



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the United
Nations

Office of Evaluation

Mid-Term Evaluation of Improving Food Security and nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach - (GDCP/MLW/001/FLA)

Final Evaluation Report

July 2014

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Office of Evaluation (OED)

This report is available in electronic format at: <http://www.fao.org/evaluation>

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Acknowledgements

The evaluation team (ET) would like to extend sincere gratitude to all the people involved in preparing and facilitating this evaluation. Organizing such an evaluation is never void of obstacles! However, the team was able to talk to most of the important stakeholders and was able to gain a lot of inside knowledge. We would like to thank especially all stakeholders from the various Ministries for their time and information. We are very grateful especially to all the beneficiaries in the various locations who shared their own perceptions about the outreach project and to all the extension staff members who provided us with useful insights into their daily work. Last but not least, we would like to thank project staff members for all their efforts in organising our programme and field visits and for sharing their own views on the project with us.

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Acronyms

ADD	Agricultural Development Division
AEDC	Agricultural Extension and Development Coordinator
AEDO	Agricultural Extension and Development Officer
AGMP	Nutrition and Consumer Protection Service (currently known as ESN)
ASWAp	Agricultural Sector Wide Approach
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme
CPF	Country Programme Framework
DADO	District Agriculture Development Office
DEC	District Executive Committee
DFID	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
DM	District Manager
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EPA	Extension Planning Area
ESN	Nutrition Division
ET	Evaluation Team
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations
FFS	Farmer Field School
FICA	Flemish International Cooperation Agency
FISP	Farm Input Subsidy Programme
FPMIS	Field Programme Management Information System
FUM	Farmers Union in Malawi
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoM	Government of Malawi
HDDS	Household Dietary Diversity Score
HIV/ AIDS	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus/ Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
HQ	Headquarter
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
HSA	Health Surveillance Assistant
HYV	High Yielding Variety
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IMCF	Improved Mother and Child Feeding
JFFLS	Junior Farmer Field and Life School
KAP	Knowledge Attitudes and Practices
LoA	Letter of Agreement
LTO	Lead Technical Officer,
LTU	Lead Technical Unit,
MDGs	Millenium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MGDS	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
NASFAM	National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi
NCHS	National Centre for Health Statistics
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NMTPF	National Medium Term Priority Framework
NNPSP	National Nutrition Policy and Strategic Plan
NPC	National Project Coordinator
OED	FAO Office of Evaluation

OIC	Officer in Charge
OPC	Office of the President and Cabinet
PM	Project Manager
PMU	Project Management Unit
PS	Principal Secretary
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTF	Project Task Force
RIDP	Rural Infrastructure Development Project
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SO	Strategic Objectives
SRRTF	Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food
SSLP	Small Scale Livestock Programme
SUN	Scaling up Nutrition
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
TCSF	South-South and Resource Mobilization Service
TCOS	Special Programmes Coordination and Monitoring Service
TIPS	Trials of Improved Practice
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive summary

Overview

ES 1. The project “Improving Food Security and nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach” (GDCP/MLW/001/FLA), funded by the Flemish Government¹, is set to run from 2007 to 2015. This means that after evaluation the project will only have one year in which to consolidate activities and incorporate findings.

ES 2. Phase I of the project ran from 2007 to 2011, phase II runs from 2011 - 2015. Both phases were funded with 8.2 million Euro, with about 1 million Euro remaining for the rest of the second phase. The Project has two components; i) Outreach Component and ii) Policy Component. All related activities are led by the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) based in Lilongwe, Malawi with technical backstopping from FAO Nutrition Division (ESN). Driven by food insecurity reports, the Government of Malawi decided to implement the outreach component in the districts of Kasungu and Mzimba.

ES 3. The project’s specific and immediate objective is:

- to contribute through policy and programme advisory services to the achievement of the Government’s development goals in terms of improving the food security and nutrition situation of the Malawian population at large and more directly through direct grass-roots interventions to the improvement of the situation of approximately 29 000 food insecure households in the target areas of Mzimba and Kasungu Districts on an economically and environmentally sustainable basis.

ES 4. Target beneficiaries were primarily the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS in the Office of the President and Cabinet. Indirect beneficiaries at the national level² will be other ministries and departments involved in nutrition and food security work as well as food insecure households in Malawi in general. At the district and local level, food insecure households in newly selected Extension Planning Areas (EPAs) in Kasungu and Mzimba districts are the target.

ES 5. The present Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) intends to complement the findings of the 2013 evaluation funded by Flemish International Cooperation Agency (FICA)³.

ES 6. The MTE was conducted by a team of three evaluators in March – April 2014. The team travelled to the country and met with a wide range of stakeholders, project partners and beneficiaries. The purpose of the journey was to review the progress made to date in achieving project outputs that contribute to the expected project outcome of improved

¹ The agreement between the Government of Malawi, the Flemish Government (the donor) through the Flanders International Cooperation Agency (FICA) and FAO (the executing agency)

² Selection of new EPAs was made by the district authorities in consultation with project management and priority was given to those EPAs in close proximity to each other and where food insecurity and vulnerability was widespread. It was thought that by adopting this method, management would be enhanced and the likelihood of showing a visible impact would be greater. Selection of sites took into account the community interest, motivation and commitment, non-duplication of donor supported activities, and access to markets for produce generated by the project.

³ The FICA evaluation included this project implemented by FAO and another two programmes implemented by other organizations but funded by FICA in Malawi.

household food security and nutrition at household level in the project areas, and to ensure accountability to the donor, the Government and project participants.

ES 7. The current evaluation employed a number of different methods - amongst these are document reviews, informal interviews with stakeholders at various levels, as well as interviews with beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. For the field phase the evaluation team tried to have the upper hand in choosing EPAs, Sections and Communities in order to maintain objectivity and independence on the ground. This was not always possible due to bad weather and road conditions during the field visits in Kasungu.

Key findings

ES 8. The project documents for both project phases demonstrate that a number of different interventions need to be further tailored to the needs of targeted communities. This may help to address the lack of a systematic approach to achieving outputs and inefficient distribution. The project document for the second phase stressed the importance of training and shifted the focus away from input supply. In addition there was a common understanding of the need to promote agricultural diversity as an important precondition for dietary diversity.

ES 9. From the review of the documents and the interviews with stakeholders it is clear that the food security objectives of the project were relevant to the needs of the communities and national priorities. At the implementation level, the project is praised for following relevant approaches that are in line with government policy: i) multi-disciplinary approach to food and nutrition security, ii) group approach to reaching beneficiaries for training and capacity building and iii) participatory planning process at district level.

ES 10. Concerning the project management, it was found that the preparation of annual work plans had not followed a standardized approach. During the first phase work plans were agreed with the district authorities and were demand driven. During the second phase the project management tried to alter the above consultation assuming it would better suit the project objectives. The work plans became very general and similar for the two districts without disaggregation by EPA. This meant that the approaches were not well tailored to community-based planning. The lack of differentiation made monitoring very difficult. Though work plans should include procurement plans, only availability funds were mentioned, with no indication as to when procurement needed to take place. This has often led to delays in the implementation process. In addition, lack of clarity and specifications concerning the procurement requests led to additional delays. Work plans were generally not based on the logical framework of the project documents.

ES 11. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a very important tool in project management. The project carried out annual project reviews in the context of the two-day planning meetings with all implementation partners. It appears that these reviews combined with regular field visits were the only monitoring tool of the project. Apart from this the project has not established a monitoring system. A monitoring spreadsheet, still awaiting data entry, was developed only shortly before the beginning of this evaluation. The exception is the nutrition team which has started to fill in the attendance data of the nutrition education sessions. This is a start, but it is still a long way away from being results-based. The nutrition component, however, is currently partnered with a German funded research project that will generate some results based monitoring data at the end of phase II. A recommendation is proposed to this effect.

ES 12. In terms of staff management the project manager was permanently based in Kasungu whereas the policy advisor was based in the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) and was strongly involved in policy formulation. The evaluation team realised that this has led to a disconnect between the policy and outreach components. The policy advisor position was also vacant for some months during the second phase. Following her appointment, the new policy advisor was positioned in the FAO Country Office. A recommendation is proposed to this effect.

ES 13. Almost two million dollars of the overall project budget was spent on fertilizer and chemicals, which amounts to 20 percent of the total project budget. 26 percent of the overall project budget was spent on seeds, out of which 51 percent were spent on high yielding maize. Only 6 percent of the seed budget was spent on vegetables.

ES 14. At the policy level the project documents called for the establishment of a Project Steering Committee (PSC) at a central level to guide the overall direction of the project. The PSC existed only on paper and never became operational. A recommendation is proposed to this effect.

ES 15. **At the outreach level the project was meant to have a Project Management Unit headed by a National Project Coordinator (NPC).** The role of the NPC was to liaise with government authorities, prepare project work plans, budgets and progress reports and to propose modifications to the project when necessary. In reality the NPC function was taken care of by the two Project Coordinators at district level plus the head of the respective ADD office. Therefore the project had no formal actor at national level.

ES 16. **From the overall budget of the project about 80 percent went to the outreach component and 20 percent towards policy advice.** About 60 percent of the budget is allocated directly to beneficiaries which equals about 95 USD per household. This means that the project intended to improve food and nutrition security with an investment of 13 USD per household per year.

ES 17. **The project implemented the outreach activities through the existing Government structures, which is very positive.** However, the efficiency and effectiveness of activities was constrained by the limited numbers of Agricultural Extension and Development Officers (AEDOs) in the districts. There were only 60 AEDOs in the 12 EPAs covered by the project.

ES 18. In the absence of a benchmark study underlying an effective M&E system it is difficult to judge to what extent the project outputs have been achieved. The evaluation team is unable to provide sound statistics on the number and type of food insecure households reached during both phases of the project. It is however rather obvious that high input in seeds and fertilizers have resulted in higher yields for the beneficiaries under rain-fed (in the years of favourable rainfall) and under irrigated farming. In addition there are an increased number of farmers who can now engage in irrigation farming and who will benefit from the irrigation schemes in the long run. Some farmers benefited from crop diversification too but this number could have been much higher. The evaluation team feels that the focus on maize and fertilizer has undermined the efforts of diversifying agricultural production.

ES 19. **It remains to be determined to what extent crop diversification has led to increased dietary diversity.** Unfortunately only 11 percent of the beneficiaries of nutrition education, i.e. families with children under two years which are the focus of the national

Scaling Up Nutrition Initiative, received any kind of input delivery other than maize and fertilizer input from the project.

ES 20. **The project has contributed to strengthening the district outreach capacity through training and capacity building.** This included frontline staff of various ministries as well as lead farmers and farmers through Farmer Field Schools (FFS). Unfortunately, capacity building and training was not always ideally combined with the inputs indicated in the project document. Sometimes training came after input delivery, and sometimes training was void of any inputs (as in the case of nutrition education owing to the divergence in targeting). Outreach capacity was also enhanced through the provision of motorcycles (for AEDCs) and bicycles (for AEDOs and lead farmers).

ES 21. To assess the project outcome “The capability of households strengthened to the extent that they can meet their needs in terms of food security and nutrition” is equally difficult due to the reasons mentioned above. However, some of the required information may be provided by the German research team which has been linked to the nutrition education component of the project.

ES 22. From anecdotal evidence and reports from the field, the evaluation team can state that some of the interventions and micro projects have the potential to contribute to the capacity of households to achieve better food and nutrition security. These interventions include the establishment of irrigation schemes, small livestock pass-on projects, nutrition education and the establishment of bank accounts or revolving funds. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of all micro-projects. The evaluation team is very critical of the high inputs in High Yielding Variety (HYV) maize and fertilizers, which were repeating/ complementing the farm input subsidy program run by the government. This hybrid seed serves beneficiaries for one season but does not provide sustainable benefits.

ES 23. Some interventions could have contributed to the stated outcome if they had followed the approach described in FAOs normative work. This is especially true for the Junior Farmer Field and Life School (JFFLS) approach, begun in the second phase of the project, and falling short in many respects. Shortcomings exist at the level of beneficiary selection and facilitator training, up to the level of the curriculum, which seems to be a replication of what the project does in FFS (teaching improved maize production). The FFSs supported by the project have a similar problem.

ES 24. **The project tried to mainstream gender as much as possible into the activities and micro-projects.** The evaluation team did not find any use of systematically gender disaggregated data. Such data may exist but has not been compiled, which might be attributed to the absence of M&E.

ES 25. However reports from the field have shown that women and men are now working together in clubs, that the selection in JFFLS is gender balanced and that clubs should comprise approximately equal numbers of men and women. Nutrition education was, however, biased towards female participation, though the project tried to get men and village elders involved as well.

Conclusions

ES 26. According to the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Malawi as a whole has concentrated too much on maize production, which caused farmers to rely increasingly on mono cropping. The outreach component of the project should have insisted much more on

agricultural diversification. This is a prerequisite for the required dietary diversity, which is an important part of food security and soil fertility. Malawi has put food security high on the agenda of the Agricultural Sector Wide Approach (ASWAs) (2011), which also includes the need to diversify Malawi's agriculture beyond the maize economy.

ES 27. The project has a strong partnership with the government which helps promote ownership of project interventions. The project needs to expand its partnership arrangement with other organisations working in the area, especially Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other projects to ensure that interventions are implemented in a coordinated manner to allow building synergies and complementarities.

ES 28. The project is in line with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, in which agriculture and food security is identified as one of nine key priority areas. This priority area is further elaborated in the Agricultural Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp), which is comprised of three focus areas (i) food security and risk management, (ii) commercial agriculture, agro-processing and market development and (iii) sustainable agricultural land and water management.

ES 29. The project contributed to the first cluster under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2008-2011 which aimed at equitable economic growth and food security, and the third cluster, which included social development relating to health and nutrition, water, sanitation and education. The same is true for the second UNDAF (2012-2016) wherein the first cluster remained basically the same. However, the main focus on nutrition was moved to output three with focus on mothers and children below five years of age. The project contributed especially in the second phase to the objectives of the second cluster as well as to Malawi's SUN initiative.

ES 30. The project implemented the outreach activities through the existing Government structures, which is very positive. However, activities were constrained by the limited numbers of Agricultural Extension and Development Officers (AEDOs) in the districts. The establishment and/ or strengthening of village clubs was well appreciated by communities and is part of the national extension system. The training of lead farmers is helping to fill gaps in the extension system due to many vacancies.

ES 31. The project implemented a wide range of interventions but the implementation strategy and the theory of change underlying these interventions was not always clear. Likewise targeting of interventions varied from location to location and there was no guideline for standardized targeting.

ES 32. The placement of key project staff, especially the project manager, led to a detachment of the outreach component from the national level. Thus the different components of the project (policy advice and outreach) at times operated independently of each other.

ES 33. Only three baseline surveys, essential for measuring project outputs and impact, were carried out in both phases. These surveys were not devoid of technical problems.

ES 34. In general, many of the activities were not implemented according to the original project document, underlining the fact that work plans were not prepared with reference to it. This is very obvious in terms of nutrition education and the JFFLS approach.

ES 35. The performance of crop production was sometimes compromised either by erratic rainfall, late delivery of inputs to farmers and/ or poor quality planting material. The evaluation team noted that there was considerable variation in the amounts of inputs received by different farmers in different years. The livestock pass-on programme proved to be very popular amongst the target group, especially small livestock. However, sometimes the animals were passed-on when still too small or in poor condition which slowed down the progress of the pass-on programme.

ES 36. The nutrition policy advisors made some strong contributions to the formulation of the National Nutrition Policies. Their presence in the various meetings increased the visibility of FAO in the field of food and nutrition security.

ES 37. Some of the interventions in the outreach component have been effective in addressing food insecurity; amongst these are the livestock pass-on program, irrigation and most likely nutrition education. The effectiveness of maize and fertilizer input had a short term effect on yields in the respective season but was not sustainably effective. The fact that inputs were not always coordinated with relevant training, which led to losses (esp. livestock and tree seedlings), also reduced the effectiveness of the project.

ES 38. It is the opinion of the evaluation team that livestock pass-on and irrigation schemes have the greatest potential to serve the beneficiaries in the long run. In addition many groups have successfully established bank accounts or revolving funds, but may occasionally require more training to manage them, especially in the long run. By and large, communities see the training and capacity building interventions of the project as having sustainable impacts on their livelihoods. Nutrition education leads to increased knowledge and skills, which generates increased demand for agricultural and food diversity. However, it can be difficult to enrol groups after they realise that in some cases the only incentive to participate in the nutrition education group is a certificate devoid of any inputs.

ES 39. The development of food-based nutrition education material has been highly recognised in Malawi. There are indications that the SUN initiative would like to adopt and disseminate the material throughout Malawi. The impact of the project on the nutritional status of the population will be partly assessed by the impact survey of the German research team, which will be carried out in August/September 2014.

ES 40. The evaluation team is critical of the high input orientation, especially in terms of HYV maize and fertilizer. The evaluation team is convinced that this has partially undermined the objective of increasing agricultural diversity in the project area.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: To FAO.

A Different project structure is needed to overcome the lack of communication and coordination observed by the evaluation team between management, policy and outreach components. A proposed solution is:

Project manager might be based in Lilongwe, at the FAO Country office. That way the project manager would be able to liaise with the two country assistant representatives for programme and administration, with different line ministries at national level, the two agricultural divisional offices, the two district agricultural offices, as well as the policy advisor of the project.

Recommendation 2: To FAO.

There is an urgent need to establish the Steering Committee to provide guidance and advice to the project management. This Steering Committee, (composed of members from different stakeholders including Ministries), will support the project and will ensure the take up of successful project activities and lessons learnt. The Steering Committee would also be responsible for periodically reviewing project performance and providing operational advice when needed. This steering committee could be linked to or drawn from ASWAP Technical Working Groups.

Recommendation 3: To FAO.

Establish effective M&E capacity and processes to guide project implementation and enhance learning. The project should engage an M&E expert for the remaining months to work with and adapt the existing M&E framework. In a first step, the expert should try to enter data into the existing framework to test its applicability so far. A second step should be to design a report outline which includes formats of tables for monitoring of project data. Gender disaggregated data analysis should be included.

Recommendation 4: To PTF

Streamline project interventions to fewer, manageable ones, moving towards integration based on nutrition objectives and the value chain development approach, and strengthening the group approach. Promising interventions include small-scale livestock, irrigation farming, skills development, value addition, marketing support, and nutrition education to help translate agricultural diversity and improvement into enhanced dietary diversity.

In choosing interventions for future projects it is important to write up the micro-projects into technical proposals with guidelines that will define the objectives and analyze all interventions with regards to their capacity to contribute to sustainable improvement of food and nutrition security. This will help to streamline project interventions to be few and manageable.

For each micro project there should be an adaptable implementation guideline, which should ideally be developed with the government of Malawi and be based on policy guidelines. Those guidelines should include some advice on targeting and M&E so that the whole nation can build up a common strategy and monitoring system. These guidelines should be used by all stakeholders in the country, contributing to harmonize targeting, implementation and training curricula.

Recommendation 5: To FAO

FAO should advise the government on the revision and update of school programmes and curricula. For future nutrition education projects it is of utmost importance to link the contents of education to realities on the ground. Education in dietary diversity should always go hand in hand with an investigation of which inputs would be needed to put knowledge into practice. In the case of the present project, vegetable gardens and small livestock provided to beneficiaries of nutrition education could have made a great difference. However, these efforts require substantial inputs and need to be planned accordingly. They could constitute a separate project.

Recommendation 6: To PTF

An overall organogram of the project should be produced, including the Steering Committee, the FAO Country office, the Regional Office and HQ. The responsibilities and reporting mechanisms of each component of the organogram should be clarified, so that recommendations of backstopping missions will be effectively taken up by the project and not constantly neglected, as in the case of the current project.

Collaboration with other organizations and stakeholders in the districts should be strengthened in order to complement those areas that are not being served by the comparative advantage of FAO. The project should establish more effective collaboration with organizations and projects promoting irrigation (e.g. RIDP), market development and farmer group strengthening (e.g. National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM) and Farmer Union in Malawi (FUM).

1 Introduction

1.1 Evaluation background

1. At the end of 2007, the Flemish Government approved funding through FICA to implement the project “Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach” (GDGP/MLW/001/FLA) in Malawi, with a budget of € 4.1 million for the period 2008 – 2011. The project was designed to improve food and nutrition security through the provision of policy support at national level, and the implementation of outreach activities targeted at vulnerable households in Kasungu and Mzimba districts. A project mid-term review was carried out in the first half of 2010, reviewing the progress of the programme and giving recommendations for the future. Following a Malawian Government request, the Flemish Government approved a second phase to expand into new EPAs of Kasungu and Mzimba.

2. The second phase of the project started directly after the completion of the first phase in April 2011 and will end in March 2015. Most outreach activities were scheduled to be implemented during the first three years of the second phase, to be concluded at the end of the 2013/14 agricultural season. The last year of the second phase, April 2014 to March 2015, would focus on consolidating activities and results achieved and handing over the project to the respective National and District Authorities. The total budget of the second phase is Euro 4.1 million, equivalent to USD 5 350 013. The remaining budget as of January 2014 is USD 1.3 million.

3. Based on the achievements obtained and lessons learned during the first phase, the second phase of the project has continued to provide food and nutrition security policy support at the national level. Project outreach activities have been expanded from six EPAs in Kasungu and Mzimba districts to an additional new six EPAs, three in each district. The focus of the outreach activities shifted towards providing more capacity development support to the targeted vulnerable households. The objective was to capitalize on improved production by combining materials and inputs provision. Special attention was given to translating nutrition policies into field-level actions through the integration of nutrition in agricultural extension, with a focus on the implementation of intensive nutrition education in the newly targeted EPAs.

Although this evaluation is called a mid-term evaluation, the timing of the evaluation coincides very nearly with the end of the second phase. The entire first phase did not see any external evaluation and a mid-term review was done by Bunda College⁴.

4. FICA commissioned a comprehensive “Impact Evaluation of Three FICA-Funded Programmes in Malawi” in 2013. The present evaluation is not meant to reproduce the assessment done by FICA but rather to complement its analysis. Therefore, the findings from the FICA impact evaluation must be considered in addition to this report. Details of this mid-term evaluation can be found in Annex 1, including the TOR.

⁴ Its main purpose was to review progress made to date in achieving project outputs that contribute to the expected project outcome of improved household food security and nutrition at household level in the project areas, and to ensure accountability to the donor, the Government and project participants. The review did not apply any rigorous evaluation criteria. It gave, however, some idea on the characteristics of beneficiaries, targeted by the project.

1.2 Methodology of the evaluation

5. As stated in the TOR, the evaluation follows the internationally accepted evaluation criteria, namely: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. In addition the evaluation looked into compliance with the UN Common Country Programming Principles, namely:

- Human Rights Based Approaches (HRBA)/ Right to Food/ Decent Work;
- Gender equality;
- Environmental sustainability;
- Capacity Development; and
- Results Based Management.

6. The evaluation methodology was consultative and builds upon the perspectives of the different stakeholders; government partners at national and district levels (mainly Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Ministry of Water Development and Irrigation, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC), FAO & UN partners (UNDP, UNICEF, WFP), donor (Flemish Government), other important implementing partners (NGOs, EU), extension staff (AEDCs, AEDOs, HSAs), CBOs teachers in participating primary schools, village elders, lead farmers, community nutrition volunteers and beneficiary groups, non-beneficiaries.

7. A number of different methods were used during the evaluation:

- Desk review; of all documents that were made available to the ET such as the project planning documents, work plans, progress reports, “back to office reports”, budget revisions, baseline studies etc. in addition the team looked at relevant policy documents from the government as well as UN documents. The documents reviewed in the course of this evaluation are compiled in Annex 3.
- Key informant interviews with stakeholders at national, regional, district and village level. In particular, the following stakeholders were consulted during the evaluation: (mainly Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Ministry of Water Development and Irrigation, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC), FAO&UN partners (UNDP, UNICEF, WFP), donor (Flemish Government), other important implementing partners (NGOs, EU,), extension staff (AEDCs, AEDOs, HSAs), teachers in participating primary schools, village elders, lead farmers, community nutrition volunteers, beneficiary groups, and non-beneficiaries.
- Triangulation for validation of information and evidence; against the Food and Nutrition Security model and study on “Overcoming Child Malnutrition in Developing Countries” (International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI 2000).

8. The ET reviewed the baseline reports and other data provided by the project and tried to analyse them in order to learn about the project’s efficiency, effectiveness and impact. Unfortunately, the absence of an established M&E system, especially at the level of the outreach component, has made the analysis of the project’s scope, coverage and outputs very

challenging and has seriously hampered the ET's ability to provide substantive evidence on the project's scale and impact.

9. The selection of locations for conducting interviews with stakeholders, including the direct beneficiaries, is a very sensitive part of any evaluation. The ET emphasized the importance of having the choice on locations to be visited. This is important in order to allow an independent view on project activities. Due to circumstances beyond control (road conditions due to peak of rainy season) the original choices were not always feasible. Some alternative arrangements needed to take place on an ad-hoc basis. The evaluation schedule can be found in Annex 4.

2 Context of the project/programme

10. Economic growth continues to be elusive for the Malawian economy, and as a consequence, poverty is widespread with more than half of the population (52 per-cent) living below the poverty line. Malawi's economy is largely dominated by the agricultural sector, which accounts for approximately 40 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and contributes up to 90 percent of all export earnings. In this context, the performance of the agricultural sector has a direct impact on economic growth in the country. With 80 percent of the country's workforce employed in some capacity in this sector, agriculture continues to be the main source of livelihood for a great proportion of the population.

