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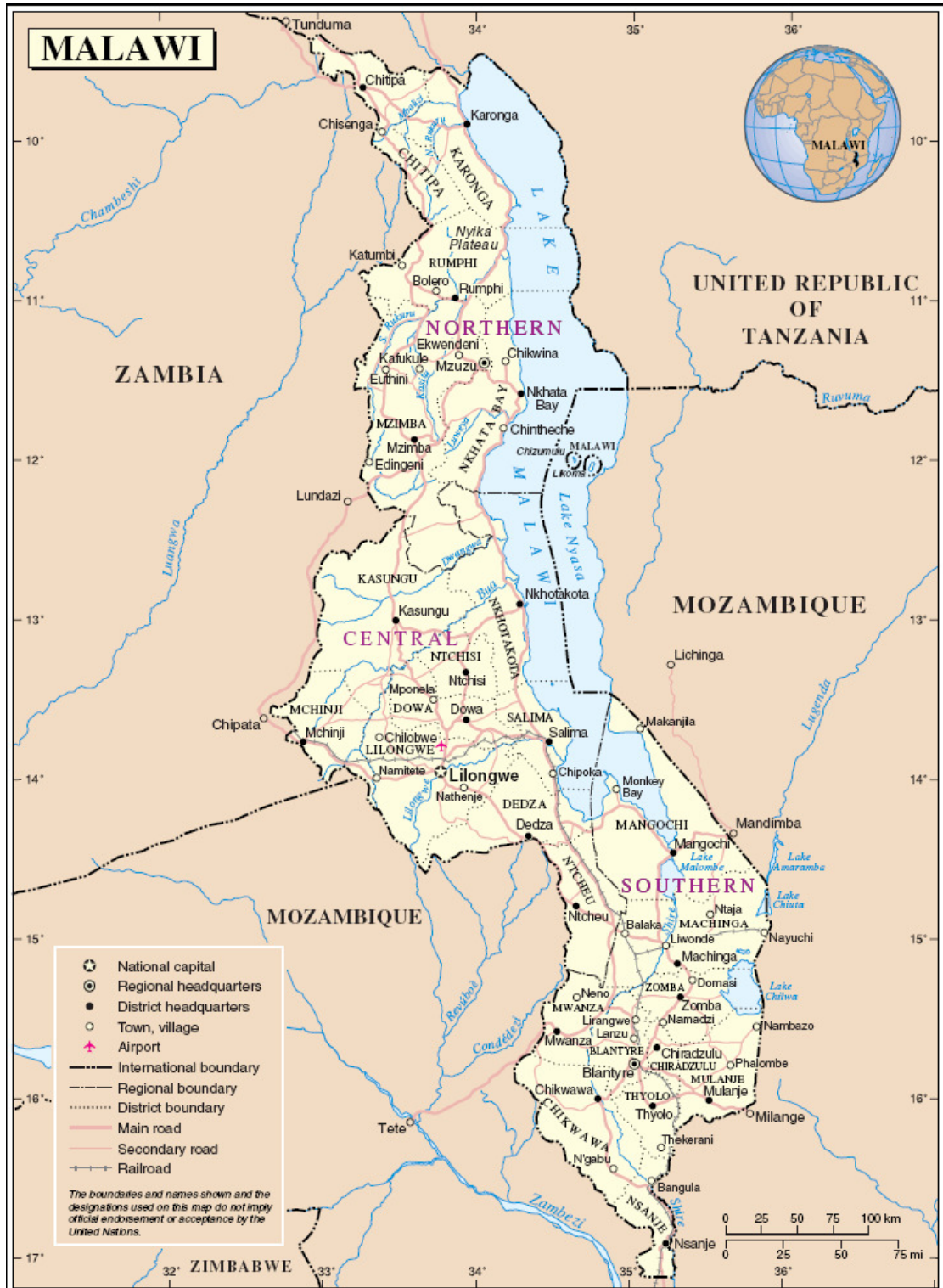
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Executive Summary

The Malawi country context between 2000 and 2008 can be divided into two periods: an initial period of crisis and instability (2000-2006) followed by recovery and gains in food security, economic stabilisation, and the strengthening of governance and Malawi's aid architecture. The situation was characterised by:

- Movement into emergency situations on two occasions, triggered by a combination of external shocks and political/technical factors attributable to both Government and donors;
- Static poverty and human development indicators, showing modest or no gains over the review period;
- Improvements in food security as a result of agricultural input subsidies and strengthening of the overall policy framework and management;
- Improvements to institutional capacity and macro-economic performance, from poor performance in these areas at the beginning of the evaluation period;
- Strengthening of the architecture for the coordination and delivery of international assistance, with stronger Government ownership; and
- Growing political sensitivity on food security issues as well as contradictory positions from counterparts in the Government and the donor community on the World Food Programmes (WFP) future role in Malawi.

Malawi has evolved, therefore, from being a volatile programme environment characterised by reoccurring emergencies, to a country in recovery. Improvements allowed the Government to shift the focus of its most recent poverty reduction strategy toward social protection, social development and disaster preparedness. Food security moved to the centre of the Government's political agenda after 2005, as the most visible public policy issue. However, gains achieved since 2005/6 have yet to be consolidated and proven sustainable in the event of future climate or price shocks. Many *structural* causes of food insecurity remain, including the degradation of natural resources, demographic trends, lack of economic diversification and climate change.

The most important challenge to WFP in this context was responding to rapid changes during the emergency period, then to supporting the transition to recovery, while addressing structural risk and reinforcing positive trends. WFP made a significant contribution to food security during the initial period (2000-2005), strengthening the Government response through alignment and delivering high quality programmes in the areas of emergency assistance, nutrition, school feeding and Food for Work/Food for Assets. However, WFP's contribution after 2005 has been affected by difficulties in moving towards a recovery and social protection orientation. Evolution of the programme was affected by the contradictory positions of its counterparts; a gap between Government requests, Government's political sensitivities over food aid and what international donors were willing to fund. These contradictions contributed to resource mobilisation problems. They were reflected in, or were the consequence of WFP's internal difficulties in defining and communicating its role.

WFP has been working in Malawi since 1965 with a total of 33 operations for a value of over US\$ 1 billion (in current prices). Between 2000 and 2008, WFP's portfolio in Malawi included six emergency operations, three protracted relief and recovery operations, two Country Programmes, and two development projects. WFP Office of Evaluation, with the

support of the Malawi Country Office and WFP's Regional Bureau in Johannesburg, undertook to evaluate the Malawi country portfolio for the 2000 to 2008 period. The goal was to generate evidence and analyses in support of decision-making on strategically positioning WFP in Malawi. It had the specific objectives of (i) *accountability*: assessing and reporting on the performance and results of WFP's portfolio in the context of its mandate and in response to humanitarian and development challenges facing the country; and (ii) *learning*: generating evidence-based analysis and insights that will inform the preparation of a country strategy, its implementation, and the way in which the portfolio and its operations are planned and managed. The portfolio evaluation was conducted by a team of five independent evaluators, with field work taking place in December 2008.

The evaluation addresses three main questions: (i) how well did WFP position itself strategically and align with Government and partner strategies; (ii) how WFP made choices and how strategic these were; and (iii) how the portfolio performed and what the results were.

The WFP programme in Malawi was closely aligned with the Government throughout the evaluation period. Alignment made a tangible contribution towards food security by strengthening Government policy, systems and capacity, in addition to material input to programmes. The strength of alignment reflected changes in the programme environment and WFP's business model, which depends on its relationships with the Government and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) for actual delivery of food goods. WFP appeared to work fully within the Government's policy and priority framework, regardless of political sensitivities over food aid. It was integrated into Government coordinating mechanisms for managing the emergency response and avoided running parallel systems and programmes that would have duplicated or weakened Government efforts for emergency assistance and other programmes. WFP used its position to support broader coordination efforts, led by Government or within the UN system and the NGO community. There were two areas where WFP appeared to be out of alignment with the context and its counterparts:

- As conditions in Malawi improved, WFP had limited capacity to respond to new Government requests for policy support and capacity development in existing programme areas. In this regard, alignment between WFP and its context and counterparts appeared to weaken moving away from the 2005/6 crisis; and
- In 2005 WFP failed to recognise the growing importance to donors of real cost accounting and financial transparency, resulting unnecessary reputation damage and the establishment of a parallel DFID/Government system for delivering emergency assistance.

WFP showed robust analytical and planning performance in emergency situations, where it had strong analytical competency and logistic and programme response capacity. In contrast, WFP's performance in Malawi during the transition to recovery was uneven. WFP appeared to have a weaker analytical and planning capacity to manage the transition from emergency to recovery. The WFP's tendency to rely on analyses generated by counterparts was effective in a resource-scare environment, and consistent with the principles of alignment. However, the programme did not have sufficient internal capacity outside of emergencies to analyse counterpart information and understand its implications. As a result, strategic planning weakened between 2005 and 2008, and WFP had difficulty in defining and communicating its role in Malawi's recovery. This led WFP into a circle of declining resources and contradictory positions taken by counterparts, where programme choices were as much driven by funding cuts as by WFP's own strategic decisions.

The overall performance of WFP in Malawi was good, generally meeting or exceeding programme objectives within the limitations of funding. WFP's contribution was highly appreciated by Government counterparts and acknowledged by members of the donor community. The evaluation did not find an instance of serious under-performance, or a

programme that was significantly off-track from its objectives. Overall performance was strongest during emergency periods, but weakened as Malawi moved further away in time from the 2005/6 crisis. As key achievements contributing to food security:

- **WFP made an important “upstream” contribution to the development of national policy frameworks and systems**, although these tended to weaken after 2006 with capacity reductions in the Malawi office. WFP contributed to the strengthening of vulnerability assessment and disaster management systems. During emergencies it made a significant contribution towards establishing and supporting systems for humanitarian assistance, with WFP contingency and logistic planning capacity, having a “spill over” effect supporting alignment in the broader emergency-response community. In each of the three programme streams (nutrition, school feeding and food for work/food for assets), WFP made additional contributions to both policy frameworks and national systems for service delivery. However, WFP did not make a systematic contribution to capacity development;
- **WFP logistics system delivered food assistance to Malawi programmes in an efficient and effective manner**, under rapidly changing conditions. Costs were close to or under WFP corporate transport rates and highly competitive with alternatives.. This occurred also during the 2005/6 emergency, when some donors were concerned that these costs were inflated. The record reflects robust management practices and institutional systems;
- **WFP had an effective and sustained policy of local procurement**, with 49 percent of all food goods distributed between 2000 and 2008 being purchased in Malawi. The number increases to 55 per cent if regionally procured food is considered. There was no evidence that WFP caused significant distortions in national market conditions, either through its procurement practices or food distribution activities;
- **WFP made an important contribution to the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition** and, by implication, the prevention of severe acute malnutrition and excess mortality in targeted areas. Supplementary Feeding Programmes implemented by WFP and its Partners since 2003 have consistently achieved and/or exceeded Sphere standard indicators for recovery of children. Performance consistently improved between 2000 and 2008, suggesting some strengthening of delivery systems and/or strategy. Combined with the substantial caseload increases, the evaluation concluded that WFP made a significant contribution to the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition;
- **School feeding activities met or exceeded objectives and beneficiary targets**, resulting from the use of schools as a channel for emergency assistance and growing demand from the Government. On average, enrolment increased 40 percent in programme schools. Attendance, retention and pass rates remained higher than the national average, dropout rates declined and the perception of teachers is that children are now more alert, more participatory in the classroom and their performance has improved. There was also a significant improvement in gender equality, with programme schools showing positive changes in girls’ enrolment. Of concern, school feeding contributed to an “access shock”, with the Government still unable to match rapid enrolment increases with improvements to education quality, such as providing enough qualified teachers and adequate classrooms and materials;
- **WFP-supported Food for Work/Food for Assets programmes have resulted in creation of community assets and rehabilitation or restoration of damaged infrastructure**. Assets were valued by communities and contributed to food security. The field mission verified the existence of assets and that they were generally relevant to needs and of good quality. However, there were concerns about sustainability. FFW/FFA

activities were significantly affected by movement in and out of emergencies, resulting in sudden changes in priorities and affecting continuity. Recent funding levels have led to withdrawal from some activities. Also, there were instances where it appeared that benefits from assets were not being broadly shared in communities.

Donor behaviour had an impact on programme performance, both in terms of the amount of food that was delivered to programmes and the operation of logistics systems. WFP had a mixed record for resource mobilisation between 2000 and 2008. The average resourcing ratio for projects was 55 percent. Resource flows were often erratic, unpredictable and out of step with the ideal pipeline cycle, requiring WFP to be flexible and innovative. However, flexibility placed strains on WFP systems. After 2006, there was also a growing gap between Government requests for assistance in social protection and social development and what donors were willing to support.

The evaluation did not ascertain a clear pattern for donor funding preferences. However, there appeared to be less donor support for WFP involvement in national medium-term recovery efforts. While the two Country Programmes, three of the five EMOPS and one regional PRRO were adequately funded, WFP had difficulty resourcing the country PRROs. Resource mobilisation has become more difficult as Malawi moves further away from the 2005/6 crisis, affecting funding levels for current programmes and planning for the next Country Strategy period.

Key Issues for the Future included:

- Managing the Transition to Recovery in Malawi WFP will need to define its emerging role in Malawi and build a consensus with the Government and donors. It will be important to eliminate the gap between Government requests and donor funding priorities;
- The Importance of Country Strategies Responding to transitional situations (ongoing structural risks co-existing with gradual improvements) requires a comprehensive country strategy. The current system of modality-based planning can produce fragmentation, of analysis, planning and implementation;
- Capacity Development, being relationship dependent, there is a strong programme rationale to improve performance through strengthening counterpart institutions. However, WFP does not have a coherent Capacity Development strategy for Malawi; and
- Alignment within the UN Country Team, to strengthen overall programme performance. The WFP's programme was fully integrated into the United States Agency for International Development (UNDAF) results framework. However, improvements to the UNDAF did not appear to improve performance in developing programme synergies between the WFP and other UN agencies.

Recommendations

- The next Country Strategic Plan should specifically address the WFP's role in Malawi's recovery process. The plan should:
 - Be based on a credible analytical framework, noting positive trends to be supported and measures to mitigate ongoing structural risk to food security;
 - Present the WFP's contribution towards the Government's social protection and social development objectives in a manner that differentiates those contributions from past emergency-oriented assistance;
 - Focus on the transition that needs to occur within remaining activities areas, including moving the WFP's approach to nutrition from curative to preventative and addressing increased Government requests for upstream contributions;

- Identify the human resource requirements to satisfy upstream requests, in the areas of policy, technical assistance and capacity development;
 - Be based, to the extent possible, on agreement with donors and Government and donors on appropriate roles, around which support and resources can be mobilised; and
 - Stress long-term efforts to reduce dependence on food assistance and include clearly defined parameters for an eventual exit strategy.
1. The next Country Strategic Plan should place particular emphasis on integrating a capacity development strategy into the WFP's Malawi programme.
 2. The Malawi Country Office requires adequate professional staff for strategic development, and to plan and manage its programmes. Recognising resource constraints, may require clear priorities on allocation and discussion with donors on funding, noting the principle of aid effectiveness that post-crisis situations are management and knowledge intensive.
 3. WFP should intensify its efforts to develop programme synergies with other UN agencies, within the UNDAF framework.

Recommendations on Logistics

1. To implement the Strategic Priority 3 (Goal 7) of the draft Country Strategy for Malawi 2008–2011 in respect of transfer of knowledge on logistics for large scale national and regional distribution, WFP should provide more comprehensive training for staff and counterparts than is currently available.
2. The “WINGS Management Overview” document was designed to provide the senior management officers with a comprehensive “control panel” listing the most important budgetary and financial parameters for projects.
This should be the case not only for national but also regional programmes. The accuracy of this document should be verified at regular intervals. Anomalies should be traced, corrected and explained.

Recommendations for School Feeding

3. Future School Feeding programmes should consider the impact of expanding demand for education services on the quality of education. Appropriate measures should be taken to coordinate demand and supply-side expansions, usually within the context of a Government led sector plan and the UNDAF process.
4. The WFP should assign at least a Professional Officer to support policy development within the Ministry of Education.. Particular focus should be given to the School Health and Nutrition Strategy and support to the Ministry of Education in the design of its costing and implementation, in the upcoming Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAP) in coordination with other UN agencies, donors and NGOs.
5. WFP should integrate the SFP fully into the Ministry of Education structures and M&E frameworks, including the Education Management of Information System (EMIS). At the same time, it should support the Ministry of Education access to Governments funds for the School Feeding Programme, in preparation for the eventual phase out of WFPs support to the programme.

1. Introduction

1.1. Malawi Country Context

1. **The Malawi country context between 2000 and 2008 can be divided into two periods;** an initial period of crisis and instability (2000-2006) followed by recovery and gains in food security, economic stabilisation, the strengthening of governance and Malawi's aid architecture. Some human development indicators showed modest improvements after being stagnant since the early 1990s. Regardless, many of the underlying structural problems from the initial crisis period remain. Gains have yet to be consolidated and proven sustainable in the event of future climate or price shocks. Managing this transition was the main challenge facing the Government and its international partners, including the WFP.

The Economy

2. **Malawi experienced a period of economic instability between 2000 and 2005,** after an extended period of stagnation. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth fluctuated between 1 percent and 3.5 percent during the period 2000 to 2005, with marked downturns in 2002 and 2005.¹ Malawi signed a Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2000, committing the Government to expenditure targets for debt repayment and pro-poor spending. However, the Government went "off track", with over-spending and a consistent pattern of expenditures assessed by international partners as not pro-poor. As a result:

- The IMF and Common Approach to Budget Support (CABS) donors suspended assistance in October 2001. Normal relations were not restored until 2003;²
- The Government substituted donor assistance with domestic borrowing, expanded the money supply and failed to cut spending levels, creating a fiscal deficit; and
- Domestic debt increased to 26 percent GDP in 2006 from less than 3 percent in 1999/00. The Government's domestic interest payments subsequently increased to 9.2 percent of GDP by 2003/4, reducing resources available for development priorities.

3. The combination of stagnant growth, the suspension of international assistance, high servicing charges for domestic debt and political instability brought Malawi to the brink of an economic crisis by 2002, the same time as the humanitarian crisis was beginning. The situation compounded the 2002 emergency and limited the state's capacity to respond.

4. **Malawi's economy stabilised between 2005 and 2008, supported by improved public resource management and growth.** GDP growth averaged 7.5 percent between 2005/6 and 2007/8, on the strength of good maize harvests, the doubling of export earnings between 2005 and 2008 and some diversification into construction, manufacturing, and services.³ Government and donor observers described Malawi's fiscal position as "stable", characterised by:

¹ Real GDP growth averaged 0.5 percent between 1989 and 1999. Prior to that, per capita growth averaged 2.2 percent between 1969 and 1979 (IMF 2001).

² Donors were highly critical about "the lack of accountability in the management of public resources" (IMF 2001). Concerns focused during and after the 2000 elections on "questionable spending outside of Government priorities" that were assessed as politically motivated with "political developments disrupting budget discipline" (IMF 2002). There was a "consistent pattern of over-expenditure on activities with little direct benefit to the poor, such as the travel of civil servants, state residences, foreign affairs, defence, the National Intelligence Bureau and Special Activities (The Republic of Malawi and World Bank 2007: 148)".

³ The projected GDP growth rate for 2008 was 8.7 percent. In early 2009, the Economist Intelligence Unit reported that Malawi had one of the fastest growing economies in the world, despite the international crisis.

- Growth in revenues and improved public finance management, with the Government generally meeting poverty reduction expenditure targets set in agreement with donors (CABS 2007, 2008; World Bank 2007; IMF 2008, 2009; EUI 2008); and
- A rapid reduction of domestic debt levels to approximately 10 percent of GDP in 2008. In 2006, Malawi also achieved its completion point under the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, receiving the equivalent of US\$3.1 billion in nominal debt relief.⁴

5. **Higher revenues and lower interest payments on the public debt translated into an increase in poverty reduction and social expenditures**, within the framework of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS). The Government and donors credited the shift with “improved progress toward some millennium development goals” (IMF 2009).⁵

6. **Malawi’s economy is highly dependent on agriculture.** There has been some diversification in recent years, with growth in construction, manufacturing and services. The Government’s improved fiscal position also creates an opportunity to support diversification within the MGDS priority of private sector development.⁶ However, Malawi still does not have a well-developed monetary economy. Agriculture is the most important sector, accounting for approximately 40 percent of GDP and 90 percent of foreign exchange earnings during the evaluation period.⁷ Between 80 percent and 90 percent of Malawi’s population depends on subsistence agriculture also making it the country’s main source of livelihood. WFP project documents and the *Malawi Poverty Vulnerability Assessment* (2007) noted:

- Malawi’s poor are particularly dependent on agriculture, with 95 percent of poor households having access to agricultural land;
- On average, households have 1.2 hectares of land, of which one hectare is cultivated. Only 10 percent of households had plots larger than two hectares;
- Poorer families tend to be larger, resulting in a higher ratio of persons per hectare, with more restricted access to the monetary economy; and
- Most cultivated land is rain-fed, with Malawi having very limited irrigation coverage (The Republic of Malawi and World Bank 2007: 150-160).

7. **Malawi’s economy was also dependent on international assistance.** Aid currently accounts for approximately 20 percent of the Gross National Income (GNI) and 50 percent of Government revenues. Eighty percent was allocated to the Government’s capital budget and 20 percent to recurrent costs. Allocations were concentrated in social sectors, meaning donors had a significant role shaping the Government’s development agenda. The ratio of aid to national resources was constant through much of the evaluation period which fluctuated with the exception of 2002 when there was a significant increase in assistance. The Government projects a modest increase in ODA as a percentage of the Gross National Income (GNI) to 23.5 percent in 2015. Development outcomes, therefore, are strongly influenced by the

⁴ After Heavily-Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and MDRI debt relief, Malawi’s stock of external debt fell from 104 percent of GDP at the end of 2005 to 14.3 percent a year later (IMF 2009).

⁵ Figures summarised from IMF *Article IV Staff Reports* during the period 2001 to 2009, the *Malawi Public Expenditure Review* (World Bank 2007) and the Economist Intelligence Units’ *Malawi Country Report* (2007 and 2008).

⁶ The MGDS budget framework is supposed to create an enabling environment for private sector development and improve economic infrastructure such as road networks, energy, water systems and telecommunication (MGDS 2006: xiv).

⁷ Three agricultural commodities accounted for 70 percent of total exports in 2007; Tobacco, tea and sugar (EIU 2008). Of these, tobacco is the largest export, accounting for about 50 percent of earnings.

efficiency and effectiveness of international assistance, and the quality of the relationship between Government and donors.⁸

Human Development

8. **Malawi's overall development situation showed only modest improvements during the evaluation period, remaining one of the 15 poorest countries in the world.**⁹ The Government reported that Malawi is "likely to meet" the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target to halve extreme poverty by 2015. The projection was based on a decline in poverty levels of almost 10 percent between 2005 and 2008, from approximately 50 to 40 percent of the population. The Government and donors attributed improvements to economic conditions and an input subsidy programme in the agriculture sector, which has increased production (Government of Malawi 2008:3).¹⁰

9. **However, there was little progress in reducing poverty levels during most of the evaluation period.** The joint World Bank and Government *Poverty Vulnerability Assessment* (PVA) estimated poverty levels at 52.4 percent in 2005, with 22.4 percent of Malawians classified as ultra-poor. These figures show only a slight improvement from 1998, when the percentage of persons living below the poverty level was 54.1 percent and 23.6 percent were considered ultra-poor.¹¹ There have been some location shifts in the distribution of poverty. Urban poverty increased to 25 percent in 2005, up from 18 percent in 1998. Over the same time, rural poverty in the Southern region declined from 68 to 64 percent. Therefore, while rural areas are disproportionately poor, urban poverty has been increasing more rapidly. The Southern region of Malawi has the highest poverty rates at 65 percent, and is also the most vulnerable to climate shock. Overall, the PVA concluded that the poverty rate "remained about the same between 1998 and 2005", with changes "not statistically significant" (Government of Malawi and World Bank: 2007).

10. **There has been very modest progress on child mortality, underweight prevalence, stunting, wasting and maternal health.** Building on other recent studies, the PVA concluded human development indicators were static, showing modest or no improvement. Child malnutrition has remained virtually unchanged since 1992, and almost half of children under five years of age in Malawi are stunted, and 22 percent are severely stunted (MDGS 2007).

11. **Primary school enrolment has expanded significantly.** The Ministry of Education estimated that primary net enrolment rates had grown from 58 percent in 1992 to 75 percent in 2007 (MDG Report 2008). The introduction of Free Primary Education in 1994 resulted in one million new students entering the system, a 51 percent increase in enrolment from the previous years. Overall enrolment showed a further moderate increase after 2000. It fluctuated in relation to the food security situation and declined during food emergencies, particularly 2002, before recovering from 2004 onwards. There were also improvements after 2000 in the areas of retention, reduced absenteeism, drop-out and evidence that more students are progressing to higher grades.

⁸ Figures are compiled from IMF reports (Staff Reports 2002 to 2008) and the Ministry of Finance, Debt and Aid Division.

⁹ As per the annual United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Reports 2000- 2008

¹⁰ The Government's 2008 report estimates that Malawi is likely to meet or has the potential to meet all MDG targets, except MDG 3 (gender empowerment) and MDG 5 (maternal health).

¹¹ In 1992, the Government and World Bank estimated 55 percent of the population was living in poverty, with 20 percent in ultra-poverty (Government of Malawi, 2002: 6). Aggregate levels, therefore, have been static.

12. **Greater access between 2000 and 2008 was not matched by improvements to the quality of education.** The education system experienced an “access shock” when enrolment expanded rapidly in the mid-1990s, with quality indicators showing a significant decline.¹² The increase had adverse consequences on the managerial capacity of the education system, retention and completion of the entire cycle of primary education. subsequently There were only modest improvements in the quality indicators between 2000 and 2008.

13. **Analysis of educational indicators found important deficiencies in the education system’s capacity to deliver services.** In part, these are the result of success of demand-side interventions that: (i) increased enrolment levels by reducing barriers that impede access to education; and (ii) improved incentives for retention and reduced absenteeism. At the same time, supply side investments have not kept pace with increased demand, such as the hiring and training of teachers, infrastructure (providing classrooms and providing water and sanitation facilities in the schools), curriculum development and expanding the school network.

Food Security

14. **Food security economy was affected by vulnerability to weather-related shocks, shifting terms of trade and volatile world energy prices.** During the evaluation period, Malawi experienced a combination of:

- Recurring climatic, terms of trade and price shocks, which affected the production of food, its availability in markets and household purchasing power;
- Degradation of Malawi’s natural resource base, including 2.8 percent annual population growth placed the small holder agriculture under pressure.;¹³
- Growing HIV/AIDS prevalence, linked to food security through productivity losses, erosion of coping mechanisms and decline in nutrition status;
- Lack of economic diversification, with limited employment or livelihood opportunities contributing to low purchasing power when household food stocks had been depleted;¹⁴ and
- Economic crisis during the first half of the evaluation period to 2005, affecting Government’s capacity to respond and invest in development priorities.

15. **There have been improvements to Malawi’s food security since 2006, for both availability (production) and access (purchasing power) to food.** The Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) projected a modest maize production surplus for 2008/2009, with some localised shortages and 1.2 million persons estimated to be food insecure (MVAC 2008).¹⁵ This compares with 4.6 million vulnerable persons during the 2005 crisis (MVAC 2005). Famine Early Warning Systemswork, UNAID, (FEWS NET) reported that “production forecasts and income generating opportunities remain promising (for 2009) most households will have enough food from the crops being harvested this season, or will be able to access them at market” (Sept 2008). The 2008/9 projections build on favourable production levels, above historical averages since 2006 and outpacing demographic trends.

¹² These included the ratio of students to teachers, students to text books, students to desk, student to classrooms and teacher training levels, among others.

¹³ The *2008 Population and Census Preliminary Report* estimated total population growth at 2.8 percent annually over the evaluation period, for total growth of 32 percent between 1998 and 2008 (Government of Malawi and UNFPA 2008).

¹⁴ In 2002, the Government estimated that rural poor households spent 81percent of their income on food (MPRS 2002: Table 36).

¹⁵ The 2008/9 MVAC was drafted in June 2008 but had not been released at the time of the field mission in December 2008. The Government considered the estimate of 1.2 million persons to be exaggerated, its estimates being closer to 500,000 persons. There appeared to be a consensus during the field mission that the lower estimate was correct, as the situation had evolved.

While availability has improved, concerns over access remained given poverty levels and food prices in markets.

