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**Executive Board  
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# **EVALUATION REPORTS**

## **Agenda item 5**

***For consideration***

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## **EVALUATION OF COUNTRY PROGRAMME—MALAWI (1998–2001)**

# Note to the Executive Board



**This document is submitted for consideration to the Executive Board.**

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document, to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

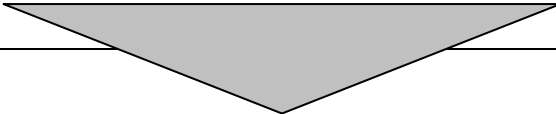
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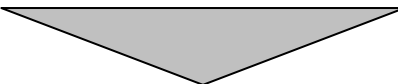


# Executive Summary



The goal of the evaluation was to assess whether the Country Programme Approach has been an effective tool for preparing and implementing WFP assistance to national development and relief programmes. The evaluation found that there is a strategic focus on the most vulnerable areas and groups, and a certain degree of coherence and complementarity in the Malawi Country Programme. Nonetheless, it appears that this latter characteristic exists more by accident than by design. It was also found that the Country Programme is compatible with the national policy on food security and consistent with WFP's policy on Enabling Development. However, it is insufficiently integrated within the relevant national development strategies and programmes, or into the programmes of bilateral donors or other United Nations agencies. In addition, government ownership of, and hence interest and involvement in, the Country Programme activities has been limited. In order to make food aid an effective input for promoting long-term development, action must be taken to ensure that the necessary complementary resources (funds, staff and other inputs) are provided. There is a local consensus on the need for vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM), but to ensure sustainability, the Government of Malawi and other stakeholders must agree on a suitable institutional location for VAM.

## Draft Decision



The Board endorses the recommendations contained in this evaluation report (WFP/EB.3/2000/5/1) and notes the lessons identified, taking into account considerations raised during the discussion.



## RATIONALE FOR WFP FOOD AID

1. Malawi is one of the world's poorest countries. It has a high population density (about 110/km<sup>2</sup>), a mainly rural population (85 percent) and a predominantly agricultural economy (35 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and 90 percent of exports). Sixty percent of the population is estimated to live below the poverty line. Income disparity is high and increasing. The country's Gini coefficient, the measure of disparity, has worsened from 0.48 in 1968 to 0.62 in 1995. However, although agriculture is the backbone of the national economy, in effect the largesse of the donor countries and agencies is arguably one of the principal determinants of the level of gross national income.
2. Declining agricultural productivity has resulted in the increasing importation of maize—the country's staple food—in recent years (except in 1999). The rapid increase in population has resulted in reduced areas of landholding per farm family, shorter fallow periods and the expansion of cultivation to marginal and less fertile areas. This is leading to deforestation, soil erosion and general degradation of the natural resource base. This problem is most serious in southern Malawi, as compared with the central and northern regions.
3. There are a number of factors that cause malnutrition in Malawi. These include frequent infections, low energy intake, poor dietary habits and traditions such as early weaning and close birth-spacing, which are aggravated by HIV/AIDS. Most families do not produce or acquire enough food because they lack cash for purchasing farm inputs, such as improved seed, fertilizers and pesticides, improved livestock breeds and drugs for livestock. Populations most vulnerable to food insecurity in Malawi are households headed by women (estimated at 33 percent of all smallholders), farming households with less than 1 ha of land for cultivation, estate tenants and the urban poor.
4. In the absence of an explicit national food aid policy, the proposed safety net strategy currently under discussion constitutes the most relevant policy guideline for orienting WFP's strategic objectives and Country Programme (CP) in Malawi. This strategy is based on the premise that food aid will continue to be required for short-term relief and longer-term development programmes. These would aim to address the problems of two vulnerable groups: those who are unable to produce enough on their own plots for their needs and those who do not have sufficient resources to obtain food in the markets. The implicit role of food aid in current policy thinking within the Government of Malawi appears to be in line with the priorities outlined in WFP's Enabling Development policy.



## SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

5. This report is based on the work of an evaluation mission that visited Malawi between 28 March and 23 April 2000.<sup>1</sup> The main goal of the evaluation was to assess whether the CP approach has been an effective tool for preparing and implementing WFP assistance to national development and relief programmes, and to determine whether this strategy is likely to lead to better results than the previous project approach. Thus, the present analysis does not constitute an evaluation, in the strict sense, of the individual basic and supplementary activities in the CP. Instead it is an assessment of the suitability and effectiveness of the country programming approach for achieving the four qualities of integration, concentration, coherence and flexibility sought through the application of a new process (together with the government and all other key stakeholders) of joint programming and activity preparation.

## OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

### Objectives of the Country Programme

6. The Malawi Country Programme supports food security and increased nutrition with a focus on the most vulnerable groups in the country. In line with the Government's long-term goal of sustaining improvements in the food security of households headed by women, a high proportion of WFP's food assistance is aimed at women and children. Malawi is also a pilot country for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). United Nations agencies have agreed to harmonize their respective programme cycles to cover the period 1997–2001, and hence the four-year length of this CP.
7. The CP has two long-term development goals and four related, lower-level "principal objectives". The goals are to:
- a) strengthen the ability of targeted households to provide for their own sustained food and nutrition requirements; and
  - b) decrease the vulnerability of targeted groups to nutritional insecurity and the adverse effects of recurrent disasters.
8. These goals are expected to be attained by actions designed to:
- a) bring about sustainable improvements to rural infrastructure for household food security through the provision of short-term employment and community self-help initiatives;
  - b) contribute to better utilization of Mother and Child Health (MCH) Centres and community-based health services through the provision of dietary support;
  - c) reduce the negative impact and likelihood of natural disasters through rapid response to localized food shortages and disasters; and
  - d) enhance human development through improved access to education, especially for girls.

<sup>1</sup> The mission was composed of a Team Leader, FAO; a WFP Evaluation Officer; a national WFP consultant; and an international WFP consultant.



9. Three basic activities and one supplementary activity are identified in the CP as the means through which WFP food aid may contribute to the attainment of the CP objectives. These are:
- rehabilitation and development of rural infrastructure (US\$5.1 million—30 percent of the CP);
  - assistance to malnourished groups (US\$6.7 million—40 percent of the CP);
  - under the rubric of expandable safety nets, supplementary resources for disaster relief and mitigation (US\$2.5 million annually); and
  - development of human resources through increased primary educational opportunities for girls (US\$5 million—30 percent of the CP).

### Activities and Their Relation to the Country Programme: Integration, Coherence and Concentration

10. The principal benefits expected to accrue from the country programming approach are fourfold:<sup>2</sup>

- **Integration:** WFP's basic CP activities are consistent with and targeted to the stated strategic priorities of the Government and other United Nations agencies within UNDAF.
- **Concentration:** Food aid is targeted to the poorest regions and most food-insecure households and is used to support the most appropriate activities in a given socio-economic context.
- **Coherence:** Complementarity and internal linkages are among the main elements of the CP, together with the external linkages to other government and donor development activities.
- **Flexibility:** Resources may be switched among activities within a CP (at present 10 percent of total CP budget).

It is thus necessary to examine the Malawi CP in terms of its performance in these four areas.

11. Strategically, the basic activities are *linked* (but not yet effectively *integrated*) in the sense that they are all complementary to the national development strategy. More specifically, they are all in line with the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) and relevant sector programmes. Geographically, they are linked through VAM targeting of the most vulnerable Extended Planning Areas (EPAs). The safety net supplementary activities are further linked to basic activities in that short-term emergency expansion of these activities is a significant part of disaster response planned under the CP. All activities are designed to address the cross-cutting issue of gender.
12. The mission has concluded that the process of developing the first CP has not resulted in a clear development strategy or a coherent programme for WFP in Malawi. Indeed, the programme seems to be a repackaging of existing projects (with the exception of food for work and school feeding), which continue to be managed and revised independently of one another. As already noted, the four key activities appear compatible with government policies, although not always well *integrated* with them (e.g. school feeding is not

<sup>2</sup> To define more specific criteria against which to assess the Malawi CP, the mission came up with these expanded working definitions (for the original definitions, see document CFA 38/P/6).



mentioned in the Ministry of Education's Policy and Investment Framework 2000-2012, nor is the assistance to malnourished groups (AMG) activity included in the National Health Plan (1999-2004).

