstances).

**Box 8: Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Program Outreach.**

The project is funded by Flemish International Cooperation Agency and has the goal of improving food security and sustainable livelihood of the population in the impact areas (Kasungu District/Kasungu ADD) and Mzimba District/Mzuzu ADD). Administratively the project has a Project Manager who is based at Kasungu ADD and has the overall function of coordinating all activities. At the ADD, he is supported by an Administrative Assistant and an Accountant. In the 2 districts, the project has coordinators who oversee the implementation of project activities in the impact sites. The District Coordinators are housed at the District Agricultural Office and work closely with relevant Government officers. The project components include irrigation, agribusiness, nutrition and land resource management.

*The Review Team*

### **5.3 Lessons Learned**

Of the major lessons learned during the first years of the project implementation can be mentioned as follows:

1. Before starting production in any new agri-business groups, the market potential must be properly explored. The possible markets both in the community vicinity and further away should be looked into, and the result of this will decide on what kind of production to start. The risks of such production must be clearly assessed from the very start in a participatory process. As such, marketing aspects must also be taken more seriously in the Farmers Business Schools and be an integral part of the curriculum. Beneficiaries selected for business interventions should at least have enough food, or be supported in fulfilling this need, so that business efforts should not end up being reverted to fulfilling subsistence needs.
2. The success of any intervention is fully dependent on the wholehearted participation of the governmental system at local level (the ADD, the districts and the EPA). This must be secured through involving the highest level of officers from the very beginning and undertake joint planning of project actions with the governmental and other initiatives in the areas. Ideally, any intervention should be fully integrated into the governmental system, but clearly with Technical Assistance where the governmental system is too weak. Alternative managerial set-ups should to the farthest extent be avoided. . Incentives for the governmental staff to identify with the actions must be carefully considered, like providing additional vehicles to extension staff (motorbikes and pushbikes); in general facilitate joint transport and other logistics; support with subsistence allowances to all district and EPA staff working in project villages; and if separate project offices are needed, to set up such as close to, and preferably integrated within, the permanent governmental offices as possible at various levels.
3. The reporting requirements of the various partners should be discussed at the start-up of the Project. A common format should be agreed to in order to avoid duplication of work for the project management. The format should if possible follow the governmental reporting requirements, and the bilateral donors and other institutions participating (notably the UN system) should seriously consider relaxing their normal reporting standard requirements.
4. The technical standard on infrastructure development must *not* be relaxed, as poorly constructed structures will eventually be prone to more breakdown and more maintenance in the future, thus being more costly for the communities to operate. This might mean more close technical supervision

during the construction phase, for example of excavated and brick irrigation canals, motorised pump installations, etc.

5. In general, motorised pumps should be avoided as they make the communities much more vulnerable to breakdowns and periods of non-operations. Simpler more appropriate technology is encouraged, e.g. as the treadle pumps. Easily wear and tear spare parts for a certain time of operation should be part of the initial supply to the farmer groups.
6. Awareness raising and capacity building at farmer level is a never-ending undertaking, as pre-set human minds and old habits take long to change. Farmer group exchanges should be encouraged and facilitated by any agricultural project, as “seeing is believing”. Efforts in diversification of crops will definitely benefit from this in the long run.
7. In general, it should be carefully considered at the start-up of any community interventions whether the project should go “deep” or “wide” in the trial interventions. This is especially connected to the size of the input packages for the various farmers groups, e.g. to the CA groups. The discussion on whether 0.2 ha or 0.4 ha land for each farmer should be supported will always be subject to a balance between political and professional issues at stake. Whereas the Government is almost obliged to spread national funding “thinly out” in order to satisfy all inhabitants, a project funded by a donor could indeed concentrate efforts more when earmarking funds for this. The Review Team believes that in general going “deep” will give a better chance of replication and sustainability than going “wide”. Ideally, both approaches could be tested to see the difference in impact.

---

## **Appendix 1:** Maps, figures and tables

---





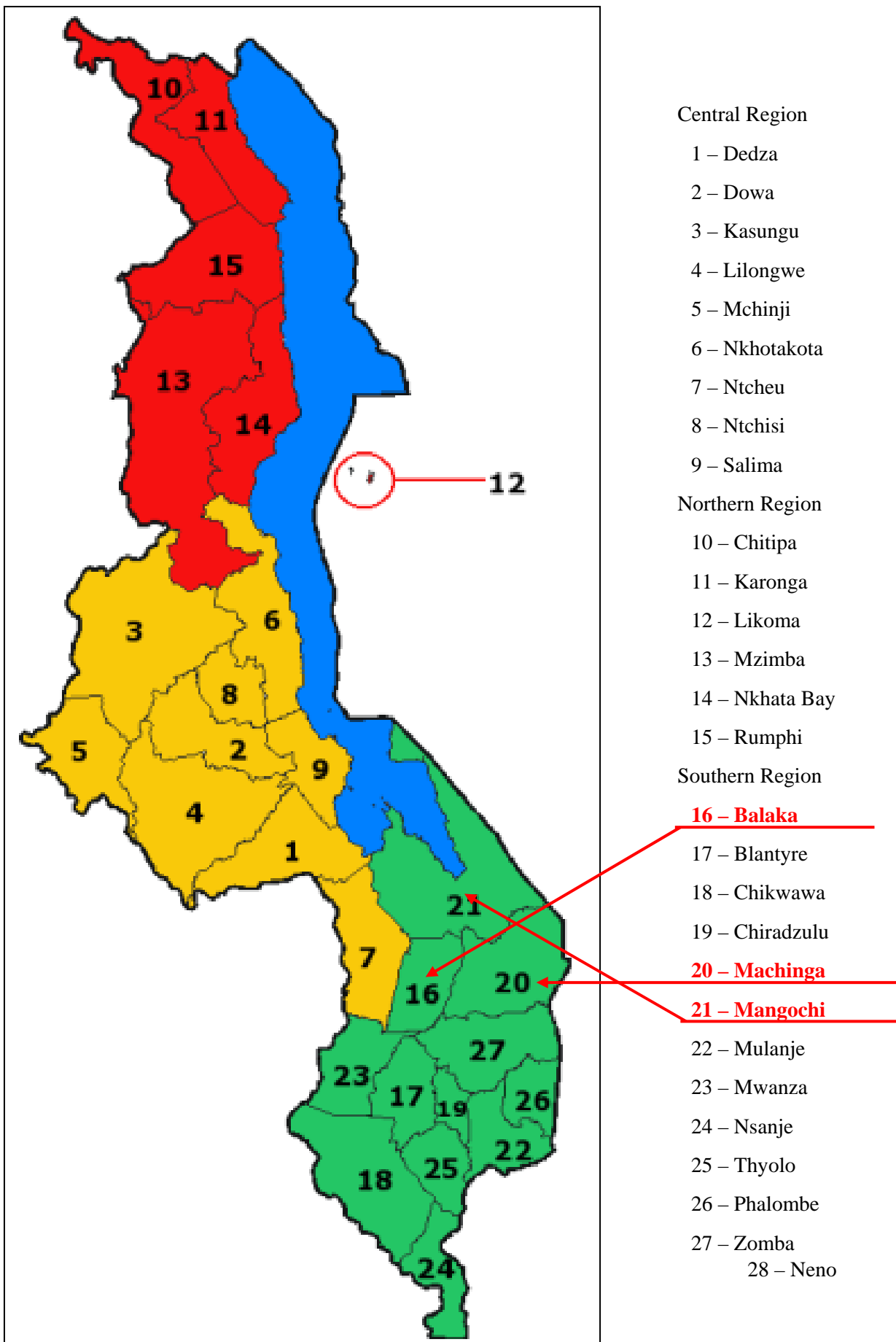
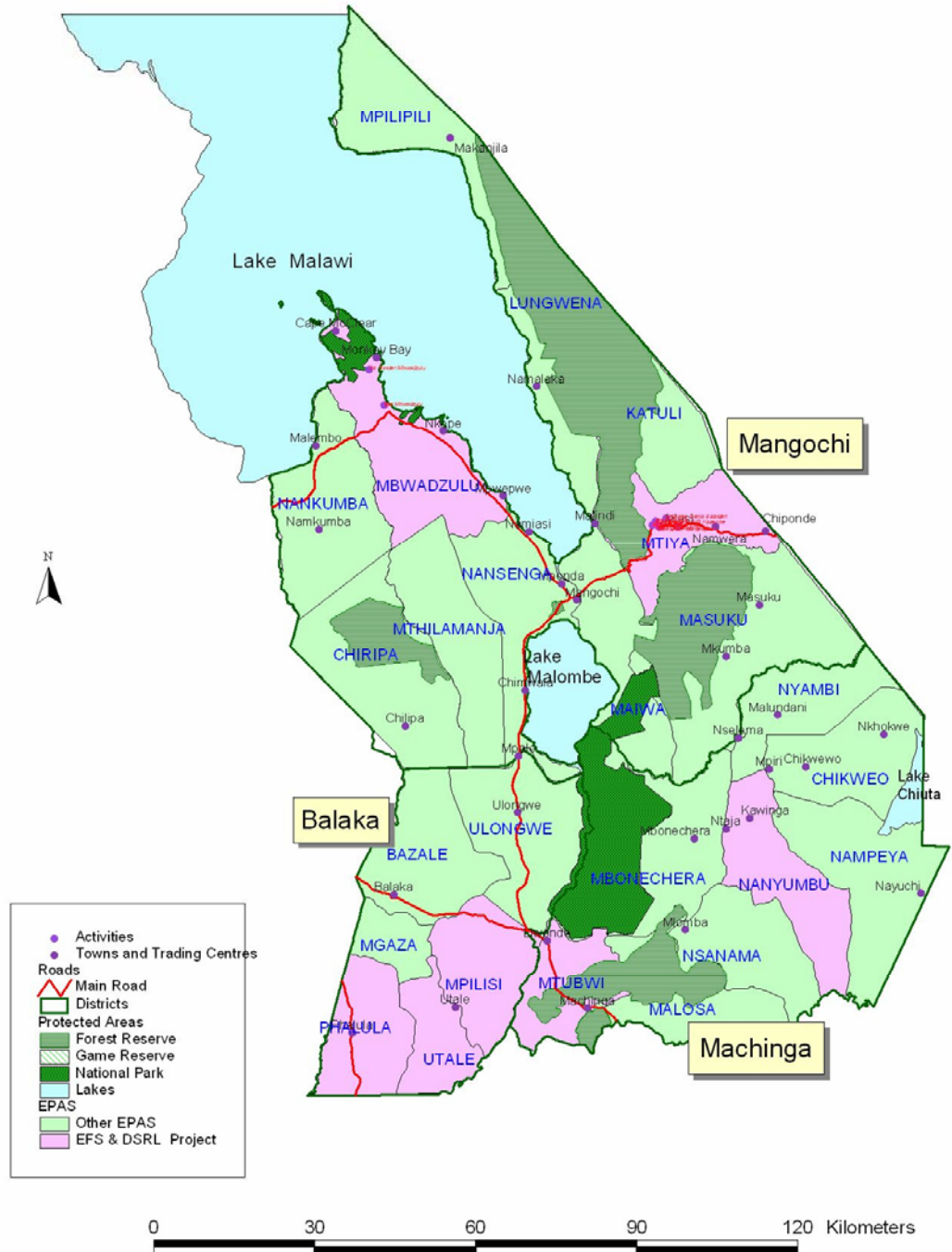