Table 1: Estimate of Vulnerable Persons (MVAC reports 2005- 2008)

Year	2008	2007	2006	2005
Number of Vulnerable Persons	500,000	519,200	833,000	4,200,000

16. **Regardless, Malawi was food insecure between 2000 and 2006, part of long term trend dating back to the early 1990.** Maize production levels were volatile, and heavily influenced by climatic,¹⁶ terms of trade and/or price shocks that undermined purchasing power. There were food deficits after the 2001/2 and 2004/5 growing seasons, requiring two large-scale international food aid interventions:

- **In 2001/2**, a modest production decline from due to erratic weather in some locations, combined with mismanagement of grain reserves and an increase in HIV/AIDS prevalence, causing 30 percent of the population to require emergency assistance. Evaluations from the period conclude that national food security policies were inconsistent and unpredictable, development partners provided contradictory advice to Government and early warning failures delayed the humanitarian response;¹⁷
- **In 2005/6**, drought caused a significant decrease in maize production throughout Southern Africa, resulting in 55 percent of Malawi’s population needing assistance (FEWS NET Nov. 2005). The shock of insufficient rainfall was compounded in 2006 by flooding in the Southern region. Food availability declined further when the supply in Government-run Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation (ADMARC)
- maize markets was exhausted, at the same time most households needed to purchase. This left households “totally dependent on local markets as prices rose steeply” (FEWS NET, Dec 2005). FEWS NET described the price increases of late 2005/early 2006 as “unprecedented, affecting access well into the next growing season”;¹⁸ and
- **Lessons learned from 2002/3 contributed to better management of the 2005/6 crisis.** In particular, there was evidence of improved emergency policy, early warning and response capacities, with agriculture and food security moving to the centre of the Government’s agenda in the MGDS;¹⁹

¹⁶ UNDP reported that there were 40 weather-related emergencies between 1970 and 2006, including 16 during the 1990s (UNDP 2007). As early as 1997, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported long term changes in weather and rainfall patterns, resulting in drought and intensified rainfall in different parts of Malawi. These contributed to the ecosystem degradation in Malawi and complex emergencies and conflict in the region (IPCC 1997). The IPCC’s report for 2007 noted precipitation declined in the Southern Africa region between 1970 and 2007, with the area affected by drought likely to increase (IPCC 2007). A 2002 World Bank Study concluded “the relationship throughout the [Southern Africa] region between production volatility and climatic events is striking”, noting an increased incidence of drought and “the role which the extremely high rainfall in Malawi in 2000/01 played in the lead up to the food crisis in 2002 have highlighted the risks associated with high rainfall” (World Bank 2003).

¹⁷ Assessments of the 2002 crisis focus on the combination of natural, technical and political factors, with the latter two being attributed to both Government and the international community. The crisis “followed a sequence of adverse events: harvest failure, bad information, a depleted grain reserve, import bottlenecks, and unaffordable food prices”, with a delayed international emergency response (Stevens et al 2003). A USAID study found “food security issues have become ‘externalised’. Competing views, interests, and demands have polarised [national and international] stakeholders, compromised policy coherence, and subjected policy-making and implementation to ideological leanings. Hence, policy is marked by erratic swings, and the social contract between the Government of Malawi and its citizens is eroding” (USAID 2005).

¹⁸ See FEWS NET, Nov, Dec 2005 and Jan 2006.

¹⁹ Regardless, FEWS NET reported “slow and intermittent flow of food aid” from international donors (FEWS NET Nov 2005). This is consistent with the evaluation’s finding that donor contributions through WFP were erratic and unpredictable during and after the 2005/6 emergency.

17. **Maize production since 2006 has remained above historical levels and population growth.**²⁰ Access was affected by price fluctuations throughout 2006-2008. For the 2008/9 season, FEWS NET reported “sustained higher prices of maize will erode the purchasing power of the rural poor... reducing their ability to access food for household consumption once their own-produced food runs out” (FEWS NET May 2008).²¹ The Government and donors credited the expansion of fertiliser subsidies for improved security, combined improvements in the policy framework, stronger institutions and favourable weather conditions (Government of Malawi 2008; IMF 2007, CABS 2007). Government’s improved fiscal position means that it can afford to look at alternatives for food aid, such as crop insurance and the purchase of commodity options in regional markets. However, there were concerns about the sustainability of gains. Many of the underlying structural problems for vulnerability remain. Also, Donors were concerned that the high cost of input subsidies, which accounted for 15 percent of budget expenditures in 2007. the Government committed to maintain the subsidies during the 2008/9 election campaign.

18. **As conditions improve, the Government’s development agenda is shifting to social protection and social development programmes, including strengthening basic services.** The MGDS states “social protection strategies should include measures to decrease the risk of shocks and strengthen resilience to shocks (such as those identified in food security and economic empowerment) (2007: 43). The MGDS also made important commitments to social development (health, education and gender equality) (2007: 60). Food security has been at the centre of the current Government’s policy since assuming office in 2005.

Governance

19. **There was a consensus among informants that the overall quality of Governance has improved,** understood as strengthening the policy environment (framework for Donor alignment) and the state’s institutional capacity to implement development programmes (individual and into political systems). Malawi has not experience the same levels of instability or conflict/violence as many of its neighbours. Some NGOs reported an increase in incidence of land-related conflicts at the community level and election-related incidents of intimidation.²² However, these did not appear linked to political instability, or to present a significant risk.

20. **There has been an increase in political tensions prior to Presidential and Legislative elections,** scheduled for May 2009. Tensions originated with the 2004 elections, with unresolved issues spilling over to the current campaign.²³ Election-related competition was credited with an impasse in Parliament on key legislation, including delayed approval of the 2008/2009 national budget and other decision-making in policy areas of concern to WFP. Regardless of the election outcome, key political actors may not accept the results, extending tensions into the future.

21. **There was progress in developing the Government’s policy framework and the state’s institutional capacity** for implementing programmes. Informants and field study observation noted strengthening of:

²⁰ Production in the period between the two crises recovered to historical levels, before declining again in 2004/5.

²¹ FEWS NET and others noted a contradiction between increased supply and price increases, which could not be explained with existing information (FEW NET May 2008).

²² See reports of the *Forum for Dialogue and Peace* (2005- 2008) and the Body of Case Handling Institutions (BCHI), newsletter *Public Ear*

²³ President Mutharika came to power on the United Democratic Front (UDF) ticket but left the party in 2005 to form the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP). The relationship between Mutharika’s DPP and the UDF has since deteriorated.

- The Government's overall policy framework, including through implementation of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (2006-2011);
- Donor confidence in government performance, particularly for macro-economic management;
- Institutional capacity, in the areas of social programme implementation relevant to WFP programme;
- Policy and institutions for food market management; and
- Institutions and systems for disaster preparedness and vulnerability assessment.

International Assistance

22. **There was evidence that the quality of development assistance to Malawi has improved**, in terms of the overall tone of the relationship, coherence and coordination, alignment with Government priorities. The relationship between the Government and donors was contentious during between 2000 and 2004/5, at which time there appeared to be a lack of coordination within the donor community itself. The Government, donors and the United Nations system have developed a more comprehensive aid coordination framework in recent years. The shift corresponds with growing: (i) Government capacity and assertiveness in playing a leadership role; (ii) donor confidence in its relationship with the Government, and (iii) the emergence of ownership and alignment as principles of aid effectiveness. As some elements:

- Government priorities are expressed in the *Malawi Growth and Development Strategy* (MGDS; 2006-2011). Recent donor assessments of Government performance against targets is positive, although concerns remain about the Government's ability to fund agricultural input subsidies (IMF 2007/2008/2009; CABS 2008);
- The *Malawi Development Assistance Strategy 2006-2011* (DAS) provides a framework for the mobilisation and allocation of international assistance, which is accepted by the international community;
- A database was established within the Ministry of Finance to track assistance. Informants noted that reporting is voluntary, and the reporting performance of UN agencies and donors has been uneven. The Government stated that its objective is to move more assistance *on-budget*, moving through state financial systems;
- An important portion of assistance is delivered to Malawi as budget support, coordinated with the Government through the CABS, which provides a forum for policy discussion between the donors and the Government;
- Government led coordination at the sector level appeared to be strengthening. There were national sector plans in four areas of concern to WFP (Education, Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition). SWAP's were established for Health and HIV/AIDS, with pooled funding arrangements under discussion for Education, Agriculture and Water;
- WFP participates in Government-led coordination forums for HIV/AIDS, natural disaster preparedness, the vulnerability assessment process (MVAC), among others; and

There has been progress towards UN reform objectives, through the *United Nations Development Assistance Framework* (UNDAF 2008-2011) process. United Nations Country Team (UNCT) members noted that it will take several years to align existing agency programmes Contradictory Positions of Stakeholders

23. **WFP's main counterparts in Malawi had contradictory positions on the role of food assistance.** Contradictions were related to the tensions between: (i) improved food security and the political sensitivity of related issues; (ii) continuing underlying structural risk; (iii) continuing Government requests for food inputs to social protection and social development programmes, and; (iv) WFP's difficulty defining and communicating a role in the post-crisis period after 2006.

24. **Stakeholders acknowledged during interviews that food security gains are fragile and reversible**, and that important structural risks remain (political tensions, reliance on agriculture, reoccurrence of shocks, environmental degradation and the Government's ability to sustain input subsidy financing, amongst others). Counterparts in Government and the donor community generally stated they want WFP to continue monitoring the situation, maintain a presence in Malawi for emergency preparedness and contribute towards social protection initiatives (disaster preparedness and responding to emergencies). Some also referred to "upstream" roles for WFP, supporting the development of policy, institutional systems and state capacity in food security-related areas.²⁴ However, there were few specifics about what kind of "presence" was appropriate, or indication of what donors were willing to fund.

25. **Food security was the most visible and important public policy issue.** The Government declared Malawi to be food secure, with related issues being central to the 2009 elections. As a result, there were sensitivities around WFP's role given its association with emergency assistance.²⁵ While the emergency period has passed, WFP responds to Government requests for food, technical and policy inputs to its social protection and social development initiatives, in the areas of nutrition, school feeding, HIV/AIDS, vulnerability assessment and disaster preparedness. There was the perception of tension between the Government's objectives of reducing dependence on emergency assistance while requiring WFP food inputs for recovery-oriented programmes. From interviews, the problem appeared to be the association of WFP with emergency programmes.

26. **In-country donors appeared to accept the Government's position on food security.** Major donors conclude that the Government has the expanded capacity and fiscal space to address a crisis, and do not foresee a need for food aid. During interviews, several donors made strong statements about WFP attempting to maintain a presence in Malawi after the emergency situation had passed. While wanting WFP to keep some form of emergency capacity in Malawi, they have been reluctant to provide funding to WFP social protection and social development-oriented programmes, and there was limited support for WFP in recovery roles. The donor's position was reflected in funding reductions after 2006. It also appeared, therefore, that a gap existed between the Government requests to WFP and the programmes donors are willing to support.

1.2. The WFP Portfolio in Malawi

27. **The World Food Programme undertook 12 operations in Malawi between 2000 and 2008.** According to the project documents, the total amount of food aid for delivery was 957.595 mt, with an approved total budget of US\$ 556.2 million.²⁶ The programme portfolio included two Country Programmes (CPs), six Emergency Operations (EMOP), three Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO) and one Development Project (DEV). Nine of the operations were completed during the evaluation period and three operations were still under implementation.²⁷ The portfolio also included three large emergency responses, covered the Southern Africa region and including Malawi. These were managed by the Regional Bureau in Johannesburg.²⁸

²⁴ Stakeholders did not have a common definition of "upstream". However, it usually referred to the creation or strengthening of state systems, including policy frameworks, legislation, management systems and capacity development. "Downstream" referred to the actual delivery of programmes and services.

²⁵ As one example, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture stated "WFP and FAO should know that we have enough food and it's time they moved from food relief in Malawi to food production because the whole world has recognised us, even the UN, that Malawi is on course to achieving the MGD 1 [on food security]. Deputy Minister for Agriculture Frank Mwenifumbo, as quoted in 'Hunger Looming in Malawi', *The Nation* Blantyre, 07 October 2008, in a speech responding to the 2008 MVAC estimates.

²⁶ Total value of approved budgets as recorded in WINGS per 08/12/2008.

²⁷ PRRO 10309.0, DEV 105810.0 and PRRO 10586.0

²⁸ EMOP 10200.0, EMOP 10290.0 and PRRO 10310.0

28. During the period 2000-2008, the WFP contributed to strategic planning and capacity development within the Government, including:

- Analytical work on food security and school feeding, among other issues (three crop and food supply assessments with Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), two school feeding baselines studies and other analytical work carried out with grants);
- Formation of the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) and support to development of the Government's disaster prevention and management system, among other activities; and
- Various need assessments, and capacity and policy development activities.

WFP Malawi also:

- Adopted a second generation *Country Strategy Outline* in 2000 and began work on a country strategy in September 2008; and
- Contributed to two *United Nations Development Assistance Framework* (UNDAF) documents (UNDAF 2002- 2006 and UNDAF 2008-2011), as well as various UNCT planning and coordination processes.

29. Of the 12 operations in WFP's Malawi portfolio between 2000 and 2008, nine operations were completed by September 2008 and three were ongoing. It was too early to assess resourcing ratio for the three ongoing operations. Of the nine completed operations, the confirmed resourcing figures of the three regional operations were inconsistent with the design budget figures, the contributions released to the operation and the final amount of expenditures.²⁹

The average resourcing ratio for the remaining six operations was 55 percent:

- The two Country Programmes had resourcing ratios of respectively 80 percent and 64 percent;³⁰
- Two of the EMOPS achieved satisfactory resourcing ratios of 72 percent and 77 percent respectively;³¹
- The ratios for two EMOPs were low, at 37 percent and 30 percent respectively;³² and
- Ongoing programmes reported low funding levels.

30. While programmes were well funded, the flow of resources from donors was often late, unpredictable and erratic, with the tonnage distributed to the beneficiaries reflecting funding levels. In the case of the two latter EMOPs, the tonnage did not reach half of the target set at the design stage. The pace of resource flows from donors was as important as the funding levels. The two Country Programmes were well resourced overall. However, the monthly resourcing rate from the "directed multilateral donations" was erratic and unpredictable, with periods of 10 months or more during which no donations were recorded. While the four Malawi EMOPs also enjoyed good initial support, they were confronted with a dwindling flow of contributions that compelled the Country Office to downsize operations. The three completed regional operations recorded encouraging levels of monthly resourcing during their initial phase. However, the bulk of resourcing was only received 12 to 16 months after the operations got under way.

²⁹ Three regional projects: EMOPs 10200.0, 10290.0 and PRRO 10310.0.

³⁰ Two country projects: CPs 10014.0 and 10106.0.

³¹ EMOPs 10056.0 and 10152.0.

³² EMOPs 10153.0 and 10201.0.

31. **Funding delays forced WFP to innovate with the use of other financing channels, some of them untested.** A case in point was the regional PRRO 10310.0. When confronted with a widespread crop failure and slow donor response in the 2004/5 season, WFP drew funds from several different credit lines simultaneously. WFP showed a high degree of flexibility in securing the necessary funds. However, flexibility places its own strain on WFP system, including exposing some systemic failures with WFP losing track of the exact amount of funds committed and disbursed between different elements of the regional operations.³³

32. **Country Programmes with development components received good support from the donor community, particularly during the period 2002 to 2005.** The finding appeared to contradict the perception that donors favour WFP emergency operations. The two largest regional operations, one EMOP and one PRRO, spanning as much as seven countries in Southern Africa, also benefited from good support from the donors, albeit the initial response was slow resulting in some organisational problems for WFP at both regional and country level. While the data supplied in respect of the resourcing of the Malawi part of the three regional operations, two EMOPS and one PRRO, is totally inconclusive, the level of expenditures recorded in WINGS reached close to 80 percent of the approved design budget figures. This was a clear indicator that WFP managed to secure the necessary resources from the donors to run the operations.

1.3 Evaluation Objective and Method

Goals and Objectives of the Malawi Portfolio Evaluation³⁴

33. The *Evaluation of WFP's Portfolio in Malawi* was commissioned by the World Food Programme's Office of Evaluation (OEDE), and undertaken with the support of WFP's Country Office in Malawi and Regional Office in South Africa. The goal of the evaluation was to guide choices on the strategic positioning of the World Food Programme, as an input into WFP Malawi's Country Strategy Document that will reflect the implementation of WFP's Strategic Plan 2008 – 2011. The evaluation had two main objectives:

- **Accountability:** Assess and report on the performance and results of WFP's portfolio in the context of its mandate and in response to humanitarian and development challenges that the country faces; and
- **Learning:** Generate evidence-based analysis and insights that will inform the preparation of the country strategy, its implementation, and the way in which the portfolio and its operations are planned and managed.

34. The main users of the portfolio evaluation will be WFP's Country Office and its partners within, the Government, the International community, NGOs, private sector, civil society, and WFP's Regional Bureau. The evaluation will be presented to WFP's Executive Board to inform them of the performance and outcomes of WFP's portfolio in Malawi and to share the lessons learned. Finally, WFP may use the results to support planned mid-term evaluations in Malawi of the Government's MGDS and of the UNDAF.

³³ See PRRO 10310.0 evaluation, paragraphs 69 and 70 (page 32), Paragraph 71 (page 33), paragraphs 95 - 96 - 97 (page 39).

³⁴ The goals and objectives of the evaluation as well as the methodology were outlined in the *Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of WFP Portfolio in Malawi 2000-2008* (September 2008), which is included as Annex 1 to this report. The methodology was further developed in the *Inception Report* (November 2008).

Approach and Methodology

35. The evaluation was conducted between September 2008 and January 2009, including a preparatory mission (September 2008) and a field mission (December 2008). The team was comprised of five persons, reporting to the Director of OEDE. The evaluation was also exposed to the review of two external experts. The evaluation covered the time period between 2000 and 2008. Some events and programmes prior to 2000 were also considered, where relevant to understanding the evaluation period. The 2000-2008 timeframe was selected as:

- The last WFP *Country Strategy Outline* was done in 2000, which was used as a milestone for comparing past strategic positioning;
- There was a framework of strategies that developed during the 2000-2008 period, including through regional operations; and
- The need for new strategic directions to respond to arising challenges and to implement WFP's country strategies for 2008-2011.

36. The evaluation period also allowed for an assessment of WFP's performance under a variety of conditions. The period 2000-2008 included two elections cycles (2004 and 2008/9), an economic downturn (2000-2006), two humanitarian crises (2002/3 and 2005/6), a period of post-crisis recovery (2006 onwards), a cycle of deterioration and renewal in the relationship between the Government and the donor community (2000-2005) and prolonged political stalemate in Parliament affecting the Government's policy agenda (2005 onwards), among other events.

37. The evaluation included programmes implemented throughout the national territory of Malawi, including those implemented under the three regional operations. Interviews with Government officials took place in Lilongwe and Blantyre. The field study focused on operations in Kasungu, Salima (Central Region), Blantyre, Chiradzulu District, Nsanje District, and Phalombe (Southern Region). These were chosen as locations where WFP concentrated its programme delivery, allowing for best use of the evaluation team's time and resources. No visits were made to the north of Malawi, although related operations were covered in the document review.

The methodology focused on identifying:

- The outcomes from WFP's contribution to Malawi at the portfolio level between 2000 and 2008; and
- The manner in which the results of individual programmes and activities accumulated to create those outcomes.

38. The evaluation assessed the efficiency and effectiveness of WFP's logistics operations in Malawi, noting they delivered WFP's primary programme input. Programme was then structured into four thematic areas, reflecting the programming activities integrated into many of the 12 programme operations. The streams included:

- Emergency operations, consisting of General and Targeted Food Distribution programmes;
- Operations with a social protection orientation, including Nutrition (Therapeutic and Supplementary Feeding Programmes), School Feeding, Food for Work/ Food for Assets;
- Programming on cross-cutting issues; and
- "Upstream" work in the areas of policy and capacity development, and technical assistance to the Government. WFP also offer these services to some Civil Society Organisations and NGO.

39. The *Evaluation of WFP's Portfolio in Malawi* included programmes and activities, with three exceptions:

- Operations related to refugees, excluded as the programmes did not benefit Malawians directly. Also, refugee programme were small in scale relative to other WFP programmes as well as the Government's budget. The programme impact of support to refugees, therefore, was unlikely to have been significant;³⁵
- Cash and vouchers. A pilot was conducted in 2006/2007. Programmes were still in a start-up period and had not been operational long enough to make an assessment; and
- Purchase-for-Progress (P4P) initiatives. P4P programming was also only in the start-up phase with insufficient progress to carry out an evaluation.

40. The evaluation focused on three questions:

Question 1, Strategic Alignment: The extent to which WFP programmes were aligned with the priorities and programmes of the Government of Malawi, and the priorities of the UNDAF and of WFP's main counterparts (multi-lateral, bilateral and NGO). Within WFP's alignment strategy, the evaluation was also asked to consider the trade-offs between aligning with Government and other counterparts (external coherence) and with WFP strategic plans and corporate policies (internal coherence).

Question 2, Strategic Planning: Assess how WFP positioned itself strategically between 2000 and 2008, considering formal strategy documents and evolving strategies through its portfolio; the main factors that influenced strategic choices, and how those factors can be considered and managed in future strategic planning.

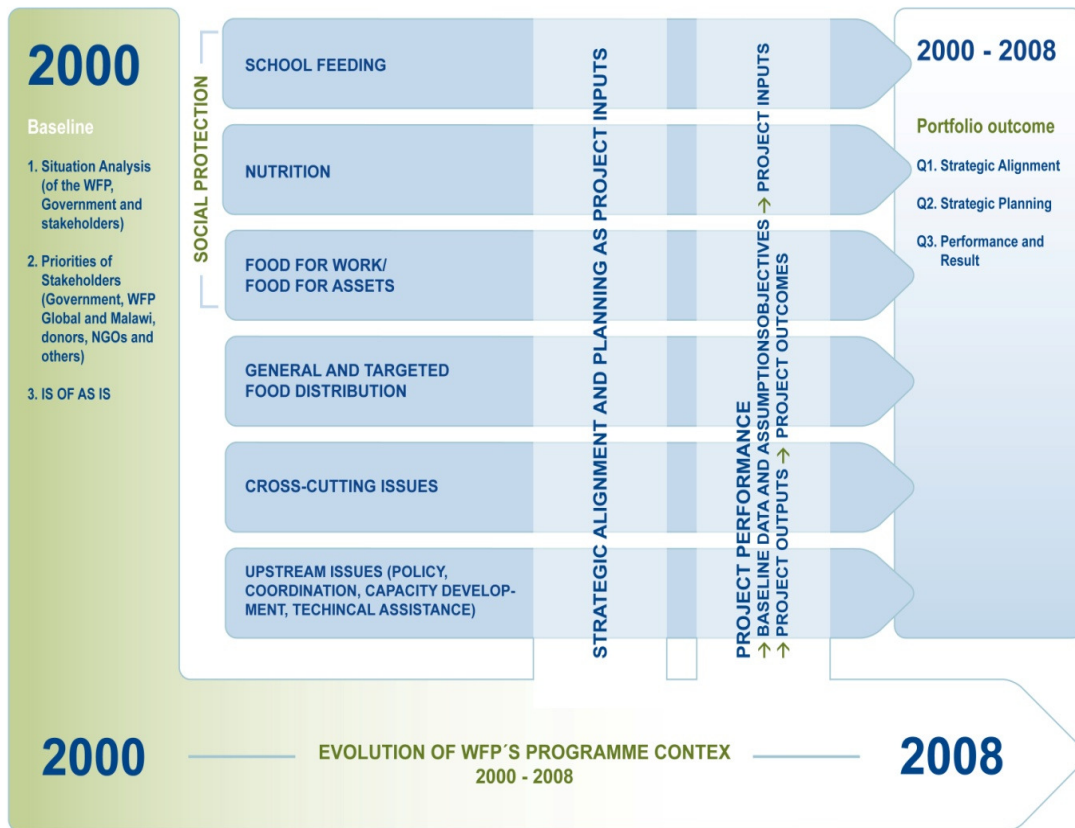
Question 3, Performance and Results: Assess the performance of the overall WFP portfolio and whether it formed a coherent country programme; identify results in the key programme areas; explain the factors contributing to those results, including factors within and beyond WFP's control, and; identify lessons that can be applied to future strategic choices and operations.

41. **Cross-cutting Issues:** Both WFP and the Malawi UNDAF (2008-2011) highlight the importance of gender equality. The evaluation considered gender issues across the three questions to: analyze and assess whether, and to what extent, WFP's portfolio placed it in a strategic position to address gender issues; whether gender issues were built into the design of operations and other work; assess results in a way that is sex-disaggregated and reflects on changes in gender relations that might have resulted from WFP operations, and; report gender-related outcomes.

42. **"Upstream" Contributions:** *Upstream* refers to WFP's contribution toward strengthening the Government's policy framework and programmes systems. These included policy development and capacity development as well technical assistance. Some contributions were situated elsewhere in the aid architecture (sectoral processes, the UNCT/UNDAF and support to civil society).

³⁵ WFP contributed approximately US\$ 375 million to support of Mozambican refugees in Malawi between 1987 and 1993. The contribution declined to approximately US\$ 2.5 million between 2002 and 2007, in support of refugees from the Great Lakes region of Central Africa.

Figure 1: Overview of the Evaluation Methodology



2. Evaluation Findings

2.1. Strategic Positioning and Alignment

43. **Alignment contributes to food security when it strengthens relevant policy frameworks, systems and capacity, in Government and civil society.** The importance of alignment grew between 2000 and 2008. From initial discussions at the global level during the late 1990s on aid effectiveness, the evaluation period saw:

- Adoption of the *Paris Declaration* (2005)³⁶ and *Accra Agenda for Action* (2008)³⁷. These commit donors and international organizations to align behind Government priorities and use local systems; and
- Integration of *Paris Declaration* principles into UN reform initiatives, at the corporate level³⁸ and down to the country-specific UNDAF.³⁹

44. In Malawi, the conditions for alignment were weak during the first part of the evaluation period. Conditions improved after 2005, facilitated by the movement out of crisis (humanitarian, political and economic), and strengthening of:

- Government's policy agenda and capacity;
- Malawi aid architecture, and the confidence between the donors and the Government; and
- UNDAF providing an avenue for developing WFP's relationships within the UNCT.

45. Changes reflect a greater assertiveness shown by the Government with its international counterparts, as its capacity strengthened and food security moved the centre of its policy and political agenda.

Government Policy Framework

46. **Malawi's overall development strategy was set out in two successive Poverty Reduction Strategy papers (PRSP); the *Malawi Economic Growth Strategy* (MEGS) 2002-2006 and the *Malawi Growth and Development Strategy* (MGDS) 2006-2011.** These were preceded by an Interim PRSP (2000-2002) intended as a road map for approval of a full PRSP, and by structural adjustment agreements with the IMF during the 1990s. PRSP objectives were supported by sector strategies/policies:

- The MGDS placed emphasis on six key priority areas of agriculture and food security; irrigation and water development; transport infrastructure development; energy generation and supply; integrated rural development; and prevention and management of nutrition disorders, and HIV/AIDS;

³⁶ In the *Paris Declaration*, donors commit to “Base their overall support — country strategies, policy dialogues and development co-operation programmes — on partners’ national development strategies and periodic reviews of progress in implementing these strategies” (OECD 2005).

³⁷ The *Accra Agenda for Action* states “*country ownership is key.*” Developing country governments will take stronger leadership of their own development policies, and will engage with their parliaments and citizens in shaping those policies. Donors will support them by respecting countries’ priorities, investing in their human resources and institutions, making greater use of their systems to deliver aid, and increasing the predictability of aid flows” (OECD 2008).

³⁸ The UN High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence sets out as one of its five strategic directions that UN agencies “ensure coherence and consolidation of United Nations activities, in line with the principle of country ownership, at all levels (country, regional, Headquarters)” (UN A/61/583; 2006).

³⁹ The UN *Development Assistance Framework for Malawi 2008-2011* commits agencies to “full alignment behind the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy” (2007).

- The MPRSP was based on four pillars: rapid sustainable pro-poor economic growth and structural transformation; enhancing human capital development; Improve the quality of life of the most vulnerable and; Good governance. The MPRS included HIV/AIDS, gender, environment, and science and technology as cross-cutting issues;
- The 2000 Interim Strategy did not elaborate a poverty reduction strategy, but noted the Government's focus at the time was on: (i) small holder agriculture, to raise productivity and income levels, (ii) private sector development to expand off-farm employment, and (iii) expanding social services.

47. Observations on the Government evolving framework include:

- The evolution of priorities reflected a gradual transition from addressing emergency conditions to a post-crisis focus on strengthening food security, social protection and economic development;
- Malawi did not have an explicit food policy. WFP was involved in discussions with the Government and others over a policy framework throughout the evaluation period. However, informants stated development of a policy is not currently a Government priority. The Government favoured including food aid within the framework of food security policy rather than highlight it as a priority;⁴⁰
- Food aid is noted in the MGDS 2008-2011. The Government committed to two specific objectives: (i) implementing policies that do not distort the market and which reduce dependency on food aid; and (ii) improving the coordination and management of food aid and imports;
- Food security, improving nutrition, education and livelihood and disaster management are explicitly cited as core development priorities in both plans, as are the cross-cutting issues of HIV/AIDS. Food security moved to the centre of the Government's policy agenda after 2005, including through the Government's agriculture/fertiliser subsidy programme; and
- The MGDS takes an integrated approach to food security, making explicit linkages between its different components. There is a new focus on social protection with nutrition, education and disaster management/preparedness as components.⁴¹ The plan also includes measures to develop off-farm sources of livelihood, although that aspect of the strategy appears less well developed.

48. The WFP programme objective responded directly to three of the core Government priorities (food security, prevention and management of nutrition disorders, and HIV/AIDS), and the sub-priority of expanding access to education (MGDS 2007: 50) and disaster prevention and management.