11. However, the nutritional status, agricultural production and food security situations in Malawi remain precarious due to a number of factors ranging from low agricultural productivity, natural disasters (mainly floods and droughts), and poor policy and strategy implementation frameworks. The country has developed comprehensive policies for food security and nutrition during the last years (see chapter 6.1).

12. Given that 90 percent of agriculture is rain fed and the majority of the population engaged in agricultural production are smallholder subsistence farmers, they are highly vulnerable to any climatic changes or economic shocks. This continued exposure to risks and vulnerability to shocks contributes heavily to rural poverty. Vulnerability is further compounded by lack of cash resources, limited access to off-farm income and limited availability of credit, in turn impeding the ability of households to break away from a poverty trap.

13. In mid-September 2006, a delegation from the Flemish Government visited Malawi to review the potential for cooperation with Government of Malawi (GoM) and FAO, among others. Following the mission, the GoM requested FICA to assist the agricultural sector since the country had just been hit by a massive drought in 2005/06 covering several districts in the country. FICA presented a concept note to the Flemish Minister for Development Cooperation, recommending that Flanders invest in the area of food security and called upon FAO to provide the required technical assistance. Based on the positive advice of the Minister, FICA requested to FAO that a joint project identification and formulation mission be organized.

14. It is against this background that FICA decided to support GoM. In collaboration with other UN Agencies and FAO in particular, FICA explored two main avenues to channel funding and support. One is through funding of a Food and Nutrition Security Expert to assist GoM to develop and further strengthen work in the area of policies related to food and nutrition security. The expert was asked to coordinate food security and nutrition actions, support the development of agricultural and/or nutritional policy (including the Agricultural Sector-Wide Approach (ASWAp), and strengthen linkages between government, UN, NGOs, donors and civil society organizations. The second part of FICA's support to Malawi entailed funding of a food security and nutrition outreach project in two districts that were hard hit by natural shocks (drought). Following consultations with FAO and national stakeholders, Mzimba and Kasungu Districts were identified for the project. This choice was mainly driven by food insecurity reports due to drought (erratic rains), which was negatively affecting the livelihoods of poor households in the two districts. In addition, there were fewer NGOs

providing support in the two districts (most NGO and development support is concentrated in the southern region).

15. During the first phase of the project, the local authorities identified 3 EPAs in each district for project implementation. The second phase of the project included another 3 EPAs per district as depicted in the map below. The EPAs indicated with blue lines were included in phase 1 of the project; those indicated with red lines were newly included in phase 2 of the project.

Figure 1. Implementation areas of the project in phase 1 (blue) and phase 2 (red)

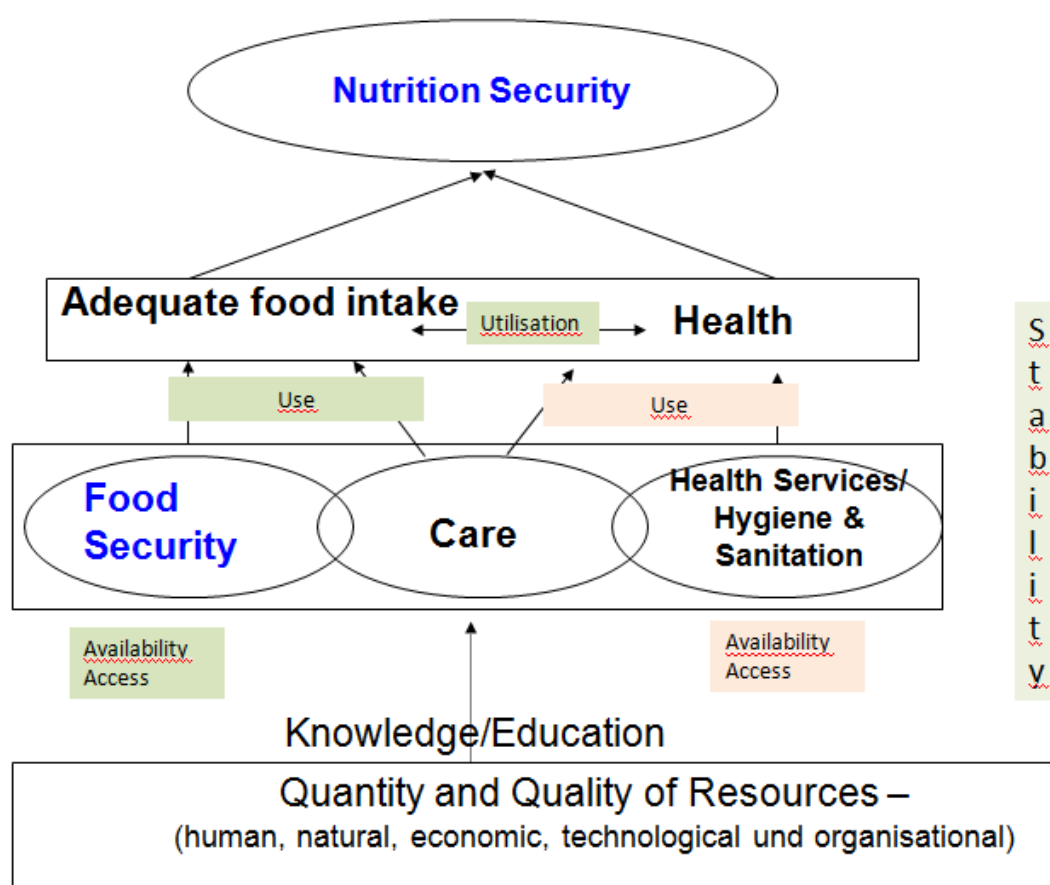


3 Analysis of project concept and design

16. The title of the project under evaluation: “Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach” is quite broad in scope. In order to arrive at an analysis of the project concept it is important to clarify the concept of food and nutrition security.

17. The concept of food and nutrition security is best explained using the model below. Nutrition security (expressed by the nutritional status of the population) is positively influenced by adequate health and food intake. The underlying conditions are food security, care, functioning health services, hygiene and sanitation. In this context the importance of food security (availability and access to food) in terms of achieving a good nutritional status is obvious. However, food security is only one aspect of nutrition security.

Figure 2. Figure 2: Food and Nutrition Security Model



18. The original definition of food security implies that all people, at all times, should have access to sufficient and healthy food. However, access to food does not automatically mean that this food is being used. Intra-household distribution will determine whether food is consumed in accordance with individual nutritional needs. Availability and use of adequate health care would contribute to improved utilisation of nutrients in the body resulting in desirable nutritional outcomes. While food security is an essential component, it is not sufficient for achieving nutrition security – as can be seen in the model.

19. The above figure thus shows the need to link food security (availability and access) to an improved and more diversified dietary intake. This is where nutrition education plays an

important role as it builds food and nutrition knowledge and skills, and promotes improved family and young child feeding at household level. The first phase of the project did not involve activities in nutrition education. However, this has received increased importance in the second phase.

20. The current project places considerable emphasis on capacity building, such as nutrition training and education (FFS, JFFLS and Improve Mother and Child Feeding (IMCF)) which is expected to influence not only food security but also maternal and child nutrition practices and caring behaviour. The project's work on health related aspects is limited, except for the provision of water (through boreholes and rehabilitation of gravity fed piped water schemes), and the promotion of improved sanitation behaviours, such as hand-washing with soap and water.

21. The nutrition security model does not compare the impact of underlying causes on malnutrition. In this context it is useful to cite the study on "Overcoming Child Malnutrition in Developing Countries" (IFPRI 2000) in which the authors identify the main contributors to improved nutrition between 1970 and 1995. Both improved food availability and improved health environment contributed with 26 percent and 19 percent respectively. The most important impact came from the education of women (43 percent) and their social status (12 percent). As would be expected, research shows that women with higher levels of education have better nourished children and that women with higher status in society have better nutritional status themselves and so do their children.

22. This fact helps to explain why sometimes very high rates of malnutrition are found in so called food secure areas or the "food baskets" of countries. Another explanation is that food security initiatives often end with availability and access, neglecting the fact that these factors do not automatically translate into improved dietary intake. In this context education, and specifically nutrition education, plays an important role. While the model includes education, nutrition education tailored to specific needs is equally important. Providing mothers with nutrition education regardless of their education level has been shown to improve the nutritional status of their children and to decrease rates of mortality.

23. Food production should be based on the population's dietary needs in order to achieve nutritional adequacy. This means that the recommended types and amounts of foods produced should be aligned with a country's food-based dietary guidance and the specific nutritional requirements of the population. Nutrition education, based on behaviour change communication strategies, is the inevitable next step to ensure that available and accessible food will be used to improve dietary intake and, in turn, the nutritional status of the population.

24. FAO's comparative advantage in nutrition is to ensure that diverse agricultural production can enhance improved dietary intake and thus contribute to an improved nutritional status. As has been stated in the concept note for the International Symposium on "Food-based Approaches for Improving Diets and Raising Levels of Nutrition" (December 2010): "The importance of food-based approaches for overcoming malnutrition and improving nutrition in general is fully recognized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Focusing on the distinctive relationship between agriculture, food and nutrition, FAO works actively to protect, promote and improve established food-based systems as the sustainable solution to ensure food and nutrition security, combat micronutrient deficiencies, improves diets and raise levels of nutrition and by doing so, to achieve the nutrition-related

MDGs”. Project design and focus, especially concerning phase 2, are in line with the approach and priorities described above.

25. The need to document project processes carefully and to produce evidence-based results that clearly demonstrate the benefits of food-based approaches has been recognized by FAO and was one of the purposes of the above mentioned symposium. The Global Evaluation of FAO’s work and role in nutrition emphasized this by providing more evidence in this direction. Therefore the current project is accompanied by the German funded research project GCP/INT/108/GER – “Improving the dietary intakes and nutritional status of infants and young children through improved food security and complementary feeding counselling” (IMCF), whose objectives are to document the effectiveness and impact of promoting locally available and affordable food on children’s dietary intake and growth.

26. The project design was considered strategic by the ET in particular in terms of the appointment of a nutrition policy adviser who was expected to contribute to the nutrition policies within the Ministry of Agriculture, Education and Health.

27. The logical framework of phase 1 shows that the project took notice of the fact that food and nutrition security measures would need to cover a wide range of activities if the outcome “households can meet their food and nutrition security needs” was to be met. The activities mentioned under 1.4 of the logframe are: production, storage, processing and marketing of field and horticultural crops, livestock, aquaculture; nurseries for seedlings, communal woodlots, potable water, household access to sanitation, school gardening and nutrition, health and sanitation work, nutritional care and support for HIV/ AIDS, off-farm income generating activities, savings and credit groups and multipurpose cooperatives.

28. The causal relationship between inputs, activities, outputs and expected outcomes is clear. However, the details for each of the micro projects are not sufficiently described in the project document. They were meant to be formulated in specific micro-project proposals.

29. It is important to highlight that many of the micro projects would need to target the same communities and beneficiaries, so that they could act in synergy and contribute to improving the nutritional situation of the target groups. This would have implied a much higher budget than was the case. In fact, the project document states that the project cost will be on average 100 USD per household.

30. The project document of phase II builds upon phase I. Point 1.7 in the logical framework refers to strengthening the existing groups and to assisting them in developing their own future strategy. This is an important point in terms of an exit strategy.

31. As stated in the project document for phase II, the goal of the project is to contribute to achievement of the Government’s development goals in terms of improving the food security and nutrition situation for the Malawian population at large. More directly the project aims to contribute to improvements in the situation of food insecure households through direct grass-roots interventions in the target EPAs of Mzimba and Kasungu Districts on an economically and environmentally sustainable basis. The expected outcome is that the capability of households is strengthened to the extent that they can meet their needs in terms of food and nutrition security.

32. In conclusion, the project has the capability to contribute through agricultural production, especially the promotion of agricultural diversity and nutrition education towards an improved dietary intake and through this towards an improved nutritional status. It has to be understood, however, that a more comprehensive package of interventions is essential to enable reductions in malnutrition, including especially health and sanitation.

33. Finally, adequate food security and nutrition policies and institutional development are fundamental to providing the political framework and institutional capacities in which programmes and projects can operate. Once nutrition policies are in place, the focus of the next phase could be changed from “Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach” to: “Improving Food and Nutrition Security through agricultural diversity and nutrition education in Malawi”. This title would specify the theory of change whilst pointing out two main issues (agricultural diversity and nutrition education) which need to go hand in hand (together with health, sanitation and adequate care) in order to lead to a change in the nutritional status.

4 Analysis of the implementation process

4.1 Project Programme Management

4.1.1 Operation Management

34. The Project management implemented the activities according to annual work plans. These plans are agreed with the implementing partners (District Governmental Institutions⁵). There is a genuine participatory effort behind these annual plans. However, they are inadequate as management tools because they are too general, not disaggregated by geographical location and they overlap in time. In general, the preparation of these annual work plans did not follow any standardized approach, either in content or in timing. Thus, they are difficult to monitor and not well suited for planning and organizing work in each community. The lack of geographical disaggregation contributed to the difficulty of monitoring activities. . In addition, the even allocation of the budget does not take into consideration that interventions can require more or less funding depending on, for example, geographical or geological differences (especially in the case of irrigation schemes). The water and sanitation interventions during the first phase could be cited as another example, when Kasungu District focused on boreholes whilst Mzimba District benefitted from the rehabilitation of gravity fed water schemes.

35. The work plans were also perceived by project management (PM) as procurement plans. After their validation in the annual meeting by the Project Coordinators⁶ and the district commissioners they were sent to FAO Lilongwe to be approved and monitored. However, two problems were identified by the ET:

- The work plans indicate the timing for inputs and funds but they do not inform the project management on the time of procurement;
- Requests for procurement of agricultural inputs and supplies submitted to FAO Lilongwe often came late and specifications were sometimes not detailed enough thus requiring a process of clarification resulting in delays; hence the procurement requests were not in accordance with FAO's procurement rules.

36. As a result of this situation for example, a request for “maize seed” without specifying the type of seed and the quantity, or requesting “goats” instead without specifying numbers, age and sex of the animals caused delays because of the need for consultation between FAO Lilongwe and the Kasungu project office.

37. In general, the project encountered frequent delays in implementation of activities. Submission of six-monthly progress and financial reports were often late, followed by delays in calls for funding from the donor. These delays also led to the failure of some planned activities. In 2013, due to delayed funding, irrigation schemes were compromised, and the irrigation activities were not implemented. After six years of project operations, when one could have expected a well established project management team operating in accordance with established FAO project management rules and regulations, it is difficult to understand how these issues continue to exist.

⁵ The principal implementing partner is the ADD (AEDO, DADO), but others institutions at district level are involved: Health, Education, Water and Sanitation, etc

⁶ Head of the ADD in each district

4.1.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

38. The lack of monitoring is adversely affecting all areas of the project activities and limits understanding of what works well, and what does not work well, and why. It thus has not enabled ET to make any objective inferences or conclusions on possible best practices that could be integrated in policies and could be applicable on a wider scale. In the first years of the project the understanding of “monitoring” was reduced to ad-hoc visits to the field and the signature of sheets indicating the input distribution and/or trainings. Thus “monitoring” of the annual work plan was mainly comprised of travels and monitoring workshops. From the beginning of the first phase the lack of a monitoring system and its implication for the decision making process has been pointed out repeatedly in different headquarter backstopping, back-to-office and consultancy reports with recommendations to establish a monitoring system as a matter of priority.

39. The annual review of project activities included all implementing partners and was conducted during a two-day planning workshop. These annual reviews were done in a participatory way and are the only visible monitoring tool in the project. Apart from these annual reviews, neither the PM nor the FAO country office in Lilongwe established a monitoring system, either at national or at district level. It was only shortly before the start of this MTE that a monitoring spreadsheet was developed, which during the course of the evaluation remained empty and thus no data could be obtained by the ET. The nutrition team, however, has started to establish a monitoring database. This database includes data on weekly or bi-weekly attendance of the nutrition education sessions and cannot be called results based.

40. Government partners did not have the capacity and mobility to carry out monitoring in the field – and were perhaps not convinced about monitoring being a very important tool of project management. The complaint about the lack of a joint monitoring and evaluation system came up regularly during ET interviews with partners.

4.1.3 Staff management

41. ET feels strongly that the project management has possibly been compromised by the detachment of the outreach component from the national level. From the project’s inception, the Nutrition Policy Advisor and the Outreach component Project manager seem to have worked quite independently of each other, and failed to exchange information with each other. In addition, coordination and guidance from the FAO country office appears to have been weak, given the absence of a fully fleshed out FAO representative for over two years (2011 to 2013).

42. It is unclear to the ET why the current outreach project manager was placed in the Agricultural Development Division (ADD) Office of Kasungu and not in Lilongwe (considering that the project impact areas cover two divisional offices of Kasungu and Mzuzu). The presence of the project manager at a central office in Lilongwe would have helped to facilitate a better linkage of the outreach component to the policy advisory part of the project and would have enabled the project manager to liaise with the national government as well as potential donors who might be interested in rolling out a project of this type. The following paragraph presents a detailed picture of the complicated management structure of the project.

43. The evaluation team believes that inadequate staff management at project level has affected project results. From the start of the project, the project manager and the district managers were not given full project posts, but were issued consultancy contracts of 11 months, with a mandatory break of one month. All contracts started on the same date, which meant that all staff had to have their mandatory breaks at the same time thus contributing to the disruption of project activities. In addition, there has not been any systematic performance appraisal of any member of the project team at the end of their consultancy contract. Also, even though the reporting lines are quite clear, it seems that they have not functioned effectively. The district managers report quarterly to the project manager who should compile the quarterly report for the FAO Office in Lilongwe. The Kasungu-based nutritionist reports directly to the project manager and to the district managers. The project manager reports only six monthly through progress reports, which have been delayed on several occasions, resulting in delayed six-monthly or annual reports by FAO HQs and subsequently to the donor. This has led to delays in the call for and the subsequent release of project funds by the donor thus compromising the timely implementation of planned project activities. The progress reports that the evaluation team has had access to seem to report only on activity-, are not results based, and several six-monthly reports could not be located.

44. The lack of records from the project management is worrying, especially in relation to the Back-to-Office reports or final consultancy reports. This project has received more than 12 support missions from FAO headquarters and consultancies covering specific technical issues. It was difficult to obtain these mission reports as they were not systematically filed in either the Field Programme Management Information System (FPMIS) or any of the relevant offices (FAO Lilongwe, Kasungu project office and FAO headquarters' Lead Technical Unit (LTU) offices).

4.2 Financial resources management

45. This section analyses the relevance and adequacy of budget allocation according to the project components and budget lines. It will also analyse the adequate allocation of the annual work plan budget, comparing it with the available budget and actual disbursement of project funds. Then, it will examine the coherence of the budget revisions in matching implementation needs. Finally, it will assess the rate of delivery and budget balance at the time of this evaluation, and compare it to the initial plans.

46. The challenge posed by lack of any financial information and financial monitoring system⁷ by the project management caused the ET, in collaboration with the project administration officer in Kasungu, to carefully review all the Expenditure Transaction Listings of the entire seven years of project operations from FAO's financial system⁸. The analysis of these transactions produced delivery data by component and could be closer to the real disbursement. Data related to expenditures presented under this section is derived from this analysis.

47. Analysis of the initial budget allocated to different components in the project document showed that the Outreach component received the highest allocation. In the first phase of the

⁷ It is worth mentioning that project manager has no direct access to FAO financial systems (Management Information System (MIS)).

⁸ MIS

project lifecycle the Outreach component received 86 percent of the budget although this was decreased to 78 percent in the second phase of the project. While the Policy component budget is significantly lower in the two phases with 14 and 22 percent respectively Table 1.

Table 1. Project initial budget by component

Component	Total Budget (aggregation of two phases)	Budget Phase I	Budget Phase II
Policy component	18 percent	14 percent	22 percent
Outreach component	82 percent	86 percent	78 percent
TOTAL	100 percent	100 percent	100 percent

Source: Evaluation team

48. The details of the budgets presented in the project documents were broken down by expenditure lines and disaggregated by the two components (Policy and Outreach), see Figure 3, but not by outputs therefore it is not feasible to make a judgment about the appropriateness of the allocation of expenditures to achieve results.

Figure 3. Total Budget

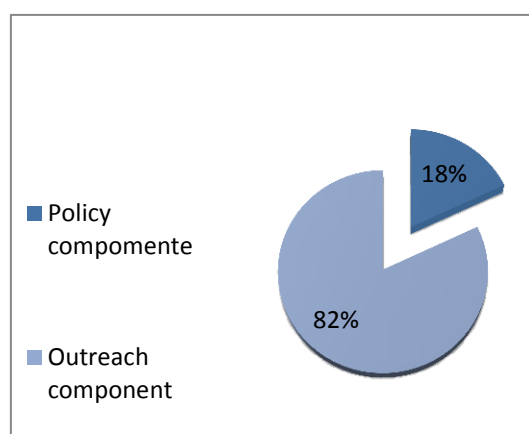
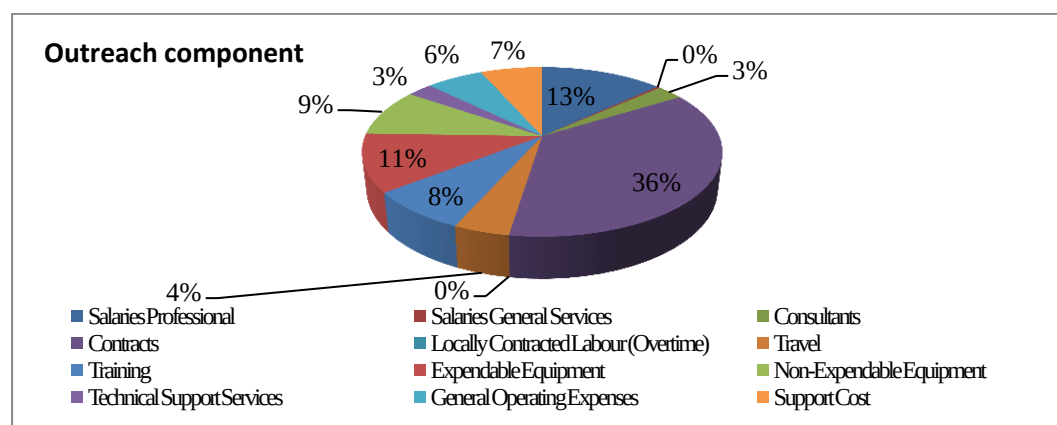


Fig figure 3: Total budget by main components

49. The Outreach Component, with two out of the three outputs of the Logical Framework, represents 82 percent of total budget (USD 8897154).

50. Figure 4, shows how ambitious this component is in terms of the areas of interventions and in terms of beneficiaries. The initial target in the number of beneficiaries, summing up the two project phases, was 41 000 farmers, teachers and front line staff, plus 15 000 school children, a total of 56 000 persons. According to the project document 60 percent of the budget (USD 5 338 292) should be allocated directly to the beneficiaries. On average 95 USD would be invested per person per seven years' duration of the project. Therefore this project intended to improve food and nutrition security with an investment of about 13 USD per person per year.

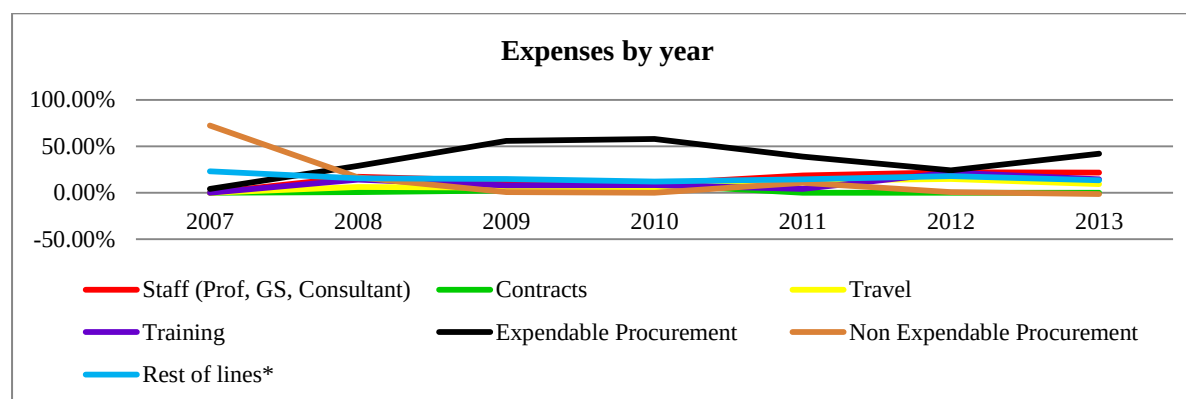
Figure 4. Outreach component by budgetary lines



Source: Evaluation team

51. The original idea in the project document was that NGOs or the private sector would be sub-contracted through “Letters of Agreement” (LoA) and would implement the Outreach component. That is why the Contract budget line in the first phase was 54 percent of the total budget (see Annex X). However, it was decided by FAO Office in Malawi that the project staff and the district counterpart would implement the whole component. Thus for the first three years of the project no LoA was signed, except one agreement with the Water District department in Mzimba for the rehabilitation of a water scheme⁹. During this period the project team decided to have a strategy that was mainly input distribution oriented with a small component of training in contrast to the logical framework and the Project Document.