Figure 1.2: Districts of Malawi with project districts marked





# MAP SHOWING PROJECT COVERAGE BY EPA Enhancing Food Security and Developing Sustainable Rural Livelihood Project



*Figure 1.3: The three project districts with EPAs marked*

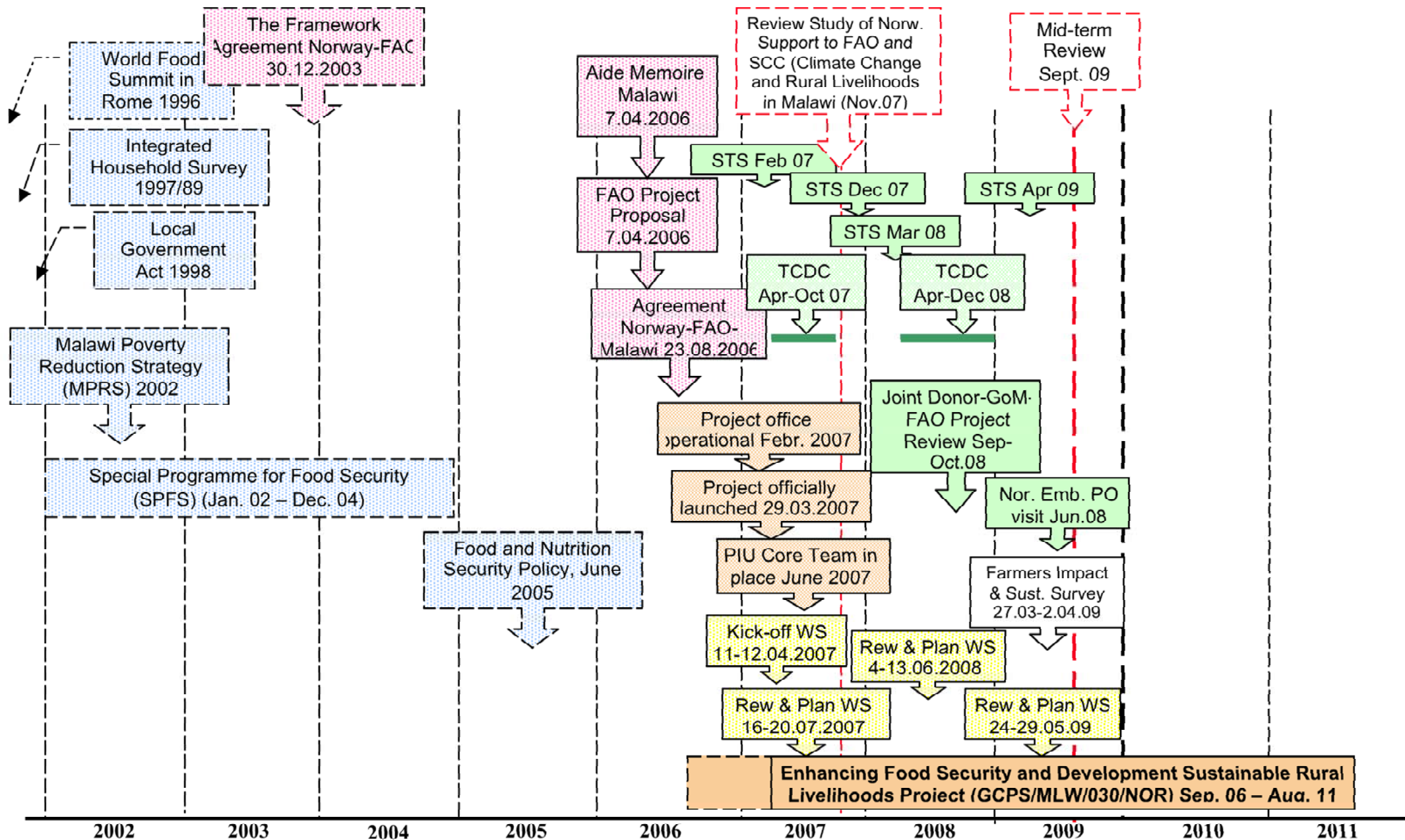


Figure 1.4: Important project milestones

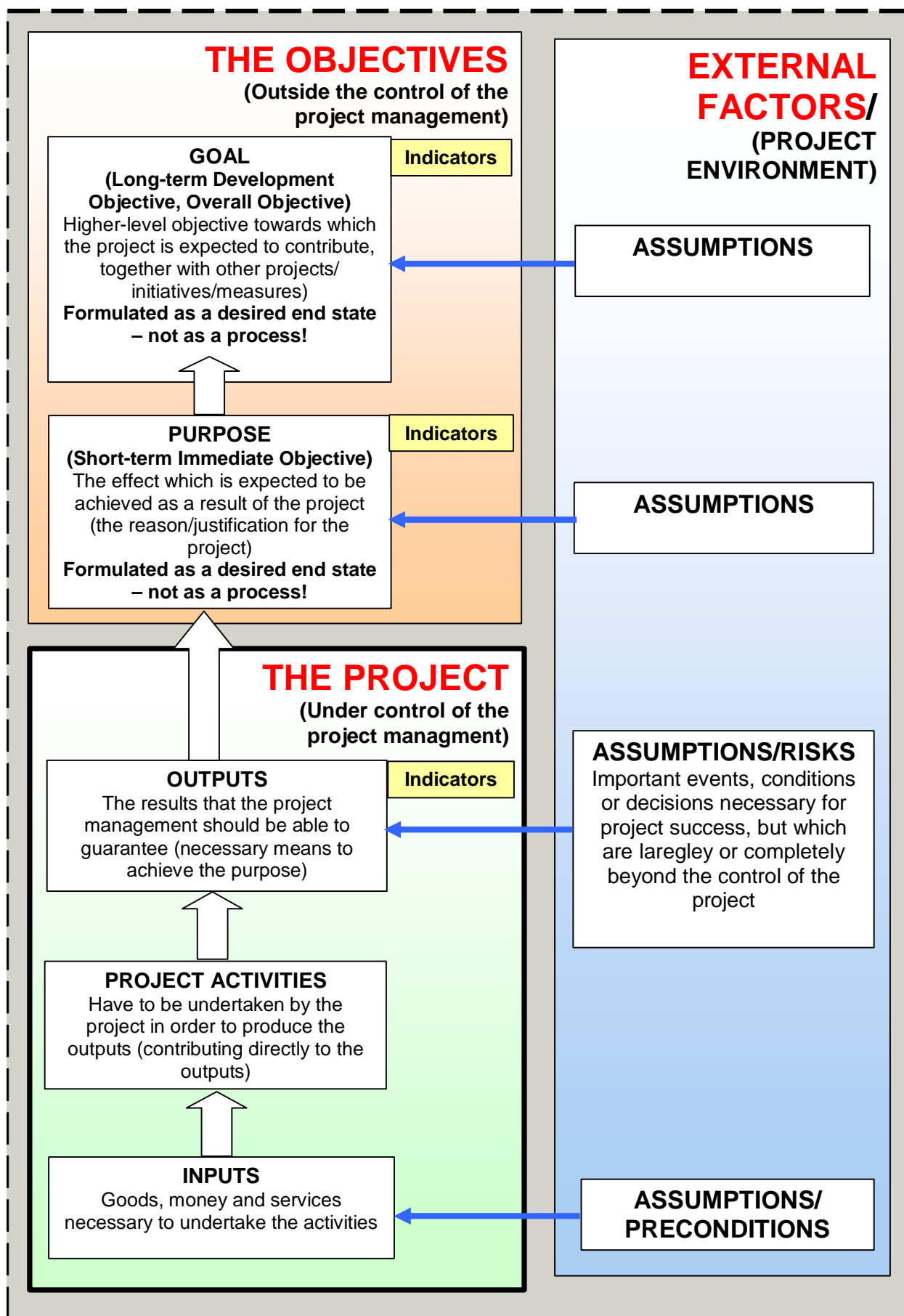


Figure 2.1: General project logframe (LFA) elements



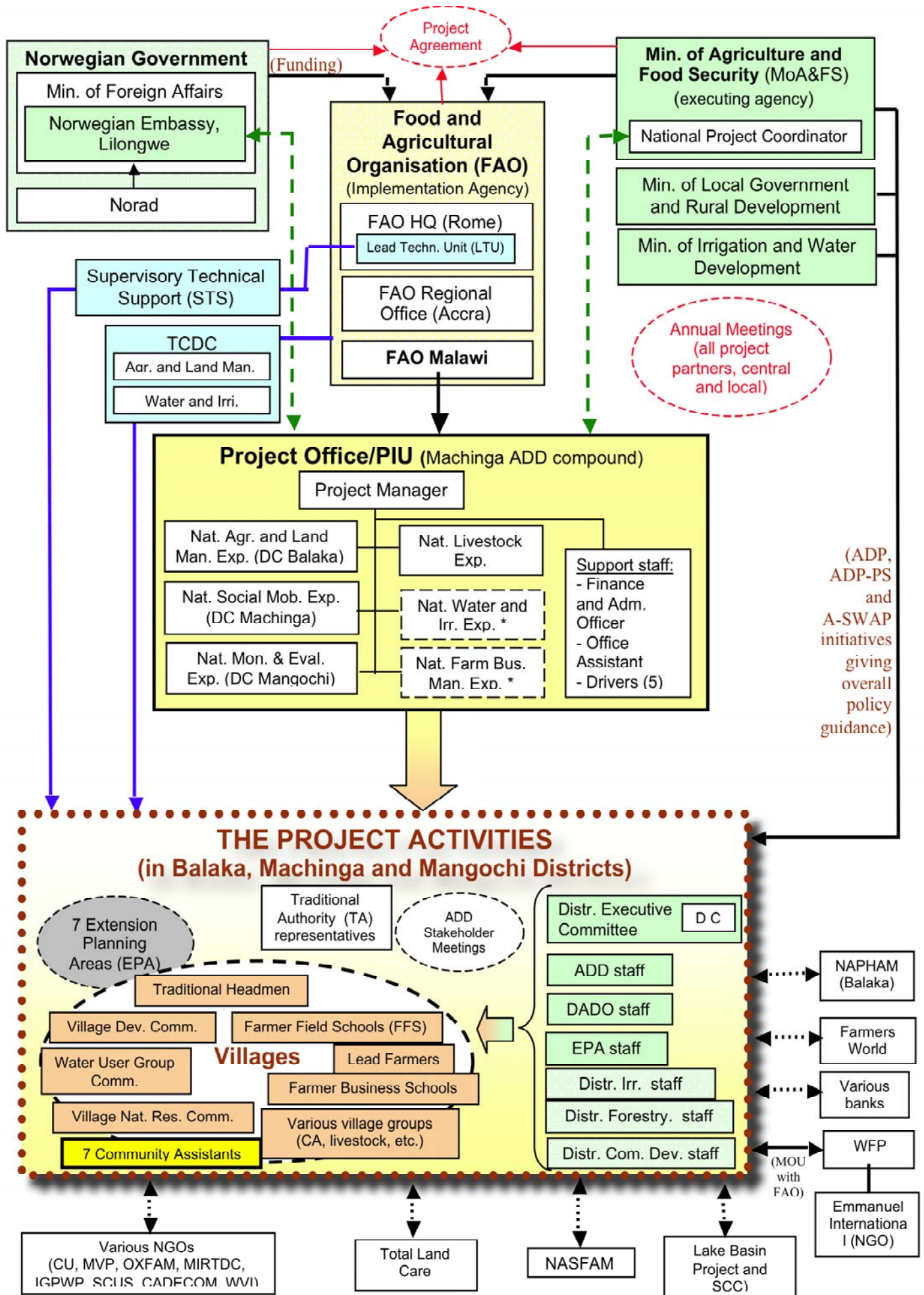
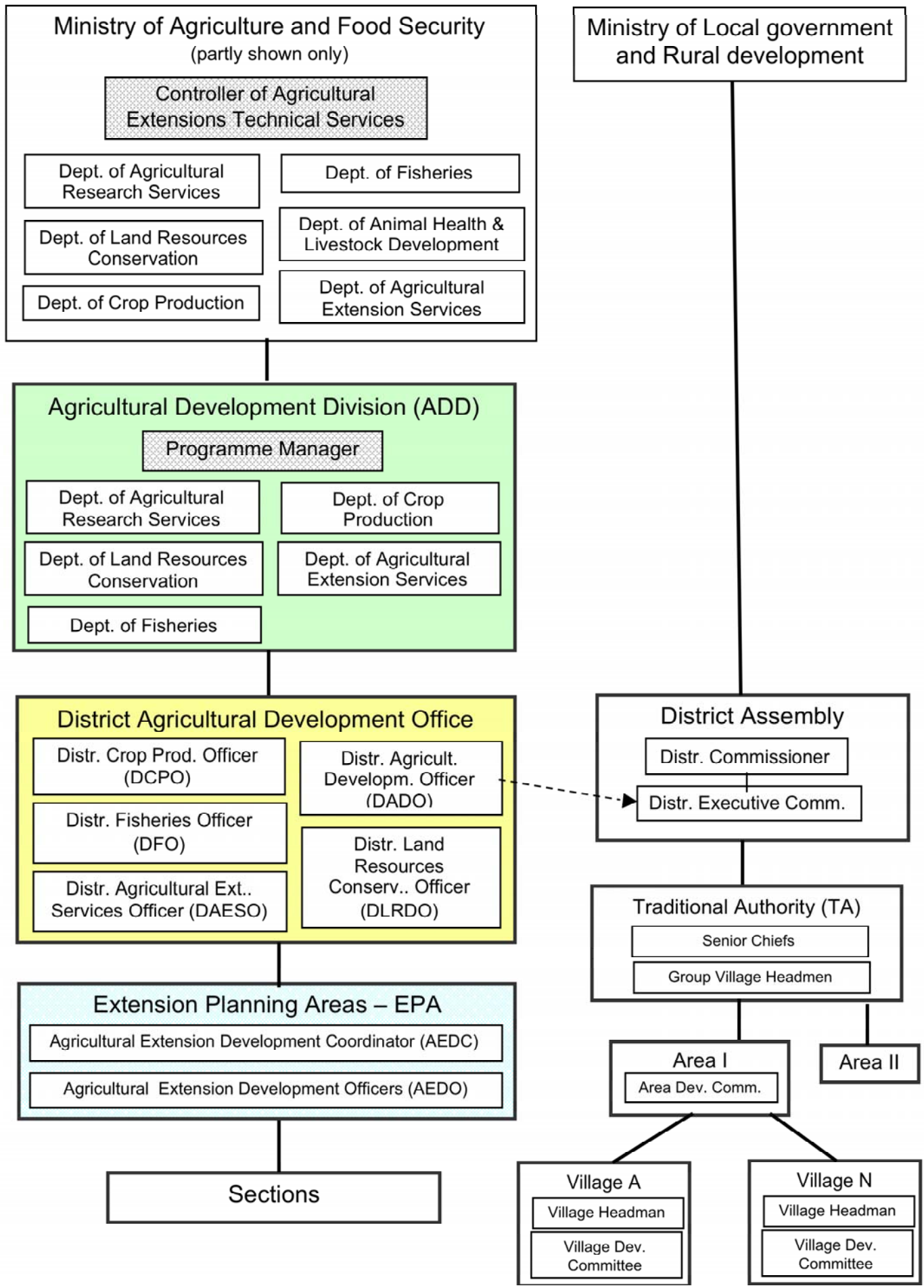


Figure 2.2: Project managerial and administrative structure (\* Quitted first half 2009)



**Figure 2.3: Various levels of the Min. of Agriculture and Food Security, as compared to the Min. of Local Government and Rural Development**

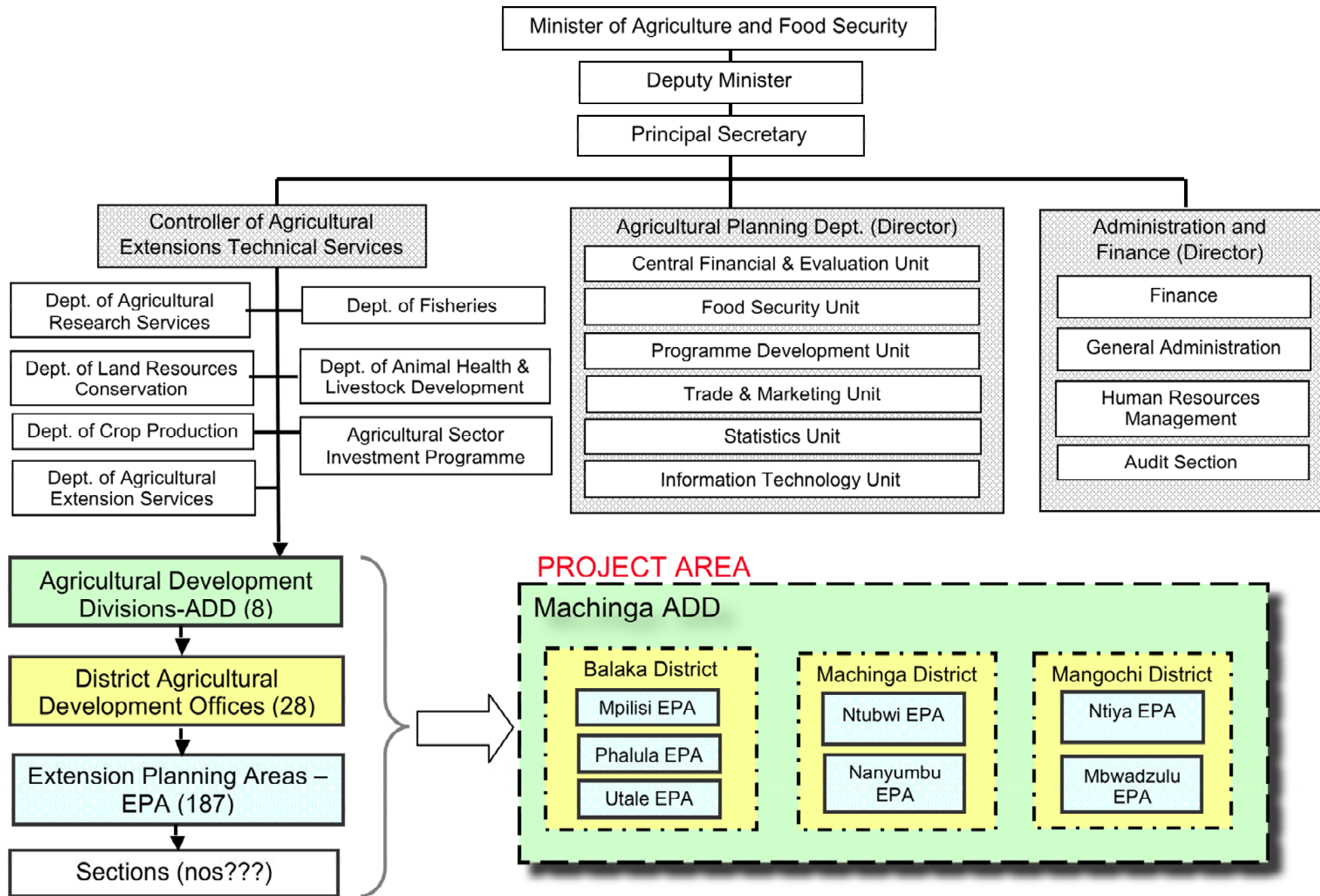
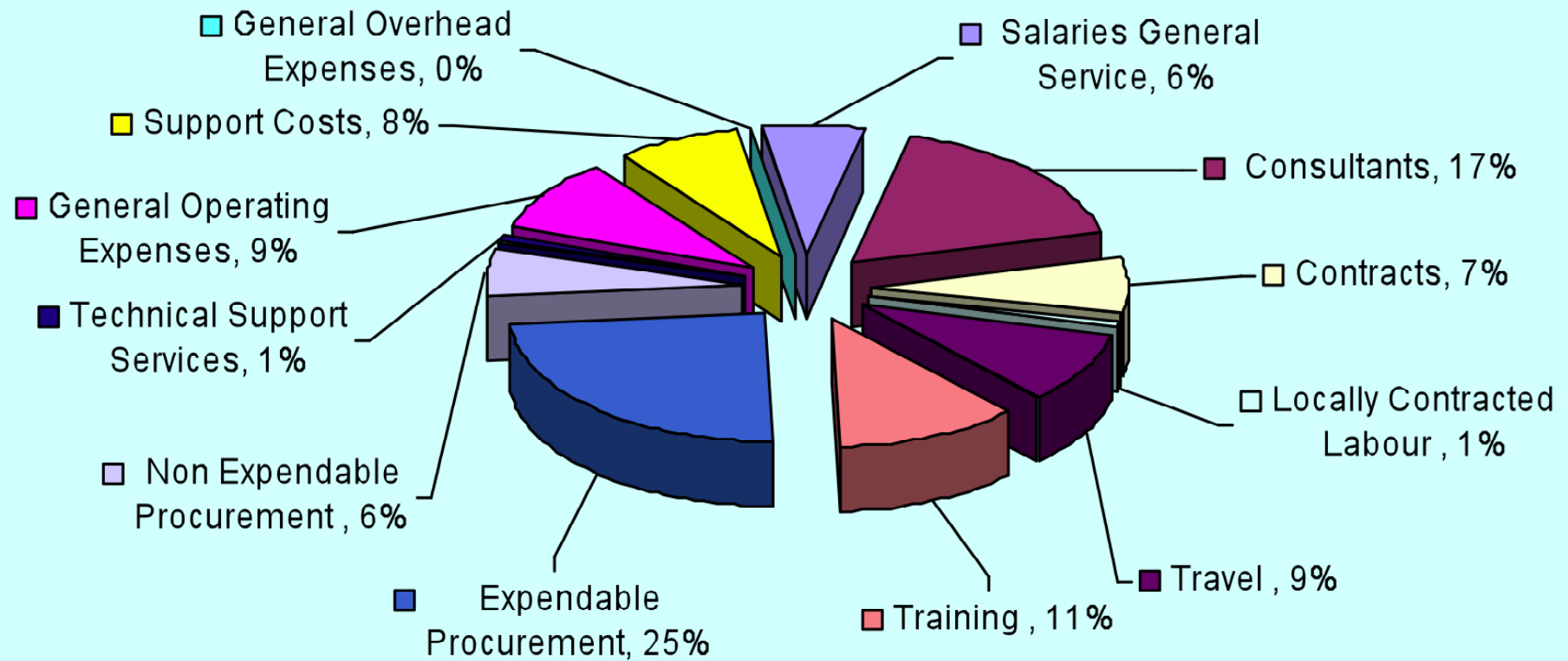


Figure 2.4: Organisational structure of the Min. of Agriculture and Food Security and the project area

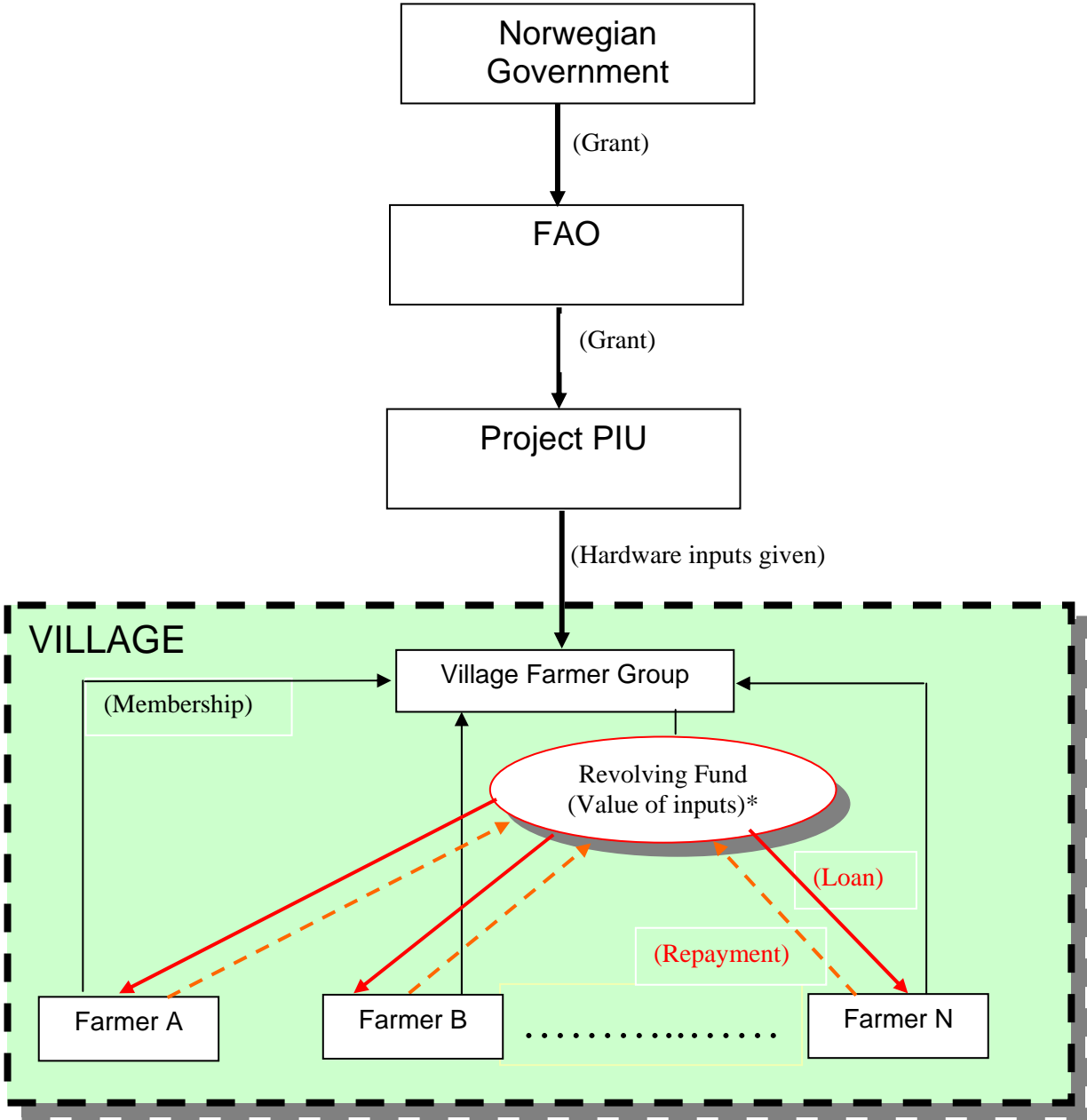


### EFS&DRSL Expenditures as of August 2009



Salaries General Service	Consultants	Contracts
Locally Contracted Labour	Travel	Training
Expendable Procurement	Non Expendable Procurement	Technical Support Services
General Operating Expenses	Support Costs	General Overhead Expenses

Figure 3.1: Distribution of project expenditures as per August 2009



\* Exclusive pumps (motorised and treadle), for irrigation groups given as grant contribution



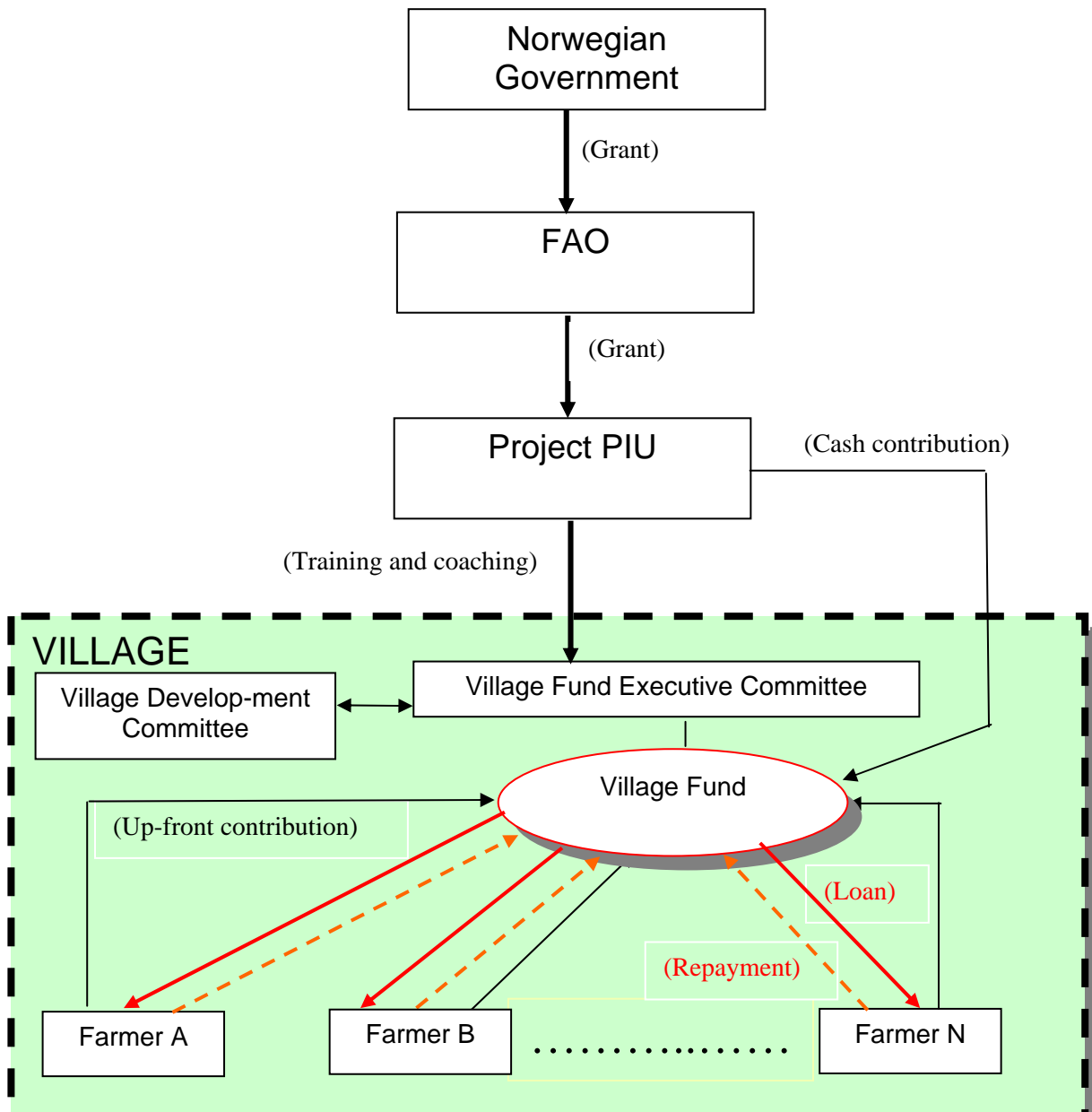


Figure 4.2: Illustration of the Village Fund (“Village Bank”) set-up

**Table 2.1: List of activities in the Inception Report**

**QUARTERLY WORKPLAN- CONSOLIDATED MAY- JULY 2007: ENHANCING FOOD SECURITY & DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE RURAL LIVELIHOODS**

<b>Output 1.1 Small scale irrigation systems</b>	1.1.1 Conduct farmer awareness meetings			X		
	1.1.2 Facilitate formation of farmer groups			X	X	

