ADAPTATION FUND BOARD SECRETARIAT TECHNICAL REVIEW OF PROJECT/PROGRAMME PROPOSAL

PROJECT/PROGRAMME CATEGORY: REGULAR-SIZED PROJECT CONCEPT

Country/Region: Malawi
Project Title: Smallholder Climate Resilience Project
Thematic Focal Area: Agriculture and Rural Development
Implementing Entity: International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
Executing Entities: Ministry of Agriculture
AF Project ID: AF00000380
IE Project ID:
Requested Financing from Adaptation Fund (US Dollars): 10,000,000
Reviewer and contact person: Marcus Johannesson
Co-reviewer(s):
IE Contact Person: Claus Reiner

Technical Summary	The project "Smallholder Climate Resilience Project" aims to build climate adaptive capacity and resilience of smallholder farmers and communities to increase food and nutrition security and enhance disaster risk management in Malawi. This will be done through the three components below: Component 1: Resilient ecosystems sustainably provide services to smallholder farmers (USD 2,914,014); Component 2: Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi (USD 3,502,000); Component 3: Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi (USD 1,925,000); Requested financing overview: Project/Programme Execution Cost: USD 875,576 Total Project/Programme Cost: USD 9,216,590 Implementing Fee: USD 783,410 Financing Requested: USD 10,000,000

	The initial technical review raised several issues, such as undemonstrated climate change adaptation rationale and benefits, lack of consultation, full cost of adaptation reasoning, compliance with ESP and GP, and insufficient activities identification, as is discussed in the number of Clarification Requests (CRs) and Corrective Action Requests (CARs) raised in the review. The second technical review finds that the concept note has been substantively modified. Several of the CRs and CARs raised in the first review are no longer relevant. A number of additional CRs and CARs are raised, such as on the concrete adaptation outcomes, the lacking learning and knowledge management component and compliance with the ESP and GP. The third technical review finds that all CRs have been addressed and that only a few CARs remain related to the full cost of adaptation reasoning, ESP risks and the presence of USPs. The fourth technical review finds that most CRs have been addressed but that a minor issue still remains in relation to some of the ESPs.
Date:	10 January 2025

Review Criteria	**Questions**	**Comments 1st Technical Review (24 January 2024)**	**Comments 2nd Technical Review (08 August 2024)**	**Comments 3rd Technical Review (5 December 2024)**	**Comments 4th Technical Review (10 January 2025)**
Country Eligibility	1. Is the country party to the Kyoto Protocol, or the Paris Agreement?	**Yes.**	-	-	-
	2. Is the country a developing country particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change?	**Yes.** Malawi is particularly prone and exposed to adverse climate hazards including dry spells, seasonal droughts, intense rainfall, floods, strong	-	-	-

		winds and cyclones.			
Project Eligibility	1. Has the designated government authority for the Adaptation Fund endorsed the project/programme?	**Yes.** As per the Endorsement letter dated 20 December 2023. There is an inconsistency between the Endorsement letter and the proposal in that the letter states that there will be two executing entities. **CR 1:** Please clarify who the EE is/are and ensure consistency between the proposal and the Endorsement Letter.	**CR 1: Cleared.** A revised letter of endorsement has also been provided.	**-**	**-**
	2. Does the length of the proposal amount to no more than Fifty pages for the project/programme concept, including its annexes?	**Yes.** The proposal consists of 43 pages and 7 pages of annexes.	**Yes.** The revised proposal consists of 47 pages and 3 pages of annexes.	**-**	**-**

	3. Does the project / programme support concrete adaptation actions to assist the country in addressing adaptive capacity to the adverse effects of climate change and build in climate resilience?	**No.** The language used in the description of the project components (section II.A) is unclear in several places and would benefit from revision. **CR 2:** Please clarify the description of the project components. The link between the proposed interventions and the described climate change impacts and adaptation needs is not always clear. E.g. paragraph 24 includes restoration of ecological functioning of watersheds, but this is not mentioned in the description of the climate risks and	**CR 2: No longer relevant.** The link between the proposed interventions and the described climate change impacts and adaptation needs is still not always clear. E.g. ecosystem services and watersheds are not mentioned in the description of the climate risks and vulnerabilities of the project areas. **CR 3: Not cleared.** **CR 4: No longer relevant.** The implementation period for the project is eight years, which seems long. **CR 5: Not cleared.** The feasibility, relevance and effectiveness of Output 2.1 hinge on the quality and availability of “climate	**CR 3: Cleared** In Section A5, the proposal describes how the project will respond to identified climate change related vulnerabilities in human and natural systems including selection of exposed districts, sensitivity of livelihood sources and low community adaptive capacity through its three interrelated and coherent components. Participatory approaches and assessments will underpin needs-based interventions. **CR 5: Cleared** Under Component 2, the proposal clarifies the role and status of farmers groups as well as other local entities to be involved into the project’s operations in villages to build localised climate resilience.	**-**

		vulnerabilities of the project areas. **CR 3:** Please ensure that the climate change adaptation rationale is clear and explicit for all the proposed interventions. There are inconsistencies in the descriptions of the outputs and their constituent activities. E.g. paragraph 48, the Department of Agricultural Research will undertake farm demonstrations based on recently approved agro-ecological-specific fertilizer recommendations, as an extension service. The corresponding activity 1.1.4 phrases this as "Undertake farmer participatory	projections for the upcoming season". While this likely refers to medium/long-term weather forecasts, the proposal does not provide information to suggest that these will be available and of good quality. **CR 6: No longer relevant.** **CR 7: No longer relevant** **CR 16 (New CR):** Please provide an explanation for the eight-year implementation period. The revised component 1 consists essentially of consultations and gender equality promoting activities within the groups that will be involved, also with the aim of identifying the USPs of component 3.	**CR 16: Cleared** Project duration reduced from 8 to 5 years. **CR 17: Cleared** A new Component 1 has been developed which envisages how villages will be involved and engaged into the project's work while building climate resilience that can maintain and sustain the utilization of the ecosystems upon which the communities depend on their livelihoods. Village Natural Resource Managements Committees will be central in the sensitization and participatory planning processes among beneficiaries. A dedicated lens and methodologies for mainstreaming gender and social inclusion into the project will be applied.	-

		research on new fertilizer protocols (…)". Coherence is lacking among the elements of Component 1. Based on the numerous and various objectives of its outputs, it is hard to see how a farmer – or anybody else for that matter – involved would be able to make sense of the multitude of simultaneous requirements and ambitions and develop relevant meaningful adaptive capacity. The activities of output 1.3 are an eclectic amalgamation of interventions ranging from smart energy stocks over community forestry to flood control	Given that this component appears to offer limited immediate or tangible benefits to the communities, there is some uncertainty about how group members will be motivated to invest their time in these activities. **CR 17 (New CR):** Could you please provide further clarification on how the project plans to effectively engage and motivate the beneficiaries of component 1?" The relevance of the GALS concept to be used in these groups is unclear as it is "a household methodology that transforms norms in the households and encourages women and youth participation in decision-making" (p. 15). The groups will	**CR 18: Cleared** While the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology is talking its starting point in the household, the proposal describes how it effectively and transformatively intends to impact gender justice "from within" and promote women empowerment at scales including on individual, household, community and organizational level through GALS champions and peer-to-peer dissemination, specific participatory processes and tools. **CR 19: Cleared** Under Output 3.1 the proposal presents how the project will source and enhance climate information to ensure informed decision making for small holder farmers. The quality, accessibility, outreach and user	

		infrastructure, all in support of sustainable landscapes management. **CR 4:** Please clarify to improve the feasibility of the suggested approaches of component 1. The same concerns apply to component 2. The establishment of farmer groups is vague, and there is no information at all on their legal status or operation. **CR 5:** Please clarify the nature and operation of the farmers groups, including their legal status. These concerns are exacerbated by the second output of component 2, in	not consist of households, and it is unclear how this approach will deliver the claimed outcomes. **CR 18 (New CR):** Please clarify how the GALS methodology is relevant in this non-household context. The revised project document references various groups such as natural resource management groups, rural community groups, existing farmer groups, water user associations, agricultural cooperatives, women's groups, women- and youth-led community-based seed banks, storage facility management groups, and disaster response groups. However, it is not clear what specific roles and activities these groups will	friendliness of this service and its uptake will be facilitated by capacity building of extension service providers and key stakeholders, as well as small holder farmers. In addition, information networks will be consolidated and the development of relevant feedback mechanisms in-between service providers and farmers at local level will be supported to enhance forecast improvements. **CR 20: Cleared** The proposal justifies the costs of upgrading the Agriculture Resources Centres (ARCs) by that these are already established as key points of connecting information seekers with information	

		which the farmer groups are the vehicle to access funds from a Farmers Challenge Fund (FCF) that is to be provided with USD 5 million of project funds. The modalities of accessing this fund are unclear and involve a commitment of voluntary landscape and micro-catchment restoration by the farmer groups. In addition, farmer groups will have to provide some amount of 'matching grants'. There are no details on this. **CR 6:** Please clarify the structure, operations, management, oversight and accountability for the Farmers	undertake within the project. **CR 19 (New CR):** Please clarify the source of weather forecasts and demonstrate their quality and relevance to the project. Component 2 has a budget of USD 4,000,000 for workshops, farmer field schools' activities, and the upgrading of 21 Physical Resource Centres. These centres are intended to provide "information for remote farmers with limited access to digital media." **CR 20 (New CR):** Please clarify the cost of upgrading the Physical Resource Centres and how this approach is the most cost-effective way to	providers. The ARCs are believed to play a key role in consolidating and disseminating information generated or supported by the project to the benefit of small holders. This approach enables to enhance the adaptive capacity of a large number of individuals, at a comparatively low cost. **CR 21: Cleared** The activities of the former Component 2 and its ambition of outreach (39,000 beneficiaries through Farmer Field Schools (FFS) have in the new proposal been scaled down somewhat and project targets have been rebalanced in line with the geographic areas. This to allow sufficient room for other activities and to	

		Challenge Fund. Please clarify the due diligence process that will be applied for its establishment, as well as how the IE will ensure that applicable oversight in line with the AF fiduciary obligations (e.g. on anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism etc.) will be provided. Component 3 includes support to agriculture extension and disaster risk management services. For this, it will build on initiatives undertaken by the Global Center on Adaptation. It is unclear what this entails or how this would address the	reach the intended target farmers. **CR 21 (New CR):** Please justify the large budget allocation for component 2. The scope of component 3, which focuses on the restoration of ecosystem services, appears ambitious. The approach of community seed banks as described does not provide a functional or viable method for genetic conservation or for slowing down the spread of pests and viruses. The causal link between the establishment of 'community woodlots' and the forecast benefits are not demonstrated, and some drivers of deforestation are not addressed. Additionally, the capacity building in	enhance scalability of project results. **CR 22: Cleared** The proposal emphasizes that the feasibility and effectiveness of Component 2 (former Component 3) is based on it building on Malawi best practices for village level ecosystem restoration. Particularly anticipated small scale restoration measures could prove to ensure feasibility, effectivity and sustainability gains while at the same time offering replicability across communities. The proposal suggests a set of integrated measures to tackle the risk of maladaptation. In addition, the previously planned capacity building in charcoal production and support for constructing kilns has	

		identified adaption needs. Output 3.2 addresses knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation. Apart from non-specified training programmes and awareness raising activities, this output will also "seek to formulate policy briefs whose recommendations will improve the design of attractive and innovative smallholder farmer crop-based insurance accessible to vulnerable groups and women". The issue of crop insurance has not been discussed elsewhere and seems disconnected from the other project activities.	charcoal production and support for constructing kilns might create additional drivers for unsustainable forest use, constituting maladaptation. **CR 22 (New CR):** Please clarify the feasibility and effectiveness of component 3 in terms of its stated objectives, and how the risks of maladaptation are excluded. **CR 23 (New CR):** Please clarify and justify the decision not to integrate Disaster Risk Management mainstreaming in the extension services of output 4.1 within the capacity-building efforts of component 2.	been removed and the approach to community seed banks will be further described at project proposal stage, and will align with national best practices for genetic conservation and slowing down the spread of pests and pathogens. **CR 23: Cleared** The proposal has integrated Disaster Risk Management across the projects components and made it a "transversal" aspect of the project in reference to village-level action plans; enhanced climate information services and decision making; and the enhanced extension services capacity.	

		CR 7: Please clarify how the development of a policy paper on crop insurance is considered a concrete adaptation action, while this is already included in several policies and plans.			
	4. Does the project / programme provide economic, social and environmental benefits, particularly to vulnerable communities, including gender considerations, while avoiding or mitigating negative impacts, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy and	**Unclear.** The proposal states that project districts "have been selected based on specific criteria including poverty rates and chronic food insecurity". It is unclear if in this respect the most vulnerable communities have been selected.	**CR 8: Cleared.** A full proposal will need to provide information substantiating the choices of target areas currently described in generic terms only. **CR 9: Cleared,** as per the details on p. 44-46.	**CR 24: Cleared** As per para 107 the proposal specifies the expected biodiversity benefits that the project will lead to, e.g., how the restoration of ecosystem services in Component 1 results in vegetation return and biodiversity, whereas integrated approaches under	**-**

	Gender Policy of the Fund?	**CR 8:** Please clarify the grounds on which the project areas have been selected, reflecting in particular vulnerability to climate change impacts and adaptation capacity building requirements. The description of the economic benefits that are expected from the project is unclear and aspecific, in particular for the activities of component 2. They are also in part based on activities not mentioned elsewhere in the proposal. The same applies to some of the social benefits. The anticipated gender benefits depend on positive discrimination and	The proposal states that the project will increase biodiversity but does so only in generic terms and without providing any substantiation or specification. **CR 24 (New CR):** Please specify the expected biodiversity benefits.	Component 2 will promote agrobiodiversity, varied and adapted genetic resources, and by encouraging integrated pest management.	

		awareness raising. The proposal does not describe the mechanics and likelihood of this achieving the stated objectives. The environmental benefits are not quantified, and it is not demonstrated in the proposal that the relevant project activities are of a scale and with an impact that are relevant and significant to the magnitude and complexity of the problems they intend to address. Beneficial impacts on biodiversity are not demonstrated. **CR 9:** Please clarify and quantify where possible the economic, social and environmental benefits of the project.			

	5. Is the project / programme cost effective?	**Unclear.** The claimed cost effectiveness is based on the premise that the building of any adaptive capacity is cost effective, which is not the case. The proposal states on p. 5 that "While many previous initiatives have been undertaken to improve generation, access and use of climate information, there are still huge gaps for effectiveness of the available information." Clearly there are valuable and important lessons to be learned. It is unclear if this has been done and how the proposed project will avoid being similarly ineffective.	**Yes.** Please also see CR 20. **CR 10: Cleared** as per the details on p. 47-49		

		The relevance of the economic rate of return and cost benefit ratio analyses presented is highly questionable considering the lack of quantitative information presented in the proposal and the high share of USPs. None of the underlying assumptions are presented. **CR 10:** Please clarify how the project outcomes will be effective both in terms of impact and cost, reflecting sustainability considerations and the lessons learned from numerous past ineffective interventions.			
	6. Is the project / programme consistent with	**Unclear.** The proposal states that the	**CR 11: Cleared.** As per the information on p. 24.	**-**	**-**

	national or sub-national sustainable development strategies, national or sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, national communications and adaptation programs of action and other relevant instruments?	project is aligned with the Malawi Vision 2063, the National Agriculture Policy and national climate change policies and strategies. Malawi has not submitted a NAP to UNFCCC. The updated NDC (2021) lists three pillars and three key objectives. None of the components of the proposal appear to be aligned with the strategic or concrete adaptation actions of the NDC. **CR 11:** Please clarify how the proposed project is aligned with the NDC.			
	7. Does the project / programme meet the relevant national technical standards, where applicable, in	**No.** The relevant section of the proposal describes compliance with	**CAR 1: Not cleared.** The proposal does not address food quality standards, which are crucial for	**CAR 1: Cleared** The proposal clarifies that while aflatoxins are regulated in Malawi it currently	**-**

	compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Fund?	certain laws and national policies but does not identify the national technical standards that apply to the project activities, with the exception perhaps of the Malawi Pesticide Act. **CAR 1:** Please identify national technical standards relevant and applicable to the project activities and describe how the project will meet these.	ensuring the safety and marketability of agricultural products. While groundnuts are highlighted as the most climate-resilient crop in the project, the document fails to mention the potential issue of aflatoxins, which are toxic substances produced by certain molds that can contaminate groundnuts. Aflatoxin contamination poses significant health risks and can affect both local consumption and export potential. It is essential to include measures to monitor and mitigate aflatoxin levels to safeguard public health and enhance the market viability of groundnuts.	only relates to maize. The project will follow up on anticipated regulation related to aflatoxin that could relate to the project. Food safety enhancement concerns are otherwise integrated into the project by providing producers with actionable information and storage solutions but also approaches of how to reduce food loss and waste.	
	8. Is there duplication of project / programme with other funding sources?	**Unclear.** The close similarities between the proposed project and several other	**CR 12: Cleared.** **CR 13: Cleared.** As per the revised section II.F of the proposal.	**-**	**-**

		ongoing large IFAD-funded agriculture and rural development projects in Malawi are briefly described, indicating numerous opportunities for collaboration and synergies that are currently not adequately reflected in the proposal. This section is very informative as it explains several of the elements of the current proposal that lack or have inadequate justification from a climate change adaptation needs perspective. At the same time, it is unclear to what extent the proposed project is indeed specifically focused on climate change adaptation rather than an	There is a potential risk that needs to be addressed in the full proposal: an AF-funded project may not be sufficiently distinguishable on the ground from other ongoing IFAD activities. This lack of differentiation could lead to confusion among beneficiaries, stakeholders, and donors, and may undermine the visibility and perceived impact of the AF-funded project. To mitigate this risk, the full proposal should include clear strategies to highlight the unique objectives, approaches, and outcomes of the AF-funded project.		

		extension of the other business-as-usual development projects into new locations. **CR 12:** Please clarify further the linkages between the elements of the proposed project and the other projects listed, highlighting the specific adaptation needs that are being addressed. There is no information on possible other recent or ongoing projects in the project areas. **CR 13:** Please clarify the presence of other relevant projects or programmes in the project area.			
	9. Does the project / programme have a learning and	**Unclear.** Component 3 has provisions for USD	**CAR 2: Not cleared.** The relevant section of the proposal only	**CAR 2: Cleared** The project will mainstream	**-**

	knowledge management component to capture and feedback lessons?	1.4 million for institutional capacity building and knowledge management systems. A knowledge management strategy will only be prepared during implementation, depending on an external strategy that is being formulated under the Agriculture Sector Wide Approach – Support Programme (ASWAp-SP). It is unclear what this involves, it is not mentioned in the section on avoiding duplication. No justification is provided for not including a knowledge management strategy in the proposal and making this entire project component	mentions the intention to develop a knowledge management component during the full proposal stage. Given the importance of knowledge management in ensuring the project's success and sustainability, it is recommended to include it as a distinct project component or clearly defined outputs (if mainstreamed across components) from the outset. This will provide a structured framework for capturing, sharing, and utilizing knowledge generated through the project, enhancing learning and innovation. Additionally, a clear budget allocation for these component/ outputs is essential to ensure adequate resources are dedicated to its	Knowledge Management to capture and disseminate lessons learned. The proposal presents a set of anticipated knowledge and learning products; activities for learning and sharing, monitoring and evaluation and knowledge exchange; as well as communication and dissemination processes and channels across the components. The KM-system, integrated planning, M&E and Communication will have a set of integrated objectives. The M&E Officer will have the overall responsibility for these duties in coordination with the Project Management Unit and other key project stakeholders. **It is expected that the fully-developed proposal will realize**	

		dependent on external achievements, whilst substantive funds are reserved for this purpose in the project budget. The few knowledge management activities that are described in the proposal involve strengthening processes at the EE. Climate change adaptation is entirely absent from the description of the knowledge management component. **CAR 2:** Please include a fully developed knowledge management component clearly describing the strategy and plan to capture the climate change adaptation lessons	implementation and effectiveness. By establishing knowledge management as a separate component/ clearly defined outputs, the project can better facilitate continuous improvement, stakeholder engagement, and dissemination of best practices.	**more clearly and in greater detail this Concept Note's idea of mainstreaming KM into project outputs, activities, and indicators, quantify key knowledge products in a Results framework, as well as clarify how the project plan to track and analyse turnout and result of the interventions to the benefit of global, national and local climate change adaptation. It would also be important to more clearly depict how the project will learn from intervention experiences track the experience ensure continuous learning of The FP could also visually detail out the organization and processes needed for efficient and qualitative learning**	

		and knowledge the project will generate.		**and sharing, and KM.**	
	10. Has a consultative process taken place, and has it involved all key stakeholders, and vulnerable groups, including gender considerations in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy of the Fund?	**No.** The proposal describes consultations that were held during its formulation. Only institutional stakeholders were consulted, except for two farmer groups that were involved in two districts. Only one of these districts is a project target area. No consultations were held in the three other project districts. The consultations held so far would not have been of a nature to solicit adequate feedback on the project design or the application of the required safeguards. That is also reflected in	**CAR 3: Not cleared.** The description of the consultations that have been held has been updated. However, given the substantive changes to the project design since the initial submission, it is unclear to what extent these consultations addressed the currently proposed project outputs and activities. It is important to ensure that stakeholders have had the opportunity to provide input on the latest project design to validate its relevance and effectiveness. Please clarify how the consultations incorporated feedback on the revised project components and whether additional	**CAR 3: Cleared** As detailed out in PART II H, Consultations have been carried out on national, district and community levels with key actors, including with potential and direct beneficiaries; men, women, youth and vulnerable groups in all of the four districts. Challenges in agriculture production and social and gender dynamics were discussed. The stakeholder consulted confirmed the relevance of the project and its approaches, and contexts. Stakeholder concerns in relation climate change impact and the project's response on these have been reflected and documented in the proposal as shown in Annex C.	**-**

		the annexed consultations report. **CAR 3:** Please carry out a consultative process that involves all key stakeholders, including identified marginalised and vulnerable groups. Remarkably, one consultation showed that previously supported groups reported that the GALS gender approach had increased representation of women in decision making but that most women still had limited access to credits and productive assets. Nevertheless, the proposal still intends to employ the unmodified GALS approach to	consultations are planned to engage stakeholders on the current project outputs and activities. **CR 14: Not cleared.** No relevant changes were made to the proposal.	**CR 14: Cleared** The proposal describes how the project will rely on gender transformative methodologies such as the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) and Gender Sensitive Climate Vulnerability & Capacity Analysis (GCVCA) to to impact gender justice “from within” and promote women empowerment at scales including on individual, household, community and organizational level through for instance enhanced household and community gender awareness, gender equitable solutions in livelihoods planning and value chain development, GALS champions and peer-to-peer dissemination etc. The proposal describes how the project concretely will aim to	

		gender mainstreaming. **CR 14:** Please clarify how the lessons learned from applying the GALS approach in Malawi have been included in the proposal design to ensure promotion of gender equality also in substantive matters.		promote women's participation and voice, decision making power, economic empowerment and access to income generating activities.	
	11. Is the requested financing justified on the basis of full cost of adaptation reasoning?	**No.** The proposal provides no information on the number of beneficiaries for whom adaptive capacity would be developed. The full cost of adaptation thus cannot be appreciated, not at farmer or ecosystem level, nor at district level. All project components are critically dependent on external outputs,	**Unclear.** Whilst it is overall probable that the proposed activities will assist the country in addressing adaptive capacity to the adverse effects of climate change and build in climate resilience, it is unclear if or to what extent the full cost of adaptation will be addressed at the beneficiary or community or group level. **CAR 4: Not cleared.**	**CAR 4: Not cleared** While Section I concerning the Full Cost of Adaptation Reasoning has been thoroughly updated showcasing the concrete adaptation output and outcomes the project plans to deliver, it does not clarify if the planned achievements will be delivered without the need for any external sources of finance besides the AF funding. Please, clarify if the intended outputs and	**CAR 4: Cleared** The proposal has concluded that "*the planned achievements will be delivered without the need for any external sources of finance besides the AF funding, and the intended outputs and outcomes can be achieved with the AF funding requested*". See para 133.

		including the FCF financing window, digitalisation of agriculture extension services, knowledge management and communication strategy, carbon incentives, etc. Without these inputs, the project would at least experience severe delays, and a number of objectives would not be achievable. This dependency goes far beyond the regular use of valuable relevant lessons learned. **CAR 4:** Please clarify the full cost of adaptation reasoning justification for the project, and/or adjust the proposal as required.	Please also see CR 19.	outcomes can be achieved with the AF funding requested.	
	12. Is the project / programme aligned	**Yes.**	**No.**	**CAR 8: Cleared**	**-**

	with AF's results framework?		The revised results framework presented has misaligned the project and the AF results framework. **CAR 8:** Please demonstrate how the project aligns with the AF results framework. Please do so in the description of components. An alignment table is not required at concept note stage.	Under PART II A, the proposal satisfactorily describes how the project's components aligns with and contributes to the Adaptation Fund results framework.	
	13. Has the sustainability of the project / programme outcomes been taken into account when designing the project?	**Unclear.** Paragraph 126: "(…) A Targeted Adaptation Assessment will be conducted to provide guidance *during project implementation* and ensure that the investments made are cushioned against climate change impacts" (reviewer's italics). Climate change resilience should	**Unclear.** Sustainability of project outputs in conjunction with the groups involved will critically hinge on the ability of these groups to be (legally) empowered and have the ability to generate revenues needed for sustaining the outcomes, e.g. the development and implementation of a management plan for the woodlots. The proposal does not	**CAR 15: Cleared** The proposal clarifies how the project's beneficiaries will be enlivened and engaged in a hierarchy of legitimate local structures (and thereby legally empowered) which will serve aspects of sustainability and commercial viability. Various Farmer's Groups are encouraged to join by formally register as	**-**

		be a vital element of all projects interventions and be a vital design element. Carrying out such an assessment during implementation would be too late. Other sustainability arguments include elements that are not mentioned elsewhere in the proposal such as shifting away from subsidized input supply. Other arguments such as that of community-based farmer-to-farmer extension services contradict specific project objectives, in this example of digitizing extension services. Paragraph 129: the project "will place emphasis on active community participation in the implementation	provide information on how this will be the case for the myriad of groups that will be involved in the project. **CR 15: Not cleared.** Please see CR 5.	"Cooperative Societies Limited".	

		and management of project interventions. This approach will ensure that the communities are at the centre of the project, owning activities that are directly beneficial to them, and in the course increasing their knowledge and adaptive capacity to climate change. As a result, resilient climate activities will sustainable (sic) beyond the project's life". It is unclear how this is a credible statement considering that only two farmer groups in one of the four project districts have been consulted during project concept design. **CR 15:** Please clarify that and how adaptation			

		benefits achieved with the help of the project can be sustained after its end.			
	14. Does the project / programme provide an overview of environmental and social impacts / risks identified, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy of the Fund?	**No.** Paragraph 88 states that compliance with the IE's ESMS will constitute compliance with the AF ESP, which is not the case. Regardless of the methodology used, the IE needs to demonstrate compliance with the AF ESP. The information provided in Section II.K of the proposal is not in compliance with the AF ESP and GP. The table is not correctly completed. It is unclear for each principle whether or not there is a risk. In any case, most of the risk's	**No.** Some activities of component 2 and all activities of component 3 are USPs. **CAR 5: Not cleared.** Some activities of component 2 and all activities of component 3 are identified as unidentified subprojects (USPs). The use of USPs prevents a comprehensive identification of environmental and social risks, which should be thoroughly addressed in section II.K. Furthermore, there are issues with the risk identification for several ESP principles, as the	**CAR 5: Not cleared** The environmental and social risk pre-identification and assessment at district level (based on the enhanced consultations with stakeholders and beneficiaries) is overall satisfactorily at this stage including the presence of USPs. It is still unclear if the project plan to include USPs beyond the Full Proposal stage (See CAR 6), if this is the case, it will be essential, as the proposal also concludes, to put in place an Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) which in detail depicts the process and procedure by which	**CAR 5: Not cleared.** There will be a presence of partially USPs (location and activities) to some degree beyond the FP stage as the actual end-beneficiaries (households and groups) will be identified only during implementation stage which also holds true for the activities and the actual investments while for instance needs/opportunity assessments at landscape and farm including prioritization among other will only be undertaken at implementation stage. This is acceptable since the environmental and social risks are allowed to be sufficiently pre-identified and where a

		findings are premature and lack substantiation. The ESP requires safeguards efforts to be commensurate to the risks, not based on an unsubstantiated categorization. Furthermore, the project consists mostly of USPs, in particular but not limited to those to be financed by the FCF of Component 2, representing 54 per cent of the total project cost. The use of USPs is not acknowledged or justified, and risks findings are presented as being comprehensive. There are no relevant provisions for identification and management	current proposal lacks sufficient substantiation of the risk findings. It is essential to include a justification for USPs and ensure that all identified risks are backed by substantial evidence. This will help in ensuring the project's compliance with environmental and social safeguards and its overall success. **CAR 6: Not cleared.** Please provide the required information on the USP activities, in compliance with the guidance available at https://www.adaptation-fund.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/PPRC.30.54-Updated-guidance-on-USPs-with-Annex.pdf Annex B is a Preliminary Gender assessment. At the concept note stage, a	any potential risk that will arise is addressed through reduction and mitigation strategies as well as through a proactive and preventive approach. The ESMS would be implemented in accordance with an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). Hence, **the Full Proposal is advised to deepen the environmental and social assessment and risk analysis once the project areas and potentially also end beneficiaries are selected** In Section K, Table 11, the risk level for ESP 14 is noted as “unidentified”, **please provide a risk level.**	final ESP and gender compliance determination can be undertaken during project implementation. Furthermore, the FP stage will also deepen assessment and analysis and put in place an ESMS and ESMP. While the compliance with the ESPs is sufficiently discussed and outlined at this stage, it is noted that the “Low risk” of non-compliance with ESPs number 6, 10, 12 and 15 in Table 11 are marked (with an x) to indicate that there is “no need of further assessment required for compliance”. Any ESP identified to be associated with any level of risk of non-compliance should be

		of environmental and social risks and compliance with the AF GP during implementation. Some salient points specific to the AF ESP principles: The principle on compliance with the law is interpreted to be limited to the National Environmental Acts. Marginalized and vulnerable groups have not been identified. A gender analysis has not been carried out, which is required at the concept note stage. A full proposal needs to present the findings of a gender assessment. Risks under the core labour rights should not be	gender analysis is required. As a gender assessment it lacks key aspects. The information presented is at country level but does not reflect a gender analysis specific to the project areas. **CR 25 (New CR):** Please clarify the relevance of the information provided in Annex B for the gender analysis for the concept note.	**CAR 6: Not cleared** The environmental and social risk pre-identification and assessment at district level (based on the enhanced consultations with stakeholders and beneficiaries) is overall satisfactorily at this stage including the presence of USPs. It is noted (para 47) that the project plans to identify the actual projects areas at the Full Proposal stage and but the identification of the actual households and groups will be selected only at implementation stage. At the same time in the response to the comments under the Second Technical Review it is expressed that the Full Proposal stage is planning to avoid the use of USPs.	continuously monitored and assessed, please adjust the above-mentioned table accordingly. ***Response to CAR 5:*** *In table 11, ESPs 6, 10, 12 and 15 have been adjusted accordingly, removing the [x], and highlighting the need for further assessments required, as guided by the ESMP to be developed at full project proposal stage.* **CAR 6: Cleared** USPs will be partially present in relation to specifically defined locations and activities

		limited to child labour. Indigenous peoples are found to be 'not applicable', which contradicts common knowledge of the existence of a dozen ethnic groups in the country. Considering the nature of the project activities, it seems at least premature to conclude that no protected areas or natural habitats are involved. Considering the major problem of deforestation, a biodiversity risk cannot be excluded. The findings of climate change risks include risks to the project by climate change, which is not in compliance with the AF ESP. Considering the nature of the		**Please, clarify the project's approach to USPs** and if USPs are deemed necessary (or not) due to the project's nature and approach**.** This will serve to simply considerations under the review. **CR 25: Cleared** The preliminary gender assessment based on the extended consultations in the four districts as elaborated under Annex B is satisfactorily at this stage. At the Full Proposal stage it is expected that the a deepened gender analysis is undertaken once the selection of project areas (and potentially also end beneficiaries) including the	on a level which from a risk perspective is not deemed to burden the project and its implementation negatively. Also, see CAR 5 for a reference.

		proposed activities, use and abuse of agro-chemicals including fertilizers and pesticides cannot be excluded at this stage. The risk finding for physical and cultural heritage is based on “will avoid areas with physical and cultural heritage for implementation of its activities”. This confirms that there is a potential risk, which has not been acknowledged. The risk for lands and soil conservation is found to be absent based on the envisaged positive outcomes. Regardless, even those activities do present inherent risks to lands and soil conservation in the context of		mainstreaming of gender into the project’s components.	

		high rates of soil loss and erosion. **CAR 5:** Please identify environmental and social risks of the project in compliance with the ESP and GP. **CAR 6:** Please justify the use of USPs.			
Resource Availability	1. Is the requested project / programme funding within the cap of the country?	**Yes.**	**-**		
	2. Is the Implementing Entity Management Fee at or below 8.5 per cent of the total project/programme budget before the fee?	**Yes.** The IE Management Fee is at 8.5 per cent of the total project cost. The budget numbers are not rounded to the nearest whole number. The budget figures do not add up. **CAR 7:** Please round the budget	**No.** The budget was revised. The IE Management Fee is now at 9.2 per cent of the total project cost, which exceeds the cap. **CAR 8 (New CAR):** Please adjust the budget to comply with the cap for the IE Management Fee. The revised budget contains errors.	**CAR 8: Cleared** The budget is adjusted and now compliant including a IE Management Fee just beneath 8.5 %.	**-**

		numbers to the nearest whole number and ensure that the budget figures add up correctly.	**CAR 9 (New CAR):** Please present a correct budget. Some budget figures are not rounded to the nearest whole number. Throughout the proposal, figures are presented in a variety of formats. **CAR 7: Not cleared.**	**CAR 9: Cleared** Budget correctly revised. **CAR 7: Cleared** Figures in budget are rounded to the nearest whole number.	
	3. Are the Project/Programme Execution Costs at or below 9.5 per cent of the total project/programme budget (including the fee)?	**Yes.** The project Execution Costs are at 8.7 per cent of the total project budget.	**Yes.** The project Execution Costs are at 9.4 per cent of the total project budget.	**-**	**-**
Eligibility of IE	1. Is the project/programme submitted through an eligible Implementing Entity that has been accredited by the Board?	**Yes.**	**-**		**-**
Implementation Arrangements	1. Is there adequate arrangement for project / programme management, in compliance with the	n/a at concept stage			-

	Gender Policy of the Fund?				
	2. Are there measures for financial and project/programme risk management?	n/a at concept stage			-
	3. Are there measures in place for the management of for environmental and social risks, in line with the Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy of the Fund?	n/a at concept stage			-
	4. Is a budget on the Implementing Entity Management Fee use included?	n/a at concept stage			-
	5. Is an explanation and a breakdown of the execution costs included?	n/a at concept stage			-
	6. Is a detailed budget including budget notes included?	n/a at concept stage			-
	7. Are arrangements for monitoring and evaluation clearly defined, including budgeted M&E plans and sex-disaggregated data, targets and indicators, in	n/a at concept stage			-

	compliance with the Gender Policy of the Fund?				
	8. Does the M&E Framework include a break-down of how implementing entity IE fees will be utilized in the supervision of the M&E function?	n/a at concept stage			-
	9. Does the project/programme's results framework align with the AF's results framework? Does it include at least one core outcome indicator from the Fund's results framework?	n/a at concept stage			-
	10. Is a disbursement schedule with time-bound milestones included?	n/a at concept stage			-

ADAPTATION FUND

CONCEPT NOTE PROPOSAL FOR SINGLE COUNTRY

PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION

Title of Project: Smallholder Climate Resilience Project (SCRP)

Country: MALAWI

Thematic Focal Area: AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Type of Implementing Entity: Multilateral Implementing Entity

Implementing Entity: IFAD

Executing Entities: Ministry of Agriculture

Amount of Financing Requested: 10 million (in U.S Dollars Equivalent)

Project Formulation Grant Request: Yes ☒ No ☐

Executing Entity of the PFG: IE (IFAD)

Amount of Requested financing for PFG: 150,000 (in U.S Dollars Equivalent)

Letter of Endorsement (LOE) signed: Yes ☒ No ☐

NOTE: LOEs should be signed by the Designated Authority (DA). The signatory DA must be on file with the Adaptation Fund. To find the DA currently on file check this page: https://www.adaptation-fund.org/apply-funding/designated-authorities

Stage of Submission:

☒ This concept has been submitted before

☐ This is the first submission ever of the concept proposal

In case of a resubmission, please indicate the last submission date:

December 23 2024

Deleted: November

Please note that concept note documents should not exceed 50 pages, including annexes.

A. Project background and context

1. Malawi is a landlocked country in south-eastern Africa, bordered by Zambia to the west, Mozambique to the southeast and Tanzania to the northeast. Malawi is listed as a Least Developed Country (LDC) by the UN, and ranks among the 20 most vulnerable countries in the World by the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative Index 2021,1 which measures vulnerability to climate change. The country has a total area of 118,484 km^2, of which 79.4% is land and 21.6% is water. Malawi terrain is characterized by an elongated plateau, resulting in rolling plains, hills, and mountains. This terrain creates microclimates, principally due to the variation in rainfall across locations, with the overarching climate described as sub-tropical, which is influenced by the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)[1]. Agriculture is highly rainfed dependent.

A1. Socio-economic background

2. Based on Human Development Index (HDI) and comparative analysis across countries, Malawi is ranked among the least developed countries. Malawi's HDI value for 2019 was 0.483 and ranked 174 out of 189 countries and territories (UNDP, 2020)[2]. With a total population of nearly 20 million[3], Malawi has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of $645[4]. The agriculture sector is a key contributor to the Malawian economy. The sector employs around 85% of the workforce, contributes 22.3 % of GDP(According to Agriculture Sector Performance report of 2023/2024) and 80% of its export earnings[5]. Crop production alone is estimated to account for 74% of all rural incomes[6]. Over 70% of the population lives below the international poverty line of $1.90/day, driven by abject poverty and recurrent climate related shocks[7]. The higher poverty levels entail limited livelihood opportunities with over 80% of people's livelihoods reliant on natural resources, which are climate sensitive[8].

3. **Poverty particularly affects women**, as gender inequalities lead to low participation in economic activities and limited access to productive resources. Gender inequalities occur not just in governance and leadership but also in agriculture, education and health. According to the World Bank (2022), women in Malawi comprise 52% of population and provide nearly 80% of the labor force in agriculture. Despite their critical role in agriculture, producing about 70% of the food, women do not enjoy equal benefits from production.

4. Land is culturally owned either by men (patrimony) or women (matrimony). While land holding sizes are already low for Malawian farmers (1.0 ha), women farmers hold 20% less land (in size) than their male counterparts. Additionally, and regardless of culture or ownership, the use of land is mostly controlled by men, despite them providing less labor. Women also have lower education levels, less access to loans, less access to improved inputs and less access to agricultural extension and information (only 14% of the recipients of extension services are women), which restricts their agricultural productivity. Women managed plots are 25% less productive than those of their male counterparts. When aggregated, these challenges increase women's vulnerability to climate change and decrease their capacity to attain food, income and nutrition security.

5. **The youth (age 15-35),** constituting 40% of the population, lack basic opportunities, and experience high unemployment levels (80%). Focus group discussions with youth in selected communities indicated that youth had less land, were deliberately excluded from accessing credit and agricultural capacity building initiatives, and overall had a lower participation in projects. Consultation with youth further highlighted that high unemployment levels, coupled with less knowledge, expertise

[1] McSweeney C, New M, and Lizcano G (2010). Climate Change Country Profiles. http://www.un-gsp.org/sites/default/files/documents/malawi.oxford.report.pdf.
[2] UNDP (2020). Overview of Malawi Human Development Report.
[3] World Bank (2022) Open Data.. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=MW
[4] Ibid
[5] IFAD (2022). Republic of Malawi, Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (2023 – 2030). https://www.ifad.org/en/-/malawi-country-strategic-opportunities-programme
[6] Chirwa EW, Kumwenda I, Jumbe C, Chilunda P, Minde I (2008). Agricultural Growth and Poverty Reduction in Malawi. Past Performance and Recent Trends. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADS611.pdf
[7] FAO (2022). Malawi Chronic Food Insecurity Situation 2022 – 2026. https://www.ipcinfo.org/ipc-country-analysis/details-map/fr/c/1155612/?iso3=MWI#:~:text=AcuteMalnutrition&text=Chronic%20food%20insecurity%20in%20Malawi,reliance%20on%20weak%20livelihood%20strategies
[8] National Statistical Office (2020). The Firth Integrated Household Survey. Zomba, Malawi. http://www.nsomalawi.mw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=230&Itemid=111.

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and participation in agriculture, led many to risky activities such as prostitution and early marriages for girls and increased criminal activities for boys.

6. The present Smallholder Climate Resilience Project (SCRP) Concept includes considerations on how to mitigate gender inequalities and enhance women and youth empowerment, informed by consultations with the community (Section H and Annex C) and the preliminary gender analysis (Annex B).

A2. Agriculture and Food Security

7. The agriculture sector is a key contributor to the Malawian economy and source of livelihoods for 80% of people. The majority are smallholder farmers (70-80%) cultivating between 0.1-1.0 hectares with low and limited quality farm inputs.

8. Only 28% of the potential irrigable area is irrigated, with the majority of irrigation infrastructure benefitting larger private estates. Smallholder farmers produce most of the food crops that are reliant on rain-fed agriculture, making the sector highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Community consultations identified the following as main challenges to agriculture productivity (ranked from highest to lowest challenge): droughts, land degradation resulting in soil loss and decreased soil fertility due to rapid deforestation, other unsustainable agricultural practices and climate change, pests and diseases management, expensive farm inputs, limited loans and markets access, lack of diversification and post-harvest losses.

9. Consultations also revealed an increased incidence of pests and diseases on a yearly basis. The emergency of the fall armyworm (FAW) in 2015 further worsened yield losses. Estimates indicate that FAW alone was responsible for about 10-12% maize yield loss in Malawi. As regards pests' management, farmers lack basic information about FAW biology and behavior that would enable them to target planting dates and integrated management interventions, including pesticides and the timing of treatments.[9]

10. Due to the challenges faced, smallholder crop yields were comparatively lower than potential yields. Actual yield to potential yield was: 32% for maize; 43% for groundnuts; 28% for soybean; 26% for common beans; 42% for sweet potato; and 67% for cassava. SCRP will enhance adoption of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices, including through improved soil fertility management, pest management and other practices, as well as small irrigation schemes and other water infrastructure, addressing the critical factors that reduce smallholders' productivity and increase their vulnerability to climate hazards.

A3. Natural Resources

11. Malawi faces one of the highest and most widespread rate of natural resources and land degradation (soil erosion and loss of soil fertility)[10]. This is the result of both climate drivers such as heavy rains and floods, and anthropic pressure including deforestation, unsustainable land management and overgrazing. The average annual soil loss from cropland is described as severe with 29 tons/ha (GoM 2019)[11], putting Malawi among the top 12 countries most exposed to soil erosion. In the last 10 years' land degradation has resulted in a 15% decrease in arable land[12], worsening the already dire situation of low land holding size (1 hectare per household)[13]. With an estimated 96% of the total population using fuelwood for cooking in the form of firewood and charcoal, the deforestation rate is the highest in sub-Saharan Africa[14], with almost 33,000 hectares of land cover loss annually and a main driver of ecosystem and biodiversity loss.

12. A recent study in 2020, found that soil loss contributes to a national GDP loss of 1-3%, and causes a 32 to 61% decrease in maize production in some areas. In the 1990s, maize yield decrease

[9] Feed the Future (2019). Fall Armyworm Management for Maize Smallholders in Malawi: An Integrated Pest Management Strategic Plan
[10] GoM (2019). Synthesizing Agricultural Research Findings in Malawi. Final Report. Department of Agricultural Research Services. Lilongwe, Malawi
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Holden, S., Lunduka, R., 2012. Do fertilizer subsidies crowd out organic manures?. The case of Malawi. Agric. Economics 43 (3), 303–314
[14] Borrelli, P., Robinson, D.A., Fleischer, L.R., Lugato, E., Ballabio, C., Alewell, C., Bagarello, V., 2017. An assessment of the global impact of 21st century land use change on soil erosion. Nat. Commun. 8 (1), 2013.

due to soil erosion was estimated at 15.6%[15]. As a consequence, farmers face reductions in food production, income losses and devaluation of their land, exacerbating their vulnerability and food insecurity and fostering urban migration. Another study in 2019, indicated that female headed households faced double the impact of soil loss on maize productivity and on per capita real consumption when compared to male counterparts, indicating that female headed households were more vulnerable to soil erosion impact than male counterparts[16].

13. Community consultations confirmed that land degradation had the second worse effect on agricultural productivity after droughts. With already over three-quarters of the agricultural land exposed to severe topsoil loss, erosion represents a major threat to food security and the agriculture sector, and amplifies impacts of climate change such as floods and droughts, while also being exacerbated by climate change effects itself. If not addressed, impacts of land degradation are expected to worsen due to the combined effects of climate change (heavy rains and strong winds), high population growth, rapid deforestation and intensive agriculture. To address these critical risks and vulnerabilities, SCRP will promote on farm and micro-catchments restoration and conservation.

A4. Climate change and its impacts

A4.1. Past and current climate, and projected changes

14. Malawi has two climates, tropical and temperate, and two seasons, rainy (October-April) and dry (May-September). The country is roughly divided into three zones by temperature and humidity, which are greatly influenced by altitude: semi-arid and warm south; sub-humid and cool north; and the intermediate central region. The climate in Malawi varies significantly over space, owing to the country's location in a climatic transition zone between East and Southern Africa and to its wide-ranging landscape. These features lead to differing effects of climate change, including climate extremes and disasters, occasionally in short distances.

15. As highlighted in Fig 1, Malawi's observed **mean temperature** increased by 1.25 °C between 1951 -1980 (21.50 °C) and 1991- 2020 (22.25 °C) (**Fig 1 - a**). The observed average monthly temperature changes for the same period also increased by between 0.5 °C - 1.0 °C for most months except for October and November (**Fig 1-b**). The projected mean temperatures are expected to increase from 21.75 °C in 1960s to 23.5 °C by 2040 (**Fig 2 - a**). The projected (2020-2040) temperature increases vary across the country from 0.96 to 1.08 °C (**Fig 2- c**).

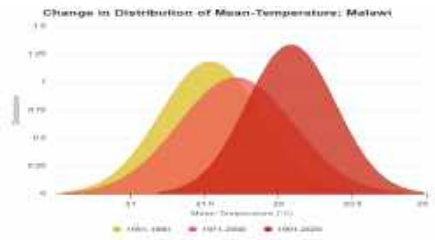


Fig 1-a: Changes in mean temperature over years.
Source: World Bank (2018)[17]

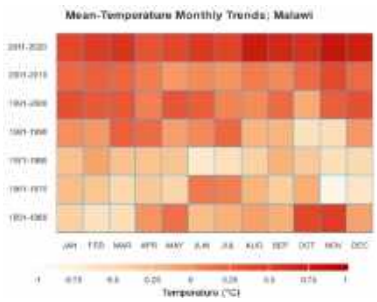
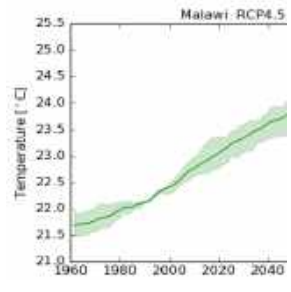
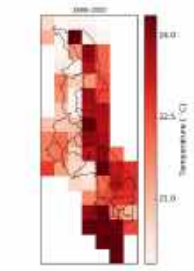
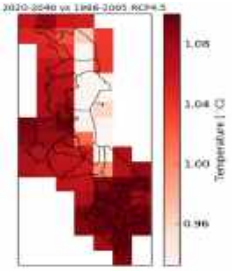
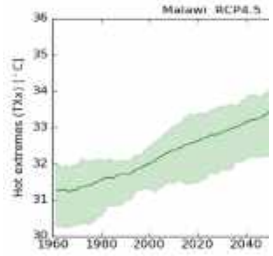
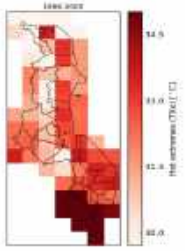
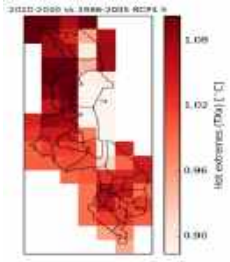


Fig 1-b: Increase in mean monthly over years.
Source: World Bank (2018)[18]

[15] FAO and UNEP (2019). Soil and nutrient loss in Malawi: An economic assessment.
[16] Giacomo P et al (2020). Distributional impacts of soil erosion on agricultural productivity and welfare in Malawi. Ecological Economics 177 (2020) 106764.
[17] World Bank (2018). Climate Change Management Portal for Development Practitioners and Policy Makers. https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/malawi/extremes.
[18] Ibid.

		
(Fig 2-a): Mean temperature changes annual aggregates (2020- 2040)	**(Fig 2- b):** Reference temperature (1986- 2005)	**(Fig 2-c)**: Future projected province changes (2020-2040)
Source: Climate Analytics: https://regioclim.climateanalytics.org/choices[19]		

16. **Extreme average hot temperatures** have increased from around 30.0 °C - 32.0 °C in 1960s to 31.2 °C - 33.5 °C 2040s (Fig 3 - a). The projected (2030-2040) highest extreme temperatures are expected in the northern region at 1.08 °C (Fig 3 -c). However, the highest extreme temperatures will still be expected in the southern region (Fig 3-b plus Fig 3-c).

		
(Fig 3- a): Annual average extreme temperature change (2020-2040)	**(Fig 3 b):** Reference extreme temperature (1986- 2005)	**(Fig 3 - c):** Projected extreme temperature changes (2020- 2040)
Source: Climate Analytics: https://regioclim.climateanalytics.org/choices [20]		

17. Observed **mean precipitation levels** remained the same at nearly 1875 mm per year between 1951-1980 **and** 1991 - 2020 (Fig 4 - a). This corroborates many studies that precipitation in Malawi varies but change is uncertain. However, there are noticeable changes in monthly precipitation between the different decades (Fig 4-b). The projected mean precipitation levels show a slight decrease from 1100m mm per year in 1960s to 1040mm in 2040s (**Fig 5 - a**) with huge uncertainties. When projected to (2030- 2050) the highest precipitation increases (50mm) and decreases (-50mm) are noted across the country compared to the reference year of 1986-2005 (**Fig 5 -c**).

[19] Climate Analytics: https://regioclim.climateanalytics.org/choices
[20] Ibid

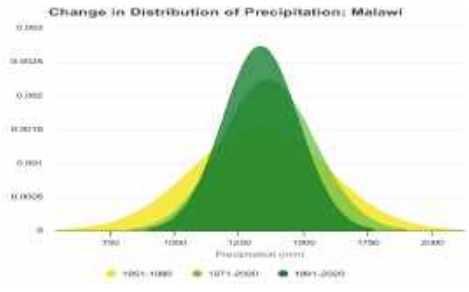


Fig 4-a: Changes in annual observed precipitation. **Source:** World Bank (2018)[21]

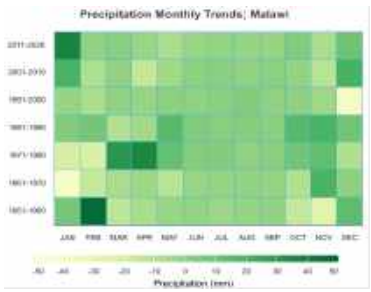
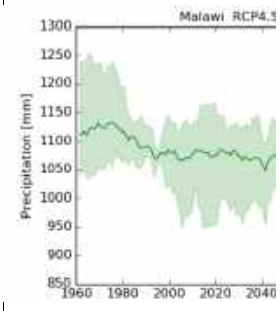
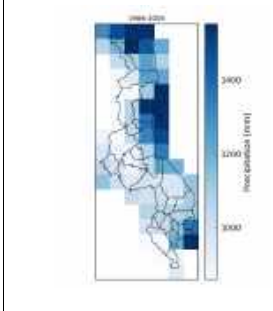


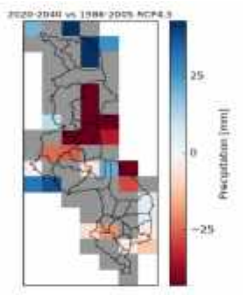
Fig 4-b: Changes in monthly observed precipitation. **Source:** World Bank (2018)[22]



(Fig 5 -a):
Annual mean precipitation changes (2020 – 2040)



(Fig 5- b):
Reference mean precipitation levels (1986- 2005)

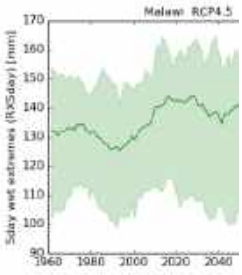
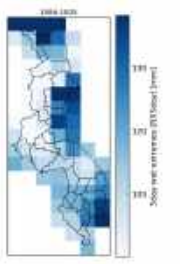
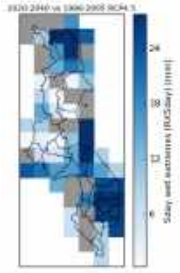


(Fig 5- c):
Projected mean precipitation changes (2020-2040)

Source: Climate Analytics: https://regioclim.climateanalytics.org/choices [23]

18. Unlike mean precipitation changes, there are changes in **extreme mean precipitation**. At national level there is a general increase in extreme precipitation from 132mm (1960s) to 140 mm (2040s) with huge uncertainties (Fig 6-a). Overall extreme precipitation is observed in the very north and south-eastern regions of Malawi (Fig 6-c). Even though there are slight changes in average precipitation and extreme precipitation, much of the rainfall changes could be variability in start and end dates which also greatly influence the crop productivity. Extreme precipitation events also directly impact ecosystems, in particular in areas characterized by important slopes and where land resources are already degraded (including due to deforestation).

[21] World Bank (2018). Climate Change Management Portal for Development Practitioners and Policy Makers. https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/malawi/extremes.
[22] Ibid
[23] Climate Analytics: https://regioclim.climateanalytics.org/choices

		
(Fig 6- a): Extreme precipitation changes (1960-2040)	**(Fig 6- b):** Reference extreme precipitation (1986-2005)	**(Fig 6 - c):** Projected extreme precipitation changes (2020-2040).
Source: Climate Analytics: https://regioclim.climateanalytics.org/choices [24]		

A4.2. Hazards

19. The World Bank (2018)[25] has described Malawi as particularly prone and exposed to adverse climate hazards such as dry spells, seasonal droughts, intense rainfall, riverine and flash floods. Droughts and floods occur on an annual basis in many districts of Malawi. Most smallholder farmers are resource poor with very limited capacity to adapt to and mitigate shocks arising from climate change. Economic modelling assessment estimated that the direct overall costs of climate change impacts were equivalent to 5% of the country's GDP each year (GoM 2015)[26]. Due to drought occurrence in the 2023/24 season, the Government of Malawi urgently needs more than $200 million in humanitarian assistance to provide food to more than 2 million households and declared a state of disaster in 23 of out 28 country districts[27].

20. The Department of Disaster Management Affairs analyses show that an increased number of people are impacted by climate related disasters. In 1989, about 200,000 people were affected by storms, floods and landslides. The number steadily increased 500,000 in 1997; 700,000 in 2015; 1,000,000 in 2019 and 2,300,000 in 2023.

21. **Cyclones**. Since January 2022, three cyclones (cyclone Ana in January 2022, cyclone Gombe in March 2022, cyclone Freddy in March 2023) have hit Malawi with devastating impacts. Cyclone Ana destroyed more than 220,000 farmers' fields in nearly 179,000 hectares of crop fields. The effects of Tropical Cyclone Idai, in 2019, placed Malawi in the top five countries worldwide most affected by extreme weather events, according to the Global Climate Risk Index[28].The post disaster needs assessment conducted in April 2023, estimated that cyclone Freddy alone affected over 2.3 million people and over 545,000 households were reported to have lost their crops and livestock, 1.6 million were declared severely food insecure, over 650,000 people displaced and over 600 deaths (WFP 2023)[29]. Cyclone Freddy in 2023, is estimated to have reduced maize production at the national level by 20-30% below average, which is likely to exacerbate food insecurity. Economic modelling has estimated the direct overall costs due to climate change impacts equivalent to losing at least 5% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) each year[30]

22. **Floods**. In the last five decades, Malawi has experienced more than 19 major flooding events and seven droughts. In 2015, the country was affected by the worst floods in 50 years, impacting over

[24] Climate Analytics: https://regioclim.climateanalytics.org/choices
[25] World Bank (2018). Climate Change Management Portal for Development Practitioners and Policy Makers. https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/malawi/extremes
[26] Department of Disaster Management Affairs (2015). Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report. Lilongwe, Malawi.
[27] WFP (2024). Reliefweb: https://reliefweb.int/report/malawi/wfp-urges-global-support-malawi-faces-looming-food-crisis-triggered-el-nino
[28] Eckstein, Kunzel and Schafer (2021). Global Climate Risk. Who Suffers Most from Extreme Weather Event? Weather Related Loss from 2000-2019. German Watch.
[29] WFP (2023). Cyclone Fredy Response Update. https://reliefweb.int/report/malawi/wfp-malawi-cyclone-freddy-response-update-6-april-2023-0800-cat.
[30] GoM (2021). Updated National Determined Contribution

1 million people, displacing 230,000 people and killing 106 people, with another 172 people reported missing[31], and physical damages and economic losses valued at $335 million[32]. The 2019 floods resulted in 60 deaths, with 975,000 people affected, physical damages and economic losses of $220 million[33] [34].

A5. Climate vulnerabilities

23. Malawi is listed as a Least Developed Country (LDC) by the UN, and ranks among the 20 most vulnerable countries in the World by the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative Index 2021, which measures vulnerability to climate change. Malawian rural communities are highly vulnerable to both the climate hazards just described, and to the impacts of ongoing and expected changes in climate. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defines the level of vulnerability of human and natural systems to climate-related impacts as a function of geographic exposure to climatological, hydrological, and meteorological hazards (highlighted in the previous section), sensitivity and adaptive capacity to cope with climate change. As such, climate change vulnerability in Malawi is exacerbated by the high sensitivity of livelihood sources and low community adaptive capacity, encompassing among others: gender disparities, soil, land and natural resource degradation, limited access to finance for climate resilient investments, etc.

Sensitivity

24. Malawi's high population density, high poverty levels with a huge proportion of population relying on climate sensitive sectors such as agriculture, leads to high sensitivity to climate change. Malawi is one of the most densely populated countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, with 203 people per km^2. The current population of 20.9 million (GOM 2020) is expected to double by 2060[35], which will exert further pressure on land resources, leading to worsened widespread impact on soil, land and natural resource, in absence of proper actions. The fact that over 80% of people in Malawi depend on rainfed agriculture and natural resources which are climate sensitive[36], makes the Malawi economy overly sensitive to climatic hazards. For instance, due to floods in 2024, there was a significant fall GDP (GoM 2015)[37]. SCRP will contribute to reducing climate sensitivity through irrigation, community water sources through boreholes and diversification from predominantly maize crop-based livelihood to integrated crop management and CSA, including on-farm and landscape soil, land and micro-catchment conservation.

25. Female headed households are poorer (57% compared to 43% to their male-headed households)[38]. Women poverty is caused by low participation in economic activities, low access to productive assets (land and capital) and higher illiteracy rates. Social customs override women land inheritance rights and decision making on land uses. Even though women provide 70% of the labour force in the agricultural sector, they still earn less than their male counterparts. The youth (age 15-35), who are the majority of population (57%)[39], lack basic opportunities to enable them to contribute to the economy, in particular in agriculture. SCRP will ensure active participation and empowerment of women and youth (50% women and 30% youth) in its interventions.

26. Malawi faces one of the highest and most widespread natural resources and land degradation, largely caused by deforestation and inappropriate land management practices resulting in increased soil erosion. The annual soil loss from cropland is estimated at 29 tons/ha and responsible for up 31-61% per annum crop yield reduction (GoM 2019)[40]. In the last 10 years land degradation has resulted in a 15% decrease in arable land[41]. With an estimated 96 percent of the total population using fuelwood for cooking, deforestation is estimated to be responsible for 33,000 hectares of land cover loss annually[42]. Soil, land and natural resources degradation was ranked among 5 critical factors affecting

[31] GoM (2021). Updated National Determined Contribution
[32] Department of Disaster Management Affairs (2015). Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report. Lilongwe, Malawi.
[33] Department of Disaster Management Affairs (2019). Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report. Lilongwe, Malawi.
[34] Department of Disaster Management Affairs (2015). Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report. Lilongwe, Malawi. Ibid
[35] National Statistics Report (2020). The Firth Integrated Household Survey. Zomba, Malawi.
[36] Ibid
[37] Department of Disaster Management Affairs (2015). Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report. Lilongwe, Malawi.
[38] National Statistics Report (2020). The Firth Integrated Household Survey. Zomba, Malawi.
[39] UNDP (2020). Human development Index.
[40] GoM (2019). Synthesizing Agricultural Research Findings in Malawi. Final Report. Department of Agricultural Research Services. Lilongwe, Malawi.
[41] Ibid
[42] GoM (2019). Synthesizing Agricultural Research Findings in Malawi. Final Report. Department of Agricultural Research Services. Lilongwe, Malawi.

agricultural production, and a main driver of ecosystem and biodiversity loss. The SCRP will promote sustainable soil, land, and natural resources management, leading to enhanced micro catchments resilience. Considering the current situation, without soil, land and natural resources restoration and management there cannot be any effective agricultural production.

Adaptive capacity

27. Malawi smallholder farmers' climate adaptive capacity is low, due to limited climate change knowledge, lack of access to finance to adopt climate resilient technologies, high poverty levels, low women and youth participation and empowerment in economic activities. SCRP will contribute to improve climate adaptive capacity through capacity building, enhancing adoption of available CSA technologies, and support access to extension services and inputs for climate-resilient practices on the farm.

28. Malawi has limited public, private funding as well as limited access by smallholder farmers to financial services and extension, which impact on climate smart technologies and investments in climate resilient infrastructure. For instance, less than 30% of potential irrigable land is under irrigation and the over reliance on rain-fed agriculture increases the vulnerability of small-scale poor farmers, and farmers experience huge post-harvest losses (25%) due to proper storage and value addition. Also limited adoption of CSA technologies lead to increased degradation of soil, land and natural resources. SCRP will provide the investments needed to roll out climate-smart technologies that reduce farmers' vulnerability to climate change, including crop diversification, soil cover, integrated pest management, etc. It will also increase water availability and access through small-scale irrigation schemes and communal water sources such as boreholes.

29. While many previous initiatives have been undertaken to improve generation, access and use of climate information, there are still huge gaps for improvement. For instance, the forecast information is done at the start of the season, with few updates in between, covering large areas and not narrowed to a specific area, not specific to value chain, message alert being too short for effective preparedness. SCRP will enhance climate information generation and advisories formulation, improve dissemination capacity through digitalization and build capacity of district and local communities.

Climate risks and impacts

30. **Production systems**. Key projected climate effects include increases in temperature, aridity, rainfall variability and extreme events, which will translate into limited and modified water availability, with an altered onset of the rainy season, increasing water stress and intensifying incidence of pests, diseases and weeds. This will directly affect crop yields, including through an increased risk of crop failure. The impacts of droughts and floods on crop yields have been heavily damaging in Malawi, especially when the intervals between extreme weather events are short. Erratic rains and prolonged dry spells in 2015-2016 delayed the start of the agricultural season by two to four weeks. Consequently, the crop production in the southern and central regions was estimated 13.4% lower than the previous season 2014-2015, which was already 30% less than the season before due to the severe flooding in 2015[43]. Earlier major droughts (seven during 1980-2012) affected districts across the country; the major crops impacted were maize, potato, groundnut and beans[44].

31. The intensification of pests and diseases was confirmed in all consultations with local agricultural officials and communities. For instance, across the country over 60% of maize fields are attacked by fall armyworm (FAW) to different extents. It is currently estimated that yield losses from FAW are approximately 10%. Farmers have only limited access to education about IPM for effective management of FAW or any other pest. Specifically, farmers lack basic information about FAW biology and behavior that would enable them to target planting dates and management interventions, including pesticides and the timing of treatments.[45] Managing pests and diseases, including the FAW will reduce farmers' vulnerability to climate change, increase agricultural productivity and additionally reduce the environmental risk where farmers are without knowledge using chemicals without sufficient knowledge for its control.

32. **Ecosystem degradation**. Main factors leading to watershed degradation include soil structure

[43] *Ibid*.
[44] Giertz, A., 2015. "Malawi: Agricultural Sector Risk Assessment." World Bank Group Report Number 99941-MW. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.
[45] Feed the Future (2019). Fall Armyworm Management for Maize Smallholders in Malawi: An Integrated Pest Management Strategic Plan

and erodibility; climate (rainfall intensity and temperature); reduction in land and vegetation cover influenced by type of land use; and topography (influencing the speed carrying and capacity of runoff). Climate drivers in Malawi, including increased temperatures and aridity, associated with an increased frequency in extreme events, put a strain on already degraded ecosystems, reducing the supply of ecosystems good and services, including through soil degradation and decreased water availability. At the same time, current climate change impact pathways put communities under increased pressure to resort to a vicious cycle of maladaptation, associated with unsustainable ecosystem use and management. Indeed, rapid deforestation increases the climate vulnerability of ecosystems and communities that depend on them, with decreased water infiltration and increased runoff, resulting in further loss of topsoil, reduced fertility, and increased damages from floods and sedimentation or siltation downstream. Trees also provide essential windbreaks in case of cyclones, which communities have repeatedly suffered from.

Differentiated vulnerabilities and impacts by group

33. From stakeholder consultations the following were identified as the most vulnerable groups to climate change: women and girls, the youth and the elderly.

34. **Women and girls** are among the most vulnerable groups to climate change. Women face unique impacts due to their primary role as caretakers of the households. When disaster occurs, women face an extra burden to care for the family. In periods of droughts, women and girls walk longer distances to fetch water for the household, exposing themselves to further climate hazards or other sources of insecurity, and spending time away from productive activities. Women also lack access to productive resources, lack of employment opportunities, lack access to micro-credits and access to agricultural extension services and climate information. Women and girls will also have increased stress related to sanitation and hygiene. These combined vulnerabilities result in increased malnutrition, increased debts incurred, increased incidences of dire poverty, disturbances marriages and gender-based violence as a result of climate change, while further constraining their capacity to adapt to climate change impacts.

35. **Youth** are also particularly vulnerable due to their lack of access to productive resources, lack of employment opportunities, lack of access to micro-credits and to agricultural extension services and climate information. Consultations revealed that youth were segregated from microcredits and women had less decision-making power on what type of crop and CSA investments to undertake. The youth were mostly affected by low yields resulting in increased food insecurity, decreased likelihood of getting employment due to reduced agricultural activities, less land access as parents resorted to selling land as recovery measures to disasters, increased high risk behaviors (prostitution and criminal activities) and early marriages among girls.

36. The **elderly** were also particularly vulnerable due to limited social protection interventions, especially as they have limited energy to actively participate in productive work. The elderly and **children** were more affected due to increased malnutrition incidence, challenges to move during floods and increased absenteeism for school going children.

37. **Other marginalized groups in Malawi**. The 2018 Population and Housing Census indicates that there are 1,734,250 persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Malawi aged 5 years and above, representing about 11.6% of the total population. The Prevalence of HIV among adults of ages 15 to 64 years is 10.6%: 12.5% among females and 8.5% among males. In 2018, 4.3% of young women were living with HIV, compared to 2% of young men. This corresponds to approximately 900,000 people living with HIV (PLHIV) ages 15 to 64 years.

38. Based on the most critical climate hazards outlined during consultations and the specific gender impacts, SCRP includes interventions to address these differential impacts. SCRP also includes preliminary beneficiary selection criteria based on recent government guidelines on mainstreaming gender and disadvantaged groups in agricultural interventions. These ensure that in each district, the most vulnerable areas, the most vulnerable communities, and most vulnerable households will be targeted, with specific measures to ensure women and youth empowerment and participation.

A6. Climate vulnerability analysis and selection of districts of intervention

39. The selection of districts of intervention under the project was led jointly by the Government and IFAD, based on a rapid vulnerability analysis in line with the IPCC definition of climate vulnerability encompassing exposure, sensitivity, adaptive capacity to climate change (based notably on poverty levels and food insecurity levels) as outlined in the previous section. Potential to complement existing

programmes was also considered, while avoiding duplication. As such, and while some districts might be very vulnerable, the number of immediate past and ongoing climate change interventions was also taken into consideration so as to avoid duplication of climate related interventions in some districts.

40. **Exposure**. The selected districts have medium to very high exposure to climate change risks as highlighted in Table 1 below. Balaka is highly exposed to recurrent droughts, rainfall variability (including short rainy seasons), high temperatures and strong winds. Lilongwe, Dowa and Mzimba are moderately exposed to droughts, rainfall variability, floods and strong winds.

41. By 2040, temperatures are expected to increase by 1.08 ºC in Balaka, and around 1.04 ºC in Lilongwe, Dowa and Mzimba. However, the highest temperatures will still be observed in southern and lakeshore districts. A slight decrease in precipitation is expected in Dowa and Balaka, where Mzimba and Lilongwe remain the same. All districts show an increase in extreme precipitation, Balaka (24mm for 5-day wet extremes), Lilongwe (12mm), Dowa (12mm) and Mzimba (4mm) respectively (Fig 6-c).

42. During community consultations droughts and land degradation were the highest ranked hazards for Lilongwe, Dowa and Mzimba in terms of impact on the communities. For Balaka, the highest ranked hazards were droughts, land degradation and floods. Soil, land and natural resources underlying causes of degradation are often closely linked with maladaptive and unsustainable management practices, while climate change impacts such as droughts and floods accelerate and exacerbate these issues.

Table 1 - Description of exposure for selected districts

Exposure factor	**Potential selected project implementation areas**			
	Balaka	Lilongwe	Dowa	Mzimba
Drought occurrence	Very high	Medium and some high areas	High	High
Rainfall variability	Very high	High	High	High
Floods occurrence	High	Medium	Medium	Medium
High temperatures	Very high	High in some parts	High in some parts	Medium
Strong winds	Very high	High is some areas	High in some parts	High is some parts
Data source: Malawi Hazards and Vulnerability Atlas - DoDMA (2016)				

43. **Sensitivity**. Table 2 highlights the sensitivity factors for the selected districts. Due to high poverty levels, population density, illiteracy levels and proportion engaged in the agriculture sector, Balaka has the highest sensitivity. Lilongwe and Dowa show high sensitivity due to high poverty levels and proportion of population in the agriculture sector. Mzimba is mostly sensitive due to the high proportion of its population in the agriculture sector.

Table 2 - Description of sensitivity for selected districts

Sensitivity factor	**Potential selected project implementation area**			
	Balaka	Lilongwe	Dowa	Mzimba
Poverty levels	Very high	Very high	Very high	High
Population density	Very high	Very high	Medium	Medium
Illiteracy levels	High	Medium	Low	Very low
Population in agriculture	High	High	High	High
Data source: Malawi Hazards and Vulnerability Atlas - DoDMA (2016)				

44. **Adaptive capacity:** Table 3 highlights the adaptive capacity factors for the selected districts. All selected districts have high land and soil degradation, except for Mzimba which is moderate. Compared to national averages, all selected districts have a low proportion of land under irrigation, making farmers extremely vulnerable to droughts. Access to inclusive financial resources and credits is extremely low in all districts, which presents a barrier to adopting and investing in climate resilient technologies. Apart from Balaka, all districts have low access to use of climate change information to guide decision making.

Table 3 - Description of adaptive capacity for selected districts

Adaptive capacity factors	**Potential selected project implementation area**			
	Balaka	Lilongwe	Dowa	Mzimba
Literacy rate	Low	Medium	Medium	High
Time taken to access markets	Low	Low	Medium	High

Access to health services	Medium	High	Medium	Low
Land under irrigation	Low	Low	Low	Low
Natural resources degradation	High	High	High	Medium
Access to financial services	Low	Low	Low	Low
Access to and use of climate information	Medium	Low	Low	Low
Climate related interventions	Medium	Low	Low	Low
Data source: Malawi Hazards and Vulnerability Atlas - DoDMA (2016)				

45. Overall, climate impacts affect agricultural productivity in all the selected districts. Figure 8 show potential climate impact on crop yield in 2050 (based on 2020 baseline), under a pessimistic scenario (current trajectory). All crops apart from groundnuts show decrease in yield. Yield reduction ranges between 6% to 30% for all the selected districts. The highest crop yield change for all districts is under maize, ranging from 30% less yields in Balaka to 40% in Mzimba.

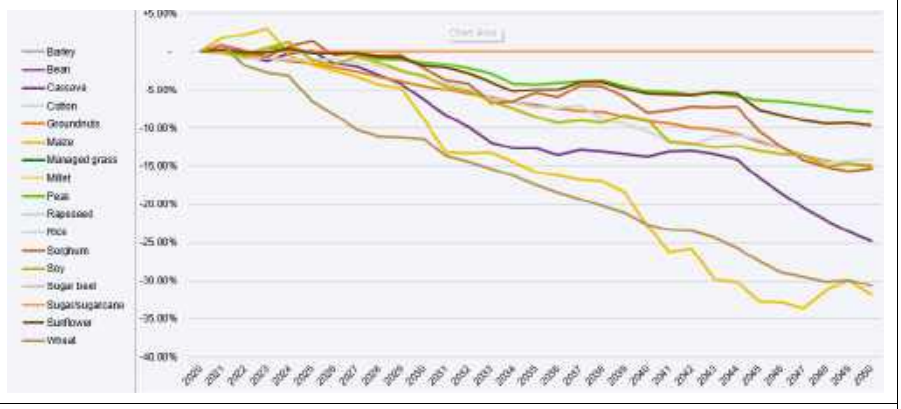


Figure 8-a: Crop yield change for Balaka
Source: Crop Impact Assessment (CARD 2018)[46]

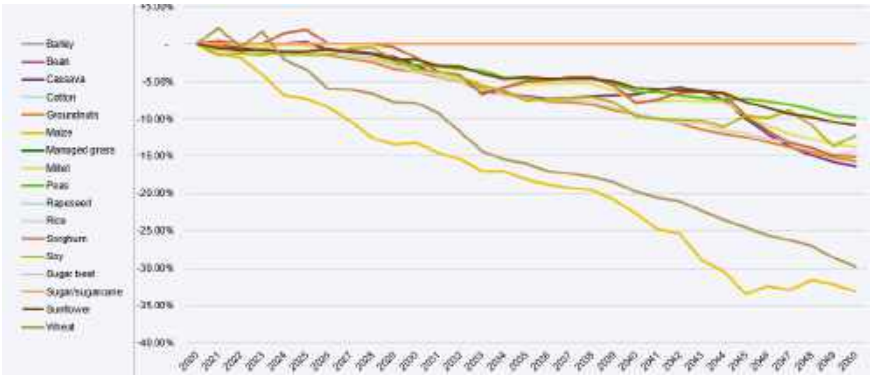


Figure 8-b: Crop yield change for Dowa **(CARD 2018)**

[46] IFAD (2019). Climate Adaptation in Rural Development Assessment Tool. Available at: https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/-/publication/climate-adaptation-in-rural-development-card-assessment-tool.

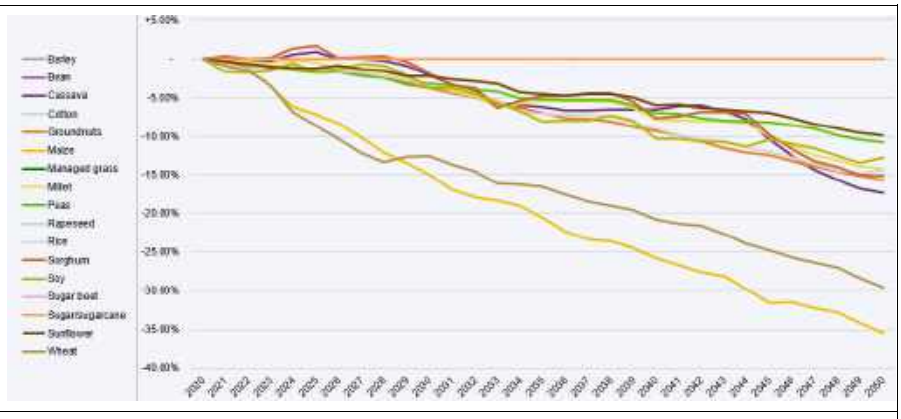


Figure 8-c: Crop yield change for Lilongwe

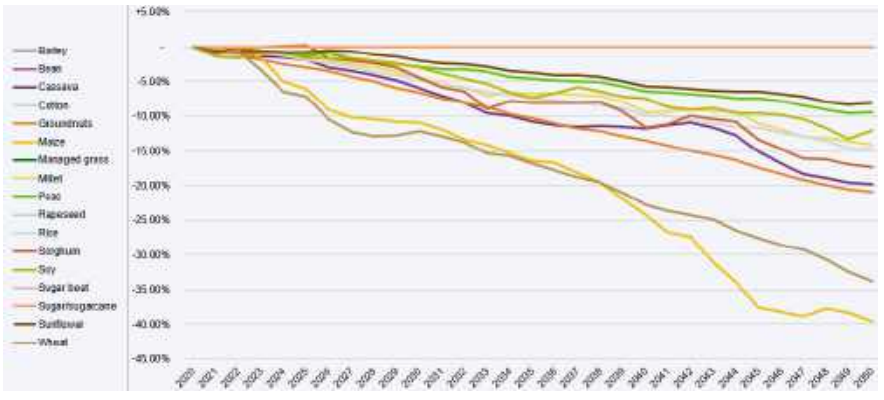


Figure 8-d: Crop yield change for Mzimba **(CARD 2018)**

A7. Project area identification and beneficiary target strategy

46. A three-stage process is proposed for selecting SCRP intervention sites and beneficiaries: (1) at CN formulation, SCRP districts are identified; (2) at full proposal, actual projects areas (extension planning areas – EPAs) will be identified; (3) at project implementation, actual households and groups will be selected.

47. **Stage one - identification of SCRP districts** is explained in detail in the previous section. SCRP will be implemented in the districts of Balaka, Lilongwe Rural, Dowa and Mzimba. Rural poverty in these districts is even higher, especially among the most vulnerable groups, such as women and youth. In addition, there is a very high co-relationship between poverty rates and food insecurity incidences, with Lilongwe Rural being worse-off, with over one and half million people categorized as being chronically food insecure. All the participating districts are also badly affected by climate change which impinges on their agricultural productivity.

48. **Stage two - Selection of project areas in targeted districts**: Within the project districts, the project communities or areas will be selected with stakeholders at district level. The most vulnerable Extension Planning Areas (EPAs) will be selected at FP development based on: climate exposure, adaptive capacity, and sensitivity (compounding poverty levels and food insecurity levels, levels of soil, land and natural resources degradation, etc.). The number of immediate past and ongoing climate change adaptation and mitigation interventions in different EPAs will also be considered so as to avoid

duplication of climate related interventions. The criteria for identification of SCRP EPAs will be further refined and validated with district stakeholders (local stakeholders) at project proposal stage.

49. **Stage three - selection of actual beneficiary households**: While the targeting criteria will be further elaborated at project proposal stage, the criteria shall prioritize the following types of households, recognized to be most vulnerable to climate change and to play a key role in enhancing the targeted areas' resilience to climate change: a) rural food insecure households, vulnerable to malnutrition[47]; and b) moderate food insecure households involved in low-productivity subsistence crop and livestock farming.

50. The project will directly enhance the climate resilience of around 30,000 smallholder farmers. Women will constitute 50% of the beneficiaries for each activity respectively (i.e. 12,000 women with enhanced resilience to climate change); Youth will constitute 30% (3,000 youth) and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) 5% (i.e. 1,500).

B. Project Objectives

51. **Objective**. The project objective is to *reduce the vulnerability of smallholder farmers and the ecosystems they depend on to the negative impacts of climate change*.

52. **Outcomes**. The project will achieve the stated objective through three outcomes:

a) **Outcome 1**. Improved climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers
b) **Outcome 2**. Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems
c) **Outcome 3**. Climate information solutions for decision making in agriculture enhanced at both local and national levels

C. Project components and financing

Table 4 - Project components and financing

Project Components	Expected Outcomes	Expected Concrete Outputs	Amount (USD)
Component 1 Resilient ecosystems sustainably provide services to smallholder farmers	**Outcome 1**. Improved climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers	Output 1.1. Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed	1,268,014
		Output 1.2. Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level	1,646,000
Subtotal Component 1			**2,914,014**
Component 2 Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi	**Outcome 2**. Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems	Output 2.1. Adaptive capacity of smallholder farming systems supported	1,362,000
		Output 2.2. Adapted inputs and resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers	2,140,000
Subtotal Component 2			**3,502,000**
Component 3 Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi	**Outcome 3**. Climate information solutions for decision making in agriculture enhanced at both local and national levels	Output 3.1. Climate information for decision making available at local level	1,100,000
		Output 3.2. National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector	825,000
Subtotal Component 3			**1,925,000**
Total project activity cost			8,341,014
Project Execution cost (9.5%)			875,576
Total Project Cost			9,216,590
Project Cycle Management Fee charged by the Implementing Entity (8.5%)			783,410

[47] A significant proportion of these households are likely to be female-headed households and individuals vulnerable to malnutrition (women of reproductive age and children under five years of age), youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable groups.

Amount of Financing Requested	10,000,000

D. Projected Calendar

Table 5 - Projected calendar

Milestones	Expected Dates
Start of Project Implementation	June 2026
Mid-term Review (if planned)	January 2029
Project Closing	June 2031 (5 years)
Project Completion	December 2031
Terminal Evaluation	June 2031

PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

A. Describe the project components, particularly focusing on the concrete adaptation activities of the project, and how these activities contribute to climate resilience.

Component 1. Resilient ecosystems sustainably provide services to smallholder farmers

Outcome 1. Improved climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers

53. As highlighted previously, climate drivers in Malawi, including increased temperatures, floods and droughts, associated with an increased frequency in extreme events, put a strain on already degraded ecosystems, reducing the supply of ecosystems good and services, increasing soil degradation and reducing water availability. At the same time, current climate change impact pathways put communities under increased pressure to resort to a vicious cycle of maladaptation, associated with unsustainable ecosystem use and management. Continued deforestation has increased the climate vulnerability of ecosystems and communities that depend on them, with decreased water infiltration and increased runoff resulting in further loss of topsoil, reduced soil fertility, and increased damages from floods and sedimentation or siltation downstream. Trees also provide essential windbreaks in case of cyclones, which communities have repeatedly suffered from. While communities are aware of the importance of trees, they lack the means to improve the management of local natural resources, integrating climate and disaster risks in the planning of their use; and they also lack information on alternative practices that can still support their livelihood while reducing the impact on ecosystems they depend on.

54. Under this component, the project will support the **improved climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers** (Outcome 1), directly contributing to Adaptation Fund Output 5 "*vulnerable ecosystem services and natural resource assets strengthened in response to climate change impacts, including variability*" and Outcome 5 "*Increased ecosystem resilience in response to climate change and variability-induced stress*", thereby supporting the "*increased ecosystem resilience in response to climate change-induced stresses*" (Adaptation Fund impact level result). This will be achieved by building on current best practices in Malawi[48] to engage local stakeholders following a landscape planning approach to collectively identify priorities for restoring and protecting degraded ecosystems and the services they provide (such as water infiltration, soil fertility, windbreaks, etc.). Based on this approach, key climate vulnerabilities will be mapped within the targeted landscape unit, in relation with the flow of water within the micro-watershed (with impacts in terms of drought/water availability, erosion, and flooding), as well as key local dynamics (including maladaptive behaviours accelerating ecosystem degradation). The project will hence support the identification of priorities of intervention from the landscape to the farm-level, taking into account climate risks and the principles of disaster risk management. Landscape level priorities will be directly supported by the project under this outcome, with the dual objective of restoring ecosystem services and ecosystems' resilience to climate change, while reducing anthropic drivers of degradation,

[48] The following are promoted by Malawi Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management: Participatory Rural Appraisals, Rapid Appraisals of Agriculture Knowledge Systems (RAAKS), Visual Mapping, as well as some interview and working group-style discussion and transect walk.

including deforestation. This will be achieved through sensitisation, enhanced management of natural resources, as well as support to alternative livelihoods, both under the present and the second components.

Output 1.1. Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed

55. **GIS Climate vulnerability assessment**. Under this activity, SCRP will support the preparation of detailed climate vulnerability assessments for each district of intervention. The exercise will entail an analysis of potential impacts of projected climate change using high resolution downscaled scenarios and applying GIS tools to propose recommendations on how to manage climate risks for rural landscapes and livelihoods in these areas.

56. The IPCC approach to vulnerability analysis may be adopted, combining the analysis of exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity. Additionally, specific assessments will be conducted for priority resources including key commodities (crops and livestock). An analysis of existing adaptation options based on different time horizons and climate change scenarios (low and high emission) to support shifts in technologies/practices needed to adapt to future climates and avoid maladaptation will also be included, assessing tipping points to prevent maladaptation based on 2030 and 2050 time series, and including trade-offs as well as recommendations on required shifts in technologies/practices.

57. Overall, these vulnerability analyses will adopt a tailored approach focusing on the root causes of vulnerability of livelihoods and landscapes in targeted areas, identifying barriers to adoption of climate resilient technologies and practices. As such, the final products will be key to inform local priorities in terms of agriculture practices, infrastructures, and landscape management but also local, district level and national policies and strategies.

58. **Geographic targeting of project activities and community engagement**. This activity will support the delineation of up to 20 micro-watersheds of intervention for the project in the districts and EPAs of intervention, based on selection criteria, including: (i) vulnerability to drought, (ii) vulnerability to floods; (iii) need to combat erosion and land degradation; (iv) avoiding duplication with other interventions; etc. This exercise will be informed by the district level GIS vulnerability assessments. Building smallholders' adaptive capacity through restored ecosystems and adaptive practices requires a deep rooting in the communities, ensuring the buy-in and relevance of each intervention to the targeted landscape and communities. Within the villages included in these micro-watersheds (micro-catchments include 5 to 10 villages), the project will raise communities' awareness about the project approach and planned interventions, highlighting the reliance on participatory processes and importance of community empowerment. Community sensitization sessions will be delivered through district, area and village meetings, coordinated by the Village Development Committees (VDCs) and in consultation with the traditional authorities. The project will ensure sensitization sessions are conducted on: (i) climate change and expected impacts in targeted micro-watersheds; (ii) disaster risk management; (iii) available climate information; etc., in relation with planned activities under the project. Time and location of these sessions will be carefully planned to ensure women, youth and minorities can attend and participate actively.

59. **Gender and Social inclusion**. Vulnerability to climate change is compounded by social exclusion, resulting in lack of access to resources, and lack of assets and economic opportunities, thereby increasing vulnerability to various shocks and stresses. Indeed, women in Malawi are disproportionately affected by climate change, owing to their increased exposure working in the field, their responsibility as caretakers, their role fetching water over increasingly long distances. Like youth, the land they work on is typically less productive, as their access to information and extension services training is reduced due to higher illiteracy, poor timing of delivery, or restricted access due to cultural norms. These challenges were also highlighted in consultation with communities (see Part II.H).

60. As such, Gender considerations will be taken into account throughout project implementation, thanks to relevant tools and methodologies to ensure women (and other marginalized groups) participation to activities (as also further outlined in the Preliminary Gender Analysis included under Annex B). In particular, the project will rely on methodologies such as the Gender Sensitive Climate

Vulnerability & Capacity Analysis (GCVCA)[49] and the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) (see below) to ensure women's voices are heard and their concerns mainstreamed into project responses. These approaches will guarantee that women and youth participation to consultations and project activities are not only performative, but that they also play an active role in the groups' decisions.

61. The Gender Action Learning System (GALS)[50] is a household methodology that helps realize gender-transformative results. A GALS process usually lasts a period of two to three years, and is based on a set of principles, tools and stages. Additional key elements of GALS are the peer replication structure and integration into the interventions of a specific project. The GALS is based on a set of principles which should inspire and guide its implementation and use: (i) gender justice, (ii) inclusion, (iii) leadership potential of all, (iv) action orientation, (v) sustainability, and (vi) gender is fun.

62. The GALS is a gender transformative methodology that takes the household as entry point, but directly impact the whole community households belong to. Project beneficiaries will be directly engaged in the process through the formation of pools of GALS champions within the communities, who will expand the methodology through peer-to-peer dissemination. The GALS aims at increasing awareness of gender roles in the households and communities by improving their capacity to negotiate their needs and interests and find innovative, gender-equitable solutions in livelihoods planning and value chain development. In this project, the methodology will be leveraged for activities under this and other outputs to enhance women participation to all project activities, create assets for the poorest, and work with female-headed households. The GALS constitutes an effective approach for a community-led empowerment using specific participatory processes and simple mapping and diagram tools. The ultimate goal is to give women and men more control over their lives as the basis for individual, household, community and organizational development. The results are tangible in terms of a more equitable work balance in the home, a greater voice for women in household decision-making, a fairer share of economic benefits accruing to women, improved food security and nutrition and a noticeable reduction in domestic violence. The GALS focuses explicitly upon achieving gender justice "from within", involving all households members without supporting the women/girls at the expense of men/boys.

63. The methodology takes participants through a number of stages, all of which are participatory and depend on the use of visual, rather than written, material to work with. The process includes creating initial commitment and action priorities for gender justice in an entry point event. It aims to achieve a positive orientation by encouraging participants to develop individual and then household level visions for their futures (step 1) before establishing their current situation (step 2). In order to promote a sense of achievement and to help them identify cause-effect linkages, the participants are asked to consider where they have come from (step 3). Next, participants identify the opportunities and constraints that will affect the realization of their vision (step 4). Step 5 focuses upon enabling participants to identify their objectives, and finally, step 6 asks participants to set milestones on the road towards the achievement of their overall vision.

64. Paired with gender- and youth- explicit targeting, GALS will help ensure women and youth can access the support provided by SCRP and that the interventions also cater for their specific vulnerabilities. GALS will notably address the prevention of gender-based violence, and HIV/AIDS. SCRP will conduct workshops with District Agriculture Extension Committees (DAEC) and relevant district actors to sensitise local agricultural institutions' staff on the GALS approach. It will then support dedicated workshops and linkage of GALS modules with capacity-building interventions of SCRP, and notably farmers and their organizations (cooperatives) that are engaged in the FFS programme (see component 2), but also other local organizations including Village Natural Resource Management Committees (VNRMCs). In total, 20 extension officers will be trained as trainers of trainers and 140 local facilitators will be further trained, in order to reach 2,800 households mentored on GALS (benefitting directly around 13,000 people of which 50% women).

65. **Strengthening/establishing Village Level Natural Resource Management Committees**. In villages included within targeted micro-watersheds, the project will establish a total of up to 140 Village Natural Resources Management Committees (VNRMCs), or strengthen their functions where they already exist, in order to establish operational watershed management structures at micro-catchment

[49] The GCVCA practitioner's guidebook provides a framework for analyzing vulnerability and capacity to adapt to climate change and build resilience to disasters at the community level, with a particular focus on social and in particular gender dynamics. Gender Sensitive Climate Vulnerability & Capacity Analysis - CARE Climate Change

[50] See https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/-/how-to-do-note-integrating-the-gender-action-learning-system-in-ifad-operations

level (in line with the Forestry Act of 1997). It is expected that these or similar groups have been created under previous projects presented in Section F. Where they don't exist yet, the project will support their registration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change following relevant guidelines. The project will support VNRMC charter establishment or its review and revision where it already exists. Where needed, VNRMCs will be enhanced to ensure at least 50% of members are women and 30% are youth. VNRMCs capacities on aspects relevant to local planning will be supported, with dedicated trainings covering: (i) training of VNRMCs and representative community members (from all groups including women, youth, and other vulnerable groups) on climate risks, how those risks specifically affect the local landscape and how to plan for them (disaster risk management and early warning – including participatory needs assessment); (ii) principles of micro-watershed integrated planning; (iii) options for watershed restoration and sustainable management of natural resources; etc. Gender and social inclusion considerations will be mainstreamed into the training sessions. VNRMCs will be engaged, consulted and supported throughout the project's lifetime, including as part of activities under component 2.

66. **Mainstreaming climate resilience into village-level action plans (VLAPs)**. VLAPs are "*plans for managing the resources and infrastructure at village level, and provide for in-field activities. One of the most important aspects is for village members to participate in the planning process so that people have both input into and a clear understanding of what their responsibilities are. The focus of village plans is on the maintenance and sustainable utilization of the ecosystem that provides resources in support of village livelihoods. Part of the plan addresses the rehabilitation or restoration of damaged ecosystem services needed to support the village*"[51]. The project will support the establishment of up to 140 climate-resilient VLAPs covering individual or groups of villages in its area of intervention (group VLAP for up to 10 villages in case their resources are commonly managed). VLAP preparation will be under the leadership of VNRMCs, but will also closely engage additional relevant local stakeholders, including Village Level Civil Protection Committees to ensure that Disaster Risk Management is fully integrated into the planning approach. Consultations will be undertaken through participatory approaches following Malawi National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure. This participatory planning process will directly involve women, youth and minorities to factor in their perspective on the local landscape thanks to methodologies such as the Gender Sensitive Climate Vulnerability & Capacity Analysis.

67. Based on local climate vulnerability and participatory rural appraisals conducted to assess the state of natural resources in the local landscape, local stakeholders will: (i) engage in discussion of investment needs/opportunities at landscape and farm levels; (ii) identify preferred locations for interventions; (iii) identify potential sources of conflicts over resources; (iv) determine common climate threats faced; (v) identify common challenges in implementing integrated soil fertility management (ISFM); and (vi) ensure the plans target women and youth jointly or separately to encourage participation; etc. Investment at landscape-level will be supported under output 1.2. At the intersection of landscape and farm-level, stakeholders will also identify local needs in terms of infrastructure to be supported under output 2.2. Examples of investment needs at farm-level will be supported under output 2.1. VLAP stakeholders will be encouraged to inform Farmer Field Schools (FFS) priorities with the view of increasing farmers' understanding and knowledge of technical responses for adapting to the changing climatic conditions and enhancing their capacity to integrate climate resilient practices into their farming systems under output 2.1.

Output 1.2. Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level

68. The project will directly support communities with the implementation of ecosystem resilience measures, based on the needs identified within the VLAPs, selected for their capacity to restore ecosystem services (thereby reducing farmers' exposure to climate impacts), while increasing women and youth's empowerment. With the implementation of climate resilient VLAPs, the project will strengthen communities' capacity to protect and restore public goods, such as well-functioning ecosystems, which are more resilient to extreme climate and continue to provide goods and services under the changing climate (e.g., carbon sequestration and storage, water infiltration and retention and soil fertility improvement, soil stabilization and windshields). This will in turn mitigate the impact of projected increased temperature, erratic rainfalls and increased occurrence of extreme weather events impacting the top soil which is the major contributing layer to soil fertility. This will directly benefit

[51] National Guidelines: Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure (2015).

sustainable agricultural production and local livelihoods. Measures supported under the present output include: (i) community forests and woodlot restoration through reforestation, and promotion of native vegetation/trees through assisted natural regeneration (ANR); (ii) soil and water conservation measures; and (iii) household level measures to reduce pressure on natural resources.

69. **Community forests and woodlots restoration**. SCRP will support the provision of inputs (notably agroforestry seeds and seedlings by supporting the establishment of local nurseries specifically targeting women and youth under output 2.2), preparation of lands and other activities necessary to the afforestation of areas that have been deforested and/or require restoration to better protect communities in the target catchments. Afforestation will be organized in the form of "community woodlots". Native tree species will be chosen, and species selection will ensure they can provide co-benefits to communities in terms of raw material or income-generating products, in particular for women and youth. The project will also promote Assisted Natural Regeneration and Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration to enhance vegetation return. Participatory management plans will be developed to ensure sustainable use of the woodlot resources once tree products become available, to prevent further deforestation while also ensuring that communities reap tangible economic benefits from the land. The participatory management plans will include cultural by-laws which are agreed upon by the members of the VNRMC and the local VDC. To make best use of the woodlot, apiculture activities will also be developed as income generation activities, targeting women and youth specifically. A total of 1,400 ha of woodlots (supported through both reforestation and ANR) are expected to be restored, benefiting 140 VNRMCs with 10 ha each. Native tree nurseries will be promoted under output 2.2 to support these activities, enhance the return of agrobiodiversity and provide alternative income-generating activities to women and vulnerable households.

70. **Small scale soil and water conservation measures** play a key role in reducing the accelerated soil erosion and flooding provoked by extreme climate events, and will be supported under the present output, with access to relevant inputs and support to works. Relevant measures include: contour bunds, contour and water absorption trenches, diversion ditches, contour vegetation strips, reclamation including check dams, spillways or terraces, based on the selected project areas in the targeted districts and in complementarity with other programmes already doing soil and water conservation measures. In addition, youth will be encouraged. These measures will be implemented over a total of 1,400 hectares (10 hectares per village on average), protecting a downstream area of up to 5,600 hectares for a total of 7,000 hectares protected.

71. **Reduced pressure on ecosystems** will be promoted aiming for a shift in the local use of natural resources. This will be attained by providing direct support to vulnerable households in achieving a more efficient use of natural resources, including fuel and water. At the same time, this will directly contribute to alleviating women's burden, as climate change and ecosystem degradation translate in their traveling longer distances to fetch wood and water. Direct support anticipated includes the provision of fuel-efficient woodstove; and equipment for water harvesting and storage at the village or household level, for households that actively engage in NAR/FMNR. The rocket stove and *chitetezo* stove have been shown to significantly reduce the amount of firewood required for cooking, while also producing less smoke and saving time, improving the health and reducing labour required from women. SCRP will support the provision of these stoves (together with dedicated trainings for their production/maintenance), specifically where woodlots have been developed, and pilot the introduction of solar ovens where wood availability is very limited. A total of 2,800 women-led HHs will be targeted to benefit from these technologies. Support to water storage will include equipment for rain and floodwater harvesting serving 280 households, with possible link to support for efficient small-scale irrigation under component 2.

Component 2. Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi

Outcome 2. Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems

72. As highlighted previously, climate change is already severely impacting smallholders' farming systems and their productivity in Malawi: key climate effects on agriculture include increases in temperature, aridity, rainfall variability and extreme events, which translate into limited and modified water availability, altering the onset of the rainy season, increasing water stress and intensifying incidence of pests, diseases and weeds. Combined with these effects, the impacts of droughts and floods on crop yields have been heavily damaging, especially when the intervals between extreme weather events are short. Farmers' adoption of resilient practices remains scarce, despite good practices being identified. Farmers lack both access to relevant information in terms of resilient

practices they could shift to, and to information on which to base their short, mid and long-term decisions. At the same time, smallholders' farming systems in Malawi are fragilized by the lack of adapted inputs and resilient infrastructure, both to support productivity and timely storage.

73. Under the present component, the project will support the **improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems** (Outcome 2) through the enhanced capacity of extension services to support farmers' adoption of adapted good agricultural practices based also on available weather and climate information. At the same time, the project will enhance agrobiodiversity through the provision of adapted seeds and seedlings, while supporting resilient productive infrastructure, including small scale irrigation systems and rainwater storage facilities. This will contribute to Adaptation Fund Output 3.1. "*Targeted population groups participating in adaptation and risk reduction awareness activities*" and Outcome 3 "*Strengthened awareness and ownership of adaptation and climate risk reduction processes at local level*", thereby supporting the "*increased adaptive capacity of communities to respond to the impacts of climate change*" (Adaptation Fund impact level result).

Output 2.1. Adaptive capacity of smallholder farming systems supported

74. Insufficient extension capacity has been recognized to play a role in low adaptive capacity and stagnating productivity in Malawi. The capacity to produce and manage quality climate-data is also weak, and experts on climate change adaptation are scarce at the district level. From the district to the village level, the project will seek to build institutional and notably District Extension Services' capacities to support smallholder farmers anticipate, react and adapt to rapid and slow onset events.

75. **Enhanced technical guidance based on available climate data**. Based on the vulnerability assessment produced under the component 1, as well as on direct project experience supporting the mainstreaming of adaptation practices at field and landscape level for smallholder farmers (see below), the project will support studies to assess the impacts and trade-offs of supported practices, to draw lessons and recommendations from its experience. These will be capitalized on to revise and enhance relevant guidelines and extension manuals used by Agriculture Extension staff, and in particular the 2018 Malawi Climate Smart Agriculture Handbook for Frontline Agriculture Extension Staff, the Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) guidelines and the Conservation Agriculture guidelines. Indeed, these guidelines lack specific guidance on sustainable application of fertilizer, water conservation, crop conservation and diversity, etc. While past projects and programmes (see Part II.F.) have supported multiple guides and manuals those have not been harmonised nor institutionalised. The updated guidelines and extension manuals will gather information from these past programmes and from latest technologies developed by the Department of Agricultural Research Services (DARS), and combine them into specific guidance for agroecological and regenerative agriculture practices that restore and protect soil health, reduce environmental degradation, maximize nutrient and water use efficiency, shield fields from the impacts of strong winds and floods (or restore ecosystem services that reduce these impacts) and promote women integration in extension services, thereby enhancing the climate resilience of farming systems and smallholder producers.

76. **Support to the institutionalisation of the Farmers Field Schools (FFS) approach**. Based on the wide use of FFS in Malawi, and on the limited staff available for extension, the Government of Malawi recognized in the National Agriculture Extension and Advisory Services Strategy (2020-2024), that the approach has been fundamental in reaching more farmers, thanks to lead-farmer managing several FFS and responding to one extension agent. Recent FFS initiatives in Malawi operate within government structures and institutions, intended to facilitate mainstreaming of the model, and its institutionalization into the extension service system. The FFS approach has proven an effective way for uptake of climate-resilient practices through its participatory and context specific methodology[52]. The standard roll out of the FFS relies on three levels: (i) the Master Trainers Course; (ii) the Training of Facilitators (ToF); and (ii) the actual FFS implementation. This will target at least 50% women and 30% youth.

77. The project will build on the ongoing FFS institutionalisation to ensure climate adaptation is fully mainstreamed in the system by enhancing the curriculum for the Malawi FFS programme (implemented and developed under the FAO-led KULIMA project – see Section F) by integrating climate resilient techniques in line with needs identified under output 1.1, developing dedicated modules on the following topics: general principles and practices of agroecology and conservation agriculture practices - in particular soil and water conservation (SWC) practices and integrated soil fertility management (ISFM); integrated pest management (IPM); intercropping; agroforestry; promotion of climate-resilient

[52] https://www.fao.org/farmer-field-schools/ffs-overview/en

crops (early maturing, drought resistant, etc.); importance of agrobiodiversity, varied and adapted genetic resources; etc. Based on these modules, the project will also support the training of Agriculture Extension Development Officers (AEDOs) and Agriculture Extension District Coordinators (AEDCs) level officers as Master Trainers for FFS, in charge of training lead farmers who will themselves act as FFS facilitators on a continuous basis.

78. In the continuity of support provided in terms of local access to agrometeorological information under output 3.1 (see below), the FFS trainings will fully mainstream climate and weather information analysis (in line with the "Climate Field Schools" approach), notably through the Participatory Integrated Climate Services for Agriculture (PICSA). The PICSA module involves agriculture extension staff working with groups of farmers ahead of the agricultural season to first analyse historical climate information and use participatory tools to develop and choose crop, livestock and livelihood options best suited to individual farmers' circumstances. These workshops will follow and build on district level workshops outlined previously. Then, soon before and during the season, extension staff and farmers consider the practical implications of seasonal and short-term forecasts on the plans farmers have made.

79. **Delivery of FFS**. Lead farmers will be in charge of the delivery of the FFS programme under SCRP. Besides the training of lead farmers, the project will support transportation, input supply to model farmers in FFS sites and monitoring visits. A total of 140 FFS (benefitting 3,500 households, or 15,750 people of which 50% women, 30% youth and 5% of people with disabilities). Timing and location of FFS will be chosen to maximize participation of these marginalized groups that have historically lacked access to these capacity-building interventions.

80. Activities included in the FFS curriculum will align with the climate adaptation need identified for the farm level within the VLAPs under output 1.1 and topics included in the curriculum for the FFS programme listed above (including soil and water conservation measures, intercropping, agroecology, agrobiodiversity, promotion of early maturing varieties, drought-resistant and climate resilient crops, biochar, IPM, ISFM, etc.), and will reflect the inclusivity of this participatory planning process, ensuring women and youth challenges are addressed and their burden not increased. FFS will take a gender sensitive approach empowering women to address social and gender norm and barriers, engaging men and boys to champion gender equality, supporting women small-scale producers, and increasing food security and good nutrition. This will be achieved by using the GALS methodology (see previously) with FFS groups. FFS will also cover Post Harvest Management, to reduce loss and damage, including with the proper handling, drying and packaging of harvested products. This module will include discussions on specific risks and mitigation measures associated mycotoxins and in particular aflatoxins, as well as food safety in general (including topics of timeliness of harvest, handling, packaging, storage, norms, etc.). Farming as a business, including accounting, and understanding market and prices will also be addressed, and individual farmers showing interest to join forces will be supported to register as "Cooperative Societies Limited".

81. The project will promote peer to peer exchanges to ensure that techniques disseminated at the level of FFS are widely shared and up taken by stakeholders beyond FFS participants. Extension services will play a key role in further disseminating new techniques and identifying other peers or champions that can act as relays within the community. Exchange visits between villages and micro-catchments will be encouraged to allow experience sharing on FFS as well as approaches around landscape restoration supported under the first component, together with good practices and success stories around the use of climate information for decision making. Additionally, the project will disseminate knowledge through radio, TV, voice messages and SMS.

Output 2.2. Adapted inputs and resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers

82. As mentioned previously, lack of access to adapted inputs and resilient small-scale infrastructure constitutes another barrier to the adaptation of smallholders' farming systems and livelihoods. In a context where climate shocks are increasingly recurrent, the local availability of adapted seeds and seedlings is critical for farmers to rapidly adjust their practices in line with seasonal forecast. At the same time, adapted and/or climate-proofed small-scale infrastructure plays an essential role in mitigating disasters such as droughts and floods, as well as damage from pests that proliferate under certain conditions. To tackle these issues, the present output will focus on the local provision of adapted seeds and seedlings, while supporting adapted and/or climate proofed small-scale infrastructure. Priorities of investment will align with those identified under the VLAPs developed participatorily under output 1.1.

83. **Planting material available to support resilience through agrobiodiversity**. Communities highlight pests and diseases as another key climate-driven challenge affecting their productivity and food security. Increased diversity of plants and crops on-farm can help slow down the spread of pests and viruses. Diversifying production with indigenous and native species or improved varieties can also support resilience where these species exhibit drought-resistant characteristics. Finally, in case of climate hazards or a pest outbreak, practicing crop rotations and having a diversity of crops on the field ensures that not all the harvest will be affected. However, most of these seeds are unavailable on the market or are more expensive. Hence, SCRP will support the development of women- and youth-led community-based availability of diverse and adapted genetic resources for farm and communal lands, with a view to increase the resilience of farming systems and ecosystem services thanks to agrobiodiversity. For this, the project will support the identification and procurement of adapted genetic material (e.g. mndundu and dema for pest control); identify, support and build capacities of up to 20 seeds multipliers and 20 community or individual nurseries, and support the establishment of up to 20 community seed banks. As part of this activity, the project may support the registration of cooperatives of farmers willing to jointly establish as seed multipliers, community nurseries or seed banks to register as "Cooperative Societies Limited". Along with technical support to conduct the activity, targeted groups will be trained in good governance and key aspects of business development and management.

84. **Small scale water infrastructure**. SCRP will support the construction of community-based water structures including rain and floodwater harvesting (small dykes), and small-scale irrigation schemes linked to these reservoirs. The choice of infrastructure type and location will be informed by the priorities outlined in the VLAPs as a result of consultations in component 1 and hydrological study, with specific attention to facilitating women's access to water. A total of 70 small-scale community irrigations schemes (serving 30 members each). Management plans and structures will be put in place or reviewed where needed to support the ongoing maintenance and access to the structures. Women's representation and decision-making power in these plans will be enhanced.

85. **Climate proofed storage structures**. Climate change in Malawi is associated with increasing risk of extreme precipitation events, floods and landslides. These events directly threaten agriculture producethat are either not yet harvested or not stored properly, resulting either in immediate loss, or in damage associated with increased sanitary risk (e.g. mycotoxins). Malawi indeed has one of the highest post-harvest losses in the region, accounting for about 30% of the total harvest. Any losses post-harvest mean the resources used in the production have also been wasted. Hence, to improve resource-use efficiency and to support farmers resilience to climate hazards post-harvest, SCRP will also support the construction of group storage structures, in areas of the community that are not exposed to hazards such as floods or landslides. The project will also provide the training necessary to ensure their sound management for the protection of the harvest, including direct topics on Post Harvest Management and Food Safety, in continuity with trainings provided at FFS level. 70 storage facilities will be supported, and management groups ensuring maintenance of the structures will specifically target youth participation.

Component 3. Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi

Outcome 3. Climate information solutions for decision making in agriculture enhanced at local and national level

86. Integrated adaptation approaches promoted under the present project build on mechanisms to closely tailor solutions to available short-term weather and climate forecasts. This is fully aligned with Malawi's National Resilience Strategy (2018-2030), which states that "*vulnerable communities, development planners and service providers need greater access to clear, timely, and actionable information, the right information, such as good seasonal forecasts, early warning systems (EWS), and knowledge of innovative preventative and response mechanisms to strengthen contingency planning, and resilience to shocks. Communication and dissemination of climate and other early warning information to decision makers and their capacity to act on this information remains a key challenge in scaling up action to climate proof Malawi's development gains.*"

87. Under the present outcome, SCRP will seek to consolidate knowledge, systems and coordination mechanisms to enhance access to and improvement of agrometeorological information in Malawi, notably thanks to functional feedback systems. To do so, the project will build the capacities of local stakeholders to access and interpret available climate information, while establishing functional feedback mechanisms, and building institutional capacities to enhance agrometeorological information

at national level.

88. Under this component, the project will contribute to the **enhanced climate information solutions for decision making in agriculture at both local and national levels** (Outcome 3). This will directly contribute to Adaptation Fund Output 2.1 "*Strengthened capacity of national and sub-national centres and networks to respond rapidly to extreme weather events*" and Outcome 2 "*Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate-induced socioeconomic and environmental losses*".

Output 3.1. Climate information for decision making available at local level

89. The timely provision of seasonal and short-term weather and climate forecasts is crucial for designing better adaptation and disaster risk management strategies in agriculture. The present output will focus on ensuring the best available data is accessible in a form that enables informed decision making for smallholder farmers. To achieve this, the project will also build the capacity of extension staff to relay this information through various channels, and support its understanding for smallholder farmers and other local stakeholders, while consolidating information networks, and supporting the development of relevant feedback mechanisms at local level.

90. In Malawi, the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS) produces agrometeorological information disaggregated to the level of the Extension Planning Area (lowest catchment of agricultural planning unit). DCCMS includes a unit specifically dedicated to agrometeorology and produces agrometeorological bulletins every ten days (dekadal), providing information on start/end of the season, number dry spells of a given length in a month, monthly rainfall, 10-day expected rainfall, weather outlook, etc. (https://www.metmalawi.gov.mw/products/10-day-weather-and-agrometeorological-bulletin/). Seasonal forecasts (downscaled at the community level) are produced by DCCMS at the start of the rainy season[53]. While DCCMS has expanded its network of Automated Weather Stations (AWS) in recent years, and is engaged in the digitalization of its processes, gaps and barriers persist, notably in ensuring the available information reaches the local level in a form that is actionable, by translating it into user friendly and local language information. Indeed, DCCMS essentially reaches commercial farmers through e-mails, resulting in most vulnerable smallholders being left out from networks and not effectively accessing information. Similarly, effective disaster risk management and response require not just receiving information and alerts of upcoming hazards, but also being able to interpret the information, identify its implications for different groups, and act accordingly. Additionally, feedback systems between farmers and service providers need to be established to enhance forecasts improvement.

91. The project will address these gaps by ensuring that extension services and other key district level stakeholders are sensitized and trained on: (i) available agrometeorological[54] and disaster risk/early warning information and systems[55]; (ii) local channels and institutional networks to get direct updates from; and (iii) adequate response to available information. More specifically, the project will support extension services capacities with regards to:

i. Agro Meteorological Advisory. Twice a year (at the start of each season), SCRP will support a seasonal workshop in each of the targeted districts, gathering DCCMS, the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA), Ministry of agriculture staff including AEDCs and AEDOs, as well as agrodealers, farmers and VNRMCs representatives from the 140 targeted villages. The aim of the workshops will be to review weather/seasonal forecasts for the upcoming season, ground-proof them through farmer and local stakeholder feedback mechanisms, and build participants' capacities to provide specific seasonal advice to farmers based on available information, regarding planting times, preferred varieties to sow, best potential intercrop and rotation plans for the upcoming season, pest forecast, and any other

[53] The forecasts are done from the current time point up to 6 months ahead and are updated twice a year: (i) seasonal forecasts for the following year are prepared between July and August, which is prior to the agriculture season to ensure that farmers prepare accordingly; (ii) a second analysis is done on December within the agriculture season; (iii) finally a third analysis is done at the end of the agriculture season (early in May) to analyze (verification analysis) the quality of the previous year's forecasts and make necessary adjustment to have better results in the next seasonal forecasts.
[54] Weather forecasting; Seasonal climate forecasting; Climate change projections; Statistical assessments of the future frequency of extreme weather and climate events; Agrometeorological crop monitoring; Agrometeorological advisories.
[55] E.g. Applications such as PICSA, Ulimi ndi Nyengo, Zaulimi; SMS systems such as Open Harvest, 321 SMS, Farmers Union of Malawi Communication Platform; radio such as Farmer Radio Programs, Zodiak, Zanyengo, Ulimi Wa Iero (Modern Farming); etc.

measure (e.g., time for irrigation, pesticide application) that may increase their resilience to projected hazards or climatic conditions. Previous projects' experience in the region shows that presence of agrodealers and seed companies at these workshops will also be crucial to ensure there is no bottleneck in the market in case the demand for a specific variety suddenly rises upon receipt of the agroadvisory. Dedicated efforts will ensure each workshop includes women and young farmers, as well as women and youth- owned agrodealers, to ensure agroadvisory does not result in increases burden for women (e.g. water fetching), and support women and young agrodealers' market power.

ii. Enhanced DRM for agriculture: A training programme will be rolled out in each district under SCRP to build the capacity of subject matter specialists, extension officers to efficiently (i) interpret the information provided by DoDMA, (ii) identify management and response measures that the communities can implement to preserve their agricultural production, and (iii) relay this information to exposed or affected communities. This training programme will be informed by participatory needs assessments conducted under the first component. The programme content will address any gender-based bias in being exposed to, preparing for and responding to disasters. Content will be tailored so that women's burden in caring for the family is not disproportionately increased, and their livelihoods not disproportionally threatened due to differing adaptive capacity and exposure (longer times walking, lower literacy levels, etc.). 140 extension workers are expected to be trained as trainers of other extension workers across 50 Extension Planning Areas (EPA) in the four districts.

92. In parallel, and building on the training received and the reinforced linkages between DAECs and DoDMA, SCRP will support extension officers in rolling out the information available and processes in place to respond to or manage hazards to protect or rebuild their farms. 140 villages will benefit from awareness raising sessions by extension officers, ensuring that beneficiaries are also able to access, interpret and act on the alerts they might receive. 50% of women and 30% of youth will be targeted through the awareness raising sessions.

93. **Dissemination of agrometeorological information at local level**. Throughout the season, tailored advisory messages will be developed and shared with farmers through radio hotlines, TV programmes, print media and in-person advice delivered/disseminated by extensionists, ensuring that the information is made available into local language to increase information uptake. Learning from previous programmes, a multi-modal approach to extension services is preferred to maximize outreach. Digital extensions services through mobile phones and social media may also be rolled out, while Agricultural Resource Centres (ARCs) upgraded under the present output will provide a valuable source of information for remote farmers with limited access to digital media. SCRP will support the development of targeted messages through these channels and actively support feedback mechanisms online, thanks to knowledge and data gathered locally, both through the installation, improvement and replacement of rain gauges, and collection of indigenous and local knowledge on weather and climate variability in relation to agriculture. Complementary information products will be developed for non-seasonal advisory on resource use, water conservation, as well as sensitization on climate-insurance products (e.g. weather-based insurance mechanisms). It is estimated that the enhanced access to agrometeorological information for decision making at the local level will directly enhance the adaptive capacity of up to 30,000 people, of which 50% women and 30% youth.

94. **Agriculture Resource Centres (ARCs)**. The Ministry of Agriculture has embarked on a nation-wide programme of establishing and managing Agricultural Resources Centres (ARCs). ARCs gather, process, and provide equitable access to essential agricultural information, that can be disseminated for the purpose of decision making in relation to choice and application of technology, target market, timing of sales and storage to enhance the resilience of the agricultural sector. Indeed, effective knowledge management – including the collection, generation and dissemination of information – is an important component of climate change adaptation. Most importantly, ARCs centralize information on appropriate methods for production of crops, fish and livestock; enhance access to Agricultural Services, and provide a forum for linking information users to information providers across the agricultural sector. The project will support the upgrade of 10 existing agriculture resource centres with the provision of enhanced equipment to improve farmers' access to digital resources. The ARCs will play a key role in consolidating and disseminating information generated or supported by the project. They will be closely linked to the FFSs supported by the project and will centralize all relevant agrometeorological information, weather alerts and associated recommendations for smallholder farmers.

Output 3.2. National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector

95. Weather forecasting and climate change projections are the basic elements of all warning systems and adaptation policies that must be applied to four aspects of food security (availability, stability, access and biological utilization), which allows decision-makers enough time to react to warnings with the highest possible degree of reliability (the more long-term the forecasts the less reliable and detailed they are). Under the present output, the project will support national institutions to enhance relevant coordination mechanisms, streamline processes and enhance knowledge management and learning to better mainstream the use of climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector.

96. **Streamlining feedback mechanisms for enhanced agrometeorological information**. Feedback mechanisms in agrometeorology are essential to ensure the continuous tailoring and improvement of climate information. While some users (including farmers) do occasionally share feedback, no robust mechanism is currently in place. Trainings are needed both for generators and users of agroclimatic information, and need to be expanded beyond the verifications conducted at the end of the season. Based on feedback mechanisms developed at local level under output 3.1, the project will support DCCMS and the Ministry of Agriculture in formalizing best practices for feedback mechanisms, and implementing them systematically.

97. **Policy responses developed based on local level feedback**. Review and planning workshops will be held in each EPA between Agriculture Extension Officers (AEO) and District Civil Protection Committees, to identify gaps in the current response and management measures specifically related to the agriculture sector. Informed by experiences from farmers, including women and youth, relayed by the AEOs and reviewed by the DCPCs, each workshop will yield policy recommendations for reviewing the current processes, identifying resources available and preventive measures that should be mainstreamed in DoDMA's action plan to reduce losses in the agriculture sector specifically and address gender-based differences in accessing, interpreting and responding to information. Five (5) policy or regulatory documents will be produced as a result.

98. **Staff capacity building at institutional level** will be supported by the project, on the following topics: (i) training on agrometeorological services and products for Meteorological Services agents and Ministry of Agriculture Department in charge of Extension Services and Department in charge of land resources conservation; (ii) training on GIS and remote sensing for agromet decision making; (iii) national training on crop calendars with a view to rollout enhanced weather-based crop calendar tools for integration with seasonal weather forecasts; (iv) regional trainings on crop modelling, satellite data products and sub-seasonal to seasonal forecasting applications for agriculture; and (v) developing crop yield forecasting methodologies/models for key crops beyond maize (for which forecasting is already being conducted).

99. **Coordination mechanisms**. In Malawi, coordination and data exchange among various stakeholders working on the provision of agrometeorological advisory services to agriculture sector are currently lacking structured protocols, leading to isolated efforts. Establishing mechanisms that enable diverse actors across society to contribute inputs effectively into the workflows of the Ministry of Agriculture and the DCCMS would align efforts, fostering collaboration and ultimately improving outcomes. The MoA is well placed to take the lead coordination role on the matters related to the provision of agro-meteorological advisory services and develop/maintain an agile overview of the innovation and developments related to climate advisory services across public, private, civil society and research sectors. Key actors benefiting from coordinated efforts will include the MoA along with its departments (and notably DAES); the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services, the Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs, the Ministry of Water and Sanitation, and e-Government (ICT Development) within the Ministry of Information and Digitalization, and local governments and councils. The integration of the ideas, needs, and capacities of Malawi research institutions and other non-governmental stakeholders like the Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET), the Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy (CEPA), the Civil Society for Climate Change in Malawi (CISONECC), and the Centre for Environmental Policy Advocacy (CEPA) will also maximize impact and further enable best use of resources.

B. Describe how the project provides economic, social and environmental benefits, with reference to the most vulnerable communities, and vulnerable groups within communities, including gender considerations.

Describe how the project will avoid or mitigate negative impacts, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy of the Adaptation Fund.

100. **Economic benefits:** SCRP is designed to improve the resilience of agricultural production among the rural population of Malawi, thereby maintaining smallholders' productivity in the face of climate hazards and retaining their main source of income. Through enhanced capacities at farm level, access to climate-resilient technologies, improved farm inputs and knowledge on soil fertility management, as well as climate-driven agroadvisory in component 2 and 3, the selected beneficiaries are expected to experience increased production and household income level and/or to reduce any losses from climate disasters. Based on previous similar initiatives driven by IFAD, in particular the Sustainable Agricultural Production Programme (SAPP), productivity of farmers is expected to increase by 30%.

101. SCRP will further support beneficiaries with accessing finance through income-generating activities, such as community management of income-generating woodlot, apiculture, tree nurseries and seed multiplication, alongside more efficient cooking and production systems that would reduce use and costs of inputs.

102. Non-quantifiable economic benefits will also be derived from the enhanced ecosystem services associated in particular with ecosystem restoration practices supported under Component 1.

103. **Social benefits and gender empowerment:** The project seeks to promote gender equality in line with the National Gender Policy (2015)[56], Malawi Gender Act (2014), IFAD Gender and Women Empowerment Policy (2015) and the Adaptation Fund Gender Policy (2017) and Environment and Social Policy (2016).

104. The project will directly enhance the climate resilience of around 30,000 smallholder farmers. Women will constitute 50% of the beneficiaries for each activity respectively (i.e. 12,000 women with enhanced resilience to climate change); Youth will constitute 30% (3,000 youth) and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) 5% (i.e. 1,500). The project will put special emphasis on addressing gender inequalities and empowering women, as their role is vital to reduce the vulnerability of livelihoods and ecosystems to the negative impacts of climate change in Malawi. This will be done through affirmative action, according to which 50% and 30% of beneficiaries will be women and youth respectively, and people with physical challenges but able to actively participate will be prioritized. It will also be supported by a mainstreaming of GALS approach in all relevant project activities, and leveraging methodologies such as the GCVCA for participatory planning processes.

105. In the implementation of capacity-building interventions across all components, the roll-out of climate-advisory services and disaster-risk information in component 3, and in the support to accessing inputs, gender differences in adaptation needs and capacities will also be explicitly addressed, having identified specific barriers faced by women in preliminary consultations as well as through the GALS workshops. Income-generating activities and ecosystem services enhancement in component 1 (and output 2.2) have been selected to specifically benefit women and youth, either by reducing disproportionate burden and exposure on women (cooking time, water collection, etc.) or providing direct access to productive resources (wood, beekeeping, etc.).

106. The preparation of this concept note was informed by gender-disaggregated insight from community consultations. During full proposal formulation, a detailed gender assessment and action plan will be prepared, including indicators for gender disaggregated data. During full proposal formulation, IFAD will also define a robust M&E and Grievance Redress Mechanism that will be systematically applied throughout SCRP interventions to monitor progress and collect feedback. IFAD will establish a project M&E and reporting mechanism to: a) track project progress and results on gender responsive indicators; and b) assess impact and compliance with ESP Principles. All stakeholders and direct beneficiaries will be informed on the grievance mechanism, the handling of complaints and the resolution processes.

107. **Environmental benefits:** Environmental benefits are inherent to SCRP, which relies on enhancing the resilience of farming systems and increasing productivity thanks to restored ecosystem services and reduced land degradation. SCRP will lead to a number of environmental benefits,

[56] Ministry of Gender, Women, Children and Social Welfare (2015). https://www.fao.org/faolex/results/details/en/c/LEX-FAOC149139/

including:

- **Improved soil fertility and soil ecosystems**: ISFM practices under Component 2 will help re-balance depleted micronutrients, reduce high soil acidity levels resulting from chemical fertilizer applications and improve the soil ecosystems, life and productivity. It will also reduce soil loss from erosion through soil and water conservation activities.
- **Conservation of scarce resources**: Soil and water conservation measures promoted as well as water collection and small-scale irrigation infrastructures supported under components 1 and 2 will provide improvements in water-use efficiency. Coupled with soil health amelioration this will contribute to better water penetration in the soil, replenishing groundwater bodies and maintaining sustainable water levels.
- **Increased biodiversity:** Biodiversity is also expected to increase thanks to soil health improvements, water conservation, shelters (including for pollinators and natural enemies) through agroforestry, afforestation and diversification of production practices. Indeed, practices promoted under the project, whether at ecosystem or farm level, both enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services, and rely on biodiversity and ecosystem services as drivers of resilience. The restoration and enhanced resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide under the first component will directly result in vegetation return and enhanced biodiversity, while the integrated approaches supported under the second component (aligned with the principles of agroecology) will also rely on increased biodiversity at farm level, notably by promoting agrobiodiversity, varied and adapted genetic resources, and by encouraging integrated pest management. Additionally under output 2.2, the project will directly support the availability of planting material (native seeds and seedlings) to support local agrobiodiversity and promote the availability and use of native species both at landscape (reforestation) and farm levels.
- **Carbon capture:** Increased soil cover and improved soil organic content (SOC) achieved on farm through ISFM (Component 2), and increased tree cover thanks to community woodlots and other ecosystem restoration measures (Component 1) are also expected to provide climate mitigation benefits through increased carbon capture.

108. To mitigate any negative impact at this stage, a preliminary social and environmental assessment was conducted, following the Government of Malawi's Environment Management Acts guidelines and the IFAD Social, Environment and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) requirement. SECAP requirements conform to the 15 ESP Principles of the Adaptation Fund. The assessment classified SCRP as having low or limited impacts. The choice of SCRP interventions was also based on a Targeted Adaptation Assessment, considering climate change scenarios, future expected impacts, socially preferred value chains, gender, technical and economic feasibility. This assessment reduces the risk of maladaptation. At FP stage, the preliminary environmental assessment, Environmental and Social Management Plan and Targeted Adaptation Assessment will be refined. During project implementation, IFAD will provide oversight to ensure the application of environmental, gender and social principles and screening of impacts and risks of proposed project activities in relation to the 15 core principles of ESP.

C. Describe or provide an analysis of the cost-effectiveness of the proposed project.

109. Cost-effectiveness rationale for the specific interventions identified is summarized in Table 6 below. In general, the biggest cost-effectiveness brought by SCRP is to lessen recovery costs and prevent losses of resources spent by the project by (i) complementing farm-based approaches with watershed improvement, (ii) linking agro-advisory to climate projections explicitly, (iii) strengthening climate resilience and preparedness of farmers, (iv) increasing the reach of disaster management plans and messages, and (v) overall enhancing collaboration between DoDMA and DAEC. Frequent climate related disasters result in large costs for repairs and rebuilding for both communities and the Government of Malawi, thereby diverting scarce resources from other development needs. For instance, the 2015 floods resulted in economic losses of $335 million apart from the death casualties and displacement of 638,000 people. IFAD's own interventions in Malawi have been affected by climate disasters, in part due to the lack of a disaster risk component and preparedness and a focus on farm productivity. Improvements in soil fertility at farm level would be entirely lost in the absence of wider ecosystem functions that can slow down the speed of water or provide windbreaks, and in the absence of clear disaster preparedness and management plans that farmers know how to interpret.

110. Overall, in selecting value chains and defining the project interventions, SCRP adopted a Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) to determine which were the most feasible options that could be implemented. The approach has taken into consideration several criteria including technical feasibility costs, social benefits, potential to address climate change risks, accessibility of options to small-scale farmers, flexibility (i.e., avoids lock-in), and transformative potential. Criteria were informed through consultation with farming communities, government representative at the ministries and other stakeholders from the private and civil society sector. This approach provides further reassurance that the selected interventions are cost-effective, thanks to their reported technical feasibility and transformative potential indicated by those consulted, and likelihood of being adopted thanks to reported accessibility.

111. Operationally, SCRP will be delivered in synergy with the government team supporting other IFAD-funded programmes. These programmes have already contributed to the delivery of necessary vehicles, office furniture and other equipment necessary for a smooth implementation. In this way, operations costs for SCRP will be optimized.

Table 6 - Proposed interventions cost-effectiveness rationale

Approaches making SCRP cost-effective	Cost-effectiveness justification	Less cost-effective alternatives
Training of trainer *Component 1, 2 and 3*	Creates a multiplier effects, extending the reach of the training beyond immediate beneficiaries while maximizing training resources used. This is applied both to the FFS programming in Component 2, the GALS approach in Component 1, and the disaster risk management interventions in Component 3.	More external trainers could be hired to train all beneficiaries directly, resulting in increased cost of staff, transportation, etc.
Seasonal Workshops for Climate-driven agro-advisory *Component 3*	Provides specific, timely advice that directly addresses the climate risks, leading to better productivity and reduced losses. Engages multiple stakeholders, including agro-dealers and seed companies, ensuring market readiness and reducing bottlenecks.	Providing non-specific, generalized advice and training that focuses on productivity enhancement without considering feasibility and timeliness with forecasted climate events. Only providing the advisory to farmers. In a similar project in IFAD-portfolio, seed companies and agro-dealers were not included in the workshop, and so the specific maize variety recommended to sow for a specific season ran out.
Consultations and coordination with natural resource management groups *Component 1 (and transversal)*	Encourages sustainable resource use and conflict resolution, preventing long-term environmental costs due to erosion of social structures and individualism, fostering "tragedy of the commons" and/or excluding some community members. No new groups will be created where some already exist or existed, building on existing trust relationships and dynamics within communities as well as their existing knowledge of the communities' resources.	Implementing interventions without forming local management groups, leading to mismanagement, potential scarcity for some community members unable to access resources, and conflicts. Entirely new groups could be formed, requiring more time to develop trust among group members and to build knowledge of natural resource management anew.
Participatory rural appraisals *Component 1*	Provides detailed, locally-relevant data to guide interventions, increasing their effectiveness and acceptance.	Relying on scientific soil health data and watershed map solely to inform interventions, using GIS and in collaboration with the research department. Interventions informed by this data alone may not be well-accepted by the community who is unable to process the data, or because it may not be reflective of their reality. In which case, interventions informed by this data are only likely to last for as long as the programme lasts, with low adoption and sustainability.

GALS approach implementation *Component 1 and transversal*	GALS approach is a specific methodology to foster women empowerment in the community. It is particularly cost-effective because it targets women-empowerment within the households with direct benefits for the group and community, so that sensitization and empowerment measures do not need to be repeated at each individual project interventions. It also addresses deep-rooted gender-norms and power dynamics, rather than being specific to a single resource use (inputs, finance, water, etc), hence further avoiding replication. Studies and reports on GALS have shown significant improvements in gender relations, economic empowerment, and community cohesion in various settings, illustrating its effectiveness and replicability.	Resource-specific programmes targeted at women like micro-finance programmes, vocational training programmes, separate agriculture training programmes, etc. These programmes may duplicate what is already delivered for men, doubling the costs, without addressing the deep-rooted reason for why women lack access to the already-existing programmes. While gender-specific programmes may at times be necessary to address discreet problems that women may face, this is not deemed necessary in Malawi if GALS is implemented successfully, and women participate in already-existing interventions.
Supporting groups rather than individuals *Component 2*	The Experience of the IFAD/SAPP Programme highlighted that farmers organized in clusters and groups are better able to mobilise resources to access inputs in bulk and enjoy some discounts. The same approach is being adopted for the delivery of FFS and the provision of inputs through a lead farmer model. Farmers will be organized in groups of common interest so that each individual supported by SCRP is then better able to access the resources necessary to implement the practices they have been trained on, through the group.	Training and support provided to a collective of individuals that have not expressed intent of pooling resources and knowledge to continue sustaining the practices. There is more chance that each individual trained in this way will not be able to sustain and/or implement the learnings gained, nor to continue learning from peers, meaning resources spent in capacity-building may be lost.
Use of various ICT channels in extension services *Throughout the project*	Learnings from IFAD SAPP Programme implementation (ended in 2024) also highlighted that the use of ICT4D tools in extension services has facilitated the communication of agro-advisory, particularly using agriculture resource centres and radio programmes which were created to "bridge the technical gap" for farmers who do not have access to mobile phones. These ICT infrastructures will be used throughout SCRP interventions involving extension services, to ensure that the communication material developed under SCRP will achieve maximum reach and avoid creating new channels of communication.	Extension services in Malawi largely rely on the use of printed material as well as radio and television programme. Their messaging are hence temporary and cannot be consulted again. Use of apps and sms services to complement them ensures that the material developed can remain accessible for longer periods of time. Private extension services could also be mobilized, but their costs may lead to the exclusion of the most vulnerable beneficiaries, hence reducing the effectiveness of services.

112. Cost effectiveness of SCRP is further strengthened by building on lessons and knowledge from previous and on-going related programmes such as Enhancing Resilience of Agro Ecological Systems Projects (ERASP); SAPP, SAPP II, PRIDE and, FARMSE (among others in Section F). The full project proposal preparation will include a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of all components and activities, as well as an alternatives analysis to ensure cost-efficiency. This analysis will assess the financial implications of each component, taking into account factors such as implementation costs, maintenance requirements, and long-term sustainability.

D. Describe how the project is consistent with national or sub-national sustainable development strategies, including, where appropriate, national adaptation plan (NAP), national or subnational development plans, poverty reduction strategies, national communications, or national adaptation programme of action, or other relevant instruments, where they exist.

113. At the time when the CN was formulated, Malawi had not yet finalized the formulation of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP). However, the Government of Malawi has a number of policies and strategies that guide the development of the agriculture sector and resilience to climate change. These

include among others: the Malawi 2063 (2020); the updated NDC (2021); The Third National Communication Report (2021); the National Agriculture Policy (NAP 2016) and National Agriculture Investment Plan (2019); the National Climate Change Management Policy (2016); the National Resilience Strategy (2017).

114. Most common climate resilient interventions suggested in national strategies include: drought management, early maturing and drought tolerant species, flood management, integrated catchment management, afforestation and agroforestry; soil and water conservation, construction of small-scale irrigation schemes, water harvesting and supply, access to improved seed through community seed banks, weather index insurance, crop and income diversification, pest and disease management and improved access to climate information and early-warning advisory. These interventions are similar to those suggested by stakeholders including communities during consultations, and hence to those proposed under SCRP.

Table 7 - Alignment of country policies and strategies to proposed SCRP

Policy/strategy main objectives	Interventions in building climate change resilience	SCRP alignment
Malawi 2063 (GoM 2020) Vision 2063 is the country's economic blueprint. The vision aims to enhance economic growth through three (3) pillars of agricultural productivity and commercialization, industrialization and urbanization	The Malawi 2063 has highlighted adverse impacts of climate change; high land degradation; low adoption of CSA technologies; poor access to finance and limited irrigation as some of the main factors affecting low agricultural productivity. The Malawi 2063 therefore outlines the following as some of the interventions to improve agricultural productivity and climate resilience: sustainable land management practices (soil and water conservation, agroforestry), irrigation, crop diversification, crop insurance and promotion of climate smart agriculture technologies, access to finance.	SCRP contributes to Malawi 2063 by promoting climate resilient technologies such as soil and water conservation, agroforestry, restoration of degraded land including catchment management (Component 1) and small-scale irrigation infrastructure and climate-smart agriculture soil and water conservation practices in the field (Component 2). SCRP also contributes to crop diversification with interventions on native seed banks and tree nurseries (Component 2).
Updated National Determined Contribution (2022) Regarding climate change adaptation, the Updated NDC has three main objectives which include: (i) promote an enabling environment mainstream Climate Adaptation (ii) improve capacity for data and information management (iii) plan and implement adaptation actions to resilience of the most vulnerable Malawians.	The updated NDC has also highlighted: increased exposure, soil erosion, loss of soil fertility, poor crop diversification, low CSA technology uptake, lack of EWS, low capacity in DRM as some of the factors exacerbating climate vulnerability. The updated NDC has proposed numerous adaptation interventions which include: drought management, use of early maturing and drought tolerant species, flood management, integrated catchment management, naturally assisted regeneration; soil and water conservation, construction of irrigation schemes, water harvesting and supply, access to improved seed through community seed banks, weather index insurance, crop-livestock-fisheries integration, pest and disease management	In alignment to the NDC, SCRP include capacity building on CSA and soil and water conservation, drought management, provision of irrigation infrastructure, community seed banks (Component 2), watershed management, afforestation, natural regeneration (Component 1); and improved DRM capacity (Component 3)
The Third National Communication Report to the UNFCCC (2021) The TNC provides a comprehensive outlook on the status of climate change issues in Malawi and highlights	Like other national strategies the TNC highlights over-dependence on rainfed agriculture, high poverty levels, increased exposure to droughts, lack of insurance, inadequate hazards mapping and lack of crop diversification as main	SCRP directly contributes to climate change adaptation priorities as outlined in the TNC. SCRP will address drought management by promoting improved drought-tolerant varieties and supporting the development of water sources and

mitigation and adaptation efforts that are feasible.	factors increase communities vulnerability. The potential adaptation interventions outlined in TNC include: Drought management through early and tolerant varieties; crop diversification to fish and livestock; access to quality seeds; promoting irrigation; promoting weather-based insurance; use of climate information and EWS; water supply and harvesting; integrated pest management; soil and land restoration; integrated catchment management among others.	irrigation infrastructure and other water infrastructure. It will also support soil and land restoration and integrated catchment management under component 1. Use of climate information for better agro-advisory is a cornerstone of component 3, and together with improved EWS in agriculture.
National Agriculture Policy (GoM 2016) and the National Agriculture Investment Plan (2019) The NAP is the main policy document for the agricultural sector and has eight Policy Priority Areas (PAs) including agricultural risk management (PA6), Empowerment of vulnerable groups, including youth and women in agriculture (PA7) to achieve sustainable agricultural transformation. NAIP, is the agricultural investments framework for NAP. NAIP has four broader programme areas, one of which includes: resilient livelihoods and production systems	NAP also highlights inclusive agriculture value chains through empowerment of women and youth to access productive assets and agriculture financing. Other activities highlighted under NAP include innovative extension, access to high quality inputs; facilitate access to finance for women and youth; irrigation, water supply catchment management; conservation agriculture and soil nutrition. NAIP actions under the resilient agriculture pillar include disaster risk reduction measures; pest and disease surveillance, livestock pass on schemes, agroforestry, conservation agriculture and nutrition related agriculture, resilient livelihoods and production systems; production and productivity growth.	SCRP will contribute to NAP objectives of increased food and nutrition security and household incomes through capacity building and adoption of CSA (Component 2) as well as improvement of extension services through innovative digital approaches and climate-resilient advisory (Component 2/3) Additionally, SCRP will ensure strong gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women and youth through the implementation of the GALS approach. It will also support community small-scale irrigation and water supply, and contribute to the restoration of degraded land (Component 1 and 2)
National Climate Change Management Policy (2016) and the National Climate Change Investment Plan (2013) The policy sets out a long-term goal for climate change management, which is to reduce the socioeconomic impacts of adverse effects of climatic change. One of the policy outcomes is reduced vulnerability to climate change impacts. The Investment Plan highlights priority areas for climate change investments to avert climate related impacts.	The NCCMP also lists exposure, lack of institutional and community capacity, sustainable land use and inadequate climate change mainstreaming as factors increasing community climate vulnerability. The NCCMP and NCCIP proposed interventions to enhance adaptive capacity of local communities through weather forecasting; afforestation and restoration of degraded lands; development of watershed management plans; increase soil fertility and reduce soil erosion; enhance sustainable irrigation in drought prone areas; promote agricultural diversification; enhance community based early warning systems, strengthen disaster preparedness at all locals including communities; enhancing gender equality to increase adaptive capacity of women and girls who are more vulnerable to climate change.	SCRP is in line with NCCMP and NCCIP based on its objectives to enhance adaptive capacity of local communities through mainstreaming climate forecasts in agro-advisory (Component 3 and 2); conduct afforestation and restoration of degraded lands, and develop of VLAPs with a watershed management approach (Component 1); increase soil fertility and reduce soil erosion (Component 1 and 2); enhance sustainable irrigation in drought prone areas (Component 2); , promote agricultural diversification (Component 2); enhance community based early warning systems and strengthen disaster preparedness at all locals including communities (Component 3); enhance gender equality to increase adaptive capacity of women and girls who are more vulnerable to climate change (Component 1 and throughout the project).

National Resilience Strategy (2018) The goal of NRS is to transition from recurrent humanitarian appeals (most due to climate change) to productive investments targeting chronic vulnerable households. The Strategy has seven pillars which include: food security and poverty reduction; scaled-up climate-resilient infrastructure, and enhanced climate-adaptation capacity of all stakeholders	Some of the NRS climate change resilience intervention: drought management through water harvesting and irrigation; climate smart and insurance product; better access to climate information and early warning; building capacity of farmer organization to resilient landscape through afforestation and micro catchments management; scaling up payment of carbon credits; disaster preparedness through community based EWS and contingency plans.	SCRP is delivering NRS priorities interventions directly, including water harvesting and irrigation (Component 1 and 2), climate-smart practices (Component 2), better access to climate information and early warning (Component 3), afforestation and micro-catchment management (Component 1), disaster preparedness through community-based EWS and contingency plans (Component 3)

E. Describe how the project meets relevant national technical standards, where applicable, such as standards for environmental assessment, building codes and complies with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Adaptation Fund.

115. Through its SECAP, IFAD aligns with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Adaptation Fund, (see ESP risk assessment summary in section II. K) and has been designed to minimize any negative environmental impact, resulting in net environmental benefits. The project is also designed in respect and adherence to the relevant federal and state level laws and codes, where they exist, as outlined in Table 8. To effectively adhere to the national standards, SCRP will involve the different government departments such as the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) at both national and district level; the Department of Land Resources; Department of Forestry; Department of Irrigation and Department of Water. While all these technical acts and standards will be reflected in the project's procurement processes and delivery, a Grievance Redress Mechanism will also allow any stakeholder or beneficiary to flag potential misalignment with these acts in the delivery of SCRP.

Table 8 - Compliance with national standards

National Acts	Description and relevance to SCRP
The Environmental Management Act (EMA 2017) and Generic Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines (1997)	A legal framework requiring environmental impact assessment (EIA) and environmental auditing. The EMA presents broader provisions for the protection and management of the environment and the conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources. These highlights guidance in areas of water, soil, waste management, environmental protected areas, conservation of biodiversity. The Generic Environmental Assessment Guidelines (1997, currently being updated) outline processes and steps to undertake EIA where and as necessary. EMA guides SCRP in mainstreaming social and environmental safeguards to mitigate perceived negative impacts. In consultation with the Environmental Affairs Department SCRP has already undertaken an environmental and social safeguards screening with categorization of moderate category (equivalent to category B). A project ESMP will be developed at full proposal with participation of EAD and other stakeholders.
The Land Act (2016)	The Land Act provides a comprehensive framework for land tenure, use, and management. It guides land utilization and access to land resources to ensure sustainability and equity. This includes describing the terms for acquiring land, necessary compensations, mechanisms for securing land tenure by communities, issuance of customary certificates, consent procedures for land used for development purposes, etc. SCRP will comply with these guidelines for all activities to be undertaken outside of private farms and at watershed levels. No activities will be undertaken without community consent, collaboration with village heads and traditional authorities, ESIAs and other provisions from the Land Act. This is also outlined in SECAP procedures and the Grievance Redress Mechanism will ensure accountability to it.
The Pesticides Act (2018)	Prescribes the control and management of the import, export, manufacture, distribution, storage, applications and proper disposal of pesticides. SCRP will be guided on types and

	proposer use to avoid negative effect on human beings and environmental pollution. SCRP will align with these prescriptions in any procurement and training on pest management practices.
Irrigation Code of Practice and Equipment (ICoP) Standards (2018) Irrigation Act (2001)	The Irrigation Act, 2001 makes provision for the sustainable development and management of irrigation, protection of the environment from irrigation related degradation, and prohibits people from engaging in practices that are destructive or potentially destructive to the catchment area of a river that provides water for irrigation. SCRP shall be guided by ICoP on suitability, design of irrigation systems in an economic and environmentally and socially sustainable manner, including the selection of type of irrigation, capacity building of farmers to manage irrigation type, and environmental screening of the proposed project and identify all environmental and social impact issues, and propose remedial measures.
Forest Management Act (1997 and Amended 2019)	The purpose is the declaration, conservation and management of forest reserves, protected forest areas and biodiversity. The act highlights how forest management and conservation will be enhanced through stakeholder participation, forest management plans, use of forest products, enforcement of regulations and penalties. SCRP will be guided by the Forest Management Act in its activities of afforestation, community management plans and use of forest products from the woodlot, in particular to ensure conservation of soils and water and to protect and manage trees and forest sustainably on customary land.
Water Resources Act (2013)	The Act guides the management, conservation, use and control of water resources and the acquisition and regulation of rights to use water in order to prevent pollution and preserve water quality (biological, physical and chemical). In relation to SCRP, this act will guide the construction of community-scale water structures (tanks, boreholes etc) and will be reflected in the subsequent management plans of the structures.
The Seed Act (1997)	The Seed Act provides for the regulation and control of the production, sale, importation and exportation of seed for sowing, minimum standards of germination and purity. SCRP will be guided by the Seed Act to avoid supply of seeds that are harmful to human beings or unsatisfactory quality.
National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure (2016)	These Guidelines for Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure serve as a planning framework for the country with the aim of improving land and water management for ecosystem and livelihood benefits across Malawi. The Guidelines address the interlinked challenges of poverty and a deteriorating natural resource base especially in the southern region and propose measures to reduce the process of environmental degradation in other regions and improve the country's overall productive potential of natural resources outlines catchment management principles, role of stakeholder including the village-level communities (VNRMCs). SCRP interventions will be compliant with all national technical standards, particularly those relating to concrete adaptation measures, including water and soil conservation and integrated watershed management.

F. Describe if there is duplication of project with other funding sources, if any.

116. SCRP preliminary location and beneficiary selection criteria target districts, EPAs, micro-catchments and communities where no ongoing projects carry out similar activities. This criterion reduces the risk of duplication. The projects below are highlighted for their potential in providing lessons and knowledge products that can be re-used under SCRP, either in the same districts or other districts.

Table 9 - Synergies between SCRP with previous and ongoing interventions

Previous or on-going interventions and project areas	Project interventions	Lessons and synergies with SCRP
Enhancing the Resilience of Agro-ecological Systems Project **(ERASP 2016 -2023)** $7,397,000 by Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD ERASP project districts were in Karonga, Zomba and Phalombe	a) Conservation of catchment areas; b) Scaling up of sustainable land management practices, and c) Provision of EWS for informed farmer decision making	SCRP covers different districts from those or ERASP. SCRP will adopt lessons and build on the manuals developed under ERASP to improve communities' capacity in ENRM and to formulate and implement catchment management plans. Learning from ERASP, SCRP will fill gaps in EWS by improving forecast resolution of climate information, linking EWS to specific agricultural value chains and improving on frequency and channels of information dissemination.
Sustainable Agriculture Productivity Programme **(SAPP 2016 - 2022)** $73,224,300 by Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD SAPP was implemented in Blantyre, Chiradzulu, Balaka, Lilongwe, Nkhotakota and Chitipa	SAPP's main climate change interventions included: a) adoption of CSA on farm activities; b) livelihood diversification through small livestock pass on programme; c) farmers access to finance through Village Challenge Fund (VCF) Initiative as vehicle to access financing for different agricultural climate resilient enterprises	SCRP will complement SAPP by reaching new farmers with capacity-building programmes on climate-resilient practices that restore soil health. Extension manuals have also not been updated under SAPP to reflect the improved practices, which SCRP will support to ensure vulnerable farmers can be best supported based on climate-informed agro-advisory. SAPP interventions' main gap was to only focus on on-farm interventions for climate-smart agriculture. SCRP will complement this through micro-catchment plans for restoration and resource management, which in turn affects crop productivity. This ensures that the resilience-building activities on-farm can be sustained by ecosystem services too, reducing exposure to or impact from events like floods and strong winds. Another gap from SAPP interventions was a perceived disconnection between agro-advisory and climate projections, and a lack of focus on disaster management. SCRP will directly fill this gap.
Sustainable Agriculture Productivity Programme - Phase II **(SAPPII 2024 - 2031)** $ 35.09 Million by Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD SAPPII will be implemented in the same districts as SCRP	SAPPII is the continuation of SAPP, focusing on scaling up interventions to support farmers that are more resilient and productive with accessing markets and finance. SAPPII main interventions from IFAD and the Ministry include (i) developing productive assets and services for agriculture commercialization, (ii) value addition and (iii) post-harvest handling. This is informed by a value chain/market analysis and adaptive research for the development on new agricultural practices. SAPPII will deliver this through a Farmer Challenge Fund, receiving business plans from farmers.	With its commercial focus, SAPPII risks excluding the most vulnerable beneficiaries, who are not yet resilient to climate change and do not adopting good and resilient agricultural practices, or have access to water, etc. SCRP will fill that gap in SAPPII by focusing on increasing the resilience of the most vulnerable farmers in the districts of operations. It will focus on the agricultural crops chosen under SAPPII to ensure that there is a continuity for beneficiaries who, once the right practices are adopted and their resilience increased through SCRP, can access finance through the SAPPII programme activities. SAPPII therefore provides an "exit" strategy for SCRP. Among other practices, SCRP will also be promoting those developed through adaptive research in SAPPII, to the extent that they support resilience to climate change.

Programme for Rural Irrigation Development **(PRIDE 2015 -2026)** $ 125.88 Million by Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD PRIDE is being implemented in Phalombe, Chiradzulu, Machinga, Dowa, Nkhotakota, Rumphi, Nkhatabay, Karonga and Chitipa districts	Main PRIDE adaptation interventions include: a) construction of irrigation schemes for smallholder farmers; b) Developing water management systems; c) Building capacity of small-scale farmers to manage, operate and maintain schemes; d) Building capacity of farmers on CSA in selected value chains; e) Integrated catchments areas	Even though PRIDE is mostly in different districts, SCRP will adopt lessons and knowledge products from PRIDE in irrigation schemes, construction process and standards; training manuals on WUA and building farmers capacities to manage and operate schemes. While PRIDE has targeted bigger irrigation schemes (at least 200 hectares), which have different sustainability criteria, SCRP will focus on smaller infrastructure. This responds to consultations with farmers, who indicated that smaller irrigation schemes suiting areas with less water (around 20 hectares) would be preferable. In this way, SCRP will reach farmers who would not benefit from the larger irrigation schemes developed under PRIDE due to either water scarcity or land scarcity.
Financial Access for Rural Markets, Smallholders and Enterprise Programme **(FARMSE 2017 – 2028)** US$ 102.73 million by Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD FARMSE is implemented in selected communities in all SCRP districts	FARMSE main interventions included: a) increase finance access and saving culture among rural households; b) capacity to improve selected value chain productivity; c) enhance access to markets	FARMSE enhanced farmers' access to finance through innovative cash transfer, which resulted in agricultural livelihood diversification through investments in both agricultural and non-agricultural value chains and increased their savings. SCRP may serve similar beneficiaries, but its activities will be targeted at implementation of climate-resilient practices and disaster management. In this way, SCRP might benefit from prior community engagements and groups formed in these communities.
Transforming Agriculture through Diversification and Entrepreneurship Programme **(TRADE 2019- 2026)** US$ 125.35 million by Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD TRADE is implemented in Chitipa, Karonga, Rumphi, Nkhatabay, Kasungu, Mchinji, Lilongwe, Dedza, Blantyre and Thyolo.	TRADE also focussed on building farmer organizations to become commercially viable and commercial entities through provision of finance, capacity building for intensification; developing agribusiness skills; capacity for value addition and market access through infrastructure development such a climate resilient roads and trade platforms, and livestock markets	Beneficiaries are not expected to overlap. If they do (in Lilongwe), SCRP will only target the most vulnerable ones that might have engaged in TRADE, supporting their increase in productivity and resilience through climate-resilient practices, climate-based agro-advisory and DRM support. In this way, SCRP learnings can be combined with agribusiness skills development under TRADE for farmers to be fully supported along the value-chain. The roads maintained under TRADE will provide better support to the implementation of SCRP activities, ensuring that the most remote beneficiaries (hence more vulnerable) can be reached.
Adapting to Climate Change Through Integrated Risk Management Strategies and Enhanced Market Opportunities for Resilient Food Security and Livelihoods (2020-2024) USD $9,989,335 by WFP and Ministry of Agriculture Projected is implemented in Balaka Zomba and Machinga	The project adaptation interventions included: a) access to micro insurance as risk transfer mechanism; b) promotion of soil and water conservation; crop diversification; irrigation; access to climate services to inform farmer decision making, access to financial services for enhanced investments in climate resilient agriculture	While there is significant similarity in some interventions there are no duplication as SCRP will target different communities in different areas of Balaka. SCRP will improve climate-services delivery by tailoring agro-advisory to climate forecasts each season, and developing recommendations through district workshops that include all actors of the value chain to ensure cohesive information and location specific advisory. SCRP will also use these seasonal planning workshops as feedback mechanisms, learning from potential errors in previous forecasts and adjusting projections and advisory accordingly. This heavily localized and context-specific process is an improvement from previous climate services' delivery. Where deemed effective, the same channels of communication will still be used.

Malawi Watershed Services Improvement Project **(MWASIP 2020-2026)** USD 160,000,000 by World Bank and implemented by Ministry of Water and Sanitation Machinga, Balaka, Blantyre, Ntcheu, Mangochi, Zomba, Neno	(i) performance-based grants for restoration of approximately of degraded landscape; (ii) matching grants to enhance agricultural-based livelihoods and boost household incomes; (iii) advisory services and capacity building on Sustainable Landscape Management (SLM) practices; (iv) a social marketing campaign to influence farmer behavior concerning adoption of SLM practices; (v) support to undertake local-level participatory land-use planning, land demarcation, adjudication and registration (i) performance-based grants to selected watershed management institutions (ii) technical assistance and the initial capital required to establish a pilot market-based mechanism for the provision and maintenance of selected watershed services; and (iii) a package of enabling infrastructure and climate information services	SCRP will work closely with the MWASIP team to ensure no geographical overlap of interventions in Balaka. It will seek complementarity with MWASIP interventions where possible, in cases where MWASIP infrastructure need small-scale extension work (i.e. for irrigation) to reach remote communities targeted by SCRP. Other districts do not overlap. MWASIP interventions are larger in scale than SCRP, with irrigation and dams systems spanning several communities beyond catchment and village level. Still, SCRP will seek guidance from the Department of Land Resource Conservation (DLRCD), closely coordinating MWASIP interventions, to re-use the data and technologies available from MWASIP for identifying degraded catchments and undertaking hydrological studies to inform watershed management interventions. SCRP team will also continuously work with DLRC to identify lessons learnt from successful community engagements with VNRMCs and barriers to SLM practices' adoption in MWASIP area of interventions, so that SCRP can adjust its interventions accordingly. This engagement process with DLRC has already been initiated.
KULIMA (2017-2022) EUR 110,000,000 by European Development Fund, implemented by FAO and GiZ and coordinated by Ministry of Agriculture Targeted counties: Chitipa, Karonga, Mzimba, Nkhata-Bay, Kasungu, Nkhotakota, Salima, Chiradzulu, Mulanje, Thyolo	Up-scaling climate-smart agriculture technologies, agriculture value chain and business development and support to improved governance in the agriculture sector. Putting in place an institutional framework for farmer field school programming and capacity building Capacity building of seed actors including agro-dealer, seed multipliers and community seed banks Fish ponds Agroforestry, IPM, ISFM and conservation agriculture training	SCRP interventions on capacity building for on-farm natural resource management are similar to KULIMA's, but there will be no geographical overlaps. In Mzimba, the only overlapping district, different communities will be selected to receive training. SCRP team will work closely with KULIMA team to identify barriers to adoption faced following KULIMA's interventions, and adjust SCRP's training content accordingly. The FFS framework developed under KULIMA will be directly re-used under SCRP. Only the content will be adapted in case the commodities chosen in SCRP do not overlap or to reflect season-specific climate advisory. Additional trainers may be trained under SCRP in areas not yet covered, but the framework will remain the same as the one institutionalized under KULIMA. SCRP will also learn from KULIMA's community seed banks interventions to establish further seed banks in other target areas.
Climate Smart Public Works Programme (CSPWP) Funded through Multi-Donor Trust Fund and World Bank, implemented by Government of Malawi Ongoing in several districts with relevant project interventions	Cash transfer to communities against a few days of work on restoration of degraded land through flood control, land restorations, conservations, regeneration and afforestation.	A number of degraded areas were identified under CSPWP, but not rehabilitated. SCRP will use this information to target some of the areas identified to micro catchments conservation and restoration. SCRP will seek continuation with CSPWP restoration activities if they link to farmers' VNRMCs and the value chains and beneficiaries targeted.

G. If applicable, describe the learning and knowledge management component to capture and disseminate lessons learned.

117. Effective knowledge management – including the collection, generation and dissemination of information – is an important component of climate change adaptation. Learning from adaptation

activities and being able to transform knowledge into products that are targeted at various audiences is essential to effective climate change adaptation.

118. SCRP is directly seeking to address the limited availability of and access to consistent knowledge, impeding both the adoption of climate resilient technologies and practices, and the capacity to plan ahead to mitigate and manage climate change related disasters. Therefore, learning and knowledge management are fully embedded into the project and its components, from the local to the institutional level. Costs associated with learning, knowledge generation, and dissemination/communication are as such fully mainstreamed under the project's outputs and in the execution costs. Indeed, the project will:

- Support the local analysis and prioritization of climate resilient activities at the landscape and farm level, and ensure those are properly identified and included in VLAPs (Component 1).
- Document the most appropriate agricultural practices under future climate scenarios (under Component 2) based both on their effectiveness and ease of adoption for farmers, so that they can become standard references to be re-used and re-adapted in the future. The project will also document the effectiveness of these practices where they have been successfully adopted, comparing them to those who received blanket agro-advisory not linked to climate-projections.
- Promote exchange visits between farmers to facilitate adoption and promotion of practices through local circulation of knowledge (Component 2).
- Document and enhance the accuracy of climate projections provided at each district's level, based on community feedback (under component 3). Projections and advisory will be revised for the following seasons accordingly.
- Identify success stories and mechanisms for true bottom-up approaches in locally led micro-catchment restoration, and in particular the types of incentives that encourages community participation and sustainability (Component 1 and Component 2).
- Share success stories in implementing GALS approach at household and community level, and the implications on productivity, household income and adoption of climate-resilient practices.
- Evaluate the preparedness and response of communities to extreme events, including droughts, floods and cyclones, and promote best practices in reducing impacts from improving communication and interpretation of DRM alerts and information, and from improved cooperation between DoDMA and DAEC.

119. Project results will also be used to formulate policy briefs and technical papers under the third component including with recommendations on: (i) improved disaster management plans for the agriculture sector, and (ii) best use of digital tools in extension services. The Project proposal budget will outline provisions to ensure effective implementation of the KM function, including through the mobilization of national and international technical assistance. Knowledge harvesting, storage and processing resources will be made available to the people and organizations that need it and to ensure best use of knowledge generated by other initiatives in Malawi and the region.

120. To support M&E, capacity-building will also be provided on data collection, analysis and interpretation; use of electronic databases; systematic documentation and knowledge dissemination processes; and geographical information collection and analysis using open-source softwares. In line with other IFAD projects in the country, the KM system, integrating planning, M&E and communication will have the following objectives: (i) continuous information to improve project performance; (ii) identification, analysis, documentation and dissemination of best practices; (iii) interactive and inclusive communication with all stakeholders; and (iv) visibility for policy dialogue and advocacy. To this end, electronic databases accessible through the project website will be developed, adapting from the existing database already available under the Ministry of Agriculture Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD). SCRP will complement in financing additional hardware and software, to better store, maintain and disseminate data from various workstations where needed.

121. The overall responsibility for Knowledge Management (KM) and communication will rest with the project M&E Officer, who will coordinate with other members of the Project Management Unit (PMU), local Government counterparts and other project stakeholders to identify case studies that illustrate the impact that the project has had on improving rural livelihoods and centralize key information generated. More generally the M&E Officer together with the rest of the PMU will process the knowledge generated into an appropriate format for the general public and disseminate it. This will be done through workshops and seminars, electronic/digital media (radio, television, and internet – emails, websites and applications); social media (YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, etc.), and print media (flyers, brochures, reports, working papers, monographs, manuals, guidelines, policy briefs).

122. The project will also document lessons learnt and disseminate knowledge products through briefing notes, infographics & flyers, knowledge platforms, annual project performance reports (PPRs), the mid-term evaluation report (MTR) and terminal evaluation report, project stories and project videos.

H. Describe the consultative process, including the list of stakeholders consulted, undertaken during project preparation, with particular reference to vulnerable groups, including gender considerations, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy of the Adaptation Fund.

123. SCRP design adopted a highly consultative process with stakeholders at different levels which included: (i) at national level: government ministries and departments, financing institutions, farmer apex bodies such as Farmers Union of Malawi, local NGOs, UN agencies; (ii) at district level: district agricultural extension coordination committees (DAECC); (iii) at community levels: with community leaders, potential beneficiary groups through focus group discussion segregated by gender (men, youth and women). All stakeholder consulted confirmed the relevance of the project and its approaches. It should also be noted that the SCRP Concept preparation was conducted in constant and close consultation with the IFAD Country Office in Malawi, and Government team from IFAD projects in Malawi, ensuring that successful experience and detailed knowledge of the national and local context were well reflected into proposed interventions, further guaranteeing their tailoring and relevance.

124. Four key informant discussions with DAEC members were conducted (one for each district) plus one with traditional leaders in Lilongwe rural district; 6 community groups discussions (2 for each district), 24 focused group discussions with women, youth and men separately (6 for each district). A total of 489 participated in the consultations, as outlined in the table below.

District	Key informants				Group Discussion (C)			Focused group discussions (D)		
	DAEC Members (A)		Traditional Leaders (B)		M	F	Y	M	F	Y
	M	F	M	F						
Balaka	8	6	5	3	36	50	28	36	50	28
Lilongwe	6	10	9	4	38	41	17	38	41	17
Dowa	9	8	6	2	34	38	21	34	38	21
Mzimba	10	6	6	-	24	36	16	24	36	16
Sub-total	33	30	26	9	132	165	82	132	165	82
Total	63		35		379			379		
Total consulted (A+B+C+D)	477									

125. **Consultations with potential beneficiaries:** Intensive consultations targeted potential direct and indirect beneficiaries. Eight community group consultation meetings were held, separated into 3 focused groups of women, men and youth (24 focused group discussions held). About 165 women, 132 men and 82 youth attended the focused group discussions. The consultation focused on understanding the general challenges they face in improving their livelihood (ranking most critical challenges) particularly in agriculture where most of livelihoods are based, most common climate hazards (ranking by frequency of occurrence; climate hazards impacts (ranking by most impact on production loss or assets loss); and differential impacts of climate change on women, men and youth; their preferred value chains (food security or income generation) and adaptation solutions (ranking by most preferred). Most communities ranked drought occurrence, high land degradation, limited finance to access adapted farm inputs and adopt CSA, and incidence of pest and disease as overarching factors affecting their agricultural production. High ranking suggested solutions included the need for community irrigation infrastructure, water harvesting, restoration of degraded lands, integrated pest management, and access to improved farm inputs and climate information.

126. **Women** particularly emphasized climate change's increased impact due to droughts exacerbating food insecurity and malnutrition due to crop failure and reduced yields as most of agriculture is based on intermittent and variable rainfall. Women proposed interventions included increased access to water in the form of solar powered irrigation schemes where feasible, solar powered boreholes, restoration of degraded land and access to improve farm inputs to improve crop

productivity. Due to low ownership of livestock on women, women indicated having limited opportunities to diversify from crop production. To reduce increased burden and time on fetching energy for household use, women expressed the need for capacity to establish, manage and conserve communal woodlots.

127. In addition to focus groups discussions, consultations were also held with community leaders including representatives of all ethnic groups and the front-line agricultural staff living in communities. The discussion sought to further validate the local context challenges, climate trends, impacts experienced, local adaptive capacity and ongoing climate resilient interventions. Validation of community leader and frontline extension staff confirmed that interventions were feasible to local context, gender sensitive and take the concerns of the most vulnerable population.

128. **Consultations at district level:** At district level 4 consultations were held through the District Agricultural Extension Coordination Committee (DAECC). Members of DAECC include officials from forest, agriculture, fisheries, gender and social welfare, irrigation, livestock, agri-business, environment, climate change and meteorology and nutrition sections among others. DAECC officials were informed of the SCRP objectives, potential activities, and the need for their respective input.

129. Discussions were held face to face through a checklist questionnaire. Issues discussed included prevalent agricultural production systems and challenges to agricultural production, vulnerable groups and factors exacerbating climate vulnerability; common occurring climatic hazards, impact on vulnerable communities (segregated by gender); most vulnerable areas at district level; current interventions in enhancing climate resilience at district level; ongoing interventions to enhance women and youth empowerment at district level, including social and gender dynamics challenges to improve gender equality; suggestion of proposed objective and interventions; and district capacity needs to ensure effective implementation and sustainability. A total of 30 women and 33 men attended the DAECC consultations.

130. **Consultations at national-level involving government ministries and other stakeholders:** Two format of discussion were used. Individual government ministries or departments meetings were held. The main purpose of the meetings was to understand different ongoing projects or interventions implemented by different stakeholders, capture lessons, discuss and assess gaps that SCRP may address, and obtain inputs and contributions for overall design and relevance of interventions, including relevance to national strategies, efforts and guidelines in enhancing women and youth empowerment, social and environmental considerations. The consultations were done face to face with a list of prepared questions checklist.

131. Preliminary selection criteria emphasizing on social inclusion were developed based on discussions with the Ministry of Agriculture, with inputs from other stakeholders, such as the RedCross Society; the Department of Disaster Management Affairs; the Ministry of Gender. National stakeholders were mostly from climate change, agricultural disaster risk, farmer apex organisations and agricultural financing institutions. A total of 15 women and 17 men participated in individual institutions' consultations. A second national stakeholder meeting was arranged through the Ministry of Agriculture, where proposed project interventions outlined in the present document, and level of interventions were validated after district and community consultations.

I. Provide justification for funding requested, focusing on the full cost of adaptation reasoning

132. The justification for the requested funding lies in the comprehensive assessment of the full cost of adaptation associated with implementing the present project. Least Developed Countries are most vulnerable to the damaging effects of climate change, since their economic development and food security are highly dependent on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture. The agriculture sector remains a key contributor to Malawi's economy, employing around 85% of the workforce, contributing 40% of GDP and 80% of export earnings. Climate change puts a critical strain on the sector, and future scenarios indicate increased rainfall variability, and incidence of floods and droughts. Agriculture is the main, and sometimes the sole, livelihood option of the many intended beneficiaries, who have limited adaptive capacity due to high poverty levels, and are overdependent on rainfed agriculture, exposed to environmental degradation, have limited knowledge of improved agricultural practices and limited opportunities to diversify their farms will further worsen the poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition status, unless adequate financial support is provided.

133. Thanks to Adaptation Fund supporting the full cost of adaptation of activities planned under

the project, SCRP will transform livelihoods in targeted micro-watersheds, by improving the climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers, by improving the resilience of smallholder's farming systems themselves, and by enhancing the provision of climate information for decision-making in the agriculture sector in the country. Table 10 below summaries justification for providing that financial support. The planned achievements will be delivered without the need for any external sources of finance besides the AF funding, and the intended outputs and outcomes can be achieved with the AF funding requested.

Table 10 - Scenario without and with adaptation cost

Business as usual scenario	Adaptation Fund additionality
Component 1. Resilient ecosystems sustainably provide services to smallholder farmers	
Hilltops and landscapes are degraded, charcoal production and agricultural expansion continue to drive deforestation. Flood water flows downstream at increased speeds, bringing sediments into downstream water bodies and physical damages to crops and infrastructure. Where afforestation activities take place, they are unsustainable as vulnerable households and other farmers resort to maladaptive practices (deforestation for charcoal production), resulting in decreasing yields, accelerated environmental degradation, loss of livelihoods and possible outmigration/conflict. Without participatory approaches at landscape levels, individual farmers continue to use resources for individual households with no coordination with other users nor concern for long-term availability of the resource and the ecosystem services they provide. Natural resources continue to degrade, with high negative impacts on yields through reduced soil fertility, reduced water absorption capacity, and increased exposure to floods and strong winds. Vulnerable communities, particularly women and youth and persons with disabilities, suffer disproportionately from climate change impacts. Women and youth continue being segregated from productive work, have less access to extension services and other information susceptible to increase their productivity.	- 140 Villages targeted in 20 micro-catchments - 2,800 households mentored on GALS, benefiting 13,000 persons of which 50% women - 140 VNRMCs established and include at least 50% women and 30% youth members - 140 participatory climate-resilient VLAPs are developed - 1,400 hectares of woodlots are restored and managed sustainably by VNRMCs - 1,400 hectares are targeted for anti-erosive measures, protecting 7,000 hectares of degraded watersheds - 2,800 women-led HH receive improved stoves, and 280 HH receive tanks for rainwater harvesting, enhancing their adaptive capacity, decreasing pressure on natural resources & alleviating women's burden
Component 2. Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi	
Climate change extreme events such as droughts and floods become increasingly frequent and intense, and growing periods become shorter, agro-pastoral systems are put at risk, with decreasing fertility and increasing pressure on resources (land and water). Vulnerable households and other farmers continue practicing agriculture following the same BAU models (no adapted varieties, no soil and water conservation, etc.). Farmers lack capacity to store harvest for long enough until it can be sold or used. Resources used in producing the harvest, including land, water, nutrient and time from the farmers are lost as the harvest quality degrades rapidly due to pest, sun, heat or humid conditions following floods. Water resources continue to be depleted or inaccessible due to weather hazards, while large-scale irrigation infrastructure does not serve the most vulnerable communities and existing infrastructure is deteriorated. Productivity subsequently decreases, alongside health and sanitation quality in households. Women continue to walk longer distances to fetch water for their households, further increasing their exposure to climate hazards, increasing their insecurity levels and reducing their time and access to productive resources and knowledge.	- GIS vulnerability assessments are conducted for all targeted micro catchments - Relevant technical guidelines for agriculture in Malawi and extension manuals are updated to reflect latest data, vulnerability assessments, and best practices - 140 FFS are implemented thanks to the cascading training of 40 extensionists as MoTs, further training 140 lead farmers as FFS facilitators - 3,500 HH of which 50% women-led are trained on climate resilient agriculture through FFS, directly enhancing 15,750 people's adaptive capacity - 70 small scale community irrigation schemes are supported (increasing 2,100 households' adaptive capacity) - 70 resilient storage facilities are supported, improving 3,500 households' and close to 16,000 individuals' adaptive capacity.
Component 3. Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi	
Agro-advisory and climate-resilient interventions are shaped based on blanket recommendations or based on large-scale climate models and do not reflect the specificities of the soil, terrain, and general exposure of the communities. Theoretical impacts on agriculture production differ from what farmers actually experience. Farmers following agro-advisory continue to experience yield losses and impacts of climate change.	- Seasonal workshops on agrometeorological forecasts organized twice a year in 140 villages, increasing the adaptive capacity of at least 14,000 individuals - 140 extension workers trained on agrometeorology and DRM across 50 EPAs - Linkages between DoDMA and DAECs enhanced

Farmers cannot access agro-advisory due to lack of connectivity for digital advisory or access to extension officers. They continue implementing agricultural practices based on knowledge shared by peers or from own experience. Practices are not adapted to the changing climate nor to the increased deterioration of soils, hence yields are low and impacts of climate change threaten their livelihoods. Lack of capacity in modern agricultural extension and disaster risk management leads to poor dissemination of early warning systems and ineffective risk management and response. DRM advisory and EWS do not reflect farmers' needs and are not provided on time, agriculture extension officers and farmers cannot interpret the implications of alerts received, so farmers cannot protect their farm and livelihood accordingly.	- Enhanced dissemination and quality of agrometeorological information for decision making directly enhancing the adaptive capacity of 30,000 individuals of which 50% women - 10 Agriculture Resource Centres upgraded - Standard feedback mechanisms are established for enhanced agrometeorological information - 5 policies/regulation documents enhancing the use of weather/climate information for decision making in agriculture are produced - Staff from DCCMS and Ministry of Agriculture trained for enhanced agrometeorological information in the country - Coordination mechanisms established to improve systematic collection and circulation of climate/weather information for decision making in agriculture

J. Describe how the sustainability of the project outcomes has been taken into account when designing the project.

134. **Environmental sustainability** is embedded in the project, notably through the adoption of a soil regeneration and ecosystem-services restoration approach both at farm and wider landscape level, respectively through the promotion of the integrated planning of micro-catchment resource management and ecosystem restoration measures under the first component, and the promotion of climate resilient practices in line with the principles of agroecology under the first component.

135. **Social sustainability** will be fostered through **community engagement** throughout the project. SCRP is designed and will be implemented through farmer groups (including VNRMCs and cooperatives) and participatory approaches. This ensures, among others, that access to capacity building initiatives is improved as it is often accessed in groups; sharing of lessons between farmers is facilitated through connections made in groups; and planning and delivering of interventions and investments' is conceived as a joint commitment and responsibility among community members, promoting ownership. This approach relying on community engagement will improve the sustainability of the interventions throughout the project, either informally through continued community interactions or formally through management plans designed to sustain the group interventions. The GALS approach is also built to ensure deep-rooted cultural norms and assumptions regarding women participation are transformed within communities and households, beyond the project's interventions only. This ensures that the project's focus on women participation and subsequent improvements in their decision-making role can be sustained once the activities are over, as households' perception of women themselves will have changed.

136. **Economic sustainability.** In the case of afforestation, the intervention will be specifically designed to promote community woodlots that would not close-off an area from the community and deprive them of valuable resources. Instead, these woodlots will be able to provide income sources and/or raw materials needed in the community, so that the benefits from trees are directly perceived and reverting to deforestation is disincentivised. To maintain this beyond the project lifecyle, **management plans** will be drawn with the community to guide what, when, and how much can be used/extracted from the woodlot so that it continues yielding in the long-term. A similar management approach will be adopted for water infrastructure. Several **income-generating activities** have also been embedded in the project, including tree nurseries, seed multiplication, beekeeping and other products that may be sold from community-woodlots. As farmers are rational economic decision-makers, tying interventions to income generation is key to ensure they continue implementing them.

137. **Institutional sustainability**. While the SCRP coordination will be undertaken by PMU, the actual implementation at the community level will be through the existing government structures and staff. First, adequate capacity building based on capacity needs will be undertaken for all frontline staff in the project areas, who will be technically backstopped by technical staff at district, PMU and respective ministry or departments. Second, as frontline government staff are permanent staff, their

guidance and support to farmers will continue beyond the project period, informed by the lessons from SCRP. To secure the knowledge gained through the implementation of SCRP, extension manuals and relevant guidelines (including on good agricultural practices) will be updated. Other farmers receiving extension services will hence also benefit from the learnings and material developed under SCRP beyond the project's lifetime, as those documents are the basis for extension services' support.

K. Provide an overview of the environmental and social impacts and risks identified as being

138. The environmental and social screening presented in the table below provides a brief overview of the risk assessment that will be further detailed in the ESMP to be prepared at the full project document stage, and evidences the minor risks related to the project, and for which additional detail and dedicated mitigation measures will be integrated into the project. As a result of these elements, the project has been identified as **Category B** (Moderate risk based on IFAD's Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures – SECAP – screening tool, equivalent to category B in the Adaptation Fund's Environmental and Social Safeguards) with regards to socio-environmental aspects as per the Adaptation Fund's Environmental and Social Policy.

139. During the full proposal development stage, the risk categorization will be confirmed, and an Environment and Social Management Plan (ESMP), Gender Assessment; Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) will be developed. In the unlikely event that the risk categorization should change during the full proposal development, additional studies and documentations will be developed in accordance with Government of Malawi Guidelines and Adaptation Fund Social and Environmental Policy standards. During implementation, the project will conduct gender-disaggregated data collection and a gender specialist will be recruited to ensure gender considerations in project design and implementation.

140. **Unidentified Sub-Projects (USPs)**. The nature of project activities has been formulated to the extent that pre-identification of environmental and social risks is possible, and the formulation team will seek to identify project specific intervention areas to the extent that identification of environmental and social risks is possible during the fully developed proposal preparation. The targeted districts have also been screened to identify all site-specific environmental and social risks, and the project formulation team is confident that the project will not generate risks with regards to ESP 9 and 14 in particular. However, and because specific project areas are not determined yet, the project may be considered to include USPs ("partially identified USPs"). This will be addressed during the full project formulation, through a detailed vulnerability assessment of the targeted districts, based on GIS mapping and remote sensing to inform the selection of project sites, as budgeted for in the PFG application. In the case that USPs are still recognized at project proposal stage, an Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) with measures to comply with the Environment and Social Policy of the Fund for concerned activities will be included in the project ESMP (to be prepared at the full project document stage). During implementation, each USP would then be screened prior to its implementation to identify potential site-specific risks and adopt appropriate mitigation measures to be captured by relevant ESMPs for implementation, monitoring and reporting.

Table 11 - Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Checklist

Checklist of environmental and social principles	No further assessment required for compliance	Potential impacts and risks – further assessment and management required for compliance
ESP 1. Compliance with the Law	X	**No risk** Indirect risks may arise from project service providers not aligning with all relevant laws, regulations and policies as identified in Part II. E., and in particular the National Environmental Acts (2017). The small-scale of SCRP interventions limits the risks of not being compliant. Each law and regulation will nonetheless be reviewed, and compliance will be ensured at procurement and implementation. It will be verified during monitoring/supervision missions.
ESP 2. Access and Equity		**Low risk** Direct risks could arise from an improper targeting approach, leaving out most vulnerable groups including women, youth, People with Disabilities (including with HIV/AIDS): for women, their limited access to assets in the agricultural sector may render their targeting difficult resulting in exclusion from specific project activities (e.g. FFS, planning processes, etc.); for youth, their lack of voice may result in their lower access to decision-making processes; for PWDs, their marginalisation may impede interactions and direct targeting, resulting in decreased access to project support. Indirect risks may arise from aid diverting at various levels: e.g. for women and youth specifically,

		the male heads of households may request priority access to project support and elite capture may exclude most vulnerable households. Cumulative risks are associated with intersectional aspects, e.g young women, youth with disabilities, etc. being exposed to additional barriers in access to project activities and benefits. Key considerations have been taken into account through the preliminary gender analysis conducted at Concept Note stage and will be further elaborated upon through the Gender Assessment to be developed at Full Proposal. The government and the Ministry of Agriculture already have a number of guidelines and policies to ensure gender equality and empowerment. Affirmative action to ensure women and youth participation will be taken to ensure 50% of the beneficiaries are women and 30% are youth. Selection of project interventions shall conform to all gender needs and participation, such as adequate timing and location of capacity-building activities, etc., to remove barriers to women and youth. Additionally, IFAD will widely promote its grievance procedures, providing a means for anyone who believes they have been wronged to seek appropriate remedies. By prioritizing transparency and accountability, the project aims to mitigate any adverse effects on affected individuals and ensure their rights are protected.
ESP 3. Marginalized and Vulnerable Groups		**Low risk** Direct risks could arise from improperly engaging most vulnerable groups including women, youth and PWDs: for women, their limited voice and decision making may render their engagement difficult resulting in insufficient tailoring of activities to their specific needs; for youth, the lack of lucrative opportunities in the local economies may make it difficult to engage them, resulting in insufficient tailoring of activities to their specific needs; for PWDs, their marginalisation may render their engagement difficult, resulting in insufficient tailoring of activities to their specific needs. Cumulative risks are associated with intersectional aspects, e.g. young women, youth with disabilities, etc. being exposed to increased risks of marginalization. The project aims to target the vulnerable and resource restricted individuals forming groups in conformity with the Social Welfare Policy (2018). As stated, a Beneficiary Targeting Strategy will be developed to guide the selection of beneficiaries. At least 50% of them will be women, 30% will be youth and 5% will be with disability. The project does not have any components that may bring disproportionate adverse effects on the marginalized and vulnerable groups in particular women and youth, people with disabilities (including HIV affected groups). This will be informed by continuous consultations. The project will ensure participation and equal access to resources. Additionally, this project will respect land, property and customary rights. By prioritizing transparency and accountability through its Grievance Procedure and disaggregated M&E, the project aims to mitigate any adverse effects on affected individuals and ensure their rights are protected. Marginalized and vulnerable groups – especially women - will be further consulted during the proposal development process to ensure that their identified threats, priorities and mitigation measures are fully reflected, in particular with the establishment of a Gender Assessment.
ESP 4. Human Rights	X	**No risk** The project affirms the rights of all people and does not violate any pillar of human rights. No activities will be proposed that could present a risk of non-compliance with either national requirements relating to Human Rights or with International Human Rights Laws and Conventions.
ESP 5. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment		**Low risk** Direct risks could arise from an improper targeting approach and engagement, leaving out women, based notably on their insufficient voice and decision making, as well as limited access to assets in the agriculture sector. This could result in limiting their access to project activities, and reducing their benefits, notably in terms of voice, representation, economic empowerment, and reduction of workload. Indirect risks are associated with culture and norms in the project area that may limit women's social status and constrain their access to productive resources, jobs, and social services. Additionally, it is possible that the empowerment of women and women-targeted activities results in backlash against them, associated with increased risk of marginalization and GBV. Cumulative risks are associated with intersectional aspects, e.g. young women, women with disabilities, etc. risking lower opportunities of equality and empowerment. Key considerations have been taken into account through the Preliminary Gender Analysis conducted at Concept Note stage. A detailed gender assessment will be further conducted at the full proposal development to ensure that all gender aspects are fully incorporated. Women will make up 50% of the beneficiaries and their participation in the project will be monitored. The implementation of the gender strategy and action plan will be monitored. Through the GALS approach and through gender-based targeting, the project will seek to achieve women empowerment through three strategic pathways: (i) promote economic empowerment to enable rural women and men to have equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from profitable economic activities; (ii) enable women and men to have an equal voice and influence in rural institutions and organizations; and, (iii) achieve a more equitable balance of workloads and the sharing of economic and social benefits between women and men. In addition to GALS and other methodologies such as GCVCA, specific interventions such as community-based water infrastructure of smaller scale and energy efficient stoves have been

		inbuilt in SCRP specifically for their potential to reduce women workloads.
ESP 6. Core Labour Rights		**Low risk** Direct risks may arise from isolated incidences of child labour in the project area. Indirect risks may arise from project service providers not aligning with international and national labour laws and codes, as stated in IFAD's policies. SCRP will be bound by ILO Regulations, the Malawi Labour Act (GoM 2000)[57] and Malawi Employment Act (2014). The project will raise awareness and forbid children's work among beneficiaries. This will be laid out in the ESMP and associated to specific monitoring processes. The programme will ensure that all appropriate health and safety measures are taken in accordance with both national and international standards. Any risk to labour rights will be continuously monitored and assessed during the implementation of the project, as guided by the ESMP to be developed at full project proposal stage
ESP 7. Indigenous Peoples		**No risk** Intensive consultations with government, NGOs and communities confirmed that there are no people categorized as indigenous in Malawi. The targeted districts of intervention include various ethnic groups, which repartition is very varied across the national territory, as illustrated in the targeted area: Mzimba District is predominantly Tumbuka with a few Ngoni; Lilongwe District includes close to 50% Chewa, 17% Ngoni, 14% Lomwe, 12% Yao and 7% Tumbuka; Dowa District is mainly Chewa (over 92%), with 0.6% Yao, 0.6% Tumbuka, 0.5% Lomwe, 0.1% Tonga, 0.1% Mangánja and 0.1% Sena; Balaka District includes over 36% Yao, and around 25% Lomwe, 14% Ngoni, 10% Chewa, 7% Tumbuka, 3% Sena and 3% Mangánja. The second level consultation included all targeted groups including village leaders belonging to the various ethnic groups available within their communities as entry point, women, youth and other vulnerable stakeholders, as highlighted in the consultative process annex. While no issue of exclusion/marginalization was raised, some groups are more concerned by agriculture (e.g. Chewa, Tumbuka, Yao) while others are involved in pastoralism (e.g. Ngoni). The specific needs of the different groups will be further analysed and reflected at Full Project Proposal stage (including thanks to additional consultations). In any case, project will adhere to issues of Free and Prior Informed Consent to all beneficiaries and social inclusion without segregation of people's orientation or tribes.
ESP 8. Involuntary Resettlement	X	**No risk** No involuntary resettlement is foreseen as project activities do not involve large infrastructure or modification of tenure. The programme will collaborate with communities in their locations and on a voluntary basis and only include small-scale works. Therefore, no resettlements or even displacement to new locations is expected. FPIC will be sought from each individual group members as they engage in project activities (e.g. FFS). IFAD's grievance procedures will be widely promoted, providing a means for anyone who believes they have been wronged to seek appropriate remedies.
ESP 9. Protection of Natural Habitats		**Low risk (partially identified)** There is a low probability that project intervention areas may overlap with existing critical natural habitats including those that are *(a) legally protected; (b) officially proposed for protection; (c) recognised by authoritative sources for their high conservation value, including as critical habitat; or (d) recognised as protected by traditional or indigenous local communities*. For example these may include Dzalanyama Forest Reserve (covering in part Lilongwe district); Kasungu National Park in Lilongwe; Dowa Hills Forest Reserve; etc. In case this may happen, there is a low probability that project activity overlap or encroach on these sites. However, this is unlikely to be associated with negative impacts as project activities are conceived to restore ecosystems thereby enhancing their climate resilience. Nonetheless, further assessment will be conducted at full proposal stage to verify the likelihood of overlap based on the precise project area. Additionally, site selection criteria may be developed at project proposal stage, with the de-facto exclusion of such sites from project interventions.
ESP 10. Conservation of Biological Diversity		**Low risk** Considering the extent of deforestation in project areas, there is a possibility that ongoing deforestation activities are negatively impacting biological diversity. However, the project will propose integrated solutions to restore ecosystems and reduce drivers of deforestation. As part of this, there is a small risk that reforestation activities (but also antierosive measures relying on revegetation and reseeding) are conducted in a way that does not strive to restore the original biodiversity (e.g. by introducing non-native, possibly invasive species). Additional minor risks to biological diversity may arise from use of pesticides and/or introduction of pests and diseases. The project will not promote any invasive plant or animal species. It will abide by the Pest act and have its own Integrated Pest Management Plan. It will only use native or proven locally adapted and non-invasive species of trees and crops. Improvements in biological diversity are expected from increased habitats (through community woodlot and improved soil cover) and pollination (through increased diversity on the farms and beekeeping), as well as promotion of native seeds multiplication and native tree species production in project supported nurseries. Any risk to biological diversity will be continuously monitored and assessed during the

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[57] Ministry of Labour (2000). Malawi Labour Act. https://invest.mitc.mw/images/downloads/Employment-and-Labour-Acts-of-Malawi.pdf

		implementation of the project, guided by the ESMP to be developed at full project proposal stage.
ESP 11. Climate Change	X	**No risk** The project's interventions do not involve large scale agriculture, construction works, nor large afforestation requiring extensive land preparation. Additionally, the project promotes climate resilient agriculture options including improved soil fertility and environmental restoration, which can act as carbon capture. Clean energy technologies such as solar will be promoted (in water infrastructure, storage, etc) to reduce GHG emissions.
ESP 12. Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency		**Low risk** There is a direct minor risk of use and abuse of agro-chemicals including fertilizers and pesticides. However, potential impacts resulting from this risk remain limited because of the type (smallholder agriculture) and scale of interventions. Additionally, no farming intervention will expand into non-agricultural areas, and the project will promote low input, climate resilient techniques, in line with the principles of agroecology. For example, IPM practices will be promoted to reduce use of pesticides, and ISFM practices promoted should contribute to reduced needs of chemical fertilizers. Where inorganic fertilizer cannot be avoided, precise application techniques will be promoted. Timeliness of treatments based on agroclimatic information will also enable to generally decrease the use of chemicals. At Full proposal development, the project will develop an ESMP, including a pest management plan with the necessary mitigation measures and monitoring mechanism for pesticide use. The specifications of fertilizers and pesticides contracted by the PMU will be required to operate in line with the specifications in IFAD SECAP VOL 1 Annex 4 and the WHO-FAO codes for safe labelling, packaging, handling, storage, application and disposals of pesticides Any risk associated with pollution and resource use inefficiency will be continuously monitored and assessed during the implementation of the project, as guided by the ESMP to be developed at full project proposal stage
ESP 13. Public Health		**Low risk** SCRP will not and does not envisage any activity that will negatively impact on public health directly. However, potential health and food safety concerns may arise from the production of chosen crops along the value chains in case practices promoted are not fully adopted. For example, high aflatoxin content of groundnuts and other grains; increased agricultural productivity from the use of inorganic and pesticides can result in increased use of agrochemicals. Poor agrochemical handling and application can increase the risks to the health of pesticide-exposed people and agricultural product consumers. Under FFS implementation and other activities, the project will sensitize stakeholders and promote best practices to reduce the risk of mycotoxins including aflatoxins. The project also will promote practices that reduce the need for pesticides and chemical fertilizer used (See ESP 12). The use of organic fertilizers and pesticides will be promoted where possible. Where it cannot be avoided, precise application techniques will be promoted. Farmers will also be trained on health and safety requirements for safe application and storage, using the protocols provided by the Ministry of Health.
ESP 14. Physical and Cultural Heritage		**Low risk** There is a low probability that project intervention areas may overlap with existing physical or cultural heritage sites. In case this may happen, there is a low risk that project activity overlap or encroach on these sites. This will be further verified at project proposal stage as the level of geographic identification of project areas (district level) did not enable the specific identification and characterisation of such sites. However, it should be noted that during implementation, SCRP intends to screen out such areas if they are present. Additionally, while the project will incorporate local knowledge and species in adopting modern technologies, it will not permit and does not envisage implementation of activities that will target specific physical and cultural heritage assets. Where feasible, local/traditional knowledge will be promoted, for instance in control of pests or weather forecasting.
ESP 15. Lands and Soil Conservation		**Low to no risk** The project will promote sustainable land management practices at landscape (micro-catchments) and farm level. Soil conservation, fertility and health will be the primary focus of capacity-building interventions for improved resilience to climate hazards. Activities are focusing on small-scale farmers, with low potential to impact soil health at large. Only small and localised impacts may occur if the practices promoted are not adopted successfully. This will be carefully monitored and addressed through the ESMP monitoring plan. Even then, impacts are not expected to be worse than the baseline scenario without the project. Erosion is also expected to be limited through improved vegetation cover in micro-catchment and on the field, reducing soil loss. Any unlikely risk to land and soil conservation as a result of project interventions or that may threaten project intervention will be continuously monitored and assessed during the implementation of the project, as guided by the ESMP to be developed at full project proposal stage.

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PART IV: ENDORSEMENT

A. Record of endorsement on behalf of the government[58]

Mr. Robert Mwanamanga Director Debt and Aid Management Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs	Date: 05 December 2024

B. Implementing Entity certification

I certify that this proposal has been prepared in accordance with guidelines provided by the Adaptation Fund Board, and prevailing National Development and Adaptation Plans of Angola and Namibia and subject to the approval by the Adaptation Fund Board, commit to implementing the programme in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Adaptation Fund and on the understanding that the Implementing Entity will be fully (legally and financially) responsible for the implementation of this programme.	
Implementing Entity Coordinator Pierre-Yves GUEDEZ Lead Multilateral Climate & Environmental Funds (AF, GCF, GEF)	Email: p.guedez@ifad.org
Juan Carlos Mendoza Director, Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division International Fund for Agricultural Development	
Date: 15 January 2025	email: ecgmailbox@ifad.org
Project Contact Person: Mr Claus Reiner, Regional Climate and Environment Specialist East and Southern Africa, ECG Division, IFAD Tel: +254 793 484 367	
Email: c.reiner@ifad.org	
Ms Bernadette Mukonyora Country Director for Malawi, ESA, IFAD	
Email: b.mukonyora@ifad.org	

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[58] Each Party shall designate and communicate to the secretariat the authority that will endorse on behalf of the national government the projects and programmes proposed by the implementing entities.

Annex A: Letter of Endorsement

Telephone: 01 789 355
Telefax: 01 789 173
Telex: 44407
Email:secmof@finance.gov.mw

MINISTRY OF FINANCE
AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
P.O. BOX 30049,
CAPITAL CITY,
LILONGWE 3. MALAWI

Ref. No. FIN/DAD/5/1/7/NC **5th December 2024**

The Adaptation Fund
1818H Street, NW,
MSN 7N-700
Washington, DC 20433,
USA

Dear Adaptation Fund Secretariat,

ENDORSEMENT FOR "SMALLHOLDER CLIMATE RESILIENCE PROJECT (SCRP)"

In my capacity as designated authority for the Adaptation Fund in Malawi, I confirm that the above national grant proposal is in accordance with the government's national priorities in implementing adaptation activities to reduce adverse impacts of, and risks, posed by climate change in Malawi.

Accordingly, I am pleased to endorse the above grant proposal with support from the Adaptation Fund. If approved, the project will be implemented by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and executed by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Yours Sincerely,

Robert Mwanamanga
FOR: **SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY**

Revised PFG Submission Form[1] (additions in red)

Project Formulation Grant (PFG)

Submission Date:

Adaptation Fund Project ID: AF00000380
Country/ies: Malawi
Title of Project/Programme: Smallholder Climate Resilience Project
Type of IE (NIE/RIE/MIE): MIE
Implementing Entity: International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
Executing Entity/ies: International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for the PFG, Ministry of Agriculture for the project

A. Project Preparation Timeframe

Start date of PFG	June 2025
Completion date of PFG	May 2026

B. Proposed Project Preparation Activities ($)

List of Proposed Project Preparation Activities	Output of the PFG Activities	US$ Amount	Budget note[2]
Consultancies and contracts to develop program	Full proposal of the SCRP project	77,250	Consultancy fees: USD 54,250 Travel fees: USD 13,000
Detailed vulnerability assessment of the targeted districts, based on GIS mapping and remote sensing to inform the selection of project sites (microwatersheds)	Vulnerability assessment report including maps	20,000	Consultancy fees: USD 20,000
Gender and Environmental and Social risk analyses and formulation of Environmental and Social	Environmental and Social Management Plan and Gender Action Plan formulated.	40,000	Consultancy fees: USD 30,000 Travel costs: USD 10,000

[1] As presented in AFB/PPRC.33/40 Annex 1.
[2] The proposal should include a detailed budget with budget notes indicating the break- down of costs at the activity level. It should also include a budget on the Implementing Entity management fee use.

Management Plan and Gender Action Plan. This document is required as part of the submission of the full proposal.			
IE Fee (8.5% of total)	-	12,750	-
Total Project Formulation Grant	-	150,000	-

Please describe below each of the PFG activities and provide justifications for their need and for the amount of funding required:

The PFG activities requested for the SCRP project will support the formulation of the full proposal at different levels, ensuring that the Executing Entity will be provided with a complete design package to fast-track implementation. The activities proposed are detailed below:

1. Consultancies and contracts to develop program

IFAD is requesting additional funds to top up the budget it allocates for the design of Adaptation Fund projects. The fund will be used to address the issues the Adaptation Fund raised during the review of the project concept note. IFAD proposes to hire 3 consultants (national and international) to improve the quality of the full proposal. The proposed cost amounts to USD 77,250, covering consultancy fees and travel costs.

2. Detailed vulnerability assessment the targeted districts, based on GIS mapping and remote sensing to inform the selection of project sites (microwatersheds).

SCRP is fully based on a watershed management approach, with the concentration of activities in highly vulnerable microwatershed. This activity will both enable to prioritize microwatersheds of intervention in the selected four districts, and to ensure that all environmental and social risks are assessed, therefore excluding the presence of USPs. The assessment will be conducted by a GIS and remote sensing expert, who will produce a set of maps of microwatersheds in the targeted districts, displaying a number of vulnerability factors, including an assessment of the level of land degradation through remote sensing. The total cost of the study will be USD 20,000 (consultancy fees, no travel required).

3. Gender and Environmental and Social risk analyses and formulation of Environmental and Social Management Plan and Gender Action Plan

The Adaptation Fund requires a robust and evidence-based gender and environmental and social risk analysis, based on the list of identified sites for project interventions. For the full proposal, IFAD and the Ministry of Agriculture propose to carry out thorough data collection and analysis for gender, marginalized populations, as well as for the assessment of environmental and social risks. The risk analysis will inform the formulation of a robust Environmental and Social Management Plan and Gender Action Plan. IFAD will hire two international consultants for this assignment, a gender specialist and an environmental specialist who will work jointly. The cost of USD 30,000 includes consultancy fees for 15 days as well as fieldwork costs for one week.

For LLA Projects only:

If requesting additional funding for LLA projects to enable devolving decision making to the local level, please specify the activities that would directly serve to enable devolving decision making to the lowest appropriate level and enable local actors to make informed decisions on how adaptation actions are defined, prioritized, designed, and implemented:

Please provide justifications for their need and for the amount of additional funding required:

C. Implementing Entity

IFAD will be the Implementing Entity with fiduciary and technical oversight. While IFAD will also be the Executing Entity for the PFG, the Ministry of Agriculture will be the Executing Entity of the project.

This request has been prepared in accordance with the Adaptation Fund Board's procedures and meets the Adaptation Fund's criteria for project identification and formulation

Implementing Entity Coordinator, IE Name	Signature	Date (Month, day, year)	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email Address
Pierre Yves Guedez Lead Multilateral Climate & Environmental Funds (AF, GCF, GEF), IFAD			Claus Reiner Regional Climate and Environment Specialist, IFAD	+254 11 5492302	c.reiner@ifad.org

Annex B: Preliminary Gender Analysis

a) Core socio-economic context

Gender parity. With a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.483 in 2019, the Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)[59] ranked Malawi 174th out of 189 countries and territories and classified the country among the ones in the low human development category. In 2019, the value of the UNDP's Gender Development Index (GDI) - an indicator that considers sex-disaggregated HDI and which is defined as a ratio of the female to the male HDI - was of 0.986 for Malawi with the HDI value of 0.493 for females and 0.500 for males. The GDI value of 0.986 placed the country into Group 1, a category that includes countries with absolute deviation from gender parity of 2.5 percent or less[60], considering the three basic dimensions of human development, which are health, education and command over economic resources.

Gender inequalities persist in Malawi. Given that patriarchy predominates, women have generally held a less privileged position compared to men. This situation is underpinned by different levels of education and knowledge, access to resources, decision-making authority and economic dependence. Gender roles are defined by traditional and cultural factors that intersect with other social identifiers, such as age, religion and ethnicity, and dictate the deemed appropriate behavior for men and women. Roles and relations are the results of social constructs, gender inequalities are reinforced by social norms, particularly in rural areas. The acceptance of male authority over women is transmitted both implicitly and explicitly through various institutions, including in homes, schools, churches and community gatherings.

One particular element to be considered in Malawian societies is the variation of succession pattern according to whether the district is governed by matrilineal or patrilineal system. In matrilineal system, women in the family inherit land and the man moves into the woman's family home after marriage. In patrilineal systems, inheritance is passed on to the sons and the woman moves in with her husband's family. Customary law in patrilineal system only gives women land-use rights acquired through kinship relationships and their status as wives, mothers, sisters and daughters. These rights are therefore linked to women's role as household food producers and do not grant enough security of tenure in case the marriage ends. Although women tend to have better access to land in matrilineal systems, men (wife's brothers in matrilineal societies) often remain the decision makers regarding access and control over land in both systems[61]. Concerning the project area of intervention: Mzimba district is patrilineal; Balaka district is predominantly matrilineal; Lilongwe district is Matrilineal and Dowa district is Matrilineal.

Assessing gender-based inequalities in reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity, the Gender Inequality Index (GII) of the UNDP ranked Malawi 142th out of 162 countries in 2019[62]. This ranking can be illustrated by (i) a maternal mortality ratio that equals to 349 deaths per 100,000 live births, (ii) an adolescent birth rate of 132.7 births per 1,000 women aged 15-19, (iii) 22.9 percent of parliamentary seats held by women, (iv) 17.6 percent of adult women having reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 26.1 percent of their male counterparts, and (v) a female labour market participation of 72.6 percent compared to 81.1 percent for men. Malawi's GII of 0.565 is slightly better than the average of 0.570 for Sub-Saharan Africa and 0.592 for low HDI countries.

In Malawi, female wage workers earn approximately 64 cents for every dollar earned by men, highlighting a significant gender wage gap. The gender parity ratio in secondary education enrolment is 84%, and women face disadvantages in various areas of economic participation. Malawi ranks 111 out of 151 countries in the Economic Participation and Opportunity index, according to the 2021 World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report[63].

Malawi has one of the highest child marriage rates globally, with 46% of girls married before turning 18. This contributes to a cycle of early marriage, pregnancy, and a lack of formal education. The HIV prevalence rate among young women is significantly higher than that of their male counterparts, and period poverty is a major issue due to the stigma surrounding menstruation and lack of access to

[59] UNDP, 2020. Human Development Report 2020, The next frontier – Human development and the Anthropocene, Briefing note for countries on the 2020 Human Development Report Malawi."

[60] Malawi National Human Development Report 2021, Delivering Sustainable Human Development and Accountability at the local level: the experience of decentralisation in Malawi, UNDP, 2021

[61] Country Profile Malawi, Landlinks, USAID, August 2010 (https://www.land-links.org/country-profile/malawi/)

[62] Ibid.

[63] Unlocking Malawi's Economic Growth by Bridging the Widening Gender Gaps in the labour workforce (worldbank.org)

menstrual products.[64]

National gender policy and legal frameworks. The Government of Malawi is a party to most of the International and regional instruments that promote human rights in general and women, youth and child rights in particular. Malawi legally ratified on the promotion of human rights, equal rights of women and men and the protection of women from all form of discrimination. The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi of 1994 promotes equality between women and men. In its fundamental principles, it recognizes the dignity and worth of each human being and guarantees the protection of their basic rights, according to its terms: " *the inherent dignity and worth of each human being requires that the State and all persons shall recognize and protect human rights and afford the fullest protection to the rights and views of all individuals, groups and minorities whether or not they are entitled to vote"*[65] It also prohibits any discrimination based on "race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability, property, birth or other status or condition"[66]. Key national legislation on women includes among others: the Prevention of Domestic Violence Act (2006); the Gender Equality Act (2013); the Marriage, Divorce, and Family Relations Act (2015); the Deceased Estates (Wills, Inheritance and Protection) Act (2011); and the National Registration Act (2010).

Malawi has also established the 2015 National Gender Policy, and gender considerations are at the core of Malawi's Growth and Development Strategy II (2011-2016), the National Plan of Action to Combat Gender Based Violence (2014-2020), the Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights Policy (2017), the National HIV and AIDS Policy (2003), and the National Strategy on Ending Child Marriage (2018).

Institutional Framework. The Ministry of Gender, Child Development and Community Development (MoGCDCD) is responsible for gender matters. To mainstream gender in all policies and promote gender equality and equity in the national development system, the current gender institutional framework and coordination mechanisms include a Cabinet at the top, a Cabinet Committee on Community and Social Affairs, a Parliamentary Committee on Social and Community Affairs and Parliamentary Women's Caucus. There is a Gender Advisory Committee (GAC) responsible for advising the cabinet committee on gender issues. At technical level, there are specific Technical Working Groups on i) Gender, Culture, HIV and AIDS and Human Rights Technical Working Group; ii) Gender Based Violence Technical Working Group and the Technical Working Group on Political Empowerment of Women (GoM, 2015).

b) Gender-differentiated access and control to resources, division of labour and decision making in the agriculture sector

Around 59% of employed women and 44% of employed men work in agriculture in Malawi, which is the largest employment sector[67]. However, significant gender productivity gaps exist, with men's agricultural plots yielding 25% more than women's, due to unequal access to resources and participation in value chains. Women play a key role in Malawian agriculture, accounting for 65% of smallholder farmers, performing between 50 and 70% of all agricultural tasks and producing 70% of locally consumed food[68]. Despite their high involvement in the sector, women face multiple constraints including very limited access and control over land, difficult access to farm inputs and labor-saving technologies and limited access to financial resources. Women have lower education levels and limited knowledge of improved agricultural practices, a situation that is worsened by limited access to information, inadequate provision of extension services to support their activities and less ability to practice more labor-intensive farming methods. At the same time, various successful experiences have demonstrated the feasibility and high impact of engaging women in conservation agriculture[69], as lead farmers[70], or in other key dimensions to increase climate resilience in agriculture. Female-managed plots are, on average, 12% smaller than those of their male counterparts and 25% less productive[71] as a result of differing levels of knowledge and access to inputs for improving farming efficiency[72]. These

[64] Women's Rights in Malawi - The Borgen Project
[65] Malawi Constitution – Chap.I (Fundamental principles) - Section 12 (Constitutional principles) Al. 1.d
[66] Malawi Constitution – Chap. IV (Human rights) - Section 20 (Equality) Al. 1
[67] Malawi (MWI) - Demographics, Health & Infant Mortality - UNICEF DATA
[68] Gender, agriculture and climate change in Malawi, Luanar, University of Leeds, Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment, University of Kwazulu Natal, Kulima
[69] Chisenga, Chimwemwe M., "Socio-economic factors associated with the adoption of conservation agriculture among women farmers in Balaka District, Malawi" (2015). Open Access Theses. 542.
[70] Malunga P. 2018. An Assessment of Women Empowerment Among Female Lead Farmers: Case of Dowa District in Malawi
[71] Levelling the Field: Improving Opportunities for Women Farmers in Africa, Michael O'Sullivan et al., World Bank, 2014
[72] Caught in a Productivity Trap: A Distributional Perspective on Gender Differences in Malawian Agriculture, Policy Research Working Paper 6381, Kilic et al., World Bank, 2013

constraints and barriers are exacerbated by climate change. Since water security is essential for agricultural production with around 9 out of 10 people in the country depending on rain-fed agriculture[73], and since women generally have lower levels access to water technologies, such as irrigation, than men; women are more likely to be affected by the country's critical water stress.

The gender gap in agricultural productivity stems from women having unequal use of land inputs, and contributes to a substantial burden on the economy. This disparity is critical as agriculture is a major contributor to Malawi's GDP[74]. Women's unequal ownership of quality farmland also has significant implications for the country's rates of hunger and malnutrition. Addressing this disparity is crucial since women play a vital role in agricultural consumption decisions and household food decisions[75].

c) Gender-differentiated climate risks and impacts

Ranked fifth in the Global Climate Index 2021 for nations most affected by climate-related extreme weather, Malawi faces significant climate change impacts, including more erratic and extreme weather events like droughts and floods. In Malawi, climate change disproportionately affects women and girls, intensifying existing gender inequalities and exposing them to increased risks. Women and youth, and especially those in rural areas, are most affected due to their vulnerability, their natural resource- and climate-dependent livelihoods. Indeed, climate challenges exacerbate food, water, and financial insecurity, particularly for those dependent on rain-fed agriculture, and notably the 65% of smallholder farmers who are women. This dependency makes them especially vulnerable to food insecurity and economic shocks. Women are on the frontline of confronting the challenges posed by climate change to livelihoods and the health of their families, and yet they are often poorly equipped and resourced to respond to them. Indeed, women, due to their social status, limited income, education, and resources, are more likely to live in poverty and have less decision-making power and access to finance than men. Additionally, gender roles in Malawi, including the responsibility of gathering water and firewood, often fall on women and girls. Climate induced environmental degradation, leading to scarce resources, forces them to travel further, increasing their vulnerability to gender based violence and using time that could be spent on income generation, education or rest.

d) Initial analysis of targeted beneficiaries and their gender profile

Various gender analysis conducted in the targeted districts corroborate feedback from stakeholder consultations, and in particular:

- In Mzimba district:[76] A patrilineal inheritance system dominates in the district, with women generally accessing land through their husbands, and their tree tenure therefore being limited and conditional. Young single women own no land, since they are expected to get married and move away. Consequently, distributing seedlings to unmarried young women may be limited in promoting their empowerment, and "mobile asset" strategies like skills development may be more effective. The older the woman, the more decision-making authority and autonomy she has. Widows who have retained access to land from their deceased husbands, as well as older divorced women who have been allocated land in their home villages, have relatively more decision-making autonomy, and have significantly higher tree tenure security as compared to their younger counterparts. However, their household labour constraints are high. In the district, women have less access to inputs and extension than men, and tree management workload adds to existing domestic responsibilities. In commercial value chains, men dominate transportation and marketing and take greater control of income as sales increase. Value Addition opportunities for smallholders are limited, and even more so for women.
- In Dowa district:[77][78] The Chewas are the main ethic group in Dowa followed by the Ngonis who are the original Bantu migrators. Marriage and descent systems follow the ethnic groups. Both matrilineal and patrilineal family linages are found in Dowa with matrilineal lineages being dominant. Dowa is a farming community; the main food crops are maize and sweet potatoes. Most households depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Traditional authority is practiced with the village Head man overseeing the day to day issues. Leadership in traditional authority is hereditary. Traditional gender roles remain prevalent in the sampled communities, with women continuing to be primarily

[73] Climate Change is Putting Women & Girls in Malawi at Greater Risk of Sexual Violence, Relief web, OCHA, August 2022
[74] https://mwnation.com/malawi-gender-gap-widens-report/
[75] https://foodtank.com/news/2021/06/research-in-malawi-shows-how-access-impacts-female-farmers/
[76] ICRAF/CIFOR. 2022. Gender Assessment Study or Improved Fruit Tree and Macadamia Nut Value Chains in Mzimba and Kazungu districts of Malawi.
[77] Malunga P. 2018. An Assessment of Women Empowerment Among Female Lead Farmers: Case of Dowa District in Malawi
[78] Mkandawire, E., Bisai, C., Dyke, E. *et al.* A qualitative assessment of gender roles in child nutrition in Central Malawi. *BMC Public Health* **22**, 1392 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-13749-x

responsible for the food, care, and health of the household, even if both men and women are involved in productive, reproductive, and community work. Women carry a disproportionate workload in supporting child nutrition compared to men. Women's heavier workloads often prevent them from being able to meet children's food needs. Nevertheless, shifts in gender roles can be observed, with men taking up responsibilities that have been typically associated with women. These changes in gender roles, however, do not necessarily increase women's power within the household. A study on the lead farmer model demonstrated its relevance, contributing towards changes in household, community and individual level. These changes have led to social and economic empowerment of female lead farmers.

- In Lilongwe district:[79] Lilongwe is traditionally Chewa culture, with a matrilineal system. Historically, the Chewa family system places considerable emphasis on the woman's right and husband's subordination to the wife's kin, and importance of female children as future reproducers of the lineage and inheritance of property. A number of important changes in the Chewa system have occurred over the years which have affected the marriage contract, family residential patterns, exercise of domestic authority, and control or custody of children. In the district, men own and control big household assets of which metal silos qualify to be one. In terms of gender roles and responsibilities, it is culturally expected in the district for men, as heads of households, to decide and assign roles and responsibilities to women and children at both household and at community levels. Men are also culturally expected to be responsible for or take a lead role in financial decisions e.g. paying school fees. On the other hand, women and children are culturally expected to be the usual takers of roles or responsibilities assigned to them by the men. In terms of division of labour, work assumed to be physically challenging is done by men while kitchen jobs are for women because they are assumed not to be physically challenging. However, most farming activities are done jointly. In terms of access to and control of resources, men have more access and control of resources and benefits than women, even in circumstances where the resources and benefits are owned by women.
- In Balaka district:[80] Main ethnic groups include the Yao (36.2%), Lomwe (25.2%), and Ngoni (14.2%) and Chewa (10%) groups, with a predominantly matrilineal system. Despite contributing much labour in farming, women have little or no power over decisions made concerning the land and selling of products after harvest. Even though women appreciate the benefits of conservation agriculture for soil fertility and lessening their farm work, adoption among women is challenged by prevailing gender ideas that give all decision-making power to men as the household heads. With more gender sensitive approaches in promotion of conservation agriculture, women could play a key role in upscaling of the practice. The labour burden together with limited access to inputs and land are the major challenges that women in the area face in conservation agriculture adoption.

e) Planned project responses

The project will undertake a detailed Gender Assessment at project proposal stage. To address the identified gender issues, the project will take proactive measures to integrate gender-focused development strategies, ensuring it will not pose a risk to the principle of gender equality and women's empowerment. In particular, three strategic pathways for gender equality and women's empowerment may be followed, in line with IFAD's strategy for Gender equality and empowerment: (i) promote economic empowerment to enable rural women and men to have equal opportunities to participate in and benefit from profitable economic activities; (ii) enable women and men to have an equal voice and influence in rural institutions and organizations; and, (iii) achieve a more equitable balance of workloads and the sharing of economic and social benefits between women and men.

In line with this, the project will rely on a mix of approaches, including: proven methodologies for the empowerment of women and their inclusion in participatory processes and decision making (including GALS and GCVCA), activities targeting women directly (notably to reduce their workload under output 1.2, and to provide them with income generation opportunities under output 2.2), use of quotas to ensure women representation and participation in project activities, etc. Gender aspects will be mainstreamed in the project's assessment of climate risks, and relevant adaptation measures promoted in the VLAPs developed under component 1, while women specific needs will be accounted for in activities of components 2 and 3. Gender mainstreaming will also be supported throughout the studies and awareness raising activities under Component 3. Additionally, women proposed interventions under the present project include increased access to water, restoration of degraded land and access

[79] Confédération Suisse. 2015. Gender Analysis of Maize Post-Harvest Management in Malawi: A Case Study of Lilongwe and Mchinji districts

[80] Chisenga, Chimwemwe M., "Socio-economic factors associated with the adoption of conservation agriculture among women farmers in Balaka District, Malawi" (2015). Open Access Theses. 542.

to adapted farm inputs to improve crop productivity. To reduce increased burden and time on fetching energy for household use, the project will promote women's involvement in the establishment, management and conservation of communal woodlots. Women will make up 50% of the beneficiaries and their participation in the project will be monitored. The implementation of the project's gender strategy and action plan will be monitored. Trainings will be designed and delivered at times and in locations that are convenient to women given the demands on their time from other duties.

The GALS will be used as a pillar of gender transformation in the project. The GALS is a gender transformative methodology that takes the household as entry point, but directly impact the whole community households belong to. Project beneficiaries will be directly engaged in the process through the formation of pools of GALS champions within the communities, who will expand the methodology through peer-to-peer dissemination: the GALS aims at increasing awareness of gender roles in households and communities by improving their capacity to negotiate their needs and interests and find innovative, gender-equitable solutions in livelihoods planning and value chain development. It constitutes an effective approach for a community-led empowerment using specific participatory processes and simple mapping and diagram tools. The ultimate goal is to give women and men more control over their lives as the basis for individual, household, community and organizational development. The results are tangible in terms of a more equitable work balance in the home, a greater voice for women in household decision-making, a fairer share of economic benefits accruing to women, improved food security and nutrition and a noticeable reduction in domestic violence. The GALS focuses explicitly upon achieving gender justice "from within", involving all households members without supporting the woman/girls at the expense of man/boys.

Annex C: Summary of Stakeholder Consultations for Malawi AF CN

Concerns raised and consultation findings. The main issues emerging consultations are identified in the tables below:

CONSULTATION FINDINGS: FIELD CONSULTATIONS		
Stakeholder	**Concern**	**Project response**
Mzimba district stakeholders		
Women groups	• **Climate change impact:** Long distances to fetch water, insufficiency of food, long distances to get fuel wood, lone responsibility looking for children, men leaving for long period looking for work, low productivity due to soil degradation • Limited access to finance, lack of employment opportunities, men dominated culture, high poverty levels among female headed households (FHHs), land ownership horded by men than women, lack of access to climate change information, unemployment or no peace work, income used by men without consultation, limited knowledge in GAPs	• Enhanced climate resilience thanks to restoration of ecosystem services, and support to climate adaptive agriculture ensuring stability of income and enhanced food and nutrition security • Promotion of gender equality and women empowerment through: direct support to alleviating women's burden (efficient cookstoves, rainwater harvesting); economic opportunities for women (under output 2.2 in particular); enhanced voice and decision making (through dedicated methodologies, including GALS, see output 1.1).
Youth groups	• **Climate change impact:** Food shortages, increased unemployment, • High unemployment, lack of access to agricultural inputs, lack of access to loans (including youths being deliberately segregated), lack of capacity building opportunities in agriculture enterprise	• Direct support to youth adaptive capacity and engagement in resilient agriculture thanks to output 2.1 activities • Youth empowerment through access to economic opportunities under output 2.2
Vulnerable groups	• Lack of water for livestock, flooding rivers blocking people from free movement, limited water access for irrigation and livestock, low productivity due to soil degradation	• Enhanced resilience of landscape and farming systems, benefitting primarily most vulnerable households and groups
Dowa district stakeholders		
Women groups	• **Climate change impact:** increased poverty levels, increased risk behaviors such as prostitution, long distances to fetch water, firewood, food insecurity, gender violence increase, no clean water, lack of energy sources • Limited access to climate change information, limited access to loans, access to improved technologies, access to markets. lack of irrigation facilities, more opportunities for men than women, limited or dwindling energy sources.	• Enhanced climate resilience thanks to restoration of ecosystem services, and support to climate adaptive agriculture ensuring stability of income and enhanced food and nutrition security • Promotion of gender equality and women empowerment through: direct support to alleviating women's burden (efficient cookstoves, rainwater harvesting); economic opportunities for women (under output 2.2 in particular); enhanced voice and decision making (through dedicated methodologies, including GALS, see output 1.1).
Youth groups	• **Climate change impact: L**ow productivity leading to food insecurity, low school attendance among children and youth, Malnutrition, lack of food resulting into school absenteeism, difficulties to travel to school due to flooding, early marriages, prostitution among girls, more degradation due to charcoal making as an alternative • Limited access to finance, lack of ownership of productive resources, Limited capacity on farming practices, business management and marketing, start up capital, high unemployment, limited irrigation infrastructures, clubs formed but not trained, lack of EWS, lack of alternatives, limited opportunities for youth in agriculture, land degradation, EWS, lack of markets, loan access disparity	• Promotion of gender equality and women empowerment, directly benefiting young women and youth in general, through: direct support to alleviating women's burden (efficient cookstoves, rainwater harvesting); economic opportunities for women (under output 2.2 in particular); enhanced voice and decision making (through dedicated methodologies, including GALS, see output 1.1). • Direct support to youth adaptive capacity and engagement in resilient agriculture thanks to output 2.1 activities • Youth empowerment through access to economic opportunities under output 2.2
Vulnerable groups	• Depression due to lack of means to support families, men run away from their families absconding their duties.	• Enhanced resilience of landscape and farming systems, benefitting primarily most vulnerable households and groups, and helping them settle instead of having to resort to outmigration
Lilongwe rural district stakeholders		

Women groups	• **Climate change impact:** Increased distances or time to fetch water, Lack of food and malnutrition, increased debts incurred, limited access to energy for cooking, increased incidences of dire poverty, marriages destabilized, gender based violence increased. • Low literacy levels among women compared to men, high unemployment, limited access to finance, limited access to climate change information, limited access to improved agricultural inputs, limited participation in productive work, gender disparities among men and women. Lack of storage or aggregate infrastructure to reduce post harvest losses and aggregate for market	• Enhanced climate resilience thanks to restoration of ecosystem services, and support to climate adaptive agriculture ensuring stability of income and enhanced food and nutrition security • Promotion of gender equality and women empowerment through: direct support to alleviating women's burden (efficient cookstoves, rainwater harvesting); economic opportunities for women (under output 2.2 in particular); enhanced voice and decision making (through dedicated methodologies, including GALS, see output 1.1).
Youth groups	• **Climate change impact:** Lack of water for irrigation (dambo farming); lack of alternative livelihoods, low yields resulting into hunger, parents forced to sell land leaving youth with no land, increased prostitution, increased stealing among youths, disbanded families due to search of opportunities, low school attendance among children and youth, malnutrition, lack of food resulting into school absenteeism, difficulties to travel to school due to flooding, early marriages • Limited capacity in better farming practices, business management and marketing, start-up capital, high unemployment, lack of better markets leaving middle-men cashing in from farmers, limited irrigation infrastructure, clubs formed but not trained, lack of EWS, lack of alternatives, limited opportunities for youth in agriculture	• Promotion of gender equality and women empowerment, directly benefiting young women and youth in general, through: direct support to alleviating women's burden (efficient cookstoves, rainwater harvesting); economic opportunities for women (under output 2.2 in particular); enhanced voice and decision making (through dedicated methodologies, including GALS, see output 1.1). • Direct support to youth adaptive capacity and engagement in resilient agriculture thanks to output 2.1 activities • Youth empowerment through access to economic opportunities under output 2.2
Vulnerable groups	• Forced to move away from home leaving families in search of opportunities, reduced water leading to long hours watering, searching water for livestock	• Enhanced resilience of landscape and farming systems, benefitting primarily most vulnerable households and groups, and helping them settle instead of having to resort to outmigration
Balaka district stakeholders		
Women groups	• **Climate change impact:** Lack of water for household and agricultural use; low yield mostly due to recurrent droughts, infrastructure damage such as houses, irrigation schemes and roads, loss of assets including livestock due to cyclones, food insecurity and malnutrition due to low productivity.Limited access to climate information among women, lack of knowledge how to adapt to recent hazards particularly cyclones; increased burden to fetch water for household use due to droughts and floods and challenges to fetch firewood due to deforestation; limited access to improved inputs to improve primary food production for food security; difficulties to access better markets	• Enhanced climate resilience thanks to restoration of ecosystem services, and support to climate adaptive agriculture ensuring stability of income and enhanced food and nutrition security • Enhanced early warning systems, disaster risk management, and access to agroclimatic information • Promotion of gender equality and women empowerment through: direct support to alleviating women's burden (efficient cookstoves, rainwater harvesting); economic opportunities for women (under output 2.2 in particular); enhanced voice and decision making (through dedicated methodologies, including GALS, see output 1.1).
Youth groups	• Climate change impact: Increased poverty levels and food insecurity due to low production. Reduced employment opportunities due to low agricultural production by potential employers • Limited or no access to start-up finance for small businesses.	• Direct support to youth adaptive capacity and engagement in resilient agriculture thanks to output 2.1 activities • Youth empowerment through access to economic opportunities under output 2.2

Stakeholder consulted and date	Topics/Concerns	Project response
Department of Land Resources Conservation (DLRC) Mrs Gertrude Kambauwa – Director; Gilbert Kapunda – D.D; Anderson Kawejere – CLMTO; McPherson Nthara - DDECE 7th Feb 2024	Main drivers of catchment degradation and their subsequent interventions such as population density, expansion of agricultural land. Solutions include delineation of hotspots and afforestation etc.	Project integrated approach supporting jointly the enhanced resilience of ecosystems (component 1) and that of farming systems (component 2)

Department of Agricultural Extension Services (DAES) Christine Chidaya – PAEMO; Ken Chaula -DD *7th Feb 2024*	Institutionalisation of FFS methodology. What constitutes a farmers group. Basic elements for recognizing a farmer group as per Ministry requirements, achievements, challenges, and lessons from previous and ongoing projects on climate change information and EWS extension services, govt policies etc.	- Support to the adoption of climate resilient practices for smallholder farmers building on the FFS model (enhancing it and supporting it) under output 2.1 - Direct support to and reliance on Agriculture Extension Services for the dissemination of agrometeorological information at local level (output 3.1) - Enhanced institutional capacity to centralize, elaborate and disseminate actionable agrometeorological information (output 3.2) - Alignment with relevant policies and strategies
Environmental Affairs Department (EAD) Peter Magombo - PEO *7th Feb 2024*	List of Environmental Regulations, Standards or Acts related, status of Malawi Carbon Trade Initiative and the opportunities or expected challenges for smallholder farmer participation.	- Inclusion of relevant standards in the Concept Note
Programme for Rural Irrigation Development (PRIDE) Limbani Gomani – Engineer; Victor Nyirongo – Env Specialist *7th Feb 2024*	- Estimates for different community irrigation scheme construction costs - Need for community consultations, awareness, and information to get concurrence before constructing community irrigation schemes - Environmental profile mapping and EIAs	- Costs and approaches taken into account for output 2.2 - Participatory approach embedded in the project - Compliance with the law including environmental standards is planned and will be embedded into the project ESMP
Lilongwe District Council: Ezra Mbendera – Direc. Agric; Joseph Mtengezo – Crops Officer; Dalitso Mbewe – APO; Judith Chapotera – DAHLDO; Bettina Nkhoma – CPO **81 Community beneficiaries** (Signed copies available) *16th Feb 2024*	District farming systems; main agricultural value chains; actual yields vs potential yield; poverty levels; food insecurity status; general challenges to agricultural production; factors exacerbating community climate vulnerability; main climatic hazards, frequency and impact; most climate change vulnerable areas in the districts; ongoing agricultural livelihood projects; access to climate information; proposed interventions to reduce climate vulnerability and increase resilience, initiatives undertaken to improve women/youth empowerment and gender equality, capacity of and existing extension staffing levels	- Confirmation of geographic targeting through assessment of district vulnerability - Validation of proposed activities and confirmed relevance for the district - Landscape resilience and restoration activities under component 1 (including participatory planning, empowering VNRMCs, community woodlots, ecosystem restoration measures and incentives to reduce pressure on ecosystems) - Activities supporting smallholder farmer resilience under component 2 (training on climate resilience practices through strengthening of FFS model and access to adapted planting material and climate resilient infrastructure) - Access to actionable climate information at local level thanks to support provided under output 3.1. - General information for context section and Preliminary Gender Analysis.
Mzimba District Council: Rodney Simwaka – DC; Siles Chiwambo – Chief Irrigation officer; Julius Banda – PAO; Benjamin Mhango – Planning Officer **75 Community members** (Signed copies available) *14th Feb 2024*		
Dowa District Council: Martin Kamlomo – Director of Agriculture; Stenson Kadango – DAHLDO; Chifundo Mpoola – CPO; Vetta Mzilahowa – ABO; Mirriam Njolomole – Nutrition Officer; Grant Dalireni – Planning Officer **104 Community members** (Signed copies available) *15th Feb 2024*		
Balaka District Council: The Full DAECC was represented including Mr. Zingeni, the DADO himself; Ancy Banda - Principle Livestock Development Officer; Nelson Mataka - DEAD, NAIP-MoA; Pacson Simwaka-Agronomist at DARS; Godfrey Liwewe - DAPS, ABS; Milha Phiri, Senior Land Resource Conservation officer at Department of Land Resources; Aone Kumwenda, Agricultural Officer **100 community members** consulted.		
Ministry of Gender Fred Simwaka – Deputy Director *11th March 2024*	- National policies and strategies on gender empowerment in general and particularly to the agriculture sector. - Guidelines, training manuals, and materials available for use to enhance gender empowerment, confirmation that Malawi laws do not segregate or discriminate against gender,	Elements taken into account in the Preliminary Gender Analysis and throughout the concept note

	confirmation on indigenous peoples categorisation in Malawi.	
Famers Union (FUM) Derek Kapolo – Head of Agribusiness *12th March 2024*	Status of farmer groups such as the Associations and Cooperatives. Issues of promoting women and youth inclusion in agriculture and improvement of availability of seeds through department of research/need to enhance agrobiodiversity, need to improve access to finance mostly through farmer groups and marketing through farmer groups or cooperatives. Need to improve climate change information access particulary on area resolution (currently given at regional and sometimes district level but better at EPAs or TA level) and the updates are limited, usually only at start of season	- Support to farmers groups and their formalization (output 2.1 and 2.2) - Activities in support to agrobiodiversity (output 2.2) - Support to women and youth inclusion in agriculture and use of GALS (output 2.1) - Access to climate information under component 3
Department of Climate Change and Meteorological services (DCCMS) Clemence Boyce – Deputy Director *14th Feb 2024.*	Lessons learnt from previous and ongoing projects on climate change information and EWS services and capacity gaps.	- Component 3 activities supporting access to climate information for decision making in agriculture at local and institutional level
World Food Programme Moses Jemitale – Head of Resilience Dept *8th March 2024*	- EWS through PISCA approach worked well (information was demanded in advance from DCCMS) with support of project. - Crop insurance and smallholder farmer experiences, current insurance packages more feasible for huge member subscription but not for few or individual small-scale farmers; need to enhance awareness and knowledge of small-farmers on insurance, some farmers expected guaranteed payment every year even without reaching set threshold for compensation. - Need for national guidelines on agricultural insurance	- EWS building on PICSA planned under output 2.1 and more generally access to weather information planned under component 3 - Insurance schemes out of the scope of the project but linkages may be planned at project proposal stage - WFP relevant project included in the duplication table
NBS Bank Gomezgani Kakhuta- Head of Agribusiness*13th March 2024*	- Bank experiences in issuing loans to smallholder farmers, prefer farmer groups or cooperatives as has good recovery rates, Bank has experiences in handling third party funds for derisking financing to smallholder farmers. Bank provides training through third party to enhance farmers groups loans and financial management.	- Project support to establishing and formalizing farmer's groups as well as support to basic business principles ("farming as a business" module of FFS) may enhance access of vulnerable smallholders to financial services