Figure 5. Expenses by year (with the data arranged to the real lines expenses)



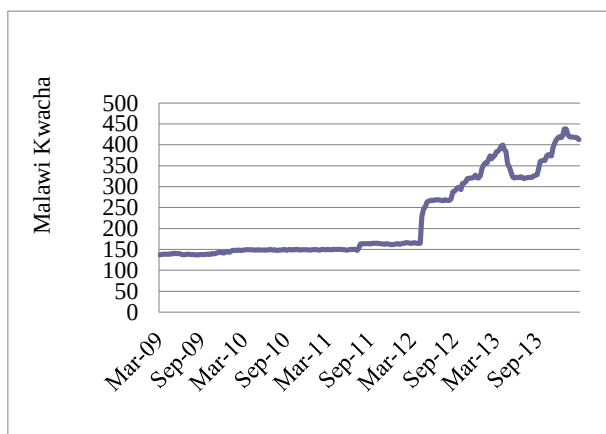
Source: Evaluation team

52. In the second phase, PM tried to change the strategy from input orientation to placing more emphasis on training and capacity development. When analyzing the amounts disbursed (Figure 5), it becomes evident that the project changed its strategy; from 2011 to December 2013 the expenses for inputs decreased from 52 percent in the first phases to 37 percent. In comparison, the expenses for training increased from 9 percent to 13 percent, even though the emphasis on input distribution was still very high. In 2011, 36 percent of the total work plan budget was allocated to “Agricultural inputs for rain-fed beneficiaries”, 31 percent in 2012 and 16 percent in 2013.

⁹ The project management has not been able to provide this LoA to the Evaluation team.

53. There are three explanations for the mismatch between the budget work plan and the actual delivery:

Figure 6. Rate exchange USD/Malawi Kwacha over the years



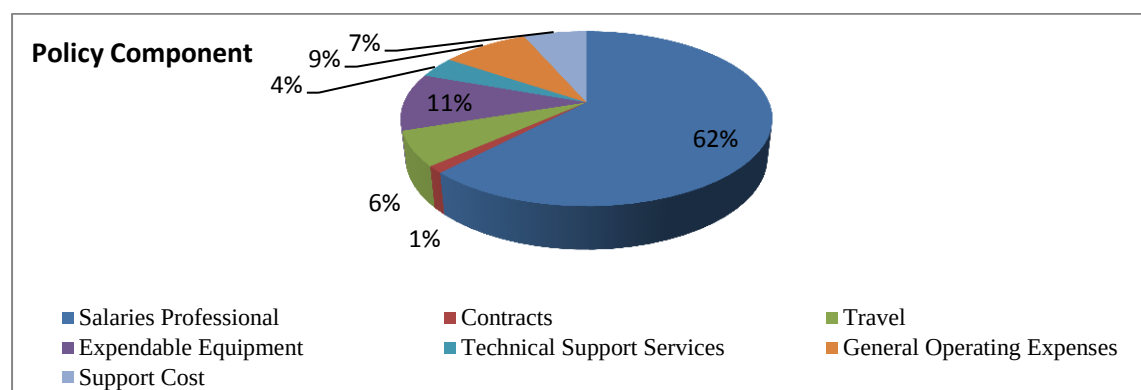
Source: Evaluation team from data of OANDA.com

54. There is and was a gap between planning and implementation, due to lack of monitoring and follow up of work plans, as mentioned before. Starting in June 2011, there was a continuing devaluation of the Malawi Kwacha, triggering a dramatic and steady price surge of agricultural inputs, among other things (see figure 6). Thus PM was not able to provide all the inputs required in the work plans and realized that training was a good tool to reach a bigger number of beneficiaries.

55. In fact during focus group discussions with beneficiaries it was evident that training is considered important for improving food and nutrition security.

56. At the end of 2011, the project had run short of funds because of the price increase which entailed more expenses than planned. The project thus overspent the budget lines, especially the non-expendable line, and disbursement of funds from the donor was delayed due to late application from the side of the project.

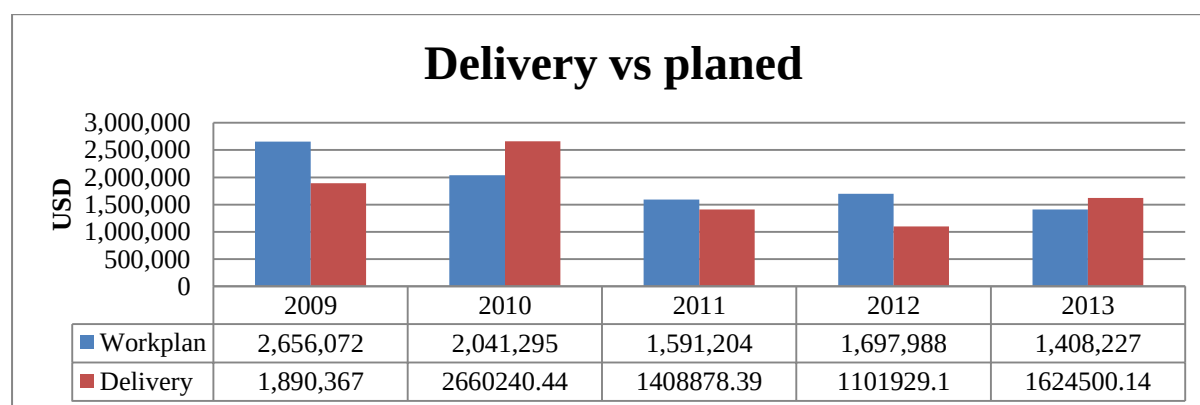
57. The Policy component represented 18 percent of the total initial budget for both phases and this consists of mainly the salary of International Professionals (62 percent of the budget component, see Figure 7). There was no budget provision for trainings or workshops allocated to the policy component, however, both incumbents in post during Phase 1 and 2 respectively, have succeeded in accessing substantial funding from other sources for national nutrition activities, mainly from UNDAF.

Figure 7. Policy component by budgetary lines

Source: Evaluation team

58. In general, the work plans complied with the project documents in terms of percentage allocated for each component but the distribution of the budget within the components was very different. During the first phase of the project, the post of the Nutrition policy advisor was filled by a national consultant (through an international selection and recruitment process which identified the national incumbent as the best qualified for the post). Savings were allocated to trainings and other outreach activities but not in nutrition during the first phase. With the arrival of the International nutrition policy consultant in the second phase the funds for other activities went down.

59. The evaluation team noticed that the project constantly overspent the budget lines (even though they should have had considerable savings from the Nutrition Policy Advisor post). Comparing expenditures with the work plans, the project spent less than stated in these plans (see Figure 8), with the exception of 2010 and 2013. The actual problem of over-expenditures was more concerning the distribution among the different budget lines. To cover those over-expenditures the project had to undergo four budget revisions.

Figure 8. Comparison of work plans elaborated by the project with the actual delivery

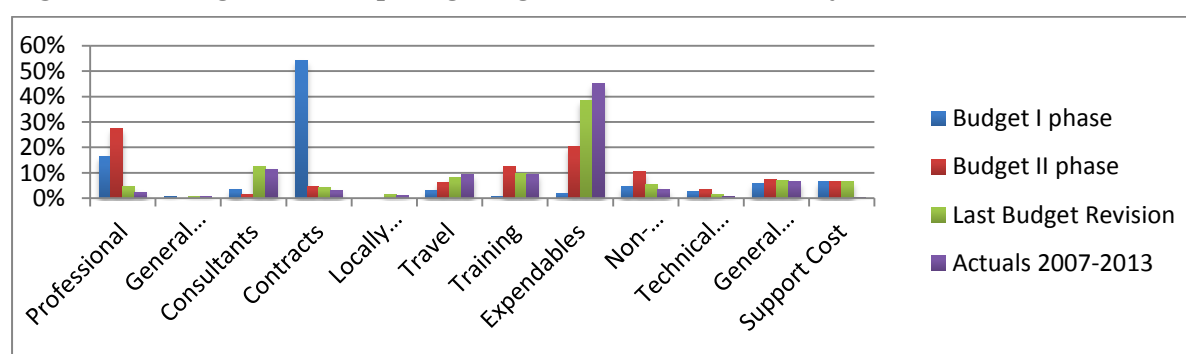
Source: Evaluation team

60. These budget revisions have revealed that the professional salary budget lines disappeared because all members of the project staff were consultants. The expendable line increased eight times, which demonstrates the input oriented strategy of the project, and the training lines ten times. In 2010, the second budget revision showed a 300 percent increase in expendables, which is further proof of the very input-driven direction. In fact this increase means 28 times more spending on inputs than in the original project budget, and an overall

contribution of 51 percent of the total budget. This remarkable increase was possible because the contract line decreased drastically. At this point the project management had decided to opt for direct implementation. The budget lines for training and travel doubled during this period.

61. With the third budget revision in 2011, the professional salaries budget line reappeared. The rest of the lines increased more or less proportionally, but the focus was still on expendables with USD four million out of eleven spent. The following budget revisions were done to cover the constant increase of the expendables, which indicates once more an important focus on inputs (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Budget lines comparing budgets versus actual delivery



Source: Evaluation team

62. At the time of the evaluation¹⁰ the project has expended or has committed 92 percent of the total funds. The 43 percent of the total expenses on expendables necessitates a deeper analysis of this line.

Table 2. Project expenses at 1st April 2014

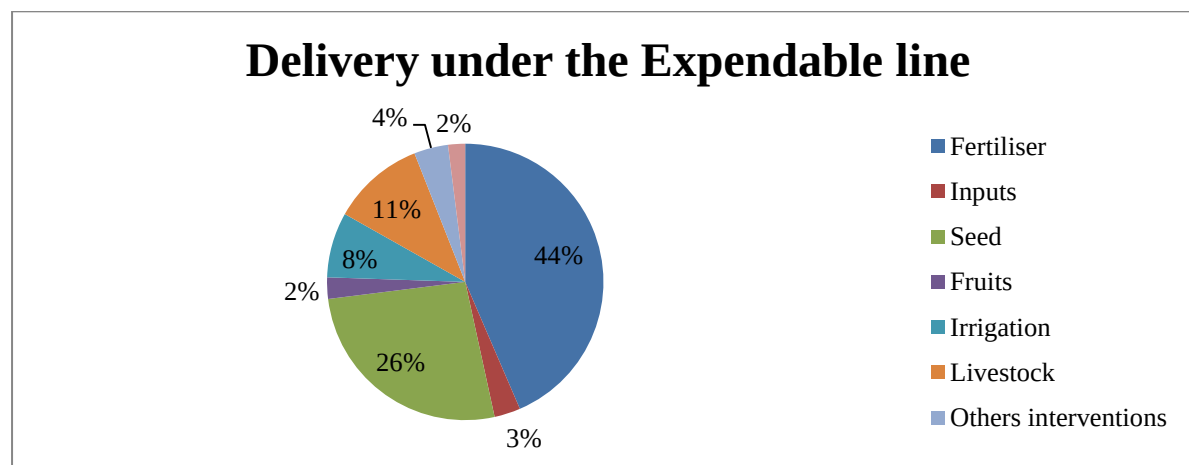
Account	Expenses (US\$)	%
Salaries Professional	404,929	4.00%
Salaries General Service	100,409	1.00%
Consultants	1,258,917	12.40%
Contracts	287,036	2.80%
Locally Contracted Labor	123,740	1.20%
Travel	819,810	8.10%
Training	1,055,859	10.40%
Expendable Procurement	4,430,389	43.50%
Non-Expendable Procurement	334,774	3.30%
Technical Support Services	53,594	0.50%
General Operating Expenses	662,801	6.50%
Support Costs	644,103	6.30%
General Operating Expenses - external common services	749	0.00%
Grand Total	10,177,110	100.00%

Source: Evaluation team

¹⁰ 1st April 2014

63. The figure 10, represents the principal items identified under the line of expendables. Almost two million dollar (USD 1.933.713) was expended in fertilizer and chemicals, 20 percent of the total budget of the project. 26 percent of the inputs went into seed. The seeds were: mainly maize (51percent of the expenditures on seeds), cassava (24percent) and beans (7 percent), soya beans (6 percent), sweet potatoes (5 percent), and the 6 percent left was for vegetables, groundnut and mushrooms.

Figure 10. Delivery under the Expendable line



Source: Evaluation team

4.3 Efficiency and effectiveness of the institutional arrangements including Government's participation

64. This section analyzes the efficiency and effectiveness of institutional arrangements at three levels: at policy and strategic level, at operational level and at technical level. At the end of this section there is an analysis of how the concept of 'Working as One FAO' is perceived through this project.

65. At policy level, both project phases call for the establishment of a Project Steering Committee (PSC), set up at central level, chaired by the Principal Secretary (PS) of the MoAFS or his designated person, and with the Project manager (PM) as its secretary. The PSC should be responsible for overall direction of project activities and provision of policy and strategic guidance. The PSC is a tripartite committee, comprising representatives of the main stakeholders directly involved in project activities. Unfortunately this PSC exists on paper only and never became operational. This structure has not been constituted and it seems to the ET that no effort was made to establish it. The ET tends to conclude that the project may have lacked a multi-stakeholder leadership platform at national level to provide policy guidance and coordination. In addition, the project has not been adequately linked to the ASWAp coordination structure although the project has benefited to some extent from ASWAp coordination structures such as the Sector working group and Technical working groups at which the project has been periodically represented.

66. At the operational level the project was meant to have a Project Management Unit (PMU) headed by a National Project Coordinator (NPC) appointed by Government for overall coordination, oversight and guidance regarding the overall direction of the project. The NPC was to be supported by a Project Manager (PM) and two District Managers (DM) to

be employed by FAO. The NPC, PM, the two District Managers and the project Administration officer/accountant should have together constituted the PMU as the operational arrangement.

67. The NPC should have been responsible for translating the government directives into project actions and ensuring project implementation through the established government structures at the appropriate levels. The role of NPC should be to liaise with government authorities, prepare project work plans, budgets, progress reports and propose modifications to the project design when required. The NPC was changed in reality to two Project Coordinators at district level and the head of the ADD Office in each district. Their roles, however, have remained at district level and they are seen as advisors or supervisors, without real executive power. Therefore, the project has not had any formal actor at national level to assure the role of the NPC.

68. At implementation level, the project is highly regarded for following relevant approaches that are in line with government policy. These include:

69. Multi-disciplinary approach to food and nutrition security – through different interventions Group approach to reaching beneficiaries in line with government extension approach training – enhancement of knowledge and skills at community level and frontline staff, use of Lead farmer concept to reach more farmers and fill the gaps in extension, evidence of participatory planning process at district level though lesser at community level.

70. The PM has the responsibility for coordination and implementation of the project, including day-to-day activities and the supervision and monitoring. He had the responsibility for: (i) planning; (ii) organization and supervision of all backstopping requirements for local and international assistance; (iii) organization and supervision of training programmes; (iv) administration and liaising with the FAO Representation for procurement, contracts and disbursements; (v) technical and managerial support to the service providers implementing the field activities; (vi) technical and financial reporting; and (vii) liaison and cooperation with FAO and other relevant projects and programmes that can support the activities of the project. The project document refers to the PM as responsible for the whole project. However, in practice he only assumes those responsibilities regarding the Outreach component.

71. The Nutrition Policy advisor has worked independently and discharges responsibilities connected to the food security and Nutrition Policy component.

72. All project staff worked under the operational responsibilities of the FAO Representative in Malawi, being the budget holder. The FAO Office in Lilongwe is responsible for the operation and administrative support to the project through the administration unit in the project. It emerged that only in 2008, during the first planning meeting in Kasungu, had staff from the FAO Country Office provided explanation of FAO rules and procedures.

73. A number of concerns from district stakeholders and beneficiaries regarding the randomness of implementation were heard. The ET tends to believe this is true as evidenced by scattered interventions. Targeting and support processes to communities were not uniformly done. It was observed that in many communities there is little integration of project interventions and approaches, inadequate monitoring and review processes to guide project

implementation and enhance project impact. There have been calls among stakeholders for more systematic approaches and implementation towards completeness and sustainability with clear exit strategies.

74. It was evident to the ET that the project heavily relied on grass-root structures for beneficiary targeting and implementation. These have included local leaders and volunteer lead farmers backed up by government agricultural and health (for the nutrition component) extension staff. Although this approach has been seen as more empowering and as enhancing sustainability, there have been challenges linked to inadequate training and uncommitted and poorly trained leaders and lead farmers. These challenges have undermined the effectiveness of beneficiary targeting and completeness of project implementation and the accrued benefits to beneficiaries.

75. The evaluation team observed serious gaps in the operational and administrative support to the project and confirmed some findings from the OIC Audit of 2012:

- The rules of procurement were completely disregarded during the first phase when the procurement committee was situated within the project.
- The contracts of the project staff are not suitable for the project's requirements as they all have a one month mandatory break at the same time.
- The drivers are under a "local labour" contract, which implies not more than a 9 month contract per year.
- The expenses are wrongly charged in the budgetary lines, etc.
- The administrative arrangements have not been efficient and have led to frequent operational delays compromising the timely delivery of project inputs and implementation of project activities.

76. The project has been executed from the start by FAO and implemented through Government (mainly through MoAFS) for the Outreach Component and through Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS, Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) for the Nutrition Policy Component. The implementation through the existing structures has the advantage of allowing appropriation and ownership. However, there are also constraints concerning the efficiency and effectiveness of the activities. The outreach component with a target of more than 50 000 beneficiaries has to be implemented through the Agricultural Extension Development Officers (AEDOs) (frontline extension officers of the ADD) who are not more than 60 for the 12 targeted EPAs. In addition these AEDOs are overwhelmed with similar work from different projects and programmes from different development partners. On the other hand, the government has no intention of reinforcing the extension services because they are trying to shift the strategy to outsourcing those services.

77. The concept of 'Working as One FAO' was launched in 2010, as one of the pillars of the Culture Change Strategy that aimed at supporting the changes brought about by the Immediate Plan of Action. From that perspective this project worked in isolation from the rest of FAO's projects in Malawi. The Lilongwe office did not promote coordination with other projects. The evaluation team observed a missed opportunity as there are experts available in FAO's projects in the country that could have supported some interventions in this project.

78. During implementation, the project has benefited from the assistance of a pool of international and national consultants covering both policy and technical subject matters. The project has been steadily supported by the subsequent Lead Technical Officer (LTO). In the

first phase, from the formulation phase to the end, the Lead Technical Unit (LTU) was South-South and Resource Mobilization Service (TCSF) (first named Special Programmes Coordination and Monitoring Service (TCOS)); also in the first phase the Policy component had the support of the Food and Nutrition Service (AGNP) from HQ, since 2012, Nutrition Division (ESN). By the second year of the second phase the whole LTU responsibility fell under ESN. For the complete duration of the project, the project management relied on an international consultant to backstop the Outreach component and to support the project management. From 2007 to 2014, there were more than 12 backstopping missions, which indicate the high interest in supporting this project. Nevertheless the link between the two components continued to be weak, a steering committee has not been formed and no effective monitoring and evaluation system was put in place. The question, however, remains why recommendations and observations from these missions were not taken up seriously.

79. The project also received assistance from the sub-regional office and from external consultants. The Project Management did not keep records of the missions received or of the resulting reports. The evaluation team needed to conduct an extensive search to find the information. It can be concluded that the project has been strongly supported. According to project staff, the support from the FAO Country Office in Lilongwe was there but could have been much stronger

80. Whilst the positioning of the Nutrition policy advisor in OPC during the first phase of the project has influenced some degree of positive change in the national policies regarding nutrition, support of the outreach component remains limited.

81. After the post of the policy advisor had been vacant for a number of months during the beginning of the second phase, it was decided that the advisor should be based in the FAO country office. According to the organigram provided by FAO, the policy advisor reports directly to the FAO Country Representative and does not report to the programme manager. This positioning further deepened the detachment from the outreach component.

82. In addition, one would think that the policy advisor might have some impact as well on other FAO projects in Malawi. According to the information received during the evaluation field visit, the advisor tried to link with these projects, but without official backing which made it difficult. The policy advisor is not part of the FAO-Lilongwe management team, overall, the position is not clear, and the support to FAO projects underutilized.

83. The position of the FAO Country Representative saw many changes over the total project period. The Country Representative who was present during the formulation of this project might not have provided due attention to the project. This could be attributed to the retirement of the then FAO representative, which left the position vacant for nearly two years. The current FAO Representative has been in office since September 2013. This could have contributed to the above mentioned problems.

5 Analysis of results and contribution to stated objectives

5.1 Achievements at Output level

84. The formulation of outputs is quite similar in phase I and phase II of the project, with the exception of a more serious approach towards nutrition improvement which made the second document identical to the first phase. Most of the examples discussed under this section are based on phase 2 of the project lifecycle.

85. Output 1 Outreach Component: “Building on the existing district planning cycle, a process for participatory planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of community level activities in support of food security and nutrition will be fully functional by the end of year 1 and will have reached out to approximate additional 15 000 food insecure households by the end of year 4 and have provided educational/ training support to 31 500 households and 10 500 school children in all 12 EPAs of the first and the second phase.”

86. All together, the project document reports on 11 different activities under output one. Not all of them will be discussed here and short comments on each of the activities are provided in Annex 6 and Annex 7 of the report. In general the ET feels that in the absence of an effective M&E System it is rather difficult to judge the quality and the extent to which the expected outputs have been achieved. In this sense the evaluation team is unable to provide sound statistics on the number and type of food insecure households reached during both phases of the project, and the type and number of inputs that they received. The same is true for the level of participation of food insecure households in the district planning cycle. A full-fledged household survey may need to be done to assess achievements and results of the project in comparison with the project document targets and the baseline survey results.

87. The participatory planning process, which is part of the activities in phase one and two, has been done systematically in each year at district level but more need to be done at community level. If the project is aiming at empowering communities to carry out these planning exercises, there needs to be more continuity in guiding and training communities to do them on their own. In the communities visited by the ET, the identification of beneficiaries, which should be based on this planning tool, was not always done this way - it varied from systematically looking for vulnerable people to self-identification of the target group.

88. The following section looks only at some of the various micro-projects and activities covering production, livestock, irrigation, nutrition education, junior farmer field schools, irrigation and baseline surveys (1.3 - 1.7). As to the range of micro-projects that have been implemented by the project, the evaluation team has not seen any micro project proposals, which should have been written for each of them, spelling out the objectives, outputs and activities (as indicated under activity 1 under output 2). In the absence of the M&E system and thus the lack of output data (which could normally be provided by such a system), the following section will be based more on the description of activities and processes as gathered from documents and interviews.

5.2 Crop Production (Log frame activity 1.3 – 1.5)

89. The project seems to have put much more emphasis on supporting crop production than on improving household food security and agricultural diversification for dietary diversity. The project provided crop production inputs to farmers through the farmers' clubs in the form of maize seeds and fertilizer primarily and significantly lesser amounts of legumes and planting materials for roots and tuber crops.

90. The evaluation team noted from interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders that the performance of the crops was negatively affected by erratic rainfall especially in 2012/13 season both in Kasungu and Mzimba districts. This led to reduced yield gains by the beneficiaries in this particular cropping season, considering that the support for each group was for one season only. There were also widespread concerns regarding late delivery of inputs to farmers (especially in the first year) for some crops e.g. soya beans, beans, cassava (leading to poor establishment). There were also reports of groups receiving poor quality seeds or planting materials e.g. cassava cuttings. However, the project tried to replace all poor planting materials which were reported.

91. The evaluation team also noted, based on discussions with project participants, that there were variations in the amounts of inputs (fertilizer and maize seed) received by different groups in different years. Although the project may have stipulated amounts per beneficiary (25kg basal dressing fertiliser, 25kg top dressing fertiliser, 5kg maize), there were changes in the amount received per beneficiary in different years and in different groups, with some receiving more and others less. There seems to be 2 reasons for this. One is that the project, having procured fewer inputs in subsequent years, decided to give fewer inputs to fewer beneficiaries than the previous years. It is clear that the beneficiaries were not told the reasons for the change. The other is that at community level, due to more demand for the inputs, some community leaders decided to reduce amounts given to beneficiaries to cover a larger number of households. This emphasises the lack of project implementation manuals, containing all guidelines, that should have been available to everyone including project staff, extension workers and beneficiary groups.

92. There were also challenges in some groups provided with support in undertaking conservation agriculture. Beneficiaries complained that herbicides for CA were not readily available in some rural areas, meaning that farmers had to cover long distances to buy herbicides in Kasungu or Mzimba towns. This, however, was a national problem in Malawi when herbicides were not readily available, especially in rural areas.

5.3 Livestock (Log Frame Activity 1.3 – 1.5)

93. Small-scale livestock (especially goats, pigs and sheep) proved to be a very popular intervention among beneficiaries, since poor households would gain access to livestock from the project and through a pass-on scheme. However, a number of livestock beneficiaries complained that some of the goats (and sheep) received were too small, and it took more time for the animals to reproduce and be passed on to others. In addition the smaller livestock were more vulnerable to mortality due to travel stress and change of environment. Most beneficiaries for goats expressed the need for the project to supply bigger livestock, especially goats, in order to reduce the time needed to wait for offspring. This was not a problem for the beneficiaries of dairy cattle, as they received big cows which were often pregnant already.

94. In all communities visited, beneficiaries expressed their concern that the animals (goats, sheep and pigs) were sourced from distant areas outside the district. Thus they were subjected to long distance travel and change of environment when they reached the beneficiaries. As a result, some animals died soon after delivery due to stress. They all recommended that livestock be sourced from within the area to reduce travel stress, and to ensure that livestock are well suited for the area in order to reduce mortality and enhance gains.