⁴⁰ The Food Security policy states 'Food aid programmes shall be designed for desperately vulnerable people whose needs cannot be addressed through any meaningfully viable programmes other than being supported by special programmes like food aid. Efforts shall be made to ensure that food aid is not used for political purposes or as a means of forcing other concessions and bribes. Large scale distributions shall remain a last resort.'

⁴¹ The MGDS aims to ensure that "food will be available for all Malawians in sufficient quantities and qualities at affordable prices. "Strategies included "improving agricultural productivity and increase the variety of food available at household, community and national levels; implementing policies to improve the functioning of the maize markets; improving the ability to import and distribute food through better domestic and regional connectivity; providing means for Malawian's to gain income and put in place effective social protection programs with improved targeting and implement a nutrition strategy *while improving coordination and management of food aid*" (MGDS 2007)."

Alignment of General and Targeted Distribution (Emergency Response)

49. **WFP humanitarian assistance was closely aligned with Government priorities and systems.** WFP did not have a specific food aid policy to align its programmes against. Rather, alignment occurred through WFP's participation in assessment and coordination forums, its use of national systems, national procurement and strengthening of the Joint Emergency Food Aid Programme. The 1991 Disaster Preparedness and Relief Act provided for the coordination and implementation of measures to alleviate the effects of disasters. It established the Commissioner for Disaster Preparedness, Relief and Rehabilitation within the Department of Poverty and Disaster Management (DoPDMA). The department was also charged with preparing a National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP). During the 2002/2003 crisis, it was determined that DoPDMA lacked the institutional capacity to manage the response. A National Food Crisis Joint Task Force and six sub-committees were created to coordinate relief and information sharing.

50. At the same time, DoPDMA, the Ministry of Agriculture, Donors, the UN, and a consortium of NGOs, launched the Joint Emergency Food Aid Programme (JEFAP) to facilitate a standardised programme implementation at the field level and ensure unified information sharing and decision making at the national level. The JEFAP was the principal food aid component inside the "Food Crisis Joint Task Force" and acted as a focal point for the Government of Malawi, donor organisations, WFP and the NGO consortium. The chair is taken by the Department of Prevention and Disaster Management (DoPDMA), with WFP serving as the secretariat. Within this framework, WFP:

- Was a founding member of the Food Crisis Joint Task Force, and sat on several sub-committees;
- Was a founding member of JEFAP, playing an important role coordinating disaster and humanitarian response after 2002/3;
- Supported vulnerability assessments, as a founding member of the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee; and
- Delivered humanitarian assistance in coordination with the Government, often using Government direct modalities (JEFAP) or systems (delivery through the education and health systems).

51. **WFP contributions were consistent with the Government's objective of improving the coordination and management of food aid.** Contributions were made in the crucial 2002/3 period, when a climate shock coincided with tensions between donors and economic crisis. A market survey conducted by evaluation found that WFP's activities had little impact on market conditions and, therefore, did not create price or availability distortions.⁴²

Alignment of Nutrition Activities

52. **WFP was closely aligned with Government nutrition policy and programmes throughout the evaluation period.** WFP was considered a valued partner by the Ministry of Health, working primarily through the Department of Nutrition and HIV/AIDS programmes. It made contributions to policy development and used Government systems, in addition to coordination of WFP programmes with the Ministry. Specifically, WFP was a reliable counterpart in the Targeted Nutrition Programme Committee, programming consistently within Government food security, nutrition and HIV/AIDS policies and in line with MDGS. WFP contributed to the *National Nutrition Policy* (2007) and the Policy and Strategic Plan objective to "improve the quality of management of malnutrition in under-five children through Community Therapeutic Care (CTC) and through stand-alone Nutrition

⁴² See Part Two: *Programme Performance Reports: Assessment of the Market Impact of WFP Operations in Malawi*.

Rehabilitation and Supplementary Feeding sites where there is no CTC” (Government of Malawi 2007).

53. **WFP nutrition programmes were implemented through national systems, designed to build/strengthen those systems and enhance Government leadership.** The Ministry of Health and WFP have jointly planned activities and agreed on objectives, programme strategy and operations. The relationship is one of interdependence. WFP delivered inputs (food, non-food and technical assistance, such as developing nutrition guidelines) into Government systems, but has no programme implementation capacity. For its part, the Ministry of Health relied on WFP inputs to establish and sustain programmes. Being closely aligned with the Government meant that the outcomes achieved with WFP inputs were largely determined by the performance of Government systems.

54. **Nutrition objectives were integrated into the UNDAF 2008-2011 Outcomes 1, 3 and 4.** WFP’s relationship with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) at the technical level in nutrition has been strong and active in developing strategy. The two agencies provided technical support to nutrition interventions in Malawi, in support of Ministry of Health particularly during the last crisis of 2005/06, working to a clear MOU and work plan. However, since expiry of the MOU in 2007 the relationship has faltered and coordination appeared more *ad hoc*.

55. **Coordination between UN agencies was important to the outcomes of nutrition programmes,** particularly considering nutritional education, dietary diversity, infant and young child feeding, and food-based approaches. While there were examples of successful coordination between agencies, this did not occur in a systematic and effective manner to address the continuum of interventions, from prevention through to the cure of malnutrition. Similar coordination problems exist within the Government, creating a situation where there is fragmentation at both levels. The recent creation of the Department of Nutrition and HIV/AIDS within the Office of the President and Cabinet was a response to a lack of coordination, to which a stronger unified UNCT could apply itself.

56. WFP’s relationship with FAO should have been a critical partnership for addressing prevention of malnutrition. However, cooperation appeared weaker in the post-crisis period. Plans to work with FAO in CP10106 to implement a soya seed revolving fund in communities failed due to lack of donor support, and no recent joint interventions have been planned. Informants stated that limited FAO field capacity in Malawi was a contributing factor. Interviews conducted during the field research advocated a more coherent and unified UN and a desire to see agencies working together in complementary programming.

57. **Nutrition activities were aligned with WFP’s Corporate Strategic Objectives and to the MDGs and programme goals and objectives,** in particular MDGs 1 (halve hunger), 4 (reduce child mortality) and 5 (improve maternal health), WFP’s Strategic Objectives 3 and 5 to support nutrition and health, and to build capacity respectively. While supporting nutrition and health is clearly achieved through programmes, building capacity in health and nutrition programmes has been weaker. Aside from technical support and advice at policy level, WFP involvement in staff training and capacity building at district level appears to relate largely to programme implementation with a focus on commodity management, rather than systematic strengthening of capacity.

Alignment of HIV and AIDS Activities

58. **HIV/AIDS activities were closely aligned with the Government.** The policy environment in Malawi strengthened considerably over the evaluation review period, and currently represents a comprehensive and coordinated response to prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. WFP programmes were implemented in accordance with the HIV/AIDS National

Action Framework's (NAF) goal to "improve the quality of life of those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS", in partnership with UNAIDS, FAO, UNICEF, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNFPA and WHO and through JEFAP. Government involvement includes the Department of Nutrition and HIV and AIDS, the National AIDS Commission, the Ministry of Health (HIV/AIDS and Nutrition Units), and the Ministry of Women and Child Welfare; programmes are consistent with the social protection and disaster mitigation policy and the proposed interventions in the MGDS to increase access to treatment, care and support.

59. Institution-base programmes were implemented by the Ministry of Health and Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM), with WFP providing food commodities to women in the National PMTCT and TB programmes,. Community-based programmes, are implemented by JEFAP NGOs. The weakness of the Ministry of Health's monitoring systems. was a challenge for WFP which does not have its own systems and depends on counterparts for outcome information. This has hindered WFP ability to develop a clear analysis of outcomes, and enable its own strategic planning.

60. WFP is currently involved in development and review of the NAF in the Impact Mitigation and the Prevention Technical Working Groups as a member of the One UN AIDS team, through which UN response and strategy is coordinated. The forum appeared to be effective in coordinating the UN response, and for engaging the Government on policy, strategy and coordination issues. Government informants highly valued WFP's participation.

61. In the previous PRRO (10310) food assistance was provided in conjunction with the national care-and-treatment programmes under the "3 by 5" initiative, and WFP facilitated preparation of a national action plan for support to Orphans and Vulnerable Children in partnership with UNICEF, Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In 2003 FAO funded Income-Generating Activities (IGA) and community gardens in support of WFP HIV/AIDS programmes, but since then joint programming has been limited. This has been a loss to WFP as graduation of beneficiaries to sustainable livelihood activities remains a major constraint to successful programming.

Alignment of School Feeding

62. **School feeding was closely aligned to Ministry of Education plans and policies.** WFP programmes were not fully integrated into Government system, in the same manner as nutrition programming. Rather, WFP implementation functioned as a parallel system. The Ministry of Education provided staff in every district (the School Feeding Coordinator) and Ministry of Education and communities provided labour and oversight. WFP delivered food and non-food items (such as cooking materials) and materials for construction of infrastructures. There was agreement between WFP and the Ministry of Education on coverage, targeting and the food basket. In this regard, WFP activities appeared coordinated with Government, contributed to the Ministry's overall education strategy and expanded its programme reach.

63. **School feeding was not included in the education policy framework at the beginnings of the evaluation period (Performance and Investment Framework [PIF] 2000-2015).** It evolved in response to expectations and demand created by the scaling up of feeding programmes during emergencies, when schools were used as an important distribution channel. School feeding was subsequently included in the *National Education Strategic Plan 2008-2017* (NESP) and in the universal *School Health and Nutrition* (SHN) strategy. The SHN strategy is the framework for school feeding interventions, and all partners will work within the policy (Ministries of Education, Health and Agriculture involved). The current MGDS 2008-2011 commits Government to scale up school feeding programmes to increase

attendance and retention, as part of both its Education and Protecting the Vulnerable Strategies (2007: 93-95).

64. **There was a shift towards focusing on upstream contributions, in the form of policy and capacity development support at the sector level.** These were requested by the Government in addition to WFP's role providing food inputs and coordination. In addition to expanding the policy framework and guidelines on common standards for implementing organisations, the Ministry of Education would like WFP and others to eventually: (i) integrate into or work more closely with Government systems and; (ii) and use Government reporting mechanisms and data collection systems.

65. **Alignment within the UN system appeared weak, with lost opportunities for synergies across the demand and quality sides of the education equation.** School feeding was included in the UNDAF 2008-2011 (Outcome 3.4), with WFP as the lead agency in collaboration with UNICEF. However, collaboration occurred only when allowed by logistics, since the targeting criteria of UNICEF and WFP are different. There did not appear to be an alignment of strategies between the two agencies to expand their cooperation. Cooperation at the sector/policy level also appeared limited, with no evidence of linkage between the demand-side programming of WFP and UNICEF, and the quality-side work of UNICEF. Many schools visited also had the support from other NGOs such as World Vision. However, this support was *ad hoc*, and there were no formal agreements between the NGOs involved and WFP.⁴³

66. **Remaining aligned with Government plans for a universal school feeding (UFS) programme will create challenges for WFP, related to resource mobilisation, sustainability and expectation management.** Planning for the programme was not complete at the time of the field mission. Policy drafts and informants indicated that achieving universal coverage would involve a significant expansion in both the number of schools and the Ministry of Education budget. Additional resources from the Government's annual budget have yet to be approved and donors, who already fund approximately 60 percent of the Education sector budget, appeared to have reservations. These factors create uncertainty around the actual scope of future programming.

67. The Ministry of Education expressed its hope that WFP would be able to open new geographic areas, as well as supporting coordination, policy development and standard setting. There was particular interest in WFP "upstream" contributions. In response, WFP is considering supporting policy and capacity development and assisting the Ministry of Education in designing and implement the programme. However, WFP is already experiencing difficulty mobilising resources for school feeding programmes and a decline in its human resources. There will be growing limitations on WFP's ability to engage and sustain its commitment unless the resource situations change, which will have broader implications for the Government's planning.

Alignment of Food for Work and Food for Asset Programmes

68. **FFW/FFA programmes were fully aligned with stated Government food security priorities, but received mixed support from the Government and donors.** The impact of alignment on national structures and capacity, therefore, was unclear. FFW/FFA activities were an integral part of WFP portfolio, in both emergency and recovery operations. Food for Assets (FFA) activities supported food security and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes of the government, both in the short and medium term. Apart from addressing immediate food needs, FFA assisted in addressing longer term food security and

⁴³ There were some exceptions. For example, WFP had MoUs with Plan International and IFAD for complementary work being done at WFP schools.

environmental problems in addition to improving rural accessibility through rehabilitation of feeder roads. In many districts, attempts have been made to align proposed FFW/FFA activities to district priorities as outlined in district development plans.

Alignment of Procurement and Logistics

69. WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2011) Strategic Objective 5 refers to hand-over strategies and local purchases. The (draft) country strategy for Malawi (2008–2011) goes further and suggests in Strategic Priority 3 (Goal 7) to the leveraging of WFP Malawi local purchase ability in an effort to provide a market to small-holder farmers. Under Goal 9 of the same Strategic Priority 3, WFP Malawi commits to sharing its business knowledge of commodity markets through intensive training of smallholders farmer groups and partners. In the chapter setting out the methods to implement the strategy, WFP Malawi indicates that it will raise the quality of its relationship with Government of Malawi, donors, development institutions, general public, beneficiaries and its own staff in an all-out effort to promote a beneficial two way communications' flow.

70. **WFP made significant progress towards aligning with Malawi's market structure, by procuring almost 50 percent of its food goods in local markets between 2000 and 2008.** Considering that the commodities were to a large extent procured from FNRA, large-scale food processors or wholesale traders, this is still a long way from closely involving the smallholder farmers as suggested by the P4P objectives. Nevertheless, local procurement was increased without distorting the price setting and contributed to strengthening market mechanisms

71. As a full member of the Food Crisis Joint Task Force and of its various sub-committees since 2003, WFP was in a good position to ascertain whether its humanitarian aid policies and operations were in line with both the MGDS (2007–2011) and UNDAF (2008–2011). If corrections were needed, they can be carried out at short notice. In reverse, WFP made use of these platforms to share with the Government and others its expertise in the field of logistics and food procurement.

72. The *Malawi National Transport Policy* sets out the global transport policy of the country. It specifies the objectives for each part of the transport policy and the general framework within which each mode of transport is expected to operate. The logistics strategy adopted by WFP during the period under review has been in full compliance with the objectives and strategies set out in the above mentioned document. The SO 10.224.0 for road rehabilitation inside Malawi was developed in line with the guiding principles set out in this document in respect of the maintenance and improvement of the national road grid.

73. WFP organised at regular intervals training and familiarisation courses on food commodities management, warehouse keeping and COMPAS. WFP and NGO logistics staff were the main beneficiaries of these training exercises. The evaluation mission has however not come across large scale training modules which could have been organised for the benefit of high ranking senior government officials of the DoPDM, Ministry of Agriculture, National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA) or ADMARC on major topics like food procurement, nationwide management of food stocks and strategic reserves or on new food access techniques currently applied in the international grain markets, the so-called "Option Contract".

74. **Where capacity development initiatives were taken, they remained basic, low profile and devoid of any strong will to initiate a genuine hand-over strategy.** The capacity of WFP Malawi to transfer knowledge on logistics and large-scale national and regional distribution techniques to governmental institutions is not readily available. WFP Malawi has qualified staff to run its logistics operations in line with its own rules and

regulations, but for genuine and far-reaching handover strategies yielding long lasting effects more conceptual understanding and capacity is required.

WFP's Alignment with Donors

75. The Malawi County Office devoted a significant amount of energy to maintaining relations with donors. Evidence from the field study indicated that WFP was generally well perceived among donors in this regard. Donors particularly noted the Country Office's efforts to share information. However, there appeared to be a turning point in the relationship during the 2005/6 crisis, in which WFP fell out of alignment with emerging donor priorities on transparency and cost effectiveness. The consequence was reputation damage to WFP and disruption in the relationship with some donors, as well as possible reduced effectiveness of emergency operations.

76. Donors and multilateral organisations became increasingly interested in the cost structure of WFP operations and programmes. As a result, the "one size fits all" approach for the Landslide Transport Storage and Handling (LTSH) rate applied as standard to regional operations came under closer scrutiny. At the onset of PRRO 10310.0 the Regional Bureau applied a uniform rate of US\$151 mt for the seven participating countries, irrespective of the origin of the food aid. This rate turned out to be well above the cost for locally procured food-aid inside Malawi. As the food crisis worsened early 2005, the Government of Malawi attempted to mobilise with the support of the World Bank and the donor community of Malawi – (comprising major actors like EU, DFID, NORAD and WFP); – the resources necessary to import maize in large quantities.⁴⁴ With funding being tight, the Government and donors focused on costing issues for basic food commodity, transport and distribution costs.

77. The "WFP full cost recovery rate" did not stand up to scrutiny from the Government and donors. The uniform PRRO 10310.0 LTSH rate as applied by WFP throughout the region unduly inflated WFP's cost recovery rate for Malawi, which became unrealistic considering the Government was arranging for the maize delivery to its own ADMARC and NFRA facilities.⁴⁵ The Government and donors took exception to a uniform regional LTSH rate which, if accepted by the Government of Malawi and the donor community, would have constituted a hidden subsidy to neighbouring countries with higher LTSH costs. The Ministry of Finance was interested in this cost issue and was in a position to gauge WFP distribution cost structure compared with the DFID Logistics Unit, which was under contract to the Government. The Unit was charging the Ministry of Finance for the countrywide distribution of fertiliser through the ADMARC depots. The most vocal donor on this issue appears to have been DFID, which, with agreement from the Government of Malawi, set up a parallel food-aid distribution and monitoring system. The Food Crisis Joint Task Force allocated to DFID 18 easily accessible districts, where DFID was already managing a Government Voucher Scheme (GVS) on behalf of the Government of Malawi. WFP was allocated eight southern districts with access difficulties, particularly the flood prone districts of the Shire valley. Eventually between July 2005 and March/April 2006 the DFID-Government joint venture managed to distribute as much as 126.569 mt at an all-inclusive cost of US\$ 72 mt.⁴⁶

78. It took the Regional Bureau almost eight months to adopt a more realistic LTSH system specific for each country.⁴⁷ A revised Malawi LTSH rate for locally procured commodities was only introduced in August 2005, at US\$68 mt. The delay created a vacuum in which the donor community questioned the actual cost of the WFP distribution system,

⁴⁴ The Government of Malawi managed, with the active support of the donor community, to import 233,000 mt of maize between April 2005 and June 2006. GVS/DFID distributed 126,500 mt to 2.8 million beneficiaries. WFP distributed some 123,000 mt to 2.1 million beneficiaries.

⁴⁵ US\$ 151 mt.

⁴⁶ DFID figures USD 72 mt – EU figures USD 70 mt

⁴⁷ Specific country LTSH rates modulated according to the origin of the food aid: local, regional or overseas.

resulting in reputation damage to WFP, and it appeared that some donations were withheld. WFP's hesitation also resulted in the Government embarking on a parallel joint venture with DFID. In the end, the basic food distribution costs of WFP and DFID turned out to be comparable: US\$68 mt for WFP compared to US\$72 mt for DFID. Both included similar secondary transport costs, distribution costs and less well defined costs for warehousing and a small share of the logistics services overheads. Any multilateral organisation or NGO would have faced exactly the same level of costs.

79. **WFP did not appreciate the seriousness of concerns over costing and dragged into an unnecessary discussion on the full cost recovery.** It was difficult for the different parties to reach convincing and comparable figures on the overheads of WFP and DFID Logistics Unit in Malawi, as each organisation had a different structure and purpose. The Government of Malawi approached WFP Malawi with the request to conduct a fairly simple local distribution exercise requiring not much more than a limited range of logistic services at a nominal cost. Instead WFP chose to apply a cost structure as if it had to mobilise its entire range of specialised international, regional and national services. Not only did WFP put itself out of the market but it also exposed itself to challenges from both the Government and the donor community.

80. Part of the responsibility for the delay in modifying its LTSH uniform rate and failing to anticipate the negative impact of its pricing structure on the Malawi donor community rests with WFP. However, responsibility also rests with DFID, which appeared to inflate the issue and use non-comparable data. This caused unjustified reputation damage to WFP Malawi, a country office that succeeded in containing its costs below WFP corporate levels during the evaluation period. Not only did WFP lose a sizeable share of the humanitarian aid it could, in view of years long investments in staff and infrastructure rightfully claim but it also suffered from a fractured relationship with valued donors.

81. In the subsequent reports prepared at the request of the EU, the statements on cost differences between WFP and DFID are more cautious and stressed the fact that comparisons of costs between WFP and DFID Logistic Unit were difficult to make. Important differences exist in terms of scope and range of services, particularly as WFP maintains an international infrastructure.⁴⁸ The DFID report recognises that WFP local distribution costs were more or less in line with the DFID Logistic Unit's cost. Both the EU and DFID reported that their stand together with the corrective measures taken by WFP resulted in substantial savings, together estimated at US\$33 million. This in turn enabled the Government to mobilise a larger volume of maize.

2.2. Making Strategic Choices

82. In this section, the evaluation responds to Question 2 of the terms of reference; how WFP made choices, what were the main factors that drove those choices, and the effects of not having a country-specific objective on making strategic choices.

83. **Strategic Directions:** The Country Strategy Outline for Malawi (WFP/EB.3/2000/6/2) defined WFP's mission as helping food insecure communities (the poorest rural areas, chronically food insecure, and areas with high concentration of urban poor) to reduce food

⁴⁸ See report: "EU Programme for Malawi – Comprehensive Review of Stakeholder Response to the 2005 / 2006 Food Insecurity Module 1. Humanitarian Aid Sept. 2006" See chapter B7.8: "GVS/DFID the total average distribution costs are around US\$ 70 mt." "The total distribution costs from import delivery point to distribution point were US\$ 65 mt." This comparison of distribution costs between GVS/DFID and WFP is correct, as it compares like for like. The same EU report also makes reference to a total WFP domestic cost of US\$ 122 mt including all WFP national and regional overheads. This figure approaches the "WFP full cost recovery rate" excluding commodity cost. The report concludes that GVS / DFID had no overheads whatsoever and that eventually GVS/DFID with US\$ 70 mt was a more attractive alternative than WFP with US\$122 mt.

insecurity and vulnerability to external shocks. The Outline was based on, among other things, an evaluation of the 1998-2001 CP and was meant to guide the design and implementation of the subsequent CP 2002-2006. It did not, therefore, provide a strategy for WFP's portfolio as a whole, set a goal for all WFP operations in Malawi or contain a logic model with expected results (specific targets and target dates) and indicators.

84. **Common Goals:** In spite of the absence of a formal country strategy, the goals and objectives of operations since 2000 have focused on a limited number of themes that collectively aimed to reduce the food insecurity of vulnerable groups in Malawi. These built on the 2000 Outline, and included:

- Saving lives in emergencies, reflecting the number of emergency situations in Malawi since the early 1990s;
- Protecting livelihoods by preventing the need for negative coping strategies in the face of emergencies;
- (Re)building livelihoods through community infrastructure, soil and water conservation, and community assets;
- Reducing severe and moderate malnutrition of vulnerable groups, in particular children, pregnant and lactating women, and people infected or affected by HIV and AIDS; and
- Improving educational achievements by ensuring higher and equitable enrolment and attendance rates, lower drop-out rates, and better learning abilities.

85. **Strategic Choices:** Other choices that WFP had to exercise included geographical coverage - whether to focus on a few areas or a country-wide coverage - programming categories and programme content, as well as partnerships and delivery channels. The evaluation found:

- As the situation in Malawi changed, WFP responded by tapping into its different programming categories and their associated response mechanisms;
- The different categories offered different opportunities to respond to problems. For instance, EMOPs provided the basis for scaling up nutrition programmes in time of needs, while CPs involved a clear, holistic strategy to respond to malnutrition issues;
- The programme content in terms of types of programming activities did not change as such, although human resource limitations and internal debates sometimes hindered WFP from participating in important strategic discussions and subsequent programmes; and
- Delivery channels and partnerships remained the same.

86. **Analytical Underpinnings:** There were only limited changes to WFP's underlying analytical framework and strategic approach during the evaluation period. The analytical framework throughout focused on the dynamics of food insecurity, particularly (i) building on the results of food security and crop assessments; (ii) the structure of agricultural production; (iii) vulnerability to price and weather shocks; and (iv) the interaction between food insecurity and poverty, noting particularly issues related to nutrition, asset degradation and its impact on access to education. The draft country strategy adjusts WFP's analysis taking into consideration social protection and social development priorities in the MGDS 2008- 2011.

87. **WFP's analysis of food security issues during emergency periods was robust, and based on the programme's internal capacity to conduct or coordinate vulnerability and crop assessments.** The operation documents and related reports show high quality knowledge of security and vulnerability issues, contributing to a close linkage between analytical results and activities in the documents. Many aspects of the analysis continued to be valid throughout the evaluation period, noted that improvements to the situation are recent and underlying structural causes of food insecurity remain.

88. **The analysis of underlying the programming activities was more variable and overall less robust.** While there were exceptions, project strategies generally did not differentiate between emergency and non-emergency situations, and appeared based on the assumption that the differences lay in terms of scale:

- The analytical underpinnings of nutrition programmes depended on the technical expertise of WFP's partners and secondary sources, as the programme's in-house capacity in this area was limited;
- In the area of HIV and AIDS, analytical work between 2000 and 2005 appeared robust, noting the growth in prevalence rates and demonstrating the need to mainstream HIV and AIDS into the overall portfolio. However, more recent analysis was limited and did not further develop the link between HIV and AIDS and food security or the implications of changes in the context;
- The situation analysis underpinning school feeding programmes was rudimentary, primarily using data from secondary sources and basing itself on WFP's relationship with the Ministry of Education. WFP's own analysis was limited, as was the feedback loop between analytical work and monitoring. There is no mention in the school feeding documentation of the potential impact of increased enrolment and retention on the quality of education; and
- The underlying analytical framework of objectives for FFW/FFA programmes did not change during the evaluation period. This consistency of analysis and objectives related to the assessment of WFP and others that the underlying *structural* causes of food insecurity and vulnerability did not change, regardless of movement in and out of emergencies.

89. The WFP's tendency to rely on analyses generated by counterparts is a good alternative in a resource-scare environment. It is also consistent with the principle of alignment, and working through Government systems. However, the programme did not have sufficient internal capacity outside of emergencies to compensate from weaknesses in Government systems, generate supplemental information or analyse these sources understand the implications for programming. Analytical capacity declined with funding, as there were fewer resources to support related positions. As a result, the linkage between analytical underpinnings, strategic choices and programming activities was generally not as clearly defined. The same analytical framework was used across different projects, with few changes over time. The linkage weakened as WFP professional staff was reduced at the end of the evaluation period.

90. **Nutrition Strategy:** WFP's overall approach has been curative rather than preventative. The two CPs sought to increase food consumption and improve health and nutrition practices, addressing underlying causes of malnutrition, while EMOPs and the PRRO 10310 focused on relief, while integrating elements of prevention. The EMOPs were implemented to maintain nutritional status and prevent an escalation of acute malnutrition, with strategies to promote transition to recovery. The CPs appeared to have a clear and holistic strategy encompassing response, prevention and sustainability. However, the emphasis in the PRROs did not shift towards the prevention of malnutrition to complement the WFP's curative programming, revealing a gap between analysis and programme objectives. The challenge of developing capacity of weak Ministry of Health staff was underestimated throughout the portfolio, and insufficiently prioritised to permit exit strategies to be realised. The capacity in human resources of Ministry of Health to take over nutrition programmes has not significantly improved since 2002, while district health services are still rudimentary in many places.

91. **HIV and AIDS Strategy:** There was no explicit difference in strategy between the different operations (PRRO, EMOP or CP). Rather, the differences were at the implementation level, usually with targeting and scaling up of numbers of beneficiaries during the 2005/6 crisis. Exit strategies focused on the development of sustainable

livelihoods. The programme strategy was revised for PRRO 10586 with the introduction of a social cash transfer scheme, which was anticipated to reduce WFP food assistance requirements.

92. Overall, the programme strategy depended on a coordinated approach, as a Joint Programme between WFP, UNDP, UNAIDS and Malawi National AIDS Commission (NAC) implemented through NGOs. The role of WFP was to provide food and money for distribution. Strategic choices about programme improvements have not been realised because of a weakness in the feedback loop, between monitoring and planning. HIV and AIDS projects continue to be referred to as pilots after several years, while evaluation recommendations, such as those for PMTCT, have not been taken forward. Equally, community-based HIV/AIDS programmes have suffered consistently from the same constraints – targeting and graduation to IGA – since the early days of their implementation in 2002/03, which have not been strategically addressed. Monitoring and evaluation have been a challenge in programmes and results from the strength and quality of both WFP and partner systems. WFP is restricted in its ability to plan strategically while it is dependent on NGOs and the Ministry of Health for implementation and monitoring, and has no clear analysis of impact. The result is that WFP responds to the agenda of partners and has a limited role in programme policy and planning.