<b><i>promoted</i></b>	1.1.3 Conduct participatory identification of small scale irrigation sites			X	X		
	1.1.4 Conduct participatory verification of small scale irrigation sites				X		
	1.1.5 Conduct participatory perimeter and topographic surveys			X	X	X	
	1.1.6 Produce irrigation scheme designs options				X	X	
	1.1.7 Discuss designs options with beneficiaries				X	X	
	1.1.8 Produce appropriate final designs (homestead and field)					X	
	1.1.9 Conduct signing of participatory agreement forms					X	
	1.1.11 Brief DA, DEC & AEC members on scheme progress					X	
	1.1.12 Conduct participatory scheme construction					X	
<b>Output 1.2 Water harvesting techniques promoted</b>	Activity 1.2.1 Conduct farmer awareness meetings			X			
	Activity 1.2.2 Facilitate formation of farmer groups			X	X		
	Activity 1.2.3 Conduct participatory identification of water harvesting sites			X	X		
	Activity 1.2.4 Conduct participatory verification of water harvesting sites (homestead and field)			X	X		
	Activity 1.2.5 Conduct participatory perimeter and topographic surveys in water harvesting sites				X	X	
	Activity 1.2.6 Produce water impounding/dam designs options				X	X	
	Activity 1.2.7 Discuss designs options with beneficiaries				X	X	
	Activity 1.2.8 Produce final designs					X	
	Activity 1.2.9 Conduct signing of participatory agreement forms					X	
	Activity 1.2.10 Brief DA, DEC & AEC members on water harvesting progress					X	
	Activity 1.2.11 Conduct participatory water impounding/dam construction					X	
	Activity 1.2.14 Conduct re-organisation of old farmer groups				X	X	
	<b>Output 1.3 Watershed Management improved</b>	Activity 1.3.1 Conduct participatory watershed assessment to cause and effects food security.					
		Activity 1.3.2 Select appropriate sides for the construction of and water conservation structures.			X		
Activity 1.3.3 Facilitate formation of watershed management committees.					X		
<b>Output 2.1 Food crop productivity and production increased</b>	Activity 2.1.1 Develop technical reminder messages on specific crop production system.			X			
	Activity 2.1.2 Procure start up planting material.			X			
	Activity 2.1.3 Train staff in seed multiplication			X			
	Activity 2.1.4 Train farmers in seed multiplication			X	X		
	Activity 2.1.5 Procure planting materials for seed multiplication.				X		
	Activity 2.1.6 Conduct seed inspection				X	X	
	Activity 2.1.7 Mount on farm demonstration for summer cropping				X		
	Activity 2.1.9 Distribute initial inputs to selected rural communities and CBOs.			X			
	Activity 2.1.10 Source agro forestry high quality legumes				X		

	seed.					
	Activity 2.1.11 Train staff in IMP.			X		
	Activity 2.1.12 Train farmers in Integrated Pest Management			X	X	
	Activity 2.1.12 Conduct participatory field demos on recommended technologies.			X	X	
	Activity 2.1.13 Conduct farmer training in conservation farming			X	X	
	Activity 2.1.14 Procure and distribute conservation farming inputs				X	
	Activity 2.1.15 Conduct manure making campaigns			X	X	X
<b>Output 2.2 Increased access to food through diversification of income opportunities</b>	Activity 2.2.1 Conduct awareness workshops on farm diversification and enterprise development				X	
	Activity 2.2.2 Identify and appraise livelihood diversification and enterprise development opportunities, constraints and priorities				X	
	Activity 2.2.3 Prepare farm business plans for enterprise diversification activities				X	
	Activity 2.2.4 Support implementation of diversification action plans through provision of matching grants					X
	Activity 2.2.5 Introduce production of high value crops in non traditional areas (cotton, potatoes, sesame, onions, soya beans)					
	Activity 2.2.7 Conduct staff training in production of non traditional crops.			X		
	Activity 2.2.8 Conduct farmer training in production of non traditional crops.				X	
	Activity 2.2.9 Source seed and other inputs for non traditional crops.				X	
	Activity 2.2.10 Distribute seed and other inputs for non traditional crops.					X
	Activity 2.2.11 Conduct the demonstrations for non traditional crops.					X
	Activity 2.2.12 Conduct field days for non traditional crops.				X	
	Activity 2.2.13 Conduct farmers tours.				X	X
	Activity 2.2.14 Conduct supervisory visits.			X	X	X
<b>Output 2.3 Livestock production diversified</b>	Activity 2.3.1 Identify vulnerable groups for livestock production			X		
	Activity 2.3.2 Isolate and prioritize livestock enterprise selected by beneficiaries (from PRAs)			X		
	Activity 2.3.3 Train staff in prioritized livestock enterprise-goats, pigs, chickens, g/fowl				X	
	Activity 2.3.4 Train farmers in prioritized livestock enterprise ( Goats, Pigs, Chicken, G/fowl)				X	
	Activity 2.3.5 Conduct On Farm Ds on improved Kholas for the selected livestock enterprise				X	X
	Activity 2.3.6 Procure start up livestock stocks for the vulnerable groups / hhs					X
	Activity 2.3.7 Establish drug revolving fund					X
	Activity 2.3.8 Facilitate establishment of mini hatcheries					

	Activity 2.3.9 Procure start up feed for poultry					X
<b>Output 2.4 Fish farming promoted</b>	Activity 2.4.1 Identify potential sites for fish farming			X	X	
	Activity 2.4.2 Sensitise and mobilise farmers on fish farming				X	X
	Activity 2.4.3 Train farmers in basic principals of aquaculture and fisheries					X
	Activity 2.4.4 Facilitate construction of fish ponds					X
<b>Output 2.5 Linkages between farmer groups and agri-business service providers established</b>	Activity 2.5.1 Identify input suppliers, agro-processors and other agri-business enterprises for possible linkages and contract formation				X	
	Activity 2.5.2 Set up information exchange and market matching events					X
	Activity 2.5.3 Provide support for strengthening value chains and facilitate negotiations between farmers, agro-processors and financing institutions				X	
	Activity 2.5.4 Provide support for monitoring of linkage activities				X	
	Activity 2.5.5 Validate outcomes through monitoring and stakeholder appraisals					X
<b>Output 3.1 Formation of CBOs and FO enhanced.</b>	Activity 3.1.1 Identify existing functional Community Based Organisations.			X		
	Activity 3.1.2 Facilitate the formation of Community Based Organisations			X		
	Activity 3.1.3 Brief Staff and Stakeholders in Farmer Field .School Concept			X		
	Activity 3.1.4 Train Staff in Farmer Field.School Concept			X		
	Activity 3.1.5 Facilitate establishment of Farmer Field Schools (livestock, crops, land resource, small scale irrigation, extension)			X	X	
	Activity 3.1.6 Identify lead farmers			X		
	Activity 3.1.7 Train lead farmers				X	
	Activity 3.1.8 Identify agriculture service providers			X		
<b>Output 3.2: Capacity of staff, CBOs and households strengthened with technical and management skills and competencies</b>	Activity 3.2.1 Brief staff and stakeholders in PRA tools.			X		
	Activity 3.2.2 Train staff and stakeholders in PRA tools.			X		
	Activity 3.2.3 Conduct PRA in selected villages.			X	X	
	Activity 3.2.4 Train staff in project proposal writing				X	
	Activity 3.2.5 Train CBOs in project proposal writing.				X	X
	Activity 3.2.6 Train staff in project planning implementation (M&E)				X	
	Activity 3.2.7 Organise staff and stakeholders tour to successful FFSs / CBOs					X
	Activity 3.2.8 Train CBOs in group management				X	
	Activity 3.2.9 Train staff in FFSs concept.				X	
	Activity 3.2.10 Attend agriculture shows			X	X	X
	3.2.11 Brief staff in HIV/AIDS and gender mainstreaming.				X	
	3.2.12 Train CBOs and farmers in HIV/AIDS and gender mainstreaming in agriculture production.				X	X
<b>Output 3.3 Effective partnerships between CBOs and service providers strengthened</b>	Activity 3.3.1 Identify service providers			X		
	Activity 3.3.2 Conduct sensitisation meetings to service providers on partnerships			X		
	Activity 3.3.3 Establish an inventory of existing CBOs and FBOs			X		

	Activity 3.3.4 Conduct sensitisation meetings to already existing CBOs and FBOs on partnerships				X	
	Activity 3.3.5 Conduct exchange visits between CBOs and FBOs					
	Activity 3.3.6 Conduct Area stakeholder quarterly coordination meetings					X
	Activity 3.3.7 Conduct District stakeholder quarterly coordination meetings					X
	Activity 3.3.8 Conduct joint supervisory visits with stakeholders on progress of activities					X
<b>Output 3.4: District Planning and Management reinforced through information and lessons based on project experience</b>	Activity 3.4.1 Design a Monitoring & Evaluation system.			X	X	
	Activity 3.4.2 Conduct baseline surveys			X		
	Activity 3.4.3 Collect and analyse data on outcome and impact.				X	X
	Activity 3.4.4 Organise stakeholder reviews;					
	- Monthly for EPA level			X	X	X
	- Bi monthly for District level			X		X
	- Quarterly ADD level				X	
	Activity 3.6.6 Conduct supervisory visits			X	X	X
	Activity 3.4.7 Conduct Field days				X	X
	Activity 3.4.8 Conduct exchange visits					X
	Activity 3.4.10 Formulate Work plans					X
Activity 3.4.11 Compile and submit progress reports.						

---

## **Appendix 2:** List of Project Outputs and Activities

---

The following list of seven outputs and adjacent activities was presented in the Inception Report (IR) following a Project Launch Workshop where all the various key stakeholders were present. **This list was refined and revised later, ending up with 12 outputs presented in the 2007 Annual report. The heading/nomination of the various outputs has also changed during this period, (with the original nomination shown in brackets).** It is however noted that the Table 1 in the IR lists many more activities under the initial outputs.

## **Objective 1: Small Scale Irrigation and Watershed Development**

*Output 1.1 Small scale irrigation systems promoted (Development of water control and watershed management activities to expand small scale irrigation and water harvestin).*

Activity 1.1.1 Identification of sites for small-scale irrigation and drainage schemes through community based demand driven approach in villages

Activity 1.1.2 Mobilisation of trained farmers in the rural communities to effectively undertake improved water control and watershed management activities and ensure the appropriate operation and maintenance of irrigation and watershed treatment works.

Activity 1.1.3 Design and identify appropriate water distribution structures and practices to improve water use efficiency.

Activity 1.1.4 Construct and supervise improved water control distribution systems and watershed related watershed treatment works.

Activity 1.1.5 Identify sites with potential for water harvesting

Activity 1.1.6 Design and construct appropriate water harvesting measures around homesteads, on cultivated land and common land as relevant.

**Comment:** A total of 1,000 hectares are planned to be brought under small scale irrigation and a further 500 hectare under water harvesting. These interventions will contribute to improving water availability and enable smallholder farmers to cultivate high value crops utilising irrigation and harvested and stored run-off water.

*Output 1.2 Water harvesting techniques promoted (Design and implement appropriate measures to protect and restore the watershed).*

Activity 1.2.1 Conduct participatory watershed planning and diagnosis that highlight the causes and effects of food insecurity and poverty and identify opportunities for development.

Activity 1.2.2 Select appropriate sites for the construction of soil and water conservation measures, the location of nurseries, and the establishment of community forestry within watershed areas.

Activity 1.2.3 Provide technical assistance to farmers to design and construct physical soil and water conservation measures on cultivated land and introduce appropriate vegetative materials for stabilisation.

Activity 1.2.4 Facilitate linkages with WFP to provide Food for Work or Cash for Work assistance for the construction and establishment of physical conservation measures on communal land.

Activity 1.2.5 Design and organise environment awareness learning using IEC materials and site to site visits.

### ***Output 1.3 Watershed management improved***

**Comment:** Soil and water conservation structures will be constructed and community forestry established on both cultivated and common lands as part of an integrated watershed development. Some 500 hectare of land will be placed under community forestry. A total land area of 15,000 hectares will be treated with soil and water conservation measures, improved land husbandry methods and community forestry.

## **Objective 2: Intensification and Diversification of Farm Production**

### ***Output 2.1 Food and crop productivity and production increased (Increased food crop productivity and production)***

Activity 2.1.1 Selection of appropriate crop production systems (crop species, varieties and rotations) and identification of sustainable crop technologies suited to specific agro-ecological conditions and market opportunities.

Activity 2.1.2 Design and introduce on-farm technology packages to enhance agricultural productivity

Activity 2.1.3 Conduct participatory field demonstrations of improved cultural practices, integrated plant nutrition systems, integrated pest management, high-yielding varieties (seeds, plant cutting) and post-harvest technology for suitable crops.

Activity 2.1.4 Provide initial inputs and technical packages to selected rural communities and CBOs.

Activity 2.1.5 Promote soil fertility enhancement through agro-forestry by incorporating high quality legumes that are also suitable for conservation agriculture (e.g. mucuna, dolicos lablab).

**Comment:** Some 30,000 households will be provided with improved technological packages for rain-fed agriculture. Recognizing the increased role that women have in farming in Malawi as a result of HIV, simple production technologies will be introduced designed to reduce the burden of daily farming and household tasks.

### ***Output 2.2 Access to food through diversified income opportunities promoted (Increased access to food through diversified income opportunities).***

Activity 2.2.1 Identify livelihoods strategies and new opportunities to increase farm and household income and access to food.

Activity 2.2.2 Promote smallholder livestock development and fish farming in particular for the landless and women headed households

Activity 2.2.3 Promote value adding micro-enterprise development interventions

Activity 2.2.4 Establish community level revolving fund schemes to support income generating activities

Activity 2.2.5 Facilitate linkages between CBOs and market outlets, financial institutions, input suppliers, for the provision of inputs and support services.

Activity 2.2.6 Diversify the household diet and nutrition through the design of an extension programme targeting women and children, encouraging school feeding programmes, food storage, processing, preparation and intra-household distribution.

Activity 2.2.7 Promote and liaise with WFP and other food assistance agencies for the



establishment of school-feeding programmes where appropriate

**Comment:** Some 10,000 households will be targeted for small scale livestock interventions. Alternative value adding activities such as food preservation or processing will similarly be considered.

*Output 2.3 Livestock production diversified*

*Output 2.4: Fish farming promoted*

*Output 2.5: Linkages established between farmer groups and agribusiness service providers*

**Objective 3: Capacity Building, Institutional Strengthening and Sustainability**

*Output 3.1 Formulation of Farmer based Organisation (FBOs) enhanced (Capacity of community based organizations (CBOs) and households strengthened with technical and management skills and competencies).*

Activity 3.1.1 Investigate and understand existing traditional Organizations within the rural community and their structure and functions.

Activity 3.1.2 Facilitate the formation of CBOs in response to community interests.

Activity 3.1.3 Provide training to members of CBOs in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of development plans and proposals for micro project support.

Activity 3.1.4 Provide technical and managerial support to CBOs for implementation and monitoring the natural resource based development plans.

Activity 3.1.5 Provide technical and management training to CBOs and Farmer Field Schools and Life Schools in selected technical subject areas and group management.

Activity 3.1.6 Strengthen the human resource capacity of support service staff (Government, NGOs, private sector) to support local development in technical subject areas.

Activity 3.1.7 Prepare and disseminate appropriate Information, Education and Communication (IEC), materials on aspects of marketing, rural enterprise development, CBO development and extension methods.

Activity 3.1.8 Provide support to women and children headed households in rural communities, through advocacy and awareness raising

*Output 3.2 Capacity of staff, farmer based Organisations and households strengthened*

*Output 3.3 Effective partnerships between FBOs and services providers strengthened (Effective partnerships between CBOs and stakeholder Organizations developed and strengthened).*

Activity 3.2.1 Encourage and assist well established CBOs to work with each other and to provide advice and assistance to more recently established CBOs.

Activity 3.2.2 Support networking and information exchange among CBOs, VDCs, NGOs and private sector service providers.

Activity 3.2.3 Organise site-to-site exchange visits to facilitate sharing of lessons and good practices.

Activity 3.2.4 Hold periodic workshops and meetings amongst stakeholders including NGOs, government institutions, private sector service providers and farmers for information exchange and prioritising areas of collaboration.

Activity 3.2.5 Forge linkages with organizations engaged in social service activities such as government, NGOs, international donor and the private sector and various

associations.

*Output 3.4 District planning and management reinforced through information and lessons based on project experience (Information and lessons based on project experiences used to reinforce planning and management capacity in other districts)*

- Activity 3.3.1 Design and implement a project monitoring and evaluation system to collect and analyse data on outcome and impact.
- Activity 3.3.2 Organise stakeholder reviews amongst CBO beneficiaries and front line support staff to identify good practices and encourage replication in additional communities.
- Activity 3.3.3 Organise stakeholder review meetings for information exchange and to provide feedback on successes and weaknesses identified in the course of implementation for broader replication to other districts.

---

**Appendix 3:**  
Updates of project progress  
presented to the Review Team  
(September 2009)

---

**IN THESE VERSIONS OF THE PROGRESS UPDATES THE PHOTOS, LOGOS AND TEXT BOXES ARE  
TAKEN OUT BY THE REVIEW TEAM IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE FILE!**

**ENHANCING FOOD SECURITY AND DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE RURAL  
Livelihoods Project**

**GENERAL BRIEF**

**FOR**

**MTR**

**MISSION**

**By  
Blessings Mwale  
Project Manager**

**Box 100  
LIWONDE  
Telephone- 01 542 222/ 0888 208 250/ 0999 868 944  
[Blessings.mwale@fao.org](mailto:Blessings.mwale@fao.org)/ [blessings.mwale@gmail.com](mailto:blessings.mwale@gmail.com)**

**AUGUST 2009**

## **Introduction**

### **1.1 Brief description of the project, its objectives and components**

This project, GCPS/MLW/030/NOR, ‘Enhancing Food Security and Developing Sustainable Rural Livelihoods’, is one of the government’s direct responses to the country’s persistent deficiencies in food production that has been experienced in the past years. With financial support from Norwegian government, the project is being implemented by FAO in partnership with Malawi government through Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development in Machinga ADD. The project builds on an earlier initiative by FAO and Malawi government called the Special Program on Food Security (SPFS) which was implemented between 2002 and 2004.

The overall purpose of this project is to support the efforts of Government in implementing its Food and Nutrition Security Programme and mitigate the food shortages (chronic) that many vulnerable households in Malawi face year in year out.

The primary objective of the project is:

“To alleviate the immediate problems of poverty and food security amongst the resource poor rural households, addressing their needs by better water control and the sustainable use of the environment”

The project aims at providing small scale farm households with less than 2 hectares of land with the means to increase food production and generate income opportunities. The focus of the project is on water control, the support of production increases in rain-fed cropping systems and income generation through enterprise development, crop and livestock diversification.

In support of the project development objectives and aims, the project has three immediate objectives with 12 result outputs:

- **Immediate Objective 1: To develop small scale irrigation, water control and watershed development**
  - Output 1.1 Small scale irrigation systems promoted
  - Output 1.2 Water harvesting techniques promoted
  - Output 1.3 Watershed management improved
- **Immediate Objective 2: To intensify and diversify smallholder farm production system**
  - Output 2.1: Food crop productivity and production increased
  - Output 2.2: Access to Food through Diversified Income Opportunities Promoted
  - Output 2.3 Livestock Production Diversified
  - Output 2.4 Fish farming promoted
  - Output 2.5 -Linkages established between farmer groups and Agribusiness service providers
- **Immediate Objective 3: To empower communities to sustain project benefits**
  - Output 3.1: Formation of Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs) enhanced
  - Output 3.2 Capacity of staff, Farmer Based Organizations and households strengthened
  - Output 3.3 Effective partnerships between FBOs and service providers strengthened
  - Output 3.4 District planning and management reinforced through information and lessons based on project experiences

### **1.2 Total project cost**

The total project cost is **\$5.29** million, equivalent to **33 million NOK**, at the time of approval. This is a grant fully funded by the Norwegian Government. To-date, **22 million NOK** has already been disbursed. The Malawi Government contribution is mainly in kind- staff and office space, training facilities and other local services necessary for the implementation of the project.

### **1.3 Project Duration (date of Loan Signature, Start date, Effectiveness, Project**

### **Life, Expire date)**

The project was designed to run for five years. The project agreement was signed by Government of Malawi, Norwegian Government and FAO on **23<sup>rd</sup> August 2006**. The project expected end date is August 2011.

## **1.4 PROJECT START-UP ACTIVITIES**

### ***1.4.1 Administrative issues, staff hire and procurement***

- **September 2006- February 2007:** FAO in liaison with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food security initiated identification of project offices. This exercise was completed around in December 2006 when four offices were identified and renovated at Machinga Agricultural Development Division premises.
- **October- December 2006:** FAO office initiated procurement of project vehicles, motor cycles and other office equipment. The vehicles were ordered through international bidding. The first batch of four vehicles arrived into Malawi in April 2007. The lorry and motor cycles were in the country in June 2007. But the project started its operations with the support from vehicles that were transferred from the Special Programme for Food Security.
- **October 2006- May 2007.** Project staff hire processes were initiated in October 2006. All except the M&E National Expert was on the project by June 2007. The M&E was on board almost a year later- of course, there was need to have the M&E Strategy in place before hiring the national Expert- which was developed jointly with staff before the end of 2007.
- **February 2007:** Installation of telecommunication in the project office was completed.