95. Communities reported in general an increased livestock population. Due to project activities they observed that an increasing number of poor farmers now own livestock. One woman, e.g., received 2 pigs, she passed on some to others and now she has 8 pigs of her own. There was also improved access to manure from livestock which is contributing to the improvement in crop production. Some beneficiaries also reported an increase in income from the sale of livestock (goats, pigs) – helping to improve housing and education for children. With improved access to income through sale of livestock some beneficiaries were able to buy fertilizer for crop production, and to address other household needs.

5.4 Irrigation (Log Frame Activity 1.3 – 1.5)

96. Project support to irrigation development was also highly regarded as beneficial to improving crop production, food security and incomes. Those who benefited confirmed seeing gains from irrigation support which has boosted their irrigation activities and outputs. However, the targeting of irrigation beneficiaries was based on land ownership¹¹ in the selected irrigation sites and thus not entirely geared at supporting the most vulnerable households in the communities. In most communities visited, there were concerns that few people benefited from irrigation support such as treadle pumps and gravity fed schemes. Some groups complained that one treadle pump given per group was not enough to serve all group members. In some gravity schemes (e.g. in Luwerezi EPA), communities expressed concerns regarding inadequate funding for irrigation materials such as pipes and cement. This resulted in pipe-length not being sufficient to cover the distance from water intake to the fields, and that feeder canals not being cemented, resulting in water seepage losses.

97. There were also situations where water intake sites and pipes were washed away or destroyed by flooding as a result of heavy rains. In addition, people complained that the project was not providing support for maintenance, thereby affecting the performance of the irrigation sites. This, however, is also a question of training on maintenance as the project cannot be held responsible for maintaining these establishments forever.

98. The ET observed that the district irrigation offices do not have field staff at community level. They rely on agricultural frontline extension staff (who are not trained irrigation technicians) to support communities and implement irrigation activities, which may not deliver efficient results in terms of management and utilisation of irrigation schemes.

5.5 Nutrition Education (Log Frame Activity 1.6)

99. During the first phase of the project, nutrition education was limited. The project did not have any position for a nutritionist and had to rely on an international consultant. The consultant's terms of reference focused on identifying priority nutrition/nutrition education

¹¹ However, sourcing in the project area was difficult as there was a shortage of livestock within the districts.

and training activities for integration into the project's food security program and work plan, developing IEC material, preparing an outline training programme and M & E system, and recommending activities for future technical assistance (3 week mission). This was definitely overambitious and impossible to cover in a 3 week mission, and there was no follow up, which might be due to the fact that the importance of the mission was not recognised.

100. When preparing the second phase of the project, the emphasis on nutrition increased but continued to face challenges. This can be inferred from the project document, which only included the position of a nutritionist for the outreach component in the project for a period of 2 out of 4 years. It is due to the intensive efforts of FAO HQ that this position was filled with a complementary budget from sources external to this project for a longer period, which enabled the nutrition team to work continuously on nutrition education. The team implemented the TIPS (trials of improved practices) followed by wider dissemination of tried and tested nutrition messages and practices, an approach which has been and is being implemented by FAO in different countries (i.e. Afghanistan, East Timor, Zambia, and currently in Cambodia and Malawi) .

101. During the second phase of the project, nutrition education was also implemented through extension staff from the Government. The following table summarizes the training activities at various levels.

Table 3. Training activities at various levels during phase 2 of the project

No.	Indicator	Round 1 (G1 & G2)	Round 2 (G1 & G2)	Total
1	No. Master Trainers (includes SUN Trainers in Round 2)	20	+10	30
2	No. of trained CNFs	400	368	768
3	No. of IYCF frontline staff trained	64	111	175
4	No. of households reached (includes other members)	6,367	3,500	9,867
5	No. of caregivers /child pairs (approx)	4,775	2,625	7,400
7	No. of villages reached	200	175	375

Source: presentation from project nutritionist during TAC Meeting February 2014

102. The project benefitted from the fact that Malawi belongs to the early risers in the SUN (scaling up nutrition) movement which is targeted at stunting reduction. The country has identified main implementing partners for all 28 districts in the country in order to scale up nutrition. This means that nutrition is well supported through the OPC a. The importance of nutrition has increased and is also starting to be recognized in the agricultural sector.

103. It has to be stated that the communities and groups that received nutrition education did not systematically benefit from other inputs. However, it was reported that there was an accidental overlap with the food security activities in approximately 11 percent of the cases.

5.6 Junior Farmer Field Schools (Log Frame Activity 1.6)

104. The project was asked to implement Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) under the nutrition component: “Demonstration gardens established and training on food security and nutrition improvement, improved food processing, preservation, storage and utilization provided to most of the communities in the 12 EPAs. Establishment of vegetable & fruit school gardens supported and JFFLS established at 120 primary schools.” Unfortunately most of the schools visited did not have a vegetable garden or the fruit trees..

105. Primary schools, which were supposed to include the JFFLS’s approach, were selected by a team of Primary School Education Advisors from the “School Health and Nutrition Coordinator”. Only one teacher per school received training from the project. Many of the teachers interviewed by the ET did not know why their school had been selected. According to the project document the project wanted to assist primary schools by integrating a school garden and nutrition education through the JFFLS approach. Specifically 120 schools should have benefitted from a vegetable garden plus fruit tree cultivation and 10,500 school children should have received education on vegetable and fruit tree cultivation plus nutrition education.

106. According to the information received by the evaluation team, in the second phase of the project, only 30 schools had been targeted per year and per district and each facilitator was supposed to train 25 – 30 vulnerable learners. Each school has identified 30 vulnerable children, 15 boys and 15 girls, who were in the majority amongst those children attending school. There seems to be no systematic search for those children who have dropped out of school due to vulnerability. In this sense, the project has targeted only 5,400 children in these primary schools. There was no systematic inclusion of fruit tree cultivation or vegetable gardens at these schools. The main focus was – like in the case of FFS – on maize cultivation and sometimes the schools reported receiving beans or sweet potatoes. The focus on agricultural or dietary diversity was not apparent.

107. In addition it was unclear which aspects of a JFFLS were included in the approach. According to the FAO, JFFLS guidelines, there are many more topics to be covered and the evaluation team came to the conclusion that support to primary schools is not a conclusive JFFLS approach. Last but not least, it has to be mentioned that the curriculum for the JFFLS was not finalized at the time of the evaluation, which means that this component was implemented without any clear concept.

108. The evaluation team observed that the support given to the schools varied tremendously. Even though the team covered only a small fraction of schools, the variation was high. One school for example (Kanthona Primary School in Mkanakhoti EPA) received 40 fruit trees, 10 kg hybrid maize seed plus 4 bags of fertilizer. The school received also 6 guinea fowls from the project, but there was no timely training on housing and animal keeping. Thus 3 of them were killed by predators. In addition to this, they received about 1300 trees plus 189 fruit trees from the Climate Change programme (DFID funding). They also received maize and soya beans for home-grown school meals (HGSM) from the government.

109. In contrast, another primary school (Mtoso Primary School) in Santhe EPA had never received a fruit tree or small livestock, not even a vegetable garden, or any support from other donors. After the training of one of the selected teachers, the school received one delivery of

maize and fertilizers, and some beans for training and establishing a demonstration garden. All the schools received a one-off delivery of note books, pencils, flipcharts and rulers to enable the learners to record activities in the field, for training of the vulnerable children.

5.7 Baseline Survey (Log Frame Activity 1.9)

110. Baseline surveys are essential in order to measure progress and effectiveness of interventions. They are also important for the establishment of an effective M&E system. The baseline done in the first phase of the project consisted of three separate surveys. The project started off with a socio-economic baseline, followed by the nutrition baseline and later on a livestock baseline. It would have been ideal to connect the three studies in order to run a multi-causal analysis of malnutrition and identify key determinants of malnutrition. Unfortunately, this did not happen.

111. At the beginning of the second phase there were again three different baseline surveys done – all in relation to nutrition. The first survey (cross-sectional) was carried out by the IMCF in October 2011 focusing on year one beneficiaries only, for the purpose of segmenting project areas into intervention and control areas and eventually measuring project impact (the impact assessment will be carried out in August 2014) . This survey included only the new EPAs of the project. The second survey carried out by the project was done in February 2012 and allowed a comparison between the new and the old EPAs. A third baseline was done in October 2012 which concentrated again only on new intervention areas. Apart from the fact that this is not very efficient in terms of management of financial and staff resources, there were also serious technical problems related to this duplication of survey work:

112. The two surveys of February and October 2012 (commissioned to a consultant) analysed anthropometrical data, using the software “Anthro 2005” which is based on the reference data from the National Centre for Health Statistics (NCHS), whilst the nutrition baseline survey done by the German research team as well as the Demographic Health Survey (2010) applied the new reference data from WHO which were released in April 2006. Therefore comparison between the studies is impossible.

113. Another indicator which is used to describe dietary adequacy is the Household Dietary Diversity Score (HDDS). First of all it is recommended that the HDDS be assessed about 3 – 4 months after the harvest. For Malawi this means that the assessment should be done in October. The German Research team had chosen adequate timing for the survey. The baseline from the project, done in February 2012, was very late in this sense. In addition, instead of using the 12 food groups, which are recommended by FAO, the consultant used the 6 food groups which are propagated in Malawi and decided to call 1-2 food groups poor, 3-4 groups medium and 5 – 6 groups adequate in terms of diversity. The third survey, done in October 2012 did not apply the diversity score at all.

114. Output 2: District Outreach Capacity: by the end of year 4, the capability of the organizations that are implementing the project will be adequate for delivering a district-wide comprehensive set of services in support of food security and nutrition improvement. Services will be provided through micro-projects and educational/ training programmes that address specific problems in a comprehensive and sustainable way, and that combine investments in assets and capacity building.

115. Under this output the first activity in phase 1 stated that detailed proposals will be developed for each micro project. These proposals, which would have identified clear objectives, outputs and activities and explained the theory of change underlying these micro-projects, have not been developed.

116. The evaluation team has been informed that training materials have been developed and exist at facilitator level, but they have not been made available to them. The same is true for the curricula for FFS and JFFLS, which were still under development during the field visits. Based on the ETs observations, discussions and field visits, the project contributed towards improved knowledge and skills on crop production, irrigation and livestock through training of frontline staff, farmers and lead farmers. Lead farmers have acquired knowledge of better crop management, especially in the current planting of maize and the appropriate application of fertilizer, which leads to improved yields. The outreach capacity was also enhanced through providing motorcycles to EPA staff and bicycles to frontline staff and lead farmers. However, there is no evidence of the project investing in strengthening participatory planning processes at local level to enhance project planning and implementation.

117. Unfortunately, capacity building was not always combined with assets as indicated in the logical framework. Sometimes inputs came first and training later (and sometimes too late); sometimes inputs came not at all, as in the case of nutrition education. This is partly due to the fact that nutrition education is mainly targeted at families with young children and pregnant mothers, and communities did not perceive pregnancy or having small children as vulnerability criteria. Thus these families were mostly not targeted by the agricultural interventions. However, of late, this problem has been recognised and is beginning to be rectified by the project.

118. Output 3: Policy Component: Technical Assistance provided to the Government of Malawi and its development partners to further develop a better focus on food security and agriculture related policies and programmes on contributing to the achievement of nutrition objectives and outcomes.

119. There are four activities identified under the policy component. There is clear evidence that the policy advisor contributed to the formulation and revision of the national policies. However, there was no survey done on the users of this formulated policy advice.

120. In phase I the project contributed to a nationwide nutrition capacity assessment, which was followed by support to national training programmes.

121. Activity 4 in phase II spells out the need to support nutrition education in the outreach component. This is the necessary link between the two components of the project. However, it did not happen to the extent needed.

5.8 Achievements at Outcome level

122. Outcome: “The capability of households strengthened to the extent that they can meet their needs in terms of meeting their food security and dietary requirements”. The indicators identified under this outcome are: (i) knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) related to nutrition and household food security, (ii) increase in household income and (iii) increase in household assets.

123. Despite the fact that a functional M&E system is absent in this project, this question will be answered to the extent possible by the German research project which, measures the effectiveness and impact of the FICA intervention in year 1 project communities. According to preliminary findings and observations nutrition education has contributed to reduced illnesses and improved hygiene at household level. Many caregivers at the household level reportedly have adopted improved feeding practices, increasing the diversity, quality and frequency of meals consumed by young children (6 to 23 months) as well as improving hand-washing behaviours. There are also reports of peer education efforts, i.e mothers passing on knowledge and skills to other mothers, and of communities outside the intervention villages attempting to adopt the new practices. The IMCF research team has indicated during a discussion that there is an increased dietary diversity among children whose parents attended FFS and that there are signs that stunting decreased. However, it is the opinion of the ET that with a more integrated approach of nutrition education and food security interventions, the effect could have been better.

124. For now, based on findings from the field visits, the evaluation team can state that some of the interventions and micro projects have the potential to contribute to the capacity of households to achieve better food and nutrition security. These interventions include the establishment and rehabilitation of irrigation schemes because it is expected that this will lead to more reliable and sustainable yields. The provision of legume seeds and promotion of legume production also has good potential for promoting diversified food security and nutrition and raising household incomes. The livestock pass-on programme (especially for small livestock – goats, sheep, chickens, guinea fowl) has a very high potential to contribute to better food and nutrition security as well as improvement of livelihoods. Last but not least, the establishment of bank accounts or revolving funds worked well for some of the groups, especially in helping to sustain the interventions started by the project and providing financial support for community members to engage in income generating activities through village loan schemes.

125. Unfortunately this is not true of all the interventions and micro-projects carried out. The evaluation team is concerned about the high inputs in HYV maize and fertilizer, which complemented the Government's farm input subsidy programme (FISP) and which served the beneficiaries for only one season and proved unsustainable. In fact, many of the beneficiaries recycled the HYV maize in the subsequent season as seed, even though they knew that they would get a lower yield. In addition, most of the poor farmers were not able to buy the very expensive fertilizers in the subsequent years unless they were given hand-outs or a subsidy. Even though revolving funds were meant to enable farmers to buy these inputs, the focus group discussions with these groups revealed that this did not work to the extent necessary. This means that for many beneficiaries the immediate impact lasted only one season and future sustainability of these benefits is at stake.

126. Some of the interventions could have contributed towards the outcome, provided they follow the approach described in the normative work of FAO. This is especially true for the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS), which were started during the second phase of the project. The concept implies that the project looks systematically for vulnerable children who have in many cases already dropped out of school. In addition, the original idea was to fully involve the community when it comes to life skills training. The current project provided training to just one teacher in the schools covered and identified most of the children from children already attending school. The community members were only partly involved in the process.

127. The Farmer Field Schools, established and supported by the project, have a similar problem. The concept of a FFS implies that farmers will be accompanied for an entire agricultural season with a systematic step-by-step approach to learning by doing. For various reasons, the farmers in this project received support for a very short period. In addition the evaluation team has the impression that the content concentrated on maize production with little or no focus on diversified food production for improved food security and nutrition, as in the case of JFFLS. In addition, it seems the FFS approach is not yet well adopted and implemented through the normal agricultural extension system.

5.9 Gender equality

128. According to the SADC Gender Protocol for Malawi (2013), Malawi has made real progress in gender mainstreaming and equality but still needs to scale up efforts to improve the overall situation. The project document does not spell out gender issues specifically but it mentions that gender will be cross-cutting in all project activities and that woman headed households are amongst the most vulnerable targeted by the project. The project has from the outset mainstreamed gender into project activities as much as possible. The project spelled out the requirement that men and women should be equally represented in the farmer clubs. Participants in the JFFLS were always gender balanced, meaning the schools choose 15 boys and 15 girls to be enrolled in the programme. In general, training of beneficiaries and even the distribution of inputs was close to a 50:50 ratio.

129. As has been pointed out in the evaluation of the three FICA programmes in Malawi (2013), men and women are now working together in the clubs due to the requirement of the project that clubs should comprise of equal members of men and women. This has led to improved gender equality within the communities. However, the evaluation team is not able to state to what extent the project activities have contributed towards the empowerment of women. Unfortunately the evaluation team could not systematically find gender disaggregated statistics for all the interventions. They might exist in various folders but have not been consolidated and aggregated yet.

130. As to the extension staff in the agricultural sector, there are still more men than women. The same is true for nutrition surveillance workers. This issue needs to be addressed by GoM at the time of training and recruitment. In addition there is a need to create working conditions conducive to the participation of women.

131. Nutrition education mainly targets women's groups at community level, although special sessions are also organised for grandmothers and men to participate. Grandmothers are important in terms of influencing nutrition practices at community level, while men may determine family food purchasing decisions and intra-household distribution of food. Knowing that some of the barriers to behaviour change need to be addressed as well, the project tried to involve some of the fathers and village elders in the nutrition education scheme (5 out of 20). This has been done to a small extent and can be seen as a step in the right direction. During the first phase of the project, nutrition education focused on community nutrition issues but the targets in terms of education were mostly women. In the communities visited by the ET, women, being part of the nutrition education groups, felt neglected as there was hardly any input provided to enable them to put the new knowledge into practice.

5.10 Capacity development

132. The project document considered capacity development as a critical element in improving agricultural practice and the management of resources. As the project phases out, the government system and government capacity should be sufficiently built up to preserve continuity of project activities and lessons. Throughout implementation, the project has supported the existing staff of the MoAFS extension services system, as well as health surveillance assistants, nurses and staff from the nutrition rehabilitation centres, which have been trained in various components and technologies of the project. The extension workers have been supported by lead farmers, selected in various communities, who have also been strengthened through training and other support such as bicycles.

133. As to the beneficiaries themselves it is envisaged that farmer training, group mobilization and Farmer Field Schools will enhance capacity, knowledge and skills of farmers to engage in profitable and sustainable agricultural activities. Lead farmers are to take a prominent role in farmer to farmer training and exchange of knowledge and skills. With regards to replication of activities, coordination of activities through the District Executive Committee (DEC) will ensure that lessons learned can be replicated throughout the district. As such, the project will be able to achieve scale through its implementation and institutional framework.”

134. Between January and June 2009, a national nutrition capacity development assessment was conducted with the technical and financial assistance of FAO . The assessment was carried out under the auspices of the Department of Nutrition and HIV and AIDS of the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) and can be attributed to the work of the nutrition policy advisor in the first phase of the project. Its objectives were to: (i) gain a good understanding of current gaps and needs for strengthening institutional capacities in nutrition; (ii) reach consensus among government and development partners on an integrated and well-coordinated framework for nutrition capacity development in Malawi; and (iii) provide a basis for enhancing nutrition actions at all levels in support of the implementation of the Malawian National Nutrition Policy and Strategic Plan (NNPSP).

135. The assessment also confirmed that there were inadequate human resources in nutrition at all levels and across all institutions in Malawi. There is a high vacancy rate and most existing posts in nutrition are occupied by staff with insufficient qualifications or training. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) report a similar problem in their inability to recruit sufficiently qualified or trained personnel. In both government and NGO nutrition programmes, there has been limited training of staff. Personnel have been recruited into nutrition positions without the prerequisite qualifications and experience, and there have not been any attempts up to now to develop a training and capacity development strategy to better prepare the staff for their roles.

136. As a result of this two government officers were supported to obtain a post graduate diploma in food and nutrition security from Wageningen University in the Netherlands. The project also played a leading role in mobilizing resources for MSc. level training, both in the country at Bunda College of Agriculture and outside the country. The result of this activity was that a total of 14 government officers from the DNHA and the Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security, Health, and Gender, Children and Community development were able to start MSc training in 2011. Six of these officers were funded directly through the “One UN Fund” under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Other

donors have also been mobilized to support capacity development in nutrition including USAID and Irish Aid.

137. In this context the project has done a commendable job in providing training to frontline staff as well as to community volunteers in order to bridge some of the gaps mentioned above. FFS, lead farmers and nutrition volunteers play a key role in training and capacity building at community level.

5.11 Human-Rights Based Approach

138. The right to food is a human right. The right to food is not about charity, but about ensuring that all people have the capacity to feed themselves with dignity. The project has the objective of supporting especially vulnerable households to achieve food and nutrition security. It is important to look at the conditions under which the “Right to Food” must be achieved. The three main pillars of the Right to Food are, availability, adequacy and access to food.

139. The Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food (SRRTF)¹² visited Malawi in 2013 and came up with some important findings and remarks which need to be considered by the project in Kasungu and Mzimba. In his report he stated that Malawi already has a set of well-formulated and well-intended policies and strategies to accelerate progress in the realization of the right to adequate food. What is still missing is bringing together the various frameworks to build synergies in implementation, which would be grounded ideally in a policy and in legislation. The Policy Advisor was much involved during the visit of the SRRTF and this issue needs to be further followed up by the project.

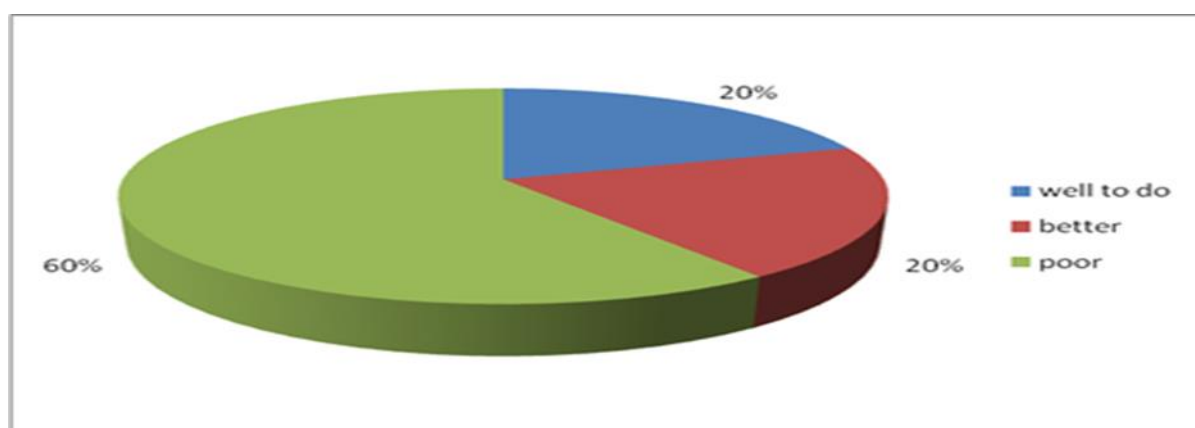
140. The Malawi government is known for the success of the Farm Input Subsidy (FISP) which has led to very good yields. However, even though the program was supposed to target especially the most vulnerable resource poor people there is growing concern that the target group was not fully reached. The current project was also concerned with targeting the most vulnerable households.

141. The project asked Bunda College in 2010 to do a beneficiary assessment as well as the project review. The beneficiary assessment was meant to look at non-participating and participating communities in order to analyse whether the project was able to target the most vulnerable people. In addition this would have provided a good insight into the views of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries concerning project targeting. However, the report lacks information on non-beneficiaries. The beneficiary analysis looked into targeting and found out that 60 percent of the participants were classified as being poor, which is the main target

¹² The report points out that past agricultural and economic policies were putting a lot of emphasis on maize production which has led farmers to gradually depend on a single annual staple for the bulk of their food. This is first of all detrimental to dietary diversity and also puts a lot of pressure on soil fertility. The monoculture of maize, year by year on the same land has led to erosion of soil nutrients which need to be replenished through fertilizer. In addition, the importance of chemical fertilizers has increased as livestock and thus the availability of organic fertilizers have decreased, due to increased population pressure. In conclusion the report points out that Malawi has put food security at the top of its agenda and the ASWAp (September 2011) incorporates the need to diversify Malawi’s agriculture beyond the maize economy, combined with a blue and a brown revolution (water and soil management).

group of the project, whereas 20 percent came from better and 20 percent from well to do households.

Figure 11. Wealth ranking of beneficiary community groups (Source beneficiary assessment)



142. There is growing concern that the rising costs of fertilizers will have an impact on the affordability of inputs for poor households. The current project supported farmers only for one season with the hope that farmers would invest some of the revenue to buy new seeds and fertilizers for the subsequent season. Unfortunately, most of the farmers interviewed during this evaluation reported that they recycled the seed and did not invest in buying fertilizers even though they were advised to do so. This in turn means that for many farmers the availability of maize is guaranteed for one season only. However, there were some positive examples as well and a randomised survey would be needed to assess the percentages in terms of a successful continuation.

143. The report of the Special Rapporteur points out the need for (i) agricultural diversification, (ii) a brown revolution (improving soil fertility), (iii) a blue revolution (improve water conservation), and (iv) the scaling up of agricultural extension services.

144. The project has done some work in promoting agricultural diversification but the ET is convinced that the focus on food diversification at the farm household level could have been much stronger. There is considerable evidence that the project complemented the farm input subsidy programme and was able to reach out to resource poor people (in contrast to the FISP). However, the high concentration on maize and fertilizer has impeded more funding for agricultural diversification.

145. In supporting tree planting initiatives, conservation farming and integrated agriculture (integrating livestock and crop production) and irrigation schemes, the project contributed to the brown and blue revolution. And last but not least, the project supported the agricultural extension system through the capacity building of frontline extension staff (AEDOs and AEDCs), the FFSs and training of lead farmers.

