



Programme Workplan for the Republic of Malawi

Donor:	European Commission
Implementing Agency:	FAO
Proposed Funding:	€269,403 \$361,000 (Exchange rate US\$/EURO= 1.34)
Duration:	3 year
Starting date:	15 October 2005

Malawi is one of the focus countries of Phase II of the EC/FAO Food Security Programme "Food Security Information for Action".

Problems identified in Malawi concerning food security information generation and utilization are mainly related to lack of data availability and accuracy and to some inconsistency in policies and donor coordination leading to lack of consensus on the proper course of action to be taken.

The Programme will assist the Government in enhancing food security information by:

1. *Applying the Food Security analytical tool kit by:*
 - a) *Introducing CountrySTAT to organize and disseminate statistical data and metadata on food and agriculture;*
 - b) *Setting up and training in the use of the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) Workstation;*
 - c) *Strengthening national agro-meteorological and statistical tools and supporting the national crop monitoring and forecasting system through the Crop Monitoring Box (CM Box).*
2. *Developing monitoring tools for assessing the state of food security and of community based food and nutrition programmes.*
3. *Organizing a regional workshop/consultation to enhance information availability and exchange.*
4. *Capacity Building in "Statistical Information for Application of Climate Data (SIAC-Training) for two participants from Malawi in 2006 and 2007.*
5. *Strengthening coherence/consensus on food security policies by facilitating in-country meetings and by setting up ad-hoc technical teams to address key policy issues.*

22 December 2005

1. Background

Malawi is one of the world's poorest countries with a per capita income of just US\$ 170 per year. Poverty in Malawi is chronic and household food insecurity affects about 40-50% of the population. HIV/AIDS severely affects the economy and the functioning of institutions and is estimated to cause about 70,000 deaths per year.

Over the past 10-15 years, the country has shifted from being a nationally self-sufficient producer of maize in no-drought years to being dependent on commercial food imports and foreign assistance to achieve a national food balance. A strategic grain reserve is being maintained to buffer food security shocks.

Policy guidance for food security is being developed in a wide-range of overarching policy documents, including the Poverty Reduction and Strategy Paper (PRSP), the Malawi Agricultural Sector Investment Programme, the Draft Food Security and Nutrition Strategy and the recent land use policy. However, there is the perception that much national policy development is de-linked from programmes and projects implemented at field level.

2. Problems to be addressed

The Government of Malawi has developed the **Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Master Plan**¹. The master plan provides a situation analysis of poverty monitoring in Malawi and outlines a number of **key challenges** which are important for strengthening food security information for action links:

- Lack of standardization, quality and timeliness of data
- Capacity concerns
- Lack of co-ordination between the National Statistical Office (NSO) and other data collection institutions
- Lack of co-ordination of M&E Systems across ministries and districts
- Lack of systematic use of monitoring results

These and similar concerns, including a reported lack of coordination and technical capacity pertaining to maintaining data management and retrieval systems, low capacity for M&E at sector line-ministry level, lack of regular information flows between operational levels and central government, and lack of coordination between government, donors and other stakeholders need to be addressed. In addition, data stored by various ministries or national offices are often available only in aggregated form, in hard-copy, or in published volumes, even in the NSO.

Because of these factors, capacity constraints and future sustainability will need to be account for in view of the implementation of the programme and definition of activities.

¹ For details see: GoM (2004): Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy Monitoring and Evaluation Master Plan.

3. Previous and Ongoing Assistance

The EC has provided US\$ 45 million for food security, but the design and implementation of this assistance is dependent on the endorsement of a food security policy document by the Government, based on earlier inputs on its formulation provided by the EU.

The World Bank is about to finance a loan project with a focus on irrigation which would address the availability/production side of food security. The allocated budget is US\$37 million.

UNDP is currently supporting a sustainable social and economic empowerment programme (SSEEP) which addresses irrigation and involves various NGOs. It is also involved in disaster management and preparedness, once more through NGOs. UNDP is particularly interested in financing the development of the private sector, in particular the emerging commercial farming sector and estates.

USAID is involved in activities supporting agriculture development and nutrition, in particular the National Association of Farmers (NASFAM) through technical expertise. This includes providing input supply systems through the private sector and support to safety nets programmes through international and national NGOs.

WFP has been involved in distributing fruit tree seedlings to schools, as part of a school feeding programme, and around 20 school gardens have been developed. Malawi is one of the nine countries involved in home-grown school feeding programmes. WFP has also supported a forestry tree planting programme by which 15 million trees have been distributed to 400,000 households (around 2 million people) in 400 villages at a cost of US\$1 per seedling; the programme involved several donors (including World Bank, EU and DFID).

Previous or on-going FAO-supported programmes include:

- Follow-up to Preliminary Support to Agricultural Statistics and Food Security Information Systems;
- Background Paper for Malawi on the Poverty and Vulnerability Assessment in Support of the PRSP process;
- Strategic Framework for the National Action Plan for Food and Nutrition Security;
- Agro-meteorological, remote sensing, GIS and mapping tools: Agro-climatic Vulnerability for Crop Insurance;
- Improving and Protecting Food and nutrition security of OVCs.