93. **Education or School Feeding Strategy:** There was limited development or variation of school feeding objectives. Objectives focused on the issue of access to education; increased primary school enrolment and attendance and reduced drop-out rates of children in food-insecure areas, particularly girls and orphans, through the provision of school meals. While responding to Government requests, WFP planning did address the impact of enrolment increases on the quality of education. The programme was not embedded in an education sector development plan that considered the balance between enrolment increases and the need to strengthen the overall education system. Operations assume this will happen, but there are no specific plans to ensure that other partners invest in those supply side issues. Nor was school feeding associated with a monitoring system for school performance. Moreover, the results of the 1999 pilot are not available, so the analysis and strategy of the programme under CP 10014 are unknown.

94. Overall, baseline information is not collected per district, and variations in the choice of indicators used in surveys and assessments that have been undertaken make it difficult to follow how choices about programme design are made. Equally, this situation makes it difficult to measure progress and feed this information back into programme design choices.

95. **General and Targeted Food Distribution (Emergency Response):** WFP's strategic positioning appeared *strong* for the period prior to 2006, particularly in relation to emergency operations. This was reflected downstream in WFP's proven efficiency and effectiveness as a channel for emergency assistance to Malawi. As contributing factors, WFP had good analytical capacities as indicated above. These analyses were also used by counterparts. In addition, WFP played an important role in developing and coordinating the international response. WFP strategic planning capacity, therefore, showed "spill over" into the wider emergency community.

Factors Influencing WFP Decisions

96. Within this context, the evaluation found five main factors influencing WFP programme decisions:

- **WFP's mandate**, which directs the WFP to work in both emergency and recovery (therefore transitional) situations;

- **The changing programme environment** and need to re-position WFP's operations in response to both sudden changes (two emergencies), longer-term trends (improvements since 2005/6) and the Government's increased capacity and assertiveness, including the movement of food security to the centre of the political agenda;
- **WFP's capacity to analyse its context and plan a coherent programme response**, including its capacity to: (i) define and communicate its role to counterparts, and; (ii) build support and mobilise resources around those roles. In the context of an aligned environment, this entails negotiation with the Government, donors and other UN agencies in the context of the UNDAF;
- **The perception that counterparts had of WFP's role in Malawi**, including managing: (i) contradictory positions from both donors and the Government on WFP's post-crisis role in Malawi, (ii) Government sensitivities on food security and food aid; and (iii) strained relations with donors after the 2005/6 disagreement over transport costing;
- **Funding constraints and the willingness of international donors to support WFP in non-emergency roles** related to the Government's social development and social protection agendas; and
- **The effect of funding cuts on WFP's ability to retain technical expertise** for the analytical side of programme development, as well as meeting Government requests for upstream assistance. WFP's overall strategic capacity in Malawi has been significantly reduced since 2006, tracking the reduction of emergency assistance. This is particularly expressed in a decline in the number of professional staff.

97. **A key finding of the evaluation is that the WFP had difficulty managing the transition from emergency to recovery**, as well as responding to the sometimes contradictory trends and requests embedded in the process. In particular, WFP did not have the robust analytical and planning capacity needed to position itself in the post-2006 period, as Malawi moved away from the last emergency. Post-crisis programmes were not significantly differentiated from those implemented during the emergency, and WFP appeared to communicate with the same messages and content used during the emergency period. Donors and the Government appeared to associate the WFP programme with the "old" context, and "food aid". It was not until 2008 that WFP began to articulate a new role for itself in a recovery environment. In this regard, WFP also had limited success in shaping the perceptions of donors.

98. **Having lost some of its positioning, the main factor determining programme strategy appeared to become reductions in donor funding.** WFP had limited success in pro-actively identifying a limited number of priorities appropriate to a transitional and resource-constrained environment, and then acting to build a consensus on those roles with counterparts and funders. The result appeared to be a combination of "default" strategic planning, with WFP putting forward status-quo programming, while real strategy choices were made by proxy through donor funding decision.

2.3. Portfolio Performance and Results

99. This section presents the evaluation findings on the performance and results of the main programming activities, namely: (a) general and targeted food distribution; (b) school feeding; (c) nutrition programmes; and (d) Food for Work/Food for Asset programmes. In reviewing the performance of these programmes, the evaluation assessed their relevance in the country context (such as the alignment to the Government and partner programmes and appropriateness to the beneficiaries needs) and their efficiency (which was done for the portfolio as a whole rather than by programme activity in terms of cost and management). For the assessment of the results of the programme, the evaluation looked at programme effectiveness in terms of attaining objectives and contributing to impacts, to the extent that this can be established.

School Feeding Programmes

100. **WFP's support to school feeding in Malawi between 2000 and 2008 was implemented through two CPs, two EMOPs and one PRRO.** There was no exact data on the WFP food commodities delivered through school feeding related programmes, relative to the WFP's overall Malawi portfolio. However, the targeted districts included:

- **CP 10014** 1998-2001: districts of Dezda, Salima, Ntcheu
- **CP 10106** 2001-2006: districts of Dezda, Salima, Ntcheu, Thyolo, Nkhatabay, Chikwawa, Kasungu, Lilongwe, Mangochi, Mulanje, Nsanje, Chiradzulu, Phalombe, Zomba
- **EMOP 10200** 2002-2003: districts of Mangochi, Kasungu and Lilongwe
- **EMOP 10290** 2003-2004: districts of Salima, Lilongwe, Kasungu, Ntcheu, Mangochi
- **PRRO 10310** 2005-2008: districts of Chikwawa, Nsanje, Phalombe, Mulanje, Zomba, Thyolo, Chiradzulu, Kasungu
- The current **DEV 10581 2008-2011** plans to reach 13 districts: Chikwawa, Chiradzulu, Dedza, Kasungu, Lilongwe, Mangochi, Mulanje, Nsanje, Ntcheu, Phalombe, Salima, Thyolo and Zomba.

101. **WFP interventions focused exclusively on the demand side of the education equation.** A synthesis of project objectives included:

- Increase enrolment in primary schools;
- Reduce dropout rates of girls and orphaned children;
- Improve attendance in all grades; and
- Relief for short-term hunger in order to increase concentration in the class.

102. **Promoting strong demand for education services had the potential to create an imbalance in the overall education system.** WFP made little or no contribution to the "supply" side of education (activities related to the delivery and quality of education services, such as curriculum, teacher training, education system management or physical infrastructure). Related activities were outside WFP's mandate and required coordination within the context of a Government-lead education sector plan and/or the UNDAF. An increase in the number of students enrolling and staying in school, and then proceeding to higher grades, had the potential to create an imbalance in the education system, with particular implications for quality. Supply-side considerations were not addressed in the WFP planning documentation.

103. **At the Government's request of and in response to emergencies, the school feeding programme expanded significantly between 2000 and 2008.** WFP support started in the Dedza district during 1999, when 24 schools were involved in a pilot.⁴⁹ School feeding expanded to 679 schools in 13 districts by 2008, or 12percent of all schools in the country. Most of the expansion occurred during the emergency periods, with schools that received emergency assistance later becoming part of the regular school feeding programme. The programme has reached an average of 330,000 children per year since 2000. The number of beneficiaries increased to 635,000 children in 2008. At the same time, WFP contributed to the *School Health and Nutrition Strategy and Policy* and to the *Universal School Feeding* planning of Ministry of Education.

⁴⁹ The results of the pilot are not available. References found in later project documents indicate the results of the pilot were positive, contributing to increased enrolment, attendance and reduction of short-term hunger. This information was entirely narrative and lacking in supporting analysis or data.

104. **WFP's School Feeding Programme in Malawi had a significant and positive impact on improving the access of children to education.** Performance met or exceeded objectives throughout the evaluation period, in terms of outputs (number of children and schools reached) and outcomes (improvement in enrolment and related indicators). WFP also made important contributions to Malawi's education policy framework related to school feeding, and the child health and nutrition strategy. Government, school and community informants expressed strong satisfaction with WFP's contribution in these areas. On average, enrolment in programme schools increased by 40percent . Attendance, retention and pass rates remained higher than the national average, especially for girls, and the perception of teachers is that children are now more alert, more participatory in the classroom and their performance has improved.⁵⁰ Participating schools also showed a marked improvement in gender equality over non-participating schools.

105. Performance findings were based on the 2004 assessment⁵¹ and the 2007 survey,⁵² as well as observations from the field visit to seven districts as part of the 2008 evaluation exercise, and the analysis of the database.

The 2004 Assessment

106. The 2004 assessment compares 51 project and 15 non-project schools in the districts of Mangochi, Thyolo, Kasungu, Lilongwe, Dedza, Ntcheu, Salima and Nkata Bay. The summary of results is as follows:

- Positive changes in girls' enrolment, showing an increase of 37.7 percent over year 0. At the same time, girls' enrolment in non-project schools declined by 9.7 percent;
- Girls enrolment increased 13.3 percent over that of boys;
- Boys' enrolment in programme schools overall increased by 24.4 percent, against a fall of 7.7 percent in non-programme schools;
- Performance of girls receiving Take Home Rations (THR) improved; and
- Performance of boys did not improve despite the school feeding.

The 2007 survey conducted by WFP

107. In 2007, the survey conducted by WFP comparing also project and non-project school showed the following results:

- Absolute enrolment figures are higher in programme schools than in schools not receiving the food;
- The dropout rates seem to be similar for those schools that started the programme in 2001, and those that started in 2006;
- In programme schools, girls outnumber boys in all grades except grade 8, while in non-programme schools girls are slightly below boys;
- Boys continue to enrol in school regardless of school feeding, but the incentive of receiving food at school increases girls' enrolment;
- The gender ratio is above one in programme schools while it is below one in non-programme schools, except for Grade 8. The ratio gets higher the longer the school has been in the programme;

⁵⁰ To note, this is the perception of the teachers, and that other factors such as the availability and improved quality of teachers, availability of classrooms and learning materials is also a major factor having an impact on the improved performance of the children. School feeding is only one variable potentially affecting enrolment rates and other education indicators.

⁵¹ Roka, Margaret "A Report on the Assessment of the Performance of the SFP beneficiaries" and "A report on the Assessment of the Targeting of Take home Rations", submitted to WFP in March 2004.

⁵² Tallant, Anna, *WFP Supported School Feeding Programme. Baseline Survey Report*, WFP, Lilongwe, 2007.

- Attendance is higher for girls than for boys in programme schools when compared to non-project schools, and is consistently higher (around 97 percent) than the national average of 92 percent. Boys attendance is also very high as 96 percent, despite not receiving THR;
- On the relief from short-term hunger, the only evidence are the perceptions of pupils, who respond that the programme is good and they like the food, they are more attentive and improves their learning abilities: having improved;
- The reasons for non-enrolment, absenteeism and drop out were similar in programme and in non-programme schools, and very similar to the reasons reported in 2003. It should be noted that hunger is not a reason for dropping out in programme schools, but is mentioned as a reason in new schools;
- When asked about new ways to enrol children in school, non-programme schools mentioned school feeding as an incentive, but this was not mentioned in programme schools;
- Programme schools have 29 percent female teachers on staff, compared to 22 percent in 2003. It was not clear whether this result could be attributed to school feeding, or if other factors were involved;
- The teacher/pupil ratio in programme schools was 1/146, compared to 1/125 in 2003. There was evidence, therefore, that school feeding contributed to increasing the teacher/pupil ratio;
- The classroom to pupil ratio is 1:143 in programme schools while it is 1:92 in non-programme schools. The national average classroom to pupil ratio was 1:104;
- Pass rates (primary school leaving certification exam) in programme schools were similar to the national average (67 percent for girls and 80 percent for boys, including urban and rural schools), although it was slightly higher than in non-programme schools; and
- Programme schools often receive other interventions (health education, de-worming, and provision of materials) that can be key factors for the better results of those schools. Non-programme schools also receive these interventions, to a lesser extent.

The field visit conducted as part of the 2008 Evaluation

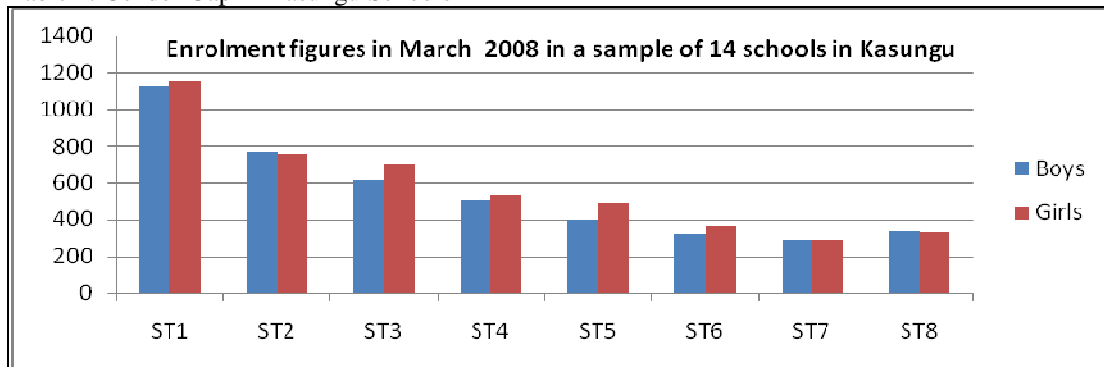
108. The evaluation field study was conducted in seven districts and 12 schools. The positive aspects related by the interviewees consistently in all districts and schools were the following. The programme was highly appreciated by all schools and DEMs. All schools showed increased enrolment, especially of girls, and increased retention. THR is a key motivating factor for girls and orphaned children. There is a reduction of drop-outs reported, especially of girls, reduced absenteeism and more regular attendance for both boys and girls. The schools and districts report there has been a reduction in early marriages for girls. Teachers and school community in general report a more active participation of children in the class, and higher energy of children while at school. They also report higher marks of children and increased pass rates to secondary.

109. The interviews were complemented by an analysis of the data for those schools in the database. In general, enrolment trends are not always increasing despite the impression of the respondents. Absenteeism trends are not declining as steadily as the respondent suggest, and finally in most school there are still more boys than girls in Grade 8, hence the need to maintain the THR. There was a discrepancy, therefore, in the data regarding the comparison with non-programme schools that the field mission could not clarify due to lack of time. The trends and behaviour of schools in terms of enrolment and attendance are inconclusive.

110. Analysis of the WFP database was conducted comparing the project school with the averages for the districts or national averages, as per the EMIS 2007. In the district of Kasungu, a sample of 14 programme schools showed girls had higher enrolment rates than boys in Grades 3 to 6 (around 10 to 17 percent higher), while the average for the district was 1 percent higher. Also in Standard 8, where boys outnumber girls by 20 percent on average for

the country, in this sample of schools they only outnumber girls by 1 percent. The programme, therefore, showed a positive gender impact at all grades and especially at Standard 8.

Table 1: Gender Gap in Kasungu Schools



111. Another significant example is the case of Dedza, the district where the school feeding programme started that shows a higher number of girls enrolled in each grade except for grade 8. When compared with the total figures for Dedza district we observe the different patterns with a smaller gap between boys and girls in Dedza district.

Table 2: Gender Gap in Dedza “School Feeding Programme” Schools

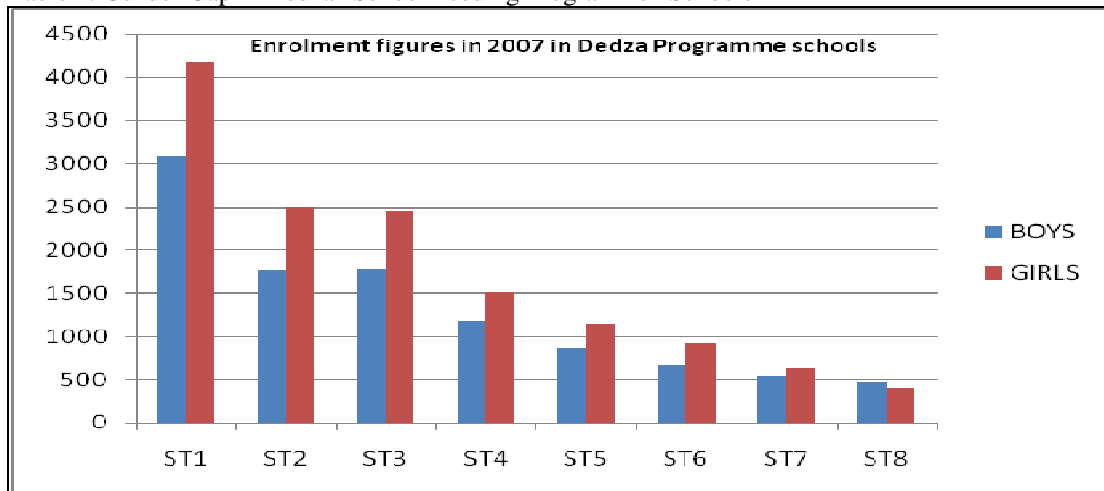
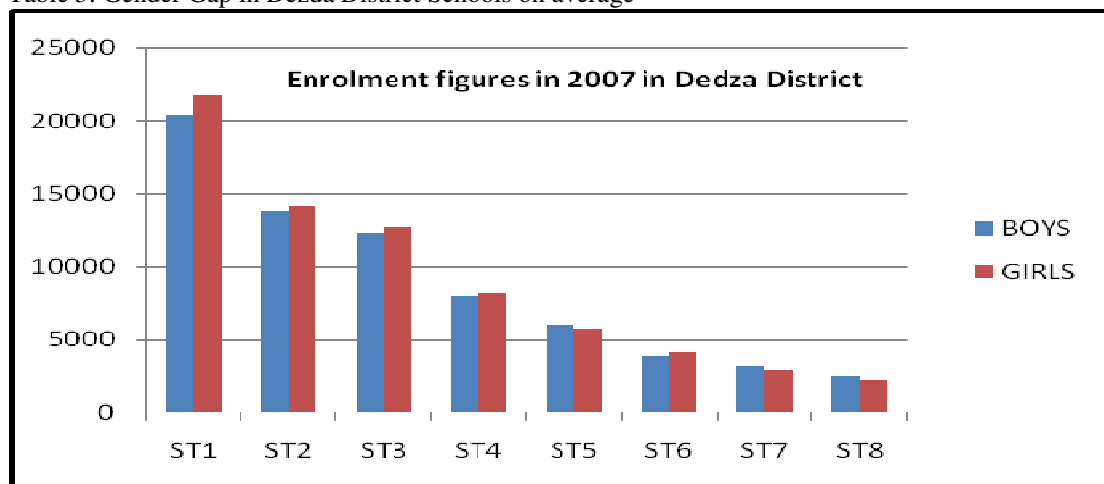


Table 3: Gender Gap in Dezda District Schools on average



112. **In summary, school feeding programmes had a positive demand-side impact when compared with non-programme schools.** Analysis of the WFP data base and the field mission was less conclusive than the WFP assessments of 2004 and 2007. However, there was clear evidence linked to feeding programmes of increased enrolment and retention, reduced absenteeism and improved gender equality. At the same time, promoting demand for education services was not accompanied by an expansion of the overall system. Evidence indicates school feeding contributed to larger classroom sizes and increased teacher/pupil ratios, with no marked increase in pass rates. Increasing the scope of quality of services tends to require much longer-term investments, and there was a lag in performance.

Finally, the technical quality of project documentation, this was uneven. The observations from the document review are as follows:

- The analysis contained in the documents was general. WFP did not update its analysis with each new operation, adapting for the movement in and out of emergencies, trends in the education sector or assessing the impact of enrolment increases on the overall education system;
- There is no baseline per district at the beginning of each intervention. It was, therefore, difficult to measure the progress of each operation in the specific locations where implemented. In order to measure performance, the surveys had to compare programme and non-programme schools and the 2004 and 2007 surveys are not comparable, that is losing an enormous effort as well as the opportunity to compare and thus show progress;
- Each operation measured different indicators, almost none of which followed the Indicators compendium provided by WFP., This made comparisons difficult to pursue. Also, there was no systematic effort to monitor at the outcome level;
- There is no rationale explained in the documentation on the links between the school feeding programme and the other interventions of WFP in Malawi; and
- There is no reflection in any of the project documentation on the quality of the education that children are receiving. Planning, therefore, did not consider the impact of increasing the demand for education services on the ability of the education system to supply those services, or the impact on quality.

Nutrition

113. WFP contributed to the implementation of Supplementary Feeding Programmes (SFP) and Therapeutic Feeding Programmes (TFP) throughout the evaluation period, channelling support through the Ministry of Health and the Christian Health Association of Malawi (CHAM) predominantly in Maternal and Child Health (MCH) clinics and Nutrition Rehabilitation Units (NRU). Nutrition objectives were integrated into both Country Programmes (CP10014 and CP 10106), two EMOPs (10200 and 10290) and two PRROs (10310 and 10586). Between them, the Country Programme objective included:

- Decrease vulnerability levels of targeted groups to nutritional insecurity and the adverse affects of recurrent disasters;
- Contribute to the better utilization of Mother and Child Health Centres (MCH) and community-based health services through the provision of dietary support;
- Reduce moderate malnutrition among children aged <6-59 months to < 5.5 percent and severe malnutrition to less than 1.2 percent in selected districts;
- Reduce low birth weight to less than 10 percent among vulnerable at risk pregnant women in selected districts; and
- Reduce risk factors for maternal and child malnutrition (both acute and chronic) related to food, health and care in selected districts.

114. EMOPs focused on safeguarding the nutritional well being of vulnerable segments of the populations such as People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) children, orphans, expectant and nursing women and the elderly, while the PRROs were designed to:

- Support improved nutritional status among children, pregnant and lactating women and people living with HIV in target areas (Strategic Objective 3); and
- Protect and enhance the livelihoods of food-insecure people, including people living with HIV, in targeted areas (SO2); striving to prevent vulnerable people from sliding into deeper poverty because of economic and natural disaster shocks; increasing the assets of the poor.

115. The current PRRO 10586 2008-2010 complements Government efforts to scale up CTC by aligning TFP and SFP support, potentially in all districts in Malawi, with the aim of ensuring that all children discharged from Outpatient Therapeutic Programmes (OTP) can receive follow-on support in SFP. WFP is currently providing support to all 96 NRUs and approximately 200 SFP sites. WFP is also supporting the NRUs with establishment of nutrition gardens to grow fruit and vegetables for caretakers, while teaching them kitchen gardening and methods for the preparation of nutritious meals for their children.

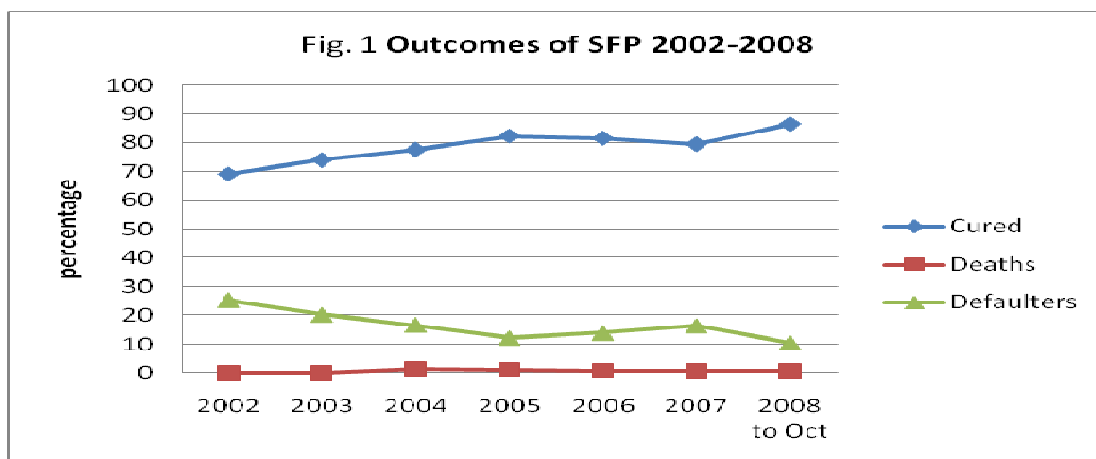
Supplementary Feeding

116. **There was significant growth in new SFP admissions between 2002 and 2008.** Low numbers in 2002 reflected: (i) the slow start up of EMOP 10200 due to slow donor response and initial resource limitations; (ii) delays caused by a ban on the import of Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) products, and (iii) the need to expand the Ministry of Health's capacity prior to implementation. These constraints contributed to the low numbers of new admissions, with WFP reaching less than half the planned number of child beneficiaries. The programme scaled up significantly in 2005/06 to meet the demands of the food crisis, and was subsequently reduced as the situation stabilised.

Table 4: New admissions in SFP 2002-2008

New admissions	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008 to Oct
Under 5	11 611	21 870	59 259	73 262	150 312	61 837	32 150
Pregnant/lactating women	N/A	2 011	20 223	25 547	45 386	20 503	15 051

117. **Data indicates that WFP made an important contribution to the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition, and by implication the prevention of severe acute malnutrition and excess mortality in targeted areas.** The Sphere indicator of 75 percent cured for supplementary feeding programmes has been consistently achieved and exceeded since 2003. The major challenge to improvement in this indicator is the high number of defaulters, the percentage of which hovers between 10 to 20 percent (Sphere indicator is less than 15 percent). Reasons provided for these high numbers include the long distances mothers have to travel to reach SFP sites, sometimes with rainy season sometimes affecting accessibility; mothers' perception that the child is improving and therefore lack of necessity to continue with the programme; competing demands on mothers' time, particularly during cultivation periods; and pipeline breaks, usually a result of funding shortfalls as well as deficiencies in the ordering process between sites and WFP.



118. Information on average length of stay in SFP is not routinely collected by the programme due to lack of staff capacity and a decision by Targeted Nutrition Programme (TNP) Committee that it would not be necessary for reporting. Malawi's Community Therapeutic Care (CTC) guidelines state that children discharged from OTP should stay in SFP for four months, which is an excessive length of time currently up for review. In sites visited differences were noted in both verbally reported average length of stay and permitted maximum length of stay ranging from 2-4 months. The discrepancy suggests that protocols are unclear and programmes are not being uniformly implemented. There are variations in performance between sites which affect the speed of recovery.

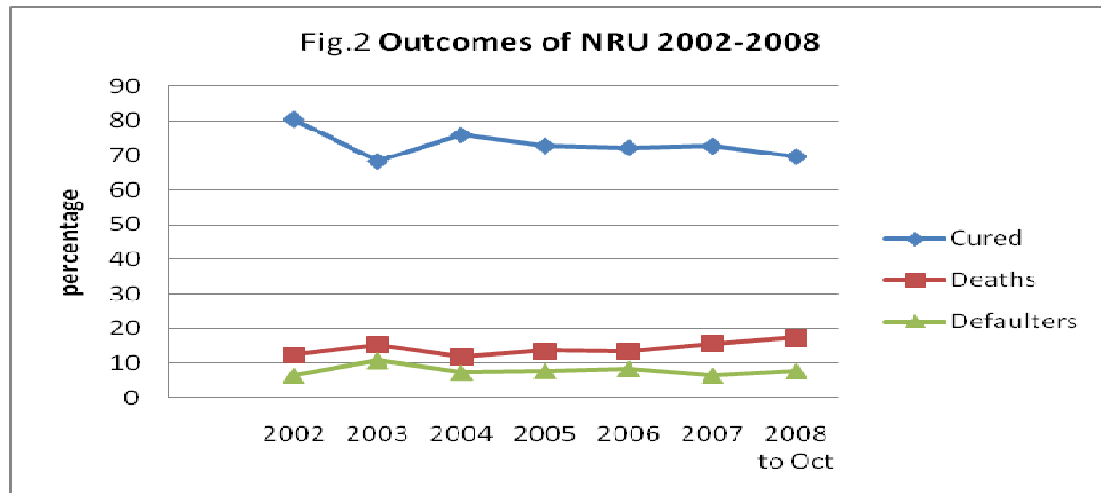
119. In the December 2005 National Nutrition Survey (NNS), coverage of SFP throughout Malawi was found to be fairly low, at 21.4 percent, while TFP was lower at 15 percent. Previous National Nutrition Surveys in 2002/2003 did not measure coverage, as many SFPs were operating with entry criteria based on weight-for-age prior to 2002. Low coverage limits the overall impact of the programme on rates of malnutrition in Malawi, as many eligible children are missed and do not receive treatment. It is hoped that the current geographical expansion of the programme under the CTC approach will improve programme coverage, particularly if enhanced active case-finding can be effectively implemented.

120. Forty-two percent of pregnant women have been discharged cured from the programme during the period January 2003-Oct 08, with 7.5 percent defaulting. 43.7 percent of lactating women were cured, with 5.5 percent defaulters. The objective of SFP for pregnant/lactating women is twofold in that it targets both the mother's and infant's nutritional status, in addition to the added benefit of accessing women for ante-natal and post-natal care. The low percentage of defaulters suggests good adherence to the programme. However, the impact of the programme is unclear since the cure rate is low, suggesting low impact on women's nutritional status. There was no data on birth outcomes to illustrate impact on the infant or improvements in delivery.

121. Follow-up of beneficiaries and community outreach was consistently reported as a challenge, especially in relation to defaulters and provision of nutritional advice and support in the community. This is the responsibility of Health Surveillance Assistants (HSAs) and community volunteers. As the planting season coincides with the seasonal peak of malnutrition, competing priorities mean that volunteer support is lowest at the most critical time for active case-finding. Although this is primarily a responsibility of the Ministry of Health, underachievement in community outreach activities affects overall programme performance.