5.12 Partnerships and Alliances

146. FAO is executing this project in partnership with the government, with the exception of the project manager, the two district managers and one nutritionist serving both districts. All project activities are implemented as part of the government system, supporting government staff at district and frontline staff local level. This approach helps in promoting ownership of

the project interventions and building capacity of government staff at local level for sustainability.

147. However this approach also faces a number of challenges. Firstly, the government staff are targets and agents of many different organizations and projects with different interventions and approaches and their full commitment to one project may therefore not be ascertained. Secondly, there is a high vacancy rate for frontline staff for government and this affects effectiveness of project delivery. For example, in Champhira EPA, out of 13 establishments of frontline extension staff, only six are in position which means some sections are without frontline staff and some officers have to take care of vacant areas in addition to their areas thereby compromising on effective delivery.

148. The project needs to expand its partnership arrangement with other organizations and projects working in the area especially NGOs. This will ensure coordination and building on synergies and complementarities. For example, in Mzimba district, the project needs to build closer working arrangements with Rural Infrastructure Development Project (RIDP) and other NGOs such as World Vision who are also promoting irrigation development and livelihood enhancement interventions including using the lead farmer and the group approach.

149. The project established a working partnership with SSLLP (a local NGO which also received funding from FICA) to provide capacity building service to the project on livestock in Kasungu district. SSLLP has been providing the following services to the project:

- Livestock extension services and linking farmers to government extension services for livestock;
- Facilitating access to drugs for livestock groups – providing drug boxes (57 provided in Kasungu) and facilitating formation of drug revolving funds to sustain the activity;
- training extension staff,
- Training community based livestock volunteers (lead farmers) – 150 trained in old EPAs; (7 females); 57 trained in new EPAs (5 females)
- Providing bicycles to community livestock volunteers to support other farmers (57 provided)
- Training farmers with support of lead farmers – 536 trained (246 females and 277 males)
- Facilitating exchange visits for livestock farmer groups
- Training farmers on manure use, integrated agriculture, climate change, gender and HIV/AIDS.

150. This partnership has contributed to promoting livestock development considering that SSLLP specializes in livestock and has expertise and field staff to support project implementation. However SSLLP has faced some challenges which include: (i) poor selection of lead farmers and extension workers: some of them were not committed or available after being trained; (ii) lack of commitment among government staff at local level to support project activities e.g. to follow up on pass-on schemes among beneficiaries; (iii) lack of proper monitoring system for project activities such as the pass-on scheme; (iv) lack of livestock data at district and at EPA level to use in planning; (v) inadequate coordination within the project – leading to farmers sometimes receiving livestock before being trained.

151. For nutrition education, the project worked together with agricultural extension staff and at the same time with frontline staff from the Ministry of Health (health surveillance assistants). In addition the project contributed to and benefited from the SUN movement.

6 Analysis by evaluation criteria

6.1 Relevance

152. As far as the relevance is concerned the project concept and design are highly relevant to country policies, FAO's strategic objectives and priorities. Nutrition, gender health, diversifying agricultural production and adding value to agricultural produce were key topics identified in FAO's Strategic Objective, UNDAF and Malawi Growth and Development Strategy 2011-2016 (MGDSII). Nine key priority areas for interventions were identified in MGDSII. Agriculture and Food Security is the first priority stated. Within this priority the necessity of increasing agricultural productivity, crop and dietary diversification (for domestic use and export), livestock and fisheries, functional agricultural markets and improved national storage facilities are pointed out. It is also meant to build partnerships between all stakeholders. In UDAFF 2012-2016, under output 3.3.1: people living with HIV and OVCs have access to safety nets and livelihood development opportunities (UNICEF, FAO and WFP). "Furthermore, direct support in livestock production will be provided to 7500 vulnerable households". In this context, FAO is directly requested to engage in the provision of livestock for this target group. The evaluation team understood that the project design is quite relevant to the donor development plan in Malawi as the current project is accompanied by the German funded research project which looks into the impact of TIPS to improve infant and young child feeding practices

153. The project outputs address the objectives of the Agricultural Sector Wide Approach (ASWAP) which comprises of three focus areas namely: (i) Food Security and Risk Management; (ii) Commercial Agriculture, Agro-processing and Market Development; and (iii) Sustainable Agricultural Land and Water Management. The Agricultural Sector Wide approach (ASWAp) is the prioritized guiding framework for agricultural interventions and support in Malawi covering the period 2011-2015. The ASWAP is based on priority areas identified in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (2012-2016) in line with the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) of the African Union. The ASWAp is aimed at increasing agricultural productivity (towards achieving a 6 percent annual growth in the agricultural sector), improving food security, diversifying food production to improve nutrition at household level, and increasing agricultural incomes of the rural people. In this context the project is relevant.

154. FAO Malawi in collaboration with the Malawi Government in 2010 prepared the National Medium-Term Priority Framework (NMTPF) to guide FAO operations and support to the Malawi government for the period 2010-2015. Recently (2013) FAO undertook another review of its assistance framework and a new Country Programme Framework (CPF) is being prepared in line with the MGDS2 and the UNDAF.

155. It is clear from the review of documents and consultations with stakeholders that the food security objectives of the project were relevant to the needs of communities and national priorities. At community level, household food security remains the priority focus for most poor households as reflected in the farming systems which are maize dominated. Most households appreciated and expressed demand for support towards improvement of household food security such as benefiting from fertiliser and maize seeds from the project. Apart from fertilisers and maize seeds, most beneficiaries acknowledged the importance of other projects interventions such as legumes, irrigation and livestock as contributing to attainment of household food security and improvement of livelihoods. At national level,

attainment of food security is also prioritised in key national documents such as the MGDS and the ASWAp, as such the project interventions were considered highly even at national level by key stakeholders. However, the question remains whether the many project interventions were implemented in an integrated and systematic manner to achieve intended results rather than being scattered among too many beneficiaries in geographically very diverse and spread out areas.

6.2 Efficiency

156. FAO has committed to provide technical support, operational services; and financial and accounting services. These services have performed with various degrees of efficiency. The following paragraphs illustrate some key processes of varying degrees of efficiency, it is apparent that the work-plan as documented in the FAO project document was “impracticable”. It should be mentioned that the efficiency indicated relates to all project parties; however, the focus is on FAO. The project didn’t succeed in establishing a clear operating procedure for operational, financial and administrative processes. The ET found no realistic work plans, nor reporting or monitoring systems to follow up on emerging issues and/ or delays.

157. In addition the project channelled different interventions through the same extension officers of the Ministry of Agriculture, who were sometimes overwhelmed with the wide range of activities, not only from this project, but also for other projects and organizations. The absence of clear operation manuals, developed together with government and compulsory for all stakeholders, contributed to a less efficient mode of implementation. The evaluation team came across other organizations using the same implementation structure, who reported that extension staff were paid incentives. This has created problems for the current project which is unable to provide top ups, except per diems during training sessions, for government extension staff. This means a lot of motivation work and convincing as the project did not pay incentives but invested instead in training and thus capacity building.

158. The project however, has done some strategic investments in the relevant ministries human resources base by; contributing to building capacities among staff through using the government structures (frontline staff) on the ground, continued training, on-the job trainings, master degrees etc.

159. The support of village clubs is well accepted by the communities and promoted by the national extension system. The ET supports this as being very efficient instead of targeting single vulnerable households. The training of lead farmers (community extension volunteers) and community nutrition facilitators is another positive example of the proper and correct usage of project resources. There is reason to believe that the Government would like to rely on these lead farmers and other community volunteers in the future. The government is currently working with other extension stakeholders to come up with national guidelines on incentives and standards for lead farmers.

160. The project has implemented a wide range of food and nutrition security interventions.. The evaluation team counted about 13 different micro-projects which were implemented through various Ministries and/ or Departments. This demands a very high level of management and coordination. This wide range was not void of problems and the ET feels that the interventions were not prioritised according to the project document. It might have

been more efficient to implement only a few activities more efficiently based on micro-project proposals.

161. The positioning of Policy Advisor in the OPC in the first phase was quite invisible for FAO operations, especially for the outreach component of this project. This contributed to a detachment of the two components of this project. Currently, the policy advisor is based in the FAO Country Office but the role within FAO needs to be clarified and strengthened.

6.3 Effectiveness

162. The evaluation team is doubtful of the degree of effectiveness of the project as there was no clear implementation strategy behind the range of interventions. Project support in terms of material input lasted for only a year but there was supposed to be extension back-up for a long period. Many of the beneficiaries visited during this evaluation claimed that they were not able to consolidate gains and sustain many activities.

163. It is rather obvious that the high inputs in terms of supplies provided have resulted in higher yields for the beneficiaries under rain-fed (in the years of favourable rainfall) and under irrigation farming. The project has also contributed to an increased number of farmers who engage in irrigation farming and who will benefit from the irrigation schemes in the long run. For some farmers, there is a distinctive impact from crop diversification. The IMCF research team will be able to provide some information on this, once they have conducted their impact survey in August 2014 and the analysis has been completed (early to mid 2015).

164. There is still a need to find out to what extent crop diversification has led to dietary diversification. According to the researchers, approx. 11 percent of the round 1 (year one beneficiaries) in the intervention areas receiving nutrition education were provided with some kind of inputs under the food security interventions. This is an accidental overlap and was not strategically planned. In addition, the evaluation team feels that the focus of the project was too much on HYV maize plus fertilizer, which swallowed a huge percentage of the project budget. It remains largely unclear, why the project management decided to increase these inputs again and divert from more agricultural diversification as was originally planned (especially in phase II).

165. Wherever the project rehabilitated or established irrigation schemes, the ultimate effect on food production was evident. The evaluation team, however, cannot say, whether the most vulnerable people of the communities benefitted from these interventions.

166. Income improvement among farming households is an important contributor to improving food security and livelihoods. Results from recent FICA review of the project (table 6) showed higher incomes from crop and livestock sales among project beneficiaries both in Kasungu and Mzimba districts compared to non-beneficiaries which were attributed to project support. The increased income was seen to have a direct bearing on household food security by enhancing access to diversified foods. This was also ascertained from some beneficiaries interviewed during this evaluation process through group discussions in the two districts. This was evident from beneficiaries who received crop inputs in the year when weather conditions were favourable and also among beneficiaries engaged in irrigation and livestock.

Table 4. Average annual income (MK) of respondents from various sources

Income source	category	
	Beneficiaries n=261	Control n=152
Crop sales	114,136	85,081
Livestock sales	22,560	16,390
Other sources	14,420	8,055

Source: *Impact Evaluation of Three FICA-Funded Programmes in Malawi*

167. There was high appreciation of the various training activities which took place at community level. Even more so if training and input delivery were well integrated. However, this was unfortunately not always the case. Some communities received the training only after input delivery which led to inefficient use of these inputs. However, there were some shortcomings in the effectiveness of the project. First of all the setup of the project in terms of administration and management was not very helpful. The complete absence of the Steering Committee and the fact that the project coordinator was not based in Lilongwe but Kasungu contributed to inefficiency and ineffectiveness e.g. in the decision making processes of the project.

168. Another important deficiency is the lack of bilateral coordination and cooperation with some stakeholders in the districts. Even though stakeholders meet at a regular basis in the DEC meetings there seem to be no further bilateral coordination. The project portfolio is for example very similar to the one of the RIDP (financed by the EU) and there would be a tremendous potential to join forces and coordinate across the district – this never happened.

169. The effectiveness of the project could have been increased in cases where training and input delivery was not well coordinated. This has led to some losses of inputs due to improper management, e.g. of livestock or tree seedlings.

170. The nutrition policy advisors have made some strong contributions to the formulation of the National Nutrition Policies and during its current revision process. They have also been present in the various nutrition meetings and increased visibility of FAO in the field of nutrition security. Unfortunately the advisors were not recognized within their own Country Office. Whether these policies and guidelines are effectively applied by various stakeholders cannot be stated due to the absence of such an assessment.

6.4 Sustainability

171. Key to increasing the probability of sustainable outcomes is focusing on building alliances and partnerships with community groups, other projects, NGOs and perhaps government. Whilst alliances have been strong with GoM and community groups, the partnering with other important stakeholders was rather weak.

172. One of the activities initiated by the project and commonly perceived as sustainable has been livestock, especially small-scale livestock such as goats and sheep. The livestock provided by the project has the capacity of multiplying and increasing a beneficiary's asset base and income. Through pass-on, this benefit has the potential to spread with time to more poor community members.

173. The other intervention is irrigation farming. With initial investments in irrigation infrastructure, the groups continue to produce high value crops for food and income taking advantage of available water. The sustained production and increased benefits from irrigation farming open further avenues for communities to engage in value addition and organized marketing to increase their returns. For example, in Champhira EPA, Mswamphira irrigation community has greater ambitions to take forward the irrigation farming gains to improve their livelihoods and community welfare. Some of the community plans include: to contribute money to buy a car to take their crop produce to markets in urban centres; to buy a maize mill for food processing and income generation for the community; to apply for electricity to be brought to the community; and to build a primary school to reduce distance covered by their children to school (>3km).

174. One community in Phazi section (Luwerezi EPA) has established a cooperative (Mujikole Farmers' Cooperative) to take forward some of the promising interventions, and sustain the benefits. Some of the functions of the cooperative include helping farmers to access better markets and sourcing inputs for members. Members pay membership fees to be part of the cooperative and can also buy shares. Especially in Mzimba district, groups have established bank accounts/ revolving funds which are helping some to continue project activities, e.g. buying inputs, livestock medicines and borehole spares. The revolving funds are also turning out to be an opportunity for community based village savings and loans schemes which can help poor community members to access microfinance, to engage in other income generating activities and to enhance their agricultural enterprises. However, for these to bear results, there is need for more training and capacity building so that communities can manage their revolving funds, loan schemes and cooperatives effectively and systematically.

175. The project support in promoting reforestation at community level by providing tree seedlings and environmental education has the potential to enhance environmental sustainability. For example some communities in irrigation schemes are planting trees along the riverbanks to protect the water sources and are planting trees in catchment areas to protect their irrigation scheme from flooding and siltation. Other groups are working to establish a village forest area to protect their catchment and also to generate other benefits such as wood and poles.

176. By and large, most communities look at the training and capacity building interventions of the project as leaving sustainable impacts on their livelihood activities. This is achieved through the training received, the establishment of groups and strengthening of group cohesion and continuing beneficial roles of lead farmers in their communities. Communities feel more empowered to work together and forge ahead in their agricultural enterprises for the benefit of their individual members and the community as a whole. The project needs to invest more effort in strengthening the community groups into organized groups with clear visions and systematic governance structures so that they can continue thriving beyond the project support.

177. Whilst it was mentioned above that the nutrition education approach had some very positive effects in terms of knowledge and increased demand for food diversity, there were some considerations in terms of the sustainability of this approach. After the first round with the selected groups the project team tried to enrol new groups into the programme. This was apparently very difficult as people realized that the training provided only a certificate, with no other incentive to participate. This problem could have been dealt with by providing seeds or small livestock to the groups, which would in turn have enabled them to practice what they

have learnt and to be part of a pass on scheme (in terms of knowledge and inputs). This would also have contributed to more gender equality and empowerment of women in these communities.

178. In this line, the evaluation team realized that the Community Nutrition Volunteers (CNV) will need a lot of motivation to carry out their duties in the long run. The CNVs would like to have a uniform to be easily recognized by the community. In addition they reported that volunteers for other implementing agencies receive some financial incentives. Thus it may be unlikely that these volunteers will continue with nutrition education after the phasing out of this project unless they are connected to the SUN activities that are being rolled out in all districts in Malawi. In this context it is noteworthy to recommend FAO for the training material in nutrition education which will be adopted by SUN to be rolled out nationwide.

179. The project has not yet developed a comprehensive exit strategy. At the community level people did not know from the outset that support will last for only one year and people are still hoping that the project will come back with more assistance.

6.5 Impact

180. The evaluation team believes that some activities will have positive and long lasting impact on the livelihoods of people. There is definitely some improved income from the livestock pass-on programmes as well as from improved irrigation schemes. Some communities have developed their own ideas on how to proceed with all the progress they have made due to the project. This is mainly related to the activities that have the potential to lead to some sustainable changes.

181. Many of the communities visited reported that the pass on programmes especially contributed to more collaboration and social inclusion in the communities. This process can be explained by the fact that pass-on usually happened from one group to another and that all these groups have been formed using certain inclusion criteria like vulnerability, gender equality and age ranges. This is a very important impact of this project.

182. The ET learnt during interviews with stakeholders that there was some resistance concerning the nutrition component in the beginning of the project. During the second phase of the project this has changed and nutrition education has contributed to an increased awareness of the importance of a good dietary diversity and the need for good family and young child feeding. In return this has created the demand for a higher agricultural diversity which was unfortunately not supported by the project to the extent necessary. In this context, the SUN movement was and is helpful in advancing and creating support for nutrition at national and field levels.

183. The development of food based nutrition education material has been highly recognized in Malawi. Material on good complementary feeding has been developed for extension staff (Facilitator's Guide) and mothers (mother's booklet) in English, Chichewa and Tumbuka. A recipe booklet in all languages is also in use and is currently being printed for wider circulation. There are indications that the SUN initiative would like to adopt the material that has been developed by the project to disseminate it throughout Malawi. According to UNICEF they would like to complement the material with some more health and sanitation related messages but the core would be the material developed by the project.

184. The impact on the nutritional status and the reduction of stunting among children is currently being studied by the German research team. The end-line survey will be carried out in August 2014 and will provide some of the data needed. The evaluation team is convinced that the impact on the reduction in child malnutrition could have been stronger, if nutrition education had been more effectively integrated and delivered together with measures to increase agricultural diversity. This has serious implications for similar programmes in the future.

7 Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

According to the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Malawi as a whole has concentrated too much on maize production which caused farmers to rely increasingly on mono cropping. The outreach component of the project should have focused much more on agricultural diversification. This is a prerequisite for the required dietary diversity, which is an important part of food security and soil fertility. Malawi has put food security high on the agenda of the Agricultural Sector Wide Approach (ASWAs) (2011) which also incorporates the need to diversify Malawi's agriculture beyond the maize economy.

185. The project has a strong partnership with the government, which helps promote ownership of project interventions. The project needs to expand its partnership arrangement with other organisations working in the area, especially Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other projects to ensure that interventions are implemented in a coordinated manner to allow building synergies and complementarities.

186. The project is in line with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, in which agriculture and food security is identified as one of nine key priority areas. This priority area is further elaborated in the Agricultural Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp), which is comprised of three focus areas (i) food security and risk management, (ii) commercial agriculture, agro-processing and market development and (iii) sustainable agricultural land and water management.

187. The project contributed to the first cluster under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2008-2011 which aimed at equitable economic growth and food security, and the third cluster, which included social development relating to health and nutrition, water, sanitation and education. The same is true for the second UNDAF (2012-2016) wherein the first cluster remained basically the same. However, the main focus on nutrition was moved to output three with focus on mothers and children below five years of age. The project contributed especially in the second phase to the objectives of the second cluster as well as to Malawi's SUN initiative.

188. The project worked efficiently in implementing interventions through existing government structures. The establishment and/ or strengthening of village clubs were well appreciated by communities and are part of the national extension system. The training of lead farmers is helping to fill gaps in the extension system due to many vacancies.

189. The project implemented a wide range of interventions but the implementation strategy and the theory of change underlying these interventions was not always clear. Likewise targeting of interventions varied from location to location and there was no guideline for standardized targeting.

190. The placement of key project staff, especially the project manager led to a detachment of the outreach component from the national level. Thus the different components of the project (policy advice and outreach) at times operated independently.

191. Only three baseline surveys, which are essential for measuring project outputs and impact, were carried out in both phases. These surveys were not devoid of technical problems.

192. In general, many of the activities were not implemented according to the original project document which underlines that work plans were not prepared with reference to it. This is very obvious in terms of nutrition education and the JFFLS approach.

193. The performance of crop production was sometimes compromised either by erratic rainfall, late delivery of inputs to farmers and/ or poor quality planting material. The evaluation team noted that there was considerable variation in the amounts of inputs received by different farmers in different years. The livestock pass-on programme proved to be very popular amongst the target group especially small livestock. However, sometimes the animals were passed-on when still too small or in poor condition which slowed down the progress of the pass-on programme.

194. The nutrition policy advisors made some strong contributions to the formulation of the National Nutrition Policies. Their presence in the various meetings increased the visibility of FAO in the field of food and nutrition security.

195. Some of the interventions in the outreach component have been effective in addressing food insecurity; amongst those are the livestock pass-on program, irrigation and most likely nutrition education. The effectiveness of maize and fertilizer input had a short term effect on yields in the respective season but was not sustainably effective. Another obstacle towards effectiveness was the fact that inputs were not always coordinated with relevant training, which has led to losses (esp. livestock and tree seedlings).

196. It is the opinion of the evaluation team that livestock pass-on and irrigation schemes have the greatest potential to serve the beneficiaries in the long run. In addition many groups have successfully established bank accounts or revolving funds but may occasionally require more training to manage them especially in the long run. By and large, communities see the training and capacity building interventions of the project as having sustainable impacts on their livelihoods. The nutrition education has some very positive effects on increased knowledge and in turn generates increased demand for agricultural diversity. However, it seems to be more difficult to enrol more groups after they have realised that in some cases the only incentive to participate in the nutrition education group was the certificate devoid of any inputs.

197. The development of food-based nutrition education material has been highly recognised in Malawi. There are indications that the SUN initiative would like to adopt the material to be disseminated throughout Malawi. The impact of the project on the nutritional status of the population will partly be assessed by the end-line survey of the German research team which will be carried out in October 2014.

198. The evaluation team is critical of the high input orientation especially in terms of HYV maize and fertilizer. The evaluation team is convinced that this has partially undermined the objective of increasing agricultural diversity in the project area.

7.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1. To FAO.

A Different project structure is needed to overcome the lack of communication and coordination observed by the evaluation team between management, policy and outreach components. A proposed solution is:

Project manager might be based in Lilongwe, most likely at the FAO Country office. This way the project manager is able to liaise with the two country assistant representatives for programme and administration, with different line ministries at national level, the two agricultural divisional offices, the two district agricultural offices, as well with the policy advisor of the project.

Recommendation 2. To FAO.

There is an urgent need to establish the Steering Committee to provide guidance and advice to the project management. This Steering Committee, (being composed of members from different stakeholders including Ministries), will support the project and will ensure the take up of successful project activities and lessons learnt. The Steering Committee would also be responsible for periodically reviewing project performance and providing operational advice when needed. This steering committee could be linked to or drawn from ASWAP Technical Working Groups.

Recommendation 3. To FAO.

Establish effective M&E capacity and processes to guide project implementation and enhance learning. The project should engage an M&E expert for the remaining months to work with and maybe adapt the existing M&E framework. In a first step, the expert should try to enter existing data into the existing framework to test its applicability so far. A second step should be to design a report outline which includes formats of tables for monitoring of project data.

Recommendation 4. To PTF

Streamline project interventions to fewer, manageable ones, moving towards integration based on nutrition objectives, strengthening group approach and based around value chain development approach.

Promising interventions include small-scale livestock, irrigation farming, skills development, value addition & marketing support and last but not least nutrition education which will help to translate agricultural diversity and improvement into an enhanced dietary diversity.

In choosing interventions for future projects it is important to write up the micro-projects into technical proposals with guidelines which will define the objectives and analyze all interventions concerning their capacity to contribute to sustainable improvement of food and nutrition security. This will help to streamline project interventions to be few and manageable

for each micro project there should be an adaptable implementation guideline, which should ideally be developed with the government of Malawi and be based on policy guidelines. Those guidelines should include some advice on targeting and M&E so that the whole nation can build up a common strategy and monitoring system. These guidelines should be used by all stakeholders in the country. In this sense they would contribute to harmonized targeting, implementation and training curricula.

Recommendation 5. To FAO

FAO should advise the government on the revision and update of school programmes and curricula. For future nutrition education projects it is of utmost importance to link the contents of education to realities on the ground. Education in dietary diversity should always go hand in hand with an investigation of which inputs would be needed to put knowledge into practice. In the case of the present project, vegetable gardens and small livestock provided to beneficiaries of nutrition education could have made a great difference. However, these efforts require substantial inputs and need to be planned accordingly. They could constitute a separate project

Recommendation 6. To PTF

An overall organogram of the project should be produced, including the Steering Committee, the FAO Country office, the Regional Office and HQ. This includes a clarification on responsibilities and reporting mechanisms of each component of the organogram so that recommendations of backstopping missions will be effectively taken up by the project and not constantly neglected as in the case of the current project.

Strengthen collaboration with other organizations and stakeholders in the districts in order to complement those areas that are not being served by the comparative advantage of FAO. The project should establish more effective collaboration with organizations and projects which are promoting irrigation (e.g. RIDP), market development and farmer group strengthening (e.g. National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM) and Farmer Union in Malawi (FUM).

7.3 Way forward

199. During the remaining months of the project, the team should try to strengthen the existing groups and discuss strategies for moving forward sustainably. It has to be explained that the direct support from the project will be terminated at the end of this phase but that knowledge transfer and capacity building will remain in the area. At the same time they need to be encouraged to carry on with some of the successful programmes like livestock pass-on. The project should assist in linking these groups to promising markets. Because the lifespan of the current project is rather short, the project should try to link with organizations like NASFAM and FUM which are very active in strengthening farmer groups, value chain development and linking farmers to markets.