### ***1.4.2 Project launch preparatory phase***

#### ***1.4.2.1 Project site selection and validation***

As recommended in the project document, the final selection of project sites was to be made with full consultation with the district authorities prior to project implementation. On February 2007, the project hosted the first Supervisory Technical Support (STS) services mission, David Kahan. One of the main objectives of the mission was to initiate the process of validating the project’s proposed sites in the three districts with the district authorities.

During this period, the mission held consultative meetings with Senior ADD Management staff as well as Senior District Technical staff of the three districts. The mission also visited some of some sites in Mangochi but failed to visit sites in Balaka and Machinga because of a car accident which the mission was involved in on the way to Balaka.

In general, the Project team and the Government staff were guided by the following conditions in the final selection of proposed sites:

- Degree of food insecurity- the project’s main objective is to improve food security
- Irrigation potential, including water harvesting
- Extent of land degradation- thus opportunity for land use management including soil fertility improvement
- Presence of other projects- avoid duplication or potential for linkages
- Presence of other partners, including United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

In the final analysis, seven EPAs instead of original six were prioritized as targeted project areas. **In Balaka district, the DEC members included Phalula** EPA because of its high ranking in environment related

problems which was strongly felt needed immediate attention- and falls on the upper catchment of the two other targeted EPAs, hence critical to the undertakings on these lower sites. **However, what this meant was that the geographical coverage was expanded. Thus, the final targeted EPAs are as follows:**

- ◆ **Mangochi:** Ntiya and Mbwadzulu EPAs. The district has a total of 11 EPAs
- ◆ **Machinga:** Ntubwi and Nanyumbu EPAs. The district has a total of 8 EPAs
- ◆ **Balaka:** Mpilisi, Utale and Phalula EPAs, out of the total of 6 EPAs in the district

See Map below, showing EPAs covered by the project in relation to other EPAs in the districts.

**Figure 2: Final selected project sites**

### **1.4.2.2 District Executive Committee Consultative meetings**

Three meetings were organised for District Executive Committee (DEC) members for Balaka, Mangochi and Machinga from 15<sup>th</sup> March to 20<sup>th</sup> March 2007. These meetings were organised as part of an initial and critical broad stakeholder involvement in the project and securing commitment to support its objectives and purpose. It was also an opportunity to validate the project concept, review and recommend improvements on project design.

### **1.4.2.3 The Project Launch- March 29<sup>th</sup> 2007**

The project was launched on **29<sup>th</sup> March 2007** at Sun N Sand Holiday Resort in Mangochi district, with participation by DCs from the project sites with their Directors of Planning, senior government officials from the MOAFS and other collaborating Ministries like Irrigation and Water Development, FAO Lilongwe, Embassy, farmer representatives including Senior Chiefs and Group Village Headmen from the project sites and NGOs. Specifically, the workshop was organized:-

- To present the project as part of awareness creation about the project.
- To give stakeholders an opportunity to review and validate the project concept; assess if the intended outputs and associated activities are sufficient to contribute to the project immediate objectives. This was aimed at giving an opportunity to stakeholders to contribute to improving the project design before activities kick off on the ground
- To share field experiences related to implementation of similar activities in the districts.

### **1.4 Target Beneficiaries- number as well as description**

The main beneficiaries are small scale farmers and rural households with less than 2 hectare of land. The project was originally designed to reach approximately **40,000** households, 30,000 of which could have benefited from input support of **20 USD** each but the target was later revised downwards to **23,500** taking into account errors in budget calculation especially on the irrigation component- but without changing the geographical coverage. To-date, **12,574** households have been registered for direct support against the project target of **23,500**. However, if we add pass-on beneficiaries and other beneficiaries reached through outreach programmes like Field days and exchange visits, the number reached comes to **15,070**.

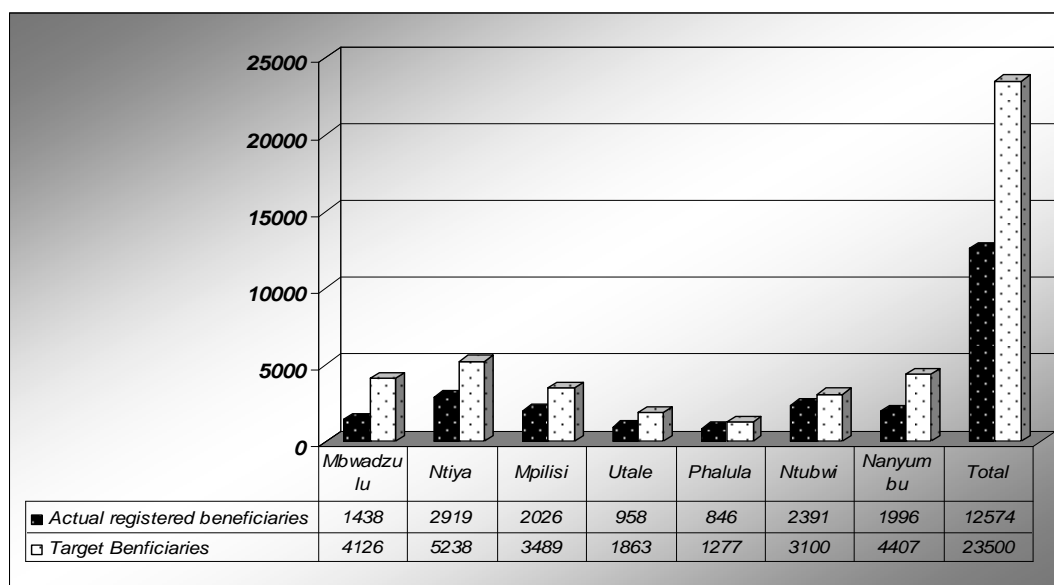


Figure 1: Break down of actual registered direct beneficiaries against project target

### 1.5 Key features on implementation modalities

- **Participatory philosophy-** involving beneficiaries to generate demand driven responses
- **Integrating within the government systems-** joint work planning, implementation and monitoring to ensure ownership and sustainability
- **Cultivate the culture of saving and self-reliance from the word go for the beneficiaries-** own resource mobilization; revolving inputs; capacity building
- **Pass on-** aim to reach every household in the village
- **Demonstration, especial on A&LM-** full package preferred- visible and reach out to many beneficiaries

### 1.6 Key project targets

Table 1: Project Key indicator Target Outputs

Indicator	Target as in approved document	Revised Target
1. Area of land under irrigation (ha)	1,000	500
2. Area of land treated by improved land husbandry methods (ha)	5,000	4,000
3. Area of land brought into cultivation (ha)	500	0
4. Area of land under community forestry (ha)	500	500
5. Number of households with improved packages of inputs	30,000	23,500
6. Number of households with small scale livestock- include pass-on	10,000	6,666
7. Number of households with other income generating activities	5,000	1,800

### What triggered revising project targets?

- First error in the budget worksheet "General Operating Expenses -field level activities. When calculating cost for irrigation development, it picked cell B34 instead of Cell B33 i.e. used \$ 1000 per ha instead of \$5,000. The 1000 was the target has and not unit cost. Therefore, the cost under this activity is one-fifth



the estimated cost.

- Secondly, although the irrigation sector envisaged another 500 ha of land developed for irrigation through water harvesting, there was no attached budget specifically for this activity
- Thirdly error worksheet 'Contract' - programme execution: Cell I38 picked wrong figures in the summation i.e. I35 instead of I35 and I37 instead of I37
- Forth error in worksheet 'Staff' - Sub-total staffing missed to add 'International Professional staff sub-total costs. This is also reflected in the 'Summary worksheet' - professional staff is only reflecting National Professional staff.
- Sixth error, the training component for CBOs- the cell calculating person days per year left the number of courses to be conducted and only picked the number of persons and days of training i.e. 80 person days instead of 360 person days for CBO development

If all these were corrected- i.e. only correctly formula links- then the Project budget should have been **\$11,242,716.00**

However, although, a revision was made to remain within the frame of initial approved resources, but maintaining geographical coverage meant the project has still been operating on sub-optimal budget. **It would have been better if the project was revised to its original plan or resources or reduce the geographical coverage.** However, reducing coverage would have been difficult when the project was already 8 months on the ground after the launch and activities were already underway in all the project sites.

## 2.0 General observations on project physical progress

### 2.1 Cumulative project achievements

**Table 2: Cumulative project achievements against main project indicator targets**

Indicator	Project targets	Actual Cumulative achievement	% achieved	Remarks	Other comments
Area of land under irrigation (ha)	500	205.00	41%	Civil works taking longer time to complete	To opt more low cost irrigation development with treadle pump. Motor pumps and weir construction technologies require more initial financial investment and have high operation costs
Area of land treated by improved land husbandry methods (ha)	4000	1,354	34%	Include area under CA, ridge re-alignment, tied ridging, soil & water conservation structures such as soil bunds, and manure (both khola & composit), vertivar	Technologies are introduced on demonstration basis
Area of land under community forestry (ha)	500	357.00	71%	Include Communal woodlots; homestead planting and forestry rehabilitation; Dispersed systematic interplanting. Planting for 2008/09 to take place from January	Better survival rates in 2009- averaging between 70-94%. Staff intensified campaign on environmental management with focus on Climate change & developing management plans
Number of households that accessed improved agriculture package of inputs	23500	11,551.00	49%	Through VRF, Irrigation, CA, FFS, Soya & QPM	Inputs provided as grant to groups but as loan to individuals except FFS.
Number of households targeted with various project activities	23500	15,074.00	64%	Comprising of 718 farmer interest groups in all sites	Include direct beneficiaries and indirect beneficiaries
Number of households with small scale livestock	3333	1,812.00	54%	High deaths of Black Australop chickens in the first season has reduced beneficiaries of pass on programme but now picking up	If combined with those doing business in Livestock the achievement is more than target
Number of households with other income generating activities	1800	1,101.00	61%	Include poultry business, bakery, bee keeping and fish processing, Piggery, broiler, fish farming	Suspension of livestock business enterprises due high feed cost slowed down pace of implementation

### 2.3 Observation on physical implementation component by component.

#### 2.3.1 Immediate Objective 1: To develop small scale irrigation, water control and watershed development

##### Output 1.1 Small scale irrigation systems promoted

- ◆ Significant progress has been registered especially in Machinga where treadle pump irrigation systems have been accelerated
- ◆ To-date- 205 ha has been developed (Not planted) and/ or is already in full/partial use, broken down as follows: Machinga 118 ha, Mangochi 65 ha and Balaka 82 ha About 3001 farmers involved with women participation of 75%
- ◆ Promoting high value and marketable crops like Kilombero in the schemes is key to sustainability.
- ◆ Motorized pumps are proving to be a big challenge- demand timely and frequent maintenance visits- at least with one of the irrigation pump type.
- ◆ There is need for high marketing capacity building support- unfortunately, farmers are still slow to notice the dynamics of marketing present systems
- ◆ Needs to operate as a **Water Users Association** and NOT merely as a gathering of individual farmers- registered and abiding by their own constitution, discipline
- ◆ Priority for extra resource allocation, if there was such an opportunity. Machinga ADD has over 77,000 ha of potential irrigable land. It is a winning formula for farmers adaptation to climate change

<RT comment: Output 1.2 obviously forgotten>

### ➤ **Output 1.3 Watershed management improved**

- ◆ There is general positive response in the communities on the need and importance of restoring the degraded lands through various afforestation activities
- ◆ However, the project needs also emphasize on CARE and SUPPORT for the survival of out-planted tree seedlings is critical
- ◆ There is also need to improve on technical advice given to farmers- e.g. tree/ fruit tree management and site selection into improve survivability of the trees.
- ◆ Need to promote community based grafting of fruit trees as one way of empowering the communities, some which can take fruit tree grafting as a business; if external purchase are made, attention is needed on quality of the seedlings
- ◆ Need to monitor enforcement of forestry management plans developed in the communities
- ◆ Timeliness of inputs is always important

## **2.3.2 Immediate Objective 2: To intensify and diversify smallholder farm production system**

### **Output 2.1: Food crop productivity and production increased**

- ◆ Need to support diversified cropping packages taking into account climate change and energy food needs. Currently very limited energy foods produced.
- ◆ The marketing challenges that have characterized this year’s cotton industry is a threat to next year’s and future efforts to promote this crop. Farmers all over are disgruntled with disagreements on cotton pricing in 2009- many have abandoned the crop in the field.
- ◆ High need to promote crop diversification and income earning opportunities to broaden the base for resilience against food and income shocks. Crops like Kilombero rice for rain-fed production, soya, common beans have high market potential and would offer farmers who are organized an opportunity to penetrate lucrative markets- as was organized for Tayamba Irrigation farmer groups in association with other irrigation farmers in the district for kilombero rice marketing that were linked to Tambala Food Products for a total marketing transactions of more than **MK 1.2 million**.
- ◆ Crops like Cassava, sorghum and sweet potato needs special emphasis to boost farmers’ energy food reserves and also upcoming marketing opportunities. There is now high demand for red sorghum in Chibuku Products industry

- ◆ FFS should expand to include CA. Farmers are already convinced that it is a winning technology to fight hunger and poverty. This could accelerate adoption rates of the technology. Unfortunately, we are constrained by resources. However, although the three districts may not yet be part of the **ADP-Support project**, but we can lobby for **more resources** to expand **CA** activities that are already a priority in the ADP-Support project. The project put forward a proposal for scaling up activities that have relevance to adaptation to climate change. If the donor considers this proposal, it could to compliment the World Bank/ FAO/ UNDP Climate change proposal under consideration.
- ◆ The One UN Fund has positively considered to fund One Family One Fruit Tree initiative in Balaka and this is an opportunity that has opened the window for leveraging more resources to the ADD, though not necessarily same villages as the project’s

## Output 2.2: Access to Food through Diversified Income Opportunities Promoted

### ➤ Small business enterprises

- ◆ Small-scale businesses are important in order to diversify rural livelihood options that can support the socio-economic needs of the resource poor farmers- e.g. fish processing, bee keeping have shown to be low cost and profitable
- ◆ Serious advice is need for farmers still interested in livestock based enterprises like piggery, layers and broilers because of feed cost issues- **preparedness to source local materials** for own feed compounding **IS THE ONLY WAY OUT. The project has started by embarking on training farmers on how to compound own local feed. This can cut feed costs by almost 50%**
- ◆ Need to support enterprises that are cost-effective and with high returns
- ◆ Crop based enterprises such as Kilombero, Soya, Red Sorghum that offer high marketing opportunities and income to farmers should be supported, given resources
- ◆ Need to promote value addition e.g. rice packaging. Tayamba irrigation scheme farmers with other neighbouring schemes tried at 2009 Agriculture Fair
- ◆ In general, more marketing linkages are NEEDED

### ➤ Village Bank Initiative-

- ◆ It has proved to be a good initiative, though not in all sites- but we have success stories to tell- Kamwendo, Idrusi, Matungwi, Sumbi I, Mpandasoni – those who started the programme in December 2007. Others can learn from these groups
- ◆ Capacity building to manage the VRF is very critical for the success and sustainability of such initiatives
- ◆ Loan Recoveries needs innovative dialogue with farmers- it is for their own benefit; it is livelihood issue. Farmers should consider also in-kind contributions that can be marketed as a group to generate money for the revolving accounts. Some villages are already doing it- Kamwendo in Ntubwi EPA, Mdoka, Kaluma and Idrusi in Ntiya EPA.

## Output 2.3 Livestock Production Diversified

- ◆ The introduction of Smallholder Poultry Model has been successful. We need replication to all sites as it is an opportunity to raise start-up stock from within the communities
- ◆ Monitoring of BAs and pass-on programme is important to ensure that these programmes continue in the communities. So far so good
- ◆ Goat population has been increasing (**26%**) and pass-on programme has been better than for Bas. To monitor impact of livestock activities, we also need **statistics on livestock changes at household level**
- ◆ The boer-buck and local goat cross breeding is also valuable programme but sourcing these improved male goats is a challenge without adequate project funding, as you have to import The project is trying its best to borrow from other projects. In 2007, Small Livestock Improvement Project lent the project **7 boer bucks** and we are in the process of borrowing **20** this year.
- ◆ The sector has also serious challenge to get start-up stock for chickens- introducing mini-hatcheries could

assist to lessen this burden if there opportunities for funding. Both staff and farmers have been trained in hatchery management

- ◆ The introduction of drug boxes has been a good initiative- but farmers and front line staffs need to follow the calendar for chicken vaccination if we are to win the battle of fighting New Castle Disease (NCD) for both young chicks and adults
- ◆ There is need to expand pasture establishment where land is available- by introducing other species that are easy to propagate; do well in poor soils, highly adapted to climatic shocks; high nutritive vales not only as livestock feed but also human nutrition; can be used as human medicine- such as **Moringa Tree- can increase daily weight gain in livestock of up to 32%, increases milk production by 43-65%.**
- ◆ Piggery as a business is best when farmers can source own local feed. During hunger months it competes for feed with humans. It is also best done as an individual business enterprise not group- group enterprises should only be for demonstration.

➤ **Output 2.4 Fish farming promoted**

- ◆ A lot more farmers interested
- ◆ Let us pay attention to site selection and maximise economic gains of the enterprise
- ◆ More capacity building, especially feed management so that the farmers can raise good size fish for good nutrition and income when sold

➤ **Output 2.5 -Linkages established between farmer groups and Agri-business service providers**

- ◆ On output marketing linkages, we have started well. Let us build on the initiative – rice marketing in Machinga and Ang’ona were a success this year, honey marketing in Phalula, maize marketing in Machinga and Mangochi are some good examples
- ◆ Need similar strategies for green maize, vegetable marketing. If farmers can not sell their produce, they will have an excuse of failing to pay to the revolving fund account
- ◆ Exchange visits- providing ‘seeing is believing’ needs be encouraged
- ◆ Direct links with input suppliers will also cut costs on the part of the framers

### **2.3.3 Immediate Objective 3: To empower communities to sustain project benefits**

➤ **Output 3.1: Formation of Farmer Based Organizations (FBOs) enhanced**

- ◆ Have done well to register beneficiaries in time- but these need training.
- ◆ There is need to clear any backlogs on farmers trainings
- ◆ We are still short of our targets:
  - Machinga- Nanyumbu 45% registered; Ntubwi: 77% registered;
  - Mangochi- Ntiya 56%; Mbwadzulu 47%
  - Balaka- Mpilisi 58%; Utale 51% and Phalula 66%
  - Overall, **54%- if we include indirect beneficiaries, approx 64%**

➤ **Output 3.2 Capacity of staff, Farmer Based Organizations and households strengthened**

- ◆ The level of technical training to staff has been tremendous-
- ◆ Emphasis should be on farmer trainings
- ◆ Personally, I commend the ownership entrenched in the implementation arrangement of this project.
- ◆ I can not over-emphasize the need for more farmer training- BUT perhaps we should focus more on local/ in-situ trainings so that we interrupt less the farmers activities
- ◆ The FFS should continue- it is a powerful tool for ‘ farmer learning by doing’
- ◆ Let us revamp FBS- we had some lessons last season. One challenge has been lack of/ inadequate backstopping by the extension worker when farmers meet.

**Output 3.3 Effective partnerships between FBOs and service providers strengthened**

- ◆ We are encouraged to participate in other stakeholders functions. It means they recognize us that we exist; we also learn something from such interactions;
  - ◆ Most districts have facilitated these farmer-farmer exchange visits- our farmers need more of these, especially with high illiteracy levels- seeing is more important than classroom trainings
  - ◆ Let us not forget our farmers to make partnership or open up opportunities for partnerships with other farmer-based groups and other service providers. The farmers who participated in 2009 Agriculture Fair had an opportunity to foster some business links; was a powerful exposure to new marketing and business dealings
  - ◆ Should also continue to build from what already exists- e.g. linkage with NAPHAM groups in Machinga. However, let us support them with the required technical advice according to the choice of enterprises they have chosen. They are part of our beneficiaries. NAPHAM does not have the technical skills
- **Output 3.4 District planning and management reinforced through information and lessons based on project experiences**
- ◆ Commend the M&E team for the recent publications on impact and output indicator surveys, farmers perceptions on impact and sustainability issues- they help to make informed decisions.
  - ◆ Each one of us should make use of these findings- including the farmers themselves- so we need to give feedback to the communities about these findings
  - ◆ Although the farmers perception survey scored highly on relevance of training we offer to farmers and that they see improved extension-worker:: farmer contact, there was generally recognition that **issues to do with leadership of the groups are still weak** and needs more attention. **Leadership** is the backbone of group cohesion and continuity
  - ◆ There is need to organize more field days as they serve as good and effective platforms for rapid dissemination of messages;
  - ◆ Publicity through print media and radio and TVM is also an area we can improve
  - ◆ Project review meetings at community, EPA and District levels are a useful forum to reflect on how the project is progressing- However, we (**at all levels**) need to **follow up on actions agreed** with farmers in these community reviews; lest farmers relax and forget what they agreed will do to make the project continue progressing
  - ◆ Joint work planning process a forum for exchanging best practices, challenges and finding common solutions

### **3.0 Collaboration with other partners**

- **Collaboration with SCC-** exchange visits, resource materials, reports; Strategic Framework on Adaptation to Climate Change
- **Collaboration with Total Land Care-** exchange visits, resource materials, reports; Strategic Framework on Adaptation to Climate Change
- **Collaboration with WFP-** fruit tree production; road access improvement and canalization through Food for Assets
- **Other NGOs-** CU, MVP, OXFARM, MIRTDC, IGPWP- visits, resource materials; field days; Trade fairs
- **Other ministries-** MoIWD, MCWCS; Forestry- beef up capacity gaps; resource materials

### **4.0 Other general constraints issues that have had implication on project activities**

#### **4.1 Livestock package**

The project has very low provision for livestock such that in the second season, we had to switch to one goat per beneficiary instead of two as the price of one goat almost doubled in the second season. Yet, farmers are very appreciative of goat programmes. Some first season farmers now are proud of having as many as 7 goats even after paying the loan of two goats to the secondary beneficiary. If more financial resources were available, the programme can expand and benefit many more farmers.