Therapeutic Feeding

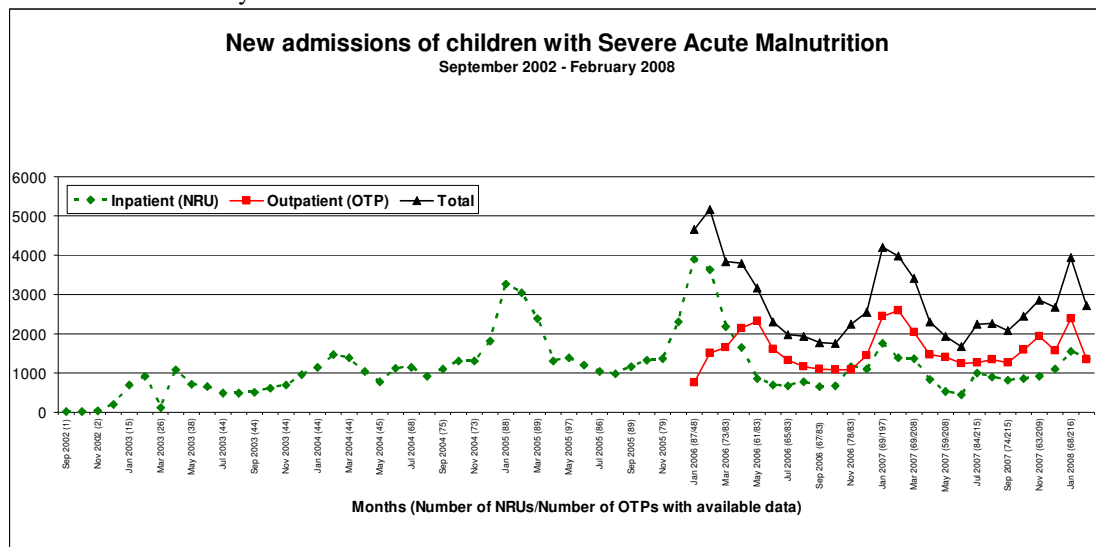
122. **Outcomes of NRU show that a 75 percent cured rate (Sphere indicator) has proved difficult to achieve**, though results hover only slightly below the target. The main reason was the high percentage of deaths in NRUs. Persistently high reported death rates reflect children arriving at NRUs at very late stages of severe acute malnutrition, often with medical complications and/or infected with HIV/AIDS. The percentage of deaths appears to be at its highest in 2008, and is indicative of the move to CTC, with the majority of non-complicated cases of severe acute malnutrition now being treated in Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP), so that, in the areas where the CTC programme operates, only the very difficult cases are referred to NRUs.



123. Defaulters in NRU appear steady and low, surpassing targets of less than 15 percent. WFP's main commodity contribution currently to NRUs is the caretaker ration, the purpose of which is to enable caretakers to stay in the NRU with their children and complete treatment. Interviewees consistently attributed the low defaulter rate to the WFP contribution.

124. The graph below clearly shows the seasonal trend in numbers of children presenting with severe acute malnutrition, with numbers rising annually in December and peaks between January and March. WFP has responded appropriately to the seasonality of malnutrition by increasing SFP sites during the lean period in areas of high risk as identified by nutrition surveys and vulnerability assessments, such as this year with a seasonal expansion to 17 sites in Nsanje and Chikwawa districts.

Table 5: New admissions of children with severe acute malnutrition, September 2002-February 2008
Source: CTC Advisory Services



125. **With the rapid expansion of CTC from 12 districts in 2006 to 21 districts this year, NRU admissions are reducing as the majority of children with severe acute malnutrition can be treated as outpatients.** The graph further illustrates the recent division of cases between OTP and NRU as CTC scales up. Overall numbers remain high in 2007/08 due to the enhanced active case-finding of CTC, combined with the greater acceptability to caretakers of OTP over extended NRU inpatient stay. A reduction in length of stay was also reported at all sites visited, from a previous average of one month to a current average of one week, as children can now be discharged to OTP very quickly once their condition has stabilised. This reduced length of stay has implications on quantities of WFP food required for caretakers. An unforeseen negative consequence of these changes is the lack of time to gain the involvement of caretakers in nutrition demonstration gardens at NRUs as their stay is short, with a sick child who needs the constant attention of the caretaker.

126. UNICEF nutrition survey of 2002 found acute shortages of staff and basic equipment in most health facilities, a situation that persists. Poor facilities in some NRUs visited during the evaluation pose a serious challenge to effective treatment of in-patients. Most prominent deficiencies noted were absence of beds, mattresses, and even ward space in one NRU, where beneficiaries had to make do with a hallway exposed to the elements. Lack of electricity hampering staff ability to conduct night feeds was reported in 2 of the NRUs visited. Despite WFP and other organisations having supported storage facilities in many clinics, some continue to struggle with provision of adequate facilities for the large amount of commodities they are receiving for delivery to the various programmes, which may include some or all of SFP, inpatient TFP, OTP, PMTCT, TB and nutrition support to Antiretroviral Treatment.(ART)

Implementation and Reporting of Nutrition Programmes

127. **Dependence on limited Ministry of Health staff capacity has resulted in variable performance of sites and the quality of information provided to WFP throughout the evaluation period.** There is an ongoing need for refresher training in SFP and NRU protocol and programme implementation. WFP depends on partner organisations to deliver training, and SFP in particular has suffered from a relatively unstructured approach and may become increasingly neglected with the increasing focus on therapeutic care in CTC. There was a strong rationale for capacity development support in this context.

128. **There were challenges in programme monitoring and reporting, resulting from limited Government capacity.** The WFP had responsibility for collation and analysis of performance data from SFP and TFP since 2000. There were improvements in data collection and reporting, while providing analysis to TNP meetings. The objective of handing over to the Ministry of Health was hampered by lack of staff capacity within the Nutrition Unit, rendering it unable to take responsibility for the database. Several clinics and District Health Offices (DHO) continue to have difficulties with appropriate and timely reporting, which leads to delayed data analyses and onward reporting by WFP, as well as breaks in commodity supply when orders are sent late. Additionally, feedback loops for dissemination of programme outcomes back to DHOs and clinics are underdeveloped.

129. While the move to CTC programming appears to be an appropriate and potentially more effective approach in the current environment in Malawi to address severe acute malnutrition in particular, it has considerable implications for WFP's programme. Corn Soya Blend (CSB) and oil is no longer required as part of the treatment protocol in NRUs operating within the CTC programme, and the quantity of caretaker rations is greatly reduced since both the number of beneficiaries as well as duration of stay are reducing. At the same time, the move to scale up SFP in terms of geographical coverage to enable discharge of all therapeutic feeding patients in the CTC programme to SFP implies the need for WFP to meet the logistical challenge of delivering small amounts of food to numerous sites.

Performance of HIV/AIDS Programmes

130. WFP support to HIV/AIDS began as pilot programmes in November 2002 during CP10106 in four districts, Phalombe, Chiradzulu, Blantyre and Lilongwe, targeting 7,500 households with general food distribution and support to patients with TB or on Anti Retroviral Treatments (ART). Programmes were initiated in response to several surveys on the care of People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA) in Malawi that specified adequate nutrition as a major constraint to health and the ability to tolerate treatment. It was also recognised that food and nutrition security was of fundamental importance for the care and support, treatment and impact mitigation of households affected by HIV/AIDS.

131. In the current PRRO 10586, HIV/AIDS activities are concentrated in four districts with both high food insecurity indicators and high HIV/AIDS prevalence: Kasungu, Phalombe, Chikwawa and Nsanje. Support is currently provided to 113,256 beneficiaries (54,363 males and 58,893 females), comprising TB patients in four district hospitals, women in PMTCT programmes in two district hospitals, and households with chronically ill individuals or those caring for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC).

132. HIV/AIDS programmes also relied on partner capacity and performance, in particular Ministry of Health and CHAM staff, capacity and infrastructure and NGO (JEFAP) partners for implementing community based HIV/AIDS programmes. WFP's input was largely restricted to food supply, with partners responsible for targeting, implementation and monitoring outcomes.

133. HIV/AIDS programme appear to have largely reached their planned targets, **without significant shortfalls in numbers of beneficiaries reached. This includes for gender distribution, which is a significant achievement.** However, as with the 2006 HIV/AIDS thematic review, WFP has concentrated on accountability for use of the food commodities, rather than programme impact in its monitoring and has not systematically collected data on outcomes. Performance, therefore, could only be assessed through discussions with beneficiaries, partner staff and the document review.

134. **All reports commissioned by WFP to assess support to HIV and AIDS programmes recommend intensifying food security initiatives and linking beneficiary households with more sustainable support, such as income-generating activities.** This has proved a constant challenge, largely due to funding constraints and, although some attempts are being made in the current PRRO 10586, the approach is not consistent across partners nor is it strategically implemented or evaluated to ensure impact.

Support to PMTCT Activities

135. All women registered in the National PMTCT programme at targeted clinics were eligible for WFP food support, regardless of their food security or nutritional status. They received a household and an individual ration from the time they began antenatal care up to 18 months post-delivery. The aim of the food support was to provide nutritional support to the mother and child, as well as achieve adherence to the PMTCT protocol, enabling continued access to the infant for administering cotrimoxazole until the child can be tested at 18 months. The inclusion of a household ration further aims to improve the household food security of HIV positive women and their families.

136. **A previous evaluation of the impact of WFP food support to PMTCT programmes found inconclusive results,** largely as a result of poor monitoring (Simbota and Namate 2006). The report's recommendations do not appear to have been implemented in subsequent programming, particularly in relation to monitoring. High uptake of PMTCT was reported by all clinics visited during this evaluation, with enhanced opportunities for ante- and post-natal care, increased number of hospital deliveries and access for follow up and testing of infants. At present this data is not being systematically collected or analysed by WFP, though several indicators are available at clinic level. Some of the same benefits are also reported in clinics with PMTCT programmes without food, revealing that there are several factors responsible for increasing uptake and adherence to the National PMTCT programme, and the effectiveness of food support in this aim is not yet quantified.

137. **Since HIV/AIDS affects all groups in society, the untargeted distribution of limited food resources to all in the PMTCT programme was questioned,** particularly by health staff. Targeting women on the basis of their nutritional status for entry into the WFP programme was proposed as a means for WFP to distribute support across more sites, reaching out to more undernourished women. Synergies with SFP for undernourished pregnant and lactating women were under-developed. The lack of thorough analysis of outcome data of PMTCT, including nutritional impact on mother and infant, HIV transmission rate and household food security, is prohibiting a clear assessment of effectiveness and justification for the programme design.

Community-based HIV/AIDS

138. The objectives of community based HIV/AIDS programmes were to maintain or improve the nutritional status of chronically ill people and improve the short-term food security of households with chronically ill people and those taking care of orphans, as well as strengthen the capacity of partner agency staff and community groups to implement HIV/AIDS and nutrition related activities.

139. **Over the review period, effective and appropriate targeting has continued to be an issue in community-based HIV programmes.** Targeting households with chronically ill members and Orphans and Vulnerable Children takes place through community structures such as village action committees, orphan day-care centres or other community-based organizations. The Government, WFP and JEFAP partners developed a two-tiered targeting

system that relied first on economic criteria and then on social criteria to select the neediest households (CSD, Sept 08).

140. **CHS data revealed the programme had a positive impact on the coping strategy index and food consumption score of households with chronically ill members, which demonstrated the short-term impact of the programme on food security.** However, the objective to improve nutritional status has not been systematically monitored and impact remains unclear. Challenges in appropriate timing and coordination of livelihood initiatives with food support were evident during the field study, so that in one programme the food support was over before the livelihood initiative had begun. The result was minimal sustainable impact of food support and a challenge of maintaining the livelihood asset where no other source of food was available to the household. The HIVAIDS thematic review (2006) found insufficient graduation to livelihood programmes, and this has been noted as a challenge in 2003, when 20 percent of households were successfully enrolled in IGA as a long-term livelihood strategy, in 2004 in CP 10106 (12 percent) and in EMOP 10290 (37 percent). The main obstacle to success cited is lack of funding for IGA.

141. **Through document review and discussions during the field visit it became apparent that there are currently a variety of interventions potentially targeting a similar beneficiary profile in Malawi.** These often occur in the same districts, including school feeding take-home rations for girls and Orphans and Vulnerable Children, nutrition support to ART and cash transfers. There was little clarity on how programmes are coordinated to ensure complementarities rather than duplication. In food-insecure communities it is also unclear whether HIV/AIDS affected households should be specifically targeted or whether short-term food support combined with income-generating or livelihood activities should be targeted to the most food insecure regardless of their HIV/AIDS status. While cash transfer programmes are in pilot stages, it is important that WFP is able to compare and contrast the outcomes of its own programmes to ensure food support to vulnerable households remains relevant and appropriate. At present WFP's monitoring systems are inadequate to that task.

Food for Work and Food for Asset Programmes

142. Malawi's *Poverty Reduction Strategy* (2000) committed the Government to "target food insecure households through food-for-work, cash -for-work, and inputs for assets programs" (Government of Malawi 2000). WFP Country Programmes for 1998-2001 and 2002-2006 were intended to support Government priorities with programmes helping food insecure households to create, maintain and rehabilitate community and household assets.

143. **Food for Work (FFW) and Food for Asset (FFA) programmes accounted for 14 percent of WFP's tonnage delivered to Malawi between 2000 and 2008.** FFW and FFA programming was a central element to WFP's food security strategy, supporting livelihoods, income and avoiding the degradation of productive household/community assets. Projects were integrated into eight of the 12 WFP programmes, with the FFW and FFA component ranging from a high of 42 percent in EMOP 10290.0 .12 percent in the more recent CP 10106.0:

- Food for Asset programmes were important components of both *Country Programmes* (CP10014.0 and CP10106). However, FFA activities were reduced, particularly in the case of CP 10106.0, in response to the humanitarian crisis;
- The focus of WFP and the Government shifted to emergency operations in 2002/3 and again in 2005/6. Based on amount of food and number of beneficiaries, 75 percent of FFW/FFA-channelled assistance was delivered between 2003 and 2007, through EMOPs 10200 and 10290 (FFW) and PRRO 10310 (FFA), and to a lesser extent under CP10014 and the current PRRO 10586; and

- Donors have not supported WFP FFA activities under PRRO 10586.0, resulting in their suspension in 2008. Programmes have also received mixed Government support and cooperation in recent years, despite the stated importance of livelihood generation to Government priorities.

144. **The overall technical quality of the programme documentation was satisfactory.** Programmes had clearly articulated goals, acceptable indicators, mechanisms for working with the Government to target beneficiaries and adequate risk assessment. Monitoring systems was weaker, focusing on a limited number of output indicators. Programmes were not designed to assess outcomes of FFW/FFA in a systematic manner, feeding information and analysis back to management and development. As a result, there has been limited outcome reporting on which to base assessments.

145. **WFP had a limited number of personnel involved in managing the FFW/FFA programmes, with the human resources declining since the 2005/6 humanitarian crisis as the overall programme has been reduced.** Records indicate WFP senior management has been directly involved and played a strong role in managing the relationship with the Government and implementing NGOs. However, actual programme responsibilities have more recently been with a single programme officer and a programme assistant that have other responsibilities. Human resources allocated to FFW/FFA programming, therefore, have become more limited as funding declined, affecting overall performance.

146. **FFW/FFA programmes were largely implemented through WFP's relationship with the Government and NGOs.** WFP has played three roles; working with the Government to develop the overall policy and programme framework, delivery of food and non-food programme inputs and coordination of the Joint Emergency Food Aid Programme (JEFAP) process. WFP main partners have been:

- The Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) providing government coordination;
- District assemblies, providing district coordination and planning; and
- The JEFAP partners and other NGOs and communities with responsibility for needs identification, planning and implementation.

147. FFW/FFA programmes depended on the quality of WFP's relationships with other organisations and WFP's capacity to coordinate the overall process. Activities were implemented by NGOs operating in different districts, and working through various levels of regional authority, including community representatives. The support of local Government and communities was central to programme strategy. NGOs played a significant role in providing additional non-food resources, such as staff, equipment, tools, materials and other inputs. The ability of an NGO to seek extra funding and provide additional resources for FFW/FFA activities has been a critical factor in successful implementation and completion of planned activities as well as facilitating community management and maintenance of the assets created after FFA.

148. The FFW/FFA has been an integral part of WFP portfolio, both in non-emergency situation (addressing long term problems of food security and poverty) and in emergency and post-emergency periods for restoration and rehabilitation of assets and livelihoods. There has been a wide variety of FFW/FFA outputs as these have reflected community needs and area specific problems faced by the communities. Over the years the focus has shifted from employment creation through public works to building productive assets with potential of improving the food security and livelihoods of the beneficiaries. Most communities have, therefore, ventured into developing irrigation farming, fish farming, improving soil fertility and afforestation.

149. **FFW/FFA has contributed to government policies on food security and environmental protection.** At district level, FFA has helped in implementation of district development plans as these have been referenced when communities are choosing what FFA projects to embark on. The challenge has been on engaging government sectoral departments to provide technical support and backup for sustainable assets. In some projects there has been limited government engagement due to funding constraints resulting in poor quality assets created. Due to the lack of support, some community assets were not well maintained or managed, resulting in suboptimal benefits or communities abandoning the project after FFA.

150. **FFW and FFA activities were significantly affected by movement in and out of emergencies, resulting in sudden changes in priorities and programme objectives.** The changes produced a re-orientation of programmes, from development to emergency and recovery, with a pronounced shift to using FFW activities as an important modality for emergency assistance. Re-orientation had important implications for the continuity and resourcing of programmes, and the sustainability of outputs. More recently, donors appeared unwilling to support FFA programming under PRRO 10586.0, in spite continued demand from the Government and linkage to the performance nutrition programmes. Donors, some Government and NGO informants questioned whether food was an appropriate input to current post-emergency programmes.

151. **There was clear evidence from the document review and field study that WFP-supported FFW and FFA programmes have resulted in creation of community assets and rehabilitation or restoration of damaged infrastructure.** These assets had direct and indirect benefits to the communities reached. Reporting shows uneven but acceptable completion rates for individual projects. Important concerns remain about the sustainability of outputs, given the volatility of resourcing and WFP's recent suspension of activities. Sudden changes of orientation in response to emergency situations affected continuity. There were also concerns about the ownership of some assets, and the manner in which broad community access to the assets was affected.

152. Review of reporting summarised the outputs from WFP supported FFW/FFA activities as follows:

- Establishment of small scale irrigation schemes through construction of canals, dams/embankments and ponds. These have been integrated with fish farming in some districts such as Kasungu, Phalombe, Chikwawa;
- Soil and water conservation and environmental rehabilitation through planting trees and vetiver grass – communities planted trees in bare lands and river banks and established community woodlots; and
- Feeder roads improvement/rehabilitation including bridges. These helped to improve access to essential facilities such as health centres and schools.

153. **Most reporting does not measure outcomes or impacts of these assets on the participating beneficiaries.** As noted, monitoring has focused on a limited number of output oriented indicators. This includes both WFP reporting and that being done by implementing NGOs. The field mission and output data indicate that there have been important outcomes in the areas of reduced vulnerability for participating communities. Consultation with communities during the field visit showed that some communities are experiencing notable outcomes from FFW/FFA outputs. The main outcomes highlighted by the communities consulted included:

- Increased crop production for those engaged in irrigation farming. A number of groups e.g. in Kasungu and Phalombe reported to be able to grow crops 2-3 times a year through irrigation. This is leading to improved food availability for their households. Some have

established communal gardens through which they are able to raise food to support communal projects in aid of orphans and chronically ill persons in their community;

- Some communities reported increased income from sale of crop produced under irrigation (e.g. green maize and vegetables) as well as fish from fish ponds; and
- Increased forest resources from tree planting with some communities (e.g. in Kasungu and Chikwawa) already harvesting forest resources for domestic use and income generation. A visit to Tomali village in Chikwawa showed that the communities have raised two forest plantations under FFA and have started harvesting the trees and selling them to other communities or within the village. The funds realised are being used for a village fund to support the needy. Some communities reported that the trees planted in bare lands and river banks are helping to reduce soil erosion and flooding. The key challenge has been management and care of these forest plantations in view of problems of livestock and forest fires.

154. Distribution of benefits from most productive assets has depended on ownership patterns within the community. For example, irrigation schemes have tended to benefit community members with land in close proximity to the asset. Although many people participated in establishing the assets (e.g. irrigation schemes or fish ponds), fewer people had access to long term benefits from the assets as it depended on their access or ownership of land. In most communities, chiefs have played a significant role in allocating suitable land for establishment of community assets and assisted in resolving ensuing conflicts once people have started realising benefits.

155. The ability of the communities to manage the assets and sustainably reap the benefits has also depended on how well they have owned the assets, the type of community structures established to manage the assets and the training and backup support received. This has also depended on the nature of benefits from the assets, whether short-term or long-term. Those assets with short-term benefits to the community (e.g. irrigation) have been favoured and well nurtured while those with longer term benefits (e.g. forestry and soil and water conservation) have faced problems of sustainability.

156. Other notable examples of outcomes from FFW reported by NGOs such as Emmanuel International (under EMOP 10290 in Machinga and Zomba districts) and World Vision (under PRRO 10310 in Chikwawa) related to improved protection from floods in areas where communities constructed flood banks to protect from floods. The communities reported experiencing reduced or no flooding due to the protection structures created. Reports also noted improved access to essential facilities such as schools, markets and health centres due to improvement of road access through FFW. Visits to some of these roads in Chikwawa show that some are still functional and being used by communities, while others require serious maintenance as they have been heavily degraded by lack of maintenance and heavy rains over time.

Factors determining the quality of FFW/FFA outputs included:

- Effective community consultation and training. The project performed better when partner organisations undertook participatory community needs assessment, planning, training and instilling a sense of ownership of the assets. The participation of traditional community authority was particularly important. FFW/FFA activities showed mixed performance in this regard early in the evaluation period, with performance strengthening over time with lessons learned;
- Linkages with other on-going programmes, such as HIV/AIDS and livelihood activities implemented by NGOs on their own or with support from WFP. Some of the benefits from the assets created take a long time to be realised. Vulnerable people require short term support, meaning the asset portfolio should be diversified. In addition, those

engaging in irrigation and fish farming need support in terms of inputs (irrigation equipment, seeds and fertiliser) and other financial resources;

- Ability of partners to provide complementary resources. FFA activities require non-food items and/or resources for backup support. Items include tools and implements for creating the assets and other support items required such as seeds, fertilisers, chemicals, fish fingerings, tree seeds and seedlings etc. In areas where the implementing partner has more presence and has secured additional funding, there has been more success in FFA; and
- Effective engagement and participation of the Government at a national and district level. FFA activities require technical expertise based on established policy and legal specifications and standards. The different technical departments of the government such as irrigation, fisheries, forestry etc. are required to provide technical support and quality assurance for the establishment and maintenance of the assets. Both WFP and partners needed to establish effective collaboration with different Government departments through the district assembly.

Logistics

157. WFP's most important programme input has been food. WFP logistics, therefore, played the primary role to procure, receive, store, transport and distribute food goods, enabling WFP's programme section to implement its various projects.

Local Procurement

158. **WFP has conducted a comprehensive and sustained policy of local procurement in Malawi since 2005.** As of 31 October 2008, 49 percent of the 727,508 mt of food-aid mustered for the 12 operations under review had been procured locally. This included 277,000 mt procured locally by WFP and 80,000 mt donated in kind by the Government and multilateral organisations. Some commodities, such as corn soya blend likuni phala or maize meal were procured from local food processors. Another 44,504 mt of food aid representing some 6 percent was procured in the SADC region, bringing the total for local and regional procurement to 55 percent. These figures illustrate the extent of involvement of the local and regional traders, though the origin of the locally procured commodities cannot always be ascertained. Some commodities may have originated from overseas even though they were eventually purchased inside Malawi.

159. **WFP procurement policy did not have a destabilising effect on the local market commodity prices.** The substantive quantities of food aid released during the 2002/2003 crises had almost no impact on the price for maize. The huge quantities of food-aid distributed during the 2005/2006 crises could not contain the spiralling of the price for maize on the local market. These finding was confirmed by a study of the market impact of WFP activities on Malawi, conducted to support the evaluation.⁵³ Inspired by a World Bank/Ministry of Agriculture trial project to guarantee access to quantities of maize at attractive prices in case of need through so-called "Option Contracts", WFP HQ and ROJ considered a proposal to enter into similar arrangements with SAFEX. Eventually these option formulae, despite its distinctive merits, were abandoned for want of readily available expertise to carry them out.

Logistics

160. **WFP made effective use of alternate transport corridors.** Five different corridors were available to import tonnage procured outside of Malawi, each with its own capacity and limitations. Thirty-one percent of the tonnage was routed via Beira, which was the most

⁵³ See the Volume Two, *Assessment of the Market Impact of WFP Operations in Malawi*

reliable corridor in terms of costs and transit times. The Northern corridor from Dar-es-Salam via Mbeya, though more expensive, was utilised as an alternative when the Beira port capacity was at risk of being over extended and for commodities procured inside Tanzania. The same applied for the Zambia procured commodities via the Eastern corridor. The most expensive route in terms of LTSH, overland from South Africa via Zimbabwe was, used sparingly (only 5 percent). If at all possible, commodities procured in South Africa were shipped out of Durban and subsequently routed via the Beira corridor.⁵⁴

161. The Nacala corridor, the shortest and in theory the most cost attractive, significantly under-performed. The two railway companies involved, CEAR and CFM (N), failed to offer reliable transit times due to from a shortage of haulage capacity and poor condition of the track. By mid-2004, WFP decided to relinquish this corridor and has not returned since. Only 15,000 mt or 2 percent of the tonnage was routed through Nacala.

162. **The repeated delays encountered with the appropriate resourcing or with the timely procurement of some commodities forced WFP to exchange or swap large quantities of food-aid between various ongoing programmes, and between countries of the SADC region.** These actions were taken to overcome shortages, avoid pipeline breaks and meet most urgent obligations. The volume of food aid exchanged or swapped (borrowed from or given on loan to) amounts to a staggering 135,000 mt or 5 percent of the total volume of food distributed during the period under review. This achievement highlights the high degree of flexibility which WFP logistics succeeded in maintaining throughout these 12 operations.

163. **Good use of the ADMARC and FNRA storage facilities were made,** on a permanent basis in Lilongwe, Blantyre and Liwonde and on an ad-hoc basis in Mzuzu, Salima and Nsanje. WFP also managed to make occasionally good use of the borrowing facilities offered by the NFRA from its strategic grain reserve.

164. Special Operation (SO) 10,224 was launched in September 2002, funded by DFID and CIDA in support of the EMOP 10.200. The SO comprised two component parts with a value of US\$ 5.6 million. The first component inside Malawi, between September 2002 and June 2004 provided for the purchase and launching of five Bailey bridges and the rehabilitation of 576 km of roads and 13 bridges inside WFP food distribution areas. This project was successfully conducted, greatly facilitating the food distribution in the region and, although the time limit to complete the project was largely exceeded, generated for WFP goodwill to the extent that the NRA is pressing for a similar project to be launched in the near future.

165. The second part was a project aimed at increasing the monthly capacity of the Nacala corridor by no less than 15,000 mt by supplementing the haulage capacity with four locomotives leased in South Africa and the rehabilitation of 76 km. of railway track in the swampy region between Cuambo and Entre-Lagos. Launched in November 2002, the project resulted in four locomotives being made fully operational with crews and spare parts in Nacala. The project was abruptly terminated by WFP in May 2003, when both railway companies failed to agree on the terms and conditions to operate third party engines on each other's rail network, and as a result of the track rehabilitation programme facing continuous new delays. The project rested on sound economic objectives, likely to yield an attractive return for both the railway companies and the Malawi import and export trade. However, it failed as the organisational details of cross-border operations were underestimated.

166. **The JEFAP, chaired by DoPDM, offers to the Government of Malawi permanent control over the selection of NGOs and the district allocation where NGO are expected to operate.** JEFAP has, with the publication of various handbooks, provided valuable

⁵⁴ US\$ 160 mt

guidance to the NGOs on fulfilling their obligations, making sure that the NGOs contracted have consistent quality, norms and standards.

167. Having put in place with the DoPDM fair screening standards for NGOs, JEFAP has enabled WFP to develop a stable and long-term relationship with a core group of reputable NGOs. It has also allowed the avoidance of the risk of duplication, large-scale multilateral organisations or international NGOs like C-Safe being assigned distinct geographical areas in the country. This in turn allowed for stability and continuity. However the screening standards, though extremely fair, are quite high and selective. Start-up national NGOs had difficulty acceding to the status of a fully recognised and registered JEFAP NGO. Arrangements could have been made for these young NGOs to be given an umbrella status under the responsibility of a well-established NGO.

Analysis of Costs

168. **During the period under review the commodity cost price fluctuated between US\$129.99 mt and US\$604.44 mt, with the average US\$207.13 price being well below the average corporate WFP commodity cost.** The cost price for maize in the SADC region has been the main contributing factor. The external transport cost averages US\$23.75 mt . As such, it was three times less than the corporate average for external transport. This low figure is mainly the result of the large share of locally and regionally procured food commodities. This should constitute a strong incentive to go, as much as possible, for local and regional procurement.