200. The project team could do a final round of participatory reviews and planning with the communities, which is supposed to feed into the next district planning cycle. This has to be done to identify promising interventions and demonstrate that successful processes must go on even without FICA & FAO.

201. Last but not least the project team, in collaboration with Government should prepare implementation guidelines for the most promising activities that can be taken to scale, which would include guidance on targeting, training, M&E and relevant exit strategies. These guidelines should point out the potential of each of the interventions and micro projects to lead to improved food and nutrition security. Towards the end of the current project, all relevant stakeholders should carry out a review of lessons learned from project activities, looking at outputs which by then can be hopefully based on consolidated M & E data.

202. If collaboration between the Flemish Government and FAO were to continue, it should not be as phase 3 of this particular project. The evaluation team is convinced that this would lead to business as usual by just including the remaining EPAs in the project. In the remaining period and in follow-up project more focus needs to be put on strengthening the established farmer groups into viable and sustainable groups with clear vision and strategy, embedding the right to food and value chain and market development approaches. The project should also look at how to assist some groups in developing market strategies linking farmers to markets for sustainable enterprises.

203. A new project, which takes the findings of this evaluation into consideration, would first of all have project proposals for the micro projects, which would then be well tailored to the communities with the vision of sustainably improving food and nutrition security. The nutrition education component which is essential to ensure that improved and more

diversified food production translates into improved diets, needs to be well integrated into such a project approach. It would be left with the GoM and relevant stakeholders to decide where such a project should be implemented.

Annexe 1. Terms of Reference

1. Background of the Project

1. At the end of 2007, the Flemish Government approved funding to implement the project “Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach” (GDGP/MLW/001/FLA) in Kasungu and Mzimba districts of Malawi with a budget of € 4.1 million for the period 2008 – 2011. The project aimed at improving food and nutrition security through the provision of policy advice at national level, and the implementation of outreach activities targeted at vulnerable households. A project midterm review was carried out in the first half of 2010, reviewing the progress of the programme and giving recommendations for the future. Following a Government request, the Flemish Government approved a second phase to expand into new areas of Kasungu and Mzimba.

2. Based on the achievements obtained and lessons learned during the first phase, the second phase of the project has continued to provide food and nutrition security policy advice at national level. Project activities have been expanded from six Extension Planning Areas (EPAs) in Kasungu and Mzimba districts to an additional new six EPAs, three in each district. The focus of the outreach activities has shifted towards providing more education/training support to the targeted vulnerable households in order to increase the sustainability of the achieved production increases as result of the materials and inputs provided. Special attention has been given to translating nutrition policies into field level actions through the implementation of intensive nutrition education in the new targeted EPAs of the project.

3. The second phase of the project started directly after the completion of the first phase in April 2011 and will terminate in March 2015. Most outreach activities are scheduled to be implemented during the first three years of the second phase and will be concluded at the end of the 2013/14 agricultural season. The last year of the second phase, April 2014 to March 2015, will focus on consolidating activities and results achieved and handing over to the respective District Agricultural Offices. The total budget of the second phase is Euro 4.1 million, equivalent to USD 5 350 013. The remaining budget as of January 2014 is USD 1.3 million.

1.1 *The project impact is:*

4. The project will contribute through policy and programme advisory services to achievement of the Government’s development goals in terms of improving the food security and nutrition situation of the Malawian population at large and more directly through direct grass-roots interventions to the improvement of the situation of an additional 15 000 food insecure households in the targeted new EPAs in Mzimba and Kasungu Districts on an economically and environmentally sustainable basis. The project will have provided educational/training support to 31 500 households and 10 500 school children in all 12 EPAs of the first and second phases of the project.

5. **Outcome:** the above impact was to be achieved through delivery of the following outcome: the capability of target households will be strengthened to the extent that they can meet their needs in terms of food security and nutrition by the end of the project life. the above outcome was to be achieved through delivery of three outputs as described in section 3.3 of these ToR. The three outputs to be delivered are:

- building on the existing district planning cycle, a process for participatory planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of community level activities in support of food security and nutrition will be fully functional by the end of year one in the new targeted 6 EPAs and will have reached out to approximate additional 15 000 food insecure households by the end of year four and have provided educational/training

support to 31 500 households and 10 500 school children in all 12 EPAs of the first and second phase of the project.

- by the end of year four, the capability of the organizations that are implementing the project will be adequate for delivering district-wide a comprehensive set of service in support of food security and nutrition improvement. Services will be provided through micro-projects and educational/training programmes that address specific problems in a comprehensive and sustainable way and that combine investments in assets and capacity building.
- technical assistance will have been provided to the Government of Malawi and its development partners to further develop a better focus food security and agriculture related policies and programmes on contributing to the achievement of nutrition objectives and outcomes.

2. Purpose of the Evaluation

6. This evaluation is a mid-term evaluation. Its main purpose is to review progress made to date in achieving project outputs that contribute to the expected project outcome of improved household food security and nutrition at household level in the project areas, and to ensure accountability to the donor, the Government and project participants.

3. Evaluation framework

3.1 Scope

7. The time frame covered by the mid-term evaluation is from the project's design phase through Phase 1 and Phase 2 up to the start of the evaluation (January/February 2014). The geographical scope for food and nutrition security policy related activities will focus on the national level while the outreach component will evaluate activities and outputs in the target EPAs in Kasungu and Mzimba districts during both project phases.

8. Regarding nutrition, the project partnered with another FAO project, "Improving the dietary intakes and nutritional status of infants and young children through improved food security and complementary feeding" (IMCF) (GCP/INT/108/GER). The purpose of IMCF is to carry out research on the nutrition-agriculture linkages and evaluate the project's impact on household nutrition practices, dietary diversity and nutritional outcomes using robust methods to measure impact, focusing on clinical and biochemical assessment of nutritional deficiencies and anthropometry. The IMCF project, which is funded by the German Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection (BMELV) has also assisted with funding and technical support in the development of nutrition education materials and outreach activities from 2011 to 2013.

3.2 Evaluation criteria

9. The project will be critically assessed through the internationally accepted evaluation criteria, namely: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. In line with the new FAO project cycle, the evaluation will assess compliance with the following UN Common Country Programming Principles:

- Human Rights Based Approaches (HRBA)/ Right to Food/ Decent Work;
- Gender equality;
- Environmental sustainability;

- Capacity Development; and
- Results Based Management.

3.3 *Evaluation issues*

Relevance of concept and design

- a. Project relevance to:
 - national development priorities, policies and programmes, needs of the population in Kasungu and Mzimba districts;
 - UN Joint programming and multi-sectoral collaboration at national and district levels; FAO Country Programming Framework;
 - FAO global goals and Strategic Objectives/Core Functions; other support programmes in the sector;
 - Project design: its adequacy for the country social, financial and political environment as well as the human and financial resources approved to the project.
- b. Robustness and realism of the theory of change underpinning the project;
- c. Clarity, coherence and realism of the Logical Framework¹³ of the project (see Annex 2) and of its design, including:
 - the causal relationship between inputs, activities, outputs, expected outcomes and impact
 - validity of indicators, assumptions and risks
 - approach and methodology
 - the link between the components: outreach, capacity building and policy
 - resources (human and financial) and duration
 - stakeholder and beneficiary identification and analysis
 - institutional set up and management arrangements.

Effectiveness of outputs and outcomes

- d. Overall effectiveness of the project (actual or potential) in attaining its intermediate and/or specific objectives. Description and analysis of the outputs produced, in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness; Key outputs include:
 - food security and nutrition participatory planning cycle of community level activities formed and functional
 - Number and type of food insecure households reached (e.g. disaggregate by different socio-economic groups, gender balance, etc.)
 - Proportion of the project and district budget allocated to direct outreach to food insecure households and communities
 - Level of participation of food insecure households in the district planning cycle (e.g. use ladders of participation)
 - Assess if the project activities were effective in targeting the intended beneficiaries, in improving the food security and nutrition situation of the

¹³ The Logical Framework embodies the Results-Based Management approach in a project

intended beneficiaries as well as within the broader community (viz. effectiveness of pass on programs and sharing knowledge and skills) and why;

- capability of the organizations that are implementing the project established and strengthened
 - Capacity development of the community and link to formation of farmer groups can be verified.
 - Quality and timeliness of project work plans
 - Technical and managerial capacity of district and sub-district staff in the diverse disciplines covered in the project
 - Economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity of service delivery through the district and sub-district service providers
 - Technical assistance to the Government of Malawi and its development partners developed and relevant policies formulated
 - Nutrition objectives, considerations and components integrated in the agricultural development programme, ASWAp, and other food security and agriculture related policies, programmes and projects.
 - Effective budget allocation and expenditures on nutrition related activities. Assess the effectiveness of the nutrition/food security policy work in terms of integration of nutrition into agriculture and other policy frameworks and resource mobilisation;
- e. Use made by the project of FAO's normative and knowledge products and actual and potential contribution of the project to the normative and knowledge function of the Organization. Achievements and gaps in project execution: taking into consideration time frame, government administration structure, availability of national partners and communication facilities in the rural areas.

10. Description and analysis of the outcomes achieved, expected and unexpected, their robustness and expectations for further uptake and diffusion.

Efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation process

11. The evaluation team will assess how the project was implemented, including overall efficiency of delivery and management of available resources. Any major issue that affected implementation should be mentioned here.

- f. Assessment of project management:
 - Quality, realism and focus of work plans;
 - Assessment of delivery, causes and consequences of delays and of any remedial measure taken, if any;
 - Monitoring and feed-back loop into improved management and operations;
 - Staff management;
 - Development and implementation of an exit strategy;
- g. Institutional Setup:
 - Administrative and technical support by FAO HQ, regional, sub-regional and country office, as appropriate;

- Institutional set-up, internal review processes, coordination and steering bodies;
- Inputs and support by the Government/s and resource partner/s.
- h. Assessment of financial resources management, including:
 - Adequacy and realism of budget allocations to achieve intended results;
 - Adequacy and realism of Budget Revisions in matching implementation needs and project objectives;
 - Rate of delivery and budget balance at the time of the evaluation and in relation to work-plans.

Analysis of the application of the UN common country programming principles, cross-cutting themes, and of the Humanitarian Principles and Minimum Standards in the case of emergency projects.

- i. Analysis of gender mainstreaming for gender equality. This will include:
 - extent to which gender equality considerations were reflected in project objectives and design to address the needs, priorities and constraints of both women and men, and in the identification of beneficiaries;
 - extent to which gender equality considerations were taken into account in project implementation and management;
 - extent to which gender relations and equality have been or will be affected by the project.¹⁴
- j. Analysis of the Capacity Development dimension in the design, implementation and results of the project, at individual, organizational and enabling environment levels.¹⁵ This will include: CD on both technical and soft-skills, i.e. planning, budgeting, partnering and negotiating.
- k. Analysis of the adoption of the Human-Rights Based Approach, namely:
 - the integration of the Right to Food dimension and principles, in the design, implementation and results of the project;
 - the integration of decent rural employment concerns in the design, implementation and results of the project.
- l. Analysis of Partnerships and Alliances, namely:
 - how they were planned in the project design and developed through implementation;
 - their focus and strength; and
 - their effect on project results and sustainability.¹⁶
- m. Analysis of how environmental impacts were taken into consideration and addressed, following the steps and criteria contained in the FAO Environmental Impact Assessment guidelines.

Impact

¹⁴ See: http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/gender/docs/FAO_FinalGender_Policy_2012.pdf
¹⁵ See: <http://www.fao.org/capacitydevelopment/en/>
¹⁶ See: <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/partners-home/en/>

- n. Overall impact of the project, actual or potential, positive and negative, produced directly or indirectly, intended or unintended; and
- o. Overall contribution of the project to FAO Country Programming Frameworks, Organizational Result/s and Strategic Objectives, as well as to the implementation of the corporate Core Functions.

Sustainability

- p. The prospects for sustaining and up-scaling the project's results by the beneficiaries and the host institutions after the termination of the project. The assessment of sustainability will include, as appropriate:
 - Institutional, technical, social and economic sustainability of proposed technologies, innovations and/or processes;
 - Expectation of institutional uptake and mainstreaming of the newly acquired capacities, or diffusion beyond the beneficiaries or the project; and
 - Environmental sustainability: the project's contribution to sustainable natural resource management, in terms of maintenance and/or regeneration of the natural resource base. In this context the evaluation will explore whether:
 - target groups are able to continue to have improved food and nutrition security after the end of the project; b) extension workers are able to deliver improved services; and c) lessons are institutionalized within local systems (government, non-government and/or community).
 - identify good practices and share lessons that can be of interest in policy and program formulation at national level and for further expansion/up scaling; Verification of the adoption of good practices into the implementation of the National Nutrition Strategy by OPC and MLGRD.
 - examine the extent to which food security and nutrition education interventions were integrated and the factors contributing to or hampering such integration;
 - identify challenges and constraints to be addressed in the remaining project period,
 - give recommendations for an exit strategy and consolidation of project outputs towards achieving the outcome of increased food security and nutrition at household level as a basis for future expansion.
12. Based on the above analysis, the evaluation will draw specific conclusions and formulate recommendations for any necessary further action by Government, FAO and/or other parties to ensure sustainable development, including any need for follow-up or up-scaling action.
13. The evaluation will draw attention to specific good practices and lessons to be learned as they are of interest to other similar activities. Any proposal for further assistance should include specification of major objectives and outputs and indicative inputs required

4. Evaluation methodology

4.1 Approach and tools

14. The evaluation will adhere to the UNEG Norms & Standards¹⁷.
15. The evaluation will adopt a consultative and transparent approach with internal and external stakeholders throughout the evaluation process. Triangulation of evidence and information gathered will underpin its validation and analysis and will support conclusions and recommendations.
16. The evaluation will make use of the following methods and tools: review of existing reports, semi-structured interviews with key informants, stakeholders and participants, supported by check lists and/or interview protocols; direct observation during field visits; surveys and questionnaires.
17. Particular attention will be devoted to ensure that women and other under-privileged groups will be consulted in adequate manner. Insofar as possible and appropriate, interaction will also take place with non-participants to canvass their opinions. The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework;¹⁸ the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) framework can be used for assessment of project results.¹⁹
18. The methodology for data collection, the data and results obtained from the impact evaluation carried out by the Flanders International Cooperation Agency (FICA) in September/October 2013, of its main agricultural support programs in Malawi, includes a partial evaluation of the current project “Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies” in Kasungu and Mzimba districts (see draft report *(Draft Impact Evaluation of Three FICA-funded Programmes in Malawi, November 2013)*, should be considered in the preparation and implementation of this mid-term evaluation to avoid duplication and provide complementary information for a better understanding of the effects of project interventions and to inform its future Country Strategy paper,

4.2 Stakeholders and consultation process

19. The evaluation team will discuss in detail with the key stakeholders of the project and will take into account their perspectives and opinions. Key stakeholders will include:
 - FAO divisions with which the project has partnered, namely; ESN, former member of TCSF and consultant responsible for the formulation of the project;
 - current and former Nutrition/Food Security Policy Adviser;
 - Project Task Force members;
 - Government representatives from Ministries of Agriculture and Food Security; Ministry of Health, Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS, OPC; district ministerial staff in Kasungu and Mzimba districts;
 - FAO Representative in Malawi;
 - the resource partner;
 - other partners, UN agencies, NGOs, representatives of civil society, research partners (JLU Giessen, Bunda College);
 - Participants in the communities, including health and agricultural extension agents, community volunteers, farmers, beneficiary families, processors, women’s groups, service providers, private sector, etc.

¹⁷ United Nations Evaluation Group, <http://www.uneval.org/normsandstandards>

¹⁸ The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework identifies five different capitals (human, social, natural, financial, and physical), each including different assets. It helps in improving understanding of livelihoods, in particular of the poor. For more information, among others: http://www.livelihoods.org/info/guidance_sheets_pdfs/section2.pdf

¹⁹ SWOT is a widely used strategic planning tool, useful also in the assessment of development interventions, to canvass their strengths and weaknesses, as well as future perspectives. It is particularly used in focus groups, but it can be adapted to individual interviews as well.

5. Roles and responsibilities

20. FAO Budget Holder (BH), the Lead Technical Officer (LTO) and the Project Task Force (PTF) of the project to be evaluated are responsible for initiating the evaluation process, drafting the first version of the Terms of Reference, and supporting the evaluation team during its work. They are required to participate in meetings with the team, make available information and documentation as necessary, and comment on the draft final terms of reference and report. Involvement of different members of the project Task Force will depend on respective roles and participation in the project.

21. The BH is also responsible for leading and coordinating the preparation of the FAO Management Response and the Follow-up Report to the evaluation, fully supported in this task by the LTO and PTF. FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) guidelines for the Management Response and the Follow-up Report provide necessary details on this process.

22. FAO Office of Evaluation assists the BH and LTO in drafting the ToR, in the identification of the consultants and in the organization of the team's work; it is responsible for the finalization of the ToR and of the team composition;²⁰ it shall brief the evaluation team on the evaluation methodology and process and will review the final draft report for Quality Assurance purposes in terms of presentation, compliance with the ToR and timely delivery, quality, clarity and soundness of evidence provided and of the analysis supporting conclusions and recommendations.

23. The Office of Evaluation has also a responsibility in following up with the BH for the timely preparation of the Management Response and the Follow-up to the MR.

24. The Evaluation Team is responsible for conducting the evaluation, applying the methodology as appropriate and for producing the evaluation report. All team members, including the Team Leader, will participate in briefing and debriefing meetings, discussions, field visits, and will contribute to the evaluation with written inputs for the final draft and final report.

25. The Team Leader guides and coordinates the team members in their specific work, discusses their findings, conclusions and recommendations and prepares the final draft and the final report, consolidating the inputs from the team members with his/her own.

26. The Evaluation team will be free to expand the scope, criteria, questions and issues listed above, as well as develop its own evaluation tools and framework, within time and resources available.

27. The team is fully responsible for its report which may not reflect the views of the Government or of FAO. An evaluation report is not subject to technical clearance by FAO although OED is responsible for Quality Assurance of all evaluation reports.

28. As a contribution to the OED Knowledge Management System:

- the Team Leader will be responsible for completing the OED quantitative project performance questionnaire, to be delivered at the same time with the final evaluation report; OED will ask all team members to complete an anonymous and confidential questionnaire to get their feedback on the evaluation process.
- For further details related to the tasks of the Team leader and team members, please refer to template TORs provided in annex.

²⁰ The responsibility for the administrative procedures for recruitment of the team, will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

6. Evaluation team

29. Mission members will have had no previous direct involvement in the formulation, implementation or backstopping of the project. All will sign the Declaration of Interest form of the FAO Office of Evaluation.

30. The evaluation team will comprise the best available mix of skills that are required to assess the project, and as a whole, will have expertise in all the following subject matters:

- Evaluation, food security and nutrition programming
- Agriculture, with a focus on extension; rural development and FFS, institutional strengthening.

31. Furthermore, to the extent possible, the team will be balanced in terms of geographical and gender representation to ensure diversity and complementarity of perspectives.

7. Evaluation deliverables

32. The evaluation report will illustrate the evidence found that responds to the evaluation issues, questions and criteria listed in the ToR. It will include an executive summary. Supporting data and analysis should be annexed to the report when considered important to complement the main report.

33. The recommendations will be addressed to the different stakeholders and prioritized: they will be evidence-based, relevant, focused, clearly formulated and actionable.

34. The evaluation team will agree on the outline of the report early in the evaluation process, based on the template provided in Annex I of this ToR. The report will be prepared in English/French/Spanish²¹, with numbered paragraphs, following OED template for report writing. Translations in other languages of the Organization, if required, will be FAO's responsibility.

35. The team leader bears responsibility for submitting the final draft report to FAO within two to three weeks from the conclusion of the mission. Within one week, FAO will submit to the team its comments and suggestions that the team will include as appropriate in the final report within maximum two weeks.

36. Annexes to the evaluation report will include, though not limited to, the following as relevant:

- Terms of reference for the evaluation;
- Profile of team members;
- List of documents reviewed;
- List of institutions and stakeholders interviewed by the evaluation team;
- List of project outputs;
- Evaluation tools.

8. Evaluation timetable

²¹ Select as appropriate

The evaluation is expected to take place during February/March 2014. The country visit phase is expected to last approximately two weeks. The timetable in the box below shows a tentative programme of travel and work for the evaluation team. It will be finalised upon the recruitment of the evaluation team.

Box 1. Tentative timetable of the evaluation

Task	Dates	Duration	Responsibility
ToR finalization	2 – 20 Dec 2013	3 weeks	Ellen Muehlhoff, FAOR MW, OED
Evaluation team recruitment	23 Dec – 17 Jan 2013	4 weeks	OED
Mission organization	20 – 31 Jan 2014	2 weeks	OED, FAOR MW
Reading documentation	3 – 14 Feb 2014	2 weeks	Evaluation team
Briefing in Rome	17 – 19 Feb 2014	3 days	Ellen Muehlhoff, Karel Callens, OED
Mission to Malawi	20 Feb – 13 Mar 2014	3 weeks	FAOR
Preparation of draft report ²²	14 – 28 Mar 2014	2 weeks	Team Leader, Evaluation team
Circulation of draft report	1 – 10 Apr 2014	1 week	OED
Finalisation of the report	8 – 18 Apr 2014	2 weeks	Team Leader, Evaluation team

Annexes

Annex 1. Project evaluation report outline

Annex 2. FAO Strategic Objectives, Results and core functions, 2010-2013 and 2014-2017;

Annex 3. OED project performance questionnaire-attached in a separate file

Annex 4. Detailed Description of stakeholders

Annex 5. Project Achievements

²² These dates were changed due to the fact that the team leader and one of the team members had fixed missions from mid-March to end of March 2014.

Annexe 2. Brief profile of evaluation team members

Dr. Friederike Bellin-Sesay is a well recognized consultant for international food and nutrition security with more than 25 years of experience in the field. She was a team member of the “Global evaluation of FAOs work and role in nutrition” which was carried out in 2010. During her professional carrier she has worked in a number of countries in Africa (Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, Niger, Chad, Kenya, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe) and Asia (Cambodia, Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka). Most of the recent consultancies were carried out on behalf of WFP, GIZ, FAO and Welthungerhilfe.

As a lecturer on “International Nutrition” and “Gender & Development” she is working mainly with the Justus Liebig University in Giessen in Germany and the University of Vienna in Austria. Apart from this she has been teaching at the University of Munich, Stuttgart, Bern and Uppsala. Recently she was asked by Kasetsart University of Bangkok and the University of Los Banos (Philippines) to administer some short courses.

Mr. Paul Jere is a Malawian full-time consultant with more than 15 years of professional experience in the areas of livelihoods analysis, food security, agricultural development, social protection, HIV/AIDS and environment. He has extensive professional experience in monitoring and evaluation, policy analysis in Malawi and the SADC region. He has successfully undertaken evaluation assignments in areas of food security, humanitarian assistance and disaster risk reduction in many countries in the SADC region for WFP, FAO and other international organizations. Since last year he has been providing technical support to the AU Land Policy Initiative based at UNECA in Ethiopia on areas of M&E and strategy development. He holds a Masters Degree in Agricultural Economics and he has also teaching experience in agricultural and development economics at Bunda College of the University of Malawi. He has also received training in environmental policy analysis, gender and emergency programme management.

Annexe 3. List of documents reviewed

BTOR – E Mühlhoff: October 2008, May 2009, February 2012, November 2012, August 2013, December 2013,

BTOR - K Callens: May 2007 May 2009, June 2010,

BTOR – M Ager: June 2010

BTOR – C Dirorimwe May 2012

BTOR - End of Mission Report E Berejena August 2009

BTOR – Consultancy Report J van de Pol: July 2010, April 2011, January 2012, March 2013, December 2013,

Budget Revisions: 2009, 2011 and 2013

Chakholoma, L: IYCF Programme. Presentation to the IMCF-TAC Meeting Rome, February 2014

Cote, Claire et al 2013. Impact Evaluation of Three FICA-Funded Programmes in Malawi

Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS, OPC and FAO 2009: Nutrition Capacity Assessment in Malawi.

