



## ADAPTATION FUND

AFB/PPRC.37/7  
16 March 2026

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Adaptation Fund Board  
Project and Programme Review Committee  
Thirty seventh Meeting  
Bonn, Germany, 7-8 April 2026

Agenda Item 5 (b)

## PROPOSAL FOR MALAWI

## Background

1. The Operational Policies and Guidelines (OPG) for Parties to Access Resources from the Adaptation Fund (the Fund), adopted by the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board), state in paragraph 45 that regular adaptation project and programme proposals, i.e. those that request funding exceeding US\$ 1 million, would undergo either a one-step, or a two-step approval process. In case of the one-step process, the proponent would directly submit a fully-developed project proposal. In the two-step process, the proponent would first submit a brief project concept, which would be reviewed by the Project and Programme Review Committee (PPRC) and would have to receive the endorsement of the Board. In the second step, the fully-developed project/programme document would be reviewed by the PPRC, and would ultimately require the Board's approval.

2. The Templates approved by the Board (Annex 5 of the OPG, as amended in March 2016) do not include a separate template for project and programme concepts but provide that these are to be submitted using the project and programme proposal template. The section on Adaptation Fund Project Review Criteria states:

*For regular projects using the two-step approval process, only the first four criteria will be applied when reviewing the 1st step for regular project concept. In addition, the information provided in the 1st step approval process with respect to the review criteria for the regular project concept could be less detailed than the information in the request for approval template submitted at the 2nd step approval process. Furthermore, a final project document is required for regular projects for the 2nd step approval, in addition to the approval template.*

3. The first four criteria mentioned above are:

- (i) Country Eligibility,
- (ii) Project Eligibility,
- (iii) Resource Availability, and
- (iv) Eligibility of NIE/MIE.

4. The fifth criterion, applied when reviewing a fully-developed project document, is:  
(v) Implementation Arrangements.

5. It is worth noting that at the twenty-second Board meeting, the Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) of the Fund was approved and at the twenty-seventh Board meeting, the Gender Policy (GP) of the Fund was also approved. Consequently, compliance with both the ESP and the GP has been included in the review criteria both for concept documents and fully-developed project documents. The proposal template was revised as well, to include sections requesting demonstration of compliance of the project/programme with the ESP and the GP.

6. At its seventeenth meeting, the Board decided (Decision B.17/7) to approve "Instructions for preparing a request for project or programme funding from the Adaptation Fund", contained in the Annex to document AFB/PPRC.8/4, which further outlines applicable review criteria for both concepts and fully-developed proposals. The latest version of this document was launched in conjunction with the revision of the Operational Policies and Guidelines in November 2013.

7. Based on the Board Decision B.9/2, the first call for project and programme proposals was issued and an invitation letter to eligible Parties to submit project and programme proposals to the Fund was sent out on April 8, 2010.

8. The following fully-developed project document titled “Smallholder Climate Resilience Project (SCRIP)” was submitted for Malawi by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), which is a Multilateral Implementing Entity of the Adaptation Fund.

9. This is the third submission of the fully-developed project proposal using the two-step submission process.

10. It was first submitted as project concept in the forty- second Board Meeting. It was later submitted as a project concept in the forty-fourth meeting and the Board decided:

*(a) To endorse the concept note as supplemented by the clarification responses provided by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to the request made by the technical review;*

*(b) To request the secretariat to notify IFAD of the observations in the review sheet annexed to the notification of the Board’s decision, as well as the following issues:*

*(i) The fully developed project proposal should highlight, more clearly and in greater detail, the idea of mainstreaming knowledge management (KM) into project outputs, activities, and indicators, quantify key knowledge products in a results framework, as well as clarify how the project plans to track and analyse turnout and result of the interventions to the benefit of global, national and local climate change adaptation;*

*(ii) The fully developed project proposal should clearly depict how the project will learn from intervention experiences, track the experience and ensure continuous learning and visually detail out the organization and processes needed for efficient and qualitative learning and sharing, and knowledge management;*

*(iii) The fully developed project proposal should provide clarity around project activities, including if there are unidentified sub-projects (USPs) or partially unidentified sub-projects, and, accordingly, implementation and monitoring arrangements in place, as per the Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Policy and policies on USPs;*

*(c) To approve the project formulation grant of US\$ 150,000;*

*(d) To request IFAD to transmit the observations under subparagraph (b) to the Government of Malawi;*

*(e) To encourage the Government of Malawi to submit, through IFAD, a fully developed project proposal that would also address any observations under subparagraph (b), above.*

**(Decision B.44/25)**

11. The current submission was received by the secretariat in time to be considered in the forty-sixth Board meeting. The secretariat carried out a technical review of the project proposal, assigned it the diary number AF00000380, and completed a review sheet.

12. In accordance with a request to the secretariat made by the Board in its 10th meeting, the secretariat shared this review sheet with IFAD and offered it the opportunity of providing responses before the review sheet was sent to the PPRC.

13. The secretariat is submitting to the PPRC the summary and, pursuant to decision B.17/15, the final technical review of the project, both prepared by the secretariat, along with the final submission of the proposal in the following section. In accordance with decision B.25.15, the proposal is submitted with changes between the initial submission and the revised version highlighted.



ADAPTATION FUND

## ADAPTATION FUND BOARD SECRETARIAT TECHNICAL REVIEW OF PROJECT/PROGRAMME PROPOSAL

PROJECT/PROGRAMME CATEGORY: Regular Size Full Proposal

**Country/Region:** Malawi

**Project Title:** Smallholder Climate Resilience Project (SCRP)

**Thematic Focal Area:** Agriculture and Rural Development

**Implementing Entity:** International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

**Executing Entities:** Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development

**AF Project ID:** AF00000380

**IE Project ID:** xxxx

**Requested Financing from Adaptation Fund (US Dollars):** 20,000,000

**Reviewer and contact person:** Ahmad Ghosn

**Co-reviewer(s):**

**IE Contact Person:** xxx

### Technical Summary

The project “Smallholder Climate Resilience Project (SCRP)” aims to reduce the vulnerability of smallholder farmers and the ecosystems they depend on to the negative impacts of climate change. This will be done through the three components below:

Component 1: Resilient ecosystems sustainably providing services to smallholder farmers (USD 8,041,397).

Component 2: Resilient smallholders’ farming systems in Malawi (USD 7,572,121)

Component 3: Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi (USD 1,143,604).

Requested financing overview:

Project/Programme Execution Cost: USD 1,676,058

Total Project/Programme Cost: USD 18,433,180

Implementing Fee: USD 1,566,820

Financing Requested: USD 20,000,000

	<p>The first/ initial technical review raises several issues, such as: providing more details on some project activities and justifying climate change adaptation merits of <i>providing fuel-efficient woodstoves</i> (Activity 1.2.4); Clarifying the project theory of change and AF objectives/ outcomes supported by the project; providing more quantification of the benefits, where possible: providing a consolidated summary table of the consultations; aligning table 11 with AF E&amp;S checklist format; further clarification of the implementation arrangements; inclusion of a summary table of the ESMP in Part IIIC; providing breakdown of the IE fee and a consolidated table for the detailed budget and notes ; revising the M&amp;E plan and budget allocations; revising the project result framework, and the project alignment with AF results framework; providing dedicated tables for applicable AF core impact indicators; among other Clarification Requests (CRs) and Corrective Action Request (CARs) indicated in the review.</p> <p>The second technical review finds that most of the CARs and CRs raised in the first review are addressed. Only few still warrant further consideration/ clarification including specifying the proposal last submission date; adding dates of two related projects; providing further breakdown of IE fees; filling related formation in the core indicators tables; revising alignment with AF RF table; and an editorial note as indicated in the review.</p> <p>This Third (final) technical review finds that all outstanding CR and CARs have been addressed.</p>
Date:	<b>4 March 2026</b>

Review Criteria	Questions	First Technical Review Comments 20 December 2025	Second Technical Review Comments 13 February 2026	Third Technical Review Comments 4 March 2026
Country Eligibility	1. Is the country party to the Kyoto Protocol and/or the Paris Agreement?	<b>Yes.</b>	-	-
	2. Is the country a developing country particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change?	<b>Yes.</b> Malawi is vulnerable to adverse climate hazards such as dry spells, seasonal droughts, intense rainfall, riverine and flash floods, among others.	- <b>Note:</b> Computer screen dashboard page numbers of the track change version are referenced in the review, unless otherwise specified.	-
Project Eligibility	1. Has the designated government authority for the Adaptation Fund endorsed the project/programme?	<b>Yes.</b> As per the Endorsement letter dated 11 November 2025.	<b>CAR1 New:</b> In Part I, first page "Project Info Sheet", please insert the proposal last submission date.  <b>CR1: Cleared.</b> See p. 113.	<b>CAR1 NEW: Cleared.</b> As per amendment on page "i" of the proposal.

		<b>CR1:</b> Please include the endorsement letter in Part IVA (not as Annex1).		
	2. Does the length of the proposal amount to no more than One hundred (100) pages for the fully-developed project document, and one hundred (100) pages for its annexes?	<p><b>Yes.</b> The document is 93 pages and annexes are 95 pages.</p> <p><b>Editorial Notes: Please address the following to improve the document clarity and quality:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Please revise table of contents to reflect the document key contents correctly (e.g., Part III sections).</li> <li>2. Add list of figures.</li> <li>3. Ensure that page numbering is inserted on the document</li> <li>4. Add the annexes in the table of contents.</li> <li>5. Ensure that all abbreviations are included in the list of abbreviations/ acronyms and are spelled out when they are first used.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Editorial Notes:</b> Page numbering does not show on the document pages.</p>	<p><b>Cleared.</b> Page numbers now appear.</p>
	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?	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part IIA, pp. 20-46. The project supports several concrete and soft adaptation actions including: developing 70 Village Level Action Plans; establishing/ strengthening 70 Village Natural Resource Management Committees and 150 Farmer Field Schools; Establishing 19 tree nurseries, 19 seed multiplier groups, and 19 community seed banks; establishing 70 small-scale flood/ rainwater collection</p>		-

		<p>infrastructures; rehabilitating 70 climate-resilient storage facilities; support the revitalization of 4 agriculture resource centers; installing 16 Automated Weather Stations; among others as discussed in Part IIA. <u>However, more details and some clarifications are needed.</u></p> <p><b>CAR1:</b> Please address the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Please provide more details on the interventions/ items under high budget activities (e.g., Activity 1.1.1 (USD 762,389); Activities under output 1.2, except for Activity 1.2.3 (over USD 6,000,000); Activity 2.1.2 (USD 767,250); Activity 2.2.2 (USD 5,712,492); etc.) to further demonstrate the amount of work involved and substantiate allocated budgets. Also, ensure that the added details are itemized in the activities breakdown in the detailed budget.</li> <li>2. Under Activity 1.1.1."Engagement of and support from DLRC", para 67 states: "SCRP will enhance DLRC capacities through training and resources... Specifically, SCRП will support DLRC</li> </ol>	<p><b>CAR1: Cleared.</b> See pp. 26-49 and IE response. <u>However</u>, please reflect the adaptation benefits of fuel-efficient woodstoves in the text of para 105, not as a footnote.</p>	
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		<p>with equipment such as: drones, GPS gadgets, soil testing kits, inclinometers, GIS software, digitizing tables, etc.". Please provide more details on the areas of training, number training sessions, number of staff to be trained, number of equipment/ devices mentioned, etc.). Same applies to Activity 1.1.2. "Community engagement and sensitization through VDCs", para 71 states: "Community sensitization sessions will be delivered ..... ". Please indicate the number of sensitization sessions under each topic, number of participants, etc. Apply for similar soft activities/ actions across Part IIA.</p> <p>3. Under Activity 1.2.4 "Recognition of community efforts and measures to reduce pressure on ecosystems", please provide further climate adaptation reasoning/ justification for the provision of fuel-efficient woodstoves, as it appears business as usual development support. if adequately justified, specify the number of beneficiaries receiving these stoves to substantiate allocated budgets.</p>	<p><b>CR2: Cleared.</b> See pp. 21-22.</p> <p><b>CR3: Cleared.</b> See para 67, pp. 26-27, and IE response.</p>	
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		<p>4. Under Activity 1.1.5, para 85 (p.26) refers to the support of national consultants in the development of the VLAPs. Is this being support covered by AF budget or it is in-kind government support? Please clarify.</p> <p><b>CR2:</b> At the end of Part I (after objectives) or as appropriate at the beginning of Part IIA, add a brief discussion Theory of Change (TOC), along with a schematic presentation of the same, to clarify the suitability of project interventions in responding to the threats posed by the likely climate scenarios outlined Part I “background and context section”.</p> <p><b>CR3:</b> Paragraph 65 refers to DLRC as the primary implementation partner. Do you mean to say, “executing partner” under the umbrella of Executing Entity (EE) “Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development”, being one of its departments? Please clarify to avoid confusion regarding the EE role and the role of IFAD as Implementing entity (IE). Ensure the proper use of the terms “execute” and “implement” to avoid confusion</p>		
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		in Part IIA and other sections (e.g.: Part IIIA).		
	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 Gender Policy of the Fund?	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part IIB, pp. 46-48. However, adding some more details related to the quantifications of economic and social benefits is recommended. Also refer to the gender assessment and action plan annex at related discussions.</p> <p><b>CR4:</b> Please strengthen economic &amp; social benefits such as increased income, job creation, market access, assets, etc. with some estimated figures and provide indicative dollar value for the economic benefits to marginalized/ vulnerable groups, including women and youth, where/ if possible.</p> <p><b>CR5:</b> please refer to the gender assessment and action plan Annex 5 at related discussions in Part IIB.</p>	<p><b>CR4: Cleared.</b> See pp. 52-55.</p> <p><b>CR5: Cleared.</b> See para 195, p. 54.</p>	
	5. Is the project / programme cost effective?	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part IIC, pp. 49-53.</p> <p><b>CR6:</b> In Table 6, please provide, if possible, some estimated dollar value of the benefits generated/ losses averted to just have a sense of overall cost-benefit ratio.</p>	<p><b>CR6: Cleared.</b> See Table 6, pp. 57-60.</p>	
6. Is the project / programme consistent with national or sub-national sustainable development strategies, national or	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part IID, pp. 53-57.</p>	-		

	sub-national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, national communications and adaptation programs of action and other relevant instruments?			
	7. Does the project / programme meet the relevant national technical standards, where applicable, in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Fund?	<b>Yes.</b> See Part IIE, pp. 57-60.  <b>CR7:</b> Change Table 8 title from "ESMP Compliance" to "Compliance with National Standards" to avoid confusion with the Environmental & Social Management Plan (ESMP).	<b>CR7: Cleared.</b> See Table 8, pp.66-67.	-
	8. Is there duplication of project / programme with other funding sources?	<b>No.</b> See Part IIF, pp. 60-63.  <b>CAR2:</b> Kindly, include the AF funded regional project "Building Urban Climate Resilience in South-eastern Africa" being implemented by UN-Habitat, in the list of related projects, as it includes elements on adaptive capacity building and ecosystem resilience as part of its results.	<b>CAR2: Not cleared.</b> See pp. 67-71. Please add the dates of the two projects listed at the end of table ("Climate Smart Public Works Programme (CSPWP)" and "Building urban climate resilience in south-eastern Africa (Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Union of Comoros)").	<b>Cleared.</b> As per insertion of dates at Climate Smart Public Works Programme (CSPWP)" on page 61 of tracked changed version.
	9. Does the project / programme have a learning and knowledge management component to capture and feedback lessons?	<b>Yes.</b> See Part IIG, pp. 63-66. Learning and Knowledge Management aspects are embedded/ integrated in project components.	-	-

	<p>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?</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part IIH, pp. 66-67 and Annex 2. However, a summary table of these consultations need to be provided in Part IIH, among other issues indicated below.</p> <p><b>CAR3:</b> In Part IIH, include a consolidated summary table of the consultations. The table should include: consultation date, consulted stakeholders/ vulnerable groups, number of participants disaggregated by gender, consultation topics, outcomes and how they were considered in project design. Also, clarify if further consultation will be conducted during the project implementation/ execution.</p> <p><b>CR8:</b> Please clarify if further consultations will be conducted during project implementation.</p>	<p><b>CAR3: Cleared.</b> See Tables 10 &amp; 11, pp. 74-78.</p> <p><b>CR8: Cleared.</b> See para 246, p. 78.</p>	-
	<p>11. Is the requested financing justified on the basis of full cost of adaptation reasoning?</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part II"1", pp. 67-69.</p> <p><b>CR9:</b> Add a brief paragraph to confirm that the project will achieve its planned outcomes/ objective/s solely based on requested AF funds, irrespective of any additional financing from other sources/ donors.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The distribution of fuel-efficient wood stoves, under activity 1.2.4 reads as</p>	<p><b>CR9: Cleared.</b> See para 248, p. 78.</p> <p>-</p>	-

		<p>“business-as-usual” development support activity and warrant further justification on its climate adaptation merits. See related comment above-CAR1)</p>		
	12. Is the project / program aligned with AF’s results framework?	<p><b>Yes.</b> <u>However</u>, see related comments below under item 9 of the “Implementation Arrangements” of the review sheet.</p>	-	-
	13. Has the sustainability of the project/programme outcomes been taken into account when designing the project?	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part IIJ, pp. 69-70. <u>However</u>, further clarification of the O&amp;M financial sustainability is recommended.</p> <p><b>CR10:</b> Please further clarify the financial sustainability for the maintenance of small-scale irrigation systems, water harvesting structures, storage facilities, and weather stations, as they may require regular maintenance, repairs, replacement of parts etc. Will related costs be borne by concerned public entities or passed down to the users.</p>	<p><b>CR10: Cleared.</b> See para 255, p.82.</p>	-
	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?	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part IIK, pp. 71-75. <u>However</u>, Table 11 is not aligned with AF checklist format.</p> <p><b>CAR4:</b> Align Table 11 with AF checklist format of the AF full proposal document template. In Column 1 of the revised table spell out the AF E&amp;S principle, in column 2, indicate whether or not further assessment is needed, and in column 3 fill in</p>	<p><b>CAR4: Cleared.</b> See Table 13, pp. 83-86.</p>	-

		<p>the discussions/ text included in the current table and include the level of risk/ Impact as appropriate (e.g., no risk, low risk, medium risk, etc.).</p> <p><b>CR11:</b> Refer the gender assessment action plan Annex 5 at relevant E&amp;S principles in the revised Table 11.</p>	<b>CR11: Cleared.</b> See Table 13, AF ESPs 2-5, pp. 83-84	
Resource Availability	1. Is the requested project / programme funding within the cap of the country?	<b>Yes.</b>	-	-
	2. Is the Implementing Entity Management Fee at or below 8.5 per cent of the total project/programme budget before the fee?	<b>Yes.</b> The Implementing Fee (USD 1,566,820) is 8.5% of the Total Project Cost (USD 18,433,180).	-	-
	3. Are the Project/Programme Execution Costs at or below 9.5 per cent of the total project/programme budget (including the fee)?	<b>Yes.</b> The Execution Costs (USD 1,676,058) are 9.1% of the Total Project Cost (USD 18,433,180).	-	-
Eligibility of IE	1. Is the project/programme submitted through an eligible Implementing Entity that has been accredited by the Board?	<b>Yes.</b> <u>However, accreditation expires on 21 December 2025.</u>	-	-
Implementation Arrangements	1. Is there adequate arrangement for project / programme management, in	<b>Yes.</b> See Part IIIA, pp. 85-78. However, the discussion does not clearly reflect the reporting line among the involved entitles.	-	-

	<p>compliance with the Gender Policy of the Fund?</p>	<p>Also, a schematic presentation/ chart of the project implementation organizational structure is needed to reflect all involved entities and the reporting lines, among others.</p> <p><b>CAR5:</b> Please add a paragraph to explicitly indicate the executing entity (i.e., Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development) followed by Para 255 “Institutional anchoring and organizational framework”. More importantly clarify the reporting lines among the involved entities and provide a full organization chart showing these entities and related reporting lines.</p> <p><b>CR12:</b> Clarify, as appropriate, how the gender-responsive elements are incorporated in implementation arrangements.</p>	<p><b>CAR5: Cleared.</b> See para 262, p. 89, and Figure 2, p. 91.</p> <p><b>CR12: Cleared.</b> See para 271, pp. 92-93.</p>	
	<p>2. Are there measures for financial and project/programme risk management?</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part IIIB, pp. 78-79.</p>		-
	<p>3. Are there measures in place for the management of environmental and social risks, in line with the Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy of the Fund?</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part IIIC, pp. 80-82, and Annex 3. However, a consolidated summary table of the ESMP is needed.</p> <p><b>CAR6:</b> In Part IIIC, please include a consolidated summary table of the ESMP. The table entries should include: the AF E&amp;S principle, project component/output/activity</p>	<p><b>CAR6: Not Cleared.</b> Table 15, pp. 96-97, and IE response however, please provide the actual figures for the cost of the ESMP</p>	<p><b>CAR6: Cleared.</b></p> <p>As per insertions at table 15 on pages 83-84 of tracked changes</p>

		<p>related to the risk, risk mitigation measures, monitoring frequency to ensure compliance with mitigation measures, responsible entity, and budget provisions. Please ensure that the risks listed in the ESMP are consistent with those mentioned in the AF checklist in Part IIK.</p> <p><b>CR13:</b> Clarify the budget line/s for ESMP implementation and related M&amp;E and supervision and reflect at related sections. Same applies to Gender Action Plan.</p>	<p><b>CR13: Cleared.</b> See Table 15, pp. 96-97 and IE response.</p>	<p>version as well as paragraph 306 on page 88 of track changed version.</p> <p>-</p>
	<p>4. Is a budget on the Implementing Entity Management Fee use included?</p>	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part IIIG, pp. 91-93, end of Table 16. <u>However</u>, further breakdown of the IE fee use is needed.</p> <p><b>CAR7:</b> Please provide breakdown of the listed three items (Financial Management, Programme Support, and Technical Support).</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The implementing entity fee covers: Corporate activities fees related to engagement with donor (Policy support, Portfolio management, Reporting, Outreach and knowledge sharing) and Project cycle management fees (Project preparation and management oversight including financial management, quality insurance, Implementation reports supervision, and Project</p>	<p><b>CAR7: Not cleared.</b> See page 112. Please provide further breakdown of the allocated amounts under “Financial Management”; “Programme Support”; and Technical Support”.</p>	<p><b>CAR 7: Cleared.</b> As per footnote *** provided to detailed budget on page 100 of track changed version.</p>

		completion and evaluation oversight).		
	5. Is an explanation and a breakdown of the execution costs included?	<p><b>Yes.</b> See Part III G, Table 16, pp. 91-93. However, ensure that the breakdown does not include items that fall under IE fee (e.g., baseline study, midterm &amp; final evaluations, etc.).</p> <p><b>CR14:</b> Ensure that the breakdown does not include items that fall under IE fee (e.g., baseline study, midterm and final evaluations, etc.).</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The project execution cost, includes the main items supported by the Adaptation Fund for project management including consultant services, travel and office facilities, etc. covering the direct costs for administration of the day-to day activities of projects. Specific costs include: Staffing costs, and project related activity expenditures (Monitoring and evaluation costs; Costs related to drafting progress reports and financial reports; Consultation with project stakeholders (meetings, workshops); Communication, Travel).</p>	<p><b>CR14: Cleared.</b> See pp. 111-112 of Table 22, and IE response.</p>	-
	6. Is a detailed budget including budget notes included?	<p><b>Yes. However, amendments are required.</b> See Part III G, Table 16, pp. 91-93. Detailed budget and notes should be consolidated in one table. Also, further breakdown for activities</p>		-

		<p>with large budget allocation is needed (e.g., Activity 1.1.1 (\$762,389); Activities under output 1.2, except for Activity 1.2.3 (over \$6,000,000); Activity 2.1.2 FFS delivery Activity (\$767,250 ); Activity 2.2.2. Resilient community infrastructure (\$5,712,492); etc.).</p> <p><b>CAR8:</b> Consolidate detailed budget and notes in one table and provide further breakdown for activities with large budget allocation, as indicated above.</p>	<p><b>CAR8: Cleared.</b> See Table 22, pp. 110-112.</p>	
	<p>7. Are arrangements for monitoring and evaluation clearly defined, including budgeted M&amp;E plans and sex-disaggregated data, targets and indicators, in compliance with the Gender Policy of the Fund?</p>	<p><b>Yes. However, amendments are required.</b> See Part IIID, pp.82-84. Some details and revisions are needed to comply with AF requirements.</p> <p><b>CR15:</b> Please mention the project completion report in the M&amp;E discussions and reflect in Table 13, as appropriate.</p> <p><b>CR16:</b> Table 13 indicates Mid-Term survey and MTR, Project completion survey, and Completion process under the PMU responsibility. Please clarify whether these are different than the midterm evaluation, final evaluation and completion report. In this regard, please note that the baseline study/ report, midterm evaluation, final evaluation and completion report related costs</p>	<p><b>CR15: Cleared.</b> See paras 301 &amp; 302, p. 100.</p> <p><b>CR16: Cleared.</b> See Table 16, pp. 101-102, para 295, p. 99, paras 300-303, p. 100, and IE response.</p> <p><b>CAR9: Cleared.</b> See CR16 above and IE response.</p>	

	<p>fall under the IE fee as per AF requirements.</p> <p><b>CAR9:</b> Baseline study/ report, mid-term evaluation, and final evaluation costs should be borne by the IE (i.e., IFAD). The AF recommends that these costs be within 1-2% of total project cost. Please revise costs and Table 13 accordingly.</p> <p><b>CR17:</b> Please clarify how the M&amp;E Plan addresses the management of identified environmental and social risks, and reflect as appropriate in Table 13, the costs for EE monitoring and IE supervision of related ESMP and Gender Action Plan (GAP).</p> <p><b>CR18:</b> In Table 13, p. 66, please specify the IE supervision functions during the annual supervision missions, among others such financial reports and audits, etc.</p> <p><b>CAR10:</b> The M&amp;E budget is well prepared, however the evaluation portion amounts to 0.4% of the total project cost (excluding the project fees) and it is suggested to increase the amount to 1% of the total project cost, as per provisions contained in the Fund's Evaluation Policy.</p>	<p><b>CR17: Cleared. Not cleared</b> Table 16, pp. 101-102 are noted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. However it is not clear what the GAP costs nor the ESMP costs actually are. "Built-in the Project Costs" is noted but the actual amount must be presented in the EMMP (full as well as summary table) In the detailed budget it must also be clear and should not be lumped with GAP costs which should also be presented in the GAP and properly identified in the budget.</li> <li>2. No audit costs are included in the M&amp;E Plan although included in the detailed budget.</li> </ol> <p><b>CR18: Cleared.</b> See Table 16, pp. 101-102 and IE response.</p> <p><b>CAR10: Cleared.</b> See CAR9 above.</p>	<p><b>CR17: Cleared.</b> Based on amendment to ESMP page 146, Tabel 16, page 888-89 and paragraph 306 of tracked changed version.</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p>
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	<p>8. Does the M&amp;E Framework include a break-down of how implementing entity IE fees will be utilized in the supervision of the M&amp;E function?</p>	<p><u>See CR18 above.</u></p>	<p>-</p>	<p>-</p>
	<p>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?</p>	<p><b>Unclear.</b> See Part III E, pp. 85-88, and III F, pp. 90-91. The presented project results framework mixes the project interventions outcomes/ outputs indicators with those of the AF results framework, includes errors in the direct and indirect number of beneficiaries targets (it indicates the targets as "direct/ all" with the "all" number lower than the "direct" number), baseline/ year 1 targets are not indicated, etc. Also, the AF core impact indicators are not presented under dedicated tables in Part III E. Moreover, alignment with AF results framework table is not as per AF requirements.</p> <p><b>CAR11:</b> Revise the project results framework in Part III E to reflect <u>the project</u> outcomes/ outputs/ activities indicators and gender responsive targets (<u>disaggregated by gender</u>) and provide related baselines, among others. Also note that the "household" targets need to be revised to reflect <u>number</u> of beneficiaries disaggregated by gender, and percentages need</p>	<p><b>CAR11: Cleared.</b> See Part III E, Table 17, pp. 103-106.</p> <p><b>CR19: Cleared.</b> See CAR11 above and IE response. <u>Note: The HH multiplier is 5 (i.e., 5 members/ HH).</u></p>	

		<p>to indicate/ include numbers as well.</p> <p><b>CR19:</b></p> <p>1. The results framework includes number of beneficiaries direct and indirect and also number of HH with increased resilience. Please clarify if the HH need to be counted on top of the total number of beneficiaries or not. Also what is the HH multiplier we should take into account.</p> <p>2. In addition, we note that the number of HH benefitting from sustainable soil and water conservation practices is 31,500, which is equal to the number of HH with an increased resilience to climate change (for the project objective). Since at outcome level there are other HH related targets, are you avoiding double counting by considering those targets as a sub-set of the 31,500?</p> <p><b>CR20:</b> Please clarify if all the baseline data is now unavailable and that it will be provided upon submission of the first PPR.</p>	<p><b>CR20: Cleared.</b> See <u>IE response</u> and para 295 p. 99.</p> <p><b>CAR12: Not cleared.</b> See Tables 18-20, pp. 107-108. Please fill in the information mentioned in the project results framework (Table 17) as relevant in the core indicators Tables 18,19 &amp; 20.</p> <p><b>CAR13: Not cleared.</b> Table 21, pp.108-110, is not aligned with the updated AF guidance provided at <u>Results Framework Alignment Table</u> (Amended in November</p>	<p><b>CAR12: Cleared.</b> Based on tables 18 and 19 in the tracked changed version page 95.</p> <p><b>CAR13: Cleared.</b> Based on updated results framework alignment table 21 at pages 96 and 97 of track changed version.</p>

		<p><b>CAR12:</b> In Part III E, provide dedicated tables for the AF core impact indicators applicable to the project (i.e., a table for each applicable indicators). The project core impact indicators must include at least the core impact indicator “Number of beneficiaries including estimations for direct and indirect beneficiaries. Other indicators must be added if the project included activities targeting the areas identified in AF results framework, namely (1) Early Warning System; (2) Assets Produced, Developed; Improved, or Strengthened; (3) Increased income, or avoided decrease in income or (4) Natural Assets Protected or Rehabilitated. Related guidance on this can accessed via the following links:</p> <p><a href="#">Methodologies for reporting Adaptation Fund core impact indicators (78 kB, DOC)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Methodologies for reporting Adaptation Fund core impact indicators (152 kB, PDF)</a></p> <p><b>CAR13:</b> Revise the AF alignment Table in Part III F to comply with related AF related requirements based on updated guidance found at <a href="#">Results Framework Alignment</a></p>	<p>2025) (77 kB, DOC). <a href="#">Please, revise.</a></p> <p><b>CAR14: Not Cleared</b>, based on IE response. See CAR13 above and the note below for further guidance:</p> <p><b>Note:</b> the project Outcome 2 “Improved resilience of smallholders’ <a href="#">farming systems</a>” would likely support AF Outcome 4 “Increased adaptive capacity within relevant development sector services and <a href="#">infrastructure assets</a>” and AF output “Vulnerable development sector services and <a href="#">infrastructure assets</a> strengthened in response to climate change impacts, including variability”. If the project Outcome 2 indicator “% reporting adoption of environmentally sustainable and climate resilient technologies and practices; Surface of agricultural land under climate resilient practices” does not align with AF fund indicators, please revise or add another indicator (same could apply of AF outcome 6 if its relevance is to be reconsidered). Reflect any changes made in the project result framework and the ToC discussions and chart on pp.18-19.</p>	<p><b>CAR14: Cleared.</b> Based on updated results framework alignment table 21 at pages 96 and 97 of track changed version.</p>
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		<p><u>Table</u> (Amended in November 2025) (77 kB, DOC).</p> <p><b>CAR14:</b> The alignment table with the Fund's SRF, does not include indicators for the Fund's outcome and output 6, please include one accordingly.</p>		
	10. Is a disbursement schedule with time-bound milestones included?	<b>Yes.</b> See Part IIIH, p. 93.	-	-



## FULLY DEVELOPED PROPOSAL FOR SINGLE COUNTRY

### PROJECT INFORMATION

**Title of Project:** Smallholder Climate Resilience Project (SCRP)  
**Country:** Republic of Malawi  
**Thematic Focal Area:** Agriculture and Rural Development  
**Type of Implementing Entity:** Multilateral Implementing Entity  
**Implementing Entity:** IFAD  
**Executing Entities:** Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development  
**Amount of Financing Requested:** 20 million (in U.S Dollars Equivalent)

**Letter of Endorsement (LOE) signed:** Yes  No

*NOTE: The LOE 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 proposal has been submitted before including at a different stage (concept, fully-developed proposal)
- This is the first submission ever of the proposal at any stage

In case of a resubmission, please indicate the last submission date: [04/12/2026 \(first submission\)](#); [Click or tap to enter a date 28/01/2026 \(first resubmission\)](#).

**Please note that fully-developed proposal documents should not exceed 100 pages for the main document, and 100 pages for the annexes.**

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

AAEDO	Assistant Agriculture Extension Development Officer
ACPC	Area Civil Protection Committee
ADD	Agricultural Development Division
AEDO	Agriculture Extension Development Officer
AF	Adaptation Fund
ARC	Agriculture Resource Centre
AWS	Automatic Weather Stations
CGRMC	Community Grievance Redress Management Committee
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
DAES	Department of Agricultural Extension Services
DARS	Department of Agricultural Research Services
DCCMS	Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services
DEC	District Executive Committee
DIF	Disability Inclusion Facilitator
DLRC	Department of Land Resources Conservation
DoDMA	Department of Disaster Management Affairs
EFA	Economic and Financial Analysis
EPA	Extension Planning Area
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESP	Environmental and Social Principles / Environmental and Social Policy
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAW	Fall Armyworm
FFS	Farmer Field School
FISP	Farmer Input Subsidy Programme
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GCVCA	Gender-Sensitive Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis
GoM	Government of Malawi
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
ITCZ	Intertropical Convergence Zone
LOE	Letter of Endorsement
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFEA	Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
MoAIWD	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
MWASIP	Malawi Watershed Services Improvement Project
NAMIS	National Agriculture Management Integration System
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NASFAM	National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi
NDVI	Normalized Difference Vegetation Index
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NTFP	Non-Wood Forest Product
PIM	Project Implementation Manual
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
PMU	Project Management Unit

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PSP	Participatory Scenario Planning
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
RUSLE	Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation
SAPP	Sustainable Agricultural Production Programme
SECAP	Social, Environment and Climate Assessment Procedures
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SCRP	Smallholder Climate Resilience Project
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USD	United States Dollar
VLAP	Village Level Action Plan
VDC	Village Development Committee
VNRMC	Village Natural Resource Management Committee
WUA	Water User Association
WFP	World Food Programme

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## Part I: Project Background and Context

### 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. It ranks among the 20 most vulnerable countries in the world according to the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative Index 2021, which measures vulnerability to climate change. The country has a total area of 118,484 km<sup>2</sup>, of which 79.4% is land and 21.6% is water. Malawi's terrain is characterized by an elongated plateau, resulting in rolling plains, hills, and mountains. This terrain creates microclimates, primarily due to variations in rainfall across locations. The overarching climate is described as sub-tropical, influenced by the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)<sup>1</sup>. Agriculture is highly rainfed-dependent.

#### A1. Socio-economic background

2. Based on the 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 (United Nations Development Programme – UNDP, 2020)<sup>2</sup>. With a total population of nearly 20 million<sup>3</sup>, Malawi has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of \$645<sup>4</sup>. 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 the Agriculture Sector Performance report of 2023/2024), and accounts for 80% of its export earnings<sup>5</sup>. Crop production alone is estimated to account for 74% of all rural incomes<sup>6</sup>. Over 70% of the population lives below the international poverty line of \$1.90/day, driven by abject poverty and recurrent climate-related shocks<sup>7</sup>. The higher poverty levels entail limited livelihood opportunities, with over 80% of people's livelihoods reliant on natural resources, which are climate sensitive<sup>8</sup>. The rural poverty rate has stagnated at 56.0%, and 95% of the poor population lives in rural areas.<sup>9</sup> For example, on 23 March 2024, Malawi's President declared a state of disaster affecting 9 million people across 23 of the country's 28 districts due to an El Niño-induced drought. The UN Humanitarian Country Team identified 6.1 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, with 3.8 million targeted through the Malawi Drought Flash Appeal's inter-sectoral response<sup>10</sup>.

3. Malawi's economy is experiencing a deep and protracted crisis characterized by elevated inflation, declining living standards, and high food insecurity. Since 2020, the average economic growth rate (2.2 percent) has been below the population growth rate (2.6 percent), resulting in declining incomes for the average Malawian.<sup>11</sup> The GDP growth forecast for 2025 has been downgraded to 2.0 percent (from 4.2 percent projected at the end of 2024), influenced by a weaker agricultural season, continued foreign exchange shortages, and the suspension of some bilateral foreign assistance. Real GDP growth is projected at 2.4 percent in 2026.<sup>12</sup> Successive deficits are financed by costly domestic borrowing. Interest payments surged to 7.0 percent of GDP in 2024, consuming 45.8 percent of domestic revenue in FY 2024/25. This made it the single largest budget line item, crowding out public investment and social

<sup>1</sup> 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>.

<sup>2</sup> UNDP (2020). Overview of Malawi Human Development Report.

<sup>3</sup> World Bank (2022) Open Data.. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?locations=MW>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> IFAD (2022). Republic of Malawi, Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (2023 – 2030). <https://www.ifad.org/en/-/malawi-country-strategic-opportunities-programme>

<sup>6</sup> 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](https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADS611.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> 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>

<sup>8</sup> National Statistical Office (2020). The First Integrated Household Survey. Zomba, Malawi. [http://www.nsomalawi.mw/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=230&Itemid=111](http://www.nsomalawi.mw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=230&Itemid=111).

<sup>9</sup> IFAD. (2022). Republic of Malawi Country strategic opportunities programme 2023–2030: EB 2022/136/R.24.

<sup>10</sup> <https://humanitarianaction.info/document/global-humanitarian-overview-2025/article/malawi>

<sup>11</sup> International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank. (2025). *Malawi Economic Monitor, 21st Edition*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

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spending.<sup>13</sup> Malawi's National Resilience Strategy recognizes three pathways out of poverty: "hanging in" (requiring consumption support), "stepping up" (diversifying and increasing productivity in agriculture), and "stepping out" (moving into non-agricultural enterprises or employment).<sup>14</sup>

4. **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 make up 52% of the population and contribute nearly 80% of the labour force in agriculture. Despite their critical role in agriculture, producing about 70% of the food, women do not enjoy equal benefits from production. Agricultural productivity is low, especially for female-managed farms (25% lower than male-managed farms), due to disadvantages in resource endowment, including poor access to inputs, irrigation technologies, and secure land rights.<sup>15</sup>

5. 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. This inequality stems mainly from the conversion of vast amounts of customary land to leasehold tenure for large-scale production, such as tea estates and burley tobacco, during the 1980s and early 1990s. Additionally, regardless of culture or ownership, the use of land is mainly controlled by men, even though they provide less labour. 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. When aggregated, these challenges increase women's vulnerability to climate change and decrease their capacity to attain food, income, and nutrition security.

6. **The youth (age 15-35)**, constituting 40% of the population, lack basic opportunities, and experience high unemployment levels (80%). Malawi ranks 168th out of 183 countries on the Global Youth Development Index 2023.<sup>16</sup> At the moment, youth underemployment is 53%.<sup>17</sup> However, four in 10 youth (40%) have secondary or post-secondary education, compared to 13%-29% among older cohorts.<sup>18</sup> 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, and participation in agriculture, led many to risky activities such as prostitution and early marriages for girls and increased criminal activities for boys.

7. The present Smallholder Climate Resilience Project (SCRIP) project proposal includes considerations on how to mitigate gender inequalities and enhance women and youth empowerment, informed by consultations with the community (Section H and Annex 1) and the Gender Assessment, Strategy and Action Plan (Annex 4).

## A2. Agriculture and Food Security

8. The agriculture sector is a key contributor to the Malawian economy and a 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. Three commonly identified agricultural challenges are gully erosion, soil infertility, and deforestation.<sup>19</sup>

9. Many Malawians are experiencing food insecurity due to climate shocks, insufficient investment in climate-resilient agriculture, and limited foreign exchange, which restricts food and agricultural imports. Since the 2022/23 season, staple grain production has not met domestic needs. Maize production for

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA). (2018). National Resilience Strategy (2018-2030): Breaking the cycle of food insecurity in Malawi.

<sup>15</sup>CIAT & World Bank. (2018). Climate-Smart Agriculture in Malawi. CSA Country Profiles for Africa Series. International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT); Washington, D.C.

<sup>16</sup>Chunga, J. J., & Evance, S. (2025). Toward Malawi 2063: Youth confront high unemployment and economic anxiety (Afrobarometer Dispatch No. 1006). Afrobarometer.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Department of Land Resources Conservation. (May 2025). SAPP II Catchment Delineation and Landscape Assessment Report for Mzimba District: Identifying common land degradation issues and establishing SAPP II Sustainable Land Management (SLM) planning and implementing spatial units (catchments).

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2024/25 is estimated at 2.9 million metric tons, falling short of the national requirement of at least 3.3–3.5 million metric tons, indicating that food shortages are expected. Although maize output increased by 5.4% from the previous year, it is still 24.7% lower than the 2019–23 average. Inflation remains high, driven by rising food prices, exchange rate issues, and monetary expansion due to large fiscal deficits. In early 2025, inflation exceeded 30% after a brief decline, fuelled by a spike in maize prices and continued money supply growth.<sup>20</sup> The Fiscal deficits are a key driver of inflation, and ongoing expansionary fiscal policy limits the Reserve Bank of Malawi's ability to control inflation.

10. The same World Bank report identified three major priority solutions. One of them is "Building resilience and protecting the poor: Addressing the growing risks from climate change by investing in climate-resilient agriculture, increasing the shock-responsiveness and sustainability of the social protection system, and mitigating food insecurity risks by importing grain for the coming lean season."<sup>21</sup>

11. Only 28% of the potential irrigable area is irrigated, with most of the 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. Out of over 200 dams constructed since independence, only six are functional, irrigating a dismal 64.6 hectares and serving only 466 smallholder farmers.<sup>22</sup> Top-down planning, high investment costs, negligence of national and local interests, over-dependency on donors, and conflicts over usage have undermined small dams.<sup>23</sup> Community consultations identified the following as main challenges to agricultural 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, climate change, pests and diseases management, expensive farm inputs, and lack of diversification and post-harvest losses.

12. Additionally, although some smallholder farmers are involved in agri-business activities involving crops, honey, fish, and livestock, they face multiple challenges. They lack access to capital and business knowledge, face challenges in adding value, and struggle to register as cooperatives or groups. Their access to mechanisation is low. Value Chain Actors highlight the need to understand climate-smart and eco-friendly agricultural inputs, their usage, and the knowledge of agricultural product quality standards and certification/export compliance procedures.

13. Consultations also revealed an increased incidence of pests and diseases yearly. The emergence of the fall armyworm (FAW) in 2015 further worsened yield losses. Estimates indicate that FAW alone was responsible for approximately 10-12% of the maize yield loss in Malawi. Regarding pest management, farmers lack basic information about FAW biology and behaviour that would enable them to target planting dates and implement integrated management interventions, including pesticides and the timing of treatments.<sup>24</sup> The other major pests include stalk borers, large stalk borers, weevils, and quelea birds.

14. Consultations also revealed that climate change has increased the frequency of livestock diseases, which undermines productivity, food and nutrition security, and surplus for marketing. These diseases include swine fever, foot-and-mouth disease, Newcastle disease, and lumpy skin disease. The government is not adequately resourced and staffed to meet the requirements. This project proposal aims to address these concerns and enhance the capacity of smallholder farmers for climate resilience.

15. Furthermore, they lack enabling infrastructure such as deep tanks, irrigation facilities, climate-smart storage structures, and functional agricultural resource centres. Additionally, low levels of mechanization make farming labour-intensive across all districts.<sup>25</sup> Highly ranked needs include Efficient Use of Seeds and Fertilizers, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Sustainable Grazing and Feed Production, Livestock

<sup>20</sup> The World Bank. (2025). Navigating uncertainty: Malawi Economic Monitor.

<sup>21</sup> The World Bank. (2025). Navigating uncertainty: Malawi Economic Monitor. p. 11.

Nkhoma, B. G. (2011). The politics, development and problems of small irrigation dams in Malawi: Experiences from Mzuzu ADD. *Water Alternatives*, 4(3): 383-398

<sup>22</sup> The World Bank. (2025). Navigating uncertainty: Malawi Economic Monitor.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Feed the Future (2019). Fall Armyworm Management for Maize Smallholders in Malawi: An Integrated Pest Management Strategic Plan

<sup>25</sup> Kachali, R., Kaula, N., Chavula, G., & Chimonyo, V. G. P. (2024, October). *Stakeholder Capacity Needs Assessment and Needs Matrix Validation: Case Study of Mzimba, Kasungu, Balaka, Zomba, and Mangochi Districts*. Published by Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

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Management and Breeding, and Water Conservation/Irrigation Techniques.<sup>26</sup> Value Chain Actors highlight the need to understand climate-smart and eco-friendly agricultural inputs, their usage, and the knowledge of agricultural product quality standards and certification/export compliance procedures.<sup>27</sup> Since the beginning of the century, the government of Malawi's efforts to promote Green Revolution technologies, primarily commercial maize production, have negatively affected agricultural biodiversity and nutrition security. In particular, the Farmer Input Subsidy Programme (FISP) and aid have promoted technologies that displaced local and traditional farmers' crop varieties. This has increased the dependence of farmers on non-local seed varieties.<sup>28</sup>

16. 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. SCRIP will enhance the adoption of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices, including improved soil fertility management, pest management, and other practices. It will also focus on 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

17. Malawi faces one of the highest and most widespread rates of natural resources and land degradation (soil erosion and loss of soil fertility)<sup>29</sup>. This is the result of both climate drivers, such as heavy rains and floods, and anthropogenic 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)<sup>30</sup>, 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<sup>31</sup>, worsening the already dire situation of low land holding size (1 hectare per household)<sup>32</sup>. 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<sup>33</sup>. This results in almost 33,000 hectares of land cover loss annually and is a main driver of ecosystem and biodiversity loss.

18. A recent study in 2020 found that soil loss contributes to a national GDP reduction of 1-3% and causes a 32 to 61% decrease in maize production in some areas. In the 1990s, the decline in maize yield due to soil erosion was estimated at 15.6%. As a result, farmers face reductions in food production, income losses, and land devaluation, which increase their vulnerability, food insecurity, and the likelihood of urban migration. Another study in 2019 indicated that female-headed households experience twice the impact of soil loss on maize productivity and per capita real consumption compared to male-headed households, highlighting their greater vulnerability to soil erosion effects<sup>34</sup>.

19. Community consultations made us realize the extensive use of wetlands for crop production. However, they face increasing pressure from demographic growth, rising poverty, severe economic stress, and droughts.<sup>35</sup> Stakeholders confirmed that land degradation had the second-worst effect on agricultural productivity after droughts. With over three-quarters of the agricultural land already exposed to severe topsoil loss, erosion poses a major threat to food security and the agriculture sector. It amplifies the impacts of climate change, such as floods and droughts, and is itself exacerbated by these climate change effects. If not addressed, the impacts of land degradation are expected to worsen due to the combined effects of

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>African Centre for Biodiversity (ACB). 2016. Farmer-managed seed systems in Dowa, Malawi: A legacy of eroded confidence and agricultural diversity after decades of Green Revolution implementation. Johannesburg, South Africa: The African Centre for Biodiversity.

<sup>29</sup>GoM (2019). Synthesizing Agricultural Research Findings in Malawi. Final Report. Department of Agricultural Research Services. Lilongwe, Malawi

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Holden, S., Lunduka, R., 2012. Do fertilizer subsidies crowd out organic manures?. The case of Malawi. Agric. Economics 43 (3), 303–314

<sup>33</sup>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.