13. Moreover, there do not seem to be enough effective *partnerships*, either within or outside of the Government in terms of planning and managing activities. Certainly there is a minimal sense of "ownership" on the part of the Government. Many government officials made it clear to the mission that WFP acts quite independently of the Government, that the programme is WFP's Country Programme and that the counterpart ministries are not real partners in planning and implementing WFP-assisted activities.
14. The mission found evidence of a positive bias in the CP towards the *concentration* of food aid towards the most food-insecure EPAs (mainly in the southern region), disaster-prone areas and women. There seems to be no move towards concentration by type of activity. This may now need to be taken into account in light of the current debate on safety nets.

## ASSESSMENT OF COUNTRY PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

### Systems and Procedures Supporting the Country Programme

15. The Country Programme Approach was introduced while WFP was embarking on a process of decentralization. The approach was expected to enhance the flexibility of the Country Director in developing and negotiating Country Programmes and making shifts in resources when appropriate. However, the process has been protracted, and there are still doubts and differing interpretations about procedures and the precise extent of the delegated authority, particularly in the area of budget and finance.
16. Two issues arise, however, with respect to the technical support required for programming (as well as managing, monitoring and evaluating) development activities. Until recently there were no clear guidelines and manuals setting out what was to be done, and how, nor had there been adequate technical training. While the availability of the Programme Design Manual is a significant improvement, some grey areas still exist. Overall, the needs of the country office in this area (Country Strategy Outline (CSO), CP and activity preparation) are considerable. The mission noted that the regional office has made a valiant effort to assist the country office by providing programming guidelines based on the process conducted in Mozambique. Regional training workshops have also been organized, with additional training planned for 2000. Even so, the experience of the past four years made it clear that these tasks could not be carried out efficiently, effectively and in a timely manner by one officer in the regional office.



### Recommendations

- ◇ The Operations Department to:
  - ✍ strengthen the regional programme adviser's office as a matter of urgent necessity. Equip the regional office with the funds and expertise required to organize regular programming workshops; and
  - ✍ more precisely define the respective areas of responsibility of the WFP headquarters and regional/field offices with regard to programme development, monitoring and evaluation, supported by clearer rules of procedure.

### Funding and Resource Allocation Issues

17. The mission observed that there appeared to be some confusion over budget and finance matters and that this hindered the management and implementation of the CP. In this respect, a serious constraint on WFP's ability to carry out development activities efficiently and effectively is linked to the method followed in the calculation and allocation of direct support costs (DSC). Food by itself can be an investment resource. To promote development effectively, however, it must be adequately combined with other inputs (human, material, financial and technical expertise). This is less so in emergencies, where the overriding consideration is speed, and where food has the sole purpose of satisfying hunger and is not also a means to an end, such as with sustained improvement in food security through development.
18. In the past, programme support and administrative (PSA) funding provided the country office with the resources required for financing these other essential, complementary inputs. This seems no longer to be so. DSC is now capped at a percentage of the food programmed and actually delivered. The less food "called forward" and delivered, the smaller the DSC funding available. However, there is no direct correlation between the technical support that may be required and the *amount of food moved*. Countries that were able to absorb only small quantities of food last year may need additional inputs this year to increase their absorbing capacity.
19. There is another issue of fundamental importance. If food is to be useful in enabling long-term development, as distinct from satisfying short-term hunger, then the *complementary resources required* (both in quantity and quality) must be made available in a timely manner. For this to happen, donor countries need to ensure the inclusion within their commitments of the complementary resources for CPs that the Executive Board has approved.