Donor Committee for Agriculture and Food Security in Malawi

Economist Intelligence Unit, UK February 2008. Malawi Country Report

Economist Intelligence Unit, UK February 2014. Malawi Country Report

Office of the Inspector General, FAO, and Audit 3112 “Comprehensive Country Review: FAO Representation in Malawi”. September 2012

FAO 2011. Terminal Report of Phase 1 for “Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach” GDCP/ MLW/001/FLA

FICA-FAO project 2008: Progress Report April 2009 – September 2008

FICA-FAO project 2009: Progress Report October 2008 – March 2009

FICA-FAO project 2009: Progress Report April 2009 – September 2009

FICA-FAO project 2008: Annual Work Plans and Budget- June- Aug 2008, May 2008

FICA-FAO project Annual Workplan and Budget Jan- Dec 2009, March 2009

FICA-FAO project 2010: Annual Work Plans and Budget

FICA-FAO project 2011: Annual Workplan and Budget

FICA-FAO project Annual Work Plan and Budget, Jan- Dec 2012

FICA-FAO project 2013: Annual Work Plan and Budget

FICA-FAO project: Draft of Annual Work Plan and Budget, Jan- Dec 2014, December 2013

FAO 2010: Progress Report October 2009 – March 2010

FAO 2011: Progress Report April 2011 – December 2011

FAO 2012: Financial Overview on the expenses relating to May 2011 – June 2012

FAO. 2012. Plan of Action for Malawi 2012 – 2016

FAO 2012. Promoting Improved Infant and Young Child Feeding. Facilitators Handbook

FAO 2012. Promoting Improved Infant and Young Child Feeding. Key Messages Book

FAO 2014: Workplan of Nutrition Advisor

Government of Malawi. 2011. Sector Policy Response to Climate Change in Malawi. A Comprehensive Gap Analysis. Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, National Climate Change Programme

Government of Malawi. 2009. Malawi Nutrition Bulletin. Volume 1. Issue 1

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Annexe 4. List of institutions and stakeholders met during the evaluation process;

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Other stakeholders**EU RIDP**

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Jacob Nyirongo –	Director of Policy and Institutional Development, Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM)	
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Mr. E Bambe	Director of Planning Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development	0999 512 654
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Local Government & partners, Kasungu

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Fortune Mwafulirwa	Forrestry advisor Department of Forestry	0888 644735
Petros Botha Rhoda Gangile	Field Coordinator, SSLP Field Coordinator, SSLP	

Local Government & partners, Mzimba

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Mr E. Malanga	Coordinating Primary Education Advisor Department of Education, Mzimba	mzimbasothdem@gmail.com
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Ephraim Mbewa	District Water Development Officer	mbewaephraim@yahoo.com
Jackson FK Manda	District Irrigation Engineer Ministry of Water and Irrigation	0999 615073

KASUNGU Field Visits

SANTHE EPA

Lerwick Zimba	AEDC	0999 264679
Zakeyo F-J Banda	AEDO	0999-369291
Benson Mwnama	Assistant AEDC	
Mr. Falison Phiri –	beneficiary of dairy animal	Santhe Village,
G.M. Zulu	JFFLS Focal Point	Mtoso Primary School
Nichetana	Handpump Committee	Nichetana Village
Mr. Asani	Chairman: Chikondi Club - goats	Mikayeli village

Mkanakhoti EPA

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Ellen Ngoma	AEDO Kapopo Section	0991394312
Mare Ziba,	Forestry Assistant	
Miriam C Lungu	Head Teacher/ YFFLS Kanthona Primary School, Kapopo Section	0991394312
Lazarons Mtika	Beneficiary, vegetables fruits Katema /Mkanakhoto Section	
TV Banda	Secretary, Mponda Piggery Club	
Simon Mwale	Member, Mponda Piggery Club	
Sacha Club Mkanaphoti Section	Group on nutrition education TIPS	
Telesio Maseko Patrick Kanyinji	Secretary, Chagando FFS, Zikondenje village Lead farmer, Chagando FFS	

Mzimba Field Visits
Vibangala EPA –
Dimi Section

Demis Mushany	AEDC	0999 738416
Winston Billy	AEDO	0999 738416
Victor Mwale	Coordinator CBO group	
Nutrition group	Nutrition training	
Lingstone Jere	Lead farmer	
Sammy Mwale	Lead farmer	

Mbawa EPA
Mchilapundu Section

Macfarlane Mwekinda	AEDC	
Alexander Chisi	AEDO	
Yazozo Village		
Nenson Banda	Community Nutrition Facilitator (CNF)	
Judith Inkota	CNF	
Rita Harz	CNF	
Desire Kamanga	Nutrition Learner	
Johnstone K Banda	Chizimya School Headteacher - JFFLS	
Focus group	Lead farmers	

Champira EPA

M. Luhanga	AEDC	0999 102300
Veronica Mwankuku	AEDO	0999 191587
Local Leaders		
Zondwayo Ndlovu	Group village headman	
Chikumukumu Nyirenda	Group village headman	
Mswahala Ndlovu	Village Headman	

Chikumukumu Village

Nutrition Group	Over 50 mothers
Nutrition Facilitator	18 facilitators (11 women, 7 men)
Health Surveillance	5 members

Chamaji Section
Simeon Sebanje Village

Group village headman	
Crops Group	40 members (gender balanced)
Livestock beneficiaries	
Mswamphira Village	
Irrigation group	

Luwerezi EPA
Phasi Section

EL Simukoko	AEDC
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AZL Nyirenda

AEDO

Focus Group with all

- Elderly people
- Non beneficiaries
- HIV support group
- Family nutrition group

Luwerezi Section

Mr. F.J. Shonga

- JFFLS
- Focus group discussion

Annexe 5. District Development Challenges

Kasungu District

According to the 2008 Population and Housing Census, the total population for Kasungu District was estimated at 627,467 people with an annual growth rate of 2.7%. About 44.9% of the population is estimated to be living below the poverty line, as reflected by food insecurity, lack of viable income generating activities, poor health, poor housing, lack of basic and productive assets and poor social and psychological status.

The District socioeconomic profile identified a number of development challenges the district is facing. Based on these challenges and the underlying causes, the district has identified number of priority intervention areas which provide the basis for the District Development Plan. The table below summarised the priority development challenges and priorities for the district:

District Development Challenges and Objectives

No.	Development Challenges	Causes	Strategic Development Objectives
1.	Food Insecurity.	1. Soil infertility 2. High farm input costs 3. Poor crop storage 4. Declining livestock production 5. High farmer/ staff ratio 6. Erratic rainfall pattern 7. Overdependence on maize as staple food.	To increase food security at household level.
2.	Poor access to safe water (62% inaccessibility)	1. Non-functioning water points 2. Inadequate safe water facilities 3. Non compliance to borehole drilling standards. 4. Inadequate number of committees trained in CBM.	To increase access to safe water by 5% per year.
3.	High environmental degradation.	1. Deforestation 2. Poor land husbandry practices. 3. Shortage of Extension Workers 4. Population pressure	- To reduce environmental degradation.
4	High illiteracy (Illiteracy rate is at 42 %.)	1. Shortage of Primary School Teachers (recommended 1:60 against 1:74) 2. High drop out rate which is at 15%. 3. Inadequate classrooms 60:1 current 174:1. 4. Inadequate text book/pupil ratio. 5. Low Enrolment in adult learning classes 6. Shortage of Teachers houses (current 1:3 recommended, 1:1) 7. Inadequate sanitary and hygiene Facilities 8. Inadequate Desks (recommended Pupil – Desk Ratio 2:1 against 21:1)	To Increase literacy levels by 8% by 2008.

No.	Development Challenges	Causes	Strategic Development Objectives
5.	High prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS (currently at 13, 2%)	1. Promiscuous behaviour 2. Inconsistent use of condoms. 3. Drug and alcohol abuse. 4. Unrestricted exposure to pornographic materials 5. Bad Cultural Practices. 6. Inadequate provision of Voluntary Counselling and Testing, Prevention of Mother To Child Transmission and Post Exposure Prophylaxis and ART. 7. Limited interventions awareness programmes in rural areas	To reduce Prevalence Rate of HIV/AIDS by 2% by 2008
6.	Poor road network (total network is 1,367.3 km and only 435 km is improved which is 32%)	1. <u>Insufficient road network</u> 2. <u>Poor road conditions</u> 3. <u>Inadequate road structures</u>	To improve accessibility to strategic points and other places
7.	Low Household Disposable Income (MK10.60/day/hh)	1. Low prices of farm produce. 2. Poor access to marketing networks. 3. Low access to credit finance. 4. Low opportunities to employment market. -5.Poor production technology	To increase household disposable income from MK10.60/day/hh to MK10.81/day/hh by 2008.
8.	High insecurity	1. Increase in crime rate.	Reduce insecurity from 58.2% to 46.7%.
9	Child labour (currently at 44%)	1. Poverty 2. Lack of parental care 3.HIV/AIDS Pandemic 4. Orphan Hood 5. Large family size.	To reduce Child Labour by 10%.
10.	Limited access to posts and telecommunication services. (725 available lines = 683 people per line).	Inadequate posts & telecommunication facilities. - Inadequate qualified staff. - Inefficient service provision - Vandalism of telecommunications equipment	To increase access to posts and telecommunication services.
11	Poor Radio and Television reception	- Outdated equipment - No TV transmitters	Improve radio and TV reception

Source: Kasungu District Socioeconomic Profile (2013-2018)

Mzimba District

Mzimba District council population was estimated at 727,931 in 2008 census. Based on recent socioeconomic analysis, the district has identified a number of development challenges and priority areas to guide interventions by the government and other stakeholders. The main aim of the priority intervention areas is to ‘improve the livelihoods of the people of Mzimba by ensuring the provision of quality and sustainable socio-economic services through community Participation in local development.

The table below highlights the identified challenges, the causes and the intervention areas

District Development challenges and Strategic Objectives

#	Development challenges	Causes	District Strategic objectives
1	Low access to safe water supply and improved sanitation	1.0 Inadequate safe and sustainable water supply facilities 2.0 Depletion of water resources rendering some shallow wells seasonal (unsustainable) 3.0 Depletion of water resources due to catchment degradation rendering some shallow wells to dry up/seasonal 4.0 Unfavourable human settlement pattern coupled with technological limitations 5.0 Low adoption of improved sanitation (Coverage of 5.6%).	1.0 To increase access to safe, sustainable water for all households in the District 2.0 To increase access to improved sanitation facilities 3.0 To reduce by half the population without sustainable and safe water and improved sanitation.
2	Increased disease burden amongst the communities	1.0 Inadequate health facilities. 1.1 Inadequate health personnel. 1.2 Low immunisation coverage. 1.3 Inadequate drugs and other medical supplies. 1.4 Distance between health facilities. 1.5 Poor referral systems. 1.6 Poor sanitation. 1.7 Inadequate knowledge on health related issues.	To raise the level of Mzimba communities through development of a health delivery system capable of promoting health, preventing, reducing and curing diseases, protecting life and reducing occurrence of pre-mature deaths using the essential health care package (EHP) strategy.
3	Food Insecurity	3.0 Low adoption rate of improved agriculture Technologies. 3.1 Declining of soil Fertility. 3.2 Poor access to Agricultural inputs. 3.3 Poor and inadequate irrigation infrastructures. 3.4 Limited knowledge in fish farming by farmers and Extension workers. 3.5 Poor access to improved livestock breeds	Reduce food insecurity by 10.5% by the year 2010.
4	Low quality of Education and vocational Training	1.0 High teacher pupil ratio. 2.0 Inadequate teachers’ houses. 3.0 Inadequate classrooms. 4.0 Inadequate instructional Materials. 5.0 Early marriages. 6.0 Lack of in service training of teachers. 7.0 Uneven distribution of teaches	To increase pass rate from 69% to 85%.

		between urban and rural schools. 8.0 Unqualified teachers in CDSS. 9.0 Poverty.	
5	Inadequate access to transport and communication facilities	1.0 Poor road conditions. 2.0 Poor road drainage. 3.0 Limited access to telephone and postal facilities. 4.0 Inadequate road network.	To improve access to transport and communication facilities
6	High prevalence of HIV/AIDS	1.0 Low adoption of HIV and AIDS Information. 2.0 Inadequate Diagnostic centres. Distance to treatment Centres. 3.0 Disease related to Stigma. 4.0 Inadequate support Services. 5.0 Negative cultural, religious and social Practices. 6.0 Inadequate knowledge in HIV and AIDS and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) issues. 7.0 Low income especially female Employed. 8.0 Family problems. 9.0 Low status of Women. 10.0 Practicing unsafe Sex.	6.0 To reduce the prevalence of HIV and AIDS from 10% to 6%. 6.1 To reduce further spread of HIV and AIDS amongst Workers.

Annexe 6. Comments on logical framework – phase 1

Activities related to output 1	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources	Comments
1.1 Participatory situation analysis at village level, including identification of food insecure households, causal analysis of food security and nutrition problems, analysis of potentials and available assets and capabilities, review of past/ongoing interventions	- Number of village profiles prepared - Levels of people's participation - Quality of analysis	- quarterly and six-monthly progress reports - mid-term and impact surveys - village profiles	Have not seen a comprehensive compilation of village profiles
1.2 Regular (e.g. annual) aggregation of the results of the participatory situation analysis at district level into a district profile and development of a menu of household, group and community micro-projects to overcome the identified problems.	- 2 district profiles prepared and regularly (e.g. annually) updated - 2 comprehensive menus of micro-projects drawn up and regularly (e.g. annually) updated	- district profiles available from DEC - micro-project field manuals - quarterly and six-monthly progress reports	Have not seen regular aggregation of results No district specific work plans available Project progress reports not based on a functioning M&E system
1.3 Regular participatory planning with the target communities, groups and households to determine which micro-projects will be implemented over the coming period (e.g. 6 months to or one year). Based on this planning prepare a detailed district work plan and budget (provisional year 1 plan and budget for the two districts attached in annex).	- X number of villages that have prepared a village action plan - Level of people's participation (e.g. ladders of participation) - Quality of district plans	- quarterly and six-monthly progress reports - district plans available from DEC	idem
1.4 Implementation of the micro-projects included the district work plans and budgets, including micro-projects on the following: - production, storage, processing and marketing of field and horticultural crops (including irrigated and rain fed production) - production, marketing, health and feeding of small-livestock - aqua-culture - nurseries for seedlings and planting materials - communal/group seed banks - communal woodlots - access to potable water (e.g. wells) - household access to sanitation (e.g. pit latrines) - school gardening and nutrition, health and sanitation work	- Proportion of the project budget spent on micro-projects (target: approximately 60 percent of the budget, excl. the cost of the policy advisor) - The number of households belonging to different socio-economic groups that are engaging in different micro-projects (target: approx. 29 000 over three years or approx. 9 600 per year) - Gender balance of the participating people - For group-based micro-projects, group maturity index - For communal micro-projects, measure of	- financial reports from districts and project - six-monthly progress reports - mid-term and impact surveys	Difficult to judge due to absence of M&E

- nutritional care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS - off-farm income generating activities - savings and credit groups - multi-purpose cooperatives	equitable access among all socio-economic groups to the benefits of the micro-project - average cost per household (based on initial district plans, target 100 US\$ per household on average)		
1.5 Regular assessment of the performance of the households, groups and communities that have engaged in micro-projects as an input in the regular adjustment of the menu of interventions offered by the district service providers.	- Approx. 9 600 households and villages taking part every year in participatory assessment of micro-projects - Level of people's participation	- financial reports from districts and project - six-monthly progress reports - mid-term and impact surveys	Idem
1.6 At the inception of the project, carry out a baseline survey covering the project's impact and process indicators	- availability of baseline data and information	- survey reports from project	Three baselines done – not well coordinated to allow a determinant analysis of all possible factors influencing food and nutrition security
1.7 At mid-term, carry out a mid-term assessment of project performance and organise a mid-term evaluation	- availability of mid-term data and information on the baseline indicators - knowledge of projects strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats - consensus on the way forward among the three main parties to the project agreement	- evaluation reports - survey reports	Mid-term review done by Bunda college – no real assessment
1.8 At the end of the project, carry out an impact survey and organise a final evaluation.	- availability of data and information at the end of the project on the baseline indicators - knowledge of projects strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats - consensus on the way forward among the three main parties to the project agreement	- impact survey report - evaluation report	No final evaluation done - <u>Beginning of second phase saw some comparison of old and ne EPAs.</u>

Output 2	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources	Comment
District Outreach Capacity: By the end of Year 3, the capability of the organizations that are implementing the project will be adequate for delivering district-wide a comprehensive set of service in support of food security and nutrition improvement. Services will be provided through micro-projects that address specific problems in a comprehensive and sustainable way and that combine investments in assets and capacity building.	- Quality and timeliness of project work plans - Technical and managerial capacity of district and sub-district staff - Economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity of service delivery through the district and sub-district service providers	- Various types of progress reports produced by the project's M&E system - Mid-term and final impact assessment of the project	
Activities related to output 2	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources	Comment
2.1 Based on the assessment carried out under Activity 1.1, develop detailed proposals for the different micro-projects identified. For a provisional list of micro-projects see Activity 1.4. Proposals should include clear objectives, outputs and activities, detailed budget, timetable, allocation of responsibilities, inputs/assets to be provided, trainings to be carried out, etc.	- quality and relevance of micro-projects	- review of micro-projects by technical units in FAO	No detailed proposals developed
2.2 Develop training materials and a training curriculum to support the training of district and sub-district staff regarding the different micro-projects that they will technically support. The training will cover the problem areas to be addressed by the micro-projects and will systematically incorporate cross-cutting issues like gender, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, environment, etc.	- quality, timeliness and relevance of training material and overall curriculum	- review of materials and curriculum by technical units in FAO	The team is convinced that something exists at facilitators level, but we have not seen them
2.3 Develop training materials and a training curriculum to support the training of beneficiary households, groups and communities regarding the implementation of the different micro-projects that they will be engaged in.	- quality, timeliness and relevance of training material and overall curriculum	- review of materials and curriculum by technical units in FAO	
2.4 Regularly assess the technical, social, environmental and economic feasibility of the individual micro-projects and make adjustments in their design when and where needed.	- regular assessments and adjustments - quality and relevance of micro-projects	- reports on assessment - revised micro-projects - review of micro-projects by technical units in FAO	Assessments not done
2.5 In support of	- number and	- training reports	Done

implementation of the district work plans, carry out training of district and sub-district staff.	characterisation of staff trained - quality and relevance of the training	- capability assessments as part of mid-term and final evaluations	
2.6 In support of the village action plans and micro-projects, carry out training of target households, groups and communities.	- number and characterisation of people trained, in terms of gender, socio-economic status, food insecurity - quality and relevance of the training	- training reports - capability assessments as part of mid-term and final evaluations	Done
Output 3	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources	
Policy Component: Technical assistance provided to the Government of Malawi and its development partners to better focus food security and agriculture related policies and programmes on nutrition objectives and outcomes.	- Nutrition objectives, considerations and components integrated in the agricultural development programme, SWAp, and other food security and agriculture related policies, programmes and projects. - Effective budget allocation and expenditures on nutrition related activities	- review of SWAp, ADP and other programmes and policies - Budget and expenditure information	Done
Activities related to output 3	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources	
3.1 Provide support to the Government of Malawi and its development partners regarding the nutrition aspects and impacts of food security and agricultural development policies and programmes.	- quality, timeliness and relevance of the technical advisory services provided	- survey of users of policy advice - review of policy and programme documents	Done
3.2 Facilitate the coordination and formation of partnerships among the stakeholders involved in food security and agricultural development policies and programmes with a view to enhance their impact on nutrition.	- extent of inter-sectoral collaboration - effectiveness of collaboration in terms of the extent to which different sectors plan and work together on nutrition and food security	idem	done
3.3 Build capacity among stakeholders involved in food security and agricultural development with a view to better appreciate and address the sensitise them for nutrition dimension of their work.	- capability of stakeholders for addressing food security and nutrition issues	idem	Nutrition capacity assessment done. Trainings implemented

Annex 6. Comments on logical framework – phase 2

Output 1	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources	Comment
Outreach Component: Building on the existing district planning cycle, a process for participatory planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of community level activities in support of food security and nutrition will be fully functional by the end of Year 1 and will have reached out to approximate additional 15 000 food insecure households by the end of Year 4 and have provided educational/training support to 31 500 households and 10 500 school children in all 12 EPAs of the first and second phase of the project.	- Number and type of food insecure households reached (e.g. disaggregate by different socio-economic groups, gender balance, etc.) - Proportion of the project and district budget allocated to direct outreach to food insecure households - Level of participation of food insecure households in the district planning cycle (e.g. use ladders of participation)	- Baseline and impact surveys - Financial reports - Mid-term and final evaluation reports	It is difficult to judge on actual numbers in the absence of the M& E System No regular participation of food insecure households in annual project planning process – project planning only concentrated at district level
Activities related to output 1	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources	Comment
1.1 Finalising the outreach activities initiated during the first phase of the project	- At least one irrigation scheme completed in each of the old EPAs. - Facilitating the “hands-on” of second and third generation of the animals distributed during the first phase of the project	- Quarterly and six-monthly progress reports - Mid-term and impact surveys	- Very little monitoring data available on the success of the pass on programmes – but beneficiaries confirm some success
1.2 Implementing each year a participatory planning process in the different villages of the six newly selected EPAs, including: food security situation and nutrition problem analysis, identification of food insecure households, review of past/ongoing interventions and identification of micro projects and educational/ training support the project could provide to improved the food security and nutrition status of these vulnerable households	- Number of village profiles prepared - Levels of people’s participation in the community meetings - Identification of target groups including at least 50% vulnerable households - Meetings held with the targeted groups of households to identify and discuss the micro projects and educational/training support. - Number and types of micro projects and educational/training support identified - Quality of analysis	- Quarterly and six-monthly progress reports - Mid-term and impact surveys - Village profiles	Participatory planning process not done for each year and each community Identification of beneficiaries done in various ways – from systematically looking for vulnerable people towards self identification of target population
1.3 Regular (e.g. annual) aggregation of the results of the participatory planning process at district level into a district profiles, menu of household group and community micro-	- District profiles prepared and regularly (e.g. annually) updated - Comprehensive menus of micro-projects drawn up and regularly	- District profiles available from DEC - Micro-project field manuals - Quarterly and six-monthly progress	Not done

projects to overcome the identified problems and detailed project work plans and budgets	(e.g. annually) updated - Detailed district work plans and budget prepared.	reports	
1.4 Mobilizing the needed support to the service providers (Agriculture extension development officers (AEDOs) and community workers, etc.) for the implementation of the identified micro projects in the newly selected 6 EPAs	- The agreed amount and types of materials and inputs made available for the implementation of identified micro projects. - Identified and supported micro projects successfully implemented by the targeted household groups. - 15 000 households have managed to improve their household food security situation through their participation in one of the micro projects.	- Financial reports from districts and project - Six-monthly progress reports - Mid-term and impact surveys	Agreed amounts not always available Inputs differ from original plan – especially for HYV maize and fertilizer and livestock
1.5 Provide the needed educational/training support to the vulnerable household groups in the old and new EPAs through the FFS/FBS approach	- 31 500 households have managed to participate in a FFS or FBS. - At least 50% of the participating households in the FFSs or FBSs managed to improve their household food security	Idem	Idem
1.6 Implementation of the Nutrition education programme in the old and new EPAs including: the development of community seasonal food availability calendars, community action plans for food security and nutrition improvement, improved complementary feeding recipes (using TIPS) and the establishment of demonstration gardens and provision of training on food security and nutrition improvement, improved food processing, preservation, storage and utilisation to the local communities as well as to assist primary schools, integrating school gardening and nutrition education (through JFFLS).	- Seasonal food availability calendars developed for each community - Improved complementary feeding recipes developed - Community action plans for food security and nutrition improvement developed - Demonstration gardens established and training on food security and nutrition improvement, improved food processing, preservation, storage and utilisation provided to most of the communities in the 12 EPAs. - Establishment of vegetable & fruit school gardens supported and JFFLS established at 120 primary schools.	Idem	Seasonal food availability calendar has been developed at the start of the project Community action plans for food security and nutrition unknown No demonstration gardens at the community level to support nutrition education No vegetable gardening at primary schools Some fruit trees established in some schools but not systemtically

	- 10 500 school children received education on vegetable/fruit cultivation and nutrition through the JFFLSs		
1.7 Providing training support to groups of households in order to strengthen their groups and to assist them in developing a strategy for the future	- 1-2 Members of each benefiting household group having received training on group management and planning issues. - 50% of the groups having prepared a plan for the groups and the use of their revolving funds.	Idem	No evidence of training on group management and planning Very little done on developing future strategies with the communities
1.8 Regular assessment of the performance of the households, groups and communities that have engaged in micro-projects and educational/training programmes as an input in the regular adjustment of the menu of interventions offered by the district service providers.	- Approx. 5 000 households and villages taking part every year in participatory assessment of micro-projects - Participatory assessment activities incorporated in all educational/training programmes - Level of people's participation	Idem	Regular performance assessment missing
1.9 At the inception of the project, carry out a baseline survey covering the project's impact and process indicators	- Availability of baseline data and information	- survey reports from project	Baseline surveys done – too many and too uncoordinated with little technical backstopping
1.10 At mid-term, carry out a mid-term assessment of project performance and organise a mid-term evaluation	- Availability of mid-term data and information on the baseline indicators - Knowledge of projects strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats - Consensus on the way forward among the three main parties to the project agreement	- evaluation reports - survey reports	midterm after 6 years of phase 1 and 2
1.11 At the end of the project, carry out an impact survey and organise a final evaluation.	- Availability of data and information at the end of the project on the baseline indicators - Knowledge of projects strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats - Consensus on the way forward among the three main parties to the project agreement	- impact survey report - evaluation report	Final Survey will be done by research team concerning the nutrition education component