The semi-scavenging chickens which are a low cost enterprise package has been challenged by lack of start-up stock from the two government farms- Mikolongwe and Bwemba- there is high demand and sometimes NGOs have to queue to get a chance to buy day old chicks.

#### **4.2 Low agriculture input packages**

Owing to low input package allocated in the project: The project adopted a demonstration approach to most of the technology transfer activities e.g. CA and also switched from input provision for general summer crops to a Village Revolving Fund initiatives that would afford farmers an opportunity- **primarily borrow money to buy agriculture inputs (with major assumption that they will have access to Government FISP)**. This VRF initiative proved a successful linkage in first season when **91%** of the beneficiaries used loans from the VRF to get farm inputs. However, beneficiaries in the second season dropped due to late recoveries in some groups.

**Innovative thinking** is required to improve loan recoveries- such as has happened this year in some communities who are not only paying cash but also in-kind and it is the responsible of the committee to dispose the goods so that they recover the money. Farmers in Mdoka, Idrusi, Kwilembe, Kamwendo who mobilized on their own some crop produce sought market to sell the produce as part of loan recoveries.

However, with more funding, a full package input would be preferred because it would allow the project demonstrate in a community with a wider participation that is visible and could accelerate adoption of technologies unlike the present approach where only a selected few farmers are chosen.

#### **4.3 Agri-business enterprises**

Most of the agri-business livestock based enterprises faced the challenge of **high input costs**. In addition, **formal micro-financing linkages remain a big challenge** for smallholder farmers- even successfully farmers who demonstrated the capability to repay loans in their VRFs have not been successful to leverage additional financing from the banks they have their account. **Banks need a formal of guarantee. Yet, the project design had put emphasis on micro-financing linkage as the main avenue of financing small-medium business enterprise with only a small matching grant of 60\$ per member which could best be put to demonstrating viable business enterprises.**

#### **4.4 Irrigation**

Although, the project put more emphasis to advocate for low cost and sustainable irrigation options for the smallholder farmers, not all project sites have same opportunities for low cost technology. Therefore, the budget error in supporting irrigation activities in the project is of great concern. Certainly, the revised budget allocation of **1,200 USD** per ha is of gross underestimation with cement prices that also have more than doubled during the space of the two and half years the project has been in operation. A cost analysis of irrigation water **pumping** alone, even using treadle pumps, is found to be around **1,000 USD** and if we add transactions costs like community mobilization and costs of developing irrigation scheme, the budget would certainly more than double. World Bank/ IFAD estimate a full package unit cost of developing one ha would be in the range of **2.9- 5 thousand USD**. If the project is serious with irrigation development, certainly allocating more resources to the sector is the best way forward

#### **4.5 Rising fuel costs**

The rising cost of fuel has had negative effect in the operation of the project. Fuel cost rose by an average of **55%** within the first season.

#### **4.6 Literacy levels**

Low literacy levels means that it takes time before farmers grasp any introduced innovation in the community. Therefore, you can not rush things. Coupled with that, you need also to fight with such negative mindset where poverty is accepted as normal in some communities.

## **BRIEF STATUS REPORT FOR **BALAKA DISTRICT** ON FAO PROJECT**

### **“Enhancing Food Security and Developing Sustainable Rural Livelihoods project”**

#### **Balaka District**

**August 2009**

#### **1. District profile**

District:	Balaka
Number of EPAs:	6 (Phalula, Utale, Mpilisi, Bazale, Ulongwe, Rivirivi)
EPAs under Project:	Mpilisi, Phalula and Utale
Traditional Authorities under project:	T/A Nsamala, STA Nkaya, STA Chathunya
No of villages under project interventions:	22 villages
No of farm families in the district:	109, 860
Number of farm families (project target):	MHH: 3242    FHH: 3387    Total: 6629

#### **2. Project Objectives**

The primary objective of the project is:

“To alleviate the immediate problems of poverty and food security amongst the resource poor rural households, addressing their needs by better water control and the sustainable use of the environment”

- To develop small scale irrigation, water control and watershed development
- To intensify and diversify smallholder farm production system
- To empower project beneficiaries to sustain project benefits

#### **3. Component activity Status**

The following is the updated status for all the components

Irrigation Development



Scheme	Type	Potential area (ha)	Area Planted (ha)			Participation		
			2007 to 2008	2008 to 2009	TODATE	M	F	Totals
Bondo	M/pump	8	0	4	4	4	16	20
Ludwe	T/pumps	12	5	3	8	29	18	47
Manyoni	T/pumps	4	2	0.4	2.4	11	31	42
Khwalala	T/pumps	4	2.2	1	3.2	14	46	60
Mitengwe	Canalisation	5	3	6	9	9	20	29
Njovuyalema	M/pump	12	3	2	5	14	22	36
Tithandizane	Canalisation	3	0	1.2	1.2	12	8	20
<b>Totals</b>		<b>48</b>	<b>15.2</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>254</b>

## Notes:

- Maize yields of up to 3500 kg per hectare were experienced
- Each farmer had 0.1 hectare plot on average
- Those who sold it as green maize realized as much as MK62, 500.00 against a cost of MK18, 000.00 per 0.1 ha translating to gross profit of MK44, 500.00
- The new schemes delayed due to land related disputes and negotiations at community level.

**Land management**

Land Management comprises all activities addressing the soil and water conservation issues in the district. The range from ridge realignment, check dam construction, water harvesting (in situ) structures, marker ridge construction. Agro forestry activities also fall in this category of activities.

**Table for land management activities**

Activity	Achievements
Ridge realignment (ha)	80.3
Marker ridge construction (ha)	88.8
Vetiver hedge rows (ha)	19
Vetiver nurseries (ha)	1.2
Stone key bunds (ha)	0.4
Swales (ha)	0.6
Area under woodlots (ha)	13.8
Area under conservation agriculture (ha)	44.4
Area applied to manure	143.3
No of compost heaps pits made	9727
No of Village Natural Resources Management Committees	6
Area under Forestry Protected Areas	28.6
No of Forestry Management Plans developed	6

## Notes

- Survival of out planted trees in the first season was seriously affected by the drought
- Recommendation is to raise the seedlings early enough to give time for establishment before end of rains.
- It is highly recommended that the communities should be mobilized to manage the natural forests through creation of forestry protected areas and development of management plans and by laws.

**Crop production**



Type of crop	Area developed	Farmer participation		
		Male	Female	Totals
Cotton	11.3	15	15	30
Soya	2.44	64	70	134
QPM	3.8	64	70	134
Cassava	4.6	84	56	140
S/potato	0.8	28	22	50
Conservation agriculture	44.4	130	92	222
Rice	3.5	25	7	32
<b>Totals</b>	<b>70.84</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>742</b>

### Notes

- 5290 assorted fruit trees were planted out of which 4052 have survived representing 87%. The fruits distributed are mangoes, guavas and pawpaws.
- Average yield for rice was 1200 kg per ha and is lower due to drought conditions and hippo attack (vermins).
- Soya and QPM had low yield averaging 300 kg and 950 kg per ha respectively due to dry conditions (drought). Seed for both have been kept for the coming season taking advantage of the composite nature of the QPM maize.
- Cassava production programme is expanding as 5 more groups received cuttings on pass on arrangement from the initial groups
- Sweet potato programme was implemented on seed multiplication basis and will take up on a wider scale in the coming season.
- Conservation agriculture has proved to be very helpful in improving food security through increased yields. Farmers were able to get as much as 4237 kg per hectare in Phalula EPA, 3659 kg per ha in Mpilisi EPA and 1625 kg per ha in Utale EPA with an average of 3436 kg per hectare for the district.
- Loan recovery is low largely due to reduced yields as a result of drought in the first season and due to poor cotton prices in the second season. Cotton is the main cash crop in the district and was expected to be the main source of income for loan recoveries in the conservation agriculture programme.

### Goat Production

EPA	Name of group	Goats received	Mebrs	Births	Passed on	Deaths	Current stock	Goats received		Mebrs	Total stock todate
								Group name	No.		
Phalula	Umphawi	20	10	16	9	4	23	Tipindule	22	11	45
	Mwayi wathu	20	10	18	16	2	20	Tigwirizane	6	10	26
	Khama	20	10	6	5	10	11	Mlambe	8	10	19
	Mtondo	20	10	15	11	4	20	Talandira	5	10	25
<b>Totals</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>115</b>
Mpilisi	Tavomera	20	10	13	9	2	22	Chilembwe	14	10	36
	Bondo	20	10	18	5	6	27		0		27
	Tiyamike	10	10	3	0	0	13		0		13
	Tiyanjane	10	10	2	0	0	12		0		12
	Madalitso	10	10	3	0	0	13		0		13
	Mlambe	10	10	3	0	0	13		0		13
	Takondwa	10	10	1	0	0	11		0		11
	Chitsanzo	10	10	0	0	0	10		0		10
<b>Totals</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>
Utale	Tiyanjane	20	10	19	10	4	25	Tanyadira	18	9	43
	Mzepa	20	10	16	8	7	21		0		21
	Tikondane	9	10	0	0	0	9		0		9
	Tiyese	10	10	0	0	1	9		0		9
	Thokozani	10	10	1	0	0	11		0		11
<b>Totals</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>Grand Totals</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>60</b>

**Note:**

- The Tanyadira group in Utale EPA has experienced births as a secondary group with three (3) kids adding the total to 346 goats to date.
- The programme is sustainable as evidenced by the progress on pass – on scheme. More demand for goats is being developed by the community and secondary and tertiary groups are being formed.
- Out of the 134 births, 73 have been successfully passed on to secondary beneficiaries. The remainder is awaiting farmer trainings for the secondary beneficiaries.
- Pasture establishment is key to sustainability of livestock development and efforts were made to establish Rhodes grass, napier grass and leucaena. Pasture establishment was affected by dry conditions so much so that close to 1 ha of pasture established.
- 230 goat kholas have been constructed to ensure the goats are properly housed.

**Poultry Production**

EPA	Name of group / vge	Group name	Type of prog	Birds recd	Membership			Eggs hatched	Deaths / losses	Total to date
					Male	Fem	Tot			
Phalula	Phombeya	Phombeya	SS (BAs)	70	10		10	38	0	<b>108</b>
	Kavala	Tuwale	SS (BAs)	70	10		10	20	27	<b>63</b>
	Chikondi	Chitsanzo	SS (BAs)	70	10		10	43	12	<b>101</b>
	Mwaligula	Tigwirizane	SS (BAs)	70	10		10	44	32	<b>82</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>			<b>280</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>354</b>
Mpilisi	Chikamana	Mwala	SS (BAs)	70	10		10	29	20	<b>79</b>
	Sitima	Alinafe	SS (BAs)	70	10		10	7	0	<b>77</b>
	Chipumi	Bwemba	SS (BAs)	68	10		10	198	102	<b>164</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3</b>			<b>208</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>320</b>
Utale	Njovuyalema	Tigwirizane	SS (BAs)	74	10		10	75	61	<b>88</b>
		Chimwemwe	SS (BAs)	83	10		10	46	65	<b>64</b>
	Muruma	Tilimbike	SS (BAs)	70	10		10	21	21	<b>70</b>
	Manyoni	Tawina	SS (BAs)	70	10		10	32	35	<b>67</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>			<b>297</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>289</b>
<b>Grand Totals</b>				<b>785</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>963</b>

#### Notes

- Hatching has just started using the local broody hens and is steadily picking up
- The pass on programme is affected by farmers preference for goats than poultry making it difficult for the grown up chickens to be passed on to new groups
- 66 poultry kholas have been constructed. Secondary beneficiaries are in the process of constructing their kholas (currently 150 in total) in readiness to receive the livestock class of their own choice.
- 21, 792 chickens were vaccinated against new castle and this activity will be done periodically as scheduled.
- Total to date is 963 and is expected to increase with more births and improved management.
- The programme has started bringing benefits at household level as evidenced by Mrs Fandinyu in Utale EPA who has managed to spend MK8, 400.00 on school fees and exercise books for her son from the sales of chickens.

#### Agribusiness development

##### Layers Production

Name of group	Initial stock	Membership			Total eggs collected	Total Revenue (MK)	Cash at bank (MK)	Profits shared per member
		Male	fem	Totals				
Mlambe	204	10		10	22339	491,458.00	16,750.00	5,705.00
Tuwere	201	10		10	24897	572,631.00	40,000.00	2,616.25
Tsanya	200	10		10	23050	696,250.00		19,000.00

#### Notes

- Tsanya culled the layers at MK600 each and realized MK120, 000.00. in total they realized the highest MK 696,250 and have ..... At the bank.
- The layers business groups experienced high cost of feed which reduced profit margins hence the culling of birds for Tsanya and the temporary halt in egg production business.

##### Broiler Production

Name of group	Initial stock	Membership			Broilers sold	Total Revenue (MK)	Cash at bank (MK)	Profits shared per member
		Male	fem	Totals				
Tuwere	300	10		10	264	132000	113500	
	250	10		10	244	146400	98000	

#### Notes

- High cost of feed also affected the profit margins negatively to the point that the business was not competitive
- Soya and QPM was introduced for the purpose of undercutting the cost to raise the profit margins through local feed compounding.

#### Village Revolving Fund (Vilage Banks)

- The village revolving fund (Village bank) has proved to be a very useful resource basket for households to assist them in accessing cash for small scale businesses and agriculture input acquisition. About 90% of the funds were used to access agriculture inputs.
- The total loan issued to 6 Village Banks in the district in the initial year was MK 1, 456, 110.00 and 64% was recovered representing MK 933, 487.50.
- In the second year (2008/09) the banks issued out the money and new other village banks were formed in the expansion sites. The total loan volume rose to MK 1, 961, 000.00 and only MK56, 700.00 has been paid back representing 2.9%. Most of the funds were used in small scale businesses as the new groups were assisted while the agriculture season had already progressed.
- Loan repayment however has been seriously affected by the poor cotton prices and lack of alternative sources of revenue for the farmers.
- Mr Dennis Chiswe is one of the beneficiaries of the scheme and he has managed to start a Grocery whoc proceeds he has plastered his house. He also used part of the money to produce cotton out of which he expects to realize not less than MK 50, 000.00. Mrs Chiwaya got MK5000 from the fund, invested in cow peas production, realized 8 bags of 50 kg each. She sold five of them at a total cost of Mk15, 000.00 and used part of that money to buy a radio cassette which she hires out at MK1000 per function within the village.

#### 4. Capacity Building for Staff

Type of training	Staff trained		
	Male	Female	Totals
Participatory Rural Appraisal tools and methodologies	25	0	25
Market oriented farm planning management	9	0	9
Village Bank Management	9	0	9
Conservation Agriculture	8	1	9
Scouting and Spraying in Cotton	9	0	9
Fish Farming	5	0	5
Integrated Pest Management	9	0	9
Pasture Management	6	0	6
Drug Revolving Fund Management	3	0	3
Poultry management, goat management and pig management	9	1	10
Nutrition, HIV and AIDS	9	2	11
Farmer field school	6	0	6
Farmer Business School	14	0	14

**Note:**

- Training and capacity building have assisted a lot in bringing about the achievements highlighted across the project activities
- There is need for more emphasis on farmer trainings and capacity building for sustainability of project activities

**5. Capacity Building for farmers**

Type of training	No of groups	Farmers trained			Remarks
		Male	Female	Totals	
<b>Livestock Development</b>					
Poultry Production	12	62	58	120	
Goat Production	17	69	102	171	
SHPPM	4	24	16	40	
PIG production	3	12	18	30	
Guinea Fowl Production	3	8	21	29	
Broiler Production	1	0	10	10	
<b>Totals Livestock</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>400</b>	
<b>Crop Development</b>					
Cassava production	14	84	56	140	
Sweet potato production	5	28	22	50	
Vegetable production	1	4	12	16	
Rice production	1	25	5	30	
Cotton production	3	15	15	30	
Conservation Agriculture	19	118	79	197	
<b>Crops totals</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>463</b>	
<b>Irrigation Development</b>					
Irrigation agronomy	5	106	151	257	
<b>Irrigation Totals</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>257</b>	
<b>Agribusiness Development</b>					
Bee keeping Association formed.	2	12	12	24	23 members trained in association management and constitution developed
Bakery business management	1	0	10	10	Trained in bakery management and marketing
Cotton production (Association development)	1	8	2	10	Balaka Cotton Growers Association 5 board of trustees identified.
Farm Business School	8	65	113	178	8 schools formed with 178 farmers recruited. Mostly in pre season
Fish farming	1	10	0	10	
<b>Agribusiness totals</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>232</b>	
<b>Capacity Building</b>					
Farmer field schools	1	23	17	40	10 lead community facilitators trained
Community policing forums	4	52	22	74	72 VDC members trained
<b>Totals Capacity building</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>114</b>	
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>1466</b>	

**Notes**

- 1466 farmers trained in assorted structured technical and institutional trainings
- 799 farmers have been trained through on site demonstrations especially in the fields of agro forestry, soil and water conservation, scheme operation and maintenance and maize post harvest handling.
- Balaka Cotton Growers Association and Balaka Bee Keepers Association are in the process of registration to become legal entities. Cotton growers association has 1020 registered members and

has paid MK10, 000.00 as part payment towards registration with 5 Board of Trustees already identified.

- The farmer field school had good impact on technology dissemination and adoption hence will be expanded to become the major platform for technology transfer. Farmers have appreciated in particular the effect of soil and water conservation structures and correct plant spacing in maximizing crop production.

## **6 Conclusion**

- It is generally felt that the project implementation strategies and approaches are effective in assisting the targeted farmers realize the benefits of the project interventions. However for the interventions dependent on weather conditions like crop production, have been negatively affected by the same thereby reducing the expected impact on targeted farmers. Conservation agriculture however has been singled out by farmers as a winning technology. Its sustainability depends on loan revolving which is affected by the climatic factors as regards production of maize.
- The livestock interventions have proved to be moving capital for most individuals especially goats and chickens. It can be concluded therefore that intensified production of goats and chickens can assist to improve both food and income security at household level.
- The project sites in the district are already facing the effects of climate change ie droughts which the project need to assist the communities to adapt to. In situ water harvesting techniques coupled with conservation agriculture need to be intensified to address the problem.
- Village banks are proving to be a ready source of income to assist the communities to access the much need agriculture inputs and develop their small scale businesses. However the programme is affected by the poor climatic factors and fluctuating market conditions.
- The project is enjoying good collaboration with Ministry of agriculture staff and other government departments and private sector partners which eventually improves service delivery.
- All in all, the district sees a positive impact of the project on targeted beneficiaries as most of the activities can be sustained in the long term by both the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and the communities involved.

# Enhancing Food Security and Developing Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Project (GCPS/MLW/030/NOR)

## Brief Project Status Report, **Machinga** (2007-2009)

### INTRODUCTION

#### Project Successes

EFS & DSRL Project is implemented in 2 Extension Planning Areas (EPAs) and their names are Nanyumbu EPA under Senior Traditional Authority Kawinga and Mtubwi EPA under Traditional Authority Sitola.

In Nanyumbu EPA the project is implemented in Chindamba Village (Msewe site) with Chindamba, Mpinganjira, Irimu, Chirimba, Joni, Matindiri and Sadiki villages.

In Mtubwi the project is implemented in Kamwendo, Mwenyemasi, Minyanga, Belo, Chindungwa, Awali, Sifakado, Sonjera, Magadi, and Jailosi. All these sites above were initially started with in 2007/08 seasons.

In all the sites the activities being implemented are almost similar because they go as a package to the beneficiaries. These are Small-scale irrigation, Livestock Production, Soil and water conservation technologies, and soil fertility improvement activities, Conservation Agriculture, Agri business, Fish farming and water shed management activities (Afforestation) and village banks.

Due to potentialities of Irrigation that the district has it has sites specifically for Irrigation only and beneficiaries are only on Irrigation sites and not as package. The sites under Irrigation are Nanyumbu has the following, Chinamwali, Tayamba, Chiuja, Likhomo, Ling’ole, Kankhomba, Msikidzi, Oga, Kapwapwa, Msokolo, Malangalanga, and Upile Irrigation schemes. Those of Mtubwi that benefit from Irrigation only are Chigumula, Limbikani, Tigwirizane, Nkalo, Chisomo and Galamukani Irrigation sites.