### Recommendation

- ◇ The Office of Budget to:
  - ✍ develop a more appropriate formula for calculating DSC for development activities. In addition, the Operations Department should regularly inform country offices of the various funding sources available at headquarters to finance complementary activities and technical support for which funding is not provided in the CP/operating budgets.





## Human Resources

20. Adequate human resources are also required to fulfil the core functions for planning and implementing development programmes (e.g. logistics, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), gender and VAM). Indeed, the mission observed that although WFP has a historical comparative advantage in logistics, its record in Malawi is mixed.
21. To meet the expectations laid out in the Enabling Development policy and ensure that country offices are equipped to carry out development activities properly, WFP needs to review and adjust the typical country office staffing profile for countries that manage CPs. The staff complement and profile and the logistic resources must be appropriate for these tasks, together with adequate budgeting and financial flexibility. The mission found that in the case of Malawi, shortcomings in these areas had constrained CP preparation and implementation.

### Recommendations

- ☞ The Operations Department should examine the issues of staffing and implementation modalities with a view towards determining:
  - ✍ a suitable formula for assessing the staffing required (both national and international) for effective programme management, irrespective of the realized annual food tonnage; and
  - ✍ the appropriate staffing profile and internal organizational structure.
- ☞ A *logistics plan and management structure* should be prepared for Malawi, including the establishment of an international logistics post. Priority should be given to solving the current logistics problems, and WFP and the Government of Malawi should agree on the correct strategy.

## Monitoring

22. Generally, the evaluation mission found that the current activity design did not facilitate monitoring. The mission considers that the reason for this lies in the weakness of project design in specifying the indicators to be monitored and how they could be made operational. This requires direct input from key stakeholders in developing a performance-monitoring plan. The identification of assumptions and analysis of risk are other important areas where project design and subsequent monitoring are weak.
23. These shortcomings make it difficult to monitor the success of activities in achieving their objectives. The evaluation mission is of the opinion that improved results-based monitoring of individual projects, using key performance indicators, should be a priority area as the country office moves to make the CP more performance-oriented. This will require more extensive use of participatory techniques so that monitoring systems are owned and used by key stakeholders. These activities are costly but clearly necessary in order to determine the relevance and effectiveness of the CP. Resources will thus need to be set aside for this purpose if M&E is to be carried out efficiently and effectively.

### Recommendation

- ✍ Improved results-based monitoring of individual projects, using key performance indicators, should be a priority area as the country office moves to make the CP more performance oriented. This will require more extensive use of participatory techniques so that monitoring systems are owned and used by key stakeholders. Training for programme staff in this area is an urgent necessity.



## Commitments to Women

24. The country office has a *gender focal point* responsible for consolidating the country office Gender Action Plan (GAP), as well as for internal advocacy and monitoring of gender issues. The GAP translates WFP's Commitments to Women into operational terms. All programme staff participate in the development and biannual review of the WFP Gender Action Plan. The GAP has a detailed outline of all the activities to be undertaken to ensure gender equity and the empowerment of women in the CP. The gender activities of the CP are also well integrated with the national gender policy. The WFP gender focal point has been an active member of all national fora on gender policy and related gender issues. In addition, the WFP focal point is a key member of the United Nations, donor, government and NGO coordination group on gender—the Development Assistance Group on Gender (DAGG). Based on an assessment of adherence to the Commitments to Women, the overall performance of the CP is commendable.

## Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM)

25. VAM is another issue to be resolved. It is clear that an important determinant of the relevance of a CSO/CP is an accurate analysis of national and sub-national food insecurity and vulnerability—a hunger analysis. Responsibility for VAM is at present dispersed among institutions (donor agencies) outside of the Government, and there is a coordinating body composed of representatives of the various stakeholders. The mission noted that this arrangement is not sustainable nor does it guarantee the quality of the primary data. Given the consensus on the need for VAM, it is expedient that the Government of Malawi and other stakeholders agree on a suitable institutional location for VAM analysis. In the longer term it may be that WFP's major role will be to provide support for improving the collection of relevant primary data while orchestrating a more coordinated donor and Government effort to meet food security information needs rather than keeping its own in-house capacity.