<sup>34</sup>Giacomo P et al (2020). Distributional impacts of soil erosion on agricultural productivity and welfare in Malawi. Ecological Economics 177 (2020) 106764.

<sup>35</sup>Schuijt, K. (2002). Land and Water Use of Wetlands in Africa: Economic Values of African Wetlands. Interim Report IR-02-0631. International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), Laxenburg, Austria.

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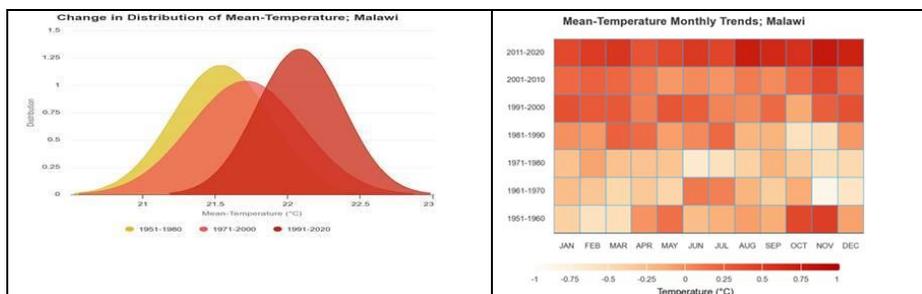
climate change (heavy rains and strong winds), rapid deforestation, high population growth, and intensive agriculture. To address these critical risks and vulnerabilities, SCRCP will promote on-farm and micro-catchment restoration and conservation.

#### A4. Climate change and impacts

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

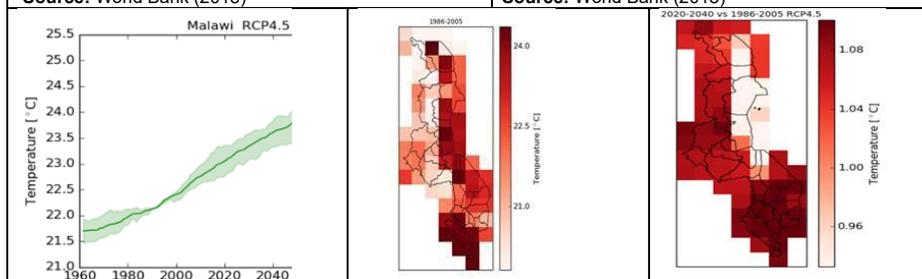
20. Malawi has two climates, tropical and temperate, and two seasons, rainy (October-April) and dry (May-September). The country is roughly divided into three zones by temperature and humidity, which are greatly influenced by altitude: semi-arid and warm south; sub-humid and cool north; and the intermediate 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 varying effects of climate change, such as climate extremes and disasters, which occasionally occur over short distances.

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



**Fig 1-a:** Changes in mean temperature over years.  
Source: World Bank (2018)<sup>36</sup>

**Fig 1-b:** Increase in mean monthly over years.  
Source: World Bank (2018)<sup>37</sup>



**(Fig 2-a):** Mean temperature changes annual aggregates (2020- 2040)

**(Fig 2- b):** Reference (1986- 2005) temperature

**(Fig 2-c):** Future projected changes (2020-2040) province

Source: Climate Analytics: <https://regioclim.climateanalytics.org/choices><sup>38</sup>

<sup>36</sup> World Bank (2018). Climate Change Management Portal for Development Practitioners and Policy Makers.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Climate Analytics: <https://regioclim.climateanalytics.org/choices>

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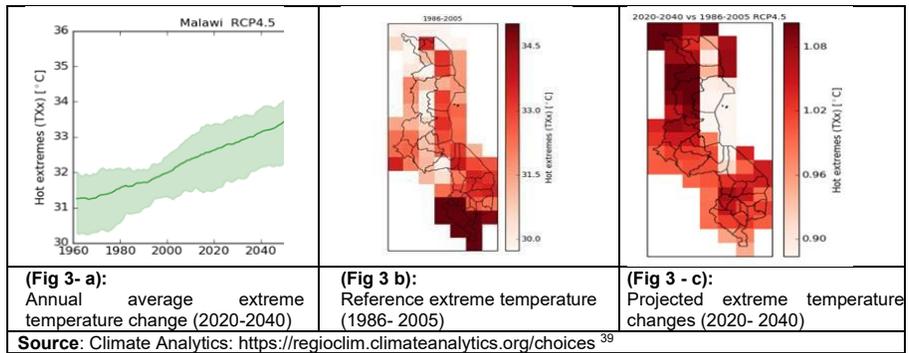
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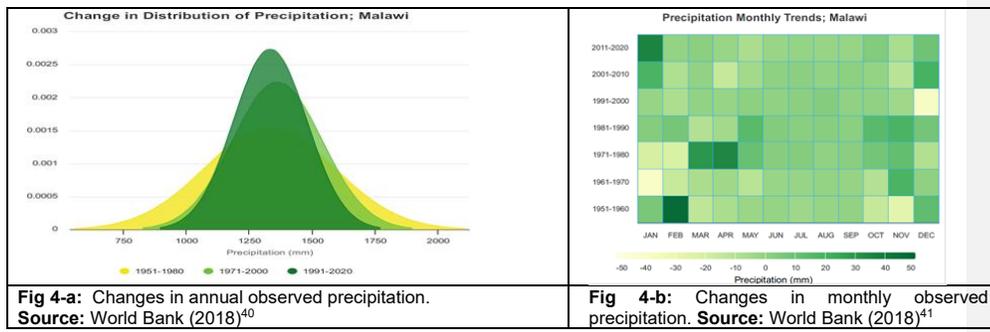
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22. Extreme average hot temperatures have increased from approximately 30.0 °C - 32.0 °C in the 1960s to 31.2 °C - 33.5 °C in the 2040s (Fig. 3a). The projected (2030-2040) highest extreme temperatures are expected in the northern region at 1.08 °C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



23. Observed mean precipitation levels remained the same at nearly 1875 mm per year between 1951-1980 and 1991 - 2020 (Fig. 4a). This corroborates many studies that precipitation in Malawi varies but change is uncertain. However, there are noticeable changes in monthly rainfall between the different decades (Fig 4-b). The projected mean precipitation levels show a slight decrease from 1100mm per year in 960s 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).



<sup>39</sup> Ibid  
<sup>40</sup> World Bank (2018). Climate Change Management Portal for Development Practitioners and Policy Makers. <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/malawi/extremes>.  
<sup>41</sup> Ibid

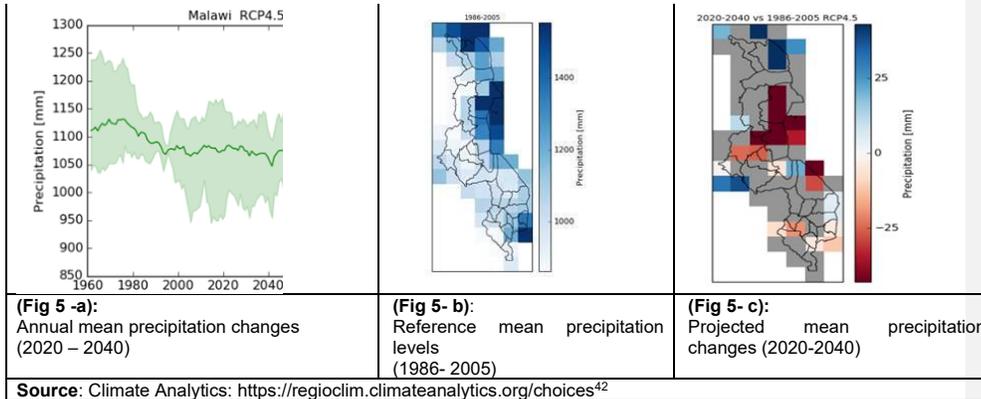
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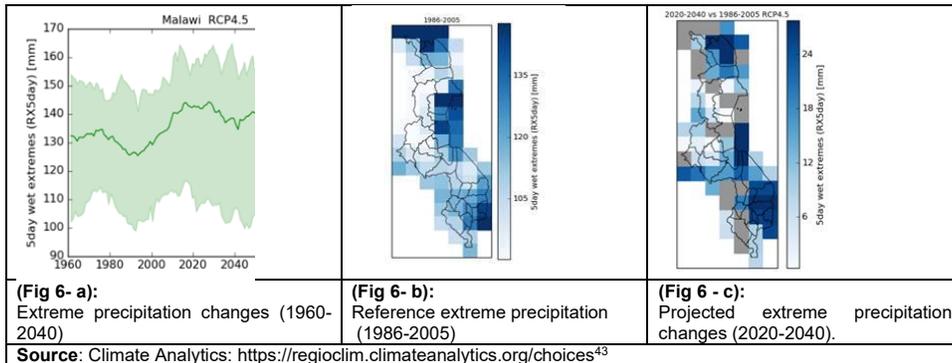
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24. Unlike mean precipitation changes, there are changes in **extreme mean precipitation**. At national level there is a general increase in extreme precipitation from 132mm (1960s) to 140 mm (2040s) with huge uncertainties (Fig 6-a). Overall extreme 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).



**A4.2. Hazards**

25. The World Bank (2018)<sup>44</sup> 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)<sup>45</sup>. Due to drought occurrence in the 2023/24 season, the

<sup>42</sup> Climate Analytics: <https://regioclim.climateanalytics.org/choices>  
<sup>43</sup> Climate Analytics: <https://regioclim.climateanalytics.org/choices>  
<sup>44</sup> World Bank (2018). Climate Change Management Portal for Development Practitioners and Policy Makers. <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/malawi/extremes>  
<sup>45</sup> Department of Disaster Management Affairs (2015). Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report. Lilongwe, Malawi.

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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 out of 28 country districts<sup>46</sup>.

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

27. **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 among the top five countries worldwide most affected by extreme weather events, according to the Global Climate Risk Index<sup>47</sup>. 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 people were declared severely food insecure, over 650,000 people were displaced, and over 600 deaths occurred (World Food Programme – WFP 2023)<sup>48</sup>. 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 GDP each year<sup>49</sup>. On 16 December 2024, approximately 1,800 households (8,100 people) were affected by the heavy rains and winds brought by the intense Tropical Cyclone. The most affected districts were Machinga and Phalombe. On 11 March 2025, Tropical Storm Jude left three missing people and approximately 4,900 displaced people in Southern Malawi.<sup>50</sup>

28. By September 2025, several southern districts were experiencing a food crisis (IPC Phase 3), and the early lean season started in October, nearly two months later than usual. In the whole country, maize prices rose from 28% in August to 34% in September 2025.<sup>51</sup> The recent elections and government transition may delay emergency food distributions to a later date in 2025. Forecasts predict above-average rainfall in southern Malawi (Oct 2025–Mar 2026) and below-average precipitation in the central and south regions.

29. **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 1 million people, displacing 230,000 people, and killing 106 people, with another 172 people reported missing<sup>52</sup>, and physical damages and economic losses valued at \$335 million<sup>53</sup>. The 2019 floods resulted in 60 deaths, affected 975,000 people, caused physical damage, and led to economic losses of \$220 million.<sup>54</sup> A Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) study revealed that severe floods, which began on October 28, 2024, displaced 26,000 people from Nkhotakota, Karonga, Lilongwe, and Kasungu districts, and damaged roads, bridges, houses, and essential services.<sup>56</sup>

#### A5. Climate vulnerability

30. 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

<sup>46</sup> WFP (2024). Reliefweb: <https://reliefweb.int/report/malawi/wfp-urges-global-support-malawi-faces-looming-food-crisis-triggered-el-nino>

<sup>47</sup> Eckstein, Kunzel and Schafer (2021). [Global Climate Risk. Who Suffers Most from Extreme Weather Event? Weather Related Loss from 2000-2019. German Watch](#)

<sup>48</sup> WFP (2023). Cyclone Freddy Response Update. <https://reliefweb.int/report/malawi/wfp-malawi-cyclone-freddy-response-update-6-april-2023-0800-cat>

<sup>49</sup> GoM (2021). Updated National Determined Contribution

<sup>50</sup> <https://www.ifrc.org/emergency/southwest-indian-ocean-tropical-cyclone-chido>

<sup>51</sup> FEWS NET. Malawi Key Message Update (September 2025). Atypically early start to the lean season as Crisis (IPC Phase 3) persists in south.

<sup>52</sup> GoM (2021). Updated National Determined Contribution

<sup>53</sup> Department of Disaster Management Affairs (2015). Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report. Lilongwe, Malawi.

<sup>54</sup> Department of Disaster Management Affairs (2019). Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report. Lilongwe, Malawi.

<sup>55</sup> Department of Disaster Management Affairs (2015). Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report. Lilongwe, Malawi.

<sup>56</sup> IFRC. (2024). Malawi floods: DREF final report.

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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.

#### **A5.1. Sensitivity**

31. Malawi's high population density and high poverty levels, with a large proportion of the population relying on climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture, lead to significant vulnerability to climate change. Malawi is one of the most densely populated countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, with 203 people per km<sup>2</sup>. The current population of 20.9 million (GOM 2020) is expected to double by 2060, putting additional pressure on land resources and resulting in broader negative impacts on soil, land, and natural resources if proper actions are not taken. The fact that over 80% of Malawians depend on rainfed agriculture and natural resources—both of which are climate-sensitive—makes the economy highly vulnerable to climatic hazards. SCRIP will help reduce climate sensitivity through irrigation, community water sources via boreholes, and diversification from mainly maize-based livelihoods to integrated crop management and CSA, including on-farm and landscape soil, land, and micro-catchment conservation.

32. Female-headed households are poorer (57% compared to 43% of their male-headed households)<sup>57</sup>[https://d.docs.live.net/305bc18b7824b1df/Documents/Malawi\\_IFAD/Input/NOTES\\_OF\\_TEAM\\_DISCUSSIONS/Project\\_background\\_and\\_context.docx](https://d.docs.live.net/305bc18b7824b1df/Documents/Malawi_IFAD/Input/NOTES_OF_TEAM_DISCUSSIONS/Project_background_and_context.docx). Women's 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's rights to land inheritance 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 most of the population (57%)<sup>58</sup>. They lack basic opportunities to contribute to the economy, particularly in agriculture. SCRIP will ensure active participation and empowerment of women and youth (50% women and 30% youth) in its interventions.

33. Malawi faces one of the highest and most widespread rates of natural resource 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 is responsible for up to 31-61% per annum crop yield reduction (GoM 2019)<sup>59</sup>. In the last 10 years, land degradation has resulted in a 15% decrease in arable land<sup>60</sup>. 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<sup>61</sup>. Soil, land and natural resources degradation was ranked among five critical factors affecting agricultural production, and a main driver of ecosystem and biodiversity loss. The SCRIP will promote sustainable soil, land, and natural resources management, leading to enhanced micro catchment resilience. Considering the current situation, without soil, land, and natural resources restoration and management, there cannot be any effective agricultural production.

#### **A5.2. Adaptive capacity**

34. 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. SCRIP will contribute to improving climate adaptive capacity through capacity building, enhancing the adoption of available CSA technologies, and supporting access to extension services and inputs for climate-resilient practices on the farm.

35. Malawi has limited public and private funding as well as limited access by smallholder farmers to financial services and extension, which impacts climate-smart technologies and investments in climate-

<sup>57</sup> National Statistics Report (2020). [The Firth Integrated Household Survey, Zomba, Malawi](#)

<sup>58</sup> UNDP (2020). Human development Index.

<sup>59</sup> GoM (2019). Synthesizing Agricultural Research Findings in Malawi. Final Report. Department of Agricultural Research Services. Lilongwe, Malawi

<sup>60</sup> Ibid

<sup>61</sup> GoM (2019). Synthesizing Agricultural Research Findings in Malawi. Final Report. Department of Agricultural Research Services. Lilongwe, Malawi

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resilient infrastructure. For instance, less than 30% of potential irrigable land is under irrigation. The over-reliance on rain-fed agriculture increases the vulnerability of small-scale poor farmers, who experience huge post-harvest losses (25%) due to improper storage and value addition. Also, limited adoption of CSA technologies leads to increased degradation of soil, land, and natural resources. SCRIP will provide the investments needed to roll out climate-smart technologies that reduce farmers' vulnerability to climate change, including crop diversification, soil cover, and integrated pest management, among others. It will also increase water availability and access through small-scale irrigation schemes and communal water sources such as boreholes.

36. While many previous initiatives have been undertaken to improve generation, access, and use of climate information, there are still enormous gaps for improvement. For instance, forecast information is provided at the start of the season, with a few updates in between. There are 118 Automatic Weather Stations (AWSs) in Malawi, each covering large areas, but they are insufficient for the country because some are not functioning. Message alerts are too short for effective preparedness. The SCRIP will enhance climate information generation and advisories formulation, improve dissemination capacity through digitalization, and build the capacity of district and local communities.

### A5.3. Climate risks and impacts

37. **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, increasing the 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, crop production in the southern and central regions was estimated to be 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<sup>62</sup>. Earlier major droughts (seven during 1980-2012) affected districts across the country; the major crops impacted were maize, potato, groundnut and beans<sup>63</sup>.

38. 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 limited access to education about IPM for effectively managing FAW or other pests. Specifically, farmers lack basic information about FAW biology and behaviour that would enable them to target planting dates and management interventions, including pesticides and the timing of treatments.<sup>64</sup> 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.

39. **Ecosystem degradation.** Main factors leading to watershed degradation include soil structure and erodibility; climate (rainfall intensity and temperature); reduction in land and vegetation cover-influenced by the type of land use; and topography (influencing the speed of carrying and capacity of runoff). Climate drivers in Malawi, such as increased temperatures and aridity, are linked to a higher frequency of extreme events. This puts a strain on already degraded ecosystems, reducing the supply of ecosystem goods and services, including 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 damage from floods and sedimentation or siltation downstream. Trees also provide essential windbreaks in case of cyclones, which communities have repeatedly suffered from.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Giertz, A., 2015. "Malawi: Agricultural Sector Risk Assessment." World Bank Group Report Number 99941-MW. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

<sup>64</sup> Feed the Future (2019). Fall Armyworm Management for Maize Smallholders in Malawi: An Integrated Pest Management Strategic Plan

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#### A5.4. Climate impacts on vulnerable groups

40. From stakeholder consultations, the following were identified as the most vulnerable groups to climate change: women and girls, the youth, People with Disabilities including persons with HIV/AIDS and the elderly.

41. **Women and girls** face multiple vulnerabilities as highlighted in Annex 4. The intersection of gender inequality, care responsibilities, limited assets, and exposure to climate shocks makes female-headed households, young women, women of reproductive age, and mothers of young children under 5 disproportionately vulnerable — economically, socially, and nutritionally. 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 a disaster occurs, women face an extra burden to care for the family. In periods of drought, 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 lack access to productive resources, employment opportunities, agricultural extension services, and climate information. Women and girls are also exposed to increased stress related to sanitation and hygiene. These combined vulnerabilities result in increased malnutrition, increased debts incurred, increased incidences of dire poverty, disturbances in marriages, and gender-based violence because of climate change, while further constraining their capacity to adapt to climate change impacts.

42. **Youth.** The project focuses on youth as a vulnerable group. Youth will represent 30% of beneficiaries, this is because: (i) half the population is between the ages of 10-35; (ii) young people face multiple and overlapping vulnerabilities, putting them at heightened risk of resorting to harmful or dangerous coping mechanisms; (iii) in Malawi, some youth migrate seeking better living standards as result of droughts, loss of livelihoods. Youth also are particularly vulnerable due to their lack of access to productive resources, employment opportunities, agricultural extension services, and climate information. Consultations indicated that youth were mainly affected by low yields, resulting in increased food insecurity, decreased likelihood of getting employment due to reduced agricultural activities, less land access as parents resort to selling land as recovery measures to disasters, increased high-risk behaviours (prostitution and criminal activities), and early marriages among girls. The participation and livelihoods of young people will be strengthened through participatory approaches, appropriate training, and field schools.

43. **People with disabilities and people living with HIV/AIDS.** 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. These individuals experience functioning difficulties in at least one domain considered by the 2018 census, such as visual, hearing, physical, and mental impairment. The baseline study conducted by the recently started International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)/ Sustainable Agricultural Production Programme II (SAPP II) project established that 12% of the sample households had at least one member with physical disability. Mzimba South, Lilongwe West, and Lilongwe East were slightly above, at 16%, 15% and 13% respectively. Particularly, the distribution of disabilities within the sample was 22% for sight, 15% for hearing, 27% for mobility challenges, 5% for speech, and 32% for other disability issues. Addressing barriers to participation in agricultural and economic activities for people with disabilities will be critical to ensuring inclusivity and equitable opportunities for all household members.

44. 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. Despite strong progress in testing and treatment coverage, people with HIV remain particularly vulnerable due to a combination of health, social, and economic challenges. Many face weakened immunity, food insecurity, and limited access to consistent healthcare, especially in rural areas. Stigma and discrimination continue to hinder treatment adherence and social inclusion, while poverty and gender inequality deepen vulnerability among women, young people, and marginalized groups.

45. The **elderly** are 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** are more affected due to increased malnutrition incidence, challenges to move during floods, and increased absenteeism for school-going children.

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46. Based on the most critical climate hazards outlined during consultations and the specific gender impacts, SCRП includes interventions to address these differential impacts. SCRП 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, Extension Planning Area (EPA), micro-catchment and village, the most vulnerable areas, communities, and households will be targeted, with specific measures to ensure women and youth empowerment and participation.

#### A7. Theory of Change

47. Malawi's ecosystems and the communities that depend on them face mutually reinforcing climate- and human-driven challenges: accelerating land and watershed degradation, severe soil erosion, and rapid deforestation have weakened the natural resource base that supports smallholder farming. These fragile ecosystems are increasingly unable to buffer droughts, floods, heat stress, and erratic rainfall, all of which have become more frequent and intense. Smallholder farmers, who rely almost entirely on rain-fed agriculture, experience low and declining productivity, recurring crop and livestock losses, limited access to irrigation, and growing pest and disease pressures. High poverty levels, dependence on natural resources for energy and livelihoods, and shrinking landholdings further constrain adaptive capacity and pushes these groups to resort to maladaptive practices. Women, youth, and persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected: women face unequal access to land, inputs, and extension services; youth encounter unemployment, lack of land, and exclusion from decision-making; and vulnerable groups such as PwDs and PLHIV face mobility, stigma, and limited access to services. Together, these intertwined ecological and socio-economic stresses heighten climate vulnerability and make integrated landscape restoration and climate-resilient livelihood support essential for SCRП's target groups.

48. SCRП seeks to address these vulnerabilities, aiming at the following objective: *reduce the vulnerability of smallholder farmers and the ecosystems they depend on to the negative impacts of climate change*, through a comprehensive approach:

- *Through the restoration of degraded micro-catchments and the strengthening of community stewardship systems, Component 1 enhances the climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers (Outcome 1).* By supporting communities to develop climate-resilient Village Level Action Plans built on participatory diagnostics integrating gender, youth and disability perspectives, SCRП intends to empower local institutions (VNRMCs, VDCs, traditional authorities) to jointly identify, prioritize and manage the drivers of ecosystem degradation. The implementation of soil and water conservation measures, assisted natural regeneration, reforestation, and riverbank stabilization will restore essential ecosystem services such as water infiltration, soil fertility and protection from climate-induced floods and droughts. Incentives like fuel-efficient stoves and water harvesting kits will further reduce the pressure on natural resources induced by maladaptive practices, and will particularly benefit women who bear the burden of firewood and water collection. By the end of the project, communities should collectively manage restored landscapes across thousands of hectares, benefiting downstream farms and enabling more sustainable and climate-resilient agricultural production.
- *By strengthening farm-level adaptive capacity and enabling access to climate-resilient inputs and infrastructure, Component 2 aims to improve the resilience of smallholders' farming systems (Outcome 2).* The institutionalization and delivery of Farmer Field Schools will ensure widespread adoption of agroecological practices, supported by updated technical guidance and research-extension feedback loops. The establishment of community nurseries, seed banks and multipliers will expand access to adapted and diverse planting material, while small-scale water harvesting and irrigation schemes will enhance farmers' capacity to cope with erratic rainfall and prolonged dry spells. Climate-proofed storage structures will reduce post-harvest losses worsened by extreme weather and increased occurrence of pests and diseases, protecting household food supplies and incomes. By embedding social inclusion through GALS and targeted support for women, youth and PwDs, the component will also help ensure equitable access to knowledge, inputs and infrastructure, leading to increased resilience, reduced losses, and more secure livelihoods for vulnerable farming households.
- *By strengthening Malawi's climate information systems from the community to the national level, Component 3 ensures that climate information solutions for decision making in agriculture are enhanced at local and national level (Outcome 3), allowing farmers, extension officers and*

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*institutions to make timely, risk-informed decisions in an increasingly unpredictable climate.* The installation of automated weather stations across targeted EPAs will improve forecast accuracy and spatial relevance, while Participatory Scenario Planning workshops will translate scientific data into localized, actionable advisories co-produced with farmers and traditional leaders. Radio, SMS and the Ulimi Ndi Nyengo digital advisory platform will expand the reach of tailored climate messages, promoting early action and adaptive planning. At national level, strengthened capacities within DCCMS, DAES and DoDMA (including new SOPs, harmonized advisory workflows, PSP institutionalization and improved data assimilation) will ensure that climate services remain coordinated, trusted and responsive. Together, these improvements will create a feedback-driven, integrated climate information ecosystem that supports smallholders' adaptation choices, enhances disaster preparedness, and institutionalizes climate-risk management across government systems.

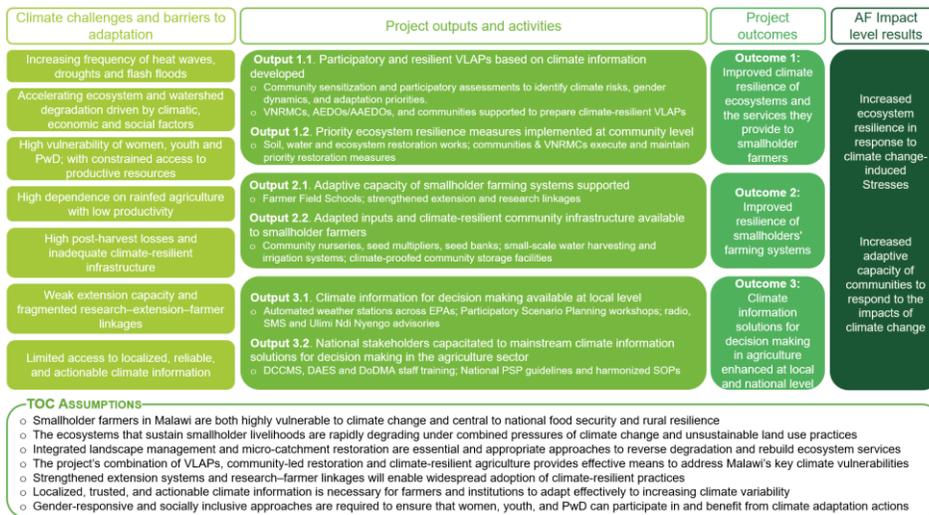


Figure 1 - Theory of Change

## A8. Project area and targeting strategy

### Geographic targeting

49. SCRIP will be implemented in four districts of Malawi, including Lilongwe rural, Dowa, Balaka and Mzimba, more specifically covering 16 EPAs, 19 micro-catchments, and 195 villages, as shown in [Table 1](#). These areas have been identified as highly vulnerable to climate change.

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49.

Table 1 - SCRIP implementation sites

DISTRICT	EPA	SECTIONS	CATCHMENTS	VILLAGES
Lilongwe rural	Mlomba	Mchitadara	Mchitadara	
	Mlomba	Nsambe	Nsambe	
	Nyang'amire	Bua	Kasoni	
	Malingunde	Mphangwe	Phirilanjuzi	
	Nyanja	Sonkhwe	Chingoli	
	Nyanja	Milembo	Katsuka	
	Chitsime	Ukatsi	Kasamba	
	Chiwamba	Mgwazamaya	Nankhanga	
Subtotal	6	8	8	72
Dowa	Mvera	Mnjere	Mnjere Central	
	Mndolera	Dzoole	Azisohora	
	Mndolera	Dzoole	Wiskoti	
	Chisepo	Chisepo	Chisepo	
	Chisepo	Mbangala	Mbangala	
Subtotal	3	4	5	50
Balaka	Bazale	Kapalamula	Kapalamula	
	Ulongwe	Mdenqa	Mdenqa	
Subtotal	2	2	2	38
Mzimba	Ensizini	Enyezini	Dambathali	
	Mpherembe	Kazuni	Kapulabundi	
	Vibangalala	Dimi	Mnthira	
	Emfeni	Mlenje	Mpasukeni	
Subtotal	4	4	4	35
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>195</b>

50. Districts were selected at concept note stage based on a rapid climate vulnerability analysis aligned with IPCC criteria (exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity) conducted jointly by the Government and IFAD. The analysis highlighted their exposure to climate risks like droughts, rainfall variability, and floods. Sensitivity was particularly high in all districts with high rural poverty, particularly affecting vulnerable groups such as women and youth; high correlation with food insecurity (Lilongwe Rural being worse off, with over one and a half million people categorized as being chronically food insecure); and high dependence on agriculture. Adaptive capacity was generally low across districts, marked by poor access to irrigation, financial services, and climate information. Climate change is projected to significantly reduce crop yields by 2050, especially maize, with losses ranging from 30% in Balaka to 40% in Mzimba, underscoring the urgency of targeted climate-resilient interventions.

51. A detailed vulnerability assessment was conducted as part of the project proposal preparation, to further identify project implementation sites. This was done by mapping villages (or closest identifiable site) against a geographical representation of a Climate Vulnerability Index, composed of exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity indicators:

- *Exposure index:* (i) Annual Mean Maximum Temperature Change (near century, RCP 8.5) (ii) February Dry Spell Length (near century, RCP 8.5), and (iii) Trends of Standardized Precipitation (1981-2020).
- *Sensitivity index:* (i) Average Revised Universal Soil Loss –RUSLE (based on Precipitation (1981-2020), (ii) Vegetation Index (NDVI), Soil types and Slopes), (iii) Population Density, and (iv) Poverty Rate.
- *Adaptive capacity index:* (i) Literacy Rate, (ii) Access to Markets, (iii) Youth Presence, and (iv) Emigration Rate.

52. The targeting process followed a multi-stage assessment, starting with EPA identification and progressing to hydrologically defined sub-catchments and micro-catchments. Socioeconomic criteria such as market access, farmer organizations, and land degradation further informed site selection. Catchments were identified and delineated based on the extent, type, and drivers of natural resource and ecosystem

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degradation. The number of recent and ongoing climate adaptation interventions in identified EPAs was also considered to avoid duplication.

### Targeting strategy

53. The targeting approach is aligned with the project's vision to promote inclusive climate resilience. Consolidation of existing data for detailed diagnostics will be conducted to guide Village Level Action Plan (VLAP) preparation. These processes will look at specific socioeconomic information aiming at (i) determining the stratification (local society's categorization into groups) of the areas targeted by the VLAPs; (ii) identifying participants that meet the eligibility criteria and: (iii) further assessing the specific dynamics of the different groups.

54. **Target group.** SCRPs beneficiaries are the households living in the selected micro-catchments and villages, especially women and youth. The project is expected to directly benefit over 150,000 persons, 50% women, 30% youth, and 5% People with Disabilities. All these households are highly vulnerable to climatic hazards and face high levels of poverty. The projects primary target groups will be:

- (i) Rural food insecure households who have very little land around their dwelling and few productive assets. A significant proportion of these households are likely to be women-headed, household and individuals vulnerable to malnutrition (women of reproductive age and children under five years of age), youth, elderly, persons living with HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable groups;
- (ii) Moderately food insecure households involved in low-productivity subsistence crop and livestock farming and also vulnerable to climate change and in need of support to increase their resilience.

55. **Targeting approaches.** The project will rely on a mix of targeting approaches, in line of best practices from other initiatives in Malawi. In each EPA, beneficiaries will be selected based on their socioeconomic profile, needs and existing opportunities. Beneficiary identification and registration will be facilitated by government extension workers at EPA and Section levels, acting as project facilitators (Agriculture Extension Development Officer - AEDOs and Assistant Agriculture Extension Development Officer - AAEDOs) with technical guidance and policy direction provided by district, Agricultural Development Division (ADD), national, and building on other IFAD project's experience in the country (notably SAPP II with which SCRPs will establish close synergies).

56. The project will employ context-specific and gender-responsive participatory approaches to mobilise and engage beneficiaries and relevant service providers at the community level. These approaches will include the Gender-Sensitive Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis in particular. The project will also adopt an inclusive outreach strategy, combining community-based, self-targeting, and direct targeting measures to ensure most vulnerable groups are effectively reached. In addition, direct targeting measures will use government social registries and poverty indicators to ensure the inclusion of women, youth, and persons with disabilities (50%, 30%, and 5%, respectively). Rural communities will actively participate in defining selection criteria, aligned with the needs, priorities, capacities, and opportunities of smallholder farmers.

57. **Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs)-sensitive targeting.** The project will put special emphasis on addressing gender inequalities and empowering women. This will be done in three ways: (i) recognition of gender differences in adaptation needs and capacities as part of landscape planning processes; (ii) gender equitable participation and influence in adaptation decision-making processes; (iii) gender-equitable access to assets, inputs and other benefits. Particular focus will be given to identify vulnerable women headed HHs, HHs with children under five years, pregnant women and youth, persons living with HIV/AIDS and persons with disabilities. The project sets targets for women, youth and PwD participation (who will represent 50% , 30% and 5% of beneficiaries, respectively). This equity will be guaranteed by the very nature of the interventions. The participation and livelihoods of women, youth, PwDs (including persons living with HIV/AIDS) and other vulnerable groups will be strengthened through participatory approaches, appropriate training and field schools.

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## B. Project Objectives

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

59. **Outcomes.** The SCRCP will achieve the stated objective through the following three intended outcomes:

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

## C. Project components and financing

Table 2 - Project components and financing

Project Components	Expected Outcomes	Expected Concrete Outputs	Amount (USD)
<b>Component 1</b> Resilient ecosystems sustainably providing services to smallholder farmers	<b>Outcome 1.</b> Improved climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers	<b>Output 1.1.</b> Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed	1,875,229
		<b>Output 1.2.</b> Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level	6,166,168
<b>Subtotal Component 1</b>			<b>8,041,397</b>
<b>Component 2</b> Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi	<b>Outcome 2.</b> Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems	<b>Output 2.1.</b> Adaptive capacity of smallholder farming systems supported	1,497,250
		<b>Output 2.2.</b> Adapted inputs and climate-resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers	6,074,871
<b>Subtotal Component 2</b>			<b>7,572,121</b>
<b>Component 3</b> Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi	<b>Outcome 3.</b> Climate information solutions for decision making in agriculture enhanced at local and national level	<b>Output 3.1.</b> Climate information for decision making available at local level	800,307
		<b>Output 3.2.</b> National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector	343,297
<b>Subtotal Component 3</b>			<b>1,143,604</b>
Total project activity cost			16,757,122
Project Execution cost (9.09%)			1,676,058
Total Project Cost			18,433,180
Project Cycle Management Fee charged by the Implementing Entity (8.5%)			1,566,820
Amount of Financing Requested			20,000,000

## D. Projected Calendar

Table 3 - Projected calendar

Milestones	Expected Dates
Start of Project/Programme Implementation	June 2026
Mid-term Evaluation (if planned)	January 2029
Project/Programme Closing	June 2031 (5 years)

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Final Evaluation	June 2031
Project Completion	December 2031

## Part II: Project justification

### A. Project components

#### Component 1. Resilient ecosystems sustainably providing services to smallholder farmers

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

60. Deforestation and ecosystem degradation have increased climate vulnerability in Malawi, leading to reduced water infiltration, soil erosion, and flood damage. 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 play a vital role in protecting communities from cyclones and maintaining soil fertility. Whilst communities are aware of these trends, they often lack the means, information, or capacity to adopt sustainable, climate-sensitive resource management practices, which integrate climate and disaster risks in planning.

61. This component aims to restore ecosystem services through participatory landscape planning and community-led restoration efforts and contributes to Adaptation Fund (AF) 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*” (AF impact level result). The focus will be to strengthen vulnerable ecosystem services and increasing ecosystem resilience to climate change and variability-induced stress.

62. The project will adopt an integrated landscape planning approach, engaging local stakeholders to identify climate vulnerabilities and prioritize restoration interventions. Mapping will focus on water flow, erosion, drought, and maladaptive behaviors. Interventions will be designed to restore ecosystem services and reduce anthropogenic drivers of degradation, including deforestation. Overall, the component builds on Malawi’s decentralized governance structures and established technical mandates of the Department of Land Resources Conservation (DLRC) and Village Natural Resource Management Committees (VNRMCs), ensuring strong institutional anchoring and long-term sustainability.

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

63. The Department of Land Resources Conservation (DLRC) will lead the planning and coordination of climate-resilient and integrated landscape management interventions in close synergy with the project’s agronomist. DLRC will work through Agricultural Extension decentralized structure and collaborate with Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Village Natural Resources Management Committees to develop Village Level Action Plans (VLAPs). These plans will guide restoration and sustainable land use interventions and enable SCRPs to enhance and strengthen existing governance structures. Community sensitization will be conducted through meetings coordinated by VDCs and traditional authorities. Topics will include climate change impacts, disaster risk management, climate information, and gender and social inclusion. Sessions will be scheduled to ensure inclusive participation.

64. Gender and social inclusion will be mainstreamed using tools such as the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) and Gender-Sensitive Climate Vulnerability & Capacity Analysis (GCVCA). Women and youth will be actively involved in decision-making through quotas and targeted support. Disability inclusion will be promoted through the Disability Inclusion Facilitator (DIF) model.

65. VNRMCs will be strengthened to support watershed management. Up to 70 VNRMCs will be established or enhanced, with training on climate risks, watershed planning, restoration techniques, and adaptive management. Membership will prioritize women and youth participation. VLAPs will be developed

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through participatory processes led by VNRMCs and AEDOs/AAEDOs. Plans will include climate vulnerability assessments, resource inventories, and prioritized interventions at landscape and farm levels. VLAPs will be reviewed annually and integrated into micro catchment management plans.

66. By embedding SCRП processes within established structures, institutions and planning mechanisms, this output will strengthen coordination, promote local ownership, and ensure the long-term sustainability of project-supported interventions.

**Activity 1.1.1. Engagement of and support from DLRC**

67. To deliver some of the activities of SCRП under the present component, the PMU will rely on the Department of Land Resources Conservation (DLRC). DLRC was chosen as the primary project partner to implement activities under this component, as it is already mandated to promote sustainable land use and conservation practices in order to increase climate change resilience while contributing to food, nutrition and economic growth across the country using integrated catchment approach. Its core responsibilities include the management of soil and water resources, implementation of integrated catchment and watershed management, and support for climate-resilient agricultural practices. DLRC support will be formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the executing entity that will be established at the start of project implementation. DLRC plays a critical role in ensuring that land resources are used efficiently and sustainably, particularly in rural areas where agriculture is the primary livelihood. In order to effectively execute its functions, the DLRC is divided into three technical divisions: (i) environmental conservation and education; (ii) land resources surveys and evaluation; and (iii) land management. The Environmental Conservation and Education division is responsible for development and promotion of environmental and land conservation technologies, as well as education and sensitization of farming communities and the general public in environmental issues. Through its decentralized structure (including other services from the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development – MoAIWD), DLRC engages with local communities, traditional authorities, and district-level stakeholders to implement land conservation strategies that align with national development and climate adaptation goals.

68. The land management training division is responsible for providing policy guidelines for land management programmes, reviewing and developing systematic human resource development programmes while the Land Resource Surveys and Evaluation division is responsible for generating, analyzing, updating, publicizing and disseminating land resources information services at national and district levels for production of sustainable land use plans and targeting of interventions. This is intended to provide quality information that will facilitate sound decisions at all levels, with regard to availability, use and management of land based natural resources. In addition, the division is also responsible for providing cartographic and mapping services.

69. SCRП will enhance DLRC capacities through training and resources, to mobilize its decentralized staff across the 4 Agricultural Development Divisions (ADDs), 4 District Agriculture Offices and particularly 16 Extension Planning Areas (EPAs) with 16 Assistant Agriculture Extension Development Officers (AAEDOs) and 16 sections with 18 Agriculture Extension Development Officers (AEDOs) at local level. DLRC staff and notably the 16 AAEDOs and 18 AEDOs will lead the planning, coordination, and execution of integrated landscape management interventions described under outputs 1.1 and 1.2. Supporting staff will be provided with salary top ups, allowances for mobility and monitoring and logistics means (motorbikes and laptops) as per current practices in Malawi. SCRП will strengthen DLRC capacity through six targeted training sessions covering GIS, remote sensing, drone operation, soil testing, slope analysis, and digital data management. These sessions will also include two 4-day trainings for 15 decentralized officers at ADD level on hotspot mapping and ground truthing, with field exercises. Approximately 20 technical officers will be trained overall, and equipment support could include 4 drones, 8 GPS units, 8 soil testing kits, 8 inclinometers, 4 GIS software licenses, and 4 digitizing tables.

70. Delivering through DLRC fosters local ownership of SCRП activities and sustainability of project outcomes, embedding the project within key institutions already undertaking participatory planning processes and supporting the integration of climate considerations into local governance structures. The department will coordinate closely with the PMU at the Ministry of Agriculture, decentralized agricultural extension systems, Traditional Authorities, and other local actors to integrate climate-resilient practices within existing institutional frameworks. It will also contribute to monitoring and reporting, help to track progress and inform adaptive management. Through its leadership in landscape restoration and watershed

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management, DLRC engagement in the project will be instrumental in transforming vulnerable rural areas into resilient socio-ecological systems capable of withstanding the impacts of climate change.

**Activity 1.1.2. Community engagement and sensitization through VDCs**

71. 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 195 villages located in the 19 targeted micro-watersheds, the project will raise communities' awareness about the project approach and planned interventions, highlighting the reliance on participatory processes and the importance of community empowerment.

72. The entry point for community engagement will be Village Development Committees, which are officially recognized by the Ministry of Local Government. As part of Malawi's decentralized governance structure, VDCs act as the interface between local communities and district-level authorities, facilitating coordination and integration of project interventions within existing administrative frameworks. They play a crucial role in supporting the formulation and execution of VLAPs, which are central to the project's approach.

73. Community sensitization sessions will be delivered through district, area and village meetings, coordinated by the VDCs and in consultation with the traditional authorities. SCRCP will deliver 1 session per microcatchment per year, with 40-50 participants per session. The project will ensure sensitization sessions are conducted on: (i) climate change and expected impacts in targeted micro-watersheds; (ii) disaster risk management<sup>65</sup>; (iii) available climate information and its use for decision making, etc., (iv) gender and social inclusion approaches activities under the project (see below); etc. The objective of these sessions will be to catalyse communities' engagement in the definition of VLAPs (Activity 1.1.5) that will be climate resilient and gender-sensitive. Time and location of these sessions will be carefully planned to ensure women, youth and minorities can attend and participate actively.

**Activity 1.1.3. Gender and social inclusion mainstreaming**

74. 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. Women in Malawi are disproportionately affected by climate change, owing to their increased exposure working in the field, their responsibility as caretakers, and their role in fetching water over increasingly long distances. Like youth, their access to productive land and income-generating opportunities, to information and extension services training. This is 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 and Annex 1).

75. SCRCP will embed gender and social inclusion throughout implementation. A dedicated officer will lead training and support for inclusive planning. Relevant tools and methodologies to ensure participation of women (and other marginalized groups) in programme activities will be deployed (as also further outlined in the Gender Analysis, Strategy and Action Plan included under Annex 4). The outcome of these assessments will support the mainstreaming of relevant social inclusion tools in targeted areas, notably to ensure equitable access to the project.

76. Gender Action Learning System (GALS) (see below) and the Gender Sensitive Climate Vulnerability & Capacity Analysis (GCVCA)<sup>66</sup> to ensure women's voices are heard and their concerns mainstreamed into project responses. These approaches enable women and youth participation in consultations and project activities beyond performative, but rather as active participants in planning and decision making. Dedicated activities supporting women primarily are also integrated throughout implementation, and notably by using quotas in participation and selection into leadership positions to ensure that women and other vulnerable groups are fully engaged in the implementation process. Relevant resources and asset will be availed including providing vulnerable and women led households with labour saving equipment (stoves, water storage); mainstreaming gender concerns at the level of Farmer Field

<sup>65</sup> In synergy with Civil Protection Committees (CPCs) placed at both Area and Village Level.

<sup>66</sup> 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](#)

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Schools (FFS); supporting small cooperatives, businesses and activities where women are prevalent (tree nurseries, seed banks, seed multiplication, pass on, etc.).

77. The Gender Action Learning System<sup>67</sup> is a transformative and participatory household methodology that enhances resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change among rural communities through inclusive decision-making, equitable access to and control over resources, and shared responsibilities. By engaging all household members, the approach promotes joint ownership, enhances transparency and accountability. GALS helps address critical gender and HIV/AIDS-related vulnerabilities, while empowering institutions to adapt to shocks and sustain livelihoods. 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 the integration of these structures into the interventions of a specific project.

78. The project will support the local facilitators to implement GALS in 2,000 households in targeted villages (around 10 HH per village), with about two cycles per year. The participatory and gender-sensitive planning adopted for VLAP preparation (including using the Gender-Sensitive Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis methodology) will be used as entry point to target households to be engaged in GALS.

79. Households will be guided through key GALS tools to promote inclusive planning, gender analysis, and collective action. Using the Vision Journey, families (alongside youth) will define personal and shared aspirations, which are consolidated into a household vision and tracked through seasonal milestones. The Gender Balance Tree will help analyze roles, time use, and income distribution, identifying areas for more equitable decision-making and resource control. Households will also assess asset ownership and commit to improving gender balance, with progress tracked through a matrix of measurable indicators. The Empowerment Leadership Map will visualize relationships and leadership roles, highlighting opportunities for women and youth to participate more actively in household and community decisions. These insights will be compiled into a Household Action Plan. Additionally, GALS will be used to assess access to climate information, identify barriers such as literacy or mobility, and propose inclusive communication strategies to ensure all household members are informed and engaged.

80. The GALS methodology will be further mainstreamed by including dedicated sessions on the topic in FFS, and organizing related community level events using *theatre for development* and *gender dialogue* sessions to ensure that communities take action on deep-rooted cultural norms and values that affect gender transformation at household and community levels.

81. Disability inclusion. The project will adopt a rights-based approach to disability, recognizing that barriers in systems, policies, and attitudes (not impairments themselves) are what disable individuals. To promote inclusion, the project will implement the Disability Inclusion Facilitator (DIF) model successfully implemented in Malawi under the IFAD-led SPARK grant<sup>68</sup>. The DIF model focuses on empowering young persons with disabilities (PwDs) as facilitators who lead awareness and inclusion efforts. These facilitators are trained through a structured Disability Inclusion Academy (1 national 5-day training for 19 DIFs), which includes intensive training, mentorship, and practical sessions on disability awareness, types of impairments, and facilitation skills.

82. Once trained, DIFs will support inclusive programming by conducting awareness sessions, improving access to services and networks, and promoting leadership among PwDs. The Department of Agricultural Extension Services, with support from the PMU Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist, will oversee the selection and training of extension staff, coordinate with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), and deploy 19 young PwDs as DIFs (one in each micro-catchment). These facilitators will receive continuous mentorship and technical supervision to ensure effective implementation and long-term impact.

#### **Activity 1.1.4. VNRMC consolidation and capacitation**

83. VDCs rely on Village Natural Resources Management Committees (VNRMCs) to support them. A VNRMC is a body elected by the stakeholders of village local landscape and notably forest areas to set rules regarding forest management.<sup>69</sup> They are established with the purpose of managing and utilizing

<sup>67</sup> See <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/-/how-to-do-note-integrating-the-gender-action-learning-system-in-ifad-operations>

<sup>68</sup> <https://sparkinclusion.org/local-solutions/malawi/>

<sup>69</sup> Government of Malawi, 1997. "Forestry Act (No. 4 of 1997)."