The project is in total being implemented in 22 villages, 12 villages in T/A Kawinga and 10 villages in T/A Sitola and cumulatively **4,387 beneficiaries (1,385 Male and 3,002 Female representing 68% female participation)**, have been assisted through the project with various interventions to date, In Mtubwi EPA a total of 2,391 beneficiaries, with 923 Male and 1,468 Female have been reached, and Nanyumbu EPA has reached 1,996 with 462 Male and 1,534 Female. For details see below;

### Irrigation Development

- ◆ Area developed for irrigation: 79.5ha already developed to date and being utilized by 1,740 households in Nanyumbu EPA (1,374 female and 366 male). 35.3 ha developed in Mtubwi EPA and being utilized by 413 households (278 female and 135 male). In total 114.8 ha developed to date. Finalizing land preparation and planting is underway in some of the sites. In total there are 28 irrigation sites in the District. Most of these sites are outside the project impact sites where all intervention is being implemented.
- ◆ Major crops grown in the schemes include maize, leafy vegetables, tomatoes, rice under rain fed.
- ◆ A total of 273 farmers participated in Rain fed rice production (42 Male and 231 Female) Irrigation farming is enabling farmers to produce diversified range of crops all year round.
- ◆ Through linkages, NAPHAM support groups have been incorporated into the project initiatives to participate in Irrigation farming. 2 groups with 40 members (7 male and 33 Female). They

have been assisted with treadle pumps 5 to each group.

## Agriculture and Land Management

A number of interventions fall under this section: soil and water conservation, soil fertility improvement, fruit production, conservation agriculture, forestry.

- ◆ **Fruit tree production:** project promoting mangoes, guavas, oranges, bananas and paw paws. 3,181 mangoes were distributed and 2,471 survived representing 78% survival rate, guavas distributed 1,067, out of this 1,045 survived representing 98% survival rate. 2,179 Paw paw's were distributed, with 1,235 surviving representing 57% survival rate. 530 Lemons were distributed, 162 survived representing 31% survival rate. 40 Banana suckers were planted, 36 survived representing 90% survival rate, 100 oranges were distributed, to date all are still surviving representing 100% survival rate. It is imperative to mobilize and train farmers to raise root stock for farmer hands-on training in fruit tree grafting.
- ◆ **Soil fertility improvement:** Two key activities being promoted- compost manure making and agro-forestry techniques. Cumulatively 2,350 heaps/pits of compost have been made in Machinga with total area applied standing at 94 ha involving 602 farmers. Activity to be intensified as we continue manure making campaigns.
- ◆ **Agro-forestry:** cumulatively tree seedlings raised stand 29,150 of which 2,400 were out-planted by 905 farmers.
- ◆ **Area under Afforestation:** 11 woodlots established to-date, with a total of 1.53 ha established. However a total of 34,336 trees are surviving in both woodlots and homesteads.
- ◆ **Area treated with best soil conservation structures:** to date 69 ha constructed with marker ridges and ridges were realigned on contour with a total of 215 farmers participating. 22 gullies constructed with check dams for reclamation.
- ◆ **Conservation Agriculture:** to date 21 groups have been established to demonstrate conservation agriculture technology with a total of 250 farmers participating. So far, **43.0** ha were put under conservation agriculture in the last growing season. Farmers realize average maize yields from 1100kg/ha to 3090kg/ha.
- ◆ To Enhance Sustainable Natural Resource Use and Management in the District three environmental clubs aiming at Environmental Education have been formed. During the first sessions the following topics have been covered already, environmental degradation, components of environmental degradation, major types of environmental degradation, and effects of environmental degradation. Below is a summary of the clubs in the sites;

EPA	Name of school	No of clubs	Name of Club	Membership			No of Club patrons
				M	F	T	
Mtubwi	Mwacheya Junior Primary	1	Mwacheya	12	15	27	1
	Nathendo	1	Nathendo	16	14	30	1
Nanyumbu	Mpombe F.P School	1	Tigwirizane	15	15	30	1
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>				<b>43</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>3</b>

### Agri-Business Promotion

- ◆ A number of businesses were introduced; namely egg production, fish farming, piggery, and bee keeping besides locally managed micro-finance institutions (Village Banks) were established in Mtubwi EPA to provide money lending services in support of project interventions. An additional of three village banks were established in Sonjera, Sifakado and



Magadi.

- ◆ Two groups were doing egg production in Nanyumbu EPA (Chisomo and Namatunu) from Chindamba site. The groups are currently not doing their business after selling their spent layers. This is so due to high costs of feeds and the enterprise could not be sustained. Currently the groups have book balances of MK62, 000.00 and MK34, 000.00 respectively). Initiative has been taken to produce feed ingredients to build farmers’ capacity in local feed compounding.
- ◆ Piggery production: Four groups were formed in Kamwendo and Sonjera sites with 40 farmers participating (32 women and 8 men). One group has already received 4 sows and 1 Boar while the rest of the groups are yet to be assisted.
- ◆ The district has established 4 Farmer Business Schools, 2 in each EPA, 80 farmers participating with 18Male and 22 Female and 15 Male and 25 for Mtubwi and Nanyumbu EPAs respectively. Objectively the FBS is aiming at increasing farmer income through proper farmer planning and using available market opportunities

### Bee keeping enterprise

- ◆ The District also facilitated installation of 20 beehives in Mtubwi EPA at Kamwendo site. A total of **20 bee hives were installed and 16 already colonized**. Two groups are participating, Atupele and Msamalanjuchi with, 2 Male, 8Female and 4Male, 6Female respectively.

### Linkage to markets

- ◆ The District has facilitated market linkages between farmers and established buyers like Tambala food products and Charles Stewart companies.
- ◆ A total of 38 farmers (25 Male, 13Female) from Tayamba, Mikoko, Naming’azi and Chiuja Schemes, have sold Rice (11,089Kgs) to Tambala Food products at MK110.00/kg and they have realized MK1, 219,790.00. The highest amount realized was Mk175, 254.20 and the lowest Mk1, 359.60.
- ◆ Below is a summary of some of the impacts that the project is contributing to farmers livelihoods through Irrigation farming;

No of Farmers	Scheme	Assets Bought/Created	Price MK	Remarks
1	Tayamba	Canoe	35,000.00	Mr Mwalija
2	Tayamba	Built a house roofed with Iron Sheets		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mrs Lezina Eggs</li> <li>• Mr Steven Jauma</li> </ul>
1	Tayamba	1 Cow	39,000.00	Mr Pereya
5	Tayamba	2 Goats each farmer	They range from Mk3,000.00 to Mk5,000.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Robert Mbotero</li> <li>• Usyewani Robert</li> <li>• Lezina Eggs</li> <li>• Beatrice Kamanga</li> <li>• Dickson Saizi</li> </ul>

- ◆ Farmers from Umodzi irrigation Scheme (20 in total 12 Male, 8 Female) sold their maize (3740kgs) to Charles Stewart at MK40.00/kg and realized Mk149, 600.00 which has been shared among them. The highest amount realized was Mk28, 264.00, and the lowest was Mk1, 520.00. Some farmers have used the money to repay loans to the following activities Village Bank, CA farming and Irrigation farming (revolving funds/inputs)

## **Livestock Production**

### **Goat production: Goat production**

- ◆ 7 groups were formed in the first year of the project (2007/2008) at Chindamba and Kamwendo sites.
- ◆ A total of 140 female goats and 2 improved bucks were issued to farmers (Male=19 and Female=51). This was regarded as a loan that would be settled through passing on offspring to the next beneficiaries. To date 60 farmers (11 Male and 49 Female) have benefited 94 animals through this arrangement. This represents a 64% return rate.
- ◆ In the new sites 6 groups were issued with 60 goats during 2008/09 season. No pass on done so far as animals have just started kidding.
- ◆ 3 NAPHAM support groups will also benefit from goat production (13 Male, 17 Female), and semi scavenging poultry (10 Male, 28 Female).

### **Semi-scavenging**

- ◆ In the old sites 5 groups (50 farmers) were issued 350 pullets and cockerels (Black Australorp pullets and cockerels). The idea was for these to crossbreed with the local chicken to improve meat and egg output of the offspring. A pass on arrangement was conceived as for goats where beneficiaries give to next groups same number of animals as received initially to settle the loan. A total of 151 pullets were issued to 42 beneficiaries. Low return rate due to high chick mortalities and predation. In the new sites of Chapusa and Sonjera 6 groups were issued with 380 pullets and cockerels. Similarly no pass on has taken place.

### **Drug revolving fund**

- ◆ To ensure quicker and sustained access to animal health support, drug boxes complete with stocks relevant for the area were introduced in the project sites. The fund is run by the community through a committee alongside livestock lead farmers and veterinary technician. Member farmers procure the drugs at lower price than non members. The initiative has shown to improve livestock survival and productivity in the sites.

### **Rhodes Grass production**

- ◆ With a view of improving livestock feed availability, the project issued 14Kg of Rhodes grass seed in the project sites. The established plots were meant to offer seed material that would enable expansion of the initiative in the community. Well established stands were achieved especially at Kamwendo and Sonjera sites. A total of 10Kg seed has been harvested and will be distributed to goat groups.

### **Fish Farming promoted**

- A total of 80 farmers from 5 groups in Nanyumbu EPA are involved in fish farming. 5 fish ponds have been completed and 4 have been stocked with a total of 8,000 fingerlings of *Oreochromis shiranus*

**Technical Capacity Building for farmers-** a total of 544 male farmers and 1,018 female farmers were trained in various technical aspects relevant to their enterprise of choice between January and June 2009. In total 1,562 farmers were trained. Future plans have also concentrated on more capacity building activities especially for farmers where there are still capacity gaps, to make sure that they have the capacity to sustain project activities. Staff trainings were also done on various technical areas where capacity gaps were noted.

<b>Major successes for the district</b>	<b>Observations</b>
<p><b>DIVERSIFIED ENTERPRISES</b> More diversified farmer groups have been formed during the period ranging from livestock production, Soil and water conservation, crop production, Agri business, Irrigation and fish farming.</p>	
<p><b>IRRIGATION FARMING</b> The district is blessed with a lot of water resource that makes irrigation a viable project. The district has managed to facilitate establishment of irrigation schemes which are doing better. Irrigation remains the major area of focus for the district that can enable the project to show impact in terms of improving the community’s livelihoods</p>	<p>Most of the groups have been trained in group dynamics and leadership skills, Gross margins, Record Keeping and Market research and Marketing. However, there is need to hasten construction of the schemes i.e. Oga in Nanyumbu</p>
<p><b>CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE</b> Mounting of demonstrations on conservation agriculture were done and more farmers have learnt on the use of herbicides as a way of conserving soil and water and also improving soil fertility and is one way of labor saving technologies being promoted mainly during labor peaks.</p>	<p>The yield levels on the demonstrations were higher than other gardens. However the yields were a bit low as compared to the potential mainly due to sandy soils in the project sites.</p>
<p><b>MAINSTREAMING HIV/AIDS</b> Collaboration with NAPHAM</p>	<p>The response to the groups demand has been slow since the project was accessing the right projects/ IGAs that can be best managed by the NAPHAM groups.</p>
<p><b>LEAD FARMERS</b> Identification and training of lead farmers and village mobilizes is another mile stone in the district the project has achieved. This is a way forward in technology transfer in a sustainable way and also considering that the district staffing on the ground is very thin.</p>	<p>The SMSs are encouraged to intensify follow ups on the activities of these lead farmer for them to be more effective and efficient</p>
<p><b>MARKET LINKAGE</b> Linking Tayamba and maize production group from Kamwendo to Tambala Products Company and Charles Stewards Poultry respectively.</p>	<p>There is need to facilitate formation of a stronger crop specific association that should coordinate the project’s groups’ activities including marketing</p>
<p><b>LIVESTOCK PASS ON PROGRAM</b> To date, a total of 94 goats have been passed on to 60 beneficiaries. This represents a return rate of 64% which is a significant improvement regarding the pass on arrangements.</p>	<p>Dung from livestock is used to make manure</p>
<p><b>BOOM IN FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT</b></p>	

<p>The project has enhanced demand for fish farming as a business. To date, a total of 4 ponds have been constructed and stocked. But the demand is still been assessed depending on viability of the project in the areas.</p>	
<p><b>ESTABLISHMENT OF VILLAGE REVOLVING FUNDS</b> This has empowered the groups to boost their businesses. Most the farmers accessed inputs from the FISP program using the same fund.</p>	<p>There is need to encourage the spirit of paying back the loans on time if the progress is to be appreciated in short period of time.</p>

The areas that have been highlighted in the table below are the areas that the district feel could have been done better and require brainstorming if the project is to benefit the farmers more.

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Improvement/Strategy</b>
<p>Loan provision is done once in the very first year for CA and Irrigation. Farmers fail to repay back to their account because they usually get the loan while they are already struggling with food insecurity.</p>	<p>Provision of CA and Irrigation inputs as loan should be done twice, in the first yr for boosting the farmer to be income and food secure stable and second year for preparing the farmer to repay back easily.</p>
<p>Provision of loan under CA to 0.2 of ha. The area targeted is very small for a farmer to suffice food security and loan recovery.</p>	<p>If this can target at least 0.4 ha or above so as to suffice for the home food security and at least provide for surplus for sale</p>
<p>Poultry production as a business has been unsuccessful for our groups in Chindamba</p>	<p>If the enterprises groups and these should not be far from large trading centers where markets are readily available and always demand is high. The groups should also be capacitated in local feed compounding to cut costs on production costs so that they increase on their gross margins.</p>
<p>Low survival rates for trees</p>	<p>The district is in the process of establishing Natural Resources Management Plans for all the sites in liaison with Forestry department. The district has also intensified on capacity building on to empower the community on care and management of trees once out planted. For fruit trees, the district is also promoting constructing protective shelters around established plants.</p>
<p>Trainings though have been adequately provided in all components to staff and farmers, the impact or result is not directly linked to implementation</p>	<p>There is need to intensify the supervision, follow ups. The focus now is on more trainings to farmers than staff. Also intensifying on action plans developed after each training.</p>
<p>Lead farmers for all components not being used effectively and efficiently.</p>	<p>There is need to intensify supervision and follow ups on lead farmers.</p>

## CONCLUSION

The project is on course in terms of addressing the farmer’s needs as outlined in the result areas of the project.

The collaboration between the project coordinating unit and the DADO’s office has been excellent.

It should be noted that all the areas that the district has noted shall be addressed forthwith although some of the issues shall take a bit of time to be addressed and shall require support from all the stakeholders.

The district is committed to the project activities and shall strive to produce positive results for the project.

ENHANCING FOOD SECURITY AND DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE RURAL

**Livelihoods Project**  
**(GCPS/MLW/030/NOR)**

**Brief Project Update for **Mangochi** (2007-2009)**

 **Basic facts:**

- ◆ EPAs targeted : 2 EPAs- Mbwadzulu and Ntiya
- ◆ Traditional Authorities targeted: TA Nankumba in Mbwadzulu and Senior Chief Jalasi in Ntiya EPA
- ◆ Villages already in the project: 6 Villages in Mbwadzulu EPA and 11 villages in Ntiya EPA.
- ◆ Beneficiaries recruited have steadily increased over the last 2 and half years of project operation as summarized in table below.

District	EPA	2007			2008			2009			Cumulatively			Project targets	% Reached	Traditional Authority
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total			
Mangochi	Mbwadzulu	92	379	471	219	103	322	263	302	645	574	864	1438	4126	35	Nankumba
	Ntiya	435	818	1253	213	425	638	329	699	1028	977	1942	2919	5238	56	Jalasi
Subtotal		527	1197	1724	432	528	960	592	1081	1673	1551	2806	4357	9364	47	

- ◆ 4,357 beneficiaries represent 47% of the Projects beneficiary target for the District. However, it is envisaged that the targeted number of beneficiaries would be surpassed through pass on programs and adopters besides direct recruitment into the project.
- ◆ Overall, 64% of the beneficiary population reached is that of female-headed households which constitutes the largest segment of the farm families in the agricultural sector nationally.
- ◆ Beneficiary recruitment is an on-going process as pass-on programs progress under livestock small stock asset building programs.

### ☒ Cumulative physical achievements

#### Irrigation Development

- ◆ Area developed for irrigation: 52 ha already developed in the last 2 and half seasons and being utilized by 325 households (211 female and 114 male). 4.3 ha have already been planted to crop while land preparation is continuing in most of the irrigation sites.
- ◆ A total of 5.6 ha have already been planted in Ang’ona, Mdoka and Matungwi sites. 9.8 ha are waiting to be planted in Chilambo, Lizimba and Sabili sites as these are newly developed sites.
- ◆ Major crops grown in the schemes include maize, leafy vegetables and rice under rain fed production.
- ◆ In 2008/09 rainy season, 9 ha were planted to rice in Ang’ona scheme in Mbwadzulu with 103 farmers (94 female, 9 male) that participated where yields of **2750 kg average/ha** were attained. It is estimated that an average of **24.75 MT** were produced.
- ◆ Average irrigated maize yields in the previous season was 3.7MT/ha with some farmers realizing an average of MK 7000 from green maize sales. Income ranged from MK500 to MK13000.
- ◆ Irrigation farming has enabled farmers to produce diversified range of crops all year round.

#### Agriculture and Land Management

- ◆ A number of interventions fall under this section: soil and water conservation, soil fertility improvement, fruit production, conservation agriculture, forestry.
- ◆ **Fruit tree production:** project promoting mangoes, guavas, oranges, bananas and paw paws. **648** tree seedlings were distributed to farmers in 2008-09 growing season, which were planted under

homesteads. Banana suckers were planted in irrigation schemes. Plans are under way to mobilize farmers to raise root stock for farmer hands-on training in fruit tree grafting. Efforts are continuing to encourage post planting care of out-planted tree seedlings in order to improve survival rates. Average survival rates stand at **54.3%**.

- ◆ **Soil fertility improvement:** Two key activities being promoted- compost manure making and agro-forestry techniques. Cumulatively **1,400** compost heaps/pits have been made in Mangochi with total area applied standing at **36.5 ha** involving **435** farmers (**175 men & 260 women**). Activity to be intensified as we continue manure making campaigns.
- ◆ **Agro-forestry:** cumulatively tree seedlings raised stand **60, 188** of which **40, 238** were out-planted by **734** farmers.
- ◆ **Area under afforestation:** **15** woodlots established to-date, with a total of **7 ha** established with **27, 832** tree seedlings of the **40,238 seedlings** out-planted. The remaining tree seedlings were planted under individual homesteads. In the last two seasons, **49.4 ha** have been established under various agro-forestry technologies in the district.
- ◆ **Participatory Forestry Management Plans:** The district continued to develop plans for Ndengu Hill in Ntiya, where the village forest area has been surveyed by GPS with a total of **1,095.37ha** already put on a map. Forest management units (Village Natural Resource Management Committees) have been set up for proper management of the forest and by-laws have been developed to safeguard mandates of the forest management units. Community sensitization meetings on the developed management plans have been conducted.
- ◆ **Area treated with best soil conservation structures:** to date **73.8 ha** constructed with marker ridges and has ridges realigned on contour with **324** farmers participating (**143 men & 181 women**).
- ◆ **Conservation Agriculture:** to date **33** groups have been established to demonstrate conservation agriculture technology with a total of **387** farmers participating of which **34** farmers from **one** group are adopters of the technology. So far, **38.7 ha** were put under conservation agriculture in the last growing season. Farmers realize average maize yields of **3401kg/ha** from as low as **1455kg/ha** under traditional methods of farming representing **234%** increase in attainable yields under the technology. Continued campaigns on CA loan recoveries are under way with some groups already paying off their loans in kind e.g. CA group in Mlambala village has sold **3MT** of maize contributed in kind to offset the loan and raised **MK 167, 500**.
- ◆ **Environmental Education Awareness:** A new dimension has been taken to incorporate pupils in environmental management issues as future custodians of the environment. The Land Resources Conservation Department at MU organized a staff orientation on Environmental Education, which targets pupils and teachers in selected schools to roll out environmental rehabilitation program through establishment of environmental clubs in the schools.

### Agri-Business Promotion

- ◆ A number of businesses were introduced; namely egg production, broiler production, fish processing. Besides locally managed micro-finance institutions were established to provide money lending services in support of project interventions.
  
- ◆ Three groups were doing egg production in Ntiya EPA in three (3) villages (Matungwi, Kwilembe and Kaluma). The groups suspended their business after selling their spent layers due to high costs of feeds hence the enterprise could not be sustained. MK31, 750 was shared among the 30 members in the 3 groups for household use. Currently, Takumana group in Matungwi village and Green Corner group in Kaluma have embarked on a transitional enterprise of maize trading in order to raise their level of capital before going back to the egg production enterprise.
  - Takumana withdrew K84, 000 and bought **27(50kg)** bags having a account book balance of **K20, 000**. Green Corner withdrew **K90, 800** have bought **40 (50kg)** bags with nil book balance.
  
- ◆ Two groups were involved in broiler production business. Tayamika group realized MK 542, 300 whereas Tukumulane realized MK449, 670 in gross sales for the batches that were raised before suspension of production. Currently Tayamika has MK 104,000 while Tukumulane has MK 58,000 in their accounts. The groups are not doing broiler business because of high feed costs. Currently, Tukumulane group has embarked on a transitional enterprise of maize trading to raise their capital before commencing broiler production whereas Tayamika group has switched to Piggery as it feels the market is readily available. So far **4 piglets** have already been bought at a cost of **MK 24,000**. Khola construction is yet to commence as members continue mobilizing feed. In view of the feed problem, the project took initiative to produce feed ingredients and build farmers’ capacity in local feed compounding.
  