169. The Malawi Landside Transport Storage and Handling (LTSH) cost, which is indicative for the overall distribution cost within the country, averaged US\$102 mt for the portfolio period under review. **The figure compares favourably with WFP corporate average of US\$161 mt.** The Malawi LTSH rate fluctuates between US\$68 for locally procured food-aid and US\$150 to US\$160 mt for food-aid routed overland from South Africa. This record reflects the professional conduct of the logistics policy, planning and implementation.

170. **With an average cost of US\$ 28.75 mt, the Other Direct Operational Cost (ODOC) exceeds WFP corporate average of US\$ 15** and, therefore, should attract the attention of management. This situation has most likely arisen from the apportionment of the FLA costs. It was noted that in some cases the part of the CPs' costs budgeted under the ODOC heading is unusually high and even exceeds the LTSH cost. This situation should be reversed. Inflating the ODOC cost component has the effect of flattering the LTSH rate. The instructions regarding the apportionment of FLA costs are many and are often diverging. There is urgent need for clear and unambiguous guidelines to be issued anew by the HQ in this respect.

171. The DSC (fixed CO overheads) average cost of US\$27.39 MT is less than half the corporate average and stands out. However, caution should be exercised as the DSC costs appear to have been rising dangerously close to US\$70 MT for the ongoing operations. It is interesting to note that taken as a whole the comparative ratio of the various cost components recorded during the period 2000 to 2008 in Malawi are in line with those recorded at corporate level. The main discordance is the ODOC component: in Malawi it represents 7.5 percent of the total costs, at corporate level only 5 percent, a difference of 50 percent and seems to signal an over-allocation of expenditures under the ODOC budget line.

172. For the period under review the total all in "direct project cost" for one ton of food aid delivered to beneficiaries amounted to US\$390 (food cost, external cost, LTSH, ODOC and DSC but excluding 7 percent ISC). Without the food cost the "direct project cost" amounts to some US\$185 per mt. Excluding the LTSH costs of some US\$102 mt – which is an

unavoidable cost each organisation, multilateral or NGO engaged in humanitarian food-aid assistance has to face – the remaining cost amounts to approximately US\$88 mt (external transport US\$24 mt, ODOC US\$ 29 mt and DSC US\$28 mt or slightly more). These are the very components which should command the continuous attention of management.

173. **Based on this analysis, it was apparent that the control over the various costing components has been robust.** It was unfortunate that enforcement of an unrealistic uniform regional LTSH rate until August 2005 by the WFP Regional Office has cast some doubts about the WFP costing structure in the donor community.

Management

174. WFP management has taken the initiative to consolidate in one location in Blantyre all its activities: management, administration, warehousing, fleet maintenance workshop and parking area. In May 23, 2007 it entered into an agreement for the lease of a warehousing /workshop complex, the idea being to withdraw in phases from two other warehouses, offices and workshops. It required almost 19 months for the Country Office to bring the new facilities WFP standards. Compliance with multiple WFP internal procedures and protracted tendering procedures caused the newly leased property to have no practical operational use for almost 17 months, involving US\$170000 in lost rent. The tendering procedures for rehabilitation and development work may have been strictly adhered to and precious time was lost. The long delays to gain approval for the works to be carried out linked to the propensity to always accept the lowest offer, resulted eventually in the contractor, delivering inadequate work.

175. Since 2003 WFP, has had a fleet of trucks comprising; initially of 53 old M621 trucks and currently of 15 new ISUZU trucks. No effective cost control system is yet in place and management has no possibility of obtaining the overall costs of running the fleet and the final cost per ton of food-aid delivered. Cumbersome tendering procedures for securing the necessary compatible software appeared to have hindered a decision in this respect. This situation illustrates once more that WINGS, despite its many excellent features, is not an appropriate tool for analytical accounting.

176. For nine out of the 12 operations of the Malawi portfolio, the expenditures (actual and commitments) recorded in WINGS are in line with the “confirmed contributions” and with the “contribution released” figures. For the three regional operations, analysis of the WINGS figures reveals a lopsided situation whereby the operations are closed with a negative “unspent balance”; a deficit of not less than US\$67 million. This is an excess of the level of expenditures over the level of “contributions released”. The discrepancy may result from an inappropriate apportionment of resources and expenses at ROJ level to the seven countries involved in these three regional operations. However, the discrepancy could also hide other anomalies.

177. The evaluation made repeated requests between December 2008 and February 2009 for information to clarify the situation and account for the anomaly. No one at management level, either at Country office or ROJ level was able to provide an explanation for this situation, or account for the deficit. Senior managers were unaware of the problem and appeared surprised when confronted with the WINGS figures. The WINGS Projects Management Overview was apparently not considered as an effective management tool or consulted as such.

178. Two months after the field visits, the evaluation mission was informed that the specific Malawi “WINGS Project management overview” documents did not correctly reflect the financial situation of a regional operation inside the country in terms of “confirmed contributions” and “contributions released”. The mission was further advised that true financial position of a regional operation should only be derived from the SPR document.

According to these SPR reports, it can reasonably be concluded that the funding and expenditures are in balance at regional level. But on the strength of the SPR documents submitted it is not possible to ascertain to what extent the Malawi part of a regional operation is in balance or not. This duality puts an extra strain on the Country Office management wishing to exercise close budgetary and financial control.

179. During this investigation exercise it became apparent that WFP handles two sets of financial reports: the “WINGS Project Management overview”, which is strictly for internal use and must therefore be considered as “Work in Progress”, and the SPR document, which, after compounding all the figures, is given a “statutory report” quality label and is reserved for donors and the general public⁵⁵. If differences between the two sort of financial reports are allowed to diverge beyond certain limits the “WINGS Project management overview” documents become totally irrelevant for WFP management and the SPR figures, while giving a broad picture of the financial performances at regional level, are inappropriate for the general public to assess the performances achieved at the respective national levels.

⁵⁵ E-mail dated 18.02.2009 from ROJ to Mr. Amir M. Abdulla Deputy Executive Director WFP : “The SPR financial are not in agreement with the data (ex WINGS) that is being considered by the mission in their report”

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1. Overall Assessment

Question 1: Strategic Alignment. How well has WFP's portfolio been aligned with strategic plans of the Government, the UNCT and other partners (multilateral, bilateral and NGOs) in Malawi or regional frameworks?

180. **WFP programmes in Malawi were closely aligned with the Government, contributing to food security by strengthening policy frameworks, institutional capacity and Government efforts to deliver emergency assistance and social protection programmes.** There was evidence that WFP's contribution had tangible and positive outcomes supporting the delivery of services of priority to Government, strengthening the Government's policy framework and systems. WFP's role was acknowledged and highly appreciated by Malawian officials. However, the agency had difficulty maintaining its alignment towards the end of the evaluation period. While the orientation of the Government and donors moved towards recovery and social protection, WFP had difficulty mobilising resources for related programmes. Also, WFP fell out of align with donor concerns over transparency in costing.

181. The WFP effort was supported by the trend towards the strengthening of the Government's capacity and Malawi's aid architecture, which provided international counterparts with more clearly defined parameters. It was involved in policy development in key programme areas, worked within the Government's policy framework and priorities and used Government systems. Alignment occurred in logistics, emergency operations and in all three programme streams. In particular, WFP:

- Was fully integrated into the Government's coordinating mechanisms for managing the emergency response during the 2001- 2006 crisis period;
- Avoided running parallel systems and programmes that would duplicate or weaken Government efforts. While occurring in 2005/6, the decision to establish a parallel food distribution system rested outside of WFP;
- Was fully integrated into early warning, assessment and disaster preparedness systems. It made a valued contribution to the development and operation of these systems, which was particularly important in 2001/2 when systems were weak and the overall situation unstable;
- Used Government systems, and local markets and transport systems for the purchase and delivery of 49 percent of food goods procured between 2000 and 2008;
- Contributed to policy and capacity development for nutrition, school feeding, and then actively integrated those policies into WFP's own programme framework;
- Used Government systems for delivery of nutrition programmes, and worked to strengthen systems in school feeding; and
- Used its position to support broader coordination efforts, led by the Government or within the UN system and the NGO community.

182. **Alignment was a product of WFP's strategic choices and was facilitated by WFP's business model.** WFP in Malawi was relationship dependent. It delivered most food goods and programmes through the systems of NGOs or Government institutions/Ministries and relied on counterparts for information, analysis and monitoring. The programme model required close working relationships. Outcomes achieved with WFP inputs depended on the performance of its counterparts, giving WFP a strong programme rationale to support the strengthening of counterparts' implementation capacity.

183. **WFP has gradually moved out of alignment in recent years, due to Government increasingly requests “upstream” support and assumes a social protection orientation.** Alignment in programme planning remained strong, as shown in the delivery of food inputs into the Government’s humanitarian, social protection and development priorities. However, WFP has increasing difficulty responding to the Government requests for “upstream” inputs (policy development, technical assistance and capacity development) and its movement towards social protection. The WFP had difficulty mobilising resources for related support, which tended to be human-resource intensive. Donors continue to perceive the WFP largely in emergency roles, and appeared unwilling to fund activities extending into Malawi’s recovery phase.

184. **WFP also fell out of alignment with donors during the 2005/6 crisis, not fully understanding growing donor concerns over cost effectiveness and transparency.** WFP did not respond in a timely manner to questions posed by the Government and donors over the real Malawi transportation costs of regional programmes. While WFP costing eventually proved competitive, delays in providing the information resulted in unnecessary reputation damage to WFP, which affected its credibility with donors.

185. **WFP’s programmes were fully integrated into the two UNDAF frameworks and there was evidence of good cooperation with UNICEF and FAO during emergency periods.** However, collaboration declined outside of emergencies and appeared to be as much a matter of convenience as strengthening programme outcomes through strategic choices. An exception is the coordination of UN agencies and the Government on HIV/AIDS. There was no evidence that cooperation and coordination between WFP and other UN agencies was strengthening.

Question 2: Strategic Planning. How has WFP positioned itself strategically in the past, especially considering formal strategy documents and evolving strategies through its portfolio, including the effects that the absence of a country-specific objective had?

186. Three external factors shaped WFP’s strategic decisions during the evaluation period:

- Evolution of the situation in Malawi, focusing on WFP’s ability to respond to crisis and then transition from emergency to recovery activities as conditions improved after 2005/6;
- The growing capacity of the Government (policy framework, resources and institutional capacity) to address food security and coordinate assistance; and
- Donor assessment of the food security situation, and their perception of WFP’s role and performance in the emergency and recovery phases.

187. **The portfolio appeared well positioned strategically during the initial period to 2005/6, particularly for emergency operations.** WFP had a unique corporate mandate for emergency operations supported by robust planning, analytical and technical assessment capacity on food security and emergency issues, in Malawi and at other corporate levels. It had the capacity to conduct crop assessments, vulnerability assessments and supported disaster preparedness, with FAO, the Government and others. The results of that analysis were effectively applied to programme development, and WFP made a substantive contribution to the overall situation analysis used by counterparts, playing an important role in developing and coordinating the international response. WFP strategic planning capacity, therefore, had a “spill over” effect, supporting alignment in the broader emergency-response community.

188. **The analysis underlying the other programming activities was less robust, with unevenness between and within operations.** As a result, the linkage between analytical underpinnings, strategic choices and programming activities was not as clearly defined.

Project strategies did not differentiate between emergency and non-emergency situations, and appeared based on the assumption that the differences lay in terms of scale. Elements from the situation analysis were not integrated into the programme strategy, and the substantive content was often not updated. While elements of the programme environment remained constant (structural risk related to food insecurity), WFP analysis appeared to miss important changes/trends. The linkage further weakened as WFP professional staff was reduced at the end of the evaluation period.

189. **WFP’s tendency to rely on analyses generated by counterparts is an effective alternative in a resource-scarce environment.** It is also consistent with the principle of alignment and working through Government systems. However, the programme did not have sufficient internal capacity outside of emergencies to generate supplemental information or analyse counterpart information and understand its implications. As a result, strategic planning weakened towards the end of the evaluation period and there was evidence that WFP had difficulty making the transition from emergency to recovery.

190. WFP appeared to have difficulty managing a set of inter-related and sometimes contradictory factors:

- Many underlying causes of food insecurity remain, and required ongoing monitoring, early warning. However, the Government was politically sensitive to needing food aid and publicly critical of WFP’s role in this regard, even though WFP was no longer delivering emergency assistance;
- Moving out of the 2006 emergency situation, there was still a related demand from the Government for WFP food inputs into social protection and social development programmes;
- However, WFP has not been able to convincingly define its role in Malawi’s recovery and mobilise the necessary resources to support programming, including the professional capacities needed for upstream contributions being requested by the Government; and
- There was resistance from in-country donors to WFP playing a role in recovery activities, based on an interpretation of WFP mandate as being emergency focused.

191. **There were gaps between the Government’s political sensitivity to food aid, ongoing Government requests for food inputs into social protection and social development activities and donor reluctance to fund a WFP role outside of emergencies.** In this context, funding cuts have become the key factor determining programme strategy. WFP had not pro-actively set a limited number of priorities appropriate to a transitional and resource constrained environment, then acting to build a consensus on those roles with counterparts and funders. The result appeared to be a combination of “default” strategic planning on WFP side, with the agency putting forward status quo programming, while real strategy choices were being made through donor funding decision.

Question 3: Performance and Results. What has been the performance and results of WFP portfolio for the four groups of activities, i.e. general and targeted food distribution (in emergency situations), school feeding, nutrition programmes, and food-for-work (FFW)?
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WFP’s Logistics Operations

192. **WFP logistics system delivered food assistance to Malawi programmes in an efficient and effective manner throughout the evaluation period and under rapidly changing conditions.** Costs were close to or under WFP corporate LTSH rates, and highly competitive with alternatives. This included during the 2005/6

emergency, when some donors were concerned that LTSH costs were inflated. The record reflects robust management practices and institutional systems.

193. **The exception was an unexplained amount recorded in the WINGS system of expenditures** in excess of the contributions released to three regional operations, resulting in a negative unspent balance of some US\$67 millions. Senior management was unaware of the anomaly. The WFP explained that country based WINGS records for regional operations were inappropriate to assess individual country performances. As a substitute SPR financial figures were proposed as reflecting more accurately the true financial position of regional operations. While this approach is not disputed, it exposes the fact that WFP is handling two sets of financial records for internal or external usage which, in the case of regional operations, can lead to totally different conclusions

194. **Forty-nine percent of all food goods distributed between 2000 and 2008 were procured in Malawi.** This number increases to 55 percent if regionally procured food is considered. WFP, therefore, has effectively implemented a sustained policy of local procurement. In addition, there was no evidence that WFP was causing significant distortions in national market conditions.

195. **Effective use was made of transportation facilities and corridors throughout the region, including those belonging to the Government of Malawi.** WFP also took several initiatives to enhance the transportation system, which reflected a forward-looking approach. However, several of these Special Operations met with mixed results due to unrealistic appraisals. A particular example was an effort to open Nacala corridor, which failed to properly anticipate track conditions and operational details.

196. **The Joint Emergency Food Aid Programme created at the initiative of WFP evolved into an effective and well developed coordinating, planning and delivery capacity.** It was a focal point for the food component of the Food Crisis Joint Task Force and a key mechanism for coordination between the Government, NGOs, donor organisations and WFP, particularly during the emergency periods. Activity of the JEFAP has been reduced as Malawi moves further away from the 2005/6 crisis and funding channelled through WFP is reduced. The situation has placed significant limitations on WFP's ability to sustain the JEFAP structure.

Nutrition

197. **WFP made an important contribution to the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition and, by implication, the prevention of severe acute malnutrition and excess mortality in targeted areas.** Supplementary Feeding Programmes implemented by WFP and its Partners since 2003 have consistently achieved and/or exceeded Sphere standard indicators for recovery of children. Performance improved between 2000 and 2008, suggesting a strengthening of delivery systems and/or strategy. Combined with the substantial caseloads increases, the evaluation concluded that WFP made a significant contribution to the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition. By implication, WFP also contributed to the prevention of severe acute malnutrition and excess mortality in targeted areas.

198. **WFP moved from rigid programming to an increasingly flexible approach to SFP and TFP.** Until 2002, SFP implemented in fixed sites, geographically situated according to vulnerability and food security assessments at district level. Programmes were unable to move to new locations in response to changing needs. The Ministry of Health and WFP are now able to move relatively quickly into new areas of need and adapt more quickly to changing conditions, particularly during seasonal peaks of malnutrition.

199. **Recovery rates in NRU/Therapeutic Feeding Programmes did not achieve Sphere indicator standards, recording persistently high death rates.** The main challenge was late presentation of severely malnourished children, often with complications that included HIV/AIDS. It was evident that the poor facilities and lack of Ministry of Health staff capacity negatively affected overall performance. Regardless, WFP inputs to Therapeutic Feeding were generally delivered in an effective manner, and the Caregiver programme was credited with reducing default rates.

200. **Feeding programmes, while responding appropriately to acute malnutrition, were not designed to address underlying causes and, therefore, did not have a significant impact on overall malnutrition rate reduction in non-crisis periods.** Food support to community-based HIV/AIDS programmes provide effective short-term food security, but had no longer-term impact in the absence of sustainable livelihood initiatives. The lack of funding available for livelihood initiatives was an issue throughout the review period and restricted WFP's ability to engage in preventative and sustainable initiatives with long-term impact.

201. **WFP's programmes in nutrition and institution-based HIV/AIDS relied heavily on the capacity of the Ministry of Health and the Christian Health Association of Malawi.** WFP maintained a robust working relationship with both throughout the evaluation period, and WFP inputs were highly valued. The Ministry of Health also noted WFP's early contributions to capacity development. JEFAP NGOs implemented community-based HIV/AIDS programmes with food support from WFP, though joint planning and monitoring is under-developed. However, the weakening of programme collaboration between WFP and FAO undermined the preventative aspects of programming. UNICEF supported nutrition programmes, providing equipment, training and therapeutic milks. The relationship between UNICEF and WFP was strong during emergency periods, but then weakened. It appeared, therefore, that relationships with national partners in the area of nutrition were more robust and effective than with other UN agencies.

202. **WFP implementing partners faced substantial capacity limitations, which negatively affected overall performance.** In addition, the quality and scope of WFP's upstream contribution was mixed:

- There was a significant WFP contribution in the area of nutrition policy and capacity development at the central level, particularly during crisis periods;
 - Capacity development at the field level appeared focused on warehouse management and food storage, related to the care of WFP inputs;
 - Informants and documentation indicate there was an assumption that the Ministry of Health and UNICEF would provide system-level capacity development. This did not occur in a regular and systematic manner; and
1. WFP did not have the resources outside of emergency periods to provide system-level support to nutrition, and coordination with UNICEF and/or other UN agencies was not sufficiently robust to compensate.

School Feeding

203. **WFP School Feeding Programme has made a positive contribution to education by improving education enrolment rates in Malawi.** As main achievements:

- **The number of beneficiaries reached generally exceeded targets.** The programme has reached an average of 330,000 children per year since 2000, and has been reaching 635,000 children since 2008. Most schools that received emergency school feeding in 2002-2004 became part of the regular school feeding programme;

- **There was also evidence, that the programme has contributed towards reduced dropout rates/retention and gender equality.** On average, enrolment has increased 40 percent in programme schools. Attendance has remained higher than the national average, especially for girls, and the perception of teachers is that children are now more alert, more participatory in the classroom and their performance has improved;
- **School Feeding Programme were also linked to improving pass rate performance,** with the percentage increase in girls' performance in project schools nearly twice the increase in non-project schools; and
- **WFP has contributed to the School Health and Nutrition Strategy and Policy and to the Universal School Feeding planning of the Ministry of Education.** The Ministry highly values WFP's contribution, and is using the experience as the basis for scaling up school feeding nationally. The Ministry of Education is requesting increased WFP involvement in policy and capacity development, with plans to expand or universalise the programme.

204. **However, rapid expansion in demand for education has not been met by an equal expansion in the education system itself.** Analysis of indicators found important deficiencies in the education system's capacity to deliver services. These related to the quality of education; the ability of the Government to provide a sufficient number of qualified teachers, classrooms, materials, curriculum and systems management, among other factors. In part, the quality concerns were the result of successful demand-side interventions, including the Government's universal primary education policy. WFP interventions were exclusively "demand-side" focused, with the largest scale-up occurring during emergencies when schools were used as a distribution channel. Project documentation did not consider the quality implications, particularly during the emergency period when schools were used as a channel for the rapid scale up of emergency assistance. Also, there did not appear to be coordination with quality interventions undertaken within the Government sector plan or UNDAF.

Food for Work and Food for Asset Programmes

205. **There was clear evidence that FFW/FFA projects have produced significant and tangible assets which are valued by communities.** They contributed to overall emergency efforts and improving food security and livelihoods for the beneficiaries. A full assessment of outcomes was not possible given limited monitoring and evaluation, which focused at the output level. However, the field mission verified the existence of assets, and that they were generally relevant to needs and of good quality. Projects also appeared to have a broad base of beneficiaries, many of whom received training related to the use and maintenance of the assets by the NGO implementers.

206. **The JEFAP was an effective network for implementation of FFW/FFA projects, with WFP playing a central coordination role.,** WFP supported the creation of national networks and made effective use of them during implementation. The robustness of planning improved over time. In particular, NGO implementing partners appeared to become more effective with community consultation processes to identify which assets were appropriate, improving relevance and sustainability. The ability of NGOs to bring additional resources into the projects was also a critical performance factor.

207. **Nevertheless, there were important concerns about effectiveness and sustainability that undermine the effectiveness of FFW/FFA programmes.** Sudden changes in focus, moving in and out of emergencies, had an impact on the continuity of operations, the ability of WFP and JEFAP to sustain interventions and the quality of assets. There was limited Government involvement and technical support for some elements of the programme, at national and district level. It was not clear from the field mission whether this resulted from

limited institutional capacity or financial constraints, particularly at the district and local levels, and/or weak support for FFA within the Government's priority framework.

208. **Not all assets were equally shared among the potential beneficiaries.** Some kinds of assets created were better suited for family ownership and could not be broadly shared by communities. Irrigation schemes were one example. Not all community members were land owners, or had land in close proximity to the irrigation scheme. Benefits, therefore, accrued to only some members of the community. It was not clear from the field mission where limited access created inequalities within communities.

209. **The investment in some assets was lost in 2008 when the WFP suspended FFW/FFA operations for lack of financial support.** The suspension meant the reduction or end to JEFAP activities, affecting the network's ability to complete and/or sustain some assets. It was too early to ascertain the affect on the JEFAP network itself. Funding declines were an indication of the lack of donor or Government support, a gap between donor and Government priorities or a combination of both factors.

3.2. Key Issues for the Future

Managing Transitions

210. **Managing the transition to recovery is the key programme challenge for WFP's next Malawi Country Strategy.** WFP showed robust performance in emergency situations, where it had strong analytical and programme competencies. After 2005/6, WFP continued delivering valued food commodities to non-emergency programmes, identified by the Government as a priority. However, WFP's planning and analytical capacities were weaker, and it did not define and communicate a role differentiated from the emergency phase. This led WFP into a vicious circle of declining resources and contradictory positions taken by counterparts, where programme choices were driven as much by funding cuts as by WFP's own strategic decisions.

211. Defining a strategy for Malawi's transition, therefore, should be a key element of the new country strategy. Elements could include the following:

- A strong analytical framework outlining trends in the Malawi programme environment and linking them to WFP's mandate;
- A clearly defined set of mandate-based roles, around which support and resources can be mobilised;
- WFP's programme repertoire would be expected to work across emergency (presence of structural risks to food security and ongoing need for monitoring and disaster preparedness) and recovery issues (Government's social protection and social development priorities);
- The framework should stress transition required *within* programme areas. For example, shifting focus from the preventative to curative in nutrition, or strengthening capacity building to ensure the sustainability of systems as WFP's implementation role is reduced;
- Discussion with counterparts should take into account the need to reduce the gap between Government requests and donor support, as a matter of overall alignment and to improve predictability for WFP; and
- An internal analytical/professional capacity to translate analysis and data from counterparts into programme strategy and ensure a clear linkage between the two.

A Coherent Country Strategy

212. **A coherent country strategy would strengthen planning.** The WFP system of modality-based planning (EMOP, PRRO and CP) within a corporate objective framework appeared to have advantages in facilitating a rapid response to emergency situations and mobilising corporate resources. However, multiple analytical frameworks appeared to create fragmentation in WFP's approach to Malawi, particularly moving into the recovery phase. It affected WFP's ability to make country-level strategic choices in the context of transition and diminishing resources. A unified country strategy is required to support planning, and then define and communicate WFP's role to counterparts.

Managing Alignment

213. **Alignment is management and human resource intensive.** It requires a significant investment of time and a programme requirement for qualified persons to attend meetings, follow up and make expected contributions to processes. In Malawi's difficult political environment (Government and donor tensions 2001- 2004, political sensitivities related to food security after 2005 and donor concerns on real cost accounting), specific diplomatic and

negotiating skills are also involved. These costs are real and grow as alignment strengthens, but are not usually not calculated into programming.

A Strong Programme Rationale for Capacity Development

214. **There is a strong programme rationale for capacity development in recovery situations.** There is a trade-off between short-term effectiveness and long-term national ownership. Working through Government structures has the medium to long-term advantage of strengthening national systems and reducing WFP's field presence. However, short-term effectiveness can be undermined in low capacity environments. WFP's performance will be determined by the capacity and performance of the Government. The trade-off creates a strong programme rationale for capacity development, an area in which WFP has limited resources and no clear strategy. Failing a direct contribution, capacity development can be done with counterpart UN agencies or others.

Alignment within the United Nations Country Team

215. **Achieving UNDAF objectives is essential to enhancing programme capacity and UNCT credibility.** The WFP and members of the Malawi UNCT made a significant investment in producing the current UNDAF, with the WFP programmes fully integrated into the results matrix. The UNDAF appeared to provide a coherent framework for collaboration between UN agencies and for defining roles and supporting resource mobilisation. Developing an UNDAF was also central to the UN's credibility with the Government and donors. However, synergies within the UNDAF have not been exploited in practical terms. There were examples in all of WFP's programme streams of initiatives that could be strengthened if the contributions of UN agencies were better coordinated.

3.3. Recommendations

6. The next Country Strategic Plan should specifically address WFP's role in Malawi's recovery process. The plan should:
 - Be based on a credible analytical framework, noting positive trends to be supported and measures to mitigate ongoing structural risk to food security;
 - Present the WFP contribution towards Government's social protection and social development objectives in a manner that differentiates those contributions from past emergency-oriented assistance;
 - Identify the human resource requirements to satisfy upstream requests, in the areas of policy, technical assistance and capacity development,
 - Be based, to the extent possible, in agreement with donors, the Government and donors on appropriate roles, around which support and resources can be mobilised; and
 - Stress long-term efforts to reduce dependence on food assistance, and include clearly defined parameters for an eventual exit strategy.
7. The Country Strategic Plan should place particular emphasis on integrating a capacity development strategy into WFP's Malawi programme.
8. The Malawi Country Office requires adequate professional staff for strategic development, and to plan and manage its programs. Recognizing resource constraints, this may require clear priorities on allocation and discussion with donors on funding, noting the principle of aid effectiveness that post-crisis situations are management and knowledge intensive.
9. WFP should intensify its efforts to develop programme synergies with other UN agencies, within the UNDAF framework.

Recommendations on Logistics

10. To implement the Strategic Priority 3 (Goal 7) of the draft Country Strategy for Malawi 2008–2011 in respect of transfer of knowledge on logistics for large scale national and regional distribution, WFP should provide more comprehensive training for staff and counterparts than is currently available.
11. The “WINGS Management Overview” document was designed to provide senior management officers with a comprehensive “control panel” listing the most important budgetary and financial parameters for projects. This should be the case not only for national but also for regional programmes. The accuracy of this document should be verified at regular intervals. Anomalies should be traced, corrected and explained.

Recommendations for School Feeding

12. Future School Feeding programmes should consider the impact of expanding demand for education services on the quality of education. Appropriate measures should be taken to coordinate demand and supply-side expansions, usually within the context of a Government-led sector plan and the UNDAF process.
13. WFP should assign at least one professional staff member to support policy development of the Ministry of Education., Particular focus should be given to the School Health and Nutrition Strategy, and support to the Ministry of Education in the design of its costing and implementation, in the upcoming SWAP in coordination with other UN agencies, donors and NGOs.

Annexes

Annex One: Terms of Reference

Evaluation of the WFP Portfolio in MALAWI 2000-2008 FINAL TERMS OF REFERENCE

[*Note: Annexes to the TOR are not included here*]

Country portfolio evaluations encompass the entirety of WFP activities during a specific period and evaluate the performance and results of the portfolio as a whole. They provide evaluative insights for evidence-based decision-making as WFP makes strategic decisions about positioning itself in a country, its strategic partnerships, and the way in which operations are designed and implemented. The evaluation of the Malawi portfolio is the first of this type of evaluations.

1. The purpose of these terms of reference is to specify rationale and objectives of the evaluation, the scope (including the time-frame to be covered and which operations and activities are included and which are not), and evaluation methods. The terms of reference were prepared by the evaluation manager (Caroline Heider, Director, Office of Evaluation) based on the review of documents, information provided by the Country Office in Malawi, and discussion during a preparatory mission to Malawi (15-21 September 2008) and Johannesburg (22 September) by the evaluation manager and team leader (David Gairdner, independent consultant). The draft terms of reference were circulated with stakeholders for comments. They will direct the evaluation team in its work during the inception, main, and reporting phases of the evaluation.