### Recommendation

- ✍ Review the mandate and Terms of Reference of the VAM Unit; Government of Malawi and other stakeholders should agree on a suitable home and support modalities for VAM.

## National Government Involvement and Support

26. Government involvement in and hence ownership of the CP appear to be minimal. As yet, the Country Programme Advisory Committee (CPAC) envisaged in the CP agreement has not been established on a firm footing. This situation may, to some extent, be of WFP's making. The introduction of the CP Approach requires changes in the work methods of WFP staff and in the manner and substance of their interaction with government officials. These behavioural changes may not have been as rapid and thorough as necessary because of insufficient training. The mission was made aware of the Government's dissatisfaction with this state of affairs as regards policy coordination.

27. However, the mission is of the opinion that the Government must also accept some responsibility for the insufficient integration of CP activities within the programmes of the sectoral ministries. Given that the Government entered into agreements with WFP for the provision of substantial food aid resources, it is legitimate for WFP to expect a demonstration of interest on the Government's part in setting up and managing the mechanisms for the joint oversight of these resources. Moreover, the difficulties that have arisen in project implementation (poor food logistics and management, lack of



complementary resources, etc.) would have found more rapid and durable solutions in such a context.

28. In terms of country programming and management, the mission is convinced that the process of formulating the CSO and CP documents is as important as the content of the final documents. It is through this process that strategic choices are jointly made, effective partnerships formed with the Government and other donors, implementing arrangements agreed upon and effective ownership by all key stakeholders guaranteed. The process is also an opportunity for reassessment in terms of internal programming, and for making linkages within the programme.

### Recommendations

- ✍ The CP process needs to involve the Government (as well as key stakeholders and potential partners) from the beginning, rather than limiting its role to a review of documents. Preparation of the CSO and CP should commence ten to 12 months in advance of the deadline and be carefully planned to maximize involvement of all stakeholders at all levels. The next CP should incorporate inputs from communities and district authorities and be designed in the context of the decentralization process with modalities for ensuring maximum community participation.
- ✍ Careful attention should be paid to the *process*. The mission believes that planning the CP process is a serious exercise in itself, and that it may require bringing in local expertise to advise on the best ways and means of involving the Government, identifying implementing partners, programming activities with other agencies, etc.

### Integration into CCA/UNDAF and the Programmes of Bilateral Donors

29. Based on the analysis made in previous sections of this report, it does not appear to the mission that the process of developing the CP appreciably enhanced WFP's involvement in the UNDAF process. Indeed, a closer examination of the individual basic activities indicates that many opportunities for collaboration and mutual support with other United Nations programmes are being missed.
30. The preparation of the next CSO/CP, however, has got off to a promising start. Workshops have been scheduled with government agencies, bilateral donors, United Nations agencies and NGOs during the period April-June 2000 to discuss food policy issues as well as the scope and nature of future WFP development assistance activities. The discussions take place against the background of each agency's projected programme and budget for the next five years.
31. However, these actions at the programme level need to be accompanied by specific actions (in terms of joint programming) at the project management level to identify probable key partners for each CP activity. Programme Officers should formalize this by including in their 2000 work plans the responsibility for identifying and approaching possible partners to provide essential inputs and implement all or part of the activity.