- ◆ Five groups in Mbwadzulu are doing fish processing and selling as a business enterprise. The groups received a total capital of MK 699, 280 from the project as a revolving grant. So far, the groups have saved MK 381, 341.53 in their accounts. One group (Pempho) completed repaying its loan and has gone into second loan disbursements to members to expand their businesses.
  
- ◆ Village Banks were established to provide micro-financing services in support of project interventions. In the first year, **284** beneficiaries accessed loans through the banks in Mbwadzulu while 809 members benefited in Ntiya.
  
- ◆ In the second year, beneficiaries for Mbwadzulu reduced to **133** whereas for Ntiya reduced to **460**. A good proportion of beneficiaries had not finalized repayment of their first year loans leading to observed reduction in beneficiaries that accessed the loans. Currently loan recovery campaigns are



being intensified. Some villages have already started repaying their loans to the Village Bank.

- ◆ **Farmer Linkage with service providers:** In conjunction with Malawi Industrial Research and Technology Development Centre (MIRTDC), the project organized technology fair in which 58 farmers (21 male and 37 female) participated. This was meant to sell to farmers various technologies that have been developed to help preserve food, mix livestock feed as well as show case some of the low cost equipment that farmers can access in adding value to their produce.
- ◆ One conservation farming group was linked to Admarc market to sell off their produce which was contributed as in kind payment for their loan. **3.605 MT** of maize was sold through this linkage and **MK 144, 200** was realized.

### Livestock Production

- ◆ **Goat production:** In 2007/2008 season ten groups were formed one in each village for Ntiya EPA and two for each village for Mbwadzulu EPA with a total membership of 100 and they received 197 goats as first groups with the aim of passing the offspring to second group beneficiaries. To date **101** goats have been passed on to second groups with a total of 75 households (**14 MHH and 61 FHH**) benefitting through pass-on representing **75%** of total second group of 100 households.
- ◆ **Boer Buck Performance:** In 2008, the project initiated a local goat improvement program using Boer bucks. Three Boer bucks were loaned to the communities for a period of 3 months and another lot of were issued to rotate within the project sites. So far **24 off-springs** have been borne out of this program (**11 bucks and 13 doers**).
- ◆ **Semi Scavenging Chicken production:** Under this program, an average of **75%** of fertilized eggs put under broody hens has been hatched. An average of **41%** of the eggs laid has been consumed thus contributing to improved nutrition at household level. Farmers have also realized income through sale of eggs totaling **MK 47, 432** under this system. More sales occurred in Mbwadzulu where **MK 39, 520** was realized.
- ◆ **Chicken Model Breeding:** Black Australorp cocks were crossed with Hyline hens to produce off-spings that could survive under the scavenging system whilst producing more eggs and meat than the local chicken. **95%** of the eggs put under broody hens were hatched indicating that this could be a viable enterprise. So far, **MK36, 500** has been realized through sale of fertilized eggs from improved chicken breeds among the model breeders while **57%** of the eggs laid contributed to household nutrition.
- ◆ **Drug Revolving Fund:** Initiative was introduced to support animal health services in the project sites. Member farmers buy drugs as at a concessional price to ensure sustained access to the drugs.

### Fish Farming promoted

- ◆ **90** farmers (**47female, 43male**) from 6 villages in Ntiya EPA are involved in fish farming. 6 fish ponds

have been completed and **5** have been stocked with a total of **7, 161** fingerlings of *Oreochromis shiranus* and *Tilapia rendalli*.

- ◆ So far, **four** groups have partially harvested their fish and made an income total of **MK18, 700** and **MK8, 500** was shared among members for household use. A total of **36 kgs** were harvested of which **9.5kg** of fish shared among members for table use contributing to household nutrition. There is growing interest among member groups to either increase the number of ponds owned as a group or encourage individual ownership of ponds.

**Technical Capacity Building for farmers:** A total of **1931** farmers (**681 male farmers** and **1250 female farmers**) trained in various technical aspects relevant to their enterprise of choice between since project inception in a total of **68 training sessions**. More in farmer capacity building exercises are continuing to ensure sustainability.

## **Beneficiary Impact Perceptions**

### **Household Anecdotes of Changes Experienced**

Every time district Subject Matter Specialists (SMSs) visit project sites, effort is made to interview some farmers on how they perceive the project. One of these is Mr Mabelo of Matungwi village. He said he has bought a radio and a good mountain push bike after sales of his produce from irrigation farming at Matungwi irrigation scheme. He was also able to buy other domestic items. His next plans are to buy iron sheets for his house.

Another farmer who testified is Mrs Modesta Mbalame who indicated that she has benefited a lot with Conservation Agriculture. According to her, she used to have problems of food insecurity at home starting from August every year to next harvesting season around April /May.

After the project introduced conservation Agriculture, her food stocks have improved such that last year her stocks reached January. To her this is a very remarkable change because it only took **2** months for her to struggle with fetching food from other sources for her family compared to **6 to 7** months before being introduced to Conservation Agriculture.

---

## **Appendix 4:**

List of persons met and consulted. Review itinerary.

---

### List of persons met and consulted by the Review Team:

Name	Position	Institution
Ms. Unni Poulsson	Counsellor	Norwegian Embassy, Lilongwe
Ms. Marita Sorheim-Rensvik	Second Secretary	---“---
Mr. J. Luhanga	Controller	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Agricultural Extension and Technical Services
Mr. B. Ngauma	Deputy Director	---”---, Crop Production Dept.
Mr. M. Manda	Deputy Director	---“---, Land Resource Conservation Dept.
Mr. P. B. Chikungwa	Deputy Director	---“---, Animal Health and Livestock Development Dept.
Mr. P.L. Chimbaza	Deputy Director	---“---, Animal Health and Livestock Development
Mr. A. Nkhoma	Assistant Resident Representative	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Mr. Chawanangwa Jana	Chief Irrigation Officer	Min. of Irrigation and Water Development, Department of Irrigation
Ms. Phideria Moyo	Chief Irrigation Officer	---“---, Department of Irrigation
Mr. Blessings Mwale	Project Manager	Project Implementation Unit (PIU)
Mr. Felix Jere	National Expert: Livestock Development	---”---
Ms. Sophie Mahonya	District Coordinator-Machinga	---“---
Mr. Spencer Ng’oma	District Coordinator-Balaka	---“---
Mr. James Gausi	District Coordinator-Mangochi	---“---
Ms. Gertrude Kalinde Thaulo	Programme Manager	Machinga ADD
Mr. A. L. F. Benati	Deputy Programme Manager	---“---
Mr. Joseph A. Mtengezo	Crop Development Officer (Project Desk Officer)	---”---
Mr. Anderson Kawejere	Chief Land Resource Conservation Officer	---“---
Mr. Cosmas Lwanda	District Agricultural Development Officer	Balaka District
Mr. McKenley Dupu	Crop Development Officer	---“---
Mr. David G. Alli	Agri-Business/Extension Methodology Officer	---“---
Mr. Alex Jangiya	Agricultural Extension Development Coordinator	Mpilisi Extension Planning Area
Mr. Witness Chidya	Agricultural Extension Development Officer	---”---
Mr. Samson Saopa	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Osborne Ngwira	Principal Livestock Development Officer	---“---
Mr. Shadrack Mafuel	District Crops Officer	Balaka District Agricultural Development Office
Ms. Matilda Mattiya	District Crops Officer	---“---
Mr. Samson Chikhadza	District Crops Officer	---“---
Mr. Patrick Viyazyi	District Land Resources Officer	---“---
Mr. G. M. Katunga	District Fisheries Officer	---“---
Mr. Francisco Kachoma	District Animal Health and Livestock Development Officer	---“---
Mr. A.D.C. Banda	District Animal Health and Livestock Development Officer	---“---
Mr. M. Namwili	Agricultural Extension	Utale Extension Planning Area

	Development Coordinator	
Mr. E. Chaseta	Agricultural Extension Development Officer	---“---
Mr. A.K. Kuzimva	Assistant Veterinary Officer	---“---
Mr. McNeal Ganeti	Farmer	---“---
Ms. Stella Chafachawona	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Lawrence Chikaluma	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Gregorio Chidzino	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Eric Damiano	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Collins Liharo	Farmer	---“---
Ms. Christina Fandinyu	Lead Farmer	---“---
Mr. Clifton G. Thyangathyanga	Director of Planning and Development	Balaka District Assembly
Mr. Peter K. Chambewu	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	---“---
Mr. J.F. Juwawo	Agricultural Extension Development Coordinator	Phalula Extension Planning Area
Mr. R.S. Ndala	Agricultural Extension Development Officer	---“---
Mr. M. Chisati	Agricultural Extension Development Officer	---“---
Mr. Zexon Kantambe	Lead Farmer	---“---
Ms. Mary Faki	Farmer	---“---
Ms. Chakwana Tyson	Farmer	---“---
Ms. Western Mpambira	Farmer	---“---
Ms. Margret Lemson	Farmer	---“---
Mr. James Kabango	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Henry Abraham	Farmer	---“---
Mr. John Ligomeka	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Madalitso Feki	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Lameck Phalula	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Dorishi Dausi	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Zakeyu Llikadza	Farmer	---“---
Ms. Mary Kapsepse	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Rabson Davison	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Chimwemwe Hara	District Land Resources Officer	Mangochi District Agricultural Development Office
Mr. James Yadi	District Irrigation Officer	---“---
Ms. Christepha Amoni	District Agribusiness Officer	---“---
Mr. Immedie Rajabu	District Irrigation Officer	---“---
Mr. D.C. Kasenjera	Monitoring & Evaluation Officer	---“---
Mr. Stanley Guma	District Crops Officer	---“---
Mr. Lemos Mlaviwa	District Forestry Officer	---“---
Mr. P.H. Kandoje	District Agricultural Development Officer	---“---
Mr. F. Phiri	Assistant District Fisheries Officer	---“---
A.K. Msukwa	District Agricultural Development Officer	---“---
Mr. Mark Heremisi	Chairman	Kuthambo Water Harvesting Site

Ms. Agnes Makeba	Chairman	Tiyese Beekeeping Club, Phalula EPA, Balaka District
Ms. Violet Mikayele	Farmer	---“---
Mr. Biswick Mlaviwa	Acting Director of Planning and Development	Machinga District Assembly
Mr. Ezekiel Luhanga	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer	---“---
Mr. Rex Baluwa	Assistant District Agricultural Development Officer	Machinga District Agricultural Development Office
Mr. Robert Maganga	Principal Irrigation Officer	---“---
Mr. Geoffrey Mahame	District Extension Officer	---“---
Mr. B.O.B Chandilanga	District Land Resources Officer	---“---
Mr. D.S.E. Monjeza	Assistant Animal Health Officer	---“---
Mr. Chikondi Binali	Acting Food & Nutrition Officer	---“---
Mr. F.D. Chamanza	District Crops Officer	---“---

*Mid-term Review of MWI-2637 “Food Security and Rural Livelihoods Programme in Malawi”*  
**Review Team’s (tentative) Itinerary**

**The Team:**

- Tore Laugerud, international consultant (Team Leader). Mob.: +47 9970 6119, [tore.laugerud@ncg.no](mailto:tore.laugerud@ncg.no)
- Sera Rose Mkandawire. Mob, (265) 0999 287 867, [Serah\\_Mkandawireahoo.com](mailto:Serah_Mkandawireahoo.com)
- Emmanuel Katchewa, Min. of Agriculture and Food Security, Mob: (265) 0888 794 878, [ejkten@hotmail.com](mailto:ejkten@hotmail.com)

**Others key actors:**

- Marita Sørheim-Rensvik, Second Secretary, The Royal Norwegian Embassy, Arwa House, City Centre, Lilongwe 3. Tel.: +265 1 774 211, Mob: (265) 09 964 879, [mars@mfa.no](mailto:mars@mfa.no)
- Blessings Mwale, FAO Programme Manager, Mob: (265) 0999 868 944/ 0888 208250, [blessings.mwale@gmail.com](mailto:blessings.mwale@gmail.com); [blessings.mwale@fao.org](mailto:blessings.mwale@fao.org)

Date	Time	Event	Responsible person
Saturday 29 Aug	15.00-	Tore leaving Oslo	
Sunday 30 Aug	15.00-	Tore arriving Lilongwe. Leisure, document reading.	
		Overnight at Sanctuary Lodge, Lilongwe	
Monday 31 Aug	09.00-10.30	Meeting with Norwegian Embassy (whole Team)	All team
	10.30-11.30	Internal team meeting (getting acquainted, discussing approach, field visit, reporting, roles and obligations in Team, etc. Room in Embassy put at Team’s disposal?)	All team
		Meetings in Min of Agriculture and Food Security (with staff directly involved/concerned with the project):	
	11.30- 12.30	Meet Director of Planning- Mr Zimalirana. Cell:.....	Katchewa
	12.30-13.20	Lunch break	
	13.20-14.00	Meet Controller of Agriculture and Technical Services- Dr J Luhanga. Cell:.....	Katchewa
	14.00-14.40	Meet Director of Crops - DR Ching’oma. Cell.....	Katchewa
	14.50-15.30	Meet Director of Extension- Dr Mrs Malindi. Cell:.....	Katchewa
	15.40-16.20	Meet Director of Land Resources and Conservation- Mr Musa. Cell.....	Katchewa
	16.30-17.20	Meeting Director of Animal Health and Industry- Mr Lipita. Cell.....	Katchewa
Tuesday 1 Sep	08.30-10.40	Meeting with Assistant FAO Representative. Mr Alick Nkhoma. Cell: 0888202248	Katchewa

	11.00-12.00	Meeting Director of Irrigation in the Min. of Irrigation and Water Development- Mr S Maweru. Tel. 099962015	Katchewa
	12.00-1.00	Lunch Break	
	13.30-14.00	Meeting the World Bank representative for ADP-SP in Lilongwe	Mission Mmbers
	14.00-14.30	Meet Chair DCAFS	Mission Mmbers
	14.30-17.30	Travel to Liwonde	All team
		Team put up at HIPO Lodge	Mission Mmbers
Wednesd. 2 Sep	08.00- 10.00	Meeting with Project Management staff: PM, NE- Livetock, District Coordinators; Admin Assitant	Gloia
	10.00-11.00	Meeting with the ADD Programme Manager, & DPM	Grolia
	11.00- 12.00	Meeting with Heads of Department (DIO, Crops, Livestock, LRC, Etension, Planning)	
	12.00-13.00	lunch	
	13..00-13.20	Depart for Mitengwe irrigation scheme	DADO/ AEDC
	13.20-14.20	Visit Mitengwe Irrigation Scheme and hold meeting with irrigation committee	DADO/ AEDC
	14.35-15.30	Meeting with Business Committees- Layers, bakery, Piggery at Mitengwe school	DADO/ AEDC
	15.30-16.30	Meeting with Business Committees- Layers, bakery, Piggery at Mitengwe school	DADO/ AEDC
	16.30-17.00	Travel back to Hipo Lodge	Mission Mmbers
Thursday 3 Sep	07.30-8.00	Travel to to Balakka District Agriculture Office	All team
	8.00-8.40	DADO briefing mission	DADO
	8.40-9.40	Travel to Utale EPA	DADO/A EDC
	9.40-11.00	Visit Khwala/ Manyoni Irrigation Schemes and meeting with irrigation committee	DADO/A EDC
	11.00-11.30	Travel to Njobvuyalema Irrigation scheme	DADO/A EDC
	11.30-12.30	Visit iirgation scheme and meeting with irrigation committee	DADO/A EDC
	12.30-13.00	Travel to Mpachika School to meet some Livestock committee members	DADO/A EDC
	13.30-14.00	Meeting with Livestock Committees	DADO/A EDC
	14.00-15.00	Travel back to Balaka DC's office	



	15.30-16.30	Meeting at DC's office- DC, DPD, Planning and Monitoring Officer	DADO
	16.30-17.00	Travel to Liwonde	Mission Mmbers
		Team at Hipo Lodge	Mission Mmbers
Friday Sep	4 07.30-8.00	Travel to Balaka District Agriculture Office	All team
	8.00-8.40	Travel to Phalula EPA	All team
	8.40-10.00	Visit Kwalala- Meet Farmer Field School Committee, CA Commiteee, Village Natural Resources Management Committee at Kabvala health centre	DADO/A EDC
	10.00-10.30	Travel to Kuthambo Water harvesting site	DADO/A EDC
	10.30-11.20	Visit Kuthambo Water Harvesting site- brief discussion with committee	DADO/A EDC
	11.20-12.20	Meet CA Committeees (Kuthambo, Mpandasoni, Mazenga-Chikowa Schol	DADO/A EDC
	12.30-13.40	Meeting business groups at Tafika Piggery group (piggery, layers, broilers, bee keeping)	All team
	13.40-15.00	Travel to DADO's Office and mission wind up	
	15.000-	Travel to Liwonde and team overnight at HIPO Lodge	All team
Saturday Sep	5 08.00-	Meet DADO Machinga at ADD	DADO-Machinga
	8.20-9.40	Visit Chigumula Irrigation Scheme & meeting with Irrigation Committee	DADO/A EDC
	10.00-11.20	Visit Umodzi irrigation Scheme- meeting with main Committee & Marketing Committee	DADO/A EDC
	11.20-12.30	Meeting with VRF Committeee- Kamwendo	DADO/A EDC
	12.30-1.00	Travel to Liwonde	All team
	13.00- 13.50	Lunch	All team
	14.00-17.00	Travel to Lilongwe	Mission Mmbers
		TL overnight at Sanctuary Lodge	Mission Mmbers
Sunday Sep	7 All day	Report writing	Mission Mmbers
Monday Sep	7 09.00-11.00	Meeting at the Embassy with the NASFAM Review Team (Team Leader: Stein Bie)	Mission Mmbers
	11.00-12.30	Early Lunch	
	12.30- 15.30	Travel to Liwonde	Mission Mmbers
	16.00-17.00	Meeting with DC, DPD, Distric M&E Officer Machinga district	DADO-Machinga

	8.00- 9.30	Meeting representative committee members of NAPHAM ( Umbrala body dealing with People Living with HIV/AIDs) supported groups	DADO- Machinga
	9.30-10.10	Travel to Ntaja for DADO's formal mission briefing	All team
	10.10-11.10	Mission briefing by DADO	DADO- Machinga
	11.10-11.40	Travel to Chinamwali	DADO/A EDC
	11.40-12.40	Visit Chinamwali Irrigation Scheme and meeting with Irrigation Committee	DADO/A EDC
	12.40-13.40	Travel to Chapusa Village- Meet Livetsock Committee members	DADO/A EDC
	13.40-14.20	Travel to Tayamba Irigation Scheme	DADO/A EDC
	14.20-15.00	Visit Tayamba Irrigation Scheme and meeting with Irrigation Main Committeee & Rice Marketing Committee	DADO/A EDC
	15.00-15.40	Travel to DADO's Office	All team
Tuesday 8 Sep	15.40-16.30	Wrap-up at DADO's office	DADO
	16.30- 17.20	Travel back to Liwonde- mission at HIPO	All team
	7.00-8.00	Team travel to Mangochi	All team
	8.00-8.40	Briefing at DADO's Office	DADO Mangochi
	8.40-9.20	Team travel to Ang'ona Irrigation scheme	DADO/A EDC
	9.20-10.00	Visit Ang'ona Irrigation Scheme & meeting with Main Committee	DADO/A EDC
	10.00-11.00	Meeting with VRF Committeees- Sumbi I village; Madzedze, Balamanja, Sumbi II	DADO/A EDC
	11.00-12.00	Meeting Business Committeees-Fish Processings & Broilers	DADO/A EDC
	12.00-13.00	Lunch at lake Services	DADO/A EDC
	13.00-13.40	Travel to managochi	All team
Wednesd. 9 Sep	13.40-14.40	Meeting at DC's office	DADO
	14.40-	Team booked at Mbwadzulu Holiday resort	Gloria
	7.30-8.30	Team travel to Ntiya EPA, meet AEDC and field staff	All team
	8.30-10.30	Visit in Idrusi- Representative Goat beneficiaries; CA groups, VRF management Committees	DADO/A EDC
Thursday 10 Sep	10.30-11.30	Visit Kwilembe Fish Pond, followed by meeting with Committees of six Fish farmimng Groups in the area	DADO/A EDC

	11.30-12.30	Visit Kaluma Key rearers on Smallholder Poultry Model	DADO/A EDC
	12.20-13.40	Travel to Mangochi, quick wrap-up at DADO's office	All team
	13.40-14.30	Quick launch	
	14.30- 17.30	Team travel to Lilongwe	All team
Friday 11 Sep	08.30-11.00	- De-briefing in the Embassy. Key stakeholders present.	
	12.30-	- Tore leaving for airport (flight at 14.55?)	
Saturday 12 Sep	16.30	Tore arriving home	

---

## **Appendix 5:** List of key documents reviewed

---

**List of main documents reviewed:**

No.	Title	Author/ Institution	Date
<b>Documents directly related to the “Food Security and Rural Livelihoods Project in Malawi”</b>			
1.	Agreement between MFA and FAO and Malawi regarding support to food security and sustainable livelihoods programme in Malawi, incl. Annex I	MFA, FAO and Min. of Agriculture and Food Security	23.08.2006
2.	Project Document	FAO	???
3.	Project Inception Report	FAO	May 2007
4.	End of Year Report, January-December 2007	FAO. PIU	???
5.	Annual Report 2008	FAO. PIU	January 2009
6.	Semi-Annual Report January-June 2009	FAO, PIU	???
7.	Work Plan and Budget July/December 2007	FAO, PIU	???
8.	Minutes from Project Review Meeting, 20 September 2007	FAO, PIU	???
9.	List of participants, Review meeting of 20 Sept 2007	FAO, PIU	???
10.	A record of the proceedings of joint Donor/FAO/Malawi Government 2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Project Review, 30-31 Oct. 2008	FAO, PIU	???
11.	Project Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy and Planning Matrix	FAO, PIU	June 2007
12.	Impact and output indicator survey and some project programmatic implications	FAO, PIU	April 2008
13.	Energy food reserves during critical period-December 2008 to March 2009. Final Report.	FAO, PIU	January 2009
14.	Project Progress Report, Trust Fund Project. Sept.08-Febr. 09	FAO, PIU	25.03.2009
<b>Other relevant documents</b>			
15.	Guidelines for effective farmer participation in development and management of smallholder irrigation schemes in Malawi	Min. of Irrigation and Water Development, Dept. of Irrigation	May 2008
16.	Evaluation of Norwegian support to NASFAM’s strategic dev. Progr. 2003-2006. Appraisal of Programme Document for support to NASFAM’s Strategic Dev. Progr. 2007-2011. Noragric Report No. 38	Noragric, Dept. of Int. Env. And Dev. Studies. Norw. Univ. Of Life Sciences (Stein Bie and Torben Lang)	Dec. 2006
17.	Climate Change and Rural Livelihoods in Malawi. Review Study Report of Norwegian Support to FAO and SCC in Malawi, with a note on some regional implications. Noragric Report No. 41	Noragric (Stein Bie, David Mkwambisi and McDonald Gomani)	Jan. 2008
18.	Agreement between Norw. MFA and Malawi regarding development cooperation concerning Agricultural Development Programme-Support Project (ADP-SP)	MFA and MoF	13.11.2008
19.	Project Information Document (PID), Appraisal Stage. ADP-SP. Report NO. AB3667	World Bank	13.03.2008
20.	Project Appraisal Document. Proposed Grant from the GEF to the Republic of Malawi fro an Agricultural Development Programme Support Project	World Bank	30.05.2008
21.	Agreement between Norway and Malawi regarding “Malawi Agricultural Research and	MFA and MoF	10.11.2005

	Development Fund, ARDEF”		
22.	Agreement between Norway and Malawi regarding “Support to BUnda College of Agriculture Capacity Building Programme, BCA Phase III”	MFA and MoF	10.11.2005
23.	Contract between MFA and Total Land Care regarding management for Adaptation to Climate Change (MACC). An integrated Model fro the Central Watersheds of Lake Malawi	MFA and TLC	25.07.2008
24.	Research into Action. Synergising Research and Outreach fro Development and Food Security in Malawi. Mid/term review of the Agricultural research and Development Programme (ARDEP). Report R2009-03	CMI (Ramji Nyirenda and Arne Tostensen)	Nov. 2008
25.	Contract between the Norwegian MFA and Swedish Cooperative Centre regarding Malawi Lake Basin Progamme – Phase II	MFA and SCC	17.03.2009
26.	Project Identification Form (PID). Climate Adaptation for Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture (CARLA)	GEF	02.06.2008
27.	Malawi1s National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) Under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)	GEF, UNDP, UNFCCC and Env. Affairs Dept. Min. of Mines, Natural Resources and Environment	March 2006 (Feb. 2007)
28.	Contract between MFA and NASFAM regarding NASFAM III, Improving the Livelihoods of Malawian Smallholder Farmers with Annex	MFA and NASFAM	16.02.2007
29.	The World Bank Group in Malawi (Brochure)	World Bank	2008-2009
30.	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security. Profile (Brochure)	MoAFS	???
31.	Malawi`s Lake Basin Programme, Annual Report 2008	Programme PIU	???
32.	Rukwa Ruka. The attempt of a foreign donor to uplift a neglected region: Sudy of the impact of Norwegian ais to Rukwa region, Tanzania	CMI (Alf Morten Jerve and E.J.K. Ntemi)	2009

---

## **Appendix 6:**

### **The Review Team’s Terms of Reference (ToR)**

---

## Mid-term Evaluation of ‘Food Security and Rural Livelihoods Programme in Malawi’

	<b>Government</b>	<b>FAO</b>	<b>Norway</b>
<b>Support Code:</b>			<b>MWI-05/029</b>

### 1.0 Description of the Project

The Project is managed by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and implemented by a Project Office in Liwonde/Balaka under the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development and Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development. The Government of Norway has provided support to FAO since 2006 with a frame of NOK 33 mill, of which NOK 22 mill have been disbursed by Mid-2009.

In line with the national policy to promote irrigated agriculture, the project adopted an approach of supporting various irrigation initiatives. The Project attempts to provide small-scale farm households with less than two hectares of land with the skills and technologies in irrigation to increase food production and increased household incomes in three districts of Malawi; Mangochi, Balaka and Machinga. Special attention will be made to target marginal farmers, female headed households, HIV/Aids affected and the disabled. The project also supports production of rain-fed cropping and income generation through crop and livestock diversification. The project was originally designed to reach approximately 40,000 households but was later revised downwards to 23,500 taking into account errors in budget calculation especially on the irrigation component. The Project involves the local governments of the three districts.

The goal of the Project is to alleviate the immediate problems of poverty and food security amongst the resource poor rural households, addressing their needs by better water control and the sustainable use of the environment. Its purpose is to support the efforts of Government in implementing its Food and Nutrition Security Project and mitigate the food crisis facing the many vulnerable households.

If implemented successfully, the project is envisaged at the end of the phase to have achieved the following outcomes:

- Improved on-farm productivity through rehabilitation and development of small scale irrigation and the design of improved agricultural practices,
- Improved food security in terms of availability of food crops and access to food,
- A broadened range of income generating options particularly for vulnerable households,
- Reduced rate of land degradation, soil erosion and deforestation through the sustainable use of the natural resource base,
- Emergence of self-sustaining communities and self help groups including women, and marginal farmers contributing to resource mobilisation and capital formation,
- Improved wellbeing of women through providing income opportunities, employment and reducing labour demands,
- Strengthened capacities of rural community members and village extension workers.

Following on the feedback from three district stakeholder consultative meetings (District Executive Committees) prior to the launch of the project, the Project Launch Workshop and the first District Work Planning and Budgeting and strategic session, the project Log Frame was reviewed and **revised**. Specifically, the stakeholders felt the need to state the outputs in a much clear and simplified version



that can easily be understood by all stakeholders. Thus, the project result outputs per component have been refined as presented below:

**Component 1: Small Scale Irrigation and Watershed Development.** Three outputs are associated with this component:

- a) Small scale irrigation systems promoted – aimed at expanding area under irrigation
- b) Water harvesting techniques promoted- with the same aim as above
- c) Watershed management improved- to be achieved by designing and implementing appropriate measures to protect and restore the watershed.

**Component 2: Intensification and Diversification of Farm Production:** envisaged to achieve the following outputs:

- a) Food crop productivity and production increased
- b) Access to food through diversified income opportunities promoted.
- c) Livestock production diversified.
- d) Fish farming promoted
- e) Linkages established between farmer groups and agri-business service providers

**Component 3: Capacity Building, Institutional Strengthening and Sustainability.** Expected outputs:

- a) Formation of Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Farmer Based Organisations (FBOs) enhanced
- b) Capacity of staff, Community Based Organisations and Farmer Based Organisations and households strengthened
- c) Effective partnerships between CBOs and service providers strengthened
- d) District planning and management reinforced through information and lessons based on project experiences

### **1.2 Team composition and leadership**

The evaluation will be undertaken by a team of three participants, who bring together the skills and competences required for evaluating all project components. The team will include a Norwegian expert for the position of team leader, an independent national consultant and a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security.

The Norwegian consultant will be hired by Norad, while the FAO in Lilongwe in consultation with the Norwegian Embassy and the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS), will be responsible for the recruitment of the national consultant. In line with the agreement, article X (3) the hiring of this consultant shall be covered by the grant. The MoAFS will appoint its own representative as part of the team.

## **2.0 Purpose, context and present challenges**

### The Agriculture Sector

At this time, there is an agriculture sector programme (ADP-SP) in place intended to develop into a SWAP the soonest. This national programme intends to strengthen the agriculture services to make food production more resilient through a.o. improved natural resource management. Support from civil society and private sector is supposed to contribute to the programme in a complementary and supportive way. The interaction between Government, civil society and private sector is not well defined, but the different actors within the sector are supposed to find their place and align themselves with the national agriculture strategy, which is also in line with the NEPAD/CAADP ‘pillars’.

What is the relevance of the Project – as it is – to contribute to the national agriculture programme, including its components on capacity building, NRM and agro-based business development? What is the potential of the Project to integrate with the Agriculture Sector Programme/ADP in terms of policy

and operations, and what degrees of integration would be suggested?

#### Livelihood projects and need for synthesis

Rural livelihood projects are doing good and tangible results are documented with modest means and reasonable time. However, they may tend to keep staying in limited geographical areas and best practices are now easily made widely accessible.

The Malawi Lake Basin Development Programme organises a consortium of cooperation (SCC, FUM, MUSCCO and NASFAM). Such cooperation is regarded as useful in order to exchange information, knowledge and experiences, as well as to service the target groups better. The Embassy wants to encourage such cooperation to a greater extent, if possible to include other livelihood projects. It is suggested to assess how feasible it would be to promote further and stronger cooperation.

The Project to be reviewed promotes agriculture and other livelihoods in ways that enriches soil fertility and the environment. Such methods, commonly known as ‘conservation agriculture’, are successful and provide good yields. Besides, NRM practices in agriculture protecting the environment and being climate-friendly, are in line with the ADP. As Projects supported by the Embassy are successful in this respect, there is a wish to assist the Government to bring such methods to a national scale. How relevant are the Project to have an influence to promote their successes beyond their constituencies?

#### The role of FAO

The Project has the advantage of being fully rooted in the Government structures as well as having access to the best of knowledge through the FAO-system. How well are these assets and opportunities managed, and what is the potential to make a difference on a greater scale? What is the role of the Project in the national contexts, how appropriate are the roles they fill, and could these roles be further refined?

However, there is a reform process going on in FAO, and the “OneUN” structure has as well been established in Malawi. Many have challenged the way many UN organisations work, which tend to be project-oriented, rather than programmatic and national scale. The Norad Director General, Poul Engberg-Pedersen, in an article in ‘Development Today’ (7/2009) states; “UN assistance should be humanitarian, protective, norm-based, universal and focused on peace, state and capacity building; instead, it seeks operational roles in all sectors, at all levels.” Does a concern like this affect the Project?

The team should assess the present Project model in light of the FAO reform process as well as to the present model of cooperation between UN organisations in Malawi. The team shall consider the appropriateness of the project model, and – if possible – assess if any adaptation to new structures can be recommended within the agreement period. Assessment shall also be made of how this project best could be organised if redesigned under the present circumstances.

### **3.0 Scope of work**

**Relevance** – Assess the extent to which the intervention conforms to Malawi’s existing policies, strategies and Projects.

- a) Is the Project consistent with food security and climate change strategies, policies and programmes?
- b) Is the Project well in tune with the development policy, especially the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy 2006–2011 (MGDS) as well as the ‘Agriculture Development Programme – Support Project’?

#### **Project design**

Quality, clarity and adequacy of project design including:

- clarity and logical consistency between, inputs, activities, outputs and progress towards achievement of objectives (quality, quantity and time-frame);

- realism and clarity in the specification of prior obligations and prerequisites (assumptions and risks);
- realism and clarity of external institutional relationships, and in the managerial and institutional framework for implementation and the work plan;

**Effectiveness** – Using the established set of indicators the review team shall assess the extent to which the Project has achieved its goals and objectives.

- a) Assess to what extent the Project has contributed to improved food security and capacity in Malawi,
- b) To what extent are the identified outcomes the result of the Project rather than external factors?
- c) What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of outputs or outcomes?
- d) Was the established monitoring and evaluation system effective in directing implementation of the Project components?
- e) What could be done to make the Projects more effective?
- f) Do the Project innovations have potential for replication nationwide?
- g) What is the added-value brought by FAO to the project and the Government?

**Efficiency** – The review team shall provide an objective assessment of the efficiency of output delivery, including assessment of expenditures in relation to activities carried out.

- a) Has the Project been managed with reasonable regard for efficiency? Have FAO’s procedures for project management helped or hindered project implementation? Was technical backstopping ensured in a timely and effective manner?
- b) What measures have been taken during the planning and implementation phase to ensure that resources are efficiently used?
- c) To what extent have the Project activities delivered as agreed?
- d) Critically assess the relevance of the original project design in relation to approved financial resources- is there need to streamline the scope of the project? – or is there potential to mobilize additional resources. It was observed from the beginning that the budget worksheets had calculation errors and both Government, FAO and donor acknowledged an error and suggested to revise targets downwards and remain within the approved budget.

**Impact** – At this point in time, the assessment of impact may be mostly on perspectives and probability of impact. The team shall assess the different potential and likely to happen types of impact of the Project, positive and negative, intended and unintended.

- a) Has the Project motivated or improved community and gender participation in agriculture in Malawi?
- b) What do the beneficiaries and other stakeholders perceive to be the impact of the Project?
- c) To what extent does the Project contribute to capacity development and the strengthening of participating institutions?

**Sustainability** – The team shall assess the effectiveness of sustainability measures established during the Project implementation.

- a) To what extent have measures been taken to address the sustainability of the Project activities?
- b) Is there local ownership of the activities at all levels, institutional and local?
- c) Is the approach used for grant management and capacity development appropriate for Malawi?
- d) Is the Project in line with the national agriculture programme, and will it contribute to and be a part of the ADP?
- e) Is the Project structure in line with the OneUN, and with the reform process of FAO?
- f) Is the Project sharing experiences with other livelihood projects?

**Assessment of risks management** – Effective implementation depends on how well the Project manages risks and how well sustainability is integrated into the design. In this regard, the review shall assess the risk management of the Project, especially those associated with the following: policy and framework conditions (incl. corruption); socio-cultural and gender issues (incl. HIV/Aids); economic and financial matters; institutional and organisational factors, and the environment.

Based on the above analysis the mission will draw specific conclusions and make proposals for any

necessary further action by Government and/or FAO/donor to ensure sustainable development, including any need for additional assistance and activities of the project prior to its completion. The mission will draw attention to any lessons of general interest. Any proposal for further assistance should include precise specification of objectives and the major suggested outputs and inputs.

## **4.0 Implementation of the evaluation**

### **4.1 Sources of information and methodology to be employed**

The team will review background information available at FAO and the Project, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Norwegian Embassy, Lilongwe and other relevant institutions. Available background information includes Project documents, previous review reports, agricultural policies and strategies, minutes of annual meetings and annual progress reports.

Implementation of the mid-term evaluation will be a joint, collaborative effort. The consultants will therefore seek the opinion and views of the widest possible spectrum of key stakeholders, some of which include: the Project Coordinator, the FAO office in Lilongwe, Principal Secretaries, Directors, Heads of Departments of relevant government departments and organisations, the Donor Committee on Agriculture and Food Security (DCAFS), beneficiaries of the Project, etc.

### **4.2 Required competences and profile of team members**

The evaluation team will combine among its members the following fields of expertise:

- Food security policy;
- small scale agriculture;
- small scale irrigation;
- watershed management;
- social development aspects including gender equality and community development;
- capacity development.

### **4.2 Timetable for the preparation, field work and finalisation of report**

The review will be undertaken from August 2009. The field work for the review shall be conducted within a period of 14 working days. The team leader shall be remunerated for two days for preparation, while the team members shall be given one day each. For report writing, the team leader shall be given six days, while the team members shall be given three days each. For finalising the report, the team leader shall be given two days. Thus the team leader shall be given 24 days in total, while the team members shall be given 18 days each.

### **4.3 Input and budget**

Norad will cover consultancy expenses related to the person recruited by Norad, while the Project will cover all costs in connection the local implementation of the review, for one Malawian consultant and for one representative from the Government

## **5.0 Reporting**

The Team shall submit a first draft of the report not later than three weeks after completion of the field work (i.e. September 2009). The concerned parties shall provide comments to the first draft within two weeks after receipt of draft. A second and preferably the final draft shall be submitted one week after having received the comments. The team leader will be responsible for the finalisation of the report, which will be submitted to Norad/Embassy and FAO within the middle of October 2009. The report will be as clear and concise as possible, will focus on findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The report will be prepared using the following tentative structure:

- Executive Summary: Summary of the review, with particular emphasis on main findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations;
- Introduction: Presentation of the review purpose, questions and methods used to gather required information;
- Findings: Factual evidence, data and observations relevant to the specific questions;
- Recommendations and conclusions: Assessment of the interventions and its results against given review criteria and proposed questions, including actionable proposals to the evaluation users. The recommendations may be strategic and operational and will have to be relevant, focussed, clearly formulated and actionable.
- Lessons learned: Discussion of issues that are likely to have a potential for wider application and use;
- Supporting data and analysis should be annexed to the report when considered important to compliment the main report for future reference.

TOR approved in Lilongwe. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 2009

For the Government of Malawi: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

For FAO: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

For the Royal Norwegian Embassy: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

---

## **Appendix 8:**

### Comments to the Draft Report (of 9 October 2009)

---

---

### Comments from Norad, Oslo:

Dear Tore

In general I find the report quite OK, having answered most of the requirements of the TOR.

However, conclusions do not always appear to match the data of the report, since it seems to me that conclusions are more positive than many of the assessments made in the text. For example is the rating of activities rather low, while the overall conclusion ends up quite positive, recommending no or few changes, and continued support in a second phase. The TOR had not asked for an opinion of possible continuation, and the positive recommendation may create expectations. I suggest that para 5.2.2 is taken out (Recommendations Post – 2011), while the reference to the FICA model could still be relevant as a reorientation within the present phase.

In Lessons learned (5.3) the second para states that PIUs can be justified when ‘government system is too weak’. I think that is a dangerous argument, which could make ‘bypasses’ an easy option. We need not discuss why a PIU was set up in the first place, but we should not justify to keep it up for the future. The report argues that the OneUN may not be a viable option in the near future, but integration into the ASWAP should be more realistic. The discussion should therefore mainly be on how the remaining period can be utilized to facilitate integration with ASWAP while continuing to implement the successful elements of the programme as planned.

The issue raised in the report on continuation into a second phase is premature, while it is time to challenge the government to take the responsibility for full integration at the time of this project agreement ending. The team points out a number of weaknesses in the programme, which is another reason to seek full integration, rather than entering into a new phase.

Another weakness in the report is the lack of risk analysis, as specified in the TOR. *(RT’s comment: This point was in later communication with Norad Oslo agreed disregarded, as it was not requested in the ToR).*

As said – in general we find the report acceptable and we will not interfere on your opinions. We therefore have the option of accepting it as it is, and to communicate our positions to the partners. The annual meeting will take place by the end of next week. If you had made some modifications already, and if you have the possibility to address some of these issues raised here, we would appreciate to receive the update by Thursday – or latest Friday morning this week. Provided the timing of the annual meeting, we will regard the document available with the Embassy at that time as the final.

In other words: Any update according to these and other comments is received with thanks within the deadline.

If not possible – we will accept what we have as the final. Tanking you, and

regards  
Arild

---

### Comments from the Royal Norwegian embassy in Lilongwe, Malawi:

Thank you, Tore.

The Embassy concurs with the views brought forward by Arild Skåra, Norad.

Concerning continued support: Although the Embassy appreciates the reflections and considerations by the consultant team regarding future cooperation, we believe that it is premature to present these as an integral part of this report.

Thank you once again.

Yours sincerely,  
Marita Sørheim-Rensvik  
Second Secretary

---

### **Comments from the Project Implementation Unit:**

Marita shared with me the version 8 of the draft MTR report which is not yet for circulation and said I can comment at this point any factual errors.

\* On the executive summary, first bullet, you have written the agreement was signed on 28th August. It must be corrected to be 23rd August as you correctly reflected later in the same document

\* Under Brief Introduction and background- third paragraph: PIU -Liwonde Town is in Machinga District and NOT Balaka.

\* Under section 2.2- (pg 9) you have a statement that reads .... it has been impossible for the RT to ascertain that farmers involved in the project have not received additional fertilizer from government FISP. The fact is that there is no overlap. In fact in this winter season, some of our irrigation schemes benefited from Government Winter Subsidy with top dressing fertilizer and the project only came in with basal dressing fertilizer.

\*Section 3.3 financial management- I would rather request the RT to make its interpretation based on the official expenditure reports the mission were given. The reference to expenditure breakdown by component which I shared with the team was from an operational point of view a management tracking tool which I use to know how resources are split between the components. In the budget framework, these components are lumped under what is called 'Contracts' - sub-item ' Microprojects'. I will comment later substantively on the percent share of expenditures according to the financial report.

\* Under 4.3 FAO's role, fifth paragraph you have stated 'three long term TCDC mission. Fact: the project recruited two TCDC- One on Irrigation and water Development and the other on Agriculture and Land Management and NOT Crop Advisor

Thanks

Blessings Mwale