4. Objectives of the Programme in the Country

The input foreseen in this phase of the Programme aims at strengthening national capacity in the analysis and publishing of food insecurity and vulnerability information and assisting the Government and NGOs in developing monitoring and assessment tools for strengthening the effectiveness and sustainability of food and nutrition programmes.

However, the programme's objectives go beyond setting up information systems and giving assistance in that area; it aims at helping the country develop a coherent policy and strategy for promoting food security, agriculture and rural development. by strengthening FAO's role as a catalyst and facilitator for policy advice and consensus building among stakeholders.

5. Expected outcomes at the End of the Programme

The following outcomes are expected to be achieved at the end of Phase II:

1. Increased national capacity to manage food security information
The Programme aims at building national capacity in maintaining and disseminating food security related databases. Digital information will be better organized and standardized and more advanced and effective means for disseminating information – through information system outputs and/or improved bulletins - will be available.
2. Enhanced analytical capacity to understand and improve the state of food and nutrition security through the:
 - Development of monitoring and assessment tools to assist governmental and non-governmental staff in increasing the effectiveness and sustainability of food and nutrition programmes.
3. Strengthened coherence/consensus on policies, strategies and instruments for food security, agriculture and rural development.
The Programme will strengthen FAO's role as a facilitator and mediator among different stakeholders by organizing workshops and meetings aimed at improving dialogue and harmonizing controversial positions on policy issues.
The use of innovative Food Information Systems, aimed at combining information for the short-term with information useful for food security policy making, will be encouraged and supported.

6. Results, activities and Inputs

The activities in the present workplan are consistent with the overall logical framework defined in the EC-FAO Food Security Overall Programme Document. The foreseen activities are balanced in terms of their contribution to the three programme objectives.

Five activities are proposed for implementation with the lead responsibility to be taken by the respective technical divisions using programme funds. These are:

1. Applying the Food Security analytical toolkit through the implementation of a) CountrySTAT (first year) and b) the GIEWS workstation (second year) and c) the CM Box
 - a) CountrySTAT is a system for organizing and disseminating statistical data and metadata on food and agriculture. CountrySTAT gathers and harmonizes scattered institutional statistical information so that information tables become compatible with each other at the country level and with data at the international level. From the technical point of view, the approach is based on the application of data and metadata standards of FAOSTAT and SDMX (Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange promoted by IMF, WB, UNSD, EUROSTAT, FAO) which are integrated into CountrySTAT by definition. The main expected result is to facilitate decision-makers access to information and to bind data sources that are currently spread throughout different institutions. A capacity building strategy to make the system sustainable in the long term will be implemented.
 - b) The GIEWS Workstation is an internet GIS mapping tool for food security and early warning data management. Introduction of the GIEWS Workstation is proposed for year 2 of the project, once experiences from other countries concerning institutional requirements for running and maintaining the workstation are more clearly understood. There will be further exploration to find out how the GIEWS workstation can be combined with CountrySTAT. Training for the correct use of the system will be provided.
 - c) The introduction of the CM Box aims at strengthening national agro-meteorological and statistical tools and supporting the national crop monitoring and forecasting system.
2. Development of monitoring tools for assessment of food security state and of community-based food and nutrition programmes

Tools will be adapted and implemented in the Malawian context of food and nutrition security for the purpose of monitoring the progress of programme interventions and surveillance. Within this framework, two activities related to nutrition information systems have been identified:

- ⇒ The first proposed nutrition activity is to introduce monitoring tools that are simple and valid in order to derive indicators of household food and nutrition security, with the objective of developing tools that can be used at a national level. One monitoring tool will be used to assess household-level food intake with respect to dietary diversity. Tools that measure dietary diversity can be instrumental in judging the impact on food intake of agricultural diversification policies and programmes and nutrition education. Another proposed tool is a food insecurity scale for measuring food access and consumption in the household. Up to eight Malawian government officials and nutrition professionals will attend a regional workshop to be held in Kenya, where training will be provided on the tools to be adapted and used. Workshop participants from Malawi will then be involved in 2-3 field projects in diverse areas (culturally or geographically) to adapt the tools. FAO will provide technical assistance for these activities. After field adaptations have taken place, a national workshop will take place to introduce tools that are universally applicable in Malawi to other potential users. The tools implemented by FAO/EC in the context of this project will have wide applicability in the area of governmental surveillance, monitoring and evaluation functions for food security and nutrition. For example, indicator developing activities could be linked to the work of the Technical Assistant, funded under the EC, on the integration of existing nutrition-related databases. It could also be linked to the work of the Technical Secretariat of the Food Security Joint Task Force on designing M&E for the Strategic Framework for the National Action Plan for Food Security and Nutrition in Malawi. A report on adaptation activities and a users' guide will be produced.
- ⇒ The second proposed nutrition activity is to assist NGOs in the assessment of their community-based food and nutrition programmes, using an assessment tool developed by FAO. Periodic programme assessment is instrumental for strengthening effectiveness and sustainability. From the programme review, problem areas will be identified and plans of action developed for programme improvement. This activity's expected output will be assessment reports prepared by the participating organizations, including plans of action for strengthening their programmes. The assessment process will take place over a period of 3-4 months and will entail two workshops with participating organizations during that time. The Nutrition Planning, Assessment and Evaluation Service of FAO (ESNA), in collaboration with assessment facilitators, will publish the lessons learned from this process in a document that will be made available on a wider basis to other interested organizations.

3. Organization of workshops/consultations to enhance information availability and exchange

In consultation with the Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee - the body that prepares regular updates on the food security and vulnerability situation - a regional workshop has been proposed with the aim of stimulating exchange between the SADC Regional Early Warning Unit (REWU) and VACs (Vulnerability Assessment Committees). The workshop will explore the demand for GIS services and other potential services. Some preparation will be necessary, both from the SADC REWU (providing an overview of the tools and services to be offered) and the MVACs (clearly explaining how GIS-based tools and products could enhance their analysis). In this framework, additional tools like the GIEWS workstation and second generation food information systems will be introduced to complement this kind of activity.

4. Capacity Building in "Statistical Information for Application of Climate Data (SIAC Training) for two participants from Malawi in 2006 and 2007.

Specialized training for two national participants will be provided.

5. Strengthening coherence/consensus on food security policies by facilitating in-country meeting and by setting-up ad-hoc technical teams to address key policy issues

In order to strengthen the coherence/consensus on policies, strategies and instruments for promoting food security, agriculture and rural development, FAO will play the role of catalyst and

facilitator. This will involve the creation of a small national technical team that is able to follow, analyze and build knowledge on key policy and implementation issues and decisions related to food security, agriculture and rural development and support the FAO representation in providing sound policy advice on critical issues. The team could eventually be expanded to provide technical support to the proposed national programme for improving food security and nutrition.

The table below shows how the above areas of intervention relate to the Programme's logical framework:

Specific objectives	Results	Outputs	Areas of intervention
1. Improve availability and quality of relevant food security information	A – Collection of food insecurity and vulnerability data and information is improved or strengthened.	1.A.1 – Food insecurity and vulnerability data and information are improved.	1a, 1b, 1c
	B – Analysis of food insecurity and vulnerability data and information is strengthened.	1.B.1 – National and regional capacity to analyze food insecurity and vulnerability data is strengthened.	1b, 1c, 2, 3
		1.B.3 – GIEWS Workstation is established at global and national levels and capacity in its use is strengthened.	1b
		1.B.4 – National and regional capacity for food security assessment is reinforced.	2,3,4
2. Reinforcing capacity in formulating food security policies, strategies and programming based on food insecurity and vulnerability information	A – National and local capacity to produce and use information for policy making are reviewed and updated.	2.A.1 – Gaps in national and local capacity to produce and use information for policy making are identified.	2, 3,5
	B – National and local capacity to produce multisector food security information is strengthened.	2.B.1 – Response mechanisms to crises and food security policy formation are improved	1a,1b,3,4
		2.B.2 – National institutional structures and systems are reviewed.	1a,1b,1c
	C – Dissemination of food insecurity and vulnerability data and information is strengthened.	2.C.1 – Integrated food insecurity and vulnerability data and information dissemination systems are strengthened.	1a,1b,3
	D – Capacity to formulate appropriate food security policies in different contexts using adequate information is increased.	2.D.1 – Methodological approaches for integrated use for household, food insecurity and vulnerability data are strengthened.	2,5
		2.D.2 – Guidelines to switch from rehabilitation to development using appropriate data and information are prepared.	
		2.D.3 – Awareness to embody gender aspects in policies using gender disaggregated information is increased.	5
		2.D.4 – Capacity to formulate food security and rural development policies in countries with natural resources under pressure is increased.	5
2.D.5 – Support to selected countries in preparing strategies and operational plans for food security agricultural and rural		5	

		development is provided.	
3. Raise awareness of governments, local actors and international community, on impact of food security & poverty	A – Causes of food insecurity and vulnerability are better understood	3.A.1 – National context analysis of food insecurity and vulnerability are better understood	1a,1b,5
	B – Good practices in food security, poverty and rural development, institution building and networking are identified, analysed and disseminated.	3.B.1 – Good practices in food security, vulnerability, institution building and networking are identified, analysed and disseminated at national level.	5
		3.B.2 – Good practices in food security, poverty and rural development are disseminated	
	C – Dialogue and exchange of experience within the international community are improved.	3.C.1 – Dialogue and exchange of experience among international community are facilitated.	
		3.C.2 – Improved information in qualitative and quantitative terms is provided to the GDPRD.	