2. The terms of reference are structured along the following lines: Chapter 1) provides background information to understand the context in which WFP operates and to give an overview of the WFP portfolio; Chapter 2) provides the reasons for undertaking the evaluation and who its main users are; Chapter 3) defines the scope of the evaluation; Chapter 4) identifies key issues that the evaluation will address; Chapter 5) spells out the evaluation approach; and Chapter 6) indicates how the evaluation will be organised.

1. Background

3. This section is based on some of the publications listed in Annex 1. A further analysis of these documents, as appropriate for the evaluation, will be done during the Inception Phase of the evaluation.

1.A. Country Context

4. Poverty. Malawi is a landlocked country in southern Africa, bordered by Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia. The total population is estimated at around 13 million people, of which 83 percent are estimated to live in rural areas. The average per capita gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated at around US\$150 and the Gini coefficient is 0.38, an indication of relatively high inequality.⁵⁶ Depending on the source, between 54 percent and 42 percent of Malawians are estimated to live on less than US\$1 per day, and 20 percent are estimated to be extremely poor living on less than US\$0.20



⁵⁶ World Bank Country Brief Malawi, March 2008.

a day. “Malawi is classified as a least developed country and is currently ranked 165 out of 177 countries in the Human Development Index”,⁵⁷ compared to being 163rd of 174 countries in 2000. Gender inequality is high and recognised by the Government and the UN country team (UNCT) as an issue that needs to be addressed in the near term.⁵⁸ Average life expectancy has dropped to 47 years due to HIV and AIDS,⁵⁹ with a prevalence rate of 14 percent. WFP estimates that there are 950,000 orphans in the country. In addition to the challenges of ensuring food security for Malawians, the country has been host to refugees from neighbouring countries. Following the urban disturbances in South Africa in May 2008, the Government and Malawi Red Cross Society expected up to 15,000 returnees.

5. **Food Insecurity.** It is estimated that 40-60 percent of Malawians face chronic food insecurity for between two and five months a year,⁶⁰ although food security varies depending on annual harvests. According to WFP,⁶¹ almost half of the children under 5 years of age in rural areas are stunted, 22 percent are severely stunted, and 22 percent are underweight.

6. **Availability of Food.** Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, contributing 35 percent of GDP to the economy, providing employment for 85 percent of the population, and generating 80 percent of Malawi’s exports. The performance of the sector is variable, as it is vulnerable to natural shocks such as floods and droughts. Crop production for 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 have been reported to be high, contributing to increased export earnings.⁶² Trade, including informal cross-border trade, is being tracked by FEWS Net and WFP and shows the movement of goods and the prices, which according to that source are high for the given supply. In addition to weather conditions, the performance of the sector is suffering from structural and economic problems: agriculture is largely rain-fed and inputs are not always available or available at the right time.

7. **Access to Food.** With the high degree of subsistence farming, access to food is dependent on the performance of the agriculture sector and with that exposed to the weaknesses of the sector and weather conditions. In addition, the high Gini coefficient is mirrored in the large proportion of small-holders: 75 percent of total, of whom 40 percent have land areas of less than 0.5 hectare.⁶³ This situation means that even in bumper crop years, localised food deficiencies exist. Moreover, access is expected to become more restricted as the country experiences high food prices in particular for maize.

8. **Food Utilization.** Studies on the use of food, traditional patterns on eating habits, were not found on the internet or inquiries during the preparation of the Terms of Reference (TOR). Issues related to the use of food and feeding practices will be subject to a review by the World Bank and USAID, to be started in 2008.

⁵⁷ WFP, Projected Needs for WFP Projects and Operations, 2007.

⁵⁸ Malawi Growth and Development Strategy and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework; see later sections in the terms of reference for more information.

⁵⁹ IRIN, Malawi Humanitarian Country Profile, March 2007.

⁶⁰ IRIN, Malawi Humanitarian Country Profile, March 2007.

⁶¹ See project document of PRRO 10586.0 for details.

⁶² The latest available statistics on FAO Stat go only up to 2001-2003.

⁶³ World Bank Country Brief Malawi, March 2008.

9. Natural Disasters.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns in its 2007 report that agriculture production in African countries “is projected to be severely compromised by climate variability and change. ... In some countries, yields from rain-fed agriculture could be reduced by up to 50 percent by 2020.” Malawi is subject to frequent floods and droughts. According to the Emergency Events Database,⁶⁴ data for natural disasters in Malawi shows that the occurrence of droughts and floods increased over the last three decades. Figure 1 shows the incidence of floods and droughts between 1980 and 2008 and illustrates that the absolute number of severe floods per year is relatively small, but that the frequency has increased since 1998: prior to that year 5 floods occurred over a period of 16 years, whereas after 1998 floods have become an almost annual occurrence and the number of floods per year has increased from previous one to two or three per year, even though the number of people affected by floods is relatively small compared to the numbers affected by droughts. Over the last three decades over 19 million people have been affected by droughts and 1.5 million people by floods.

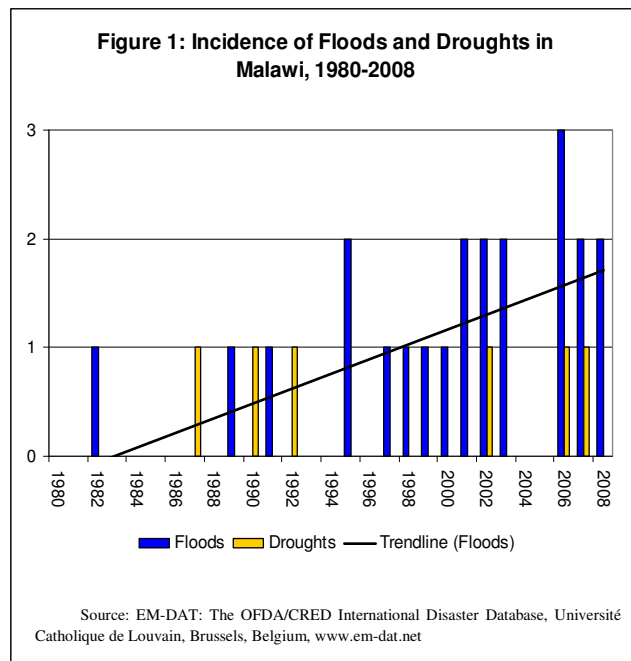


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10. Government Strategy. The Government adopted in 2006 the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) for 2006/07 to 2010/2011. This latest strategy builds on the Government’s previous economic growth strategy and poverty reduction strategy. It forms the overarching strategy that sets the priorities for Malawi’s progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

11. Government Goals and Priorities. The main goal of the Government is to reduce poverty through sustainable economic growth and infrastructure development. It aims to balance investments in economic growth and social sectors and defined 6 priority areas under which all investments by Government and partners will fall. Two of these priority areas are relevant to WFP’s work: (i) agriculture and food security, and (ii) prevention and management of nutrition disorders, HIV and AIDS. In the first area, the Government aims to secure for all Malawians food in the right quantity, quality and at affordable prices. Apart from increasing agriculture production and developing a nutrition strategy, the MGDS aims to improve the coordination and management of food aid. In the second area, the MGDS links the need for improved nutrition, among other things, with the means to address HIV and AIDS issues, and sets out an agenda to improving nutrition of the population as a whole.

12. Protecting the Vulnerable. In addition to these priority areas, the MGDS sets out themes, including protection of the vulnerable. For those who are unable to participate in socio-economic development, the Government intends to provide social protection to support human capital needs. The corresponding theme of social protection and disaster risk management involves caring for the most vulnerable target groups (which coincide with those of WFP), preventing them from slipping into poverty and/or increasing their assets to (re)engage them in economic development, and preventing disasters and mitigating their effects. Corresponding to priority areas, the Government set up a number of committees that bring together stakeholders from the Government and bilateral and multilateral partners.

⁶⁴ EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database, Université Catholique de Louvain, Brussels, Belgium, www.em-dat.net

13. **International Assistance.** According to the World Bank,⁶⁵ Malawi receives relatively little foreign assistance from relatively few donors compared with some of its neighbouring countries in the Southern African region. Total foreign contributions make up 40 percent of Malawi's annual budget: the main donors are DFID, EC, World Bank, AfDB, Norway, and USAID who together contribute 90 percent of foreign assistance, while the remaining 10 percent are made up of other international partners. Figures published on the OECD/DAC website (<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/20/1882063.gif>) indicate that Malawi's top ten donors contributed US\$1.6 billion and that humanitarian assistance makes up only for a small portion of the total (see Annex 2). In addition to these partners, the UN system plays an important role. of Malawi's annual budget: the main donors are DFID, EC, World Bank, AfDB, Norway, and USAID who together contribute 90 percent of foreign assistance, while the remaining 10 percent are made up of other international partners.

14. **Coordination Efforts.** The Government developed the MGDS as a means to coordinate contributions from its partners. Sector-wide approaches are being used and funded by a number of bilateral and multilateral partners in the health sector and for HIV and AIDS programmes. A group of international partners developed a common approach to budget support, and the UN system in its most recent United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2008-2011 promulgates principles that are in line with the Delivering as One Pilots, even though Malawi is not one of the pilot countries. The UNDAF 2008-2011 is structured around five clusters, each of which is aligned with MGDS⁶⁶ and linked to the MDGs. It spells out expected outcomes by 2011. The cluster most relevant to and convened by WFP is cluster 2: social protection and disaster risk reduction, although WFP's mandate and portfolio is relevant to a number of other clusters as well. In addition to these clusters, the UNDAF has cross-cutting themes, including gender, disaster risk reduction and developing implementation capacities, which are relevant to WFP's mandate. The cost of the UNDAF is estimated at US\$340 million over four years.

15. **Humanitarian Assistance.** On the humanitarian side there is no similar medium-term framework or strategy, although the recent contingency plan may be a plan in which humanitarian partners agreed on humanitarian challenges and their responses to them. Total humanitarian donations between 2001 and 2008, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), amounted to US\$222 million. Annex 3 provides a detailed breakdown by year and donor.

1.B. The WFP Portfolio in Malawi

16. **Overview.** WFP has been working in Malawi since 1965 with a total of 33 operations for a value of over US\$ 1 billion (in current prices). The total portfolio consists of 17 emergency operations (EMOP), 4 protracted relief and recovery operations (PRRO), 5 Country Programmes, and 1 development project, and 7 development-type of projects that were not categorised.⁶⁷ A number of these operations, in particular the large-scale emergency responses, covered several countries in Southern Africa and were managed by the Regional Bureau. Annex 4 provides a list of operations in Malawi since the beginning.

17. **Strategic Directions.** In 2000, the Executive Board approved a "second-generation" Country Strategy Outline for Malawi (WFP/EB.3/2000/6/2), which stated WFP's mission as helping the poor food insecure communities (defined as the poorest rural areas, chronically food insecure, and areas with high concentration of urban poor) reduce food insecurity and vulnerability to external shocks. The strategy revolved around (i) improving nutrition through training and community development; (ii) increasing productive assets of households (HHs) and communities; (iii) enhancing disaster preparedness and response at HH and community level; and (iv) assisting Government in preparing a food aid policy and a disaster management

⁶⁵ World Bank Country Brief Malawi, March 2008.

⁶⁶ The UNDAF adopted four of the Government's themes, leaving out infrastructure, as it was not considered a comparative advantage of the UN agencies.

⁶⁷ These are older operations, possibly before the current categories existed.

plan. The Country Strategy Outline was based on, among other things, an evaluation of Country Programme 1998-2001 and was meant to guide the design and implementation of the subsequent Country Programme 2002-2006.⁶⁸ The Country Strategy Outline did not contain a logic model/framework, which associates expected results (specific targets and target dates) with indicators and means of verification, and risks/assumptions.

18. Between 2000 and 2008 there was no formal country strategy. However, an evolving strategy can be gathered from various operations and was summarised in PRRO 10586.0,⁶⁹ approved in 2007.⁷⁰ This evolving strategy entailed (i) focusing on HIV and AIDS due to its high prevalence rates in the region and its impact on food security; and (ii) the use of regional operations, which operate in parallel with national operations. The EMOPs provided responses to droughts and people affected by HIV and AIDS and the PRRO dealt with social protection and HIV and AIDS. The strategy explained in PRRO 10586 suggests that smaller relief and school feeding components were to be launched when needed, while the bulk of the strategy focused on disaster risk reduction and livelihood protection, including nutrition (therapeutic and supplementary feeding), HIV and AIDS programmes, and food for assets. The PRRO also included an explicit handover strategy and a logical framework for the PRRO. This logical framework cannot be applied to the country portfolio as a whole, as during the same year the Board approved a development project⁷¹ with its own logical framework.

19. An analysis of the goals and objectives stated in the project documents for operations approved since 2000 shows a number of recurring intentions that the operations pursued. They revolved around a limited number of themes that, taken together, aim to reduce the food insecurity of vulnerable groups in Malawi. The themes are: (i) saving lives in emergencies, which reflects the programme's responses to the number of emergency situations in Malawi over the last years; (ii) protecting livelihoods by preventing the need for negative coping strategies in the face of emergencies; (iii) (re)building livelihoods through community infrastructure, soil and water conservation, and community assets; (iv) reducing severe and moderate malnutrition of vulnerable groups, in particular children, pregnant and lactation women, and people infected or affected by HIV and AIDS; and (v) improving educational achievements by ensuring higher and equitable enrolment and attendance rates, lower drop-out rates, and better learning abilities. Aside from these programmes directed towards Malawian beneficiaries, WFP also supported the Government in hosting refugees by providing the necessary food assistance to feed refugees in camps and provide food-for-work activities for host communities.

20. **Food Assistance Activities.** Currently, WFP's activities focused on assisting Malawians are (i) support to individuals and households affected by HIV and AIDS, whereby assistance is provided through community-based and institution-based interventions; (ii) supplementary feeding focused on moderately malnourished children and at risk pregnant and lactating women who receive assistance at maternal and child health clinics and therapeutic feeding directed towards severely malnourished children who are admitted to nutrition rehabilitation centres; (iii) food for assets to support the creation of agricultural assets; (iv) targeted food distribution to flood-affected people; and (v) school feeding. In addition, WFP supports refugees from Rwanda, Burundi, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which by 2008 are housed in one refugee camp. Table 1 provides an overview of the different types of activities under each operation and the tonnage for each of them as indicated in the project design documents.

⁶⁸ Country Programmes, contrary to typical practices of other organizations, do not comprise the entire WFP portfolio but a combination of programme activities that are implemented in addition to operations in other categories.

⁶⁹ Assistance to Food-Insecure People Suffering from the Effects of Natural Disasters and HIV/AIDS, WFP/EB.2/2007/9-C/4, October 2007.

⁷⁰ It is not clear from the document whether this response strategy refers to WFP's country strategy or response strategy to the HIV and AIDS epidemic. This question will be clarified in discussion with the Country Office.

⁷¹ Strategic Focus of the WFP Development Project: Support to Education, WFP/EB.A/2007/9-A/3, June 2007.

Table 1: Types of Activities by Operation 2000-2008
(metric tons of food, as per design documents)

Operation Category & Number	Approval	Completion	Total	FFA/FFW	GFD/TFD	Nutrition ^(a)	School Feeding
CP10014	1998	2001	51,555	18,406		18,231	14,918
CP10106	2001	2006	78,000	19,000		34,000	25,000
EMOP 10056	2001	2001	8,822		8,822		
EMOP 10152	2002	2002	1,635		1,635		
EMOP 10153	2002	2002	11,375		11,375		
EMOP 10200	2002	2003	264,501	No breakdown by activity given. ^(b)			
EMOP 10201	2002	2002	54,426		52,800	1,626	
EMOP 10290	2002	2002	36,696	13,781		14,064	8,851
PRRO 10309	2004	2005	4,496	550	3,946		
PRRO 10310	2004	2007	161,306	No breakdown by activity given. ^(c)			
DEV 10394	2004	2006		Not tonnage based, but capacity development.			
DEV 10581	2007	2011	70,104				70,104
PRRO 10586	2007	2010	214,679	No breakdown by activity given. ^(d)			
			957,595				

Source: WFP project documents.

FFA: food-for-assets, FFW: food-for-work; GFD: general food distribution; TFD: targeted food distribution.

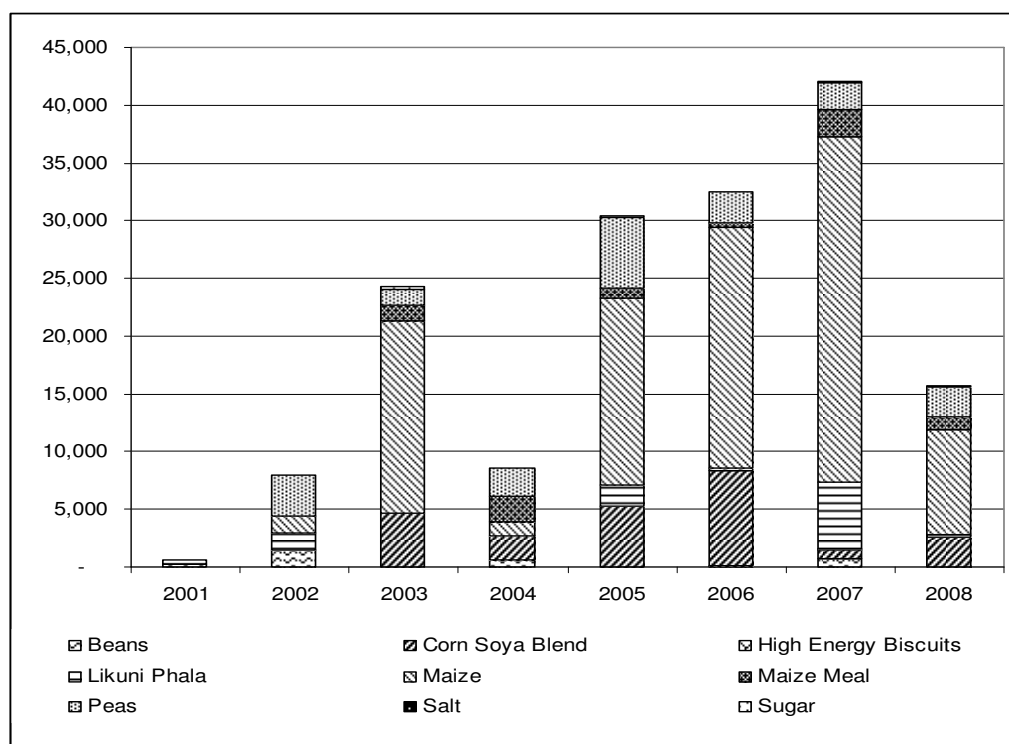
Notes: (a) Nutrition programmes include: supplementary and therapeutic feeding, HIV and AIDS activities, and maternal and child health and nutrition. (b) EMOP 10200 included: general food distribution, nutrition programmes (therapeutic and supplementary feeding), and school feeding; (c) EMOP 10310 included: food for work, targeted food distribution, and nutrition programmes (mother and child nutrition, support to people living with HIV and AIDS, feeding at early childhood development centres); (d) PRRO 10586 included: food for assets, general food distribution, nutrition programmes (therapeutic and supplementary feeding and support to people living with HIV and AIDS), and school feeding.

21. Capacity Development Activities. The Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee (MVAC) was assisted under the regional development project 10394 (2004-2006) that aimed to strengthen the capacities of partners in countries within the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) region. Institutional and provincial capacities were to be developed for food security monitoring and vulnerability assessment to enable them to respond better to shocks and manage food security programmes. The project was funded by the Republic of South Africa and DFID. It aimed to assist vulnerability assessment committees in the countries in the SADC. WFP continues to be a member of the MVAC. In addition, other capacity development activities might have taken place, but are not fully documented.

22. Commodities Procured in Malawi. Between 2001 and 2008, WFP procured a total of 162,142 metric tons (mt) of a number of commodities in Malawi, including maize (95,432 mt), corn-soya blend (23,621 mt) and peas (21,078 mt). Total procurement was valued (in

current US\$ terms) at US\$39.2 million. Supplies fluctuated over the years, as illustrated in figure 2.

Figure 2: Commodities Procured in Malawi (2001- mid 2008)(in metric tons)



Source: Data from WFP Country Office Malawi, graphic presentation by Office of Evaluation.

23. To place WFP’s local purchase power into context, figures for maize, to use one example, show that in 2004 total exports were 12,583 mt and total imports 6,865 mt⁷² while WFP procured in the same year 1,206 mt in Malawi. For 2007, data on informal cross-border trade⁷³ show a total of 48,808 mt informal maize imports and 4,361 mt informal maize exports, compared to WFP’s local procurement of 29,828 mt. Figures on procurement on local markets are not conclusive and WFP’s market imprint appears highly variable per year, but this data needs to be analyzed during the evaluation to assess whether and if so what strategic role as a market player WFP has had. In addition, in 2008 WFP started an initiative called “purchase for progress” (P4P), which aims to connect small-scale low-income farmers to markets.

24. **Future Directions.** WFP’s corporate strategic plans provide directions to operations. In 2008, WFP adopted a new Strategic Plan (2008-2011) and is discussing the introduction of country strategies that ensure the implementation of corporate strategic plans at country level. For the purpose of this evaluation, the previous two strategic plans are relevant, as the operations designed in the past fall under their direction. The strategic priorities or objectives of these strategic plans are reproduced in Table 2 below, which illustrates that the first priority of saving lives has remained the same but that new objectives were introduced in the latest strategic plan, which will require the Country Office to review how the current operations meet the new strategic directions and what adjustments are necessary.

⁷² FAO Key Statistics, <http://www.fao.org/es/ess/toptrade/trade.asp?lang=en&dir=exp>, 2004 latest data available.

⁷³ Cross-Border Trade Update, December 2007. FEWS Net and WFP

Table 2: WFP Corporate Strategic Plans 2003, 2005 and 2008

STRATEGIC PLAN (2004–2007) WFP/EB.3/2003/4-A/1	STRATEGIC PLAN (2006–2009) WFP/EB.A/2005/5-A/Rev.1	STRATEGIC PLAN (2008–2011) WFP/EB.A/2008/5-A/Rev.1
Strategic Priority 1: Save lives in crisis situations.	Strategic Objective 1: save lives in crisis situations;	Strategic Objective 1: save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies;
Strategic Priority 2: Protect livelihoods in crisis situations and enhance resilience to shocks.	Strategic Objective 2: protect livelihoods in crisis situations and enhance resilience to shocks;	Strategic Objective 2: prevent acute hunger and invest in disaster preparedness and mitigation measures;
Strategic Priority 3: Support the improved nutrition and health status of children, mothers and other vulnerable people.	Strategic Objective 3: support the improved nutrition and health status of children, mothers and other vulnerable people;	Strategic Objective 3: restore and rebuild lives and livelihoods in post-conflict, post-disaster or transition situations;
Strategic Priority 4: Support access to education and reduce gender disparity in access to education and skills training.	Strategic Objective 4: support access to education and reduce gender disparity in access to education and skills training; and	Strategic Objective 4: reduce chronic hunger and undernutrition;
Strategic Priority 5: Help governments establish and manage national food-assistance programmes.	Strategic Objective 5: strengthen countries and regions capacities to establish and manage food-assistance and hunger-reduction programmes.	Strategic Objective 5: strengthen the capacities of countries to reduce hunger, including through hand-over strategies and local purchase.

Source: WFP Strategic Plans

25. **Country strategies** are expected to be developed as country strategy documents (CSDs) with the following objectives:⁷⁴ “(a) Assess the rationale and define strategies for future WFP activities in the country; (b) Strengthen/redefine the strategic position of the CO in the host country’s humanitarian and development process and among UN and other development partners; (c) Guide and support the implementation of the Strategic Plan at the CO-level Support the strengthening of the CO’s analytical capacity, political influence and national capacity development efforts with the aim of including hunger, food security and disaster issues in the national humanitarian and development framework and policy discussions; and (d) Outline the CO’s orientation, main strategies and focus areas of intervention.” The Country Office in Malawi is one of the first two country offices to test the CSD. It also participates in a number of other new initiatives.

1.C. Stakeholders

26. WFP’s stakeholders in Malawi include national and sub-national government, multi- and bilateral partners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector, and stakeholders in the region. Annex 5 provides a matrix that lists the different stakeholders, their role in or work related to WFP’s operations, their potential interest and role in the evaluation, and implications for the evaluation. A large number of these stakeholders are partners in WFP programmes and therefore have an interest in the assessment of performance and outcomes for the purpose of accountability and learning.

⁷⁴ Framework for the Strategic Plan implementation at the CO-level through a Country Strategy Document; draft under development. The CSD concept is under discussion and needs to be confirmed.

27. Stakeholders within WFP are primarily the Country Office, which is responsible for the portfolio and its implementation and for preparing the CSD, and the Regional Bureau, which was responsible for regional operations and for supporting regional operations. Other stakeholders within WFP include relevant headquarters' units that provide support to country offices in CSD preparation and portfolio development and implementation. The interest of internal WFP stakeholders lies in receiving a fair and balanced evaluation that provides evidence and useful insights. The role of stakeholders is defined in Section 6.B below.

2. Reasons for the Evaluation

2.A. Rationale

28. The rationale for country portfolio evaluations in general is that they provide accountability and learning at the country level, including an understanding of the strategic position within a country, the strategy pursued and the collective results achieved (including synergies, where they exist). The rationale for this country portfolio evaluation in Malawi is to provide evaluative inputs into the process of developing one of WFP's first CSDs. *The intention of this country-level evaluation is to generate evidence on past performance and results to help guide choices about strategically positioning WFP for the future.*

29. The main users of the evaluation will be the WFP Country Office and its partners in Government, the international community, NGOs, private sector, and civil society. The evaluation will be presented to the Executive Board of WFP to inform them of the performance and outcomes of WFP's portfolio in Malawi from 2000 to mid 2008. Finally, the evaluation can be used in mid-term evaluations of the Government's MGDS and of the UNDAF.

2.B. Objective of the Country Portfolio Evaluation

30. This country portfolio evaluation aims to generate evidence and analyses that will support decision-making about strategically positioning WFP in Malawi. The evaluation has the dual objectives of (i) **accountability**: assessing and reporting on the performance and results of WFP's portfolio in the context of its mandate and in response to humanitarian and development challenges that the country faces; and (ii) **learning**: generating evidence-based analysis and insights that will inform the preparation of the CSD, its implementation, and the way in which the portfolio and its operations are planned and managed.

31. Secondary, but important, objectives of this country portfolio evaluation are to (i) develop and test the methodology for undertaking this type of evaluations at WFP; (ii) deciding, after testing the evaluation approach in another couple of countries, on the future use of this evaluation approach (country portfolio versus operations, or complementary); and (iii) generate the methodological basis that enables WFP to participate in joint country portfolio evaluations, for instance, of UNDAFs. Without its own capacity to evaluate its portfolio in a country, WFP would not have the technical expertise to participate effectively in such joint evaluations. This secondary objective will be dealt with by the evaluation manager and the team leader, through a debriefing on the methodology. It will not be dealt with in the evaluation report.

3. Scope of the Evaluation

3.A. Scope

32. **Timeframe.** The evaluation will cover WFP's portfolio between 2000 and mid 2008. The reasons for selecting this timeframe are (i) the last country strategy outline was done in 2000, which can be considered a milestone for comparing past strategic positioning; (ii) evolving strategies that developed during this period and in particular through regional operations (see paragraph 0); and (iii) the need for new strategic directions to respond to arising challenges and to implement WFP's Strategic Plan 2008-2011.

33. **Portfolio.** During the selected period, WFP undertook (i) 12 operations in all categories, some of which were regional, with a cumulative distribution of 944,896 mt in food assistance and procurement in Malawi of 162,142 mt during the same period; (ii) a second-generation country strategy outline in 2000, and contributions to strategic planning of the Government (e.g. contingency plan) and of the UNCT (e.g. UNDAF); (iii) analytical work (three crop and food supply assessments with FAO, two school feeding baselines, and other analytical work carried out with grants); and (iv) capacity development assistance, including that to the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee. Annex 6 provides a summary table of these activities over the years (including the index numbers of the operations for easy identification), three graphs that illustrate the number of beneficiaries reached during that period, the amount of food distributed, and the associated US dollar value, and targeted beneficiaries by operation and type of activity.

34. **Excluded Activities.** The evaluation will not cover (i) operations related to refugees, except possibly the food-for-assets programmes for host communities. The exclusion of food distribution to refugees is because these programmes do not benefit Malawians directly. In addition, the magnitude of the programmes is relatively small compared to the government budget on which their impact would not be significant; (ii) cash and vouchers, as these operations are only in the start-up period. A small pilot was conducted in 2006/2007, which may be considered if its activities are in areas where field work is being conducted; and (iii) P4P, which is only in the start-up phase so that insufficient work will have taken place to carry out an evaluation.

35. **Geographic scope.** Based on the preliminary review during the preparatory mission, the evaluation will focus on operations in Kasungu, Blantyre, Chikwawa, Nsanje, and Phalombe. No visits to districts in the centre (other than Kasungu) or the north of Malawi are planned. This choice will exclude a relatively small proportion of nutrition programmes that are delivered through the nation-wide network of supplementary feeding centres and the emergency operations in those regions. However, the latter will be covered through document review. These choices will be confirmed or adjusted, if necessary, during the Inception Phase.