### Compatibility with the Enabling Development Policy

32. The objectives of the CP and its constituent activities appear to possess a certain degree of what may be termed *passive compliance* with the new WFP policy on Enabling Development. Even so, the mission considers that insufficient attention is being paid in project design to the need to secure the sustainability of the assets created and to define realistic exit strategies for the termination of WFP assistance. Also, much work needs to be done to make the CP *actively compliant*. This can be done only through sustained, in-depth



dialogue with the Government, key stakeholders (beneficiaries, community-based organizations, traditional authorities and district administrators) and potential partners (NGOs, other United Nations agencies and bilateral donors). The key to this is the introduction of participatory appraisal and programming techniques at the community level and the deepening of the CP process referred to above. This process should favour the development of a strong sense of national ownership (at all levels, from communities upwards). These issues need to be addressed immediately with respect to current activities as well as in the preparation of the next Country Programme.

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## **ASSESSMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO CP OBJECTIVES**

### **Assistance to Malnourished Groups (MLW 6241.00—US\$6.7 million)**

33. In the AMG project, food aid plays a crucial role in preventing death from severe malnutrition and reversing the effects of short-term hunger on vulnerable groups. However, it is clear that the methods employed and the current project design are unlikely to ensure that this outcome can be sustained after external support is terminated. This appears to be so because the resources committed are inadequate, given the poor state of the health infrastructure that they are supposed to help strengthen. The project has now been under way for 26 years, and earlier assessments indicate that levels of malnutrition in the targeted EPAs appear not to have been reduced. This might perhaps be achieved by modifying the project to place food aid at the centre of a nutrition education strategy. This would require the reactivation and funding of the training component originally envisaged.



### Recommendations

- ✍ WFP should no longer manage AMG directly. Prior to the next CP, and in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP), WFP should find an appropriate NGO partner to implement the supplementary and therapeutic feeding components, which should be reformulated to address the causes rather than the effects of malnutrition.
- ✍ WFP should plan jointly with the MOHP a re-configured Project Management Unit (PMU), with the necessary skills sets to manage and monitor the activity. Given the deficit of nutritionists in the MOHP, the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) nutritionist should be reassigned to the PMU as a counterpart to the PMU manager.
- ✍ A nutritionist should review the food basket with a view towards including a vegetable protein (e.g. beans). At present, mothers and their older malnourished children do not receive any protein during their six-week stay in the therapeutic feeding centres.
- ✍ In order to strengthen the *likuni phala* production units established with WFP support, the Programme should help these units develop further linkages with the local economy in the context of a long-term, viable business plan that breaks their dependence on continued WFP purchases.
- ✍ Weight-for-height charts should be introduced in collaboration with the MOHP and WHO to ensure conformity with national policy and practice.

### Rural Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Development (RIRD) (MLW 5782.01—US\$5.1 million)

34. The previous food-for-work quick action project (QAP) registered high achievements in kilometres of road constructed but much less in the creation of assets that could be owned and used by food-insecure communities. The new RIRD activity has been modified to improve effectiveness and sustainability by working with a more appropriate government department. The budget has been reallocated to increase funding for community forestry (household orchards and woodlots) and land and water management schemes, and to reduce funding for the roads component.
35. The design emphasizes increased agriculture productivity and has expanded the targeted beneficiaries to include 30 “peri-urban” communities. However, some important issues do not seem to have been addressed adequately in the design of this new phase. For example, the quality of the assets created in the previous project was not considered equal to that of other public works schemes in the country because of poor technical supervision by line ministries. In addition, institutional arrangements for the maintenance of the assets created are not explicitly included in the project design.
36. The mission also considers it inopportune to add a peri-urban component to the new project when effective implementation modalities (community participation, food logistics and work site supervision and management) in rural areas have not yet been adequately worked out.



### Recommendation

- ✍ Prior to adding two urban pilot areas to the rural infrastructure project, the country office should undertake an urban hunger analysis. This would provide the basis for informed strategic decisions to be made regarding the inclusion of urban areas in WFP geographic priorities and the appropriateness of food aid for tackling the problems identified.