Output 2	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources	Comment
District Outreach Capacity: By the end of Year 4, the capability of the organizations that are implementing the project will be adequate for delivering district-wide a comprehensive set of service in support of food security and nutrition improvement. Services will be provided through micro-projects and educational/training programmes that address specific problems in a comprehensive and sustainable way and that combine investments in assets and capacity building.	- Quality and timeliness of project work plans - Technical and managerial capacity of district and sub-district staff - Economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity of service delivery through the district and sub-district service providers	- Various types of progress reports produced by the project's M&E system - Mid-term and final impact assessment of the project	No district specific work plans available Project progress reports not based on a functioning M&E system
Activities related to output 2	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources	Comment
2.1 Training of Agriculture extension development officers (AEDOs) of the six newly selected EPAs in facilitating the implementation of the participatory planning and action processes in the different villages of their EPAs	- 60 AEDOs trained and successfully managed to facilitate the implementation of the participatory planning and action process in the different villages of their respective EPAs - Quality of the proposals for the different micro-projects developed by the AEDOs. - Implementation of the project support activities successfully facilitated by the AEDOs in all targeted EPAs	- Training reports - quarterly and six-monthly progress reports	Done
2.2 Training of AEDOs as FFS facilitators	- 120 AEDOs of the 6 old and 6 new EPAs trained as FFS facilitators able to successfully facilitate FFSs on different crops and/or husbandry of different kinds of animals. - FFS programmes successfully implemented in all the targeted 12 EPAs	- Training reports - quarterly and six-monthly progress reports	Done
2.3 Training of selected FFS graduates as FFS farmer facilitators	- 360 FFS graduates trained as FFS farmer facilitators - FFS programmes in all the targeted 12 EPAs successfully expanded with the help of farmer facilitators	- Training reports - quarterly and six-monthly progress reports	Done

2.4 Training of AEDOs, community workers and volunteers in implementing the nutritional educational programmes in the different communities of the 6 old and 6 new EPSs	- 120 AEDOS, community workers and volunteers trained in implementing the nutritional educational programmes at community level. - Nutrition educational programmes successfully implemented in all the targeted communities in the 12 EPAs	- Training reports - quarterly and six-monthly progress reports	Done
2.5 Training of school teachers in facilitating JFFLSs and other educational activities on the school gardens.	- 120 school teachers trained as JFFLS facilitators. - JFFLSs and other educational activities successfully implemented on the school gardens of 120 primary schools in the targeted 12 EPAs.	- Training reports - Quarterly and six-monthly progress reports	Training has been done – school gardens are not established
2.6 Developing training materials and a training curriculum to support the training of beneficiary households, groups and communities regarding the implementation of the different micro-projects and educational/training activities they will be engaged in.	- quality, timeliness and relevance of training material and overall curriculum	- review of materials and curriculum by technical units in FAO	Training materials need to be compiled and standardised – maybe in collaboration with the Ministry – have not seen any guidelines
2.7 Regularly assess the technical, social, environmental and economic feasibility of the individual micro-projects and educational/training activities and make adjustments in their design when and where needed.	- regular assessments and adjustments - quality and relevance of micro-projects	- reports on assessment - revised micro-projects - review of micro-projects by technical units in FAO	No assessment reports available Very little done on technical reviews

Output 3	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources	Comment
Policy Component: Technical assistance provided to the Government of Malawi and its development partners to further develop a better focus food security and agriculture related policies and programmes on contributing to the achievement of nutrition objectives and outcomes.	- Nutrition objectives, considerations and components integrated in the agricultural development programme, SWAp, and other food security and agriculture related policies, programmes and projects. - Effective budget allocation and expenditures on nutrition related activities	- review of SWAp, ADP and other programmes and policies - Budget and expenditure information	
Activities related to output 3	Indicators/Targets	Data Sources	Comment
3.1 Continue to provide	- Quality, timeliness and	- Survey of users of	No survey available on this

support to the Government of Malawi and its development partners regarding the nutrition aspects and impacts of food security and agricultural development policies and programmes.	relevance of the technical advisory services provided	policy advice - Review of policy and programme documents	topic Advice towards policy formulation actively done
3.2 Facilitate the coordination and formation of partnerships among the stakeholders involved in food security and agricultural development policies and programmes with a view to enhance their impact on nutrition.	- extent of inter-sectoral collaboration - effectiveness of collaboration in terms of the extent to which different sectors plan and work together on nutrition and food security	Idem	Difficult to assess
3.3 Build capacity among stakeholders involved in food security and agricultural development with a view to better appreciate and address the sensitise them for nutrition dimension of their work.	- capability of stakeholders for addressing food security and nutrition issues	Idem	Difficult to assess
3.4 Provide backstopping support on a need bases to the implementation of the Nutrition educational programme in the two project districts.	Successful implementation of the nutrition educational programme in the two project districts	Quarterly and six-monthly progress reports	Backstopping of outreach component insufficient from Policy advisors – good backstopping from Rome instead

Annexe 7. Mission programme

“Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach”

GCPS/MLW/001/FLA: Mid-Term Evaluation Mission

22nd February to 14th March 2014 (4th April 2014)

Schedule of Appointments

Time	Meeting	Venue	
Sunday, 23 Feb 2014			
	Arrival	To Hotel	FBS,RC
Monday, 24 Feb 2014			
AM	Briefing with FAO Representative	FAO Office	all
PM	Mr. Nikolas Bosscher FICA Country Representative	FICA, City Centre	all
Tuesday, 25 February 2014			
AM	Briefing with FAO Assistant Representatives	FAO Office	all
PM	Travel to Kasungu		all
Wednesday, 26 Feb 2014			
	Kasungu Offices		All
Thursday, 27 Feb 2014			
	Kasungu Field Visits		all
Friday, 28 Feb 2014			
	Kasungu Field Visits Kasungu Management and Administration		FBS, PJ RC
Saturday, 1 March 2014			
	Mzimba Field Visits		all
Sunday, 2 March 2014			
	Mzimba Field Visits		all
Monday, 3 March 2014			
	Mzimba Field Visits		all
Tuesday, 4 March 2014			
	Programme Manager, MoA Gilbert M	Mzuzu	FBS
	Mzimba Offices Debriefing with district coordinator	Mzimba	PJ,RC All
Wednesday, 5 March 2014			
	Kasungu Offices		All
	Debriefing with Kasungu team		All
	Travel back to Lilongwe		
Thursday, 6 March 2014			
08:30	Dr Jeff Luhanga, PS Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	MoA&FS, Capital Hill	All
10.30	Mr Alex Namaona Director of Planning Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	MoA&FS, Capital Hill	All

Thursday, 6 March 2014			
13:30	Mr Charles Mazinga Deputy Director (school health and nutrition), Ministry of Education	MoES&T Capital Hill	FBS
15:00	Mrs. Edith Mkawa Principal secretary Department of Nutrition, HIV/AIDS, OPC	DNHA City centre	FBS RC
Friday, 7 March 2014			
08:30	The Director of Planning Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development	MoLG&RD Capital Hill	all
10:00	Mr Piyali Mustaphi. Chief, Nutrition,	UNICEF Office City Centre	FBS
Friday, 7 March 2014			
13:30	Mrs. Stella Kankwamba, Director, Agricultural Extension and Technical Services	DAES Office Lilongwe Old Town	FBS PJ
15:00	Mr Geoffrey Mamba Director of Irrigation Ministry of Irrigation and Water Development	Dept of Irrigation Lilongwe Old Town	FBS PJ
Saturday, 8 March 2014			
19.00	Klaus-Dieter Neumann, Project Manager, NAPE Project, GOPA/GIZ		FBS
Monday, 10 March 2014			
08.30	Ms Stacia Nordin Nutrition Officer (Food Security & Policy) (0999 333 073)	FAO Office	FBS, RC
08:30	Mr Jacob Nyirongo Farmers Union of Malawi(FUM)	FUM Office Lilongwe Old Town	PJ
11:00	Catherine Mkangama, SSDI	Pamodza House	FBS
10:30	Mr Dyborn Chibonga, Chief Executive, National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi (NASFAM)	NASFAM Office City Centre	PJ
12:00	Ethel Kapyepye, World Vision		FBS
13.00	Ms Stacia Nordin Nutrition Officer (Food Security & Policy)	FAO Office	FBS, RC
13:30	Mr Tamani Nkhono-Mvula, National Director Civil Society Agriculture Network(CISANET)	CISANET Office Ground Floor, Anamwino House City Centre	PJ
15:00	Ms Chalizamudzi Matola School Feeding Programme,	WFP Office, Family Dental Clinic Compound, Area 14	FBS

Tuesday, 11 March 2014			
09:30	Carol Flore- Smereczniak, Deputy Resident Rep., Programme, UNDP Mr Jan Rijpma - Assistant Resident Representative Mr. Richard Bailey, Head RCO,UNDP	UNDP Office City Centre	all
11.00	Team: Consolidation of findings		All
Wednesday, 12 March 2014			
Am	Debriefing with the FAO Country team Meeting with Bertha Munthali, (former nutritionist outreach)	FAO Office	All
Pm	Debriefing with PS, Ministry of Agriculture		All
19.00	Katja Altincicek, Nutrition Advisor, MoE		FBS
Thursday, 13 March 2014			
	Departure		FBS
Friday, 14 March 2014			
	Departure		RC
Monday, 17 March 2014			
15.00 (Rome)	Debriefing with FAO headquarters	Skype-conference call	all
Thursday, 20 March 2014			
	Ruth Butao, former Nutrition Policy Advisor,	FAO, Freetown, Sierra Leone	FBS
Friday, 4th April 2014			
10.00	Solange Heise, former nutritionist	Skype call with Niger	FBS

Annexe 8. Methodology/ Evaluation Matrix

Key Questions for the Evaluation	Analyses	Main Sources	End Products
Relevance of concept and design: Project relevance to national development priorities, policies and programmes, needs of the population in Kasungu and Mzimba districts; UN Joint programming and multi-sectoral collaboration at national and district levels; FAO Country Programming Framework; FAO global goals and Strategic Objectives/Core Functions; other support programmes in the sector; a) Project design: its adequacy for the country social, financial and political environment as well as the human and financial resources approved to the project b) Robustness and realism of the theory of change underpinning the project c) Clarity, coherence and realism of the Logical Framework ²³ of the project and of its design, institutional set up and management arrangements - including	Qualitative Assessment	Documents from FAO and other UN agencies, Malawian Government Staff Interviews Partner Interviews	Description
the causal relationship between inputs, activities, outputs, expected outcomes and impact	Qualitative Assessment	FAO documents Staff interviews Partner Interviews	Description
validity of indicators, assumptions and risks	Qualitative Assessment	Staff interviews Partner Interviews	Description
approach and methodology	Qualitative Assessment	FAO documents Staff Interviews Partner Interviews	Description
the link between the components: outreach, capacity building and policy	Qualitative Assessment	FAO documents Staff Interviews Partner Interviews	Description
resources (human and financial) and duration	Qualitative Assessment	FAO documents Staff Interviews	Description, graph
stakeholder and beneficiary identification and analysis	Qualitative Assessment	FAO documents Partner documents	Description
I. Effectiveness of outputs and outcomes Overall effectiveness of the project (actual or potential) in attaining its intermediate and/or specific objectives			
- Description and analysis of the outputs produced, in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness; Key outputs include: <i>food security and nutrition participatory planning cycle of community level activities formed and functional</i> - Number and type of food insecure households reached (e.g. disaggregate by different socio-economic groups, gender balance, etc.) - Proportion of the project and district budget allocated to direct outreach to food insecure households and communities - Level of participation of food insecure households in the district planning cycle (e.g. use ladders of participation) - Assess if the project activities were effective in targeting the intended beneficiaries, in improving the food security and nutrition situation of the intended beneficiaries as well as within the broader	Qualitative assessment	FAO docs Partner docs FAO documents Beneficiary interviews Partner interviews FAO staff interviews Non-beneficiary interviews	Description Tables Description Tables Description

Key Questions for the Evaluation	Analyses	Main Sources	End Products
community (viz. effectiveness of pass on programs and sharing knowledge and skills) and why			
– <i>capability of the organizations that are implementing the project established and strengthened</i> ▪ Capacity development of the community and link to formation of farmer groups can be verified. ▪ Quality and timeliness of project work plans ▪ Technical and managerial capacity of district and sub-district staff in the diverse disciplines covered in the project ▪ Economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity of service delivery through the district and sub-district service providers	Qualitative assessment	Beneficiary interviews FAO staff interviews Partner interviews	Description
– <i>Technical assistance to the Government of Malawi and its development partners developed and relevant policies formulated</i> ▪ Nutrition objectives, considerations and components integrated in the agricultural development programme, ASWAp, and other food security and agriculture related policies, programmes and projects. ▪ Effective budget allocation and expenditures on nutrition related activities. Assess the effectiveness of the nutrition/food security policy work in terms of integration of nutrition into agriculture and other policy frameworks and resource mobilisation; ▪ Use made by the project of FAO's normative and knowledge products and actual and potential contribution of the project to the normative and knowledge function of the Organization. Achievements and gaps in project execution: taking into consideration time frame, government administration structure, availability of national partners and communication facilities in the rural areas.	Qualitative assessment	FAO staff interview Partner interview FAO docs Government docs	Description
	Qualitative Assessment	FAO staff interviews Government Interviews UNorg Interviews	Description
	Qualitative assessment	FAO staff interviews Partner interviews Government Interviews	Description

II. Efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation process

The evaluation team will assess how the project was implemented, including overall efficiency of delivery and management of available resources. Any major issue that affected implementation should be mentioned here.

Assessment of project management: ▪ Quality, realism and focus of work plans; ▪ Assessment of delivery, causes and consequences of delays and of any remedial measure taken, if any; ▪ Monitoring and feed-back loop into improved management and operations; ▪ Staff management; ▪ Development and implementation of an exit strategy;	Qualitative Assessment	FAO docs FAO staff interviews Partner interviews	Description
Institutional Setup: ▪ Administrative and technical support by FAO HQ, regional, sub-regional and country office, as appropriate; ▪ Institutional set-up, internal review processes,	Qualitative Assessment	FAO staff interviews Back to Office Reports Partner Interviews	Description

Key Questions for the Evaluation	Analyses	Main Sources	End Products
- coordination and steering bodies; - Inputs and support by the Government/s and resource partner/s.			
Assessment of financial resources management, including: - Adequacy and realism of budget allocations to achieve intended results; - Adequacy and realism of Budget Revisions in matching implementation needs and project objectives; - Rate of delivery and budget balance at the time of the evaluation and in relation to work-plans.	Quantitative and qualitative analysis	FAO docs FAO staff documents Partner documents	Description
III. Analysis of the application of the UN common country programming principles, cross-cutting themes, and of the Humanitarian Principles and Minimum Standards in the case of emergency projects.			
Analysis of gender mainstreaming for gender equality. This will include: - extent to which gender equality considerations were reflected in project objectives and design to address the needs, priorities and constraints of both women and men, and in the identification of beneficiaries; - extent to which gender equality considerations were taken into account in project implementation and management; - extent to which gender relations and equality have been or will be affected by the project.²⁴	Qualitative assessment	FAO docs FAO staff interviews Partner interviews Beneficiary interviews	Description
Analysis of capacity development dimension in the design, implementation and results of the project at individual, organizational and enabling environment levels.²⁵ This will include: CD on both technical and soft-skills, i.e. planning, budgeting, partnering and negotiating extent to which gender equality considerations were reflected in project objectives and design to address the needs, priorities and constraints of both women and men, and in the identification of beneficiaries;²⁶	Qualitative assessment	FAO docs FAO staff interviews Partner interviews	
a. Analysis of the adoption of the Human-Rights Based Approach, namely: - the integration of the Right to Food dimension and principles, in the design, implementation and results of the project; - the integration of decent rural employment concerns in the design, implementation and results of the project.	Qualitative Assessment	FAO docs FAO staff interviews Partner interviews	Description
b. Analysis of Partnerships and Alliances, namely: - how they were planned in the project design and developed through implementation; - their focus and strength; and - their effect on project results and sustainability	Qualitative Assessment	FAO docs FAO staff interviews Partner interviews	Description

²⁴ See: http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/gender/docs/FAO_FinalGender_Policy_2012.pdf

²⁵ See: <http://www.fao.org/capacitydevelopment/en/>

²⁶ See: http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/gender/docs/FAO_FinalGender_Policy_2012.pdf

Key Questions for the Evaluation	Analyses	Main Sources	End Products
c. Analysis of how environments impacts were taken into consideration and addressed following the steps and criteria contained in the FAO Environmental Impact Assessment guideline	Qualitative Assessment	FAO docs Staff interviews	Description
IMPACT d. Overall impact of the project, actual or potential, positive and negative, produced directly or indirectly, intended or unintended; and e. Overall contribution of the project to FAO Country Programming Frameworks, Organizational Result/s and Strategic Objectives, as well as to the implementation of the corporate Core Functions.	Qualitative analysis	Project monitoring reports Beneficiary interviews Non beneficiary interviews FAO docs FAO staff interviews	Description
SUSTAINABILITY f. The prospects for sustaining and up-scaling the project's results by the beneficiaries and the host institutions after the termination of the project. The assessment of sustainability will include, as appropriate: ▪ Institutional, technical, social and economic sustainability of proposed technologies, innovations and/or processes; ▪ Expectation of institutional uptake and mainstreaming of the newly acquired capacities, or diffusion beyond the beneficiaries or the project; and ▪ Environmental Sustainability: The project's contribution to sustainable natural resource management, in terms of maintenance and/ or regeneration of the natural resource base	Qualitative Assessment	FAO staff interviews Partner interviews Beneficiary interviews	Description
▪ In this context the evaluation will explore whether: a) target groups are able to continue to have improved food and nutrition security after the end of the project; b) extension workers are able to deliver improved services; and c) lessons are institutionalized within local systems (government, non-government and/or community). - identify good practices and share lessons that can be of interest in policy and program formulation at national level and for further expansion/up scaling; Verification of the adoption of good practices into the implementation of the National Nutrition Strategy by OPC and MLGRD. - examine the extent to which food security and nutrition education interventions were integrated and the factors contributing to or hampering such integration; - identify challenges and constraints to be addressed in the remaining project period, - give recommendations for an exit strategy and consolidation of project outputs towards achieving the outcome of increased food security and nutrition at household level as a basis for future expansion.			

Annexe 9. Questions for meeting with stakeholders

I. GENERAL: FAO GDCP/MLW/001/FLA PROGRAMME

The Evaluation Team would welcome your views on the following points:

1. Specific role/involvement of your ministry/government institution in the current FAO GDCP/MLW/001/FLA Programme.
2. Coherence of the FAO GDCP/MLW/001/FLA objectives with Malawi's national priorities? Needs of the targeted population?
3. Level of coordination between various Government institutions involved in implementation of the FAO GDCP/MLW/001/FLA?
4. Does the current FAO GDCP/MLW/001/FLA contribute to addressing and mitigating Malawi's food security problem?
5. Capacity-building as part of GDCP/MLW/001/FLA implementation: in line with national priorities? Actual capacity building requirements of national/ local partners?
6. Degree of community participation in selection of activities, planning of implementation, targeting: can this be further strengthened, taking gender specific and age-group differences into account?
10. Does the current FAO GDCP/MLW/001/FLA contribute to addressing the impact of climate change on Malawi's economy and the environment? How could this be supported?

II. GDCP/MLW/001/FLA NUTRITION/EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

The Evaluation Team would welcome your views on the following points:

1. How much has the Ministry been involved in the GDCP/MLW/001/FLA programme design
2. And in terms of Nutrition and Education?
3. Are there any round table discussions with partners and Ministries to harmonize the interventions of different organizations?
4. What kind of changes would you propose for a future GDCP/MLW/001/FLA in your field of activities?

III. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS/ISSUES PERTINENT TO IMPLEMENTATION OF FAO GDCP/MLW/001/FLA YOU MAY WISH TO RAISE/DISCUSS WITH THE EVALUATION TEAM?

IV. SWOT

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION MISSION

**FAO MALAWI
(GDCP/MLW/001/FLA
May-June 2009**

Questions for Meetings with Stakeholders:

Government Counterparts

Friederike Bellin-Sesay

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION MISSION

FAO MALAWI

GDCP/MLW/001/FLA

*Questions for Meetings with
FAO Country Office and Sub-Offices*

Friederike Bellin-Sesay

Annexe 10. Questions for meeting with FAO country office and sub-offices

I. GENERAL: GDCP/MLW/001/FLA

1. Relevance of GDCP/MLW/001/FLA activities to current economic and social development trends in Malawi? If changes discernible in such trends, what aspects of the GDCP/MLW/001/FLA need to be adapted?
2. Recent developments in Malawi's food security situation and link with regional and global trends.
3. Effectiveness and efficiency of implementation arrangements for the various GDCP/MLW/001/FLA activities, specifically:
 - 3.1 Partnerships and level of coordination with implementing partners (government counterparts at national/district levels, UN and other international agencies, NGOs).
 - 3.2 Project activity cycle and implementation: coherence with national and local level priorities.
 - 3.3 Community participation: link with impact of variables (e.g. age group, gender etc.), and monitoring.
 - 3.4 Level of sustainability of GDCP/MLW/001/FLA activities: implications for design of next GDCP/MLW/001/FLA?
4. Internal coherence of GDCP/MLW/001/FLA objectives with:
 - 4.1 FAO corporate policies and guidelines.
 - 4.2 Other FAO interventions in the country: which?
5. Potential strengths and weaknesses of the GDCP/MLW/001/FLA activities as revealed during the implementation process. The Evaluation Team would appreciate if you could accord time to filling in the annexes SWOT analysis.
6. Are the projects adequately monitored by the cooperating partners, government field experts and by FAO? Suggestions for necessary improvements in the M&E system.
7. How well are records kept by cooperating partners? What are the challenges with accurate and timely reporting? Is adequate support received?
8. How well do the GDCP/MLW/001/FLA activities mainstream gender issues and HIV/AIDS according to FAO's mandate and policies? Is the knowledge on implementation of those policies sufficient among cooperating partners?
11. Are there opportunities to further strengthen implementation cooperation with governmental partners?
12. To what extent has FAO contributed to capacity building of the governmental counterpart in terms of material and human capacity? Constraints?

II. GDCP/MLW/001/FLA Food Security / Nutrition

1. Determinant analysis for underlying factors of acute and chronic malnutrition – is there a good understanding and statistical proof of the main causes of malnutrition?
2. Is the food security and nutrition participatory planning cycle of common level activities formed and functional?
 - What is the level of participation of food insecure households in the district planning cycle (e.g. use ladders of participation)

4. What is the number and type of food insecure households that has been reached (disaggregated by different socio-economic groups, gender balance etc.)
5. How does the outreach project assure that the intended beneficiaries are reached and how effective is the process
6. Proportion of District Budget allocated to direct outreach to food insecure households and communities
7. What are the main messages in nutrition education?
8. What are the main communication methods applied?

Policy

7. To which extend are nutrition considerations and components integrated in the agricultural development programme (ASWAp) and other food security and agriculture related policies, programmes and projects.
8. How effective is the budget allocation in this sense and how much resources were mobilized due to the policy component of the project
9. How useful are FAOs normative work and knowledge products
10. What are the main achievements and gaps in the project execution (take into account the time frame, government administration structure, availability of national partners and communication facilities in rural areas

III. GDCP/MLW/001/FLA Efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation

1. How is the quality, realism, focus and timeliness of the project work plans (collect plans) if there were delays, which were the causes and consequences? Which measures have been taken?!
2. How do you judge the technical and managerial capacity of your staff (outreach)
3. Is the staffing adequate to reach the project outputs and outcomes? How is staff management?
4. Economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity of service delivery through district und sub district service providers
5. Can the capacity development of the communities be linked to the formation of farmer groups?
6. How does Monitoring feed back into improved management and operations
7. Does the project have an exit strategy

Institutional Setup:

8. How do you judge the technical and administrative support by HQ, regional and sub-regional and country office (**as appropriate**)
9. How do you see the internal review processes, coordination and steering bodies
10. What is your opinion about the support by the Government/s and resource partner/s

Assessment of Resources management, including

11. Is the budget available to the project realistic to achieve the intended results
12. Is the budget revision matching the implementation needs
13. What is the rate of budget delivery in relation to the workplan (at time of evaluation)

IV Analysis of the application of UN common country programming principles..

1. Extent to which gender equality considerations were reflected in project objectives and design to address the needs and priorities of both, men and women, in the ***identification of beneficiaries***
2. Gender equality in project implementation and management
3. Extent to which gender relations and equality have been or will be affected by the project
4. Analysis of the application of the UN common Country programming principles and humanitarian principles
5. Analysis of the capacity development dimension – both technical and soft skills, i.e. planning budgeting, partnering and negotiating
6. Analysis of the human rights based approach, namely: integration of the Right to Food dimension and principles, in the design, implementation and results of the project
7. The integration of decent rural employment concerns in the design, implementation and results of the project
8. Analysis of Partnerships and Alliances, namely:
 - how were they planned
 - their focus and strength
 - their effect on project results and sustainability

V: Impact

Overall contribution to FAO Country Programming Frameworks, Organisational Results, Strategic Objectives as well as to the implementation of corporate Core Functions

VI. Sustainability

- To which extent are the target groups able to continue to have improved food and nutrition security
- Which are the good practices that can be of interest to nutrition policy
- Are any of the good practices already incorporated into Policy
- Identify factors that contribute or hamper the integration of food and nutrition security interventions into Policy
- Identify challenges and constraints for the remaining project period
- Recommendations on exit strategy and consolidation of project

**VII. ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS/ISSUES PERTINENT TO IMPLEMENTATION OF
FAO GDCP/MLW/001/FLA YOU MAY WISH TO RAISE/DISCUSS WITH THE
EVALUATION TEAM?**

ANNEX: SWOT ANALYSIS OF GDCP/MLW/001/FLA ACTIVITIES

Time permitting, the Evaluation Team would welcome the participation of FAO staff in filling out the following SWOT analysis.

Alternatively pertinent FAO staff may wish to fill in the matrix individually, focusing on their particular area of expertise and present their input to the Team prior to departure from Malawi.

STRENGTHS	OPPORTUNITIES
WEAKNESSES	THREATS