3.B. Evaluability Assessment⁷⁵

36. The first round of country portfolio evaluations faces the challenge that none of the countries have country strategies that express WFP's goals or objectives for the country as a whole. Each operation has a logical framework that provides objectives for activity streams that are in line with corporate strategic objectives. However, these do not add up to a goal for operations in the country overall, nor do they include activities that fall outside the operations.

37. During the preparatory mission, the evaluation manager and team leader discussed with the Country Office and the Regional Bureau the development of a logical framework for the

⁷⁵ Evaluability is the extent to which an activity or a program can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion, which depends on the clear understanding of the situation before assistance was provided, a clear statement of intended outcomes and impacts, clearly defined appropriate indicators, and target dates by which expected outcomes and impacts should occur.

portfolio. The conclusion of the meeting was that all activities can be grouped under the corporate strategic objectives of the respective strategic plans, which was already done in the design documents (each specified which strategic objectives were applicable) and in the annual work plans of the Country Office.

38. In the absence of a stated goal for the portfolio in Malawi, the evaluation will not assess the impact of WFP's portfolio as a whole. Instead, the evaluation will review the effects that the absence of country-specific goals had on strategic planning and positioning and subsequent programme choices, design, and implementation (see section 4, paragraph 45 below). An assessment of impact at the corporate level, i.e. the contribution that the Malawi portfolio to achieve corporate goals and objectives, is not undertaken by this evaluation, because these goals are not stated in S.M.A.R.T terms and because the assessment of the contribution of the Malawi portfolio would require corporate performance data on progress towards goals and objectives that are not available.

39. Instead of evaluating the portfolio against a common country goal, the evaluation will consider four groups of activities (i) food for work/food for assets; (ii) general and targeted food distribution; (iii) nutrition programmes, including supplementary and therapeutic feeding, food assistance to people living with HIV and AIDS, and mother and child nutrition and health programmes; and (iv) school feeding. These activities have taken place across the portfolio in operations that fall under a variety of programme categories (see Table 1, page 63). Output and outcome indicators from WFP's corporate "indicators compendium" will be used that correspond to these programme activities. Impacts will be assessed in terms of their contribution to sector development, such as their influence on or contribution to sector or social protection strategies of the Government. Impacts at country level will be considered when discussing the question of a common country goal and the effects of its absence.

40. Data for many of these indicators is being collected by the Country Office in Malawi for the operations and additional information exists from a number of sources, which can be used for triangulation purposes. Baseline information, while not necessarily compiled as such can be gathered from series of data sets that will allow trend analysis. Data exists for (i) food-for-assets programmes, in particular the community and household surveillance reports that track the well-being of beneficiary and non-beneficiary households over time. In addition, NGO partners produced regular monitoring and terminal reports in line with WFP requirements; (ii) regular data collection that is available at the Country Office and secondary data that has been presented on the response to major floods and droughts; (iii) nutrition: the Country Office has monitoring reports (in a database that can tabulate requisite information) on nutrition indicators for its programmes. In addition, information on district and national nutrition indicators are presented in the Malawi Demographic and Health Surveys, the Integrated Household Surveys, the UNICEF multiple indicator cluster survey; and (iv) school feeding, both from school feeding baseline studies conducted in 2003 and 2007/08 and from participating schools. The evaluation team will also comment on the appropriateness of the corporate indicators and the extent to which data that has been collected is reliable, useful, and being used.

41. To conclude, it is expected that the portfolio is evaluable.

3.C. Limitations to the Evaluation

42. The evaluation will not be able to collect primary data through extensive surveys, even if during the inception phase the team leader should identify that this would be desirable. Instead, the evaluation team will base its assessment on existing data, information gathered during interviews and focus group discussions, and through observations at sites. The evaluation team will report on data gaps or biases, if these were to exist, and explain how these affected the reliability and credibility of its findings.

43. The second limitation to the evaluation will be that some of the desirable technical expertise will not be on the evaluation team, as the team size was kept to a team of five. At

the time of preparing the terms of reference, the evaluation manager, in consultation with the team leader, chose the most relevant and necessary team members. During the evaluation, it might transpire that other additional expertise would have been desirable. The team leader will explain the resultant limitations to the final evaluation report, if this situation were to occur.

44. The third limitation is that the emergency operations, which make up for a considerable amount of resources, cannot be observed first hand by the evaluation team, because these emergencies are over. Instead, the team will have to rely on existing documentation and potentially key informants, although the time span between occurrence of the emergency and the evaluation are significant so that recall may not be reliable.

4. Key Issues for the Evaluation

45. The evaluation will focus on the following key issues, which will be further elaborated in the Inception Report, where an evaluation matrix will develop further sub-questions, relevant indicators, and relate the questions to the relevant standard evaluation criteria:

Q1: Strategic Alignment. How well has WFP's portfolio been aligned with strategic plans of the Government, the UNCT and other partners (multilateral, bilateral and NGOs) in Malawi or regional frameworks? What have been WFP's contributions to developing national or partner strategies, and how has it positioned itself in these contexts? Have there been trade-offs between aligning with national and partner strategies (external coherence) and with WFP strategic plans and corporate policies (internal coherence)?

Q2: Strategic Planning. How has WFP positioned itself strategically in the past, especially considering formal strategy documents and evolving strategies through its portfolio? What have been the main factors (from political to logistic realities) that influenced strategic choices and how do these need to be considered and managed in future strategic planning? What have been advantages and disadvantages of not establishing a goal for WFP's operations in Malawi for its strategic positioning and planning and resultant operational choices, implementation and results?

Q3: Performance and Results. What has been the performance and results of the WFP portfolio for the four groups of activities (see paragraph 39)? How can these results be explained, including factors beyond WFP's control and within (such as human resources, systems, logistic arrangements, etc.) and what can be learned from and applied to future strategic choices and operations? Has there been synergies between the programme activities and if so what can be learned from this for strategically positioning and using programmes to generate multiplier effects?

46. The UNDAF (see paragraph 14 above) highlighted the importance of gender equality and made it central to the development agenda for the coming years. Therefore, the evaluation will consider gender issues across all of the above three questions: analyze and assess whether and to what extent WFP's portfolio placed WFP in a strategic position to address gender issues, whether gender issues were built into the design of operations and other work, and record results in a way that is sex-disaggregated and reflects on changes in gender relations that might have resulted from WFP operations. Other importance clusters in the UNDAF, such as social protection and disaster risk reduction, will be addressed through questions of alignment and strategic positioning within government strategies.

5. Evaluation Approach

5.A. Methodology

47. **Mixed Method.** The evaluation will use a mixed method approach that involves the review and analysis of existing documentation and data that is complemented by key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and site visits/observations. Information from these sources will be used to triangulate and corroborate findings of the evaluation team. In gathering data and views from stakeholders, the evaluation team will ensure that it considers a cross-section of stakeholders with diverse views to ensure the evaluation findings are as impartial as possible. The evaluation will not represent the sole views of one stakeholder, but consult diverse stakeholders to base the evaluation team's observations and conclusions on a good understanding of potentially differing views.

48. **Using Secondary Data.** A large number of studies exist on Malawi, which are relevant to this evaluation. Some of these are listed in Annex 1; others are contained in the bibliography of the referenced studies. These sources of information will be used by the evaluation team to inform themselves and as potential baseline, background, or performance data, whichever is applicable. The evaluation team will acknowledge these sources and compare and contrast the findings presented in these reports with the observations of the team. In addition, five previous WFP evaluations covered operations in Malawi (thematic or regional and one focused of the Country Programme), which will be used, to the extent possible, to complement the findings of this evaluation.

49. **Document Review.** A review of existing documentation, both from within WFP and other sources. A large part of responding to Q1 and Q2 will be based on an analysis of relevant documents of the Government and its partners (multilateral, bilateral, and non-governmental) and of WFP (both publicly available and internal documents). The document analyses will be undertaken prior the field work to ensure the evaluation team is well prepared. Among others, the analyses will help determining baseline information and changes over time, and identify issues to be reviewed and discussed with stakeholders in the evaluation. The analysis of documents, whenever appropriate, will employ a standardised template to ensure information is extracted systematically and to the extent possible on the same issues.

50. **Existing Monitoring Data.** An analysis of existing monitoring data. This analysis will be undertaken by the evaluation team, using existing regular monitoring data generated and made available by the Country Office and the Regional Bureau. The analysis will be carried out prior to the fieldwork to ensure issues from the data are identified and can be discussed with stakeholders during the field visit.

51. **Information Collection.** During the field work of the evaluation, the evaluation team will use key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and observations during site visits. The extent to which primary data needs to be collected through surveys will depend on the quality and reliability of existing monitoring data, but in any case will be limited to small-scale surveys, if any. During interviews and meetings, each evaluation team member will act in line with the code of conduct for evaluators. Each evaluation team member will record the information gathered during field work and share this information with the team leader and other team members, following the guidance of the team leader.

52. **Site Selection.** The inception report will specify criteria for selecting sites within the selected geographical areas/districts (see paragraph 35).

53. The detailed evaluation methodology will be presented in the Inception Report.

5.B. Quality Assurance

54. The evaluation team, under the guidance of the team leader, is expected to ensure the accuracy and reliability of information and data reported in the draft and final evaluation reports. Where the accuracy of data cannot be ascertained, the evaluators will indicate potential weakness in the data and explain how this affects the conclusions they are drawing. The inception report shall explain what measures are built into the evaluation method to ensure the accuracy and reliability of information and data.

55. WFP's evaluation quality assurance system (EQAS) is based on the UNEG norms and standards and good practice of the international evaluation community (ALNAP and DAC). It includes quality assurance of evaluation products (the inception report, evaluation report, and summary evaluation report), based on standardised checklists. The quality assurance process aims to ensure that findings are evidence-based and reports are clearly written. Quality assurance does not interfere with the views of the evaluation team.

56. The evaluation manager will exercise the first quality assurance review. In addition, a second review (within OEDE) will be conducted by Claire Conan, Evaluation Officer and regional focal point for Southern Africa in OEDE. These quality checks will be conducted before the evaluation products are released for comments to stakeholders. In addition, this evaluation will be subject to external review by Daniel Maxwell, who brings extensive experience in the humanitarian and development field, in particular food security, and Jock Baker (Care International), who brings experience with a range of UN organizations and NGOs and with evaluation to the group of reviewers. Their bios are in Annex 7.

5.C. Phases and Deliverables

57. The evaluation will be undertaken in six phases, which are typical for evaluation processes, presented in Table 3 below and further detailed in Annex 8, where the specific outcomes of each phase are specified.

Table 3: Phases and Deliverables for the Evaluation

Phase	Timing	Expected Outputs
1. Design Phase	July – September 2008	Terms of Reference
2. Inception Phase	September – October 2008	Inception Report
3. Evaluation Phase Preparation Work	October – November	Initial Findings Working Papers (internal to evaluation team)
Field work	1-15 December 2008	Debriefing Presentations
4. Reporting Phase	December 2008 – February 2009	(Draft and Final) Evaluation Report Comments Matrix
5. Follow-up	February 2009 February 2009 onwards	Management Response Follow-up Actions
6. Executive Board	June 2009	(Draft and Final) EB Summary Report

Table 4 provides details for the field work schedule.

Table 4: Field Work Schedule

	DG	TW/PJ/tbd	FdM
29 November	Arrival in Lilongwe		
30 November	Team Briefing		
01 December	Briefing with Stakeholders Meetings in Lilongwe	Meetings in Lilongwe 16.30 Flight to Blantyre	
02 December		Site visits in southern Districts (Chikwawa, Nsanje and Phalombe) and Blantyre	
03 December			
04 December			
05 December			
06 December		8.00 Flight to Lilongwe	Arrival in Lilongwe
07 December	Team Briefing and Discussions		
08 December	Interim Briefing with Country Director and Regional Bureau, meetings in Lilongwe and writing time	Site visits in Kasungu	Meetings in Lilongwe Meetings/site visits in Blantyre Writing time
09 December		Meetings in Lilongwe Writing time	
10 December			
11 December			
12 December			
13 December	Internal Team Work: presentation of each team member and team leader on findings in their respective area		
14 December	Internal Team Work: discussion and identification of common higher level issues and preparation of debriefing presentation with stakeholders		
15 December	Debriefing with the Country Office and with Other Stakeholders (2 meetings)		
16 December	Departure of International Consultants		

DG: David Gairdner (team leader); TW: Tamsin Walters (nutrition); PJ: Paul Jere (livelihood development); tbd: to be determined (education); FdM: Francois de Meulder (logistics).

6. Organisation of the Evaluation

6.A. Expertise Required

58. The evaluation team will be composed of a team leader and four team members. All of them will be independent consultants, who have not worked extensively or exclusively on the Malawi portfolio or have other conflicts of interest. The team leader will have experience in complex evaluations, strategic positioning and strategic planning, and in leading evaluation teams. will have knowledge of development and humanitarian assistance. will have strong analytical skills, ability to conceptualise the evaluation and to understand the strategic implications of findings of other team members. The person will have excellent verbal and written communication skills. One team member each will be recruited for: (a) food-for-assets/work, including an understanding of income-generating activities and markets (the effects of food aid and of local purchase on local markets); (b) nutrition programmes, a nutritionist who is qualified to assess the nutritional outcomes of supplementary and therapeutic feeding programmes, assistance to people living with HIV and AIDS, and mother and child nutrition and health programmes; (c) school feeding, including an understanding of

school feeding in the context of the education sector (as a measure to ensure enrolment rates and educational outcomes) and as a social protection measure; and (d) logistics, with the capacity to evaluate contingency planning and logistic arrangements and their potential deployment in case of emergencies. While being primarily responsible for their respective areas, it is expected that team members will bring together a cross-section of skills that will complement each other. Each team member will have strong analytical skills, ability to generate, analyze and interpret evidence, and present findings in clearly written reports/ inputs to the evaluation report. Job descriptions are included in Annex 9.

6.B. Roles and Responsibilities

59. **WFP Stakeholders.** The Country Office is a major stakeholder in the evaluation and is responsible for (i) providing access to information that is necessary to conduct the evaluation; (ii) being available to the evaluation team to discuss the programme, its performance and results; (iii) facilitating the evaluation team's contacts with stakeholders in Malawi; and (iv) setting up schedules of meetings, facilitating field visits, and providing logistic support during the fieldwork. The Country Director will be the overall contact person and assign a staff to facilitate putting information together for the team. The Regional Bureau plays an important role in that it was responsible for the regional operations. It was consulted during the preparatory mission, will be contacted during the evaluation, and may participate in the debriefing meeting in Malawi. It received the terms of reference and will receive future evaluation products for comments and/or information. However, a large number of Bureau staff have been reassigned within WFP, so that the evaluation team leader will consult with them via email, telephone or at Headquarters. In addition to colleagues former associated with the Malawi portfolio, the evaluation will also consult with other headquarters colleagues in their respective roles and responsibilities of providing support to the Country Office. To ensure independence of the evaluation, Country Office and Regional Bureau staff will not be part of the evaluation team or participate in meetings where their presence could bias the responses of the stakeholders.

60. **WFP Partners.** Stakeholders in Malawi and the region will be key informants for the evaluation team. They will be a source of information to understand the context in which WFP operations, to give an appreciation of WFP from the partner perspective, and provide insights into WFP's operations and their results in as much as they worked with WFP on implementation. These stakeholders include representatives from Government (at national and subnational level), the UNCT and other international partners, INGOs and NGOs, who partner with WFP in the implementation of its portfolio (see also Section 1.C and Annex 5). They will participate also in briefings and debriefings of the evaluation team and become involved in the discussions to determine the performance and results of WFP's portfolio.

61. **Evaluation Team.** The evaluation team, under the team leader, will be responsible for the inception report, the preparatory and field work, and reporting. The evaluation team will be responsible for the content of the evaluation report and provide feedback on the way in which comments from stakeholders were taken into account and if comments were not considered provide reasons for doing so. The evaluation team will be responsible for consulting a broad and diverse range of stakeholders in Malawi, the region and at WFP headquarters so that it is well informed and as unbiased as possible. It is responsible for giving an initial briefing at the time of the start-up of the evaluation fieldwork and for a debriefing at the end of the fieldwork. The evaluation team will abide by the code of conduct for evaluators of the UN Evaluation Group.

62. **Evaluation Manager.** The evaluation manager has experience in conducting country-level evaluations for the Asian Development Bank, in setting the guidelines for and supervising staff managing this type of evaluations at the International Fund for Agriculture Development. As the evaluation manager, she is responsible for drafting the terms of reference, identifying, recruiting and overseeing the work of the evaluation team, undertaking the quality assurance of the evaluation products (inception report, evaluation report, and

Executive Board summary report) produced by the evaluation team, and for facilitating the communication between the evaluation team and WFP stakeholders. In her capacity as the director of OEDE, she is responsible for presenting the evaluation to the Executive Board.

6.C. Communication

63. All evaluation products will be produced in English. In cases where field visits require interpretation, the Country Office will facilitate identifying interpreters. During the evaluation process, evaluation findings will be shared as soon as the evaluation team is confident to make the findings available and at the latest during a debriefing at the end of the field work. This early feedback is important to (i) verify the initial findings of the team with stakeholders; (ii) give stakeholders in the country the opportunity to clarify issues during the debriefing, should this be necessary; and (iii) ensure a transparent evaluation process. After the evaluation is completed, OEDE will ensure the evaluation lessons are shared widely in particular with country directors through email distribution (with a synthesis of findings in the covering email) and possibly at country director meetings. These lessons will also be incorporated into OEDE's system for sharing lessons, once it is developed. Lessons on the evaluation method will be taken into account in subsequent country portfolio evaluations.

6.D. Resources and Budget

64. The evaluation will be financed from OEDE's Programme Support and Administrative budget. Based on the team composition in paragraph 58, the associated remuneration (daily fees) are estimated to be around US\$100,000 and the cost of travel is estimated to be US\$30,000, bringing the total cost of the evaluation to US\$130,000.

National Action Framework

Annex Two: Summary of Project Objectives

Country Programme 10014 ⁷⁶	Country Programme 10106
<p>Country Programme 10014 Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the ability of targeted households to <u>provide for their own sustained food and nutrition requirements</u>; and Decrease vulnerability levels of targeted groups to nutritional insecurity and the adverse effects of recurrent disasters. <p>In line with these goals, the four principal objectives of the programme will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring about sustainable improvements to rural infrastructure for household food security through the provision of short-term employment and community self-help incentives; Contribute to the better utilization of Mother and Child Health Centres (MCH) and community-based health services through the provision of dietary support; Alleviate the negative impact and likelihood of natural disasters through rapid response to localised food shortages and disasters; and To enhance human development through improved access to education, especially for girls. <p>Additional Objective of support to the Vulnerability Assessment and early warning capacity</p>	<p>Country Programme 10106 Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Strengthen the capacity of food-insecure households</u> (especially those headed by women and children) <u>to meet their food and nutritional needs and to withstand external economic shocks, droughts, floods and other calamities while addressing gender imbalances and HIV/AIDS.</u> <p>The proposed CP activities will all contribute to the achievement of the following three main outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Improved health status of mothers and under-5 children</u> in poor food-insecure areas through increased food availability and consumption as well as improved health and nutrition practices; <u>Increased primary school enrolment and attendance</u> and reduced drop-out rates of children in food-insecure areas, particularly girls and orphans, through the provision of school meals; and Increased food security among rural and urban poor through the <u>creation/rehabilitation of community and household assets</u> in food-insecure areas. <p>CP was to pursued its objectives within the framework of three basic activities; Supplementary Feeding (SF), Support to Primary Education (SPE) and Food for Assets and Development (FFASD) in rural and urban areas. Assistance to HIV/AIDS-infected and affected households will be mainstreamed into these three basic activities.</p>
<p>EMOP 10056 (Malawi) The objectives of this EMOP are to <u>prevent the loss of life and maintain the nutritional status</u> of the population affected by loss of crops and stocks of food in rural areas. In addition, food aid will <u>enable farming families to plant a winter crop</u> in May where possible, and <u>rebuild or repair damage to housing and agricultural lands</u>. Food aid <u>will prevent loss or sale of assets</u> and will provide adequate food intake to conduct the heavy recovery works both on the farms and of the damaged communal infrastructure.</p>	
<p>EMOP 10153 (Malawi) The objective of the operation is to <u>save the lives of people suffering from acute hunger</u> due to the food shortages in the country and to <u>prevent a further depletion of their household assets</u>.</p>	
<p>EMOP 10200 (Regional) Contribute towards <u>saving lives and livelihoods</u> in a context of adverse climatic conditions, economic decline and high HIV/AIDS prevalence levels. While pursuing <u>gender equality</u> and advocacy for women's empowerment in access and management of food resources in all its operations, this EMOP directly aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Prevent severe food shortages at household level</u> that could lead to the <u>deterioration of nutritional status and starvation</u>; <u>Safeguard the nutritional well being</u> of vulnerable segments of the population such as People 	

⁷⁶ Emphasis added from original text

<p>Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), children, expectant and nursing women, and the elderly;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Preserve productive and human assets</u>; and • <u>Prevent distress migration</u> from affected areas to urban centres and neighbouring countries.
<p>EMOP 10201 (Malawi) Overall Objective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To contribute to <u>the short and medium term food security</u> of Malawi's affected by acute problems of production and decreased access to food. <p>Specific Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To <u>meet 75% of the minimum food requirements of subsistence farmers and poor wage labourers</u> whose harvest and/or income is insufficient to sustain them. • To maintain or improve the <u>nutritional status of affected vulnerable populations</u>, with a particular focus on women and children, thereby preventing/reducing excess mortality. • Through an in-kind transfer, to <u>contribute to preventing the use of negative coping mechanisms</u>, such as migration that would prohibit the farming of fields that would increase the long-term vulnerability of households. <p>To increase the institutional and human resources capacity of the Government and other Implementing Partners for disaster prevention and preparedness.</p>
<p>EMOP 10290 (Regional) Objectives</p> <p>This operation will contribute towards <u>saving and prolonging productive lives and preserving livelihoods</u> in a context of erratic climatic conditions, economic and policy transition, and high HIV/AIDS prevalence levels.</p> <p>While pursuing gender equality and advocacy for women's access to and management of food resources, this operation directly aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Prevent severe food shortages</u> for those <u>households</u> who have not yet recovered from the recurrent and multifaceted shocks of the past two years; • <u>Safeguard the nutritional well being</u> of vulnerable segments of the populations such as People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), children, orphans, expectant and nursing women and the elderly; <p>Preserve, build, and restore social structures, human and productive assets, and safety nets.</p>
<p>PRRO 1031- (Regional)</p> <p>WFP's goal through this PRRO is to <u>contribute to improved livelihood outcomes and prolonged productive lives</u> among the vulnerable poor, including HIV/AIDS infected and affected people in five southern African countries.</p> <p>The specific PRRO objective is the <u>increased investment in improved coping strategies</u> by the vulnerable poor. The promotion of <u>gender equity</u> in terms of access to and management of WFP-related assets and resources is assumed throughout. So, too, is an integrated inter-agency response.</p>
<p>PRRO 10586 (Malawi)</p> <p>WFP assistance contributes to the Government's growth and development strategy, particularly the <u>social protection and disaster management pillar</u>, by: striving to <u>prevent vulnerable people from sliding into deeper poverty because of economic and natural disaster shocks; increasing the assets of the poor; and caring for the most vulnerable.</u></p> <p>Objectives are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Save lives in crisis situations</u>, especially those affected by sudden transitory food needs caused by small-scale natural disasters such as floods and erratic rainfall; • Support <u>access to age-appropriate education</u> in primary and preschools during the lean period in areas affected by acute food shortages; • Support <u>improved nutritional status</u> among children, pregnant and lactating women, and people living with HIV/AIDS, in target areas; and • <u>Protect and enhance livelihoods</u> of people, including those affected by HIV/AIDS, in targeted food-insecure areas.

Annex Three: List of Informants

List of interviewees, Nutrition & HIV/AIDS

Theresa Banda, Valid International
Dr Mary Shawa, Department of Nutrition and HIV/AIDS, OPC,
Stanley Chitekwe, UNICEF
Dr H Tchale, World Bank
Desire Mhango, CHAM
Desmond Johns, UNAIDS
Neil Orchardson, Tech Sec
Victor Kamanga, Manet
Hyacinth Kulemeka, Director of Child Development, Ministry of Women & Child Development
Stanley Mwase, Concern Worldwide
Martin Mtika & Gwyneth Hogley Cotes, CTC Advisory Services (CAS)
Lazarus Gonani, Osborne Sibande, Lusungu Chitete, WFP Lilongwe
Tapiwa Ngulube & Janet Guta, Ministry of Health
Wales Kazonde, MCH Coordinator Kasungu,
Ketroin Kondowe, DEHO Kasungu
Mbachir Chirambo, Area Development Coordinator, COOPI
Elisabeth Chalera, Community Nurse, Salima
Paul Chunga, DEHO Salima
Thom, WFP Area Manager, Salima
Thokozani Chidule, Medical Assistant, Chinguluwe HC NRU
Hastings ?, ADRA, Phalombe
DC office: Bennett Nkasara;
Rafael DHO, Isaac Kandawire Dir Planning & Devel, Rikaruwe MCH Coord,
Jameson Makonga, District School Feeding Coord, Chance WFP.
Staff at Holy Family, Phalombe
Mr Gringer Chitowe, Supervisor for Livelihood Programme (Field Assistant), ADRA
Kathy Whybrow, Goal Country Representative
Kaysha, WFP Field Monitor, Nsanje
Kenneth Ndau, MCH Coordinator Nsanje
Steve, WFP Field Monitor Chikwawa
John Mugawa, MCH Coord
Banda, Alex & Alexander Collig, Medical Officer in Charge, St Montfort HC
Mtsogoli Ganamba, Maisie, Edita Lombe, Ngabu NRU
Maggie, WFP Nutrition Project Officer, Blantyre
Wemah Mbalame, Mpemba NRU
Menas, HSAs & mothers at SFP, Dziwe MCH
Heidi Sandige & Liyaka Mchilamwera, Peanut Butter Project
Phillimon Peter Phiri, AAH Health and Nutrition Officer
Beneficiaries of community HIV/AIDS programme at Kamdidi FDP, TA Kaluluma, Kasungu and Namasoko, Phalombe
Staff and caretakers of children at Nkhamenya NRU, Chinguluwe NRU, Mchoka NRU, Kalemba NRU/MCH, Ngabu NRU/MCH, Mpemba NRU/MCH, Dziwe MCH
Staff and beneficiaries of TB and PMTCT programmes at Holy Family Hospital, TB programme at St Montfort Health Centre

Informants School Feeding

Charles Mazinga, School Health and Nutrition Department
FAO, (School Health and Nutrition)
Stacia Nodirn, GTZ
Rosebell Mbamba Plan International
Simon Mphisa, UNICEF
Hardwick Tchale, World Bank
Moffat J. Chitimbe, Principal Secretary Ministry of Education
Mary Shawa, Principal Secretary for Nutrition, HIV/AIDS (OPC)
Miriam Gachago, ILO
Angela Mpando, Mary's Meals
Cathy Whybrow, GOAL Malawi

Dedza District Education Manager/staff and School Feeding Coordinator
Kasungu District Education Manager/staff and School Feeding Coordinator
Salima District Education Manager/staff and School Feeding Coordinator
Phalombe District Education Manager/staff and School Feeding Coordinator
Nsanje District Education Manager/staff and School Feeding Coordinator
Chikwawa District Education Manager/staff and School Feeding Coordinator
Chiradzulu Education Manager/staff and School Feeding Coordinator
Head Teacher, Teachers, members of the School Committee, Food Committee and
Parent/Teacher Associations of the schools of: Mkatakata Police, Bondo, Chenjewazi, Sopani,
Chipoka I, Chitipi, Phalombe, Namasoko, Bangula, St. Mathews, Jombo, Mwanje.

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Acronyms

ADMARC	Agricultural Development and Marketing Corporation
ART	Antiretroviral Treatment
CABS	Common Approach to Budget Support
CHAM	Christian Health Association of Malawi
CP	Country Programme (WFP)
CSD	Country Strategy Document (WFP)
DEV	Development Programme (WFP)
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DHO	District Health Office
EMIS	Education Management of Information System
EMOP	Emergency Operation (WFP)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network (UNAID)
FFA	Food for Assets programmes
FFW	Food for Work
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (Germany)
GVS	Government Voucher Scheme
IGA	Income-Generating Activities
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
JEFAP	Joint Emergency Food Aid Programme
LTSH	Landslide transport, storage and handling
MCH	Mother-and- Child Health
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MGDs	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MT	Metric Tons
MVAC	Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee
NFRA	National Food Reserve Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRU	Nutrition Rehabilitation Units
OEDE	Office of Evaluation (WFP)
OTP	Outpatient Therapeutic Programme
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
P4P	Purchase-for-Progress
PER	Public Expenditure Review
PLWHA	People Living with HIV/AIDS
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
PRRO	Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (s)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PVA	Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment
SFP	Supplementary Feeding Programmes
SPR	Summary Project Report
SWAP	Sector-Wide Approaches
TFP	Therapeutic Feeding Programme
THR	Take Home Ration
TNP	Targeted Nutrition Programme

UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme
WINGS	WFP Information Network and Global System



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