### School Feeding (MLW 5934.00—US\$5 million)

37. At issue in the school feeding activity is the matter of sustainability. The high food and non-food item costs make it impossible for the Government to sustain this activity in the long run. Thus, it is clear that school feeding requires an agreed-upon long-term exit strategy, integrated with the national and agriculture sector development plans. The mission noted that community members expressed their willingness to continue this activity after the end of WFP assistance. However, they would have to know well in advance when this would happen and would need to be trained in managing it.
38. Tight control and direction by WFP (the presence of three active UNVs in the project area) have ensured the completion of planned activities and the achievement of good results. However, the lesson identified is that more direct and significant involvement of the District Administration in school feeding is needed to ensure that this initiative will be sustainable in the long term, and that it will be owned and managed by the Government of Malawi and the participating communities, and not by WFP. This more participatory process will require time and patient effort.
39. The issues of teacher recruitment and classroom construction are other important lessons identified. When school feeding is introduced, class size will grow rapidly and dramatically, and spillover from surrounding villages will be difficult to control. Unless the number of teachers and classrooms is also increased, it will be impossible to maintain primary education standards. The quality of primary education is presently not addressed by this pilot. The WFP initiative of school feeding must be part of the Government's comprehensive strategy—supported by different donors—to provide free, accessible primary education that is also relevant and effective.

### Recommendations

- ✍ The pilot project should be expanded with the full involvement of the district authorities, as well as Ministry of Education support, and be made conditional on complementary inputs from the Government in terms of classrooms and teachers to cope with expected increases in enrolment.
- ✍ Community sensitization should be carried out through district assemblies and their staff well before school feeding begins in order to ensure that village-level structures be set up that can continue the programme after WFP support ends.

### Expandable Safety Nets (up to US\$2.5 million/year)

40. An indicative annual budget of US\$2.5 million was included in the CP for “expandable interventions” in EPAs experiencing “unusual levels of food access stress”. In recognition of the frequency, diversity and intensity of natural disasters in Malawi, the Parliament has approved a Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act. To give effect to this, the Government is in the process of formulating a National Disaster Management Plan that emphasizes the importance of a multi-sector approach for reducing the impact of disasters. In the light of these considerations, the WFP country office, together with the Government, has recast the



expandable safety net supplementary activity as a Disaster Mitigation and Response (DM&R) project.

41. The mission is persuaded of the relevance and usefulness of the activities envisaged in terms of encouraging preventive measures to mitigate future disasters. However, to do so there is a need to ensure that disaster mitigation takes precedence over response. In Malawi, natural disasters usually come in the form of drought and/or floods and thus require, *inter alia*, the creation of water control and usage infrastructure, the consolidation of river embankments and the carrying-out of appropriate soil and water conservation measures.
42. In the context of the WFP Malawi Country Programme, the mission is of the opinion that these activities may be carried out most cost effectively by integrating the resource flows for RIRD with those proposed for DM&R in the framework of a single food aid facility. This intervention should be designed in an integrated and flexible manner so as to maximize community participation in the planning, design and implementation of activities and the identification of beneficiaries. The food assistance provided by this facility would operate through District or Urban Assemblies in the most vulnerable EPAs as defined by VAM and based on recommendations from the respective districts. The implementing partner may be an NGO, community group or district administration.

#### **Recommendation**

- ✍ During the current CP, a modified intervention should be introduced on a pilot basis within the framework of the RIRD and DM&R activities to test the feasibility and efficacy of the proposed approach. This approach would have the virtue of combining and maximizing the four benefits expected to accrue from country programming: integration; concentration and better targeting; coherence and internal consistency; and flexibility.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

AMG	Assistance to Malnourished Groups
CP	Country Programme
CPAC	Country Programme Advisory Committee
CSO	Country Strategy Outline
DAGG	Development Assistance Group on Gender
DM&R	Disaster Mitigation and Response
DSC	Direct Support Costs
EPA	Extended Planning Area
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MCH	Mother and Child Health
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOHP	Ministry of Health and Population
PAP	Poverty Alleviation Programme
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSA	Programme Support and Administrative
QAP	Quick Action Project
RIRD	Rural Infrastructure Rehabilitation and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNV	United Nations Volunteer
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping