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village forest areas by the Forest Act 1997. According to the *National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructures 2015*, VNRMCs are responsible for the protection of water catchment. As such, VNRMCs will be closely engaged in the planning and implementation of project activities at the community level throughout the project's lifetime, including as part of activities under component 2. They will be DLRC's main interlocutor in the definition and execution of micro-catchment activities later featured in the VLAP.

84. To ensure their active participation, SCRП will support the establishment of, and strengthen a total of up to 70 such watershed management structures (in line with the Forestry Act of 1997). Under the coordination/leadership of DLRC, AEDOs/AAEDOs and Department of Forestry will support VNRMC charter establishment or their review, guiding discussions to ensure that climate change, village by-laws, gender, social inclusion and other relevant concerns are reflected. Where needed, SCRП will support their registration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change. It is expected that these or similar groups have been created under previous projects presented in Section F. Where this is the case, VNRMCs may also be enhanced to ensure at least 50% of members are women and 30% are youth.

85. For each VLAP, 25 to 30 VNRMCs members' and representative community members' (from all groups including women, youth, and other vulnerable groups) capacities on aspects relevant to local planning will also be supported, with dedicated trainings (2 sessions per module per microcatchment) covering:

- (i) **Climate risks and disaster risk management**<sup>70</sup>: Training will focus on understanding climate risks and vulnerabilities at the local landscape level, and equipping communities with the knowledge and tools to plan for them through disaster risk management and early warning systems. This includes training on tools such as participatory needs assessments to identify locally relevant hazards and response strategies, and the integration of both traditional and modern weather prediction methods to strengthen preparedness. Information will be shared on community-based and institutional early warning systems, in alignment with and as preparation for activities under Component 3.
- (ii) **Principles of micro-watershed integrated planning and landscape management**: Participants will be introduced to the landscape approach, including demarcation, resource inventorying, and stakeholder engagement, with a focus on ecological, socioeconomic, and cultural sustainability. They will learn how to map and assess micro-watersheds, identify key resources and actors, and develop inclusive restoration and management plans. The training will emphasize participatory and gender-sensitive planning (including information on the Gender-Sensitive Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis<sup>71</sup> tool), facilitation techniques, EO and GIS techniques for mapping, planning and monitoring, and the importance of engaging the whole community throughout the process to ensure ownership and long-term sustainability.
- (iii) **Options for watershed restoration and sustainable management of natural resources**: Training will focus on identifying key ecosystem goods and services that support livelihoods and ecological balance within the local context. Participants will explore ecosystem-based adaptation techniques tailored to local conditions, including soil and water conservation practices, agroforestry, naturally assisted regeneration, reforestation with native species, and riverbanks stabilization, based also on the menu of options supported under output 1.2. The training will also cover biodiversity and agrobiodiversity conservation, seed banking, nursery development, and community-led seed exchange systems to support resilient agricultural and ecological systems in relation with activities under component 2.
- (i) **Identifying priority support needs for adaptation at farm level**: This module will guide participants through a participatory process to assess climate-related challenges affecting smallholder farming systems locally. It will focus on identifying practical adaptation needs guiding FFS implementation under component 2 (e.g. soil and water conservation, integrated soil fertility management, access to climate-resilient seeds, agroforestry options, and improved

<sup>70</sup> In synergy with Civil Protection Committees (CPCs) placed at both Area and Village Level.

<sup>71</sup> The GCVCA practitioners 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 specific focus on social and in particular gender dynamics. [Gender Sensitive Climate Vulnerability & Capacity Analysis - CARE Climate Change](#).

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irrigation and drainage techniques). The training will also explore barriers to adoption such as limited access to extension services, finance, and information and propose locally appropriate solutions to strengthen farm-level resilience and productivity.

- (ii) **Water resources management:** Sessions will cover the water cycle, the role of forests and vegetation in water regulation, and the impacts of floods and droughts. Participants will explore how soil, water, and vegetation interact to support livelihoods and climate resilience. Community-based water conservation strategies will be discussed and linkages will be made to support planned under component 2 in the form of small-scale water infrastructure.
- (iii) **Common property management for sustainable resource use:** The training will cover the management of common property resources using Ostrom's principles<sup>72</sup>, with a focus on equitable access, collective decision-making, and long-term sustainability, and include practical guidance on establishing community-based management systems (e.g. by-laws) for shared resources such as woodlots, community irrigation schemes, and groundwater. For woodlots, participants will learn to set and enforce harvesting limits based on sustainable yield estimates, while groundwater management will emphasize monitoring extraction volumes relative to recharge capacity—ideally informed by baseline studies or, where unavailable, a conservative recharge estimate of 4% of annual precipitation. These systems will help communities prevent resource depletion and enhance resilience to climate variability.
- (iv) **Adaptive management and monitoring:** This module will build skills in monitoring and evaluation (M&E), reporting, and activity adjustment. Participants will learn how to use M&E data to inform adaptive planning and share responsibilities within the community.

#### **Activity 1.1.5. VLAP preparation**

86. Having mobilized communities through VDCs and strengthened VNRMCs, the project will support the establishment of up to 70 climate-resilient VLAPs to guide investments under outputs 1.2 and component 2. VLAPs will cover individual or groups of villages in its area of intervention (group VLAP for up to 10 villages in case their resources are commonly managed). VLAPs are “plans for managing the resources and infrastructure at village level and provide for in-field activities. 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”<sup>73</sup>. The formulation of VLAPs is essential as they serve as the lowest SLM planning and implementing unit, allowing for the customization of SLM practices to avoid blanket recommendations across all catchments.<sup>74</sup> An amalgamation of VLAPs can form basis for developing a micro-catchment management plan.<sup>75</sup>

87. **Baseline information.** VLAP preparation will rely on relevant information available at local level, including climate vulnerability assessments, micro-catchment assessment (including participatory rural appraisals, soil health mapping and hotspot identification) conducted to assess the state of natural resources in the local landscape, and detailed gender and social inclusion assessment (utilising frameworks for analysis such as Gender Sensitive Climate Vulnerability & Capacity Analysis). Key information available will be compiled at the level of each VNRMC with the support of national consultants.

88. **Process.** The preparation of VLAPs will follow a participatory and inclusive process 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. The process will be led by AEDOs/AAEDOs in close coordination with DLRC. The process will span over several weeks, involving VDCs, VNRMC members and local residents, with a

<sup>72</sup> The Ostrom principles are eight principles developed by Nobel laureate Elinor Ostrom that outline how communities can successfully manage common-pool resources without relying solely on privatization or central government control. Key principles include establishing clear boundaries, creating local rules for resource use, allowing community members to participate in decision-making, implementing effective monitoring, and applying a system of graduated sanctions for rule violations.

<sup>73</sup> National Guidelines: Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure (2015).

<sup>74</sup> Department of Land Resources Conservation. (May 2025). SAPP II Catchment Delineation and Landscape Assessment Report for Mzimba District: Identifying common land degradation Issues and establishing SAPP II Sustainable Land Management (SLM) planning and implementing spatial Units (catchments).

<sup>75</sup> Department of Land Resources Conservation. (May 2025). SAPP II Catchment Delineation and Landscape Assessment Report for Mzimba District: Identifying common land degradation Issues and establishing SAPP II Sustainable Land Management (SLM) planning and implementing spatial Units (catchments).

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minimum of 4 rounds of consultations per VLAP (50-80 participants consulted per round). In-depth sessions at VNRMC level will be complemented by broader community consultations to validate and refine the outcomes, including committees at catchment level, who can ensure harmony, avoid duplication and help scale activities across VLAPs in a same catchment. Those consultations will be undertaken through participatory approaches following Malawi National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure, and directly involve women, youth and minorities to factor in their perspective on the local landscape thanks to methodologies such as the GCVCA.

89. Through these consultations, and using the knowledge acquired through training of VNRMCs with the support of AEDOs/AAEDOs, local communities will actively participate in a structured process to identify and prioritize adaptation and investment needs at both landscape and farm levels. Specifically, they will:

- (i) **Engage in discussions on investment needs and opportunities** at both the landscape and farm levels, considering ecological, economic, and social priorities to enhance climate resilience and sustainable resource use;
- (ii) **Identify preferred locations for interventions**, using participatory mapping (working with digital and printed maps and using community members for georeferencing areas and points within the watershed) and local knowledge to ensure relevance, feasibility, and community ownership of proposed actions;
- (iii) **Identify potential sources of conflict over natural resources**, such as land, water, and forest use, and propose mechanisms for conflict resolution and equitable resource sharing;
- (iv) **Determine common climate threats**, including droughts, floods, erratic rainfall, and soil degradation, and assess their impacts on livelihoods, ecosystems, and infrastructure;
- (v) **Identify common challenges in implementing Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM)**, such as limited access to inputs, knowledge gaps, labor constraints, and land tenure issues, and explore context-specific solutions;
- (vi) **Ensure that planning processes and interventions are inclusive of women and youth**, either through joint or separate consultations, to reflect their specific needs, roles, and contributions in natural resource management and climate adaptation.
- (vii) **Safeguards**. The VLAPs preparation process will also include dedicated sessions on safeguards, with a view to screen priorities of interventions against the 15 AF Environment and Social Principles (ESP). An outline for this screening is included in Appendix of Annex 2.

90. **Content of the VLAPs**. While AEDOs/AAEDOs will support the consolidation of VLAPs, writing responsibilities will rest with VNRMC members, ensuring local ownership and transparency. The plans will indicatively include a climate vulnerability assessment of the micro-catchment, an inventory of natural resources, and a community-defined vision for landscape restoration. The VLAP will outline investment priorities at the landscape level, farm level, and community infrastructure at the intersection of landscape and farms. Farm-level investments, including soil fertility enhancement, agroforestry, and water management will be supported under Output 2.1, thereby informing FFS priorities as well as set up of demonstration plots for soil and water conservation. Landscape level investments including ecosystem-restoration interventions such as soil and water conservation, forest and woodlots restoration, riverbank stabilization, etc will be supported under Output 1.2. Community infrastructure needs will be supported under Output 2.2. It will also detail implementation responsibilities, timelines, and required materials and equipment, while integrating gender and social inclusion considerations. Monitoring and adaptive management mechanisms will be embedded to ensure flexibility and sustainability. The ESP Screening tool will also be included.

91. The plans will cover a three-year period and be reviewed annually to reflect evolving community needs and climate conditions. Once finalized and approved by the community, the plans will be submitted to the District Council for inclusion in the Local Development Plans, after approval from the Area Development Committee (ADC) at TA level; and finally to the District Executive Committee (DEC). Local radios will also be mobilized to ensure broad communication about finalized VLAPs and their priorities at the scale of the micro-catchment.

92. **Upscaling VLAPs**. Village-level action plans will be consolidated as micro-catchment action plans, to promote joint ownership between VDCs and VNRMCs. This will help to ensure that strategic interventions for managing large communal lands (such as forests, grasslands and riparian zones) can be coordinated.

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It will also address upstream–downstream linkages among micro-catchments and integrate climate adaptation strategies to improve the enabling environment for replication and scaling.

**Output 1.2. Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level**

93. 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' and local communities' 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 topsoil which is the major contributing layer to soil fertility. This will directly benefit 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.

**Activity 1.2.1. Preparation of VLAP implementation**

94. VLAP implementation will be facilitated by AEDOs/AAEDOs, with the support of lead farmers. After VLAP finalization and with the support of AEDOs/AAEDOs and DLRC, VNRMC members and micro-catchment residents will reconfirm the activities, roles and responsibilities, and develop an annual implementation plan to be integrated into the project's overall Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB). This operation will be repeated annually to cover the 3-year period of the VLAPs.

95. AEDOs/AAEDOs will mobilize community volunteers, organize meetings for the community (one meeting for each VLAP during year 2) to reconfirm implementation activities and operations and maintenance arrangements for antierosive measures, and ensure quarterly follow-up meetings to discuss progress and issues related to VLAP implementation in their respective Districts.

96. From year 2, SCRP will establish demonstration plots within selected micro-catchments to provide hands-on training and continuous recycling of community skills on ecosystem restoration practices outlined under activity 1.2.2. A minimum of one plot per VLAP will be established each year for three years (or possibly a different plot every year, showcasing different techniques each time). These plots will serve as practical spaces where VNRMCs, community members and FFS groups will jointly apply and refine techniques such as soil and water conservation, assisted natural regeneration, gully and riverbank rehabilitation, and the use of climate-resilient vegetation. Communities will be encouraged to participate in restoration work through a rotational scheme in line with the agreements under VLAP and government practices for similar works. For works that are labour intensive the project may mobilize service providers to support the execution, demonstrating and supplying machinery and specialized labour where applicable.

97. AEDOs/AAEDOs will ensure that participation of women and youths is meaningful and satisfactory with respect to their share in participants' composition and ensure that discussions are constructive and based on a collaborative and collective spirit for sustainable landscape in the long term and that climate adaptation principles are well integrated and the principles of gender and social inclusion are respected. Information on the sub-activity will be shared at landscape level through local radios before and after each event.

**Activity 1.2.2. VLAP implementation**

98. The government of Malawi conducted the National Forest Landscape Restoration Assessment (NFLRA) in 2016<sup>76</sup> to "identify the needs and opportunities for the restoration of the productivity and ecological function of degraded and deforested landscapes in Malawi". Based on the assessment, suitable ecosystem-based adaptation investment options to be supported by the project include: (i) community

<sup>76</sup> Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining of Malawi, 2017. *Forest Landscape Restoration Opportunities Assessment for Malawi*.

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forests and woodlot restoration; (ii) forest management; (iii) soil and water conservation; and (iv) river and stream bank restoration; as well as (v) agriculture restoration on communal lands (implemented through FFS).

99. **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 promoted with access to relevant inputs and support to works. Communities will receive hands-on training by AEDOs/AAEDOs, through structured on-site demonstrations and peer learning sessions. Demonstration plots will also be established within target villages (under activity 1.2.1) to showcase best practices, allowing participants to observe, practice, and replicate soil and water conservation measures on their own land. Relevant measures will be prioritized in VLAPs among the following list of eligible measures, based on local needs and characteristics of the areas and complementarity with existing local interventions. These measures will be implemented over a total of 2,800 hectares (40 hectares per VLAP on average with sites of up to 5 ha), protecting a downstream area of up to 11,200 hectares for a total of 14,000 hectares protected. They include:

- i) Earth/contour bunds are earthen embankments built along the natural contour lines of sloped land to slow down water runoff and reduce soil erosion. They are laid out using simple tools like A-frames and constructed through community labor, often reinforced with vegetation planted on the impervium to improve stability and provide fodder.
- ii) Contour and water absorption trenches are dug along contours to capture rainwater and enhance infiltration into the soil. They are especially effective in semi-arid areas and are often combined with tree planting to improve soil moisture and support vegetation growth.
- iii) Diversion ditches are shallow channels designed to intercept and redirect excess surface runoff away from vulnerable areas, for example strategically placed above cultivated fields or erosion-prone zones, leading water to safe discharge points and reducing pressure on lower slopes.
- iv) Vegetation strips consist of grasses or shrubs planted along contour lines to trap sediment and slow water flow; species like vetiver grass and *Tephrosia vogelli* are commonly used, offering both erosion control and soil fertility benefits.
- v) Terracing is a land management technique used to transform steep or sloped terrain into a series of flat, step-like surfaces that reduce soil erosion, improve water retention, and enhance agricultural productivity. In Malawi, terracing is commonly applied in erosion-prone areas within micro-watersheds, especially where farming is practiced on hillsides. The process begins with site assessment and layout using contour mapping tools to ensure proper alignment. Terraces are constructed manually or with simple tools, often by digging and reshaping the land into horizontal platforms supported by earth embankments, stones, or vegetation. Stabilization is achieved by planting grasses, shrubs, or trees along terrace edges to reinforce the structure and prevent collapse. In some cases, stone bunds or vegetative barriers are added to further slow runoff and trap sediments.
- vi) Gully plugging implementation begins with a site assessment to identify active gullies and determine the appropriate plugging method based on slope, soil type, and water volume. Stone or brushwood check dams are constructed using locally available materials such as stones, branches and sticks, or gabions, placed at intervals along the gully to reduce water velocity. These structures are often reinforced with vegetation to stabilize the surrounding soil and enhance infiltration.
- vii) Riverbank stabilization: bank erosion is a natural process in stable rivers; however, it can become accelerated and exacerbated by modifications of river flow as a result of climate change, and particularly in flood prone areas. Channel incision and widening from hydrologic alteration in watershed is an example of indirect bank destabilization cause. Bank degradation result in societal impacts (impact on infrastructure or land from undermining structures and sedimentation of in-stream structures) and environmental impacts (fine sediment loading affecting water quality and aquatic habitat through fouling and eutrophication; channel widening modifying sediment transport capacity and damaging riparian habitats). To address these challenges, riverbanks are stabilized using a combination of structural and biological measures. Infrastructure such as gabions and stone pitching is used to reinforce vulnerable sections, while deep-rooted native vegetation is planted to bind soil and absorb flow energy. These interventions to stabilize the banks, thus reinforcing the protection against overflowing, slowing down river breakage, and reducing the risk of riverbank destruction in case of flood.

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100. **Community forests and woodlots restoration.** Sites for community forest and woodlot restoration will be prioritized in VLAPs based on a combination of ecological, social, and logistical criteria. Priority will be given to areas with high levels of degradation, strong community interest and engagement, and potential for ecological recovery and livelihood improvement. Site assessments will typically include soil quality, existing vegetation and seedstock, land tenure status, and accessibility to ensure feasibility and long-term sustainability. These measures will be implemented over a total of 2,450 hectares (35 hectares per VLAP on average with sites of up to 5 ha). The restoration process will include site preparation, with clearing invasive species, removing debris, and stabilizing soil to create favorable conditions for planting/regeneration. Community members, will be trained in relevant ecological restoration techniques, including:

- i) Assisted Natural Regeneration consists in selecting and letting grow spontaneous trees in agricultural, pastoral or forest land. It is a simple and effective technique, that is disseminated through awareness raising, communities' consensus, some basic technical skills on conducting NAR, selecting and pruning trees, and some tools (pruning shears, marking of young plants, and reseeding if necessary). In Malawi, Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) is widely practiced as a low-cost, sustainable technique to restore degraded agricultural and forest lands, and has proven effective in areas like Mzimba and Nkhata Bay, where it enhances soil fertility, improves crop yields, and contributes to climate resilience by restoring tree cover and biodiversity.
- ii) Reforestation and afforestation. Tree planting is the most expensive and labour-intensive way of bringing trees back into landscapes, and is typically used when trees are wanted by the community or land managers but are not naturally regenerating or are needed for a specific purpose such as fodder, wood or fruit, where superior genetic planting material is available to develop a certain value chain.<sup>77</sup> It is also a useful approach when close control on growing niches, tree densities and their complementarity with other farm enterprises, such as food crops and mechanised farm operations, is desired or important. Where superior genetic planting material is available, this promotes the development of local tree-based value chains. As such, restoration efforts will prioritize planting diverse, climate-adapted species<sup>78</sup> (guided by the National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management) and encourage VNRMCs to select additional non-invasive species suited to local conditions, provided native species remain predominant and biodiversity standards are upheld. Finally, enrichment planting is often used in conjunction with ANR/FMNR to fill diversity gaps or raise the value of the production obtained from naturally regenerated trees. It works best where water supplies through rain or irrigation are sufficient, where the seedlings can be protected through their first, fragile years, and where subsequent tree management encourages growth and production. The project will support local communities to restore degraded forests or tree populations by providing coaching, and strengthening their management capacities. Reforestation and afforestation plans should (i) avoid monospecific populations which are vulnerable to parasitic and other disease attacks, (ii) follow agroforestry principles that maximize synergy between strata (layers) and between species on the same layer, and (iii) maximize diversity and complementarity of tree species with the surrounding environment (e.g. providing continuity of habitat for the fauna, etc.). Planting will be done in staggered phases to ensure optimal survival rates, and mulching, fencing, and water retention measures may be applied to protect young trees and enhance soil moisture. When suitable, intercropping with legumes or medicinal plants can be introduced to improve soil fertility and provide short-term livelihood benefits. The project will procure seedlings of local species, to be selected by the communities as part of the planning process and based on availability. As soon as nurseries supported under Output 2.2 become operational, the project may procure seedlings directly from them to support the reforestation/afforestation process. The new tree cover thus supported may also create opportunities to develop Non-Wood Forest Products value chains, to the benefit of women and youth.

<sup>77</sup> ICRAF/CGIAR. 2023. [Regreening Africa Final Report](#).

<sup>78</sup> Wild Loquat, Indian Plum, Snot Apple, Iron Wood, Pod Mahogany, African Teak, and different nitrogen fixing trees have been identified as relevant options. Other trees recommended during the consultations include: gliricidia, tephrosia vogelli, senna spectabilis, faidherbia albida, sesbania sesban, mangoes, lemons, pawpaws, oranges, bananas, and pear, among others

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Afforestation and reforestation need to consider access to water as young trees may initially need regular watering. Based on this, the project will verify water availability (which will also be facilitated by other project investments) and support water efficient watering approaches (drip, mulching, etc.). Both in NAR and afforestation/reforestation, young trees need to be protected from animals and people through surveillance and awareness raising.

101. To ensure long-term sustainability of ecosystem restoration efforts, activities must be closely linked to community livelihoods, for example promoting tree species that can provide income opportunities in addition to restoration benefits (such as fruits, apiculture, medicinal plants, mushrooms, and fodder). Communities will be supported to prioritize economically valuable species (both native and non-invasive non-native trees) among those identified in national guidelines for restoration efforts, and will be linked to relevant initiatives that can help them develop associated value chains (e.g. IFAD/SAPPII project).

#### **Activity 1.2.3. Consolidation of restoration efforts**

102. **Management plans and by-laws.** After restoration works are completed, and under the leadership of VNRCMS, communities will establish forest management plans outlining conservation goals, permitted activities, and restoration strategies for the sites. Simultaneously, community by-laws will be developed, formalizing rules on forest access, harvesting, fire control, and enforcement mechanisms. Similar management plans and by-laws may also be established for pastoral or agricultural (agroforestry sites) to ensure inclusive community management. These by-laws will be validated through community consensus and submitted to local government authorities for legal recognition, ensuring both legitimacy and enforceability.

103. **Maintenance and monitoring.** Once restoration measures are in place, consistent maintenance and monitoring are essential to ensure their effectiveness and longevity. O&M trainings will be conducted at demonstration plots each year as well as at the completion of works. Communities, guided by VNRCMS should regularly inspect physical structures (bunds, terraces, etc.) for signs of erosion, damage, or blockage. Vegetative components require weeding, replanting, and protection from grazing. Monitoring activities should include visual assessments, photo documentation, and simple data collection on vegetation cover, soil stability, and water retention. These efforts can be supported by AEDOs/AAEDOs training local monitors and by integrating restoration indicators into VLAPs. Establishing seasonal review meetings and linking monitoring results to adaptive management decisions helps reinforce community ownership and ensures that interventions remain responsive to local changes and needs.

104. **Exchange visits.** As part of the project's peer learning and capacity-building strategy, exchange visits will be organized at the micro-catchment level (one per year per microcatchment from year 2, with 15 participants per visit) to foster cross-community learning and replication of best practices. These visits will bring together members of VNRCMS, community leaders, and other stakeholders from different micro-catchments to observe successful implementation of ecosystem restoration interventions such as soil and water conservation, forest restoration, and agroecological practices. Participants will engage in hands-on demonstrations, share experiences, and discuss challenges and solutions in managing their landscapes. The exchange visits will also promote social cohesion, inspire innovation, and strengthen the network of local actors committed to sustainable watershed management. Visits will be organized every year within each of the 19 targeted micro-watersheds.

#### **Activity 1.2.4. Recognition of community efforts and measures to reduce pressure on ecosystems**

105. The project will recognise and incentivise community engagement in restoration initiatives through community recognition events (one per year per VLAP from year 2), in-kind compensation for smallholders for their active participation in sustainable land and watershed restoration activities. Beyond tools, training, and agricultural inputs, incentives were also chosen to reduce pressure on ecosystems in the supported areas and alleviate women's burden. Direct support anticipated includes the provision of:

- i) Fuel-efficient woodstoves (benefitting 3,900 households)<sup>29</sup>: The rocket stove and *chitetezo* stove have been shown to significantly reduce the amount of firewood required for cooking,

<sup>29</sup> The introduction of fuel-efficient woodstoves directly supports climate adaptation by reducing pressure on already degraded forest resources, thereby helping stabilize micro-catchments and maintain the ecosystem services that smallholder farmers depend on for

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while also emitting less smoke (thereby improving indoor air quality and reducing health risks, particularly for women and children). Additionally, they save time and labor, easing the burden on women who traditionally bear the responsibility of collecting firewood. SCRCP will support the provision of these stoves (together with dedicated trainings for their production/maintenance). Under the SCRCP, targeted support will be provided to promote the use of these stoves, especially in areas where community woodlots have been established as part of broader watershed restoration efforts. This support will include the distribution of stoves and comprehensive training programs focused on their production, maintenance, and proper usage to ensure sustainability and local ownership. Furthermore, in regions where wood resources are extremely scarce, the project will pilot the use of solar ovens as an alternative cooking solution. These ovens harness solar energy, offering a clean and renewable method for food preparation, and further reducing dependency on biomass fuels.

4) The introduction of fuel-efficient woodstoves directly supports climate adaptation by reducing pressure on already degraded forest resources, thereby helping stabilize micro-catchments and maintain the ecosystem services that smallholder farmers depend on for climate-resilient livelihoods. By cutting household firewood demand, these stoves avoid maladaptive practices and slow the rate of deforestation and soil exposure, which in turn reduces runoff, erosion, and downstream flood risks (key climate vulnerabilities identified in the SCRCP target districts). Reduced fuel costs and time savings reallocated to productive activities also have the potential to increase income gains and in turn, capacity to come with climate-induced stressors. In areas facing acute firewood scarcity, piloting solar ovens further diversifies adaptive energy options by shifting households toward clean, renewable heat sources that reduce exposure to climate-driven biomass shortages.

ii) Seedlings from high value species (benefitting 11,700 households): to incentivize community engagement in ecosystem restoration, seedlings will be distributed as in-kind support to households actively participating in ecosystem restoration activities. These seedlings will be selected from approved native and non-invasive species with high economic value and ease of transplantation, and may be sourced from nurseries supported under Activity 2.2.1. Examples include fruit trees such as mangoes, pawpaws, lemons, and oranges, which offer quick returns and are well adapted to local conditions. Agroforestry and nitrogen-fixing species like *Gliricidia sepium*, *Faidherbia albida*, and *Sesbania sesban* are also prioritized for their soil enrichment properties and compatibility with farming systems. Native species such as Wild Loquat (*Uapaca kirkiana*) and Snot Apple (*Azanza garckeana*) are included to enhance biodiversity and support traditional uses. Seedling distribution is accompanied by practical training on planting, care, and integration into agroforestry systems.

iii) 780 Equipment for rain and flood water harvesting, storage and reuse at the village or household level, with possible link to support for efficient small-scale irrigation under component 2. These technologies not only enhance water access and resilience but also reinforce community commitment to restoration and conservation efforts. Examples include:

- Rain barrels: placed under roof gutters to collect runoff, ideal for watering small gardens and can be made from repurposed plastic drums;
- Intermediate Bulk Containers (IBC) totes for rooftop runoff collection: offer larger storage capacity and are commonly used for household irrigation and livestock watering; durable, easy to clean, and can be fitted with taps or hoses for controlled water use;
- Systems to improve water quality including: first-flush diverters (these devices divert the initial runoff from a rain event away from the storage tank and thereby improve water quality and are essential for systems intended for household or livestock use) and sand and

climate-resilient livelihoods. By cutting household firewood demand, these stoves avoid maladaptive practices and slow the rate of deforestation and soil exposure, which in turn reduces runoff, erosion, and downstream flood risks (key climate vulnerabilities identified in the SCRCP target districts). Reduced fuel costs and time savings reallocated to productive activities also have the potential to increase income gains and in turn, capacity to come with climate-induced stressors. In areas facing acute firewood scarcity, piloting solar ovens further diversifies adaptive energy options by shifting households toward clean, renewable heat sources that reduce exposure to climate-driven biomass shortages.

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charcoal filters for basic purification (these systems can be built using locally available materials and are effective for removing sediment and organic matter).

- d. Raised storage tanks with gravity-fed systems for irrigation: elevated tanks allow for gravity-fed water distribution, reducing the need for pumps. These systems are useful for irrigation and washing, and can be built using metal stands or masonry platforms.
- e. In flood-prone areas, semi-buried cisterns may also be provided to safely store excess water. These tanks are installed below or partially below ground to store larger volumes of water while protecting it from evaporation and contamination. They can be connected to first-flush diverters and filtration systems.

106. A total of 3,900 vulnerable households will be targeted to benefit from fuel efficient woodstoves, among a total of 11,700 households also supported with seedlings of high value species, while 780 of these households (or groups within the community) will receive support to water harvesting and storage. Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, such as women, youth, and those with limited access to land, will be prioritized, ensuring equitable benefit-sharing, and the project will also focus support on households that actively engage in NAR/FMNR.

## Component 2. Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi

### Outcome 2. Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems

107. 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 low, 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.

108. The component aims to strengthen the adaptive capacity of smallholder farmers in Malawi by improving access to climate resilient agricultural practices, inputs and infrastructure, building on existing extension systems and promotion of inclusive and sustainable farming systems. 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 to diversify farming practices, while supporting resilient, productive infrastructure, including small-scale irrigation systems and rainwater storage facilities. This will contribute to AF Output 6 "*Targeted individual and community livelihood strategies strengthened in relation to climate change impacts, including variability*" and Outcome 6 "*Diversified and strengthened livelihoods and sources of income for vulnerable people in targeted areas.*", thereby supporting the "*increased adaptive capacity of communities to respond to the impacts of climate change*" (AF impact level result).

#### Output 2.1. Adaptive capacity of smallholder farming systems supported

109. Insufficient extension capacity has been recognized to play a role in low adaptive capacity and stagnating productivity in Malawi. The low extension worker to farmer ratio (1 to 3,000 as opposed to the standard 1 to 750) limits the adoption of good agricultural practices.<sup>80</sup> This was confirmed several times during the consultations. Under the direct coordination of the project's agronomist, and 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. Agriculture

<sup>80</sup>National Planning Commission (NPC). (2022, July). Agriculture commercialization in Malawi: Productivity and diversification, prospects and pathways (Malawi 2063 Policy Brief Series).

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resource centres (Activity 2.2.3) and improved digital agro-advisory (component 3) will also complement this component to address the lack of extension workers.

#### **Activity 2.1.1. FFS institutionalization**

110. SCRCP will support the institutionalization of the FFS approach as the primary extension approach. Based on the broad 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 the lead farmers managing several FFSs and reporting to one extension agent. Recent FFS initiatives in Malawi operate within government structures and institutions, intended to facilitate mainstreaming of the approach, and its institutionalization into the extension service system.

111. **Enhanced technical guidance based on available climate data.** While past projects and programmes (see Part II.F.) have supported multiple guides and manuals, those have not been harmonised nor institutionalized. The 2018 Malawi Climate Smart Agriculture Handbook for Frontline Agriculture Extension Staff, the Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) guidelines, and the Conservation Agriculture guidelines also lack specific guidance on sustainable application of fertilizer, water conservation, crop conservation and diversity, and other practices critical to build climate resilience. SCRCP will revise these guidelines based on the vulnerability assessment produced under Component 1, as well as on direct project experience supporting the mainstreaming of adaptation practices at the 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. It will also gather information from 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.

112. **Mainstreaming climate adaptation into FFS curriculum.** The project will then use this updated guidance to feed into the ongoing FFS institutionalization process. The project will support the integration of climate resilient techniques directly in the Malawi FFS programme curriculum (implemented and developed under the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)-led KULIMA project – see Section II. F), in line with needs identified under output 1.1. Dedicated modules will be developed on the following topics (also in view of implementing project supported FFS): 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 crops (early maturing, drought resistant, etc.); importance of agrobiodiversity, varied and adapted genetic resources; etc.

#### **Activity 2.1.2. FFS delivery**

113. **FFS roll out.** SCRCP will support the roll out of the FFS approach, that has proven effective for the uptake of climate-resilient and ecosystem-based practices through its participatory and context specific methodology<sup>81</sup>. FFS methodology is also an effective way of increasing the outreach of extension support to farmers, notably by training lead farmers to act as relays of extensionists (AEDOs/AAEDOs). The standard roll out of the FFS has 3 levels: (i) the Master Trainer's Course (MTC); (ii) the Training of Facilitators (ToF); and (iii) the actual FFS implementation.

114. A total of 100 crops FFS (one for two villages on average) and 50 agroforestry FFS (one for four villages on average) will be implemented in targeted areas, with one facilitator supporting up to 4 FFS (i.e. 25 facilitators for crops FFS and 15 for agroforestry FFS). AEDOs/AAEDOs will act as FFS facilitators (receiving compensation - including top ups and incentives - for their implementation during the first year) and be trained during year 1 through two trainings of facilitators (ToF) (one training for each topic, with 30 to 40 participants per training, thereby expanding the reach of project support to more facilitators). During the first year of implementation, the project will also work with existing Master Trainers and conduct

<sup>81</sup> <https://www.fao.org/farmer-field-schools/ffs-overview/en>

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refresher trainings where needed, particularly on topics associated with climate adaptation. The project will support transportation, input supply to lead farmers in FFS sites and monitoring visits. Over the course of FFS implementation, trainers will identify 120 lead farmers, who will take over the FFS management at the end of the first learning cycle, as it is current practice in Malawi, thereby guaranteeing the sustainability of project support. A total of 120 lead farmers will be trained during and after the FFS cycle, with an objective appraisal of their involvement throughout the curriculum. Overall, the FFS programme under the project will benefit 4,500 households (with 30 farmers participating in a given FFS on average), or 22,500 people of which 50% women, 30% youth, and 5% of people with disabilities. Each FFS member will have a minimum of three follower farmers, translating into 13,500 farmers (and their households) reached. 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.

115. A **FFS cycle** typically spans one agricultural season (around 8-10 months) and consists of 12-16 sessions, usually held weekly. It follows the full production cycle of a crop or livestock enterprise and emphasizes participatory learning through planning, diagnosis, experimentation, field observation, and evaluation. While most groups complete the cycle within one season, some continue into a second to explore advanced topics or test new technologies.

116. **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 will reflect the inclusivity of this participatory planning process, ensuring women and youth challenges are addressed and their burden not increased. Topics covered will include: (i) agroecosystem Analysis and Field experimentation; (ii) sustainable Landscape Management principles; (iii) Integrated Pest Management (IPM), including production of biopesticides and diversification and introduction of insect attracting or repelling plants; (iii) agroecology and permaculture principles, practices and ecosystem design; (iv) climate resilient agriculture (introduction of adapted varieties and landraces, crop rotation, crop association and inter-row cultivation; conservation of soil quality and moisture/conservation agriculture, reduced or no-tillage farming; modification and adaptation of sowing times; efficient use of organic fertilizers; compost production, animal-plant integration; cover cropping systems, mulching; deep bed farming techniques, pit planting; contour cropping); and (v) home garden creation for food security and diversification. Additionally, crops FFS will also cover: crop management (sowing, maintenance (weeding, ridging, hoeing, positive selection, pruning); different harvesting techniques and crop processing; seed production and conservation including seed banks; techniques of conservation, treatment and preservation of agricultural products; and small Irrigation in association with rainwater harvesting. Agroforestry FFS will cover: different species, their association and use and/or ecological service they render (legumes for nitrogen fertilization, charcoal, wood, fruits, anti-erosion, etc.); different agroforestry systems; planting and care of tree seedlings, nurseries, protection; and tree management, planting of food crops and association of resources (light, water, cover crop production, etc.). AEDOs/AAEDOs will also leverage FFS to raise awareness on climate information for decision making based on capacity building provided under component 3.

117. 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".

118. **Gender mainstreaming.** 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 (detailed previously) with FFS groups. The project will strengthen the GALS by introducing agroecological logbooks, a participatory tool that helps communities document farming practices, environmental changes, and gendered labour contributions. These logbooks help make women's often invisible work in areas like soil management and seed saving more visible, enhancing their recognition and negotiation power. Distributed to 3,000 households, especially those led by women, youth, or persons with disabilities, the logbooks will track production, income, decision-making, and climate-resilient practices. Facilitated by trained AEDOs/AAEDOs and local leaders, the data will be reviewed

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monthly by farmer groups and aggregated quarterly to inform the project's monitoring and learning system, offering insights into gender roles, productivity, and the value of unpaid labour.

119. **Outreach, peer to peer learning, replication and exchange visits.** To ensure broader adoption of techniques introduced through FFS, the project will promote peer-to-peer exchanges through a total of 100 demos, as well as 250 field-days and exchange visits, supported by extension services (AEDOs/AAEDOs) that help disseminate innovations and identify local champions. Every FFS will prioritize to conduct a field day at any of the crop development stages (vegetative, maturity or harvesting/post-harvesting stages) with direct support from the project. The communities of the FFSs will be mobilized to directly support field days for the remaining two stages of crop development. All the field days will have themes directly linked to the prioritized topics under study in the FFSs. Experience-sharing will also be encouraged through demonstrations and exchange visits between villages and micro-catchments, helping to expand outreach by engaging a broader community of farmers and stakeholders.

**Activity 2.1.3. Resilient practices for small livestock rearing**

120. For vulnerable households with insufficient assets to cope with the impacts of climate change, Malawi implements pass-on programmes. Pass-on systems are community-based livestock support mechanisms where beneficiaries receive goats with the agreement to pass on offspring to other vulnerable households, creating a ripple effect of empowerment and resilience. In the project area, a large number of households are already actively engaged in these systems but lack the technical assistance to build the resilience of their livelihoods. SCRP will strengthen the sustainability, impact and resilience of existing goat pass-on schemes, by implementing a comprehensive technical assistance package tailored to the needs of smallholder farmers. This will begin with capacitating/recycling 25 Assistant Veterinary Officers (AVOs) delivering 100 demonstrations. The training topics will be covered in 2 workshops (of 5 days each) for general livestock management (including feeding), climate-resilient livestock practices, parasite and disease control, and pass-on facilitation. The sessions will apply a ToT model. At the community level, the AVOs will train 15 lead farmers on the same topics. By 2030, a total of 375 lead farmers are expected to be trained as community level facilitators. Both AVOs and lead farmers will receive annual refresher training sessions and reviews.

121. Beneficiaries will participate in hands-on sessions (about 5 demos per year per EPA) led by trained AEDOs/AAEDOs and lead farmers, focusing on building durable goat housing (kraals), preparing nutritious feed using locally available resources, and basic veterinary care such as administering routine health treatments such as deworming and vaccinations. These demonstrations will be complemented by workshops on breeding management, record keeping, and climate-resilient livestock practices. Regular follow-up visits and peer learning exchanges will be organized to monitor progress, address challenges, and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

**Activity 2.1.4. Support to extension research feedback**

122. The project will formalize collaboration with the Department of Agricultural Research Services (DARS) through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), establishing a framework for closer linkages between research, extension, and farmers. Under this arrangement, FFS supported by the project will serve as participatory research and feedback platforms where farmers, AEDOs/AAEDOs, and researchers jointly test and adapt climate-resilient agricultural technologies.

123. The collaboration will begin with the co-design and implementation of on-farm trials that evaluate technologies such as drought-tolerant crop varieties, conservation agriculture practices, and integrated soil fertility management. These trials (framed around 2 seasonal workshops in each district, bringing together 20 to 25 participants including farmers, researchers and AEDOs) will be embedded in the FFS curriculum and undertaken in dedicated plots as controls. FFS groups will document farmer observations and performance data, which will be compiled and shared with DARS to inform the refinement of ongoing research priorities.

124. To maintain a continuous exchange, seasonal feedback workshops and joint field monitoring visits will be organized to review trial results and identify promising innovations for wider dissemination during demos and field days in Activity 2.1.2. The partnership will also leverage digital feedback tools, including WhatsApp groups and SMS-based surveys, to collect real-time input from farmers and AEDOs/AAEDOs across districts.

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### **Activity 2.1.5. Agriculture Resource Centers (ARCs)**

125. To help compensate the extensionist (AEDO/AAEDO) shortage, SCRCP will also refurbish and promote the use of Agriculture Resource Centres. ARCs play a key role in consolidating and disseminating information generated or supported by the project to the benefit of small holders. During consultations, it was estimated that on average, 50 farmers visit an ARC per week. Activities conducted at ARCs include field days, accessing library services including videos, radios and TV programmes, demonstrations. The government also anticipates procurement of small-scale equipment to be located at the ARCs. This approach enables to enhance the adaptive capacity of a large number of farmers, at a comparatively low cost.

126. SCRCP support to the revitalisation of 4 resource centres (one per targeted district) will include:

- Site selection and need assessment per ARC, in partnership with the Department of Agricultural Extension Services (DAES). ARCs will be selected among already existing structures and prioritised based on their reach to farmers, demonstrated evidence of sustainable management, and capacity to host demonstrations
- Development or update of operating guidelines for each ARC in partnership with DAES, including the update of the 2010 ARC Implementation Guide
- Overseeing DAES election of ARC Management Committees and the development of ARC Constitution through dedicated meetings in each ARC. Committees should ensure representation of youth and women
- Providing refresher training to ARC staff regarding: ARC Constitution, record keeping, information collection and acquisition of goods and services, financial management, gender and social inclusion.
- Procurement of material based on ARC Committee's assessment of needs and budget allocation. Eligible material includes: furniture (including bookshelves, tables and chairs); IT equipment, such as computers, TVs and radio sets and MiFi portable wireless router; back-up power systems (generators or solar power); fans; public address systems (speakers, microphones, cables); small-scale machinery supporting the promotion of minimum soil disturbance practices and processing of products from microcatchments undergoing restoration.
- Operating costs in the first two years (to deliver demonstrations and/or procure climate-sensitive advisory material needed for SCRCP activities) and maintenance

127. As a condition to SCRCP support to material procurement and operating costs, each ARC Committee and supporting DAES office will need to demonstrate to SCRCP that they have a sustainability plan. The plan should identify expected revenue streams (e.g., processing service fees, storage rental, training workshops, linkages to agribusiness), and co-financing commitments from District Agriculture Offices, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), or cooperatives.

128. Currently, staff and security personnel of ARCs are DAES government staff on government payroll. They will be the main project partners for the activities listed above. SCRCP will also support DAES with outreach activities to promote the services of ARCs. This will include promotion of the ARC as a source of climate advisories and good practices using radio, SMS, and community meetings.

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

129. As mentioned previously, lack of access to adapted inputs and resilient small-scale water and storage 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, led by the project's agronomist with support of the rural infrastructure specialist, 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.

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### **Activity 2.2.1. Planting material available to support resilience through agrobiodiversity**

130. 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 as part of this activity and provide the inputs and technical assistance required to set up the nurseries and seed banks. The project may also 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" and link them with existing business development programmes.

131. **Tree nurseries.** The project will support the establishment of 19 community-managed nurseries in strategic locations with access to water and suitable soil conditions. These nurseries will be valued throughout implementation, notably to support landscape restoration activities under output 1.2. Each nursery will begin with site preparation, including fencing to protect seedlings and constructing shaded propagation beds. Communities will receive training in seed collection, pretreatment (e.g., soaking or scarification for hard-coated seeds), potting mix preparation using locally available materials like compost and sand, and nursery management practices such as watering schedules, pest control, and transplanting techniques (3 annual modules per nursery, with 20-30 participants). Priority will be given to indigenous and multipurpose tree species that support reforestation, soil fertility, and household needs. The nurseries will be equipped with basic tools (poly tubes, watering cans, shade nets, etc.) and linked to seasonal planting calendars to ensure timely seedling availability. Technical support will be provided by AEDOs/AAEDOs and informed by best practices from institutions such as ICRAF. Regular monitoring of seedling survival rates and nursery performance will help guide improvements and ensures long-term sustainability. Women and youth will be actively involved in the management and operation of tree nurseries.

132. **Seed multipliers.** The project will identify and support existing associations or newly interested producer groups already engaging, or willing to engage in seed multiplications, and committed to climate resilient approaches and professional seed multiplication. These groups will receive training and technical support from AEDOs/AAEDOs (in synergy with partners such as ICRISAT), to improve the production, storage, and sale of drought-resistant and locally adapted crops. 19 groups (one per micro-catchment) will be trained, with some transitioning into business-oriented seed producers (3 trainings per year, with 20-30 participants). The project will provide starter kits and link these groups to broader market and financial support activities, aiming to transform them into viable enterprises. Additionally, seed fairs will promote awareness and consumption of native and neglected crop varieties.

133. **Community seed banks.** The project will also support the creation of 19 community seed banks (one per micro-catchment) to conserve and safeguard native and locally adapted crop varieties. These seed banks will be equipped with proper storage facilities and materials, and community members (particularly women) will be trained in seed selection, cleaning, drying, and long-term preservation techniques (2 trainings per year, with 20-30 participants each time). Technical support will be provided by institutions such as DARS or the Genebank, ensuring quality control and sustainability. The seed banks will operate on community-based systems, including seed loans and exchanges, and will be directly linked to other project activities including revegetation under component 1 and FFS under output 2.1.

### **Activity 2.2.2. Resilient community infrastructure**

134. **Small scale water infrastructure.** As a result of climate impacts, districts targeted under SCRP face significant challenges related to declining agricultural productivity, particularly among smallholder farmers. The districts experience high variability of rainfall, with seasonal flooding followed by prolonged dry periods and acute water scarcity. This leads to high rates of crop failure, food insecurity, and economic loss for smallholder farmers who rely on rainfed agriculture. This activity intends to contribute to the overall objective of the project through enhanced agricultural water availability for smallholder farming systems by

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supporting rainwater and flood harvesting system. Corresponding community-based small scale water infrastructures (impoundment dams and ponds) will be designed to improve catchment conservation, enhance surface runoff capture and storage, enhance groundwater recharge, and increase the total irrigated agricultural area and enable multiple cropping cycles per year.

135. The project will focus on harvesting flood and rainwater for irrigation. Key aspects include catchment surfaces, storage facilities, filtration systems, and distribution networks. 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 studies, with specific attention to facilitating women's access to water. Location and design will be optimized to retain runoff, reduce sediment transport, recharge groundwater, and store water for supplemental irrigation and livestock use, thereby improving water availability for farming and domestic purposes. The choice of materials and technologies shall prioritize sustainability and efficiency while considering local availability. Up to 70 ponds and/or impoundment dams (one per VLAP), associated to 70 small-scale community irrigations schemes will be installed (serving 30 members each).

136. Infrastructure works will cover the following items:

- (i) Flood and/or rainwater-based irrigation systems will involve the development of flood and rainwater harvesting structures (e.g. dykes) to direct flood and rainwater to storage ponds. Ponds will be excavated to capture maximum runoff from nearby hillslopes, floodplains, and/or ephemeral streams, with capacities ranging from 100 to 500 cubic meters depending on terrain and demand.
- (ii) Impoundment-based irrigation systems will be constructed using locally available materials such as stone masonry or gabions, with dimensions tailored to site-specific conditions (typically 1–2 meters in height and 3–6 meters in width), allowing sufficient storage enough to support low-cost, efficient mini-scale irrigation schemes, with different abstraction technologies. Conveyance structures, on-farm distribution systems, and water application methods for the schemes shall be tailored to local cropping patterns.

137. Each structure is expected to serve up to 10 hectares of upstream catchment. Implementation will follow a phased approach: planning and site selection, community mobilization, studies, works, supervision and participatory monitoring. District councils and AEDOs/AAEDOs will provide technical oversight, while community committees will be engaged in supervision and maintenance. The project's rural infrastructure engineer will be in charge of this activity and its coordination.

138. Upstream protection. The project will incorporate physical and biological soil and water conservation measures aimed at reducing soil erosion and enhancing water infiltration in the immediate catchments (upstream) of the constructed agricultural water facilities. These measures will include the establishment of contour bunds, vegetative barriers, and agroforestry systems on slopes and stream banks above the water infrastructure. Communities will be mobilized to implement soil and water conservation practices such as vetiver grass planting, controlled grazing, and reforestation with indigenous species.

139. Sustainability. To ensure sustainability, the project will promote community ownership through the establishment of Water User Associations (WUAs), which will be trained in basic operation and maintenance tasks such as desilting, vegetation control, and pond upkeep (2 training sessions per scheme per year, and 1 pre-season training session per irrigation scheme, with 30 participants including WUA members and farmers). Women and youth representation and decision-making power in these associations will be enhanced. Management plans and total structures will also be established to support operation and maintenance. The project will leverage existing local resource mobilization strategies, including village development funds and savings groups to support minor repairs, while district-level engineers will be available for technical backstopping.

140. Water-harvesting based communal small scale irrigation. The project will support the development of 70 small-scale irrigation schemes over up to 3ha each using stored water from impoundment dams and ponds to enhance agricultural productivity. These schemes will be designed to serve groups of smallholder farmers through gravity-fed systems or low-lift pumps, depending on the topography and water availability. Irrigation layouts will include simple conveyance structures such as PVC pipes or lined channels, and on-farm distribution systems like furrows, sprinklers, or drip kits tailored to local cropping patterns. Under the

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leadership of the project's agronomist, and with the support of AEDOs/AEDOs, community members will be trained in water scheduling, maintenance, and efficient irrigation practices to ensure optimal use of the resource. By enabling dry-season cultivation and reducing dependence on erratic rainfall, these irrigation schemes will enhance the resilience of vulnerable households in targeted micro-watersheds.

141. **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 produce that 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 means the resources used in the production have also been wasted. Close to 70 storage facilities (one per VLAP, serving 2-3 villages) will be supported, and management groups ensuring maintenance of the structures will specifically target youth participation.

142. Each storage facility will be designed to hold 20 to 30 tons of grain (corresponding to the estimated needs of 2 to 3 villages), corresponding to a 40 to 60 m<sup>2</sup> surface with a height of 3 to 4 m for ventilation. The storage structures will be designed and positioned to withstand extreme weather events such as heavy rainfall, floods, and landslides. These facilities will be built using reinforced materials such as elevated concrete platforms, moisture-resistant walls, and ventilated roofing systems, to protect stored produce from water damage and contamination. Site selection will prioritize elevated, geologically stable areas within each community, avoiding flood-prone zones and unstable slopes. Each structure will include secure doors, rodent-proofing, and internal shelving to facilitate safe and hygienic storage (including hermetic storage bags). Implementation will be community-driven, with local contractors engaged for construction and youth-targeted management groups. Users will be trained in post-harvest handling, food safety, and facility upkeep. These efforts will be aligned with FFS training modules to ensure continuity and reinforce best practices in post-harvest management.

### 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

143. **The Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS)** is Malawi's national authority responsible for weather forecasting, climate monitoring, and the generation of meteorological and climate-related information for early warning and development planning. As part of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change, DCCMS plays a central role in supporting national resilience by providing timely, accurate, and actionable data to sectors such as agriculture, water, disaster risk management, and infrastructure. The department operates a network of synoptic and automatic weather stations across the country, produces regular forecasts and agrometeorological bulletins, and collaborates closely with national and regional partners to strengthen climate services for vulnerable communities.

144. **DAES** is a core department under Malawi's Ministry of Agriculture, responsible for delivering agricultural advisory services to smallholder farmers across the country. Through its decentralized structure, including District Agriculture Offices and Extension Planning Areas (EPAs), DAES works to ensure farmers have access to timely, relevant, and practical information that supports improved productivity, resilience, and livelihoods. DAES also plays a critical role in climate-resilient agriculture by translating agrometeorological forecasts into actionable advice.

145. Malawi's ability to manage climate risks in agriculture is constrained by gaps between the generation of forecasts, their translation into actionable advice, and farmers' capacity to act upon them. Despite the country's strong institutional base (with DCCMS producing regular seasonal forecasts<sup>82</sup>, DAES coordinating extension networks, and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) operating the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System) information often fails to reach smallholders in a timely, trusted,

<sup>82</sup> 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.

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and practical form. Outcome 3 addresses these barriers by strengthening both the *supply* and *use* sides of climate information systems. At the local level, it supports improved forecasting accuracy through additional weather stations and Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP), and ensures that forecasts are communicated through trusted and accessible channels such as radio, SMS, and extension networks. At the national level, it enhances institutional coordination, technical capacity, and policy frameworks so that community-generated data and local knowledge are systematically integrated into forecasts and advisories. Through these complementary interventions, SCRCP will help establish a robust, inclusive, and feedback-driven climate information system that links DCCMS, DAES, DoDMA, and farming communities in a continuous cycle of forecast, advisory, and response.

146. Activities identified in this component were informed by a thorough study undertaken throughout 2025 to inform SCRCP, with support from the Global Centre on Adaptation. GCA experts diagnosed and produced a roadmap for improved digital climate advisory services and improved early warning systems in agriculture in Malawi. SCRCP contributes to implementing this roadmap, which has been endorsed by the relevant Ministries. Activities will be delivered through service providers where required, as well as direct agreements (MoU) between SCRCP project management unit at the Ministry of Agriculture, **DCCMS**, and **DAES**. Implementation of these agreements will be under the direct and close coordination of the project's Meteorology expert.

147. 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 AF 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**

148. Despite improvements in Malawi's climate-advisory, consultations conducted during project preparation found limited abilities of communities to respond to weather-based advisory and early warning information. The lack of follow-up by farmers upon receiving advisory can also be explained by a lack of trust. Two factors negatively affecting trust identified through the consultations are: lack of connection to DAES, and inaccuracy in the advisories from the service. Activities in this output seek to address these challenges by improving accuracy of forecasting through information collection at local level, enhancing communication coverage, and capacitating trusted networks to relay messages.

**Activity 3.1.1 Additional equipment for improved localised forecasting**

149. SCRCP will support DCCMS with **additional equipment for improved localised forecasting**. Weather forecasting in Malawi is challenging due to its complex geography and mountainous terrain which leads to abrupt weather changes. Additionally, there are significant gaps in data from weather stations, including poor data quality, incomplete records, and limited operational time for some stations. These gaps can result in misleading information, causing weather reports to be inaccurate for certain areas within a district. Multiple sources have highlighted the necessity for better-equipped and properly maintained weather stations to deliver higher-quality, localised forecasts. Inaccurate weather reports further undermine farmers' trust in digital services and the reliability of information delivered through technology.

150. Automation of weather observation is the preferred strategy for DCCMS, to (1) increase the number of locations in which data can be collected and thus better capture variations across valleys and improve the accuracy of forecasts and associated advisory; (2) ensure data is received promptly and accurately, as current manual stations rely on paper records being sent by post and lead to delays in forecasts' communication, which farmers have also reported; (3) contribute to global initiatives to improve observations (G-BON and R-BON), which requires quality and timely observations only available from automatic weather stations.

151. SCRCP will equip each EPA with one automated weather station (for a total of 16 stations) measuring rainfall, ambient temperature, humidity, air pressure, wind speed and direction. The main objective is to generate reliable ground-level weather data that complements DCCMS satellite-based forecasts and existing AWS, which are currently unable to accurately capture all areas of the EPA. This information will be used to feed into the PSP process and to increase the share of accurate inputs from Malawi into regional and global forecasts, from which DCCMS downscales its own high-resolution forecasts.

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152. An overview of current DCCMS' current AWS in SCRP's EPA is provided below:

EPA	Presence of AWS	EPA	Presence of AWS
Mlomba	Yes	Mndolera	nearest station Mponela 20km +
Nyang'amire	nearest station Kasiya 14km	Chisepo	nearest station nambuma 20km +
Malingunde	Yes	Bazale	nearest station Balaka Met ~13km
Nyanja	nearest station Nathenje RTC ~19km	Ulongwe	nearest station Toleza Farm 23km
Chitsime	nearest station Chitedze Research Stn ~21km	Emsizini	nearest station Mzuzu airport ~32km
Chiwamba	nearest station Kamuzu Int'l Airport, ~22km	Mpherembe	Yes
Mvera	Yes	Vibangalala	nearest station Mbawa Research ~20km
Emfeni	nearest station Kaluluma ~65km		

153. The priority EPAs to support due to current lack of coverage are Emfeni, Ulongwe, Emsizini, Chisepo, Chiwamba, Nyanja, Chitsime, Vibangalala. This is to reduce the distance to the nearest station and improve granularity of weather data records across varying topographies. Where AWS do exist, they may not measure all weather indicators, or they may require enhancement.

154. DCCMS Officers will lead the procurement and installation of weather stations. Siting will be selected based on the following criteria: open space with minimal distractions to observations (such as trees or buildings), security available, mobile phone network. Power is not expected to be a constrained as DCCMS' AWS are solar-powered. Prior to installation, DCCMS conduct community leadership awareness sessions to reduce the chance of vandalism. DCCMS will develop and handover explanatory posters in each site, describing how the instruments work, what they measure, and why it matters for farmers and local communities. District DCCMS officers will also be trained by the supplier in the use of the equipment, including common sensor faults, calibration frequencies and diagnostics in case of errors, as well as detecting data outliers and inconsistency and replacing batteries (1 initial 5-day session for all district officers and annual 2-day refresher per district, benefiting 20 district officers).

155. Training on integrating the data into downscaled forecasts and calibration of historical projections will be provided in output 3.2 at the national level.

#### **Activity 3.1.2 Participatory Scenario Planning workshops**

156. To improve local relevance of forecasts and associated advisory, SCRP will also support data collection directly from farmers through **participatory-scenario-planning (PSP)**. PSP has been piloted in Malawi before, with strong evidence of effectiveness in building farmer trust and improving the usability of seasonal forecast. Under the KULIMA project, PSPs were held at EPA level with participation from DCCMS, DAES, lead farmers, VNRMCs and traditional leaders. Learning from farmers' feedback, SCRP will also facilitate participation from private sector input providers as workshop participants to ensure the advisory can be actionable by farmers (e.g: sufficient stocks of drought-resilient varieties are stocked, pesticides are available at the right time, etc.).

157. The workshops will take place twice a year, up to two weeks after each seasonal forecast is released and in each EPA. Workshops will be jointly led by district officers from DAES and DCCMS under the facilitation of the Area Agriculture Stakeholder Panel (AASP). The Area Agriculture Stakeholder Panel (AASP) operates at the EPA tier. It's the lower-level stakeholder platform beneath the district panels, meant to aggregate farmer demands collected from village structures (VDCs and VNRMCs), and coordinate service providers at EPA/Area level. Prior to the event, AASP chair will be trained on delivering PSP workshops. The training will include: (i) understanding and interpreting seasonal weather forecast (ii) developing scenarios and messages (iii) PSP concepts and application, (iv) ensuring participation of women, youth and PwD. After training, AASP will develop an action plan for convening the PSP workshops in each EPA in the district, including the venue and transport arrangements. This process will be supported by a service provider with experience in delivering PSP.

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158. Each workshop should include up to 20 participants including: area Disaster Risk Management Committees (DRMC), DAES (through AEDOs/AAEDOs), DCCMS and District Civil Protection Committee (DCPC) representatives, lead farmers from Component 2 FFS, GALS facilitators at village level from Component 1 and input providers. The workshops facilitators will take participants through the following stages:

1. Presenting the official seasonal forecasts, including expected rainfall levels (above, normal, below average);
2. Collecting feedback from farmers on traditional forecasting indicators (e.g. tree flowering, insect sightings);
3. Developing 2-3 probabilistic scenarios for the season using seasonal forecasts and local knowledge (e.g.: early onset and good rainfall; late onset and poor distribution; early onset with dry spells; etc.). For each scenario, determine timing of rainfall, likely hazards (pests, floods, etc.), crop and livelihoods risks;
4. Co-developing advisory for each scenario. Defining triggers and actions to take, such as varieties to plant, when to plant or replant, diseases to expect and prevention measures, etc.;
5. Agreeing on preferred communication channels (Radio, WhatsApp, ARCs, GALS, etc.);
6. Reviewing previous season's forecast, collecting feedback from farmers on how previous advisories matched their experience and what could be improved, to help DCCMS refine messaging and to adjust future PSP scenario framing.

159. Following the workshops, the chair will prepare a short advisory brief covering the EPA and submit to DAES and DCCMS. DAES will support dissemination, while DCCMS will integrate findings into seasonal forecast verification and bulletin improvements, with support from SCRП in output 3.2.

#### **Activity 3.1.3 Digital advisory broadcasting**

160. SCRП will support DAES to enhance its digital advisory capacities using radio and DAES's own web portal and SMS application Ulimi Ndi Nyengo AgroAdvisory<sup>83</sup>. Radio remains the most accessible service for farmers across districts, reaching more than 70% of rural households. It is also more accessible to illiterate vulnerable groups. However, consultations found that women often lack access to the radio. Hence, SMS systems in combination with in-person extension networks (3.1.4) will also be promoted. The Ulimi Ndi Nyengo AgroAdvisory web portal and SMS application was identified as preferred agroadvisory channel for SCRП as it is owned by the Ministry of Agriculture and was developed internally by DAES (with UNDP support), ensuring better sustainability. The Ministry has planned to integrate it into the National Agriculture Management Integration System (NAMIS). The application is already used by DAES and the National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM) in 14 districts, which is a key factor in promoting acceptance among farmers.

161. Initial support to **update the advisory** broadcasted will be supported. A service provider will be contracted to work with DAES to develop customised advisory, using latest information from DARS on climate-adapted technologies available as well as feedback from DAES decentralised officers in each EPA and from farmers, collected during PSP and farmer-extension-research feedback (component 2). Outputs from output 3.2 will also be used to link the advisory with yield forecasts and maps. Farmers also report a lack of information on where to access the tools, seeds, or fertilisers needed to implement the advice they receive. This type of information will be included in the advisory packages, informed by input providers present at the PSPs. Up to 20 working sessions will take place to develop and validate the updated advisory, including 1 in each EPA, to be delivered through the radio and Ulimi Ndi Nyengo AgroAdvisory app. To incentivise uptake by DAES, SCRП will also support them with airtime and broadcasting fee to ensure adequate coverage of the project targeted area, targeting 52 radio episodes annually.

162. For improved outreach, SCRП will organise **trainings on the use of Ulimi Ndi Nyengo** for 90 AEDOs/AAEDOs in Balaka and Mzimba districts (where the app usage is the most limited currently). Following their training, they will be required to register new information on the application regarding farmer users (so they may receive the advisory and send their own feedback) and the new agroecological area

<sup>83</sup> The system has three types of messages: general advisories, weather-based advisories triggered by weather scenarios, and a customised type of message. It provides advisory by agroecological zones (10-15km), and can provide tailored advice based on what the farmer is planting. It does not require extensive training to use, provides weekly forecasts and can send daily SMS if required.

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they are covering, including farming systems (so that the advisory can be tailored to the users). During FFS under Component 2 or other outreach activities, AEDOs/AAEDOs will hence record the necessary data on land use, farming system, farmers names, telephone numbers, crops, animals in each SCRP targeted villages in these districts. Data will be aggregated and entered into a database by authorised individuals or by a DAES administrator at the MoAIWD, as per existing procedures.

163. In addition, NASFAM noted that additional investment in **data management** would be required to scale the platform to more regions and unify the information received from farmers in a central database. The service provider will assess the data management requirement of DAES in handling the app and the increasing information intake from farmers, and support the set up of a harmonised database and enhancements to the application hosted by DAES, which can allow for improved analysis to develop tailored advisory and streamlined delivery of messages.

#### **Activity 3.1.4 Capacitating trusted networks**

164. Further studies informing the design of SCRP find that 82% of households in the targeted area get their advisory from extension workers (AEDOs/AAEDOs) rather than digital tools and radio. Farmers have longstanding relationships with AEDOs/AAEDOs, who serve as trusted advisors. If new DCAS tools, approaches and updated advisory are not closely connected to these agents or perceived as complementary to traditional extension services, farmers may view them with scepticism.

165. To reinforce trust through networks already used by SCRP, the project will **capacitate DAES extension officers (AEDOs/AAEDOs)** on climate-weather advisory as a whole, so that it can be mainstreamed in their interaction with farmers and with VDCs and VNRMCs under Component 1 and Component 2, including during FFS. Capacity-building workshops will be undertaken in each EPA, targeting 15 AEDOs/AAEDOs each. The curriculum will cover: (i) interpreting DCCMS short- and medium-range forecasts; (ii) overview of maps of affected areas, losses and people impacted, using the 2022/2023 cyclones as example to improve understanding of compound risks; (iv) overview of Ulimi Ndi Nyengo to encourage promotion among farmers; (v) gender- and youth-sensitive risk communication, including for PwD. Workshops will be delivered by DAES district and central staff to decentralised institutions, after they receive training themselves under Output 3.2.

166. GALS facilitators (at village level) and disability inclusion facilitators trained under Component 1 are trusted within the communities and skilled in participatory learning processes. As such, they will also be an essential link to build trust in forecasts, ensuring that women and youth are not excluded from extension and advisory messaging. Facilitators will undergo a dedicated training from AEDOs/AAEDOs (one climate-weather interpretation training per EPA; 10-20 participants each depending on the number of villages and associated facilitators in the EPA), including (i) understanding forecasts, (ii) interpreting agrometeorological bulletins, (iii) recognising hazard triggers, (iv) understanding impacts and response measures and (v) use of Ulimi Ndi Nyengo. Trainings will be co-facilitated by DAES and DCCMS, using materials adapted from the FAO PICSA approach. GALS facilitators will subsequently be supported to organise seasonal "climate circles", including farmers, youth and traditional leaders, collecting feedback to be reported during PSP and sharing PSP outcomes.

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

167. To ensure that improvements in local climate data and advisory systems are sustained, SCRP will strengthen the national-level capacity of key institutions, particularly DCCMS, DAES, and DoDMA. Output 3.2 will address persistent gaps in coordination, forecast validation, data use protocols, and institutional ownership of climate advisory mechanisms such as PSP. This output will support national climate services to improve forecasting and embed local data into forecast analysis and advisory planning, formalizing coordination mechanisms between institutions, improving policy and protocol frameworks, and strengthening the technical skills of government staff.

#### **Activity 3.2.1 Improving forecasting and advisory**

168. A first training programme will take place to support the **assimilation of new local data collected in Output 3.1 into seasonal and sub-seasonal forecasts and advisory**. While Output 3.1 supports the rollout of weather stations and enhanced local data collection, national-level systems and workflows to

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absorb and use this data remain underdeveloped. New information collected in PSPs should also be taken into account when calibrating forecasting models and historical forecasts.

169. The primary **target will be DCCMS**, who is responsible for producing the forecasts. Other participants should include DAES and DoDMA district staff responsible for feeding back data, as well as representative from National Agricultural Management Information System (NAMIS). Training modules will cover: (i) data collection templates and data cleaning; (ii) data assimilation techniques for non-instrumental (observational) and manual data; (iii) sub-seasonal to seasonal forecast modelling and regional forecasting techniques; (iv) downscaling of seasonal forecasts using field-level data; (v) statistical validation and forecast verification methods; and (vi) use of community data in producing agro-advisories and localised bulletins.

170. Four national workshops will be delivered in the first two years of SCRP. Each workshop will gather approximately 40 participants from across the four SCRP districts and national offices. Each institution will nominate staff to act as institutional focal points for data integration. Focal points will be supported by DCCMS and the training providers post-training for up to two years post-training, through bi-annual follow-up clinics and virtual coaching.

171. To ensure local data and updated forecast also feeds into advisory, further training will be provided in a parallel training programme **focused on DAES**. Training will focus on core technical competencies in: (i) interpreting seasonal forecasting tools for agrometeorological services; (ii) GIS and remote sensing for agro-climatic mapping; (iii) development and use of enhanced crop calendars integrated with forecasts; (iv) crop yield forecasting methodologies for key crops *beyond maize* (currently the only crop modelled). Outputs from training participants will include updated agroclimatic maps, enhanced crop calendars integrated with forecasts, and crop yield forecasts beyond maize.

172. 4 workshops will take place in the first year, with clinics taking place for up to two years post-training. Outputs should be produced by the end of the first year, to embed into decentralised training of DAES extension officer at EPA level under Output 3.1. Training material will be co-developed by participants to the national training programme and the training facilitators.

#### **Activity 3.2.2 Institutionalizing PSP within the national seasonal forecast cycle**

173. Despite the demonstrated success of Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP), these practices have remained project-dependent, lacking formal guidelines, institutional homes within DCCMS or DAES, or budget allocations to sustain and scale them. To ensure PSP is no longer a temporary project activity but a nationally owned climate advisory process, SCRP will also support its formal integration into Malawi's institutional structures and planning systems. This activity will ensure PSP outcomes are captured systematically and used by national institutions for improving forecast quality, contingency planning, and agro-advisories.

174. Institutionalisation will be supported via the following steps:

1. Developing formal national guidelines. Guidelines will be co-drafted by DAES and DCCMS with short-term support from service providers experienced in delivering PSPs (also supporting delivery under Output 3.1). The guideline will define (i) how PSP is embedded in the national seasonal forecast process (pre-season and mid-season), (ii) standard PSP delivery at EPA/district levels (roles, agendas, tools, inclusion requirements), and (iii) the workflow to integrate PSP outputs (scenarios, triggers, farmer feedback) into DCCMS advisories/bulletins, DAES radio/SMS products (Ulimi Ndi Nyengo), and DoDMA preparedness planning. The guideline will include low-literacy tools and translations in Chichewa and Chitumbuka languages.
2. Convening a national validation workshop to review and adopt the PSP national guidelines. The workshop will be co-chaired by DAES and DCCMS. DoDMA should also be present to inform the update of its Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) process. Farm Radio Trust<sup>84</sup> and

<sup>84</sup> Farm Radio Trust (also identified by GCA workshop participants) partners with DAES to produce the Ulimi Ndi Nyengo program and many other radio services aimed at improving food security and resilience (Farm Radio International, 2024). Farm Radio Trust estimates that their listenership exceeds 4.7 million farmers in Malawi (Farm Radio International, 2024).

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NASFAM<sup>85</sup>, key to delivering advisory, should also be invited to align dissemination formats in radio/SMS.

3. Signing of MoU between DAES and DCCMS, specifying roles, responsibilities and annual budgetary commitments to operationalise the process. Should additional resource be necessary, engagements with MoFEPD will be required to insert PSP lines into DAES and DCCMS annual work plans and budgets, which will flow into the national Estimates for Parliament approval (Appropriation Act).
4. Outreach events in each district to launch the guidelines and recognise formally the pool of 20 national-level PSP facilitators (AASP) as master trainers, referring to those trained in Output 3.1.

175. This process will be kickstarted in the first year but formalised by the end of the project, so that feedback and learnings from delivering PSPs under output 3.1 can be integrated.

**Activity 3.2.3 Enhancing the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) protocols for agriculture**

176. A review from the Global Centre on Adaptation found that current MHEWS protocols lack specificity in terms of agricultural triggers, sectoral coordination, and response actions. Key gaps to be addressed include: lack of indication on the type of information that should be included in a warning message or the format of the messaging; no indication on how to reach the vulnerable groups; no definition of thresholds for issuing warnings; no translation into clear, actionable insights for farmers.

177. To address this, SCRП work with a service provider to support DoDMA and DAES review and revise agriculture-relevant components of the MHEWS protocols. The review process will involve two national technical working sessions (5 days each) with approximately 30 stakeholders per event from DoDMA and DAES. Outputs will include:

- Development of agriculture-specific advisory for each type of hazards in DoDMA's MHEWS using exposure maps and vulnerability analysis, development of standardised advisory messages relevant to preparedness and recovery in case of extreme events, and identification of triggers for delivering the messages;
- Reviewing the relevance of using Ulimi Ndi Nyengo AgroAdvisory web portal and SMS application to deliver warning messages alongside DODMA's traditional channel.

178. DODMA will subsequently undergo the administrative process to update its MHEWS protocol and seek legal vetting for integration into the national DRM Plan. The protocols sit under the Disaster Risk Management Act (DRMA, 2023) and are operational instruments overseen by DoDMA. As the updates suggested remain within DRMA's mandate, no formal legislative pathway is required.

**Activity 3.2.4 Developing operational protocols and advisory harmonization frameworks**

179. To tie in activities from outputs 3.1 and 3.2 and address the current lack of structured workflows for the use and sharing of climate information, SCRП will support the development of national Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and protocols. These will clarify institutional roles among DCCMS, DAES, DoDMA and NAMIS alongside private sector providers, formalize quality control measures, and enable systematic integration of community data into seasonal planning and advisory cycles. The activity will be facilitated by a service provider contracted by SCRП, including a legal consultant and policy specialist.

180. First, the service provider will support DAES and DCCMS to lead harmonisation efforts across the multiple advisory platforms operating in Malawi (e.g., DAES, DCCMS, OpenHarvest) currently sending inconsistent and contradictory messages to farmers and undermining trust. Following consultations with advisory providers and private sector platforms, DAES and DCCMS will develop a climate data and advisory validation process to ensure harmonisation of information shared with farmers. This process may involve

<sup>85</sup> The National Small Farmers Association of Malawi (NASFAM) is also a core user and partner of the Ulimi Ndi Nyengo AgroAdvisory system, helping to relay tailored advisories to farmers and collect feedback from the field. As the largest farmer organization in the country, NASFAM operates through local associations and farmer clubs that reach tens of thousands of producers across multiple districts.

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quarterly pre-season coordination meetings, shared advisory calendars, and a digital checklist for message consistency across platforms.

181. Subsequently, a national technical taskforce will be formed with nominated representatives from DCCMS, DAES, DoDMA, and NAMIS. Two 3-day development workshops will be held to co-create the SOPs and accompanying protocols:

- SOPs defining roles and responsibilities for data integration, analysis, and feedback;
- Protocols for inter-agency information exchange and coordination, including taskforce meeting frequency and standing agenda;
- Legal protocols for secure data hosting, sharing, including basic encryption, access controls, and breach procedures;
- Formal climate data and advisory validation process.

182. All outputs will be consolidated and finalized by the contracted service provider in collaboration with the taskforce. Final SOPs and validation protocols will be disseminated through virtual and in-person launch briefings.

## B. Project benefits

183. SCRП aims to provide economic, social, and environmental benefits, with particular attention to the most vulnerable communities and vulnerable groups within those communities, including gender considerations, and is not foreseen to have any negative impact. IFAD, as Implementing Entity, relies on its Social, Environmental, and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) and on its alignment to AF ESP through the ESMP, to enhance social, environmental, and climate resilience throughout the project. The project is expected to generate substantial and quantifiable benefits for over 150,000 direct beneficiaries (of which at least 50% women and 30% youth – or 78,750 women, 47,250 youth, and 7,875 persons with disabilities) by improving climate-resilient productivity, reducing losses, and expanding livelihood opportunities in the four vulnerable districts of Malawi: Balaka, Lilongwe Rural, Dowa, and Mzimba. The project's target groups include rural food insecure households, and few productive assets and moderately food insecure households.

### Economic benefits

184. The SCRП project will generate significant economic benefits by: (i) restoring degraded ecosystems and enhancing their resilience, thereby reducing asset loss and increasing farm productivity by restoring the provision of essential services such as water regulation, soil fertility, and flood protection under Component 1; (ii) increasing agricultural productivity by reducing input costs and increasing yields through the adoption of agroecological practices and improved extension services under Component 2; (iii) reduced cost of inputs through the development of local sources of seeds and seedlings, and access to fuel efficient stoves and water collection systems; (iv) supporting income-generating activities such as tree nurseries, seed multiplication, and (indirectly) the development of value chains for non-wood forest products, medicinal plants, and apiculture; and (v) enhancing post-harvest management and market access with climate-resilient storage structures<sup>86</sup>, which will reduce losses and increase value addition. These interventions will contribute to more stable and diversified incomes for smallholder farmers and vulnerable households, strengthening local economies and food security.

185. Based on previous similar initiatives driven by IFAD, in particular the Sustainable Agricultural Production Programme (SAPP), the productivity of farmers is expected to increase by 30% compared to a "business as usual" scenario. This is achieved through enhanced capacities at the farm level, access to climate-resilient technologies, improved farm inputs and knowledge on soil fertility management, as well as climate-driven agroadvisory in components 2 and 3, increasing beneficiaries' production and household income level and/or reducing any losses from climate disasters. More specifically, as indicated at Part II.C on Cost Effectiveness, and based on the Economic and Financial Analysis conducted, agroecological and climate-resilient practices introduced through 150 Farmer Field Schools are projected to increase

<sup>86</sup> Post-harvest losses, which are notably high in Malawi (around 30% of total harvest), will be reduced through the construction of group storage structures and associated training. The construction process will benefit youth employment and skills development.

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smallholder productivity by 25-40%, translating into annual net income gains of USD 150-250 per household.

186. Ecosystem restoration across 2,450 ha of community woodlots and 2,800 ha of soil and water conservation structures will reduce topsoil loss and enhance water retention, increasing downstream farm productivity and safeguarding assets. These restored landscapes are expected to avert 1.5 to 2 million USD in annual losses currently caused by erosion, flooding, and climate-related land degradation.<sup>87</sup>

187. Value chain and livelihood benefits will be driven by community nurseries, seed multipliers, and seed banks (57 community groups in total), and are expected to generate USD 120-200 per member annually on average.<sup>88</sup> High-value tree seedlings distributed to 11,700 households could generate USD 50-80 per household per year through fruit sales and agroforestry products (based on conservative yield and market-price assumptions, reflecting both small cash sales and avoided food expenditures), enhancing household assets and nutrition.

188. Fuel-efficient stoves provided to 3,900 households could reduce annual fuelwood expenditures by an equivalent USD 40-60 per household and save women 50-100 labour hours per year<sup>89</sup>, allowing time reallocation to productive and income-generating activities. The project's investment in 70 climate-resilient storage structures may reduce post-harvest losses (currently up to 30% in Malawi) corresponding to an estimated USD 14,000-112,000 per year in avoided losses,<sup>90</sup> with additional savings under flood-prone conditions potentially doubling this figure.

189. In addition to this, non-quantifiable economic benefits include the empowerment of vulnerable communities, and more particularly women, youth and PwDs, that will benefit from inclusive planning processes and targeted support, and labour-saving technologies (water tank, efficient cookstoves) not only allowing the realization of economic benefits mentioned above, but also better preparing them to face climate-change challenges, and improving productivity through health and time-saving. The project will also create short-term and long-term employment opportunities. Across construction works, nursery operations, seed multiplication, and small livestock support, SCRP could generate 300-500 paid seasonal jobs. In addition, income-generating opportunities will emerge through 19 community nurseries, 19 seed multiplier groups, 19 seed banks, and restoration value chains, benefitting women and youth in particular through sales of seedlings, seeds, fruits, fodder, and other non-timber forest products.

### Social benefits

190. SCRP will directly benefit over 150,000 people (31,500 households), and indirectly touch an additional 52,645 people (over 10,000 households). The project's targeting strategy will ensure that services supported are provided in a fair, equitable and inclusive manner. The social benefits include the building of social capital, economic empowerment, and social inclusion, especially of women, youth, and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), with quotas set for 50% women (i.e., 78,750 women), 30% youth (47,250 youth), and 5% PWDs (i.e., 7,875) beneficiaries respectively. Focus will be given to vulnerable women headed HHs, HHs with children under five years, pregnant women and youth, persons living with HIV/AIDS and persons with disabilities.

191. The project relies on participatory and bottom-up processes, bringing together stakeholders at the local level to lead transformative processes for more resilient micro-catchments. This will be achieved notably through the development of up to 70 climate-resilient VLAPs benefiting 195 villages. This participatory planning, based on local vulnerability and rural appraisals, has proven to be a sustainable and democratic approach to decision-making regarding land and resource use sustainability, and will build

<sup>87</sup> Derived by scaling nationally documented economic losses from land degradation (estimated at USD 40-120 million per year in Giacomo P et al (2020). Distributional impacts of soil erosion on agricultural productivity and welfare in Malawi. Ecological Economics 177 (2020) 106764) by the proportion of degraded land restored under SCRP. With approximately 5,250 ha of severely degraded micro-catchments restored (i.e. 0.25 to 0.35% of national degraded land), and applying mid-range erosion-related crop and asset loss figures, the avoided losses amount to USD 1.5-2 million annually. This aligns with downstream yield protection benefits, reduced sedimentation, avoided infrastructure damage, and enhanced water regulation functions documented in the proposal.

<sup>88</sup> These estimates are derived from income levels observed in IFAD and FAO-supported seed and nursery enterprises in Malawi.

<sup>89</sup> Based on the typical annual cost or implicit value of firewood in rural Malawi (USD 48-126/year) and the 30-50% reduction in consumption achieved by fuel-efficient stoves.

<sup>90</sup> Based on conservative assumptions for community storage capacity (10-20 tons/year), mixed-crop market values, and Malawi's 20-30% baseline post-harvest loss rates.

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social capital in targeted communities. The project will strengthen local operational watershed management structures by establishing or enhancing VNRMCs, ensuring they include at least 50% women and 30% youth.

192. Technical training provided, particularly those supporting the adoption of climate resilient agriculture practices through FFS and small livestock demonstrations, will directly benefit the productivity of smallholder farming systems. Coupled with access to improved farm inputs through Agricultural Resource Centres, and climate information, these interventions are expected to result in increased production and stability of household income, thereby supporting associated social benefits of enhanced food and nutrition security. Women and youth, of whom are most vulnerable to climate shocks, are to stand to benefit the most from these interventions.

193. Income-generating activities targeting women and youth, such as the community management of tree nurseries, seed multiplication, seed banks, as well as the development of woodlots/community forests and linkages for support to corresponding value chains will support economic empowerment for the most vulnerable.

194. Throughout these activities, participation, representation and benefit sharing with PwD, women and other marginalised groups will be ensured through targeting quotas, household methodologies such as GALS (with 2,000 households participating in gender-transformative planning processes, supporting improved intra-household decision-making, reduced vulnerability to shocks, and more equitable distribution of labour and productive assets), and the training of 19 Disability Inclusion Facilitators (strengthening the inclusion of 7,875 persons with disabilities, ensuring equitable access to training, VLAP processes, and livelihood opportunities). In this way, improvements in social capital gained from participatory processes, training and income-generating activities will be directly accessible by these groups.

195. Gender. The project also puts special emphasis on addressing gender inequalities and empowering women, recognising their vital role in reducing the vulnerability of livelihoods and ecosystems in Malawi. The project comprehensively addresses these inequalities as detailed in Annex 4, Gender Assessment, Strategy, and Action Plan, and in line with the AF Gender Policy and IFAD's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy. Key dimensions include:

- Using gender-transformative methodologies: The GALS will be mainstreamed into all relevant project activities. GALS, which takes the household as its entry point, aims to increase awareness of gender roles, improve capacity to negotiate needs and interests, and find innovative, gender-equitable solutions in livelihoods planning. This results in a more equitable work balance and a greater voice for women in household decision-making.
- Ensuring equitable participation in planning: The project will employ methodologies such as the GCVCA to ensure women's voices are heard and their concerns are mainstreamed into project responses during participatory planning.
- Alleviating women's disproportionate burden: specific interventions, such as the provision of fuel-efficient woodstoves and equipment for rain and floodwater harvesting/storage, are included to directly contribute to alleviating women's labour burden associated with fetching wood and water over increasing distances due to climate change and ecosystem degradation.
- Promoting economic empowerment: Income-generating activities (e.g., tree nurseries, seedbanks, VCs from woodlots agroforestry products) and support for diversified production are selected to specifically benefit women and youth, providing direct access to productive resources.

### Environmental benefits

196. IFAD is committed to enhancing environmental sustainability and climate resilience in small-scale agriculture, promoting sustainable natural resource and economic base for rural people that makes them more resilient to climate change and environmental degradation. The project's activities were designed in full alignment of the AF's ESPs, and IFAD's SECAP. As such, climate adaptive and environmental benefits are built into the project, mitigating the identified adverse environmental and climate risks and helping beneficiaries adapt to the projected impacts of a changing climate. In particular, the project seeks to holistically tackle risks and challenges associated with the increased occurrence of droughts, floods, and widespread ecosystem degradation.

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197. In line with DLRC approaches associated with integrated landscape management, the project primarily targets the resilience of ecosystems, both at wider landscape (over 16,000 hectares) and at farm level (3,360 hectares), thanks to interventions supported under component 1 and 2. The rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems, and sustainable management of fragile land will deliver substantial environmental benefits by restoring degraded landscapes and enhancing ecosystem services across targeted micro-watersheds.

198. More specifically, the project will support VDCs in understanding and prioritizing investments for the restoration of ecosystems they depend on, while promoting integrated approaches combining soil and water conservation measures with reforestation, and assisted natural regeneration. These interventions will reduce erosion, improve soil structure and fertility, enhance water infiltration, and stabilize riverbanks, contributing to increased groundwater recharge and reduced flood risk. The regrowth of vegetative cover will support carbon sequestration and biodiversity recovery, while the establishment of community woodlots and agroforestry systems will create multifunctional landscapes that provide both ecological services and livelihood benefits. Together, these efforts will strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and the communities that depend on them. Specific environmental benefits under the project include:

- **Conservation of scarce resources:** Promoting soil and water conservation measures through anti-erosive structures, along with supporting water collection and small-scale irrigation infrastructures collecting runoff under components 1 and 2, will improve 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.
- **Improved soil fertility and soil ecosystems:** ISFM practices under Component 2 will help rebalance depleted micronutrients, reduce high soil acidity levels resulting from chemical fertilizer applications and improve the soil ecosystems and productivity. It will also reduce soil loss from erosion through soil and water conservation activities.
- **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. The restoration and improved resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide under the first component will directly result in vegetation return, while the integrated approaches supported under the second component (aligned with the principles of agroecology) will also boost biodiversity at farm level, notably by promoting diversification through 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 the landscape (reforestation) and farm levels.
- **Carbon capture:** Increased tree cover thanks to community woodlots and other ecosystem restoration measures (Component 1), along with increased soil cover and improved soil organic content (SOC) achieved on farm through ISFM (Component 2), are also expected to provide climate mitigation benefits through increased carbon capture.

### C. Cost-effectiveness

199. Malawi faces frequent climate-related disasters that impose significant costs on both communities and the government. For example, the 2015 floods caused economic losses of approximately USD 335 million, alongside casualties and the displacement of 638,000 people. Past supported projects in Malawi have suffered setbacks due to the absence of climate adaptation and disaster preparedness components and a narrow focus on farm productivity. Without broader ecosystem restoration and disaster planning, farm-level improvements (such as soil fertility gains) are vulnerable to erosion, flooding, and other climate impacts.

200. SCRП addresses these risks by adopting an integrated approach, consisting in concentrating investments within consistent landscape units (micro-catchments), to maximize impacts, and hence cost effectiveness. SCRП approach guarantees multiple efficiencies thanks to the complementarity of its interventions, including downstream benefits thanks to integrated planning and management. Additionally, the project's geographic targeting includes criteria seeking complementarity with past or recent investments, notably in terms of access to water, to further optimize impacts and cost effectiveness.

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201. Adaptation options under the project have been defined based on cost-effectiveness and resilience criteria including (i) location suitability; (ii) cost-effectiveness (cost/beneficiary); (iii) comparison to alternative solutions; (iv) beneficiaries' vulnerabilities and needs (direct and indirect); (v) operations and maintenance needs and arrangements feasibility; (vi) sustainability needs and arrangements (including opportunities for replication, upscaling and exit strategy feasibility); and (vii) reduced environmental and social risks.

202. Under Component 1, SCRIP supports participatory landscape planning and community-led restoration, ensuring strong local ownership and long-term sustainability of ecosystem investments. The use of in-kind support (e.g., fuel-efficient stoves, seedlings, water harvesting equipment) provides dual benefits: it directly supports vulnerable households while reinforcing ecosystem resilience. Soil and Water Conservation practices promoted under both Component 1 and Component 2 are low-cost, technically feasible, and have demonstrated high returns in terms of reduced erosion, improved soil fertility, and increased agricultural productivity, making them attractive for long-term adoption by smallholder farmers. Climate-resilient farming practices supported under Component 2, including agroecology and integrated soil fertility management, show positive net incomes under projected climate scenarios (see below), indicating that farmers adopting these practices are likely to be economically better off over time. Infrastructure supported under component 2 will be conditional to ex-ante financial feasibility analysis. Component 3 further enhances cost-effectiveness by strengthening institutional coordination between DAES, DCCMS, and DoDMA, streamlining climate information services and disaster preparedness. This integrated approach reduces duplication, improves resource targeting, and ensures that climate advisories and early warning systems are both actionable and trusted, ultimately contributing to a more coherent and cost-efficient national response to climate risks. Execution costs are also optimized through synergies with other ongoing IFAD initiatives in the country.

203. An **Economic and Financial Analysis (EFA)** was conducted, assessing cost-benefit measures of interventions and demonstrating that the project is financially and economically profitable. Overall, the project demonstrated a positive Economic rate of return of 22.8%. The NPV is estimated at USD \$6.49 million with an economic discount rate estimated at 17%. The main sources of benefits include: (i) increased farm revenue from agroecological practices, inputs and water access under component 2, (ii) increased revenue from community forestry value-chains (fodder, fruits, beekeeping) and environmental benefits (carbon, erosion control, water and biodiversity). The Carbon price used was the social cost of carbon, at 51\$/ton, and other environmental benefits came from the Ecosystem Services Valuation Database (ESVD). Expected cash flows (in USD) and results on financial profitability are presented for different models in [Table 4](#) below:

Table 4 - Expected cash flows (in USD) and results on financial profitability

	Maize	Ground-nuts	Pigeon Peas	Cow-peas	Soy-bean	Goats	Local Chicken	Tomatoes	Restoration VCs
<b>PY1</b>	-34	-92	-5	-125	-155	-67	13	-519	-20
<b>PY2</b>	331	367	175	-36	-33	2	78	-133	85
<b>PY3</b>	625	618	268	65	69	0	47	203	105
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
<b>PY10</b>	968	760	461	143	160	19	204	445	228
<b>IRR</b>	1055 %	453%	3842%	50%	47%	11%		40%	461%
<b>NPV (USD)</b>	6,139	4,972	2,927	690	756	39	892	1,997	1,286

204. **Sensitivity Analysis.** A sensitivity analysis was conducted to test the robustness of results in the face of different adverse scenarios for costs and benefits (due to the materialization of key risks identified). These included an increase in project costs (10% and 20%), a reduction in project benefits (10% and 20%), and combined scenarios (of both benefits reduced by 10%, 20% and 30% and costs increased by 10% or 20%). Additionally, a delay in project benefits (1 and 2 years) and the reduction in benefits by 50% every 2 and 3 years due to the occurrence of climate change shocks were considered. NPV remains positive under the different scenarios, indicating the robustness of the project results. The table below presents the main

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results of the sensitivity test. The analysis shows that the project is most sensitive to benefit reduction combined with cost increases.

Table 5 - Sensitivity analysis

Sensitivity Analysis							
Δ%		Risk		IRR	NPV (US\$)		
Base scenario (r = 17%)							
				22.86%	\$6,489,829		
r = 13%							
				-	\$14,894,065		
Environmental benefits (carbon, soil conservation, biodiversity and water)	Without Environmental Benefits			17.37%	\$383,580		
	Only Environmental Benefits			5.49%	\$6,106,249		
Farm Benefits & Benefits from Restoration value chains	-10%	Combined risks on sale prices		21.82%	\$5,160,525		
	-20%			20.70%	\$3,831,222		
Costs	10%	Increase in expenses and prices		21.42%	\$5,198,883		
	20%			20.14%	\$3,907,938		
Delay 1 year in Benefits		Adoption rate / delays		20.81%	\$4,224,782		
Delay 2 years in Benefits				19.08%	\$2,288,845		
External Shock every 2 years	50% Benefits	External shock (prices, quantities, climate)		20.09%	\$3,131,287		
External Shock every 3 years	50% Benefits			20.04%	\$3,094,219		
Mixed Scenarios		Costs	Benefits	10%	-10%	20.40%	\$3,869,580
				10%	-20%	19.31%	\$2,540,277
				20%	-10%	19.14%	\$2,578,635
				20%	-20%	18.07%	\$1,249,331
				20%	-30%	16.93%	-\$79,972

205. **Synergies with past and ongoing projects.** Cost effectiveness of SCRIP is further strengthened by building on lessons and knowledge from previous and ongoing related initiatives such as Enhancing Resilience of Agro-Ecological Systems Projects (ERASP); SAPP, SAPP II, PRIDE, and FARMSE (also refer to Part II.F.). Operationally, SCRIP will be delivered in synergy with the government team supporting other IFAD-funded programmes (notably SAPP II), mutualizing the following functions: (i) Procurement Officer; (ii) Assistant Procurement Officer; (iii) Programme Accountant; (iv) Assistant Programme Accountant; (v) Environment and Climate officer; (vi) M&E Officer; (vii) KM Officer; (viii) Administrative Officer/Assistant. Economies of scale will also be guaranteed by the availing of offices, additional logistical means, office furniture and other equipment, software, etc.

Table 6 - Cost-effectiveness and alternatives to project

Component/ Output	Total costs (USD)	Beneficiaries	Benefits generated – losses averted	Alternative to project
<b>Component 1. Resilient ecosystems sustainably providing services to smallholder farmers</b>				
<b>Output 1.1. Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed</b>	1,875,229	- 32 AEDOs/AA EDOs trained in planning natural resources management and resilience to act as local level facilitators - 19 micro-catchments supported through 70 participatory and climate-resilient VLAPs - 70 VNRMCs established or	(i) Participatory assessments provide detailed, locally relevant data to guide interventions, increasing their effectiveness and acceptance. (ii) Consultations and coordination with community natural resource management groups encourage 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. Communal management of resources also promotes social cohesion. 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. (iii) GALS is a specific methodology to foster women empowerment in the	(i) Relying solely on scientific soil health data and watershed map 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. (ii) Implementing interventions without forming or relying on existing local management groups, may lead 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

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**Output 1.2.  
Priority  
ecosystem  
resilience  
measures  
implemented  
at community  
level**

6,166,168

strengthened, coordinating activities across 195 villages  
- Over 150,000 persons benefit from enhanced resilience of natural resources  
- 2,000 households mentored through GALS  
- 19 Disability Inclusion Facilitators trained  
- 11,700 vulnerable households receive incentives to reduce pressure on ecosystem resources in the form of seedling kits, of which 3,900 women-led households receiving improved stoves, and 780 households receive rainwater harvesting tanks equipment

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.

(i) Productive restoration with agroforestry systems uses different strata of light and soil combined with a synergistic approach, guaranteeing a higher income than monoculture areas and degraded forest land, ensuring their long-term maintenance.

(ii) Afforestation using productive trees ensures continued maintenance. Without productive value, restored areas tend to be degraded again, and so the restoration efforts are lost. Distribution of high-value tree seedlings to 11,700 households is expected to yield USD 50-80 per household/year through fruit, fodder and agroforestry products.

(ii) Preventing soil erosion and recovering degraded areas in early erosion stages costs less than waiting for erosion rates to get worse before investing in restoration efforts. Restoration of 5,250 ha (soil & water conservation and forestry activities) is expected to avert USD 1.5-2 million per year in avoided yield losses, reduced sedimentation, and protection of downstream assets (based on national erosion-related GDP losses scaled to SCRP's intervention footprint).

(iii) Water storage solutions reduce crop losses and irrigation costs by improving water availability during dry spells. Using water runoff collection reduces infrastructure costs and prevents future depletion and repair costs from floodwater

(iv) Fuel-efficient stoves lower household energy expenses and health-related costs by reducing firewood consumption and indoor air pollution; such interventions deliver high returns relative to their low

natural resource management anew.

(iii) 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 women's lack of access to already-existing programmes.

(i) When compared to conventional agricultural practices (monocropping, etc.), agroforestry systems require higher labour costs in the early years, but in the long term their maintenance costs are lower as they reduce input needs.

(ii) Conventional restoration projects (without co-benefit generation/productive value-add) would be more expensive as they require higher monitoring and maintenance efforts.

(iii) Waiting for erosion rates to get worse before investing in restoration efforts would be more expensive than prevention in early stages.

(iii) Supporting large-scale irrigation systems or pumping water from river and groundwater sources would be costly, less accessible to smallholders, and harder to maintain in remote areas. Damages from floodwater runoff would be costly to repair

(iv) Using traditional charcoal and firewood would increase costs of health and restoration upstream. Not improving cookstoves would make expenses in restoration redundant

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implementation costs. Fuel-efficient stoves for 3,900 households could reduce fuelwood costs by an equivalent USD 40-60 per household/year, while allowing time savings (mainly for women).

**Component 2. Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi**

<p><b>Output 2.1. Adaptive capacity of smallholder farming systems supported</b></p>	<p>1,497,250</p>	<p>- Over 4,500 households participating in FFS - Over 3,000 households attending small livestock demonstrations</p>	<p>(i) FFS promote low-cost, climate-resilient practices such as agroecology and integrated soil fertility management, which reduce input costs and increase yields, resulting in net income gains for smallholders under projected climate scenarios. Adoption of climate-resilient practices by 4,500 households is projected to increase net farm income by USD 150-250 per household/year. (ii) Lead farmer training and peer replication expand outreach at minimal cost, leveraging community knowledge to scale adoption of resilient practices without requiring proportional increases in extension staffing or resources. (iii) Integration of gender-sensitive tools like GALS and agroecological logbooks improves decision-making and resource use at household level, enhancing productivity and reducing hidden labor costs (especially for women) while strengthening long-term sustainability of farming systems.</p>	<p>(i) Top-down extension campaigns relying solely on printed materials or sporadic trainings would have limited reach and low adoption rates, lacking the participatory and adaptive learning of FFS. (ii) Hiring additional extension staff to increase coverage would be significantly more costly and less scalable than the lead farmer and peer replication model, which leverages existing community networks for broader impact. (ii) Training individuals outside of organized farmer groups (without mechanisms for peer learning or resource pooling) would be little sustainable, as beneficiaries may struggle to implement practices independently, increasing the risk that capacity-building investments are not translated into lasting change. (iii) Generic gender mainstreaming workshops without participatory tools would raise awareness but fail to generate measurable improvements in household decision-making, labor equity, or productivity (especially for women).</p>
<p><b>Output 2.2. Adapted inputs and climate-resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers</b></p>	<p>6,074,871</p>	<p>- At least 1,700 individuals engaged in community-based seed and planting material facilities - 2,100 households directly benefit from small scale water infrastructure - 2,100 households directly benefit from small scale storage infrastructure</p>	<p>(i) Community-managed nurseries and seed banks increase local access to climate-resilient planting material, reducing dependency on costly external inputs and minimizing crop losses during climate shocks or pest outbreaks. Community nurseries, seed multipliers and seed banks (57 groups) are projected to generate USD 120-200 per member/year, particularly benefiting women- and youth-led groups. (ii) Small-scale water infrastructure (ponds, impoundments, irrigation schemes) enhances water availability for farming, enabling dry-season cultivation and reducing yield losses from drought, and delivering high returns relative to infrastructure costs. Small flood- and rainwater-harvesting structures (70 schemes) are expected to reduce drought-related yield losses by USD 150-300 per scheme/year, with additional non-monetized resilience benefits. (iii) Climate-proofed storage facilities reduce post-harvest losses (currently up to 30% in Malawi), preserving the value of agricultural production.</p>	<p>(i) Centralized seed and seedling distribution through external suppliers would increase logistical costs and reduces responsiveness to local needs (ii) Large-scale irrigation infrastructure would require high capital investment and complex maintenance, often excluding smallholder farmers, whereas SCRP's small-scale water systems are more affordable, easier to maintain, and tailored to community-level needs. (iii) Standard storage facilities without climate-proofing may fail to prevent post-harvest losses during extreme weather events</p>

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			Climate-proof storage facilities (70 units) are expected to save USD 200-1,600 per community/year in reduced spoilage.
<b>Component 3. Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi</b>			
<b>Output 3.1. Climate information for decision making available at local level</b>	800,307	- 210,145 persons provided with climate information services	(i) Installation of automated weather stations improves the accuracy and timeliness of localized forecasts, reducing crop losses from poorly timed planting and enabling farmers to make informed decisions. (ii) PSP workshops ensure that seasonal forecasts are translated into actionable advice tailored to local contexts. (iii) Digital advisory tools extend the reach of agro-advisory services at low cost. Localised forecasting (16 AWS) and participatory scenario planning reduce losses from poorly timed planting and input use, with estimated avoided losses of USD 10-20 per farming household/year.
<b>Output 3.2. National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector</b>	343,297	- 240 extension workers and officers are trained on agrometeorology, DRM, and digital advisory tools - 40 national staff from DCCMS, DAES, and DoDMA trained on forecast validation, downscaling, and integration	(i) Manual weather stations and delayed data reporting would result in slower, less accurate forecasts, limiting farmers' ability to respond to climate variability and making costs of installation and maintenance redundant. (ii) Generic seasonal forecasts without participatory interpretation may be poorly understood or mistrusted by farmers, reducing uptake of advisory and increasing the risk of maladaptive decisions. Lack of feedback in the absence of PSP workshops make forecast development more inaccurate and costs to develop them redundant (iii) Exclusive reliance on printed materials or private extension services for agro-advisory would limit accessibility for vulnerable farmers and lack continuity.  (i) Training national institutions (DCCMS, DAES, DoDMA) to assimilate local data into forecasts and advisories improves the accuracy and relevance of climate services, enhancing the cost-efficiency of public climate investments. (ii) Institutionalization of PSP ensures long-term sustainability of localized advisory systems, avoiding the cost of repeated project-based setups (iii) Development of harmonized protocols and SOPs for climate information sharing reduces duplication, streamlines coordination, and improves resource allocation, thereby minimizing inefficiencies and maximizing the impact of climate-related public spending.  (i) Ad hoc project-based forecasting and advisory systems would lack continuity and require repeated setup costs. (ii) Uncoordinated climate information systems across agencies would lead to duplication and misaligned messaging.

#### D. Strategic alignment

206. Malawi had not yet finalized the formulation of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), **but has a NAP Framework (2020)**. However, the Government of Malawi has several 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).

207. 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

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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 SCRCP.

Table 7 - Alignment of country policies and strategies to the proposed SCRCP

Policy/strategy main objectives	Interventions in building climate change resilience	SCRCP alignment
National Adaptation Plan Framework (GoM, 2020)	Malawi's NAP vision is "A country with people, ecosystems and infrastructure that are resilient and have adaptive capacity to the impacts of climate change." Its main approaches are: a systems approach; horizontal and vertical integration; a community-based participatory approach (CBPA); an evidence-based approach; a gender and human rights approach; and leveraging the private sector.	SCRCP is designed to enhance the resilience of the smallholder farmers and the land and ecosystems they depend on. It uses a systems and integrated approach, with a strong focus on inclusion of marginalized groups, especially women, youth, and PWDs, people living with AIDS, and the elderly.
<b>Malawi 2063 (GoM 2020)</b>  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.	SCRCP 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). SCRCP also contributes to crop diversification with interventions on native seed banks and tree nurseries (Component 2).
<b>Updated National Determined Contribution (2022)</b>  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, SCRCP 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)
<b>The Third National Communication Report to</b>	Like other national strategies the TNC highlights over-dependence on	SCRCP directly contributes to climate change adaptation priorities as

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<p><b>the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – UNFCCC (2021)</b></p> <p>The TNC provides a comprehensive outlook on the status of climate change issues in Malawi and highlights mitigation and adaptation efforts that are feasible.</p>	<p>rainfed agriculture, high poverty levels, increased exposure to droughts, lack of insurance, inadequate hazards mapping and lack of crop diversification as main factors increase communities vulnerability.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>outlined in the TNC. SCRCP will address drought management by promoting improved drought-tolerant varieties and supporting the development of water sources and 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.</p>
<p><b>National Agriculture Policy (GoM 2016) and the National Agriculture Investment Plan (2019)</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>NAIP, is the agricultural investments framework for NAP. NAIP has four broader programme areas, one of which includes: resilient livelihoods and production systems</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>SCRCP 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)</p> <p>Additionally, SCRCP 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)</p>
<p><b>National Climate Change Management Policy (2016) and the National Climate Change Investment Plan (2013)</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>The Investment Plan highlights priority areas for climate change investments to avert climate related impacts.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>SCRCP 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</p>

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	including communities; enhancing gender equality to increase adaptive capacity of women and girls who are more vulnerable to climate change.	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).
<b>National Resilience Strategy (2018)</b>  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-resilient 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)
<b>National Gender Policy (2025–2030)</b>	Mainstreams gender across sectors to reduce inequalities in health, education, economic development, and governance; addresses gender-based violence.	SCRP integrates gender considerations throughout all components, ensuring equitable access and participation of women, men, boys, and girls in planning, implementation, and benefit-sharing. The GALS approach is used to transform gender norms and empower women in decision-making.
<b>National Youth Policy (2023–2028)</b>	Mainstreams youth development in national programmes, with a focus on employment, enterprise, and skills development, especially in agriculture.	SCRP promotes youth inclusion by supporting access to services, skills development, and income-generating activities such as tree nurseries, seed multiplication, and apiculture. Youth are also targeted for leadership roles in community structures.
<b>Malawi 2063 Youth Engagement Strategy</b>	Ensures youth participation in national development, including agriculture and natural resource management.	SCRP supports youth empowerment and participation in decision-making, including through quotas (30%) in VNRMCs and targeted support for youth-led enterprises and training.
<b>National Multisector Nutrition Strategic Plan (2025–2030)</b>	Aims to improve nutrition outcomes through healthy diets, prevention of malnutrition, and resilience during emergencies.	SCRP contributes to improved nutrition through integrated homestead farming, climate-resilient agriculture, and targeted support to vulnerable households, enhancing food security and dietary diversity.
<b>National Disability Policy (2025–2030)</b>	Promotes inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in development by addressing barriers to access and participation.	SCRP targets 5% participation of PWDs in all activities and applies inclusive methodologies such as the Disability Inclusion Academy to empower young PWDs as facilitators and leaders.
<b>National HIV-AIDS Policy (2022–2027)</b>	Improves nutritional status and socioeconomic resilience of PLHIV through care, support, and integration.	SCRP identifies PLHIV as a vulnerable group and ensures their inclusion in project activities, working with local stakeholders to

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		provide equitable access to services and livelihood support.
<b>National Charcoal Strategy (2017–2027)</b>	Aims to reduce deforestation and unsustainable charcoal use through alternative energy and sustainable practices.	SCRP promotes fuel-efficient cookstoves and alternative energy solutions to reduce pressure on forests, particularly in areas undergoing restoration.
<b>National Action Plan on Child Labour (2020–2025)</b>	Seeks to eliminate child labour, especially in hazardous sectors, by addressing root causes like poverty and lack of education.	SCRP reduces household vulnerability through livelihood support and resilience-building, indirectly mitigating drivers of child labour. Labour rights risks are monitored and addressed through the project's Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP).

### E. National Standards and Environmental and Social Policy

208. SCRP complies with the Environmental and Social Policy of the AF, (see ESP risk assessment summary in section II. K and detailed assessment in the EMSP in Annex 2) and has been designed to minimise any negative environmental impact, resulting in net environmental benefits. SCRP will respect and adhere to the national laws and codes of the GoM, in particular the project will comply with the following :

209. **The Environmental Management Act (EMA 2017)** incl. **The Generic Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines (2017)**<sup>91</sup> provides the basic legal framework for environmental planning including the preparation of environmental management plans for projects likely to have negative impacts on people and the environment. The Act makes provisions for protection and management of the environment and the conservation and utilization of natural resources.

210. The specific thresholds requiring EIAs to be produced were reviewed in the ESMP for all projects in the agriculture, erosion control, forestry and water sectors, all of which relevant to SCRП activities. A comparison of SCRП targets with the Guidelines' thresholds confirmed that ESIsAs will not be required. For its investments in forestry, water and irrigation not meeting the thresholds, SCRП will seek a certificate of exemption from the EAD based on the project screening form detailed in the ESMP Appendix 1.

211. **The Constitution of the Republic of Malawi (1995)** sets out a broad framework for sustainable environmental management at various levels in Malawi. It provides a framework for the integration of environmental consideration into any investment project/programme. The Constitution provides the fundamental principles that require the State to promote the welfare and development of the people by progressively adopting and implementing policies and legislation aimed at achieving gender equality, adequate nutrition, adequate health care and responsible management of the environment. The Constitution of Malawi also provides the basis for and against land acquisition. Section 28 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi states that "No person shall be arbitrarily deprived of property" and section 44(4) states that "Expropriation of property shall be permissible only when done for public utility and only when there has been adequate notification and appropriate compensation, provided that there shall always be a right to appeal to a court of law for redress. The proposed project has a responsibility of ensuring that the implementation of sub-activities is undertaken in an environmentally sustainable manner to prevent environmental degradation and not to compromise the socioeconomic environment. The EMSP in Annex 2 specified how this will be undertaken.

212. The **Land Act (2016)** and **Land Acquisition Act (2016)** establish a legal framework for land tenure, use, and management in Malawi, promoting sustainable and equitable access. They outline procedures for land acquisition, compensation, community land rights, and development-related land use. Under these laws, the SCRП PMU will collaborate with local authorities and Village Headpersons to identify and document land for development (Component 1). For communal land use (e.g., irrigation), formal agreements will be signed. If long-term or exclusive use is needed (e.g., woodlots), land may be reclassified to "customary estate," with certificates issued accordingly. In cases where erosion control infrastructure (Component 2) causes displacement or land loss, **in-kind compensation** will be provided. All project-

<sup>91</sup> <https://www.dbsa.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2021-05/Chapter%2015%20Malawi.pdf>

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related community structures will ensure **inclusive governance and gender equality**, in line with relevant sections of the Land Act.

213. **The Pesticides Act (2018)** regulates the registration, importation, use, and disposal of pesticides in Malawi. Only pesticides approved by the Pesticides Control Board (PCB) may be used, and licenses are required for their handling and sale. In alignment with the Act, the SCRCP will ensure that only PCB-registered pesticides are procured and used. The PMU will verify pesticide registration during procurement and train stakeholders (including farmers and extension workers) on safe handling, storage, and disposal. Farmers will receive PPE and guidance on proper storage, while pesticide use will be documented in field records. The project will also support safe disposal of containers and expired products, prohibit pesticide use near sensitive areas, and promote Integrated Pest Management and biological alternatives, in line with national and IFAD standards.

214. **The Irrigation Act (2001) and Irrigation Code of Practice and Equipment (ICoP) (2018)** provide Malawi's legal and technical framework for sustainable irrigation development. They emphasize alignment with national policy, establishment of the National Irrigation Board and Fund, and involvement of local farmer groups in scheme management through formal agreements. The ICoP outlines standards for design, construction, equipment, and maintenance. Under the **SCRCP**, 70 small-scale irrigation schemes (approximately 3 hectares each) will be implemented using harvested rain and floodwater, without reliance on direct abstraction from rivers or aquifers. Although these schemes may not require formal licensing, they will follow the principles and best practices of the Act and ICoP. Farmer groups will manage operations and maintenance, with support for equitable water access, cost-sharing, and climate-resilient design. The project will also promote efficient water use, soil moisture conservation, safe drainage, and inclusive, gender-responsive management linked to catchment-level planning.

215. **The Forestry Act (1997, amended 2019)** provides the legal basis for sustainable forest management in Malawi. It requires that all forest resources (including timber, charcoal, and non-timber products) be managed under formal authorizations or agreements. The Act empowers the Department of Forestry to partner with communities, NGOs, and private entities for forest management. Under the SCRCP, any tree planting or woodlot activities will be initiated only after securing the necessary licenses or agreements. Community natural resource committees will be engaged, and planting sites—especially in sensitive areas—will be screened and managed with formal plans. No harvesting or charcoal production will occur without compliance, and the project will promote community awareness, monitoring, and benefit-sharing in line with the law's enforcement provisions.

216. **The Standards & Guidelines for Participatory Forestry in Malawi (2005)** provide a framework for promoting Participatory Forest Management (PFM), improving forestry extension services, and supporting poverty alleviation. They cover community-based forest management, co-management of reserves, and involvement in state plantations, with a focus on planning, implementation, and monitoring. Under the SCRCP, afforestation and natural regeneration activities (Output 1.2) will follow these guidelines. VNRMCs will develop community by-laws and undertake stakeholder engagement, identifying local needs and opportunities, assessing resources and tenure, negotiating roles and benefits, and forming accountable local institutions.

217. **The Water Resources Act (2013)** provides Malawi's legal framework for the sustainable management and protection of water resources. It includes provisions for water abstraction licensing, catchment management structures, and safeguarding water quality and ecosystems. Although the SCRCP irrigation schemes are small-scale and rely on rainwater and floodwater harvesting, the project will still align with the Act's principles. The PMU will consult with the National Water Resources Authority and Catchment Management Committees to determine licensing needs. The project will promote equitable water use, support water user groups, ensure technically sound and environmentally safe water harvesting structures, and incorporate monitoring of water availability and drainage. Coordination with local authorities will ensure consistency with catchment strategies and water quality protection.

218. **The Seed Act (1997)** regulates the production, sale, importation, exportation, and certification of seeds in Malawi, setting standards for purity, germination, labelling, packaging, and inspection. Under SCRCP, all seed inputs, including those for seed banks, nurseries, and multiplier networks, will be sourced from certified producers or tested to meet these standards. The project will ensure proper documentation,

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training on seed quality assurance, and maintain registers of certified seed varieties, avoiding any distribution of uncertified or substandard seed.

219. **The National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure (2016)** provide a framework for participatory planning and technical standards for land, water, and infrastructure interventions within catchments. SCRCP will apply these guidelines in micro-catchments through community-led planning, prioritizing interventions like afforestation, soil conservation, and water harvesting. Infrastructure will be designed to integrate with natural resource management and ecosystem resilience, with training and governance support ensuring sustainability and alignment with national standards.

220. **The Occupational Safety, Health and Welfare Act (1997)** sets workplace safety standards across sectors in Malawi. Though SCRCP involves small-scale works, it will implement safety protocols including PPE provision, safe handling procedures, and first aid kits for civil works and field activities. Training will be provided for staff and farmers on safe pesticide use and equipment handling, and basic site safety practices will be monitored to ensure compliance and worker protection.

221. **The Disaster Risk Management Act (2023)** establishes Malawi's framework for disaster risk reduction, preparedness, early warning, and recovery. SCRCP aligns with this by strengthening institutional and community capacities for climate-informed disaster response. Relevant activities include training district-level staff, conducting Participatory Scenario Planning, distributing weather instruments, and promoting inclusive climate information services. The project ensures dynamic feedback between communities and national systems, supporting decentralized and integrated disaster planning.

222. **The Communications Act (2016)** governs broadcasting, electronic communications and content regulation in Malawi. SCRCP's climate information dissemination (via radio, SMS, and media partnerships) will comply with MACRA regulations, ensuring licensed partners and content standards. Agreements will include provisions for consumer protection, local language use, and community responsiveness, ensuring lawful and inclusive communication that supports adaptation and disaster preparedness.

223. **The Malawi Labour Act (2000)** together with the Employment Act and Child Care, Protection and Justice Act, regulates working conditions, prohibits child and forced labour, ensures fair remuneration and non-discrimination, and mandates basic occupational health and safety measures. In compliance with these provisions, SCRCP will ensure that all labour engaged through the project (whether for construction of small-scale infrastructure (e.g. terraces, tanks, ARC upgrades), participation in demonstration plots, or facilitation of Farmer Field Schools) is implemented in accordance with national labour laws.

224. In summary, compliance with GoM National Standards and Environmental and Social Policy will be enforced throughout SCRCP in accordance with [Table 8](#) below:

Table 8 - Compliance with National Standards

Concern	Law Legislation	Enforcing agencies	Enforced regulation/item
Verification of need for EIA for afforestation, catchment infrastructure, and irrigation	Environmental Management Act (EMA 2017); EIA Guidelines (2017)	Environmental Affairs Department (EAD)	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) or Certificate of Exemption
Rainwater and floodwater harvesting infrastructure, including small dykes and tanks	Water Resources Act (2013)	National Water Resources Authority (NWRA); Catchment Management Committees	Notification or no-objection for water harvesting structures; registration if required
Smallholder irrigation development (non-abstraction schemes)	Irrigation Act (2001); ICoP (2018)	Department of Irrigation; District Agriculture Offices	Compliance with ICoP standards; documentation of scheme governance and O&M planning
Land use for woodlots, erosion control infrastructure, and restoration areas	Land Act (2016); Land Acquisition Act (2016)	Ministry of Lands; District Land Registrars	Customary Estate Certificate (if exclusive use >1 year); MoUs with communities; compensation where required
Use, training, and disposal of pesticides in IPM packages	Pesticides Act (2018)	Pesticides Control Board	Only registered products procured; PPE and training mandatory; disposal in line with PCB rules
Seed multiplication, distribution, and sale in FFS and nurseries	Seed Act (1997)	Ministry of Agriculture – Seed Services Unit	Certified seed only; labelling and documentation required; registration of multipliers

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Tree planting and sustainable use of forest resources (e.g. woodlots, fodder trees)	Forestry Act (1997, amended 2019)	Department of Forestry	Forest Management Agreement or registration for woodlots; no unauthorized harvesting allowed
Participatory planning and governance of community woodlots, afforestation, and forest restoration on customary land	Standards & Guidelines for Participatory Forestry in Malawi (2005)	Department of Forestry; District Forest Officers; VNRMCs	Community forest management under SCRП will follow PFM standards: awareness-building, tenure/resource assessment, institution formation (VNRMCs), and bylaws; roles and benefit-sharing mechanisms will be co-developed; VNRMCs will monitor compliance and guide local forest use plans.
Design and integration of rural infrastructure into catchment-level planning	National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure (2016)	Department of Water Resources; District Technical Teams	Use of participatory planning (VLAPs, VNRMCs); compliance with design & siting standards
Basic worker safety in small civil works, pesticide application, and agroecological demos	Occupational Safety, Health and Welfare Act (1997)	Ministry of Labour; Occupational Safety and Health Department (DOSH)	Include safety clauses in construction contracts; provide PPE and first aid for field staff; train FFS facilitators in safe tool/chemical handling; monitor incident reporting informally
Alignment of local climate information services with disaster preparedness and early warning	Disaster Risk Management Act (2023)	Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA); District Civil Protection Committees; DCCMS	Train DAES and DoDMA officers on climate-risk integration; Conduct Participatory Scenario Planning with farmers; Establish local monitoring systems; Link VLAPs to DRM structures
Use of communication platforms and community-radio outreach for climate information	Communications Act, 2016	Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA)	Ensure any radio/ICT services used by SCRП (e.g., farmer radio, mobile SMS alerts) are licensed or approved; adhere to content and broadcast service regulations; verify agreements with community broadcasters comply with Act's licensing and consumer-protection provisions.
Fair working conditions and prevention of child/forced labour in works, trainings and ARC upgrades	Malawi Labour Act (2000); Employment Act; Child Care Protection and Justice Act	Ministry of Labour	All contracts and MoUs for works (e.g., terraces, tanks, ARC refurbishment, seed banks) will prohibit child labour, mandate fair wages, and ensure OSH provisions. Labour clauses will be included in NGO/service provider contracts. GRM will receive labour-related complaints. First aid and PPE will be provided where relevant.

## F. Duplication

225. SCRП preliminary location and beneficiary selection criteria target districts, EPAs, micro-catchments, and communities where no ongoing projects would overlap with SCRП 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 reused under SCRП, either in the same districts or other districts.

Table 9 - Synergies between SCRП with previous and ongoing interventions

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Previous or on-going interventions and project areas	Project interventions	Lessons and synergies with SCRП
<p>Enhancing the Resilience of Agro-ecological Systems Project (ERASP 2016 - 2023)</p> <p>\$7,397,000 by Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD</p> <p>ERASP project districts were in Karonga, Zomba and Phalombe</p>	<p>a) Conservation of catchment areas; b) Scaling up of sustainable land management practices, and c) Provision of EWS for informed farmer decision making</p>	<p>SCRП covers different districts from those or ERASP. SCRП 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.</p> <p>Learning from ERASP, SCRП 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.</p>
<p>Sustainable Agricultural Production Programme (SAPP 2016 - 2022)</p> <p>\$73,224,300 by Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD</p> <p>SAPP was implemented in Blantyre, Chiradzulu, Balaka, Lilongwe, Nkhotakota and Chitipa</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>SCRП will complement SAPP by reaching new farmers with capacity-building programmes on climate-resilient practices that restore soil health.</p> <p>Extension manuals have also not been updated under SAPP to reflect the improved practices, which SCRП will support to ensure vulnerable farmers can be best supported based on climate-informed agro-advisory.</p> <p>SAPP interventions' main gap was to only focus on on-farm interventions for climate-smart agriculture. SCRП 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.</p> <p>Another gap from SAPP interventions was a perceived disconnection between agro-advisory and climate projections, and a lack of focus on disaster management. SCRП will directly fill this gap.</p>
<p>Sustainable Agricultural Production Programme - Phase II (SAPP II 2024 - 2031)</p> <p>\$ 35.09 Million by Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development and IFAD</p> <p>SAPP II will be implemented in the same districts as SCRП</p>	<p>SAPP II is the continuation of SAPP, focusing on scaling up interventions to support farmers that are more resilient and productive with accessing markets and finance.</p> <p>SAPP II 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.</p> <p>SAPP II will deliver this through a Farmer Challenge Fund, receiving business plans from farmers.</p>	<p>With its commercial focus, SAPP II 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.</p> <p>SCRП will fill that gap in SAPP II 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 SAPP II to ensure that there is a continuity for beneficiaries who, once the right practices are adopted and their resilience increased through SCRП, can access finance through the SAPP II programme activities. SAPP II therefore provides an "exit" strategy for SCRП.</p> <p>Among other practices, SCRП will also be promoting those developed through adaptive research in SAPP II, to the extent that they support resilience to climate change.</p>
<p>Programme for Rural Irrigation Development (PRIDE 2015 -2026)</p>	<p>Main PRIDE adaptation interventions include: a) construction of irrigation schemes</p>	<p>Even though PRIDE is mostly in different districts, SCRП will adopt lessons and knowledge products from PRIDE in irrigation schemes,</p>

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<p>\$ 125.88 Million by Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD</p> <p>PRIDE is being implemented in Phalombe, Chiradzulu, Machinga, Dowa, Nkhatakota, Rumpi, Nkhatabay, Karonga and Chitipa districts</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>construction process and standards; training manuals on WUA and building farmers capacities to manage and operate schemes.</p> <p>While PRIDE has targeted bigger irrigation schemes (at least 200 hectares), which have different sustainability criteria, SCRCP 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.</p> <p>In this way, SCRCP will reach farmers who would not benefit from the larger irrigation schemes developed under PRIDE due to either water scarcity or land scarcity.</p>
<p>Financial Access for Rural Markets, Smallholders and Enterprise Programme (FARMSE 2017 – 2028)</p> <p>US\$ 102.73 million by Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD</p> <p>FARMSE is implemented in selected communities in all SCRCP districts</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>SCRCP may serve similar beneficiaries, but its activities will be targeted at the implementation of climate-resilient practices and disaster management. In this way, SCRCP might benefit from prior community engagements and groups formed in these communities.</p>
<p>Transforming Agriculture through Diversification and Entrepreneurship Programme (TRADE 2019- 2026)</p> <p>US\$ 125.35 million by Ministry of Agriculture and IFAD</p> <p>TRADE is implemented in Chitipa, Karonga, Rumpi, Nkhata bay, Kasungu, Mchinji, Lilongwe, Dedza, Blantyre and Thyolo.</p>	<p>TRADE also focused on building farmer organizations to become commercially viable and commercial entities through the 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</p>	<p>Beneficiaries are not expected to overlap. If they do (in Lilongwe), SCRCP 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, SCRCP learnings can be combined with agribusiness skills development under TRADE for farmers to be fully supported along the value-chain.</p> <p>The roads maintained under TRADE will provide better support to the implementation of SCRCP activities, ensuring that the most remote beneficiaries (hence more vulnerable) can be reached.</p>
<p>Adapting to Climate Change Through Integrated Risk Management Strategies and Enhanced Market Opportunities for Resilient Food Security and Livelihoods (2020-2024)</p> <p>USD \$9,989,335 by WFP and Ministry of Agriculture</p> <p>Projected is implemented in Balaka Zomba and Machinga</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>While there is significant similarity in some interventions there are no duplication as SCRCP will target different communities in different areas of Balaka.</p> <p>SCRCP 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. SCRCP 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.</p>

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<p><b>Malawi Watershed Services Improvement Project</b> (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</p>	<p>(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</p> <p>(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</p>	<p>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 SCRCP. Other districts do not overlap.</p> <p>MWASIP interventions are larger in scale than SCRCP, with irrigation and dams systems spanning several communities beyond catchment and village level. Still, SCRCP will seek guidance from the Department of Land Resource Conservation (DLRC), 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.</p> <p>SCRCP 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 SCRCP can adjust its interventions accordingly. This engagement process with DLRC has already been initiated.</p>
<p><b>KULIMA (2017-2022)</b> EUR 110,000,000 by European Development Fund, implemented by FAO and GiZ and coordinated by Ministry of Agriculture</p> <p>Targeted counties: Chitipa, Karonga, Mzimba, Nkhata-Bay, Kasungu, Nkhatakota, Salima, Chiradzulu, Mulanje, Thyolo</p>	<p>Up-scaling climate-smart agriculture technologies, agriculture value chain and business development and support to improved governance in the agriculture sector.</p> <p>Putting in place an institutional framework for farmer field school programming and capacity building</p> <p>Capacity building of seed actors including agro-dealer, seed multipliers and community seed banks</p> <p>Fish ponds</p> <p>Agroforestry, IPM, ISFM and conservation agriculture training</p>	<p>SCRCP 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. SCRCP team will work closely with KULIMA team to identify barriers to adoption faced following KULIMA's interventions, and adjust SCRCP's training content accordingly.</p> <p>The FFS framework developed under KULIMA will be directly re-used under SCRCP. Only the content will be adapted in case the commodities chosen in SCRCP do not overlap or to reflect season-specific climate advisory. Additional trainers may be trained under SCRCP in areas not yet covered, but the framework will remain the same as the one institutionalized under KULIMA.</p> <p>SCRCP will also learn from KULIMA's community seed banks interventions to establish further seed banks in other target areas.</p>
<p><b>Climate Smart Public Works Programme (CSPWP) (2019-2025)</b> Funded through Multi-Donor Trust Fund and World Bank, implemented by Government of Malawi</p> <p>Ongoing in several districts with relevant project interventions</p>	<p>Cash transfer to communities against a few days of work on restoration of degraded land through flood control, land restorations, conservations, regeneration and afforestation.</p>	<p>A number of degraded areas were identified under CSPWP, but not rehabilitated. SCRCP will use this information to target some of the areas identified to micro catchments conservation and restoration. SCRCP will seek continuation with CSPWP restoration activities if they link to farmers' VNRMCs and the value chains and beneficiaries targeted.</p>

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<p><b>Building urban climate resilience in south-eastern Africa (Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Union of Comoros) (2020-2024)</b></p> <p>USD 13,997,423</p> <p>Adaptation Fund financed and implemented by UN-Habitat</p> <p>Targeting urban areas of Zomba in the case of Malawi.</p>	<p>The project intends to strengthen urban climate resilience in Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, and Comoros by enhancing disaster risk reduction capacities, improving early warning systems, and addressing vulnerabilities in rapidly growing informal settlements. It aims to support city-level and national interventions implemented by UN-Habitat, SADC/DIMSUR, and partners such as Oxfam to reduce climate-related risks for marginalized urban populations.</p>	<p>SCRIP will not operate in urban areas and as such, does not have direct synergies with the project. It will still draw on lessons from the UN-Habitat regional urban resilience initiative by learning from its best practices and identification of the most efficient warning systems and communication channels in Malawi, which SCRIP can replicate to reach its target group in rural areas. It will also seek to align the EWS and disaster management protocols to the best practices identified in urban areas, where relevant for SCRIP target groups.</p>
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### G. Learning and knowledge management

226. Effective learning and knowledge management (KM) are central to the SCRIP’s strategy for enhancing climate resilience in Malawi, and are designed to ensure that experiences, evidence, and innovations from implementation directly inform adaptive management and policy dialogue. The project indeed recognizes that adaptation is a dynamic process requiring continuous learning, documentation, and dissemination of experiences, innovations, and lessons. As such, KM will be embedded across all components of the project to ensure that knowledge generated is systematically captured, analyzed, and shared to support smallholders, inform policy, scale successful practices, and strengthen institutional capacities.

227. As such, all components will contribute data to the integrated M&E/KM system, enabling continuous learning, adaptive management, and dissemination through workshops, digital platforms, and national forums. This will take place at the village, area, district, and national levels. It will involve smallholder farmers, local implementation structures, supporting government and NGOs, IFAD, and the Ministry of Agriculture. This approach will ensure that KM is not a standalone activity but a cross-cutting function that informs implementation, scales successful practices, and strengthens policy dialogue at local, national, and regional levels. More specifically, KM is mainstreamed throughout the SCRIP project, ensuring that learning and sharing are embedded in every intervention:

- Under *Component 1*, community-led planning through VLAPs and restoration activities will generate case studies and success stories on locally driven ecosystem management. While consolidated at the level of institutional partners such as DLRC, these lessons will also circulate at local level both through exchange visits at micro-catchment level, demonstration sites and peer learning, and local level facilitation (including GALS).
- *Component 2* will document best practices from FFS, agroecological innovations, and gender-transformative approaches, feeding lessons into updated material critical for the institutionalization of FFS. Local ownership, consolidation and circulation of knowledge will be guaranteed by the mentoring of lead farmers.
- *Component 3* will document lessons from PSP and the use of climate advisories through Ulimi Ndi Nyengo and SMS platforms. It will track uptake of these services, capture institutional coordination experiences, and produce concise knowledge products (e.g. policy briefs, infographics, etc.) for dissemination through workshops and digital channels to inform adaptive management and policy dialogue. Local trusted networks also play a key role in KM under component 3, by facilitating the circulation of verified climate data allowing for informed decision making by vulnerable smallholder farmers.

228. **Learning processes.** The system will follow the five-step KM cycle developed under the SAPP II KM&C Strategy: (i) generation of field knowledge and data, (ii) validation through participatory review, (iii) packaging of information into accessible formats, (iv) dissemination through tailored channels, and (v)

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utilization for decision-making and scaling up. This cyclical process ensures that information flows efficiently from the field to the policy level, while lessons learned are reinvested into planning and programming.

229. Learning and knowledge sharing will occur at multiple levels (village, EPA, district, and national) anchored in the structures already supported by SAPP II. At the community level, knowledge will emerge from participatory planning processes, FFS, climate information services, and restoration activities.

230. The project will utilize a combination of digital and participatory tools to support data collection, analysis, and knowledge sharing:

- Field-level tools: FFS logbooks, VLAP monitoring forms, and PSP reporting templates;
- Participatory methods: Outcome surveys and reflection circles for farmers and extension officers;
- Digital tools: The Ulimi Ndi Nyengo app for farmer feedback, KoboToolbox for field data collection, and GIS mapping for spatial analysis;
- Multimedia documentation: Short videos, infographics, and photo stories to capture community narratives and behavioural change.

231. Field data and experiences collected through these mechanisms will be reviewed and validated through quarterly reflection sessions, district learning events, and annual national workshops. The validation process will ensure that knowledge is evidence-based, inclusive, and contextually relevant.

232. **Knowledge consolidation and dissemination.** Once validated, information will be converted into a range of knowledge products tailored to specific audiences. District KM&C officers will use standardized templates to collect case studies, farmer success stories, and technical “how-to” notes to guide documentation by district and component teams, capturing the issue addressed, the intervention tested, results achieved, and lessons for replication. At community level, these will include farmer leaflets in Chichewa and Chitumbuka, radio scripts, and posters for resource centres will be produced. At district level, short learning briefs and newsletters will be shared during review meetings and uploaded to the digital repository. At the national level, consolidated outputs will include thematic studies, technical manuals, infographics, and policy briefs highlighting evidence for upscaling.

233. The project knowledge will be stored in a central digitalized repository aligned with IFAD data retention policies. A centralized digital knowledge repository will be established under the Ministry of Agriculture’s KM Unit, linked to the existing SAPP II web portal and the National Agricultural Management Information System (NAMIS). The repository will:

- Store M&E data, research outputs, case studies, and communication materials;
- Allow categorized retrieval by theme, district, component, or stakeholder group;
- Provide secure cloud-based backup and comply with IFAD’s data retention standards;
- Be accessible to DLRC, DAES, DCCMS, and partner institutions through role-based permissions.

234. A KM calendar will be developed to guide production and dissemination throughout the year, ensuring synchronization with seasonal cycles and major planning events. Communication will rely on a mix of traditional and digital media—radio, SMS, and print materials for rural audiences, and social media, newsletters, and policy roundtables for institutional and development partners.

235. **Feedback mechanisms** are at the core of SCRIP approaches, ensuring that insights from communities, extension services, and research institutions continuously inform project implementation, strengthen adaptive management, and enhance the relevance and impact of climate-resilient interventions. Feedback loops allow the project and its partners to adjust strategies based on real-time experiences from communities and institutions, ensuring interventions remain relevant and effective. These processes will help identify successful practices for scaling and replication, supporting evidence-based policy dialogue and broader impact. Feedback will also be used to ensure that knowledge products such as policy briefs, infographics, and videos reflect real experiences and are user-friendly, increasing credibility and uptake.

236. The project will both build on these mechanisms and document their effectiveness at all levels, looking at:

- a) *Participatory monitoring.* Communities will track the implementation of VLAPs through regular review meetings and progress assessments on ecosystem restoration and land management

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actions. Data from these processes will feed into the project's integrated M&E/KM system to support adaptive management and learning.

- b) *Inclusivity and Equity*. Feedback channels such as GALS and DIF tools (but also the project's own GRM) ensure gender and vulnerable groups' voices are integrated into KM processes, promoting socially inclusive adaptation strategies.
- c) *Extension–Research feedback*. Under component 2, Farmer Field Schools and agroecological logbooks will provide practical data for researchers and extension agents, creating a dynamic link between innovation and application.
- d) *Climate information services feedback*. Two-way communication through Ulimi Ndi Nyengo and SMS platforms will enable farmers to report advisory usefulness and local conditions, improving forecast accuracy and relevance.
- e) *Institutional coordination feedback*. Inputs from farmer representatives directly to district and national stakeholders during PSP sessions and review workshops will inform harmonization of guidelines and strengthen inter-agency collaboration.

237. **Responsibilities.** KM will be coordinated by the project's KM Assistant, supported by the M&E Assistant, under the supervision of SAPP11's KM Officer and M&E Officer, and in collaboration with the project's technical staff (agronomist, meteorologist and rural infrastructure specialist), local Government counterparts and other project stakeholders to identify relevant knowledge sources and case studies that illustrate the project's impact.

238. At project start, the KM Assistant will develop a **KM Strategy and Action Plan** for the project, to describe the functioning of the KM system, aimed at systematically capturing, organizing, sharing, and utilizing knowledge to support the achievement of SCRCP objective and outcomes, improve efficiency, foster innovation, and ensure continuous learning. More specifically, it will help streamline access to critical information, inform how lessons are learnt and good practices emerge, and support capacity development and decision-making. The strategy will align on both AF and IFAD's standards and good practices for KM.

239. More specifically, the KM Strategy and Action Plan for SCRCP will clearly define objectives, including continuous learning for adaptive management, documentation and dissemination of best practices, inclusive stakeholder engagement, and evidence generation for policy influence. It will identify relevant and quantified knowledge products across components, including policy briefs, thematic studies, infographics, videos, and performance reports, and consolidate them in a dedicated KM Results Framework with specific indicators to track KM outputs and uptake. The strategy will describe the project's specific feedback and learning loops. Dissemination approaches will also be specified. Capacity building for data collection, analysis, and sharing will be included. Finally, the action plan should outline timelines, roles, and budgets to operationalize KM activities effectively.

## H. Consultative process

240. The formulation of the SCRCP project was conducted in two phases: the preparation of the Concept Note from June 2023 to March 2025, and the preparation of the project proposal from September to November 2025. Both the CN and PP preparation 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 SCRCP preparation was conducted in constant and close consultation with the IFAD Country Office in Malawi, ongoing IFAD projects (including the SAPP11 with which close synergies will be established during implementation) and Government counterparts (in particular DLRC), 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.

241. Special attention was given to ensure a gender and youth focus in these consultations. As such, institutions dealing with gender and youth issues, both public and from the civil society, were consulted. Male and female potential beneficiaries and stakeholders were consulted both separately and in mixed groups. Moreover, the appropriateness of time and location of consultation meetings, especially for women,

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was taken into account. The consultative process (including lists of stakeholders consulted) is detailed in Annex 1: Stakeholder consultation process.

242. **Consultation with potential beneficiaries.** At concept note stage in-depth consultations following an array of methodologies (direct consultations, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, etc.) targeted potential direct and indirect beneficiaries. In particular, 24 focused group discussions with women, youth and men separately (two in each of the four districts targeted, further separated into 3 focused groups of women, men and youth). A total of 165 women, 132 men and 82 youth attended the focused group discussions. During the project proposal preparation and following similar approaches, 445 stakeholders were consulted, of which 226 female, 102 youth (split with 50 young men and 52 young women) and 12 persons with disabilities, including persons with HIV. Consultations have been split by geography, considering mobility constraints of project participants and the distances covered by project activities. Consultations with project beneficiaries were held across districts between September 23<sup>rd</sup> and October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Consultations with development partners and national government officials were held from October 2<sup>nd</sup> to October 14<sup>th</sup> online and in-person, and on September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

243. In May 2025, household surveys were conducted following a mixed-methods approach to assess the socio-economic and environmental conditions of communities targeted by SCRP. Structured household surveys (covering 1,051 households), 21 focus group discussions (FGDs), and 31 key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. Household surveys quantified income, food security, and agricultural productivity, while FGDs explored community-level dynamics and resource access, with participants stratified by age and gender. KIIs provided systemic insights from stakeholders at various levels. A multi-stage sampling method ensured representative household selection, and secondary data sources complemented primary findings to guide targeted interventions.

244. Throughout 2024-2025, IFAD commissioned studies from the Global Centre on Adaptation to inform the design of SCRP component 3 on digital climate advisory services, including identifying and documenting existing digital solutions and platforms that support e-extension services in Malawi and preparing a roadmap for national digital climate advisory services and e-extension. The studies were undertaken through broad stakeholder consultation and engagement events in each districts, where lead farmers and extension officers were consulted to prioritise different digitised options that can enhance access to climate information and advisory services in Malawi.

245. **Consultation results.** All stakeholders consulted confirmed the relevance of the project and its approaches. The main issues emerging from consultations were the significant challenges communities are faced with in agriculture due to climate hazards, in particular droughts, increased heat, strong winds, irregular rainfall, and resulting land degradation, pest outbreaks, water shortage, crop productivity decrease and harvest loss, further affecting food security. Proposed solutions included community irrigation infrastructure, water harvesting, restoration of degraded lands, integrated pest management, and access to improved farm inputs and climate information.

Table 10 - Summary of consultation findings and project responses

Theme	Issue	Main concerns	Project response
<b>Climate Change Impacts and Environmental Degradation</b>	Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weather patterns: Droughts and dry spells, floods, windstorms, and hail storms, and erratic rainfall patterns.</li> <li>Land/resource degradation: topsoil loss due to soil erosion, loss of fertility, and the drying up of communal grazing areas and water bodies/rivers</li> <li>Environmental degradation and deforestation driven by charcoal burning, and expansion of agricultural land.</li> </ul>	<p>Activities throughout Output 1.1 help determine location-specific challenges to then be addressed under output 1.2 and component 2, through FFS, capacity building and direct support to catchment improvements to reduce erosion.</p> <p>Productivity improvements through capacity building in component 2, and efficient woodstoves and woodlots in component 1 aim to reduce reliance on deforestation and expansion of land</p>

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	Pest and diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate shocks influence the occurrence of pests and disease outbreaks, including the Fall armyworm, and livestock diseases like Newcastle disease and African swine fever.</li> <li>Increased floods also create parasite breeding grounds.</li> </ul>	Enhancement of the FFS curriculum by integrating climate-resilient techniques, including modules on ISFM, IPM, and SWC.
<b>Institutional and technical capacity limitations</b>	Extension Worker Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The capacity of extension workers is stretched, with a limited ratio of staff (e.g., roughly one per 1,000 households nationally, and ratios of 1:3,000 in certain areas).</li> <li>Staff face limitations such as immobility, poor access to electricity and laptops, lack of transport (often relying on push bikes), and inadequate essential tools</li> </ul>	<p>Providing district government extension workers with equipment and training</p> <p>Budget for staff mobility and top ups to support staff constraints</p>
	Technical capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor linkages between researchers, extension services, and farmers</li> <li>There is a limited knowledge and skill set in GIS and remote sensing among district staff, coupled with a lack of necessary high-precision mapping laptops and GPS gadgets</li> </ul>	<p>Strengthen research-extension-farmer linkages through adaptive research and feedback mechanisms during demos and FFS. Training extension workers on EWS</p> <p>Strengthen the capacity of DAES and DoDMA technicians through trainings to: understand DCCMS climate information; appreciate local/traditional knowledge on climate; and communicate climate and adaptation information and in a timely and socially appropriate manner.</p> <p>Support to DLRC resources and capacity, including GIS, under component 1</p>
	Coordination and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor mechanisms exist for intersectoral coordination</li> <li>Gaps in coordination and information sharing within Disaster Risk Management (DRM) efforts</li> <li>Weak governance structures at the village level were also noted.</li> </ul>	<p>Engage relevant stakeholders, and build their capacities to facilitate coordination and engagement</p> <p>Component 1 dedicated to ensuring coordination across traditional local governance bodies and alignment of local village and catchment plans</p> <p>Output 3.2 focus on enhancing coordination through protocols in DRM and climate-related advisory</p>
<b>Social inclusion</b>	General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women, youth, People with Disabilities (PwD), HIV-affected individuals, the poor, and the</li> </ul>	Social organisation and community engagement, including mobilization of

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		<p>landless) are disproportionately impacted by climate shocks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns include increasing prices and food insecurity, high poverty levels, and challenges faced by people living with HIV, such as malnutrition and being left behind in economic activities.</li> <li>Limited opportunities offered to vulnerable groups. Women and youths often have limited access to, control over, and ownership of productive resources. Young female youths, for example, often do not inherit land</li> </ul>	<p>women, youths and PWDs for collective action</p> <p>Social inclusion fully mainstreamed within project activities</p> <p>Specific targeting of women for distribution of community incentives (seedlings, cookstoves, rainwater harvesting...)</p>
	Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High cost of inputs and lack of capital/assets.</li> <li>High unemployment and poverty levels push youth into environmentally damaging activities, such as charcoal production</li> <li>Limited access to support, information, and inclusion in farmers organisations.</li> </ul>	<p>Afforestation and community woodlots</p> <p>Support the implementation of the FFS programme</p> <p>All activities within Output 2.2: Adapted inputs and resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers</p> <p>Specific targeting of youth</p> <p>Recognition and use of youth in income generating activities and management of storage infrastructures</p>
	Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food insecurity as a result of dry spells, pest infestation, and soil erosion.</li> <li>Women reported challenges accessing essential natural resources, which are being depleted or made difficult to access due to climate change impacts: such as water and land.</li> <li>Access and the cost of inputs and equipment was a major concern. They reported that agricultural inputs and equipment have become more expensive, and they face erratic input prices.</li> </ul>	<p>Small water storage for rain and floodwater harvesting</p> <p>Enhance the FFS curriculum by integrating climate-resilient techniques, including modules on ISFM, IPM, and SWC.</p> <p>Support the implementation of the FFS programme, including agroecology, deep-bed farming, conservation agriculture, and CSA.</p> <p>All activities within Output 2.2: Adapted inputs and resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers</p>
	Vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discrimination against PwDs and PLHIV due to cultural practices, prejudice, and ignorance of their statuses and abilities.</li> <li>Reliance on family members for food and income.</li> </ul>	<p>Gender-specific targeting</p> <p>Enhanced FFS curriculum</p> <p>Train agricultural extension leaders/facilitators</p> <p>Disability inclusion facilitators ensure tailored support</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate change directly translates into physical and health-related risks, impacting their primary source of livelihood and well-being.</li> </ul>	Specific targeting of PWD
<b>Data, information and early warning systems</b>	Intelligibility and understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The understanding of climate information, such as seasonal forecasts, remains weak at the village level.</li> <li>Information provided (e.g., PICSA) is often considered too complex for farmers to understand and act upon</li> </ul>	<p>All activities under Output 3.1. Climate information for decision making available at local level</p> <p>PSP under 3.1 and training of trusted networks among farmers expected to improve understanding of forecast and simplify the delivery</p>
	Data accuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns were raised about the accuracy of weather data collection. Data quality is compromised as measurements are often taken by volunteers, forms are filled out by hand, and transmission is slow.</li> <li>Stakeholders noted the need for more investment in weather stations and EWS technologies like smartphones.</li> </ul>	<p>All activities under Output 3.2. National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector</p> <p>Improved accuracy through AWS and enhancement of app and radio programmes under 3.1</p>
	Dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate information received by extension workers is sometimes reported as unreliable.</li> <li>There were reports of farmers not following advice because they did not trust the information or had already bought inputs.</li> </ul>	<p>Strengthened capacities of DAES and DoDMA technicians to: understand DCCMS climate information; appreciate local/traditional knowledge on climate; and communicate climate and adaptation information in a timely and socially appropriate manner. Training of trusted network in climate information services. Improved relevant and timeliness of advisory through PSPs and AWS.</p>
<b>Agricultural inputs, production and markets</b>	Inputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farmers face high costs of inputs (seeds, fertilizer) and lack access to credit facilities.</li> <li>Concerns were also raised about the high cost and prevalence of fake seeds/fertilizers.</li> </ul>	<p>All activities under Output 2.2: Adapted inputs and resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers</p> <p>Activities under 2.1 reduce input dependency through agroecological practices</p>
	Post harvest losses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders cited significant post-harvest losses, often due to pests (like weevils, rats, mice), theft, and transportation challenges.</li> </ul>	70 climate-proof storage facilities
	Market infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of market infrastructure, such as warehouses and storage facilities, was identified.</li> <li>Farmers also lack reliable markets, often leading to reliance on vendors and low sale prices for produce.</li> </ul>	70 climate-proof storage facilities

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Table 11 Summary of consultation groups during FP design

Stakeholder group	Number of individuals consulted in the group	Share of consultations
Female	226	51%
Male	219	49%
Youth	102	23%
PWD	12	3%
<b>Occupation (based on self-designation. Please note VNRMC Reps may also farmers and vice versa)</b>		
Farmer (incl. lead farmer, follower farmer, FFS members, etc)	123	28%
Traditional authorities representatives (village reps, chairperson, treasurer, VDC or VCPC Reps, etc)	67	15%
VNRMC Representatives	86	19%
Development partners (NGOs, UN institutions)	19	4%
Government national and decentralised stakeholders	150	34%

246. **Stakeholders' engagement.** Throughout implementation, SCRCP will maintain a participatory and inclusive consultative process that builds on the strong engagement established during project design. Regular dialogue will be sustained through VDCs, strengthened VNRMCs, and district structures, ensuring communities (and notably women, youth, and persons with disabilities within these communities) remain actively involved in planning, validation, and monitoring of activities. Participatory tools such as VLAP review meetings, FFS learning cycles, seasonal PSP workshops, and community feedback forums will facilitate continuous two-way communication between beneficiaries, extension services, and national institutions as well as the project team. This iterative engagement will ensure that implementation remains responsive to evolving community needs, climate conditions, and lessons emerging from the field, while also fostering ownership, transparency, and long-term sustainability of project interventions.

### I. Justification for requested funding

247. 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. Climate change will further worsen the poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition status, unless adequate financial support is provided.

248. SCRCP will achieve its planned outcomes/ objective/s solely based on requested AF funds, irrespective of any additional financing from other sources/donors Thanks to AF supporting the full cost of adaptation of activities planned under the project, SCRCP 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 12](#) below summarizes the justification for providing that financial support.

249. **Additional funding** is sought since the concept note to deepen SCRCP impacts on ecosystems and on farmers, by enhancing the integration of components and activities. The additional funding requested enables the project to widen the scale of ecosystem restoration through increased surfaces under soil and water conservation activities and afforestation. It also enables SCRCP to build capacity in livestock production, responding to strong requests from prospective beneficiaries shared during the consultation, as livestock represents a critical safety net when other assets are more vulnerable to climate impacts. To support the increase in activities' scale, the additional funding will also build capacity of the departments responsible for their implementation.

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Table 12 - Scenario without and with adaptation cost

Business as usual scenario	Adaptation Fund additionality
<b>Component 1. Resilient ecosystems sustainably providing services to smallholder farmers</b>	
Hilltops and micro-catchments remain degraded due to deforestation, charcoal production, and unsustainable cultivation on steep slopes as communities resort to maladaptive practices to cope with the effects of climate change. Extreme events further contribute to land degradation, and continue to cause sedimentation and physical damage to crops and community infrastructure.	19 micro-catchments supported through 70 participatory and climate-resilient VLAPs integrating watershed restoration, soil and water conservation, and disaster risk management measures.
Afforestation and soil conservation efforts remain fragmented and short-lived; without incentives or ownership, communities revert to unsustainable practices, leading to a vicious cycle of maladaptation.	70 VNRMCs established or strengthened, coordinating activities across 195 villages. 2,450 ha of woodlots restored and 2,800 ha under anti-erosive measures (contour bunds, terraces, trenches, vegetative barriers), protecting over 16,000 ha of degraded catchments.
Land-use decisions are taken individually without coordination, resulting in overuse of shared resources, declining soil fertility, and reduced ecosystem services, increasing their vulnerability to climate change.	Participatory land-use planning ensures coordinated and equitable resource management through 70 community-led VLAPs, incorporating gender- and youth-sensitive by-laws and enforcement mechanisms.
Women, youth, and persons with disabilities remain excluded from decision-making and productive opportunities due to cultural norm and time fetching water and wood, increasing their vulnerability to climate impacts.	2,000 households mentored through GALS and 19 Disability Inclusion Facilitators are trained. Women make up at least 50% of VNRMC membership. 11,700 vulnerable households receive incentives to reduce pressure on ecosystem resources in the form of seedling kits, of which 3,900 women-led households receiving improved stoves. 780 households receive rainwater harvesting equipment to reduce pressure on natural resources. Rainwater harvesting and improved stoves directly benefit women by allowing to save time normally spent fetching water and wood.
<b>Component 2. Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi</b>	
Frequent droughts and floods reduce yields and productivity; farmers rely on rainfed systems and traditional practices that are increasingly maladapted (notably due to the increasingly erratic nature of rainfall).	<b>150 FFS</b> established across project areas covering crops (100 FFS) and agroforestry (50 FFS), training <b>4,500 households</b> on climate-resilient technologies such as conservation agriculture, agroforestry, and integrated soil fertility management.
Extension coverage remains weak and insufficiently prepared on climate adaptation aspects; farmers have limited access to adapted and updated technical information, quality seeds, and inputs.	<b>40 extension staff</b> trained as facilitators and 120 FFS participants subsequently trained as lead farmers. Updated technical manuals and national CSA guidelines mainstream climate adaptation and gender inclusion. 4 agricultural resource centres are refurbished to host demo and stock advisory material. <b>Ulimi Ndi Nyengo</b> platform enhanced to deliver customized agro-advisories via radio, SMS, and web portal. <b>52 radio episodes</b> broadcast annually (also see below).
Poor livestock management and husbandry practices increases farmers' vulnerability to climate shocks, damage natural resources and slow-down rate of pass-on schemes	<b>25 Assistant Veterinary Officers</b> trained and <b>100 demonstrations</b> implemented on livestock management (including feeding), climate-resilient livestock practices, parasite and disease control, and pass-on facilitation.
Low crop diversity and limited access to quality seeds and seedlings constrain adaptation.	<b>19 community tree nurseries</b> , <b>19 seed multiplier groups</b> , and <b>19 community seed banks</b> established to strengthen local seed systems and promote agrobiodiversity.
Smallholders lack access to irrigation or reliable water sources in a context where increased heat and erratic rains lead to more frequent droughts; women continue walking long distances to fetch water.	<b>70 small-scale flood and rainwater collection infrastructure (ponds and impoundment dams) associated with small-scale irrigation schemes</b> established, increasing water availability and reducing vulnerability to dry spells.
Significant post-harvest losses occur due to unpredictable weather conditions (heavy rains, increased heat and humidity,	<b>70 climate-resilient storage facilities</b> constructed or rehabilitated, improving post-harvest management and reduced losses.

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increased occurrence of pests and diseases, etc.) while storage is insufficiently adapted based both on location (e.g. increased exposure to flood risks) and technical specificities (e.g. poor ventilation), reducing income and food security.	
<b>Component 3. Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi</b>	
Climate and weather forecasts remain too general and not localized, failing to address microclimate variability that affects smallholder production and reducing trust in climate projections from modern science.	<b>16 Automated Weather Stations (AWS)</b> installed in all targeted EPAs, improving data coverage and forecast accuracy; community data integrated into DCCMS forecasting systems.
Advisory messages are generic and uncoordinated across institutions, leading to conflicting information.	<b>Ulimi Ndi Nyengo</b> platform enhanced to deliver customized agro-advisories via radio, SMS, and web portal. <b>52 radio episodes</b> broadcast annually. Advisory is co-created through <b>128 Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP)</b> workshops conducted twice yearly in all EPAs, engaging DAES, DCCMS, lead farmers, GALS facilitators, and private sector actors to co-produce tailored advisories. Updated crop vulnerability maps, 40 crop calendars and yield forecasts are produced. Standard Operating Procedures are delivered to coordinate delivery across DCCMS, DAES and DODMA.
Limited technical capacity among DCCMS, DAES, and DoDMA staff to use or interpret data for early warning and advisories.	<b>240 extension workers and officers</b> are trained on agrometeorology, DRM, and digital advisory tools. <b>National-level training</b> delivered for DCCMS, DAES, and DoDMA staff on forecast validation, downscaling, and integration.
PSP and MHEWS processes remain project-driven, with no institutional framework or budget for continuation.	<b>National PSP guidelines</b> developed and adopted; <b>MHEWS protocols</b> revised to include agriculture-specific triggers; <b>inter-agency SOPs</b> and coordination frameworks established among DCCMS, DAES, DoDMA, and NAMIS

## J. Sustainability

250. The project is based on, and is driven by, sustainability principles that are promoted throughout its activities by i) emphasising the active participation of communities in the implementation and management of project interventions, as a means to also ensure ownership of the project and its outcomes by all relevant stakeholders (social sustainability); ii) strengthening the community-level technical capacity to ensure stakeholders have adequate knowledge and skills to maintain the benefits of the project interventions (including operation and maintenance of infrastructure); iii) promoting the adoption of cost-effective, environmentally friendly and long-lasting solutions to help restore, improve and/or protect the ecosystem (economic and financial sustainability); iv) training communities on climate-resilient agricultural techniques and supporting activities to ensure the continuity of access to adapted seeds and seedlings (technical sustainability), v) linking beneficiaries to other projects, such as SAPP II, which support value chain development as a means for communities involved in tree products value chains to receive direct income from trees and and further engage in their preservation (environmental sustainability), and vi) enhancing the availability, accessibility, and use of localized climate information through trusted networks and digital platforms, to ensure communities can make informed decisions and sustain adaptive practices over time (social sustainability); and vii) integrating project activities into existing government systems and local governance structures to ensure long-term ownership and continuity (institutional sustainability). Additionally, the project is fully aligned on the priorities highlighted in relevant national policies and strategies.

251. **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 second component. The project will rely on participatory approaches and build capacity of resource management groups, including through the

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creation of bylaws and obtention of customary titles, to fully address issues that affect the long-term sustainability of natural resources management and the welfare of local communities.

252. **Operations and maintenance.** The project's participatory and community-based approach will ensure the ownership of investments by local stakeholders. The direct involvement of communities (under the guidance of VNRMCs and AAEDOs) in restoration works and forest management activities will guarantee that they are trained and master the techniques to prepare, maintain and replicate land restoration and other relevant techniques. Support to local management plans and by-laws will further formalize responsibilities for O&M. Additionally, the project will support the establishment of nurseries and seed banks that will sustainably provide the planting material needed for ecosystem restoration. Similarly for infrastructure such as impoundment dams, irrigation schemes, and storage facilities, Water User Associations (WUA) and youth-led management groups will be established and capacitated to oversee upkeep, while annual planning and review processes ensure continued functionality and adaptation to evolving needs. Finally, O&M of Automated Weather Stations will be guaranteed through training of DCCMS district officers in equipment use, diagnostics, and maintenance, alongside integration into national forecasting workflows and institutional mandates.

253. **Social sustainability** will be fostered through community engagement throughout the project. SCRP is designed and will be implemented through local community groups (including VNRMCs and FFS) 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 notably the lead farmer approach; 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 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. Furthermore, Component 3 enhances social sustainability by equipping trusted community networks with the tools and training needed to interpret and disseminate climate information, ensuring that adaptive decisions are informed, inclusive, and sustained beyond the project.

254. **Economic and financial sustainability.** The project promotes cost-effective and locally replicable solutions for land restoration and climate-resilient agriculture, using techniques and materials that communities can maintain and scale independently. Additionally, linking ecosystem restoration to community livelihoods, notably through the promotion of economically valuable tree species and the development of associated value chains, enables communities to perceive long-term benefits and maintain restoration efforts beyond the project. By supporting the development of community nurseries, seed banks, and small-scale infrastructure such as irrigation and storage facilities, the project also reduces long-term input costs and enhances productivity. Restoration and infrastructure activities will be embedded into annual work plans and local budgets through existing governance structures, reinforcing their financial sustainability beyond the project. Agricultural Resources Centres will offer services such as mechanization rental to cover their operational costs.

255. The financial sustainability of small-scale irrigation systems, water harvesting structures, climate-proof storage facilities, and AWS is ensured through a combination of community-based O&M arrangements, low-cost technologies, and institutional anchoring. Water User Associations will manage irrigation schemes using affordable membership fees and in-kind labour contributions, supported by district engineers for major repairs, as per current practices in Malawi. Community water harvesting systems and household tanks require minimal upkeep and will rely on management committees formed under VNRMCs, guided by locally developed by-laws. Climate-proof storage facilities will be run by youth-inclusive committees applying small user fees to fund maintenance (thanks also to the reduced post-harvest losses). All infrastructure will be designed using durable materials to minimize recurrent expenses. AWS will be fully integrated into DCCMS's national system, with district-level technicians trained in routine servicing and troubleshooting. O&M responsibility will be embedded in VLAPs, ensuring inclusion in district development planning and budget processes. The project's focus on livelihood gains will increase communities' financial

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capacity to sustain assets over time. Finally, strong coordination with DLRC, DAES and DoDMA will ensure continuity of technical support and institutional sustainability beyond project closure.

256. **Institutional sustainability.** SCRП project is fully aligned with Malawi's national policies and strategies on climate resilience, land restoration, and agricultural development, and is anchored in the engagement of institutions from village to national level. Implementation is carried out through existing governance structures (e.g. VDCs, VNRMCs, etc.), and frontline government staff (AAEDOs), with activities embedded into formal planning instruments (VLAPs). While coordination is led by the PMU, district and national institutions will provide technical backstopping and local level facilitation throughout implementation. To ensure continuity beyond the project, SCRП will strengthen institutional mandates through MoUs and capacity building, and update extension manuals and guidelines to embed project learnings into national systems, enabling future beneficiaries to access improved advisory services. Standard Operating Procedures and formal guidelines for Participatory Scenario Planning will be developed in Component 3 to embed SCRП activities into institutions' mandates and improve their coordination.

257. **Scaling-up and exit strategy.** SCRП is designed for scalability and long-term sustainability by leveraging existing government systems and planning frameworks. Restoration and infrastructure investments will be integrated into local development processes, while trained government staff will continue to support communities post-project. National institutions such as DLRC, DAES, and DCCMS will be equipped to institutionalize climate-resilient practices through strengthened coordination mechanisms and updated protocols. Community structures (e.g. VNRMCs, Water User Associations, etc.) will be empowered to manage and maintain interventions, ensuring local ownership. The adoption of SCRП-developed technical materials and tools at national level will facilitate replication and expansion of successful approaches across other regions. Beneficiaries will be linked to value-chain driven projects, such as SAPP2, providing them with opportunities to monetise their increased productivity or tree products through improved access to technology, finance and access to markets.

### K. Environmental and social impacts and risks identified

258. The environmental and social screening presented in [Table 13 - Adaptation Fund Environmental and Social Checklist](#)

259. 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. <a href="#">Compliance with the Law</a>	X	<b>LOW.</b> <a href="#">The project, as formulated, complies with all national laws and standards. The project will be executed by a team hired under the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry's departments and staff. Risk of non-compliance could come from service providers that will be contracted during implementation for (i.e. for pesticide handling, small-scale watershed infrastructure works, and seed systems). Compliance by service providers will be ensured through contractual arrangements and procurement systems driven by the Ministry of Agriculture.</a>
ESP 2. <a href="#">Access and Equity</a>	X	<b>LOW.</b> <a href="#">The identified risk is low and fully mitigated by the project's approach, including its targeting strategy and its gender assessment, strategy and action plan (under Annex 4), building on the experience of IFAD and other partners in the country. The project's participatory and inclusive approach will enable fair and equitable access to project benefits to all participants, including marginalised and vulnerable groups, who meet the project eligibility criteria. Affirmative action to ensure women and youth participation will be taken to ensure 50% of the beneficiaries are women and 30% are youth. Direct risks could arise from an improper targeting approach, leaving out most vulnerable groups including women, youth, People with Disabilities (including with HIV/AIDS). 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. Participation of the project target groups will be closely monitored through</a>

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		the M&E system. The Grievance Redress Mechanism is also an avenue in case individuals and/or communities who feel excluded or marginalized from project benefits.
<u>ESP 3. Marginalized and Vulnerable Groups</u>	X	<u>LOW</u> . 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). Direct risks could arise from improperly engaging most vulnerable groups including women, youth and PWDs. Their limited voice and decision making may render their engagement difficult resulting in insufficient tailoring of activities to their specific needs. The project includes a dedicated Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy (Annex 4), and introduces Disability Inclusion Facilitators to engage vulnerable groups in FFS and PSP activities. In this way, the project will ensure participation and equal access to resources. Additionally, this project will respect land, property and customary rights.
<u>ESP 4. Human Rights</u>	X	<b>NO RISK</b> . 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.
<u>ESP 5. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</u>	X	<u>LOW</u> . Direct risks could arise from an improper targeting approach and engagement or pervasive cultural norms, 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. Key considerations have been taken into account through the Gender Assessment 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. This is further outlined in the gender assessment, strategy and action plan (under Annex 4). 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 SCRPs specifically for their potential to reduce women workloads.
<u>ESP 6. Core Labour Rights</u>	X	<u>LOW</u> . The project will ensure respect for international and national labour laws and codes, as stated in IFAD's policies, including through provisions in contracts with service providers (e.g. adherence to workers code of conduct and sensitization on GBV). The project will approach production with a subsistence rather than commercial perspective. The project does not operate in sectors or value chains where child labour was evident in the past. SCRPs will be bound by ILO Regulations, the Malawi Labour Act (GoM 2000) and Malawi Employment Act (2014). The project will raise awareness and forbid children's work among beneficiaries. Complaints if any will be addressed through the Grievance redress mechanism
<u>ESP 7. Indigenous Peoples</u>	X	<b>NOT APPLICABLE</b> . 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

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		illustrated in the targeted area. Minorities will be engaged in all project activities through its participatory processes.
ESP 8. Involuntary Resettlement	X	<b>NOT APPLICABLE.</b> 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. 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	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> Project activities are conceived to restore ecosystems, thereby enhancing their climate resilience, and will benefit natural habitats as a result. Each project site was mapped to confirm there is no 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. VLAPs will be screened to ensure the suggested investments comply with Malawi National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management (2016) (avoiding encroachment into ecologically sensitive zones; maintaining natural vegetation along protected area boundaries, and ensuring upstream restoration does not lead to human pressure inside protected areas.).
ESP 10. Conservation of Biological Diversity	X	<b>MODERATE RISK.</b> The activities of this project will not adversely impact the conservation of biological diversity. The activities are designed to restore and support the conservation of biological diversity and natural resources. There is a small risk that reforestation activities (but also antierosive measures relying on revegetation and reseedling) are 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 the Seed Act. It will also abide by the Standards & Guidelines for Participatory Forestry in Malawi, which specify species to be promoted. It will only use native or proven locally adapted and non-invasive species of trees and crops.
ESP 11. Climate Change	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> The project's interventions do not involve large scale agriculture, construction works, nor large afforestation requiring extensive land preparation. Only livestock supported are small stock. Additionally, the project was designed to contribute to reduced GHG emissions, through net sequestration benefits thanks to climate resilient agriculture practices that improve soil fertility and afforestation activities, both increasing carbon capture. The project also avoids further emissions by promoting clean energy technologies such as solar (in storage, ARCs, etc) and improved cookstoves that contribute to reduce deforestation rates.
ESP 12. Prevention and Resource Efficiency	X	<b>LOW RISK.</b> Release of pollutants to the environment in significant quantities is not expected to result from the project, as fertilizers and pesticides are not widely used in these areas (only 2-5% of target group implement pest control). SCRIP will also promote agroecology practices, including integrated pest management, composting and manure management. Resource efficiency for water, timber and non-timber forest products as a result of the combined activities planned under the project should improve. Suppliers 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. As the project focuses on refurbishing existing infrastructure and focuses veterinary activities on small livestock, only minimal waste pollution is expected.

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ESP 13. Public Health	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> The project is expected to have an overall beneficial impact on public health with the restoration of the physical environment, enhanced food security thanks to climate resilient practices, possible diet diversification thanks to increased incomes and NWFP value chains providing nutritional benefits, reduced aflatoxin thanks to improved storage structures, reduced exposure to smoke thanks to improved stoves and reduced risk of zoonosis thanks to improved animal health and access to veterinary services resulting from the demonstrations in livestock management. The project will improve all the determinants of health as listed by the World Health Organization (WHO) FFS facilitators will be trained in safe tool/chemical handling. PPE and first aid for field staff will be provided.
ESP 14. Physical and Cultural Heritage	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> The project is not expected to have negative impacts on the physical and cultural heritage of Malawi. A mapping of targeted villages confirms no site of cultural significance are at risk in the project area.
ESP 15. Lands and Soil Conservation	X	<b>LOW RISK.</b> 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. Erosion is also expected to be limited through improved vegetation cover in micro-catchment and on the field, reducing soil loss. Only small and localised impacts may occur if the practices promoted are not adopted successfully. Even then, impacts are not expected to be different than the baseline scenario without the project.

258. Table 13 below provides a brief overview of the risk assessments detailed in the ESMP (Annex 3) and evidences the minor risks related to the project, and for which dedicated mitigation measures have been integrated into the project, which has therefore been identified as **AF Category B** with regards to socio-environmental aspects (**Moderate risk** based on IFAD's SECAP — screening tool, equivalent to category B in the AF's Environmental and Social Safeguards).

259-260. SCRP aims to strengthen the resilience of smallholder farmers and restore degraded catchments in Malawi, focusing on water and land resource management, diversified livelihoods, and climate information services. The project complies with national legislation and is fully aligned with Malawi's adaptation and sustainable development priorities. Key climate-related vulnerabilities in the target area include increased frequency of dry spells and flash floods, degradation of catchment ecosystems, erosion, declining productivity, and reduced access to safe and sufficient water. The project is designed to address these risks through ecosystem-based adaptation (e.g. afforestation and soil-water conservation), nature-based infrastructure (e.g. rain/floodwater harvesting), climate-resilient livelihoods (e.g. agroecology, climate-resilient practices, diversified seeds), and capacity-building for integrated catchment and climate risk management. Investments will also promote inclusion and gender equity by prioritizing poor and marginalized households, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and youth, and by incorporating social mobilization and inclusive governance processes at community level.

260-261. **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. Specific catchments were identified with geographical coordinates associated, so that the project intervention could be screened and mapped to identify all site-specific environmental and social risks (in particular with regards to ESP 9, 10 and 14). As such the project is not considered to include USPs.

Table 13 - 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	<b>LOW.</b> The project, as formulated, complies with all national laws and standards. The project will be executed by a team hired under the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry's departments and staff. Risk of non-compliance

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		could come from service providers that will be contracted during implementation for (i.e. for pesticide handling, small-scale watershed infrastructure works, and seed systems). Compliance by service providers will be ensured through contractual arrangements and procurement systems driven by the Ministry of Agriculture.
ESP 2. Access and Equity	X	<b>LOW.</b> The identified risk is low and fully mitigated by the project's approach, including its targeting strategy and its gender assessment, strategy and action plan (under Annex 4), building on the experience of IFAD and other partners in the country. The project's participatory and inclusive approach will enable fair and equitable access to project benefits to all participants, including marginalised and vulnerable groups, who meet the project eligibility criteria. Affirmative action to ensure women and youth participation will be taken to ensure 50% of the beneficiaries are women and 30% are youth. Direct risks could arise from an improper targeting approach, leaving out most vulnerable groups including women, youth, People with Disabilities (including with HIV/AIDS). 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. Participation of the project target groups will be closely monitored through the M&E system. The Grievance Redress Mechanism is also an avenue in case individuals and/or communities who feel excluded or marginalized from project benefits.
ESP 3. Marginalized and Vulnerable Groups	X	<b>LOW.</b> 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). Direct risks could arise from improperly engaging most vulnerable groups including women, youth and PWDs. Their limited voice and decision making may render their engagement difficult resulting in insufficient tailoring of activities to their specific needs. The project includes a dedicated Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy (Annex 4), and introduces Disability Inclusion Facilitators to engage vulnerable groups in FFS and PSP activities. In this way, the project will ensure participation and equal access to resources. Additionally, this project will respect land, property and customary rights.
ESP 4. Human Rights	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> 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	X	<b>LOW.</b> Direct risks could arise from an improper targeting approach and engagement or pervasive cultural norms, 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. Key considerations have been taken into account through the Gender Assessment 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. This is further outlined in the gender assessment, strategy and action plan (under Annex 4). In addition to GALS and other methodologies such as GCVCA, specific interventions such as community-based water infrastructure of smaller scale and energy

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		efficient stoves have been inbuilt in SCRCP specifically for their potential to reduce women workloads.
ESP 6. Core Labour Rights	X	<b>LOW.</b> The project will ensure respect for international and national labour laws and codes, as stated in IFAD's policies, including through provisions in contracts with service providers (e.g. adherence to workers code of conduct and sensitization on GBV). The project will approach production with a subsistence rather than commercial perspective. The project does not operate in sectors or value chains where child labour was evident in the past. SCRCP will be bound by ILO Regulations, the Malawi Labour Act (GoM 2000) and Malawi Employment Act (2014). The project will raise awareness and forbid children's work among beneficiaries. Complaints if any will be addressed through the Grievance redress mechanism
ESP 7. Indigenous Peoples	X	<b>NOT APPLICABLE.</b> 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. Minorities will be engaged in all project activities through its participatory processes.
ESP 8. Involuntary Resettlement	X	<b>NOT APPLICABLE.</b> 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. 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	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> Project activities are conceived to restore ecosystems, thereby enhancing their climate resilience, and will benefit natural habitats as a result. Each project site was mapped to confirm there is no 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. VLAPs will be screened to ensure the suggested investments comply with Malawi National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management (2016) (avoiding encroachment into ecologically sensitive zones; maintaining natural vegetation along protected area boundaries, and ensuring upstream restoration does not lead to human pressure inside protected areas.).
ESP 10. Conservation of Biological Diversity	X	<b>MODERATE RISK.</b> The activities of this project will not adversely impact the conservation of biological diversity. The activities are designed to restore and support the conservation of biological diversity and natural resources. There is a small risk that reforestation activities (but also antierosive measures relying on revegetation and reseeding) are 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 the Seed Act. It will also abide by the Standards & Guidelines for Participatory Forestry in Malawi, which specify species to be promoted. It will only use native or proven locally adapted and non-invasive species of trees and crops.
ESP 11. Climate Change	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> The project's interventions do not involve large scale agriculture, construction works, nor large afforestation requiring extensive land preparation. Only livestock supported are small stock. Additionally, the project was designed to contribute to reduced GHG emissions, through net sequestration benefits thanks to climate resilient agriculture practices that improve soil fertility and afforestation activities, both increasing carbon capture. The project also avoids further emissions by promoting clean energy technologies such as solar (in storage, ARCs, etc) and improved cookstoves that contribute to reduce deforestation rates.

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ESP 12. Prevention and Resource Efficiency	X	<b>LOW RISK.</b> Release of pollutants to the environment in significant quantities is not expected to result from the project, as fertilizers and pesticides are not widely used in these areas (only 2-5% of target group implement pest control). SCRCP will also promote agroecology practices, including integrated pest management, composting and manure management. Resource efficiency for water, timber and non-timber forest products as a result of the combined activities planned under the project should improve. Suppliers 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. As the project focuses on refurbishing existing infrastructure and focuses veterinary activities on small livestock, only minimal waste pollution is expected.
ESP 13. Public Health	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> The project is expected to have an overall beneficial impact on public health with the restoration of the physical environment, enhanced food security thanks to climate resilient practices, possible diet diversification thanks to increased incomes and NWFP value chains providing nutritional benefits, reduced aflatoxin thanks to improved storage structures, reduced exposure to smoke thanks to improved stoves and reduced risk of zoonosis thanks to improved animal health and access to veterinary services resulting from the demonstrations in livestock management. The project will improve all the determinants of health as listed by the World Health Organization (WHO) FFS facilitators will be trained in safe tool/chemical handling. PPE and first aid for field staff will be provided.
ESP 14. Physical and Cultural Heritage	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> The project is not expected to have negative impacts on the physical and cultural heritage of Malawi. A mapping of targeted villages confirms no site of cultural significance are at risk in the project area.
ESP 15. Lands and Soil Conservation	X	<b>LOW RISK.</b> 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. Erosion is also expected to be limited through improved vegetation cover in micro-catchment and on the field, reducing soil loss. Only small and localised impacts may occur if the practices promoted are not adopted successfully. Even then, impacts are not expected to be different than the baseline scenario without the project.

## PART III: IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

### A. Implementation arrangements

**261-262. Implementing Entity.** IFAD is an accredited Multilateral Implementing Entity (MIE) for the AF. In its capacity as MIE, IFAD will be in charge of the project cycle management, overseeing overall project progress, including financial oversight, monitoring and evaluation support, as well as technical backstopping and reporting to the AF. IFAD will also undertake the oversight and quality control of the proposed project ensuring that the Gender Policy and Environmental and Social Policy are respected through its SECAP and AF ESP compliance.

**262.263. Executing Entity.** The Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development (MoAIWD) will be the Executing Entity for SCRCP. MoAIWD is one of the key ministries in the Malawi Government. Agriculture, being the mainstay of the country's economy, makes the Ministry prominent in Malawi society in general, and in its contribution to the economy in particular. The Ministry is organized in seven technical Departments namely Agriculture Extension Services, Crops Development, Animal Health and Industry, Agriculture Research, Agriculture Planning Services, Land Resource and Conservation, and Fisheries. The

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Ministry also includes Irrigation and Water Development, the government institution responsible for the water sub-sector.

**263-264. Institutional anchoring and organizational framework.** The Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs (MFEA) will formally represent the GoM on matters of SCRIP as the grant recipient, while the MoAIWD will be the lead executing entity, providing strategic policy guidance and oversight of SCRIP. The Secretary for Agriculture in the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development will be the Chairperson of the Programme Steering Committee (PSC), which will be established under SCRIP. Other members of the PSC will include Principal Secretaries for Ministries of Trade and Industry, Local Government and Rural Development; Gender, Child Protection and Social Welfare; Youth and Sports; Natural Resources, Energy and Mining; Health and the Vice Chancellor for the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR); Chief Executive Officers of the National Association of Smallholder Farmers in Malawi (NASFAM); Malawi Confederation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (MCCCI); Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM), Malawi Bureau of Standards and Civil Society Agriculture Network (CISANET). The PSC will approve the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) and review the periodic progress, financial, audit and supervision and implementation support reports. The PSC will also review the status and adequacy of the implementation of recommendations from the auditors and IFAD supervision or implementation support mission reports.

**264-265.** The PSC will be responsible for programme oversight whilst a Programme Technical Committee (PTC) will be established to provide technical support to both the PSC and the PMU. The Controller of Agricultural Extension and Technical Services (CAETS) will be the chair of the PTC. The members of the PTC will mirror the membership of the PSC and other technical Directors of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, including the Head of the National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP).

**265-266. Coordination arrangements.** Day-to-day management and implementation of the project will rest with the PMU. The PMU will be located in Lilongwe and the project will acquire 4 field vehicles for field work performed by team members. To ensure close synergies with the IFAD SAPP II, including economies of scale part of the two project's PMUs will be mutualized, particularly for administrative, procurement and financial functions. The PMU will be vested with financial and technical autonomy, and will include:

- **SCRIP specific staff:** (i) A project manager responsible for overall delivery of SCRIP activities, with expertise managing and implementing environment and climate funds; (ii) an agronomist in charge of coordinating activities under components 1 and 2; (iii) a rural infrastructure specialist supporting activities associated with infrastructure development in particular; (iv) a meteorologist supporting activities under component 3; (v) a gender and social inclusion specialist leading the implementation of the gender/social inclusion strategy and action plan and all associated activities; (vi) an M&E assistant; and (viii) a KM assistant.
- **Functions mutualized from the SAPP2 PMU include:** (i) a Project coordinator ensuring synergies between both teams; (ii) a Procurement Officer; (iii) an Assistant Procurement Officer; (iv) a Programme Accountant; (v) an Assistant Programme Accountant; (vi) an Environment and Climate officer; (vii) an M&E Officer; (viii) a KM Officer; (ix) an Administrative Officer/Assistant.

**266-267.** Beyond the dedicated PMU, project implementation in the field will be closely supported by district and sub-district level structures from DLRC, DAES and DCCMS in Balaka, Dowa, Lilongwe, and Mzimba, and notably the mobilization of 16 Agricultural Extension Development Officers supporting daily implementation of field level activities. Specific arrangements will be formalized through dedicated MoUs. Technical departments of MoAIWD will closely interface with the PMU and support programme implementation by providing technical expertise in the relevant technical areas of the programme, including land resources conservation and natural resources management; climate resilient agriculture practices; and meteorological information. Figure 2 below illustrate the project organization structure and related reporting lines.

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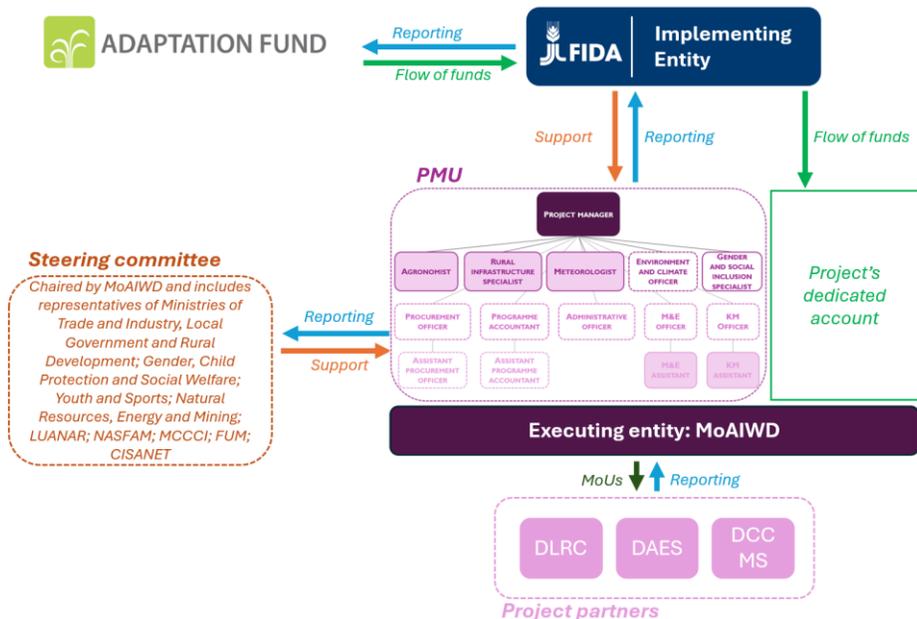


Figure 2 – SCR organization chart

**267-268.** The Project Implementation Manual will provide clear descriptions of tasks and responsibilities for the individual team members of the PMU. Members of staff of the PMU will be appointed by GoM based on their satisfactory performance reports over the past two years as a minimum and overall suitability for the position determined by a job suitability assessment. Where suitable candidates have not been identified, GoM will recruit from the market. Appointment of seconded staff from DLRC, DAES and DCCMS where applicable will be contingent to IFAD no-objection on proposed profiles, and seconded staff will have to assure full-time availability for the project. For the seconded staff, additional salary compensation will be financed from the project budget as per standard practice in Malawi.

**268-269. Planning.** A rigorous planning process – that clearly identifies the concrete outputs (or physical targets) to be produced in a 12 months period in pursuit of overall project objectives, the activities to be implemented to deliver these outputs and the financial resources (or financial targets) required – will be the starting point for the sound management and monitoring of the project's execution. To this end, the PMU will use a pre-defined AWPB template. Although the results framework and the cost-tables shall not constitute a rigid blueprint, they will be a key reference for the preparation of the AWPBs.

**269-270.** While the first AWPB will be updated during the start-up workshop, the preparation of subsequent AWPBs shall follow an iterative process, starting around the month of September with the organization of district-level annual planning workshops. On this basis, a draft consolidated AWPB will be prepared by the PMU, identifying under each Component: (i) outputs and related physical targets to be achieved; (ii) key activities, sub-activities and inputs required; (iii) timetable for implementation of key activities; (iv) staff/persons responsible for each activity and sub-activity; and (v) financial resources required. The AWPB shall also include a Procurement Plan (PP). Both documents shall be submitted to IFAD for no-objection no later than 60 days before the end of the fiscal year. Once the AWPB is approved by the PSC, the PMU will submit it to IFAD for no-objection. It will constitute a binding document that will govern, through the year, IFAD's decisions on funds' release or procurement matters. The AWPB and PP may be amended during the year at the PMU request, along with proper justification and upon IFAD's no-objection.

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**270-271. Specific implementation arrangements for each component.** Detailed implementation arrangements for the project will be described in the Project's Implementation Manual (PIM). The project will rely on good practices from IFAD and other partners in the country, which have demonstrated their efficacy and relevance. The specific arrangements for each components are described briefly as follows:

- **Component 1:** Under the leadership of the project's Agronomist (and with support from the Rural Infrastructure Specialist), the Department of Land Resources Conservation will be the entity responsible for implementing Component 1, in cooperation with district and sub-district structures in the establishment of VNRMCs and subsequent development of VLAPs. Implementation of activities will directly rely on AEDOs acting as field level facilitators. The project will empower local communities to progressively take over the implementation of activities by training local level facilitators (in particular for GALS implementation). The project's gender and social inclusion specialist will lead the implementation of corresponding activities. Procurement of inputs, equipment and services for afforestation/reforestation, soil conservation measures and measures to reduce pressure on ecosystems (including fuel-efficient stoves and rainwater harvesting equipment) will give priority to local providers and workforce. The purchase of seeds and seedlings for afforestation projects and community level incentives can be done with a competitive bidding process in the early years but should switch to prioritizing the nurseries and seedbanks installed by the project as they are implemented.
- **Component 2:** Under the leadership of the project's Agronomist, the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development will be a key partner for this component, with an MoU with the Department of Agricultural Extension Services (DAES), who will be in charge of rolling out FFS activities through AEDOs, and will receive direct institutional support (notably for revising relevant tools, manuals and curricula; and by supporting extension research feedback). Other departments that may be involved under this component include: Departments of Crops Development, Animal Health and Livestock Development, Agricultural Research Services, Agricultural Planning Services, and Land Resources Conservation, and Fisheries. Local service providers will be mobilized for the rehabilitation and/or construction of small-scale water and/or storage infrastructure, in close coordination with the project's rural infrastructure specialist. As it is the case for component 1, handover of activities to local communities will be at the core of implementation approaches, with training of lead farmers at the level of FFS and small livestock demonstration, and the establishment of WAUs and structuring of relevant management groups for infrastructures; nurseries and community seed banks.
- **Component 3:** DCCMS will lead the climate science dimension of Component 3 in close coordination with the project's meteorologist, including: interpretation of seasonal and sub-seasonal forecasts, and technical oversight for EPA-level weather stations installation and maintenance (with hands-on commissioning support from the supplier). DAES will lead the translation of forecasts into agro-advisories and their dissemination through radio/SMS and extension networks used by SCRIP (FFS, demos, AEDCs/AEDOs, GALS). Advisory products and PSP outputs will flow through DAES channels and be shared with other stakeholders (including NGOs and private input providers) via the harmonised SOPs under Output 3.2. DoDMA will lead on MHEWS alignment and will train district DCPC/ Area Civil Protection Committee (ACPC) structures on preparedness and response actions for the agriculture sector.

**274-272. Implementation Arrangement Alignment with AF Gender Policy.** Gender and Social Inclusion aspects of the project will be managed by the Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist, who will be responsible for gender and social inclusion issues (overseeing the implementation of the gender strategy, building the capacity of staff and helping colleagues to address considerations related to gender equality and women's empowerment in their operations, including knowledge management, M&E, indicators and measurement of results). Dedicated budget has been allocated to address these issues, as well as to ensure the mainstreaming of gender considerations into all project activities. The following arrangements will guarantee that gender is taken into account in the implementation of the project:

- A dedicated staff will be recruited for gender and social inclusion aspects.
- A strategy and project-type action plan will be established at project start-up.
- Budget has been allocated for specific gender- and youth-related activities
- Quotas have been set for women (50%), youth (30%) and PwD (5%) as a percentage of

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- beneficiaries, and all collected and analysed data will be disaggregated by gender and age.
- Information campaigns and outreach events targeting women and youth will be carried out during project implementation.
- Female, youth and PwD trainers and facilitators will be mobilized.
- Studies undertaken by the project will include a gender and age perspective.
- Gender parity in the PMU will be encouraged.
- Responsibility for gender mainstreaming will be included in the terms of reference of all key project staff and service providers.
- Under all component's accommodations will be made to ensure widespread women participation. This may include scheduling engagements separately with women, men and marginalized groups in places acknowledged as safe spaces for sharing information; confirming that meeting times are convenient for participants; recognizing and accommodating those with other responsibilities such as child-care.
- Considerations for gender-based violence will be integrated into all community-consultation activities as well as through household methodologies (GALS): involving men and boys in capacity strengthening to promote advocacy against gender-based violence will be of critical importance.
- In all project activities, compliance with IFAD's policy on preventing and combating sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse will be sought. This will be reflected in the terms of reference of all key project staff and service providers.

## B. Financial and project risk management

### Financial risk

**272-273. Country inherent fiduciary risk.** The inherent country fiduciary risk is substantial. In 2024 the Corruption Perception<sup>92</sup> Index scored 34 points (out of 100, substantial risk) and ranking at 107 of the 180 nations. Malawi's PFM systems<sup>93</sup> have come under public scrutiny due to the weak accountability environment and the evidence of the misappropriation of public funds that came to light in recent years. Whilst there has been some noticeable progress in addressing certain control weaknesses, including the IFMIS security and expenditure commitment controls, ongoing work in other aspects of the fiduciary environment needs continuous support. This includes fostering compliance with internal controls, enforcing sanctions in cases of non-compliance, strengthening the internal audit function, completing the backlog of bank and other reconciliations, improving the effectiveness of SAI, ensuring the timely implementation of audit recommendations as well as the introduction of legislative scrutiny of extra-budgetary units (EBUs) and public corporation financial reports. Further work is required to address staffing gaps in the PFM area, reinforce commitment controls, enhance effectiveness of the internal audit function and establishing audit committees across Central Government. It is essential that the Government continues its efforts towards the improvement of the overall PFM systems. It is mainly recommended that investment projects continue to be ring fenced and accounted for and (eventually) audited outside the IFMIS due to the current inflexibility of IFMIS regarding the production of necessary donor's specific reports.

**273-274. Project inherent fiduciary risk and financial management arrangements.** The financial management arrangements currently used by IFAD-implemented SAPP2 project will apply to the AF grant. As per latest IFAD supervision mission to the project in 2025, SAPP2 quality of FM has been rated moderately satisfactory. Sufficient segregation of duties is in place to secure internal control over project operations. The FM unit is adequately staffed, at PMU central level as well as at decentralised level, to absorb the AF grant into its workplan.

**274-275.** IPSAS cash-basis of accounting is adopted and accounting operations are performed into an adequate accounting software (TOMPRO). Further customization of the software currently used at the Ministry will be done to comply with both IFAD and specific AF reporting requirements.

**275-276. Audit** The Office of the Auditor General of Malawi, as the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI), will carry out the external audit of SCRIP and the audit report will be submitted to IFAD within 6 months of the end of

<sup>92</sup> Transparency International 2024

<sup>93</sup> African Development Bank, Country Strategy Paper 2023-2028

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the fiscal year. Internal audit will be provided by Internal Audit Department of MoAIWD and will be carried out at least twice in a year.

276-277. AF funds will be disbursed through IFAD into a segregated project designated account (DA), in USD, opened at the Central Bank. SCRIP will also open a separate project operational account (PA) in local currency to receive the proceeds of the AF grant from the DA. The DA will follow revolving funds arrangements: withdrawal and disbursement from the grant account will be based on a six-month cash forecast which will be included in the project's quarterly interim financial reports (IFRs). IFRs will be submitted, through the IFAD Client Portal (ICP), within 30 days after end of reporting quarter. The IFR will be automated in the accounting system. Current SAPP2 IFR template will be amended to include the AF Grant and it will constitute the basis for project disbursement.

277-278. The project will generate, approve and submit its Withdrawal Applications (WA) to IFAD using the ICP. This online application facilitates the approval and submission of WAs and provides the project with timely financial information and reports generated directly from the IFAD accounting system, thus further facilitating financial management at project level.

278-279. Due to in-country restrictions on the use of hard currency for payments to foreign supplier, it recurs the use of the Direct Payment method, however subject to an internal clearance process, at IFAD, on a case-by-case basis.

### Project risk

Table 14 - Main potential risks to project success and mitigation strategies

Risk	Initial risk assessment	Proposed mitigation measure	Final risk assessment
<b>Governance instability due to political transitions</b>	Moderate	Maintain strong alignment with national strategies and decentralised structures; ensure continuity through MoUs and institutional embedding of project processes.	Moderate
<b>High inflation and macroeconomic volatility</b>	High	Use price contingencies in budgeting; prioritize local procurement and community-led implementation to reduce exposure to currency fluctuations.	Moderate
<b>Foreign exchange shortages affecting procurement and implementation</b>	High	Advance planning of procurement cycles; use of IFAD procurement guidelines; consider local sourcing and staggered procurement.	Moderate
<b>Climate shocks (floods, droughts, cyclones) affecting ecosystem restoration and farming systems</b>	High	Promotion of ecosystem-based adaptation, soil and water conservation, agroforestry, and resilient infrastructure (e.g., impoundment dams, terraces). Strengthened early warning systems and disaster preparedness through PSP and MHEWS integration.	Moderate
<b>Low adoption of climate-resilient practices by smallholders</b>	Moderate	Institutionalization of FFS, participatory planning via VLAPs, peer learning, and tailored extension support.	Low
<b>Gender and social exclusion in project activities</b>	Moderate	Use of GALS and GCVCA methodologies, quotas for women/youth in leadership, targeted support, Disability Inclusion Facilitators.	Low
<b>Delays in</b>	Moderate	Clear roles via MoUs, SOPs, and protocols;	Low

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<b>implementation due to complex multi-stakeholder coordination</b>		annual planning cycles; integration into local development plans.	
<b>Sustainability risks post-project</b>	Moderate	Development of sustainability plans, community ownership models, and integration into district budgets. Synergies with existing longer projects, and embedding of project activities in Ministry's procedures and budgets.	Moderate

### C. Environmental and social risk management

**279-280.** IFAD-funded projects and programmes are designed in a participatory manner, taking into account the concerns of all stakeholders. IFAD requires that projects are carried out in compliance with its policies, standards and safeguards. Moreover, IFAD's Strategic Framework calls for ensuring that projects and programmes promote sustainable use of natural resources, build resilience to climate change and are based upon ownership by rural women and men themselves in order to achieve sustainability. As shown in Annex 2 (ESMP) the project design was assessed in compliance with the AF Environmental and Social as well as Gender Policies, and was additionally assessed through IFAD's SECAP (which are fully aligned with the AF Environmental and Social as well as Gender Policies). Following the ESP screening in Annex 2 (ESMP), the project has been categorised as a **Category B** (equivalent to the IFAD/SECAP "moderate risk" category) with regards to environmental and social aspects (also refer to section II. K).

**280-281.** The risk screening conducted in the ESMP in Annex 2 identifies that the project will not have any adverse environmental and social impacts. SCRIP is expected to have an overall positive environmental and social impact, particularly through its focus on restoring degraded catchments, enhancing ecosystem services, and supporting inclusive climate-resilient livelihoods. The project applies a landscape-based, participatory approach to catchment and community development, with strong attention to social inclusion and governance. Key interventions with positive environmental and social impacts include: nature-based and climate-smart infrastructure such as small-scale water harvesting and erosion control structures; productive restoration activities such as agroforestry, afforestation and woodlots using productive tree species; participatory catchment governance, with support to 70 VNRMCs to implement VLAPs; capacity building for inclusive adaptation planning using the GALS and GCVCA methodologies; and gender-sensitive support to agroecology, agroforestry, and seed systems through Farmer Field Schools, demonstrations, improved advisory manuals and communication channels, seed multiplying groups and seed banks, and site visits. The project also promotes inclusive access to early warning and climate information services under Component 3, ensuring that vulnerable households (including those headed by women, youth, and persons with disabilities) are equipped to make proactive adaptation decisions.

**284-282.** An **environmental and social risk analysis** has been conducted as part of the project design, identifying potential environmental and social risks and impacts associated with project activities. This analysis outlines the expected impacts, their significance, and the necessary mitigation measures to address any negative effects. In alignment with those findings an ESMP has been developed. The **Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP)** in Annex 2 defines mitigation and monitoring measures for each of the 15 ESPs, and specifies institutional responsibilities to implement them. It is summarised in **Table 14**. Risk management is embedded at three levels:

- **Institutional processes:** The PMU will train project staff, project partners, extension officers and VNRMCs to identify, screen, and mitigate environmental and social risks using tools and templates developed under IFAD's SECAP and aligned with the AF ESP. VLAPs will also be screened to demonstrate no environment and social impacts.
- **'Hard' interventions:** All physical works and equipment (e.g. water tanks, terraces, check dams) will be designed following national standards (e.g. the 2016 Catchment Guidelines), comply with thresholds under the Environmental Management Act, and avoid protected areas

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or cultural sites. ESMP implementation will be overseen by AEDOs and coordinated by the PMU.

- **'Soft' interventions:** Training, planning, and governance activities (e.g., FFS, ARC capacity building, VLAPs) were designed through multi-stakeholder consultations and informed by gender and vulnerability assessments. Tools such as GALS, GCVCA and Disability Inclusion Facilitators ensure inclusive targeting and safeguard the rights of vulnerable groups.

•283. The costs of implementing the ESMP mitigation measures are directly embedded in the activities' budgets, which are listed below for relevant mitigation measures. An additional, 48,000 USD is budgeted (in addition to standard monitoring costs) to monitor and report on, the project's compliance with all ESMP and GAP's mitigation measures, as presented in Table 16 Table 16.

Table 15 ESMP summary

AF E&S Principle	Project component / output / activity	Key risk	Mitigation measures	Monitoring frequency	Responsible entity	Budget provisions
ESP 1 – Compliance with the Law	Components 1 & 2 (ecosystem restoration, irrigation, infrastructure, service providers)	Non-compliance with national laws (labour, land, water, procurement)	Contract clauses with termination provisions; compliance audits; land access formalised through MoUs or customary certificates; permits obtained from relevant authorities	Annual	Project Manager; DLRC; Rural Infrastructure Specialist	<del>Included in Mainstreamed</del> in all contracts, supervision and M&E budgets.
ESP 2 – Access and Equity	Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1	Exclusion of women, youth, PwD from planning, benefits, services, users' associations	Mandatory participation quotas (50% women, 30% youth, 5% PwD); transparent targeting; GRM at VDC/EPA levels; inclusive scheduling and locations	Biannual	Gender & Social Inclusion Specialist; M&E Assistant; DAES; DLRC; DCCMS	Budgeted under GALS (152,000 USD for implementation and 111,000 USD for a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist)  - Disability Inclusion Facilitators (DIF) (47,500 USD for implementation)  - Mainstreamed in activities 1.1.2 (eCommunity mobilisation) and 3.1.2 (-PSPs)
ESP 3 – Marginalised & Vulnerable Groups	All components	Elite capture; inequitable benefit sharing; difficulty to engage; Exclusion of illiterate or non-dominant language speakers	Verification of beneficiary profiles; community by-laws with benefit-sharing clauses; GRM use; periodic spot checks; inclusion facilitators; Pictorial, oral and radio dissemination; translation into local languages	Biannual	Gender & Social Inclusion Specialist; M&E Assistant; DAES; DLRC; DCCMS	<del>Included in Mainstreamed in all</del> community facilitation, and M&E, and communication and knowledge management budgets.
ESP 5 – Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment	Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1	Gender-based exclusion or backlash (GBV)	Gender Action Learning System (GALS); household methodologies; monitoring of GBV trends; women prioritised in incentives and committees	Biannual	Gender & Social Inclusion Specialist	Dedicated GALS and Gender Action Plan budget (152,000 USD for implementation of GALS and 111,000 USD for a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist)
ESP 6 – Core Labour Rights	Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 3.2	Child labour or unfair labour practices; waste pollution causing	Labour clauses in contracts; community sensitisation; contractor monitoring	Biannual	Project Manager; DLRC	Mainstreamed in, included in all contract management.

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AF E&S Principle	Project component / output / activity	Key risk	Mitigation measures	Monitoring frequency	Responsible entity	Budget provisions
		occupational health and safety risks				
<b>ESP 10 – Conservation of Biological Diversity</b>	Outputs 1.2, 2.1, 2.2	Biodiversity loss, invasive species, pests	Use of indigenous species only; GIS and field monitoring for invasives; certified seeds; Pest Management Plan	Annual	DLRC; Rural infrastructure specialist; Agronomist	<u>Mainstreamed in activities 2.2.1 (planting material supporting agrobiodiversity); 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 (FFS institutionalisation and delivery, including pest management) included in restoration, FFS and PMP budgets</u>
<b>ESP 12 – Pollution Prevention &amp; Resource Efficiency</b>	Outputs 2.1, 2.2	Minor pollution from inputs, demos, veterinary activities infra	Promotion of agroecology; safe pesticide/vet waste disposal training; ARC refurbishment over new construction	Biannual	DLRC; DAES; Agronomist; Rural Infrastructure Specialist	<u>Included Mainstreamed in activities 2.1.3 (livestock in training) and 2.1.5 (ARCs infrastructure) lines</u>
<b>ESP 15. Lands and Soil Conservation</b>	Outputs 1.2, 2.1, 2.2	Soil erosion, land degradation	Agroecological practices promoted through FFS; avoidance of cultivation or infrastructure on steep slopes and erosion-prone areas; community by-laws regulating land and water use; promotion of Assisted Natural Regeneration and indigenous species	Biannual	DLRC; Agronomist; Rural Infrastructure Specialist; DAES	<u>Integrated Mainstreamed in activities within 1.2.1 and 1.2.2 (-VLAP preparation and implementation, restoration works) and 2.2.2 (-FFS implementation) and supervision budgets</u>

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**282-284. Social risks** (including the potential exclusion of women, youth, or PWDs; land-related disputes; or elite capture of benefits) will be mitigated through targeted design features. These include quotas in farmer groups and governance committees, participatory land use agreements and customary estate certification, household-level empowerment approaches, and the use of a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). The project's targeting and gender strategies, building on IFAD's country experience, promote meaningful inclusion, and their implementation will be monitored through the results framework and dedicated gender-disaggregated indicators.

**283-285. Grievance and redress mechanism.** The project will utilize the existing IFAD grievance mechanism to allow those affected to raise concerns in case the project is not complying with its social and environmental policies or commitments, first by establishing a grievance mechanism at project level, drawing from the existing mechanisms used by IFAD in Malawi. The consultative process that will be conducted with the communities and beneficiaries in Component 1 aims to ensure prevention of grievances that might arise from the project activities. However, some grievances may still arise. In such cases, program affected persons (PAPs) may raise grievances at the following levels: Site Specific Grievance Redress Management Committee (SSGRMC), Community Grievance Redress Management Committee (CGRMC), District Grievances Redress Management (DGRMC) at District level and Project Management Unit Grievances Redress Management Committee (PMUGRMC) at project coordination level.

- **Site specific.** The Site-Specific Grievance Redress Management Committee (SSGRMC) shall record, vet and hear cases submitted by PAPs. If the PAP is satisfied with the resolution, the case is closed. If the PAP is not satisfied the case shall be referred to CGGRMC.
- **Community level.** The Community Grievance Redress Management Committee (CGRMC) shall record, vet and hear cases submitted by PAPs and referred by SSGRMCs. If the PAP is satisfied with the resolution, the case is closed. If the PAP is not satisfied the case shall be referred to DGRMC.

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- **District level.** The District Grievances Redress Management Committee (DGRMC) shall record, vet and hear cases submitted by PAPs and cases referred by CGRMC. If the PAP is satisfied with the resolution, the case is closed. If the PAP is not satisfied, the case shall be referred to PMU Grievances Redress Management Committee (PMUGRMC).
- **Project Level.** The Project Management Unit Grievances Redress Management Committee (PMUGRMC) shall record, vets and hears cases submitted by PAPs and cases referred by three lower-level committees namely DGRMC, CGRMC and CSGRMC. If the PAP is satisfied with the resolution, the case is closed. If the PAP is not satisfied and the case is not closed at PMUGRMC, the PAP shall be directed to seek justice from any court of law and final decision shall be made by the court.

**284-286.** At each level, the following steps will be followed. All written or verbal complaints received will be registered in a database by the project representative. After registration, the complaints will be assessed and forwarded to the relevant teams. After that, the parties will investigate the legitimacy of the complaint and plan future directions. Fact-finding will be conducted with the PAP, village/community leader, and PMU officer. Suggestions on how to resolve the complaint will be discussed and the complainant will be advised accordingly. Once the PAP approves and the remedy is implemented, the complaint is approved as resolved. M&E for remediation measures will be undertaken alongside other monitoring and evaluation exercise of the project, using copied of registers kept by the various committees.

**285-287.** **IFAD level GRM.** There are special cases where complainants may send their concerns directly to IFAD. This option is available to individuals or groups who believe that their grievances have not been adequately addressed by the established committees or that the process has been compromised, delayed, lacks impartiality or fear of retaliation. In such cases, complaints can be raised by submitting the complaints form: through IFAD webpage (<http://www.ifad.org/en/accountability-and-complaints-procedures>) by email (SECAPcomplaints@ifad.org) or by post (SECAP complaints, Programme Management Department, IFAD, Via Paolo di Dono 44, 00142 Rome, Italy). This ensures that affected parties retain the right to seek recourse and reinforces IFAD’s commitment to accountability, transparency, and the protection of vulnerable communities.

**286-288.** The Ad hoc Complaint Handling Mechanism (ACHM) of the Adaptation Fund can be directly used in cases where the Parties have failed to reach a mutually satisfactory solution through the implementing entities’ grievance mechanism within a year. The Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat independently manages all aspects related to the ACHM, under the oversight of the Ethics and Finance Committee of the Board. Guidance to ACHM are available at this link: [Ad Hoc Complaint Handling Mechanism - Adaptation Fund](#).

**287-289.** Grievance redress mechanisms will be shared with the community during the project inception workshop and subsequent meetings with the beneficiaries. As part of the grievance redress mechanism, the contact details of the project partners (Project Manager) will be made available to stakeholders including project beneficiaries and the community. Contact numbers would be displayed at common or predominant places along-with the project details. This is expected to promote social auditing.

#### D. Monitoring and Evaluation

**288-290.** **Project Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)** will be under the oversight of the PMU and will be led by the M&E assistant who will work closely with the project partners under the supervision of SAPPIL’s M&E Officer. The project M&E will be guided by the National M&E Master Plan. The Master Plan outlines the main framework for monitoring development policies and programmes in the country. The Project’s M&E system will also be closely integrated with the MoAIWD’s M&E system managed by the M&E Unit of the Department of Agricultural Planning Services. The Unit is tasked to monitor and evaluate all projects in MoAIWD including those under the National Agricultural Investments Plan (NAIP).

**289-291.** The Project’s M&E system should: (i) produce, organize and disseminate the information needed for the strategic management of the project, (ii) document the results and lessons learned for internal use and for public dissemination on the achievements and (iii) respond to the information needs of AF, IFAD and the Government of Malawi on the activities, immediate outcomes and impact of the project.

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A monitoring and evaluation manual describing a simple and effective system for collecting, processing, analysing and disseminating data will be prepared during the first year of project implementation.

290-292. A computerized database will be developed to enable the generation of dashboards, leveraging existing systems established by SAPP II and the Ministry. The system will be regularly fed from data collected in the field by the PMU, AAEDOs, local level facilitators, service providers and contractors and the various studies, mappings and policy products carried out as part of the projects' implementation. The monitoring and evaluation system will be coupled with a GIS that will allow mapping and spatio-temporal analyses. Geo-coordinates (with at least 10-meter accuracy) and pictures will be collected for forestry, land restoration, water and storage infrastructure, nurseries and vegetation improvements. Trainings will be organized to strengthen the capacities of the various stakeholders involved in the monitoring and evaluation system.

294-293. The M&E assistant will have relevant GIS and remote sensing expertise, and his/her role will also entail: (i) overseeing the mapping of project interventions using GIS (e.g. the area under afforestation, or land restoration); (ii) aggregating data to measure spatial logframe indicators, such as the area under climate resilient practices; and (iii) using remotely sensed land health indicators to measure the impact of the project on reversing land degradation. This expert will develop guidelines for the use of GIS and earth observation for M&E as part of the M&E plan. The guidelines will establish data standards and procedures for GIS data collection, analysis and use. The impact evaluation of land health measures will include time series analysis and the comparison of treatment and control areas to determine the attributable impact of the project interventions. The remote sensing expert will use different remotely sensed land health indicators to detect change for different land uses. The PMU and in particular the M&E staff and field level officers will receive training on (i) GIS supported M&E; and (ii) admin training on merging maps for offline data collection and tiles; and (iii) remote sensing trainings for environmental monitoring (e.g. Wapor, Google Earth Engine).

292-294. Day to day monitoring of implementation progress will be the responsibility of the PMU, based on the project's Annual Work Plan and its indicators. During the first months of the project, the project team will complete and fine-tune baseline data for each indicator, and will define performance indicators. Specific targets for the first year of implementation, progress indicators, and their means of verification will be established at the Inception Workshop (below).

293-295. **Project Inception Workshop.** A project inception workshop will be conducted within two months of project start up with the full project team, relevant government counterparts and IFAD. The inception workshop is crucial to building ownership for the project results and to plan the first-year annual work plan. A fundamental objective of the Inception Workshop will be to present the modalities of project implementation and execution, and assist the project team to understand and take ownership of the project's goals and objectives.

294-296. **A Project Inception Report** will be prepared immediately following the Inception Workshop. It will include: (i) a detailed First 18-months/Annual Work Plan divided in quarterly time-frames detailing the activities and progress indicators that will guide implementation during the first year of the project; (ii) the detailed project budget and procurement plan for the first 18 months of implementation, prepared on the basis of the Annual Work Plan; (iii) an M&E plan for the duration of the project, (iv) the outline and scope of the baseline study; (v) a detailed narrative on the institutional roles, responsibilities, coordinating actions and feedback mechanisms of project related partners; (vi) a section on progress to date on project establishment and start-up activities and an update of any changed external conditions that may affect project implementation.

295-297. **Baseline study.** A baseline study will be conducted within the first year to collect data and serve as the basis for the assessment of how efficiently project activities have been implemented and results achieved. The study will include the target group and a control group which will be essential to determine the attribution of results to project activities. The study will inform the Baseline Data Report submitted to AF together with the first Project Performance Report. Indicators used in the study will be disaggregated to monitor the share of women, youth and PwD, as required in the ESMP and Gender Action Plan.

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**296-298. Quarterly Progress Reports** will be prepared by all project partners and service providers and submitted to the PMU who will consolidate them to ensure continuous monitoring of project activities and identify challenges to adopt necessary corrective measures in due time. This will include templates for reporting on the implementation of the Gender Action Plan and the ESMP on a continuous basis, to raise any issues to the PMUs.

**297-299. Technical reports** (such as a best practices and lessons learned reports and policy briefs, as well as studies/policy documents produced under the project) will also be completed, as determined during the project inception report. In particular, soil and land management best practices may be highlighted on the [World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies \(WOCAT\) platform](#)<sup>94</sup> for further visibility, and GIS overlaying improved practices with vegetation cover imagery will be highlighted in technical reports.

**298-300. Annual Project Performance Report (PPR)**. The project will submit a PPR each year to chart progress achieved in meeting the project's Annual Work Plan's objectives, and assess performance of the project in contributing to intended outcomes through outputs and partnership work, using the AF template. The PPR includes among others, (i) an analysis of project performance over the reporting period (tracking project indicators), including outputs produced and, where possible, information on the status of the outcome; (ii) lessons learned and constraints experienced in the progress towards results and the reasons for these; (iii) risk assessment; (iv) information related to financial data and procurement (expenditure reports, bids and contracts list); (v) ratings on implementation progress (Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory); (vi) clear recommendations for future orientation in addressing key problems in lack of progress; (vii) review of compliance with Environmental and Social Policy and Gender Policy, the ESMP and the Gender Action Plan. In addition, it includes a results tracker that needs to be filled i) at inception where baseline-related information will be submitted, and planned targets at project completion indicated; ii) at mid-term; and iii) at project completion when the final PPR will serve as a project completion report; but also include the final evaluation report and final audited financial statements.

**299-301. Supervision** will be organized by IFAD (under its direct Supervision framework and guidelines), with a Supervision mission mobilized at least once per year. Additional implementation support from IFAD on specific identified issues will be mobilized if considered necessary by the Government and IFAD or recommended by the Supervision mission. The composition of the Supervision missions will be based on an annual supervision plan. The supervision report will highlight, in addition to the routine supervision tasks (fiduciary, compliance, safeguards and project implementation), the main thematic or performance areas that require strengthening and would imply deployment of additional inputs for capacity building, in-depth analytical studies or review of existing policies.

**300-302. Mid-term Evaluation (MTE)**. The MTE will be carried out during the second half of year three. It will assess operational aspects such as programme management and implementation of activities as well as the extent to which the objectives are being fulfilled and corrective actions needed for the programme to achieve impact, prevent social and environmental risks and reach its target groups (as per the ESMP and Gender Action Plan). Corrective actions will be decided upon for the programme to achieve impact. Depending on the achievements the programme and the resources available, the possibility of scaling up the activities to other districts or regions will also be considered in consultation with the government.

**304-303. Completion reporting**. In line with AF requirements at project closure, SCRIP will produce a Final Project Performance Report, serving as the Fund's official final project completion report. The Final PPR will consolidate all end-of-project results, including performance against indicators, financial and procurement reporting, lessons learned, risk assessments, and compliance with Environmental and Social and Gender Policies. The final PPR will notably be informed by the project completion survey and final evaluation (see below).

**302-304. The Project completion survey** will include the same set of questionnaires included at baseline to allow for comparison against baseline results. In addition, a panel of households will be interviewed to provide a thorough analysis of project effects. Moreover, the analysis will be disaggregated

<sup>94</sup> WOCAT is a global network on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) that promotes the documentation, sharing and use of knowledge to support adaptation, innovation and decision-making in SLM.

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by type of beneficiary, location and gender of household head. As part of the evaluation, stories, lessons learned and best practices will be collected for upscaling and dissemination.

**303-305. A Final Evaluation** will be initiated three months before project closure and will include the project completion survey. The Final Evaluation will provide an independent assessment of outcomes, impacts, sustainability, and efficiency. Together, the Final PPR, Final Evaluation Report, and final audited financial statements constitute the Adaptation Fund's required completion-stage documentation, ensuring a comprehensive and evidence-based assessment of project achievements and legacy.

**306. Gender and youth.** The M&E system will give strong emphasis to monitoring of targeting performance. All project partners will be required to provide disaggregated data on women and youth participation, in relation to overall project targets. The M&E system will collect and analyse information about programme outreach, effectiveness of the targeting strategy and specific benefits for women and youth. This will require solid coordination and collaboration between the M&E team and the Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist. Other participatory monitoring tools such as quarterly progress reports, environmental and social safeguard monitoring, and regular tracking of vulnerable groups such as PwD with their problems and progress will be adopted to ensure that the target groups are effectively participating and getting progress on their livelihood improvement pathways. Lessons learned on gender and climate change will be produced and included as part of key relevant reports. Additionally, technical reports such as a best practices and lessons learned reports will also be developed. Impact will be assessed on the basis of methodologically gender sensitive baseline, mid-term and completion surveys which will use key indicators to measure women's empowerment, and youth and PwD inclusion.

**304-307. Safeguards monitoring (ESMP and GAP).** As implementing safeguards is an inherent part of how the project's activities are delivered (see ESMP Table 15 and GAP result framework), costs for monitoring them are also embedded within SCRPs, activities, evaluation costs or supervision costs. An additional 48,000 USD is budgeted to monitor cross-cutting compliance to safeguards and has been added as standalone to the M&E budget.

Table 16 - Budgeted M&E plan (breakdown by source of funding)

Breakdown of M&E Supervision	Responsibility	Timeframe	Budget (USD)
<b>Contribution of project budget to M&amp;E (AF)</b>			
Startup workshop	PMU	First year	15,000
Baseline study and baseline data report (including disaggregation of indicators to monitor and report on ESMP and Gender Action Plan)	PMU	First year	60,000
Annual workplan and budgets	PMU	Annual	7,500
Project records and consolidation (including disaggregation of indicators to monitor and report on ESMP and Gender Action Plan)	M&E Team and other PMU members	Trimestral	112,200
Semi-annual progress report	M&E Team and other PMU members	Semi-annual	
Annual project report (including progress on ESMP and Gender Action plan)	M&E Team and other PMU members	Annual	
Project completion survey (including disaggregation of indicators to monitor and report on ESMP and Gender Action Plan)	PMU	2031	30,000
Completion process (including final project completion report/final PPR)	PMU	2031	30,000

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Ongoing safeguards monitoring and implementation	PMU	Ongoing	48,000
<b>Total</b>			<b>3032,7500</b>
<b>Contribution of IE Fees to M&amp;E</b>			
Inception workshop report	PMU	After workshop	20,000
Supervision missions to assess overall physical and financial performance, progress against the ESMP and the Gender Action Plan Result Framework, identify challenges and propose measures to address them, in order to guide the project towards achievement of its objectives and outcomes, while ensuring fiduciary compliance and responsiveness to the accountability framework, in conformity with the project's financing agreement.	IFAD, PMU, Government	Annual/biannual	60,000
<u>Quality Assurance and Supervision of Baseline data survey and report</u>	<u>PMU</u>	<u>First year</u>	<u>10,000</u>
Mid-term survey and MTE mission (including disaggregation of indicators to monitor and report on ESMP and Gender Action Plan)	IFAD, external consultants	2029	85,000
Final evaluation (including disaggregation of indicators to monitor and report on ESMP and Gender Action Plan)	IFAD, external consultants	2031	20,000
Quality assurance of <u>ef baseline data report</u> , PPRs and final project completion report	IFAD, external consultants	Throughout implementation (annual)	<u>230,000</u>
<u>Project audit</u>	<u>External independent auditors</u>	<u>2031</u>	<u>48,930</u>
<b>Total</b>			<b>24563,93000</b>
<b>Grand total</b>			<b>51866,60630</b>

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## E. Results framework

Table 17 - Results framework

Objective and expected outputs	Indicators	Unit	Targets				Means of verification			Assumptions
			Ref	Year 1	Mid-term	Year 5	Source	Frequency	Responsibility	
<b>Project objective.</b> Reduce the vulnerability of smallholder farmers and the ecosystems they depend on to the negative impacts of climate change.	Ha of land protected or under improved practices	Hectares	0	0	13,905	19,810	Midline and completion surveys; GIS analysis and project M&E records (beneficiary database)	At baseline, mid-term and completion	M&E Officer and KM/M&E Assistants	Continued institutional and political commitment to climate adaptation and project implementation. Effective governance and coordination among national and local institutions. Communities remain engaged and willing to adopt climate-resilient practices. No major natural disasters, epidemics, or security disruptions beyond planned contingencies. Adequate financial, technical, and material resources available throughout implementation.
	Number of beneficiaries (direct/all)	Households	0	0	20,250/20,250	31,500/42,029				
		Females	0	0	50,625/50,625	78,750/105,072				
		Males	0	0	50,625/50,625	78,750/105,072				
		Youth	0	0	30,375/30,375	47,250/63,043				
		PwDs	0	0	5,063/5,063	7,875/10,507				
		Total	0	0	101,250/101,250	157,500/210,145				
<b>Component 1. Resilient ecosystems sustainably providing services to smallholder farmers</b>										
<b>Outcome 1.</b> Improved climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers	Natural resource assets maintained or improved under climate change and variability-induced stress (AF 5)	Assets ( <a href="#">sites</a> )	0	0	675	1,050	Midline and completion surveys; GIS analysis	At baseline, mid-term and completion	Project M&E Officer and M&E assistant; Project Agronomist; DLRC	Institutional systems, support and local groups remain strong and coordinated (DLRC, AEDOs, VDCs, VNRMCs). Community engagement and ownership are sustained. Resources (financial, material, human) and technical inputs are timely and adequate
	Ha of ecosystems protected or under improved practices	Households	0	0	20,250	31,500				
		Total benef.	0	0	101,250	157,500				
		Females	0	0	50,625	78,750				
	Numbers benefitting from sustainable soil and water conservation practices	Households	0	0	7,000	7,000				
		Total benef.	0	0	35,000	35,000				
		Females	0	0	17,500	17,500				
Numbers of farming HH/individuals trained in micro-catchment and sustainable soil fertility management	Households	0	0	7,000	7,000					
	Females	0	0	17,500	17,500					
<b>Output 1.1.</b> Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed	Number of VLAPs established	VLAPs	0	0	70	70	VLAP documents	Annually	Project M&E Officer and M&E assistant; Project Agronomist; DLRC	DLRC has the mandate, capacity, and decentralized structure to lead participatory planning and coordination. AEDOs are available and trained to facilitate VLAP development and implementation. VDCs and VNRMCs are functional,

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Objective and expected outputs	Indicators	Unit	Targets				Means of verification			Assumptions
			Ref	Year 1	Mid-term	Year 5	Source	Frequency	Responsibility	
										recognized, and committed to engaging in planning and implementation.
<b>Output 1.2.</b> Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level	5.1. No. of natural resource assets created, maintained or improved to withstand conditions resulting from climate variability and change (by type and scale)	Assets	0	0	675	1,050	M&E records and GIS information	Annually	Project M&E Officer and M&E assistant; Project Agronomist; DLRC	Communities are motivated and capable of carrying out restoration activities. Technical and material resources for restoration measures are available and suitable for local conditions. Local institutions are able to provide continuous support and monitoring to ensure effective implementation and maintenance.
	Surface benefiting from forestry investments	Hectares	0	0	1,575	2,450	M&E records and GIS information	Annually		
	Surface treated with anti-erosive measures	Hectares	0	0	1,800	2,800		Annually		
	Numbers benefitting from incentives to reduce pressure on ecosystem resources	Households	0	0	7,800	11,700	M&E records (beneficiary database) including documentation on allocation of support	Annually		
		Total benef.	0	0	39,000	58,500				
Females		0	0	19,500	29,250					
<b>Component 2. Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi</b>										
<b>Outcome 2.</b> Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems	<a href="#">Physical infrastructure improved to withstand climate change and variability-induced stress (AF 4)</a>	<a href="#">Infrastructure assets (All types)</a>	0	0	151	201	<a href="#">M&amp;E records and documentation from service providers</a>	Annually	Project M&E Officer and M&E assistant;	<a href="#">Water, irrigation, and storage infrastructure is technically feasible, socially accepted, and maintained by communities. Adequate resources and technical support are available for construction, management, and oversight.</a>
	% reporting adoption of environmentally sustainable and climate resilient technologies and practices	%	0	0	60%	80%	Midline and completion surveys; and project M&E records (beneficiary database)	At baseline, mid-term and completion	Project M&E Officer and M&E assistant; Project Agronomist; DAES	Farmers consistently adopt and maintain climate-resilient practices and technologies. Strong institutional coordination and support ensure continuity of extension services, input provision, and infrastructure management beyond the project period. Visible livelihood benefits from interventions motivate communities to sustain and scale up adaptation measures.
		Total HH	0	0	2,700	3,600				
		Total benef.	0	0	13,500	18,000				
	Surface of agricultural land under climate resilient practices	Females	0	0	6,750	9,000	Midline and completion surveys; GIS analysis			
Hectares		0	0	3,330	3,360					
<b>Output 2.1.</b> Adaptive		Households	0	0	4,500	4,500	M&E records (beneficiary)	Annually	Project M&E Officer and	Extension services have the capacity and trained AEDOs
		Total benef.	0	0	22,500	22,500				

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Objective and expected outputs	Indicators	Unit	Targets				Means of verification			Assumptions
			Ref	Year 1	Mid-term	Year 5	Source	Frequency	Responsibility	
<b>Outcome 3.</b> Climate information solutions for decision making in agriculture enhanced at local and national level	Persons provided with climate information services	Females	0	0	42,029	105,072	Midline and completion surveys; and project M&E records (beneficiary database)	At baseline, mid-term and completion	Project M&E Officer and M&E assistant; Project Meteorologist	Improved forecasts and advisories are timely, accurate, and actionable. Institutional frameworks and technical capacities are sufficient to sustain climate information systems and early warning mechanisms beyond project life. Inclusive communication ensures vulnerable groups (women, youth, PwDs) access and use climate information.
		Males	0	0	42,029	105,072				
		Youth	0	0	25,217	63,043				
		Minorities	0	0	4,203	10,507				
		Total	0	0	84,058	210,145				
Capacity of staff to respond to, and mitigate impacts of, climate-related events from targeted institutions increased (AF 2.1)	Staff trained	0	0	280	280	Midline and completion surveys; and possible ad-hoc surveys	Annually			
<b>Output 3.1.</b> Climate information for decision making available at local level	Number of EPAs equipped with measuring instruments for weather indicators	EPA	0	0	16	16	M&E records and service providers reporting	Annually	Project M&E Officer and M&E assistant; Project Meteorologist	Weather stations and PSP processes are operational and maintained, ensuring accurate, localized data collection and integration into forecasts. Farmers and local actors actively participate in PSP workshops, and provide feedback. Digital and traditional communication channels (radio, SMS, extension networks) are accessible to all groups and trusted.
	Number of Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP) workshops conducted	PSP	0	0	80	128	M&E records and workshop reports	Annually		
	Number of farmers reached through radio or SMS advisory services	Females	0	0	18,913	63,043	M&E records (beneficiary database) supported by service provider aggregated reporting	Annually	Project M&E Officer and M&E assistant; Project Meteorologist	
		Males	0	0	18,913	63,043				
		Youth	0	0	11,348	37,826				
		PwDs	0	0	1,891	6,304				
	Total	0	0	37,826	126,087					
Government staff trained on improved forecasting and climate-informed agro-advisory services at decentralised level	Total	0	0	240	240	Training records	Annually			
<b>Output 3.2.</b> National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the	No. of targeted institutions with increased capacity to minimize exposure to climate variability risk (by type, sector and scale) (AF 2.1.2)	DCCMS	0	0	1	1	Reporting from DCCMS	At baseline, mid-term and completion	Project Meteorologist	Targeted institutions have the capacity and resources to absorb local data, validate forecasts, and update advisory systems. Formal protocols and guidelines (PSP, SOPs, MHEWS updates) are adopted and enforced. Inter-agency coordination mechanisms function effectively, enabling
		DAES	0	0	1	1	Reporting from DAES			
		DoDMA	0	0	1	1	Reporting from DoDMA			
	Government staff trained on improved forecasting and climate-informed agro-advisory services at national level	Staff trained	0	0	40	40	Training records	Annually		

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Objective and expected outputs	Indicators	Unit	Targets				Means of verification			Assumptions
			Ref	Year 1	Mid-term	Year 5	Source	Frequency	Responsibility	
agriculture sector	Number of seasonal forecasts that include PSP outputs	Forecasts	0	0	80	160	Forecasts documentation	Annually	Project M&E Officer and M&E assistant; Project Meteorologist; KM Assistant	harmonization of advisory messages and integration of community feedback into national systems.
	Number of crop calendars and yield forecasts integrated with climate forecasts	Items	0	0	20	40	Forecasts documentation	Annually		
	Number of policies introduced or adjusted to address climate risks	MHEWS protocols revised and adopted to include agriculture-specific risk triggers and advisories	0	0	1	1	Protocols documents	At baseline, mid-term and completion		
		National SOPs and climate information protocols adopted	0	0	1	1	SOPs documents			
National PSP guidelines adopted	0	0	-	1	Guidelines documents					

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Table 18 - Table for reporting Adaptation Fund Core Impact Indicator "Number of beneficiaries"

Adaptation Fund Core Impact Indicator "Number of Beneficiaries"				
Date of report				
Project title	Smallholder Climate Resilience Project (SCRP)			
Country	Malawi			
Implementing Agency	IFAD			
Project duration	5 years			
	Baseline (absolute number)	Target at project approval (absolute number)	Adjusted target first year of implementation (absolute number)	Actual at completion (absolute number)
<b>Direct beneficiaries supported by the project</b>	0	157,500	tbc	tbc
Female direct beneficiaries	0	78,750	tbc	tbc
Youth direct beneficiaries	0	47,250	tbc	tbc
<b>Indirect beneficiaries supported by the project</b>	0	52,645	tbc	tbc
Female indirect beneficiaries	0	26,322	tbc	tbc
Youth indirect beneficiaries	0	15,793	tbc	tbc

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Table 19 - Table for reporting Adaptation Fund Core Impact Indicator "Natural Assets Protected or Rehabilitated"

Adaptation Fund Core Impact Indicator "Natural Assets Protected or Rehabilitated"				
Date of report				
Project title	Smallholder Climate Resilience Project (SCRP)			
Country	Malawi			
Implementing Agency	IFAD			
Project duration	5 years			
	Baseline	Target at project approval	Adjusted target first year of implementation	Actual at completion
<b>Natural Asset or Ecosystem (type)</b>	Woodlots and eroded soils	Woodlots and eroded soils	tbc	tbc
<b>Change in State</b> Ha or km protected/rehabilitated, or Effectiveness of protection/rehabilitation – Scale (1-5)	0	16,450 ha	tbc	tbc
<b>Total number of natural assets or ecosystems protected/rehabilitated</b>	Woodlots: 0 assets (sites) Eroded soil: 0 assets (sites)	Woodlots: 490 assets (sites) Eroded soil: 560 assets (sites) Total: 1,050 assets (sites)	Woodlots: tbc Eroded soil: tbc	Woodlots: tbc Eroded soil: tbc

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Table 20 - Table for reporting Adaptation Fund Core Impact Indicator "Early Warning Systems"

Adaptation Fund Core Impact Indicator "Early Warning Systems"				
Date of Report	-			
Project Title	-			
Country	-			
Implementing Agency	-			
Project Duration	-			
	Baseline	Target at project approval	Adjusted target first-year of implementation	Actual at completion
Adopted Early Warning Systems			-	-

<i>(Category targeted—1, 2, 3, 4; and absolute number)</i> <i>(1) risk knowledge, (2) monitoring and warning service, (3) dissemination and communication, (4) response capability.</i> <i>(report for each project component)</i>				
<b>Hazard</b> <i>(select from the list on page 2)</i> <i>(report for each project component)</i>				
<b>Geographical coverage</b> <i>(km<sup>2</sup>)</i> <i>(report for each project component)</i>				
<b>Number of municipalities</b> <i>(number)</i> <i>(report for each project component)</i>				

### F. Alignment with Adaptation Fund Results Framework

Table 2024 - Alignment with Adaptation Fund Result Framework

<b>Project Outcomes/Objective</b>	<b>Project Outcome-Objective Indicators</b>	<b>Adaptation Fund Outcome</b>	<b>Adaptation Fund Outcome Indicator</b>	<b>AF Grant Amount (USD)</b>
<b>Component 1. Resilient ecosystems sustainably providing services to smallholder farmers</b>				
<b>Outcome 1.</b> Improved climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers	Ha of ecosystems protected or under improved practices; Numbers benefitting from sustainable soil and water conservation practices; Numbers of farming HH/individuals trained in micro-catchment and sustainable soil fertility management;	<b>Outcome 5:</b> Increased ecosystem resilience in response to climate change and variability-induced stress	<b>5.</b> Ecosystem services and natural resource assets maintained or improved under climate change and variability-induced stress	8,041,397
<b>Component 2. Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi</b>				
<b>Outcome 2.</b> Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems	% reporting adoption of environmentally sustainable and climate resilient technologies and practices; Surface of agricultural land under climate resilient practices	<b>N/A Outcome 4:</b> <a href="#">Increased adaptive capacity within relevant development sector services and infrastructure assets</a>	<b>4.2. Physical infrastructure improved to withstand climate change and variability-induced stress</b> N/A	7,572,121
<b>Component 3. Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi</b>				
<b>Outcome 3.</b> Climate information solutions for decision making in agriculture enhanced at local and national level	Persons provided with climate information services	<b>Outcome 2:</b> Strengthened institutional capacity to reduce risks associated with climate-induced socioeconomic and environmental losses	<b>2.1.</b> Capacity of staff to respond to, and mitigate impacts of, climate-related events from targeted institutions increased	1,143,604
<b>Total objective level grant amount</b>				<b>16,757,122</b>

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Project Outputs/Outcome(s)	Project Output-Outcome Indicators	Adaptation Fund Output	Adaptation Fund Output Indicator	Grant Amount (USD)
<b>Component 1. Resilient ecosystems sustainably providing services to smallholder farmers</b>				
<b>Output 1.1.</b> Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed	Number of VLAPs established	<b>Output 5:</b> Vulnerable ecosystem services and natural resource assets strengthened in response to climate change impacts, including variability	<b>5.1.</b> No. of natural resource assets created, maintained or improved to withstand conditions resulting from climate variability and change (by type and scale)	1,875,229
<b>Output 1.2.</b> Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level	Surface benefiting from forestry investments; Surface treated with anti-erosive measures; Numbers benefiting from incentives to reduce pressure on ecosystem resources			6,166,168
<b>Component 2. Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi</b>				
<b>Output 2.2.1.</b> Adaptive capacity of smallholder farming systems supported	Numbers participating in FFS, and benefiting HH members; Number of small livestock demonstrations; Number of ARCs supported	<b>N/A</b> <b>Output 4:</b> <u>Vulnerable development sector services and infrastructure assets strengthened in response to climate change impacts, including variability</u>	<b>4.1.2.</b> <u>No. of physical assets strengthened or constructed to withstand conditions resulting from climate variability and change (by sector and scale)</u> <b>N/A</b>	1,497,250
<b>Output 2.2.</b> Adapted inputs and climate-resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers	Number of community-based seed and planting material facilities established (tree nurseries, seed multiplication and seed banks); Number of small scale water infrastructure established; Number of storage facilities constructed/rehabilitated			6,074,871
<b>Component 3. Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi</b>				
<b>Output 3.3.1.</b> Climate information for decision making available at local level	Number of EPAs equipped with measuring instruments for weather indicators; Number of Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP) workshops conducted; Number of farmers reached through radio or SMS advisory services; Government staff trained on improved forecasting and climate-informed agro-advisory services at decentralised level	<b>Output 2.1:</b> Strengthened capacity of national and sub-national centres and networks to respond rapidly to extreme weather events	<b>2.1.2.</b> No. of targeted institutions with increased capacity to minimize exposure to climate variability risk (by type, sector and scale)	800,307
<b>Output 3.3.2.</b> National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector	Government staff trained on improved forecasting and climate-informed agro-advisory services at national level; Number of seasonal forecasts that include PSP outputs; Number of crop calendars and yield forecasts integrated with climate forecasts; Number of policies introduced or adjusted to address climate risks			343,297
<b>Total outcome level grant amount</b>				<b>16,757,122</b>

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## G. Project budget

Table 2122 - Detailed budget of the project per activity

Item/Activity	Note	Total AF (USD)
<b>Component 1. Resilient ecosystems sustainably providing services to smallholder farmers</b>		
<b>Outcome 1. Improved climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers</b>		
<b>Output 1.1. Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed</b>	Activity 1.1.1 Engagement of and support from DLRC	762,389
	<i>Top ups for DLRC staff at HQ (Catchment Restoration Coordinator; Catchment Conservation expert; GIS Expert); Allowance for mobility and monitoring by DLRC central staff at local level (3 staff @2,200 per year per person); laptops/tablets for DLRC staff supporting implementation</i>	137,179
	<i>Top ups for DLRC decentralized staff at ADD level: 7 Land Resource Conservation Officers at District level; Allowance for mobility and monitoring by DLRC decentralized staff at ADD level (4 staff for 4 districts @1,200 per year per person); Equipment - 4 Motorbikes for DLRC decentralized staff in 4 districts*</i>	99,210
	<i>Top ups for 16 AAEDOs and 18 AEDOs; Allowance for mobility and monitoring by AEDOs decentralized staff at EPA level (16 staff for 16 EPAs @1,200 per year per person)</i>	306,000
	<i>Training of DLRC staff on GIS hotspot mapping, ground truthing, etc: 2 x 15 people training at ADD level; 4 days trainings including field exercises; GIS and other equipment</i>	220,000
	Activity 1.1.2 Community engagement and sensitisation through VDCs**	237,500
	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist	111,840
	Activity 1.1.3 Gender and Social Inclusion**	199,500
	Activity 1.1.4. VNRMC consolidation/capacitation**	235,000
	Activity 1.1.5. VLAP preparation**	329,000
<b>Subtotal output 1.1.</b>	<b>1,875,229</b>	
<b>Output 1.2. Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level</b>	Activity 1.2.1 Preparation of VLAP implementation	546,560
	<i>Community level meetings to prepare for VLAP implementation</i>	21,560
	<i>Demonstration plots for practical training/recycling of communities on restoration approaches (1 plot per VLAP @2,500 USD/plot/year reconducted for three years showcasing different techniques each year)</i>	525,000
	Activity 1.2.2 **	
	Community forests and woodlot restoration: Inputs and equipment for community forests (village forest areas), community woodlots (including tools for forest/woodlot maintenance), agroforestry on communal lands, restoration of pasturelands, farmer-managed natural regeneration. Inputs include native / locally-adapted/ non-invasive tree seedlings and seeds. As well as forest management, i.e. (i) natural forest protection (e.g. fire prevention, buy-laws, sustainable harvesting, etc.), (ii) managed natural regeneration and enrichment plantings to encourage regrowth of natural forest and (iii) management of existing forest plantations. Equipment consists of tools such as wheelbarrows, shovels, hoes, rakes, string, portable water containers, panga knives, bee-keeping equipment (e.g. traditional bee-hives) over 2,450 hectares, @386 USD/ha on average - cost assumptions based on National Forest Land Restoration Assessment (NFLRA) 2017 factoring in inflation *	1,173,425
	Small scale soil and water conservation measures	
	Inputs and equipment for soil and water conservation interventions, including small-scale infrastructure on slopes and hillsides (e.g. check dams, terraces, infiltration trenches, ridges and contour bunds). Inputs include native/ locally-adapted/ non-invasive/ climate resilient grass-seeds (e.g. vetiver grass) for plantation along slopes. Equipment includes e.g. wheelbarrows, shovels, hoes, rakes, string, portable water containers over 2,800 hectares, @885 USD/ha on average - cost assumptions based on National Forest Land Restoration Assessment (NFLRA) 2017 factoring in inflation *	3,074,702
	Activity 1.2.3. Consolidation of restoration efforts **	78,200
	Activity 1.2.4. Recognition of community efforts and measures to reduce pressure on ecosystems **	1,293,281
	<i>Community recognition (communication, events) for all 70 VLAPs, every year from year 2 @500USD/event</i>	140,000
<i>Fuel efficient woodstoves for 3,900 HH (@15 USD/woodstove)*</i>	72,587	
<i>Fruit trees seedling kits for 11,700 HH (@6 USD/kit)*</i>	85,199	
<i>780 Rainwater harvesting equipment (@1,000 USD/unit)*</i>	995,495	
<b>Subtotal output 1.2.</b>	<b>6,166,168</b>	
<b>Total Cost Component 1</b>	<b>8,041,397</b>	

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<b>Component 2. Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi</b>		
<b>Outcome 2. Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems</b>		
<b>Output 2.1. Adaptive capacity of smallholder farming systems supported</b>	Activity 2.1.1 FFS Institutionalization **	189,000
	Activity 2.1.2 FFS delivery **	767,250
	<i>Trainings of Facilitators (AEDOs) (30 facilitators, 3 weeks) @41,000\$/training. Costs include venue, full board, transportation and learning material.</i>	82,000
	<i>Facilitator (AEDOs) incentive kits (bicycle, backpacks, outfits, etc.) @400\$/kit*</i>	16,000
	<i>100 initial kits for FFS on Crops @800\$/kit*</i>	88,000
	<i>50 initial kits for FFS on Agroforestry @1,200\$/kit*</i>	66,000
	<i>Cost for FFS implementation (top ups to extensionists salaries) – 480 pers/month @50 USD/month</i>	24,000
	<i>100 demonstrations @1,585 USD/demo</i>	158,500
	<i>250 field days @1,331 USD/field day</i>	332,750
	Activity 2.1.3. Resilient practices for small livestock rearing **	275,000
	Activity 2.1.4. Support to extension research feedback **	200,000
Activity 2.1.5. Agriculture Resource Centers **	66,000	
<b>Subtotal output 2.1.</b>	<b>1,497,250</b>	
<b>Output 2.2. Adapted inputs and climate-resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers</b>	Activity 2.2.1. Planting material available to support resilience through agrobiodiversity **	362,379
	Activity 2.2.2. Resilient community infrastructure (costs include studies, works and supervision) **	5,712,492
	<i>70 Small scale water infrastructure and irrigation schemes @58,000 USD/scheme*</i>	4,791,380
	<i>70 climate-proof storage structures and associated training @10,136 USD/unit*</i>	921,112
<b>Subtotal output 2.2.</b>	<b>6,074,871</b>	
<b>Total Cost Component 2</b>	<b>7,572,121</b>	
<b>Component 3. Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi</b>		
<b>Outcome 3. Climate information solutions for decision making in agriculture enhanced at local and national level</b>		
<b>Output 3.1. Climate information for decision making available at local level</b>	Meteorology expert	111,840
	Activity 3.1.1 Additional equipment for improved localised forecasting	278,000
	Activity 3.1.2 Participatory Scenario Planning **	210,000
	Activity 3.1.3 Digital Advisory Broadcasting **	94,217
	Activity 3.1.4 Capacitating trusted networks **	106,250
<b>Subtotal output 3.1.</b>	<b>800,307</b>	
<b>Output 3.2. National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector</b>	Activity 3.2.1 Improving forecasting and advisory **	121,497
	Activity 3.2.2 Institutionalizing PSP within the national seasonal forecast cycle **	55,800
	Activity 3.2.3 Enhancing the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) protocols for agriculture **	54,000
	Activity 3.2.4 Developing operational protocols and advisory harmonization frameworks **	112,000
<b>Subtotal output 3.2.</b>	<b>343,297</b>	
<b>Total Cost Component 3</b>	<b>1,143,604</b>	
<b>Total project activity cost</b>	<b>16,757,122</b>	
<b>Execution Costs</b>		
Salaries and Allowances	Project manager	150,000
	Agronomist	111,840
	Rural infrastructure specialist	111,840
	M&E assistant	56,100
	KM assistant	56,100
<b>Subtotal salaries and allowances</b>	<b>485,880</b>	
<b>Equipment and Goods</b>		
Computers and tablets, printers/scanners, office furniture, accounting software actualization	24,095	
Vehicles	200,000	
<b>Safeguards compliance monitoring (ESMP and Gender Action Plan)</b>	<b>48,000</b>	
<b>Baseline survey and Baseline Data Report (BDR), Project Completion (final) survey and final project completion report (including disaggregation of indicator and surveys by gender and group to monitor progress against Gender Action Plan and ESMP targets)</b>	<b>120,000</b>	
<b>Startup workshop, planning of AWPB, staff training and workshops, supervision support and communication campaigns</b>	<b>152,050</b>	
<b>Operating Costs (offices utility and other operating costs, field allowance, audit fees, office and IT supplies, vehicle O&amp;M, and other operating costs)</b>	<b>646,033</b>	
<b>Total Project Execution Costs</b>	<b>1,676,058</b>	

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<b>Total project costs</b>	<b>18,433,180</b>
<b>Project Cycle Management Implementing Entity Fee</b>	
<b>Financial Management</b> (General financial oversight, support audits and quality control, manage, monitor and track AF funding including allocating and monitoring expenditure based on agreed work plans; financial management compliance with AF requirements; financial reporting compliance with AF standards; procurement support and compliance with Government procurement rules).	313,364
<b>Programme Support including corporate activities related to engagement with donor</b> (Technical support in project implementation; methodologies, identification of experts; troubleshooting and support implementation missions as necessary; portfolio management, reporting; outreach and knowledge sharing; Independent Environmental and Social Audits; and policy support, policy programming and implementation support services).	736,406
<b>Technical support</b> (Project preparation and management oversight including financial management, quality insurance, supervision missions and implementation support, implementation reports supervision, risk management, programming; guidance in establishing performance measurement processes; technical support on methodologies, TOR validation, identification of experts, results validation, and quality assurance; troubleshooting, and support evaluation missions as necessary; Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) and Final Evaluation; support on technical issues in programme implementation; and Project completion and evaluation oversight).***	517,050
<b>Total Project Cycle Management Implementing Entity Fee</b>	<b>1,566,820</b>
<b>Amount of Financing Requested</b>	<b>20,000,000</b>

\* NB1: for costs marked with \*, contingencies have been factored in as per current inflation rates, meaning that totals are not an exact product of unit cost per quantity.

\*\* NB2: for costs marked with \*\*, the budget allocated will directly contribute to the achievement of the Gender Action Plan Result Framework

\*\*\* NB3: IE costs related to Baseline, MTE and final evaluation as well as regular supervision missions for ongoing evaluation have been broken down in Table 16 - Budgeted M&E plan (breakdown by source of funding)

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## H. Disbursement schedule

Table 2223 - Disbursement schedule

Milestone	Amount disbursed by year (USD)					Total (USD)
	First disbursement	One year after project start	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	
Project Activity Costs	1,769,264	4,915,861	5,223,332	3,223,741	1,624,924	16,757,122
Project Execution Costs	504,271	244,956	300,715	267,549	358,567	1,676,058
Implementing Entity Fee	193,250	438,669	469,544	296,760	168,597	1,566,820
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,466,785</b>	<b>5,599,486</b>	<b>5,993,591</b>	<b>3,788,050</b>	<b>2,152,088</b>	<b>20,000,000</b>

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## PART IV: ENDORSEMENT BY GOVERNMENT AND CERTIFICATION BY THE IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

### A. Record of endorsement on behalf of the government<sup>95</sup>

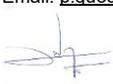
Ms. Tiyamika Kanthambi Director Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.	Date: 11 <sup>th</sup> November, 2025
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#### Letter of endorsement by the Government

Telephone: 01 789 335 Telefax: 01 789 173 Telex: 44407 Email: secmof@finance.gov.mw		MINISTRY OF FINANCE, ECONOMIC PLANNING AND DECENTRALIZATION P.O. BOX 30049, CAPITAL CITY, LILONGWE 3.
<b>Ref. No. FIN/DAD/RM/5/2/142</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> November, 2025</b>	
The Adaptation Fund 1818H Street, NW, MSN 7N-700 Washington, DC 20433, USA		
Dear Adaptation Fund Secretariat,		
<b>ENDORSEMENT FOR SMALLHOLDER CLIMATE RESILIENCE PROJECT (SCRP)</b>		
<p>In my capacity as Designated Authority for the Adaptation Fund in Malawi, I confirm that the above national grant proposal for the amount of USD20,000,000.00 is in accordance with the Government of Malawi's national priorities in implementing adaptation activities to reduce adverse impacts of, and risks, posed by climate change in Malawi.</p> <p>Accordingly, I am pleased to endorse the above grant proposal for 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, Irrigation and Water Development.</p> <p>Yours Sincerely,</p> <p> Tiyamika Kanthambi For: <b>SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY</b></p>		

<sup>95</sup> 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.

## 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, <u>commit to implementing the programme in compliance with the Environmental and Social Policy of the Adaptation Fund</u> 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: <a href="mailto:p.quedez@ifad.org">p.quedez@ifad.org</a> 
Juan Carlos Mendoza Director, Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division International Fund for Agricultural Development	
Date: 04 December 2025	email: <a href="mailto:ecgmailbox@ifad.org">ecgmailbox@ifad.org</a>
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## Annex 1: Stakeholder consultation process

1. **Approach.** The formulation of the SCRP project was conducted in two phases: the formulation of the Concept Note, and the project design. The consultations for the Concept Note were carried out in person, from 13 February to 16 February 2024. The Concept Note preparation consultations included government ministries and departments, financial institutions, farmer apex bodies such as Farmers Union of Malawi, local NGOs, UN agencies, district agricultural extension coordination committees (DAECC), and community leaders and potential beneficiary groups. 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.

2. The in-person mission for the project design was held from 22 September to 4 October 2025 with preparation of the project proposal from September to November 2025. The project proposal consultation was conducted primarily in person, with a handful of consultations held remotely. The total number of stakeholders consulted in the process was 445 (219 Males, 226 females, 102 youths and 12 persons with disabilities). Throughout this process special attention was given to ensure a gender and youth focus. As such, institutions dealing with gender and youth issues, both public and from the civil society, were consulted. Male and female potential beneficiaries and stakeholders were consulted both separately and in mixed groups. Moreover, the appropriateness of time and location of consultation meetings, especially for women, was taken into account.

3. A number of consultations were conducted by the international formulation team in Lilongwe with key government ministries, UN agencies, NGOs, and programme managers for the four SAPP II implementing Agricultural Development Divisions. In total, 18 government officials, 19 UN agency staff, and 6 international NGO representatives participated in the national Key Informant Interviews.

4. Field level consultations in targeted districts were conducted by the IFAD team in collaboration with government stakeholders. KII and group discussions held at the district level included engagement with: (i) Representatives from the Agricultural Development Division (10 representatives in total); (ii) District Council representatives (96 representatives in total); (iii) Civil Society actors (19 representatives).

5. Seven Extension Planning Areas (EPAs) were targeted for consultations from within the four districts. The mission conducted focus group discussions (FGDs) with one community group in each of the seven Agriculture Districts. The groups comprised men, women, young farmers and persons with disabilities (PWDs). 287 community stakeholders were consulted in total: 115 men, 172 women, 77 youths and 19 PWD. The team made a conscious effort to include minorities and vulnerable groups in these discussions to ensure their voices were heard and their unique needs addressed. Each group had 30 or more smallholder farmers with a representation of the following stakeholders:

- Area Development Committee (ADC) Representative
- Area Agriculture Stakeholder Panel (AASP) Representative
- Area Civil Protection Committee (ACPC) Representative
- Village Development Committee (VDC) Representative
- Village Agriculture Committee (VAC) Representative
- Village Natural Resources Management Committee (VNRMC) Representative
- Village Civil Protection Committee (VCPC) Representative
- Lead farmers
- Follower farmers
- Other smallholder farmer

**Table 1. Participation in Community Consultations**

Date	Community stakeholders			Participation				
	District	EPA	Section/Community	Men	Women	Youths	PWDs	Total
24/09/25	Balaka	Bazale	James	11	14	4	1	25
25/09/25	Lilongwe East	Nyanja	Sonkhwe	12	16	6	0	28
26/09/25	Lilongwe West	Malingunde	Mphangwe	20	52	18	4	72

26/09/25	Dowa East	Mvera	Mnjere Central	18	13	10	3	31
01/10/25	Dowa West	Mndolera	Dzoole	16	14	13	2	30
30/09/25	Mzimba South	Vibangalala	Dimi	15	36	19	8	51
29/09/25	Mzimba North	Emsizini	Enyezini	23	27	7	1	50

6. **Stakeholders consulted.** A wide range of stakeholders (government and district level institutions, village committees, vulnerable and marginalized groups, women, youth, multilateral agencies, NGOs, projects and resource persons, etc.) were consulted, both at national, district, EPA and community level, as further documented below.

7. **Principle of choice.** Types of consultations conducted can be separated in:

- Consultations of National and District representatives, to verify alignment to national and local priorities and assess environmental and social risks and compliance with national standards of proposed project activities.
- Consultation of relevant multilateral agencies and specific stakeholders (NGOs, other UN agencies or bilateral donors) to verify the relevance, technical feasibility, environmental and social risks and compliance with national standards of proposed project activities.
- Consultation with local stakeholders including from the project target group to identify their specific needs and concerns, together with specificities of local contexts (including landscape) to ensure a full assessment of the potential environmental and social risks.

8. The consultations aimed at the following:

- Verifying alignment with national and sub-national priorities: throughout the project preparation phase, IFAD worked with focal points within the Ministry of Agriculture, and other stakeholders mandated to work on aspects touched by the project. The proposed project activities and targeted areas have been prioritised / selected with these stakeholders, and in line with national priorities.
- Avoiding duplication with other projects and initiatives: systematic screening for other relevant ongoing or past initiatives was conducted when meeting stakeholders, particularly with other UN Agencies, to ensure complementarity, synergies and relevance of project interventions.
- Identifying specific needs and possible concerns of vulnerable groups: Consultations with local stakeholders, targeted communities and specific groups representatives (especially women, youth, and PWD) took place to identify specific needs and possible concerns regarding the proposed project activities.
- Identifying potential environmental and social risks and impacts. In line with AF ESP and GP policies, consultations with local stakeholders, targeted communities and specific groups representatives (especially women, youth, and most vulnerable producers) took place to identify specific needs and possible concerns regarding the proposed project activities.

9. **Consultation techniques (including gender-balanced consultative process).** Specific consultation techniques with local stakeholders included:

- Use of semi-structured interviews to ensure coverage of key themes. A set of key questions were developed by experts ahead of the mission.
- Organization of focus groups, and subsequent division into sub-groups to ensure separate consultation with more vulnerable/marginalized individuals (women, youth) and give them the time and space to express their specific needs.
- Special attention was given to ensure a gender and youth focus in these engagements. Male and female potential beneficiaries and stakeholders were consulted both separately and in mixed groups. Moreover, institutions dealing with gender and youth issues, both public and from the civil society, were consulted. These included, for example, the Ministry of Gender, First Foot Forward and UN Women. Finally, the appropriateness of time and location of consultation meetings, especially for women, was systematically taken into account.
- The consultative process during design and implementation has and will follow the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and do no harm principles. Adherence to the FPIC principle needs to be

assured before supporting any development intervention that might affect the land access and use rights of communities, IFAD will ensure that their free, prior and informed consent has been solicited through inclusive consultations based on full disclosure of the intent and scope of the activities planned and their implications.

10. The table below indicates the consultation techniques used for separate stakeholders:

Stakeholder	Consultation techniques
National and District level representatives, technical experts and development partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Semi-structured interviews (virtual)</li> <li>● One on one meetings</li> </ul>
Local stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Field consultations organized by PMU in local language, supported by IFAD experts</li> <li>● Focus group discussions</li> <li>● Interviews with key informants</li> </ul>
Women and youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Field consultations organized by PMU in local language, supported by IFAD experts</li> <li>● Focus group discussions:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mixed, as well as women/youth-only</li> <li>- Where possible, discussion led by female or young facilitator</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

11. **Safeguards process and outcomes.** The stakeholder consultation process included a thorough screening against the 15 Adaptation Fund ESPs as part of the semi-structured interview process. In depth discussions on relevant laws and regulations took place with national and district representatives. Environmental and social principles were discussed both with stakeholders from the target group, and with relevant stakeholders at national/district level and with public and civil society institutions dealing directly with these issues. Outcomes from these consultations include recognition and appreciation for the relevance of proposed project activities in the face of compounded climate, environmental and socio-economic threats, including respectively:

- Risks related to droughts, floods and land degradation;
- Environmental impacts resulting from climate threats;
- Marginalization of and limited opportunities offered to vulnerable groups. Direct inputs from expert organisations (First Foot Forward,) enabled to further identify approaches to promote the inclusion of vulnerable groups.

## Concerns raised and consultation findings

Government stakeholders: National		
Type of stakeholder	Concern	Project response
Ministry of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity and support on procedures and required actions relating to SCRP.</li> <li>Poor mechanisms for intersectoral coordination.</li> </ul>	Included in implementation arrangements
Ministry of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The capacity of extension workers is stretched.</li> <li>Immobility of staff and extension workers and poor access to electricity and laptops.</li> <li>Poor links between researchers and extension workers/farmers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowance for mobility and monitoring by DLRC decentralized staff at ADD level and allowance for mobility and monitoring by AEDOs decentralized staff at EPA level</li> <li>Use of lead farmers</li> <li>Support to extension research feedback.</li> </ul>
Department of Animal Health and Livestock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overgrazing caused by the increase in the number of animals in recent years.</li> <li>Expansion of crop cultivation areas has led to land degradation, putting pressure on common grazing areas.</li> <li>Increased floods create waterlogged areas, which serve as parasite breeding ground.</li> <li>Funding issues also restrict the department's early warning system and disease surveillance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise and enhance FFS extension manuals and curriculum</li> <li>Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> <li>Ecosystem management measures</li> <li>Additional equipment for improved localised forecasting.</li> </ul>
Department of Agricultural Extension Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The ratio of extension workers is extremely limited, roughly one per 1,000 households, limiting outreach.</li> <li>Limitations in the involvement of key village-level committees in monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E). Although national technicians are responsible for M&amp;E at the village level, which involves interactions with farmers, this process does not involve the CPC or VNRMC (Village Natural Resource Management Committee).</li> <li>DAES has no recommendation on immediate actions after a severe drought or flood.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowance for mobility and monitoring by DLRC decentralized staff at ADD level and allowance for mobility and monitoring by AEDOs decentralized staff at EPA level</li> <li>Capacitation of village level committees to lead participatory monitoring</li> <li>Small scale soil and water conservation measures</li> </ul>
Department of Agricultural Research Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The challenges posed by climate change include climate shocks that influence the occurrence of pests and disease outbreaks.</li> <li>Fall armyworm is identified as a significant issue in the country. The document mentions the formation of farmer groups for pest identification and management.</li> <li>There are significant post-harvest losses due to climate change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revise and enhance FFS extension manuals and curriculum</li> <li>Trainings on IPM as part of FFS</li> <li>Construction of climate-proof storage structures and associated training</li> <li>Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> <li>Support to adaptive storage infrastructure</li> </ul>
Department of Agriculture Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key concerns relating to PICSA: i) lack of devices to capture information, ii) low interaction with farming communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participatory Scenario Planning</li> <li>Digital Advisory Broadcasting</li> <li>Enhancing the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) protocols for agriculture</li> </ul>
Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Despite efforts to disseminate information nationally and to communities (via radio, SMS, and TV), the understanding of climate information (seasonal forecast) remains weak at the village level</li> <li>Data quality is compromised by the fact that measurements are taken by volunteers daily. Forms are filled out by hand and transmitted as images, with hard copies sent monthly by post.</li> <li>Forecasting at the village level is infeasible because financial devolution has been incomplete.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional equipment for improved localised forecasting</li> <li>Participatory Scenario Planning</li> <li>Digital Advisory Broadcasting</li> <li>Enhancing the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) protocols for agriculture.</li> </ul>
Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant environmental and climate change impacts leading to low food production: The most notable phenomena caused by climate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planting material available to support resilience through agrobiodiversity</li> </ul>

	<p>change include dry spells, windstorms, floods, pests, and soil erosion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient rainfall, topsoil loss due to soil erosion, diseases caused by pests, and the washing away of plants and soil by floods</li> <li>• Logistical and resource shortages hindering effective disaster risk management (DRM) and safety</li> <li>• Social and gender disparities impacting comprehension, decision-making, and benefit distribution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training on climate resilient techniques at FFS level</li> <li>- Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> <li>- Implementation of GALS</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Gender</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic empowerment, lack of participation in production at commercial level, lack of control and ownership of land.</li> <li>• Gender transformative approaches can be a challenge with minimal resources.</li> <li>• Women are not represented on leadership for marketing cooperatives. Women are less likely to travel longer distances with men that are not their spouses. Need female only cooperatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementation of GALS</li> <li>- Support to women's economic empowerment</li> <li>- Refurbish and promote the use of Agricultural Resource Centers for community development</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Disability Affairs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobility challenges and access to information challenges for PWD.</li> <li>• It is important to consult directly with PWD at national, district and community level.</li> <li>• Do not have specific data on PWD, reliant on NSO.</li> <li>• MACODA (Malawi Council for Disability Affairs) officers at the district level are responsible for helping to engage Persons with Disabilities.</li> <li>• Extension workers need to be trained on inclusion and empowerment to ensure that Agri-Lab can be used effectively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Disability inclusion facilitator implementation.</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Land Resources Conservation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charcoal demand, poverty (most of the poor people are dependent on NR for livelihood) and population growth.</li> <li>• GIS – Equipment and technicians capacity needs strengthening</li> <li>• Due to climate change, Indigenous Local Knowledge (ILK) is less reliable and needs western science</li> <li>• Need to strengthen information dissemination capacity of farmers, front-line staff, etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GIS equipment and training + MoU with DLRC</li> <li>- Fuel-efficient woodstoves</li> <li>- Improving forecasting and advisory</li> <li>- Capacitating trusted networks</li> </ul>
<b>Department of Crops Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful CCA measures already utilised include manure, mulching, agroforestry, box ridges, swales. Opportunity to increase these.</li> <li>• Measures need to be taken when drought is forecast i.e. early planting, drought resistant crops such as sweet potato, cassava and potato.</li> <li>• Mobility enhancement: motorcycles, vehicles, electricity for front-line extension workers' houses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allowance for mobility and monitoring by AEDOs decentralized staff at EPA level</li> <li>- Small scale soil and water conservation measures</li> <li>- Climate resilient techniques mainstreamed in FFS</li> <li>- Enhancing the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) protocols for agriculture.</li> </ul>
<b>Multilateral agencies, NGOs: National</b>		
<b>Type of stakeholder</b>	<b>Concern</b>	<b>Project response</b>
<b>Red Cross Society of Malawi</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaps in coordination and information sharing within DRM efforts (e.g., central and District teams).</li> <li>• Weak governance structures at village level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Additional equipment for improved localised forecasting</li> <li>- Participatory Scenario Planning</li> </ul>
<b>UN AIDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals living with HIV often face challenges such as lack of services, food insecurity – malnutrition, and being left</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Revise and enhance FFS extension manuals and curriculum</li> <li>- FFS delivery</li> </ul>

	<p>behind in economic activities at the community level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced funding for civil society support.</li> <li>• Access to health services in times of extreme weather, i.e. flooding.</li> </ul>	- Implementation of GALS to include HIV concerns
<b>UN Women</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power dynamics and social norms play a big role in food production.</li> <li>• Prevalence of Gender based Violence hinders empowerment.</li> <li>• Access and empowerment, protection issues (he for she, break down gender norms), and facilitating conflict resolution to ensure sustainability of initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level</li> <li>- Revise and enhance FFS extension manuals and curriculum</li> <li>- FFS delivery.</li> </ul>
<b>World Bank</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lack of mechanization negatively impacts both production and value addition.</li> <li>• More investment is needed in weather stations and the use of smartphones for early warning systems (EWS), as the government has not invested in this.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agriculture Resource Centers may provide small scale mechanisation</li> <li>- Digital Advisory Broadcasting</li> </ul>
<b>World Food Programme</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shocks and crisis: drought and floods; land degradation; high population.</li> <li>• The learning curve continues on climate insurance to increase coverage and awareness.</li> <li>• Reliant on extension services deliver climate resilient agricultural practices.</li> <li>• Reoccurring shocks contributing to high rates stunting, macro nutrient deficiencies particularly in pregnant and young children (under 2 and under 5).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed.</li> <li>- Small scale soil and water conservation measures</li> <li>- Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level</li> <li>- Support to extension research feedback</li> </ul>

### Focus group discussions

District level		
Stakeholder	Concern	Project response
<b>Balaka</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women, youth, PWD, HIV are most impacted by drought and floods.</li> <li>• Men control assets, women unlikely to access radio.</li> <li>• Youth turn to burning charcoal in times of crisis. Women turn to prostitution and sexual exploitation at food sites.</li> <li>• Insufficient understanding of climate information among farmers.</li> <li>• No reliable methods to ensure accuracy of weather data collection.</li> <li>• Low capacity of staff to use GIS.</li> <li>• Inadequate GPS gadgets as well as high precision mapping laptops for mapping of natural resources in the district.</li> <li>• Growing population and lack of alternative livelihoods drives deforestation and expansion of agricultural land.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementation of GALS</li> <li>- Mainstreaming of GCVCA methodology into planning process for inclusion</li> <li>- Women and youth prioritised in access to fuel-efficient woodstoves</li> <li>- FFS institutionalization and delivery</li> <li>- Participatory Scenario Planning</li> <li>- Additional equipment for improved localised forecasting</li> <li>- GIS equipment and training for DLRC</li> </ul>
<b>Dowa West</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vacancies and understaffing</li> <li>• Water shortages for livestock (especially September–November).</li> <li>• Data collection and reliability issues.</li> <li>• Untapped potential in value chains (sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, goats).</li> <li>• Producers invest in assets (e.g., warehouses) but lack the ideas or funds to utilize them effectively.</li> <li>• Need for value addition and market linkage and difficulty accessing loans and registering small businesses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allowance for mobility and monitoring by DLRC decentralized staff at ADD level and allowance for mobility and monitoring by AEDOs decentralized staff at EPA level</li> <li>- FFS institutionalization and delivery</li> <li>- Agriculture Resource Centers</li> <li>- Additional equipment for improved localised forecasting</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder Coordination: Mobility challenges for sub-committees. Coordination issues at the district level. Need for orientation after recent elections.</li> <li>Changing rainfall patterns and long dry spells are affecting production. A lack of reliability and accuracy of daily weather forecasts.</li> <li>Research and Resource Centers: Lack of district agricultural resource centers. No longer have dedicated research officers in each district.</li> </ul>	
<b>Lilongwe East and West</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drought is the main issue, contributing to loss of fertility due to erosion.</li> <li>Women headed-households, PwD, HIV, poor, landless, youth headed-households are most vulnerable in crisis</li> <li>Low rate of extension worker training and collaboration with researchers.</li> <li>Low productivity and high post-harvest losses.</li> <li>High labour intensiveness to produce the required manure.</li> <li>Inadequate agriculture resource centers.</li> <li>Lack of assets (fridges, cooler boxes, syringes, protective equipment)</li> <li>PISCA information is too complex for farmers to understand and act upon.</li> <li>Inadequate agriculture resource centers</li> <li>Limited knowledge and skills in GIS and remote sensing coupled with inadequate Gadgets such as GPSs, laptops and tablets for landscape mapping.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mainstreaming of GCVCA methodology into planning process</li> <li>Small scale soil and water conservation measures</li> <li>Support to extension research feedback</li> <li>Climate information for decision making available at local level</li> <li>GIS equipment and training</li> </ul>
<b>Dowa East</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irregular rainfall, strong winds, stronger and more frequent lightning, pests and diseases, biodiversity loss. Impact of climate change on human health.</li> <li>Limited access to, control over and ownership of productive resources among vulnerable groups of farmers (especially women, youths, PWDs and elderly); making them stuck at subsistence farming level.</li> <li>High levels of environmental degradation due to deforestation, charcoal burning and unimproved farming practices.</li> <li>Poor linkages between research, extension and farmers.</li> <li>Farmers do not follow the DCCMS/DAES advice as have often already bought inputs.</li> <li>Poor linkages between research, extension and farmers</li> <li>The district has no staff conversant with landscape mapping- lacks GIS and remote sensing skills which impacts landscape planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mainstreaming of GCVCA methodology into planning process</li> <li>Implementation of GALS</li> <li>Women and youth prioritised in access to fuel-efficient woodstoves</li> <li>Support to extension research feedback</li> <li>Climate information for decision making available at local level</li> <li>Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> </ul>
<b>Mzimba South</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flash flooding, erratic rain and hail storms, prolonged drought and dry spells in rain shadow area (Bolero EPA) impact maize and soya production.</li> <li>Extension workers face challenges reaching all farmers due to rugged terrain, lack of transport (mostly push bikes).</li> <li>Limited SWC measures being implemented in some EPAs</li> <li>Botanical insecticides not certified</li> <li>Resource Constraints: Insufficient extension staff (ratio 1:3,000). Lack of essential tools: smartphones, laptops, protective clothing, and weighing materials.</li> <li>Dormant agricultural resource centres (ARCs) and limited weather stations.</li> <li>Farmers distrust information from DCCMS and DAES.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small scale soil and water conservation measures</li> <li>Support to extension research feedback</li> <li>Agriculture Resource Centers</li> <li>Climate information for decision making available at local level</li> </ul>
<b>Mzimba North</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited access to, control over and ownership of productive resources among vulnerable groups of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allowance for mobility and monitoring by DLRC decentralized staff at ADD level and allowance for mobility and</li> </ul>

	<p>farmers (especially women, youths, PWDs and elderly).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young female youths do not usually inherit land from their parents; as they are expected to move to their husbands' homes soon after getting married.</li> <li>• Low participation of women, youths and PWDs in planning and decision-making processes. Although the number of women members is high in most FOs and communities, their male counterparts usually dominate.</li> <li>• Unpredictable rainfall, deforestation, and warming affecting agriculture.</li> <li>• High farmer-to-extension worker ratio (1:3,000); many vacancies and inadequate capacity to disseminate new practices.</li> <li>• Extension workers struggle to reach all farmers due to terrain, lack of vehicles (most use push bikes).</li> <li>• High cost and prevalence of fake seeds/fertilizers; lack of credit facilities and farmers' banks.</li> <li>• Most staff have general agriculture certificates with little focus on climate change; need for refresher courses.</li> </ul>	<p>monitoring by AEDOs decentralized staff at EPA level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implementation of GALS</li> <li>- Disability inclusion facilitator implementation.</li> <li>- MoT refresher for climate adaptive FFS on crops and agroforestry</li> <li>- Support to extension research feedback</li> </ul>
<b>Community Level</b>		
<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Concern</b>	<b>Project response</b>
James, Bazale EPA		
Vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intelligibility of climate information. Unsuitability of information presentation to hearing/visually impaired.</li> <li>• Farmers are unable to produce the local varieties that were previously grown due to changing climate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planting material available to support resilience through agrobiodiversity</li> <li>- Participatory Scenario Planning</li> </ul>
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing prices and food insecurity. Women headed households are particularly vulnerable.</li> <li>• Unable to produce enough manure for requirements.</li> <li>• Lack market infrastructure such as warehouses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adapted inputs and resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers</li> <li>- Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> <li>- Construction of climate-proof storage structures and associated training</li> </ul>
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of water during dry season. Lack assets to commercialise (warehouses for storage, solar pump, value add equipment).</li> <li>• Low sale prices due to lack of collectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Construction of climate-proof storage structures and associated training</li> <li>- Agricultural Resource Centres</li> </ul>
Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of storage and value-adding facilities.</li> <li>• High cost of fuel for usage in irrigation</li> <li>• Affordability of fuel for use in small-scale irrigation.</li> <li>• Intelligibility of climate information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Construction of climate-proof storage structures and associated training</li> <li>- Small scale water infrastructure and irrigation schemes</li> <li>- Digital Advisory Broadcasting</li> </ul>
Sonkhwe, Nyanja EPA		
Vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low water levels in rivers</li> <li>• Low productivity</li> <li>• Increase in incidence of diseases due to depletion of trees having medicinal values</li> <li>Late and erratic rains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level</li> <li>- Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> </ul>
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry spells, pest infestation, soil erosion are all issues they are facing.</li> <li>• Groundnuts particularly sensitive to climate change.</li> <li>• Lack of reliable markets means reliant on vendors and not receiving higher prices for crops.</li> <li>• Lack of land is a big problem; there is not enough for a growing community, and they do not have the capital to rent more.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level</li> </ul> <p>All activities under Outcome 2: Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems outputs and activities</p>

Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry spells and erratic rains</li> <li>• High input prices which limit access</li> <li>• Poorly equipped agriculture resource centres</li> <li>• Lack of resources mean they are unable to diversify their income sources.</li> <li>• Low participation in farmers organisations.</li> <li>• Low/no usage of bio inputs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level</li> <li>All activities under Outcome 2: Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems outputs and activities</li> </ul>
Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of adequate grazing areas due to climate change, which has reduced the growth of pasture in communal grazing areas.</li> <li>• Disease control in livestock, particularly Newcastle disease, and theft.</li> <li>• Lack of irrigation, many dambo areas that were previously used for horticultural production have dried up.</li> <li>• Farmers lack reliable markets to sell their produce at profitable prices, which affects their ability to buy inputs for the next growing season</li> <li>• Farmers experience post-harvest losses due to harvesting before crops fully dry in the field to avoid theft and delays in applying chemicals for post-harvest pests such as weevils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level</li> <li>- FFS Institutionalization and delivery</li> <li>- Construction of climate-proof storage structures and associated training</li> <li>- Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> </ul>
<b>Mphangwe, Malingunde EPA</b>		
Vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of food and nutrition security.</li> <li>• Indigenous Local Knowledge is often used to predict weather, but it is hard to predict for erratic rain.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhance the FFS curriculum</li> <li>- FFS Institutionalization and delivery</li> <li>- Climate information for decision making available at local level</li> </ul>
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of climate change on crops and increasing pest infection.</li> <li>• Cost of inputs and equipment.</li> <li>• Livestock diseases and theft.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adapted inputs and resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers</li> <li>- Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> </ul>
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability to raise enough capital to buy more land.</li> <li>• Soil erosion and degradation due to heavy rains.</li> <li>• High poverty levels which are fuelling charcoal production.</li> <li>• Low prices for produce due to selling through vendors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level</li> <li>- Youth prioritised in construction of climate proof storage structures</li> </ul>
Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low productivity as a result of climate change.</li> <li>• Difficult to access good quality agricultural inputs.</li> <li>• Disease control for livestock, limited livestock extension workers, communal grazing areas drying up due to climate change</li> <li>• Post harvest losses due to early harvests to avoid theft and post harvest pests</li> <li>• Early rains irrigation farming difficult during dry season</li> <li>• High levels of land degradation due to deforestation and poor agricultural practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed</li> <li>- Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> </ul>
<b>Mnjere, Central Mvera EPA</b>		
Vulnerable groups	N/A	N/A
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced water availability, low water table, and high pest infestation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funerals, school fees, illness, and farm input shortages contribute to food insecurity.</li> </ul>	- Planting material available to support resilience through agrobiodiversity
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Problems include dog attacks on chickens, diseases (NCD, ORF for goats, swine fever), theft, and feed shortages.</li> <li>Need for more agricultural extension officers and agricultural resource centre.</li> <li>Clubs exist but need formal structures to access credit and other benefits.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction of climate-proof storage structures and associated training</li> <li>Agricultural Resource Centres</li> <li>Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> </ul>
Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post-harvest losses: Losses due to weevils, rats, mice, theft, and transportation challenges.</li> <li>Inputs for farming are expensive and often bought from distant agro-dealers, making access difficult due to low-income levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction of climate-proof storage structures and associated training</li> <li>Agricultural Resource Centres</li> </ul>
<b>Dzoole, Mndolera EPA</b>		
Vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Underutilised their farmland due to limited capital and labour constraints.</li> <li>Mobility issues, lack of assistive devices or tools to support PWDs.</li> <li>Discrimination against PWDs and PLHIV due to some cultural practices, prejudice and ignorance of their statuses and abilities.</li> <li>Limited access among PLHIV to access nutritious and diversified foods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the FFS curriculum</li> <li>FFS Institutionalization and delivery</li> <li>Disability inclusion facilitator implementation.</li> </ul>
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water scarcity, flooding, soil degradation, pests and diseases.</li> <li>Maize, soya, groundnuts and common beans are impacted by changing climate.</li> <li>Low participation in leadership positions and critical decision-making processes despite their high membership in farmer organizations or institutions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed</li> <li>Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> </ul>
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low technical adaptive capacity of rural youths to impacts of climate change and environmental degradation</li> <li>Alcohol and drug (especially Indian hemp) abuse due to limited employment opportunities.</li> <li>Land degradation due to soil erosion</li> <li>Low water levels</li> <li>Pests and diseases</li> <li>Limited income forces youth to turn to deforestation and charcoal burning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed</li> <li>Enhance the FFS curriculum</li> <li>FFS Institutionalization and delivery</li> <li>Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> </ul>
Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Depletion of water resources for the past 10 years means it is hard to carry out irrigation farming along the rivers</li> <li>Degradation of upper catchments which affect the lower catchments</li> <li>High cost of inputs especially seeds and fertilizers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed</li> <li>Small scale water infrastructure and irrigation schemes</li> </ul>
<b>Dimi, Vibangalala EPA</b>		
Vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land degradation</li> <li>Poor access to animal health services</li> </ul>	- Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor access to production inputs</li> <li>Increased incidence of witchweed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planting material available to support resilience through agrobiodiversity</li> <li>Initial kits for FFS on Agroforestry</li> </ul>
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dry spells, declining and erratic rain, wind, hailstorms, flash flooding.</li> </ul>	All project activities seek to support climate adaptation of local livelihoods and ecosystems
Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pests and diseases</li> <li>Drying up of water bodies</li> <li>More weather stations needed for better data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector</li> <li>Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> </ul>
<b>Enyezini, Emsizini EPA</b>		

Vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excessive heat leads to heavy rain which fells the crops.</li> <li>• Dry spells increase the number of pests.</li> <li>• Maize and chicken are most effected.</li> <li>• Inaccuracy of climate information</li> <li>• Land degradation due to soil erosion</li> <li>• Drying up of water bodies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small scale soil and water conservation measures</li> <li>- Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> </ul>
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry spells</li> <li>• Low water levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Small scale soil and water conservation measures</li> </ul>
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to inputs</li> <li>• Poverty which fuels charcoal production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Youth cooperatives prioritised for tree nurseries</li> <li>- Youth prioritised in construction of climate proofed structures</li> </ul>
Men	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unreliable climate information: Extension workers receive climate info via TV and cell phones, but it's often not reliable. No permanent rain gauges.</li> <li>• Maize, beans, and soya yields are affected by drought, poor rainfall, pests (fall army worm, wire worm), and lack of inputs.</li> <li>• Poultry suffer from Newcastle disease, fowl pox, and others; pigs from African swine fever; cattle from East Coast Fever and other diseases</li> <li>• Significant deforestation and large gullies needing rehabilitation</li> <li>• Few water sources: shallow wells collapse due to soil instability.</li> <li>• Market access: Poor prices for crops like soya; need better</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Resilient practices for small livestock rearing</li> <li>- Small scale soil and water conservation measures</li> </ul>

**AF SCRIP detailed design mission Schedule**

Date	Day	Time	Activity	Stakeholders	Location	Facilitator/ Lead
21 September	Sunday		SCRIP Mission's Arrival		Hotel TBD	
22 September	Monday		<b>Courtesy Calls</b>			
		08:00 – 09:00	Courtesy Call -IFAD Country Director	Mission Team, SAPP II NPC	IFAD Office	IFAD
		09:00 - 10:00	Courtesy call at Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)	MoA, Mission Team, SAPP II NPC	PS's office	PS
		10:00 – 11:00	Courtesy call at Ministry of Finance	MoA, Mission Team, SAPP II NPC	Min of Finance	MoA PS
		11:00 – 12:30	Mission briefing / Bilateral discussions	Key departments & Agencies	SAPP II PMU & Departments Head Offices	Consultant/Mission Leader
		<b>12:30 – 14:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>			
		14:00 – 17:00	- National level stakeholders consultations	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU, Key departments & Agencies	SAPP II PMU	- IFAD - Consultant/Mission Leader
23 September	Tuesday	07:00 – 10:00	Travel to Balaka	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		All
		10:00-10:30	Security Briefing	Mission Team	UNDSS, Evelyn Court	IFAD with PMU Logistics Support for Mollie, Clemence, Mutizwa, Junko
		10:30 – 12:30	Machinga ADD & Balaka District Stakeholders Consultations	MADD PM, Balaka District Stakeholders, Mission Team, SAPP II PMU	Balaka District Council	Consultant/Mission Leader
		<b>12:30 – 14:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>			
		14:00 – 16:30	Continuation of Balaka District Stakeholders Consultations	Balaka District Stakeholders, Mission Team, SAPP II PMU	Balaka District Council	Consultant/Mission Leader
		16:30 – 17:30	Travel to Liwonde (for lodging / overnight stay)	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		All
24 September	Wednesday	07:00 – 8:00	Travel to Balaka	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		All
		8:00 – 9:00	Finalization of Balaka District Stakeholders Consultations	Balaka District Stakeholders, Mission Team, SAPP II PMU	Balaka District Council	Consultant/Mission Leader
		9:00 – 10:00	Travel to Bazale EPA for FGDs	Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	James Section	District officials
		10:00 – 12:00	Conduct FGDs	Community stakeholders, Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	James Section	Consultant/Mission Leader
		<b>12:00 – 13:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>			
		13:30 – 15:30	Travel to Lilongwe	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		All

<b>25 September</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	08:00 – 12:30	Lilongwe ADD, and Lilongwe East and West Consultations	Lilongwe PM, Lilongwe District Stakeholders, Mission Team, SAPP II PMU	- Lilongwe District Council - Lilongwe ADD	Consultant/Mission Leader
		<b>12:30 – 13:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>			
		13:30 – 14:30	Travel to Nyanja EPA in Lilongwe East for FGDs	Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	Sonkhwe Section	District officials
		14:30 – 16:30	Conduct FGDs	Community stakeholders, Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	Sonkhwe Section	Consultant/Mission Leader
		16:30 – 17:30	Travel back to LL City	All		
		17:30 – 18:30	Mission Check-in 1	All	Virtual	IFAD
<b>26 September</b>	<b>Friday</b>	7:00 – 8:00	Travel to Malingunde EPA in Lilongwe West for FGDs	Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	Mphangwe Section	District officials
		8:00 – 10:00	Conduct FGDs	Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	Mphangwe Section	Consultant/Mission Leader
		<b>10:00 – 12:30</b>	<b>Early Lunch (incl travel to suitable lunch spot)</b>			
		12:30 – 14:00	Travel to Mvera EPA in Dowa East	Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	Mnjere Central Section	District officials
		14:00 – 16:00	Conduct FGDs	Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	Mnjere Central Section	Consultant/Mission Leader
		16:00 – 17:30	Travel to Lilongwe	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		IFAD
<b>28 September</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	8:00 – 13:00	Travel to Mzuzu	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		IFAD
<b>29 September</b>	<b>Monday</b>	08:00 – 12:30	Mzuzu ADD and Mzimba North Stakeholders Consultation	MZADD PM, Mzimba North Stakeholders, Mission Team, SAPP II PMU	Mzuzu ADD Office	Consultant/Mission Leader
		<b>12:30 – 13:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>			
		13:30 – 14:00	Travel to Emsizini EPA for FGD	Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	Enyezini Section	District officials
		14:00 – 16:00	Conduct FGDs in Emsizini EPA	Community stakeholders, Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	Enyezini Section	Consultant/Mission Leader
<b>30 September</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	07:00-08:00	Travel to Mzimba Boma	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		All
		08:00 – 12:00	Mzimba South Stakeholders consultations	Mzimba South Stakeholders, Mission Team, SAPP II PMU	M'mbelwa District Council (Mzimba Boma)	Consultant/Mission Leader
		<b>12:00 – 13:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>			
		13:00 – 14:30	Travel to Vibangalala EPA for FGDs	Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU,	Dimi Section	District officials

		14:30 – 16:00	Conduct FGDs in Vibangalala EPA	Community stakeholders, Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU,	Dimi Section	Consultant/Mission Leader	
		16:00 – 18:00	Travel to Kasungu District	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		All	
<b>01 October</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	07:00-08:00	Travel to Dowa West	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		All	
		08:00 – 12:30	Kasungu ADD and Dowa West Consultations	Kasungu PM, Dowa West Stakeholders, Mission Team, SAPP II PMU	Dowa West Agriculture Office	Consultant/Mission Leader	
		<b>12:30 – 13:30</b>	<b>Lunch</b>				
		13:30 - 14:30	Travel to Mndolera EPA in Dowa West for FGDs	Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	Dzoole Section	District officials	
		14:30 – 16:00	Conduct FGDs in Mndolera EPA	Community stakeholders, Mission Team, District Officials (2x), SAPP II PMU	Dzoole Sections	Consultant/Mission Leader	
		16:00 – 17:30	Travel to Lilongwe	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		All	
<b>02 October</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	07:00 – 08:00	Travel to Dowa Boma	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		All	
		08:00 – 12:00	Dowa East Stakeholders consultations	Dowa East Stakeholders, Mission Team, SAPP II PMU	Dowa East: District Council (Dowa Boma)	Consultant/Mission Leader	
		<b>12:00 – 13:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>				
		13:00 – 14:00	Travel to Lilongwe	Mission Team, SAPP II PMU		IFAD	
		14:00 – 16:00	Continuation of national level stakeholders consultations <b>WFP at 14:00</b>	Ministries, Departments, Mission Team, SAPP II PMU	Lilongwe	Consultant/Mission Leader	
16:00 – 17:00	Mission Check-in 2	All	Virtual	IFAD			
<b>03 October</b>	<b>Friday</b>	08:00 – 12:00	Finalization of national level stakeholders consultations <b>09:00 - World Bank</b> <b>11:00 - Mission de-Brief with AF NDA</b>	Ministries, Departments, Mission Team, SAPP II PMU	Lilongwe	Consultant/Mission Leader	
		<b>12:00 – 13:00</b>	<b>Lunch</b>				
		13:00 – 16:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>14:00 - UNDP Tentative</b></li> <li>• Consolidation of findings</li> <li>• Drafting Aide Memoire</li> </ul>	All			
<b>04 October</b>	<b>Saturday</b>		<b>SCRIP Mission's Departure</b>				
<b>11 October</b>	<b>Friday</b>	11:00 – 12:00	<b>Final Debrief</b>	All	Virtual	IFAD	

## Annex 2: Environmental and Social Management Plan

### I. Summary description of the project

**Country.** 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<sup>2</sup>, 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). Agriculture is highly rainfed dependent.

**Poverty.** Over 70% of the population lives below the international poverty line of \$1.90/day, driven by abject poverty and recurrent climate related shocks<sup>96</sup>. Extreme poverty remains high compared to the rest of sub-Saharan Africa (69% compared to 42% in 2016 (World Bank Development Research Group, 2021)). Nine million people (50.7%) were living in poverty in 2019 compared to 8.4 million in 2016. The vast majority (94%) of poor Malawians live in rural areas, making the rural poverty rate almost three times higher than the poverty rate in urban areas (57% and 19% respectively). The poverty rate in the rural North is much lower (36%) than in the Rural South and Rural Centre (57% and 63%, respectively). These areas are also home to 92% of those in extreme poverty.

In the project area, household income average K580,803 (\$323) annually (\$0.88/day), with K329,961 (\$183) from crop farming. Additional income sources included livestock, remittances, and small businesses. Notably, female-headed households were disproportionately represented in the lowest two wealth quintiles, highlighting gender-based disparities.

**Agriculture.** 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. 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.

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.<sup>97</sup> 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.

In the project area, consistent with the national trend, cropping systems were predominantly maize-based, with 98% of all sampled farmers growing maize, often intercropped with legumes or other cash crops. Soybeans were the second most common crop, grown by 39% of farmers in the 2023/24 season, followed by groundnuts at 32%. Average yields were low, with maize output at 1,248 kg per household and as low as 224 kg in some areas, mainly due to erratic rainfall linked to El Niño in the 2023/24 season. Use of weather-based planning was minimal, at only 4%. Post-harvest storage was dominated by use of bags, and

<sup>96</sup> 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,reliaance%20on%20weak%20livelihood%20strategies>

<sup>97</sup> Feed the Future (2019). Fall Armyworm Management for Maize Smallholders in Malawi: An Integrated Pest Management Strategic Plan

while most farmers engaged in markets, the quantities sold were too small for viable commercial activity, except in a few value chains.

**Climate change.** 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.

The World Bank (2018)<sup>98</sup> 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)<sup>99</sup>. 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<sup>100</sup>. 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.

In the project area, drought/dry spells are the most frequently reported across all districts and household types. It is further noted that rising temperatures are widely reported with Mzimba north showing the highest percentage (46%). In terms of flooding, there is variation across districts with Dowa west showing the highest percent of flooding at 30%.

**Project approach and theory of change.** Malawi is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Its predominantly rural population depends on land, water, and forest resources for livelihoods that are increasingly under pressure from rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, recurrent droughts, and destructive floods. These climate hazards exacerbate already fragile ecosystems, accelerating soil erosion, deforestation, and loss of biodiversity, and reducing the productivity of both rainfed farming and livestock systems. As ecosystems degrade, farming and communities depending on natural resources become trapped in a cycle of vulnerability, where short-term coping mechanisms (such as charcoal production, unsustainable cultivation on steep slopes, and overgrazing), further intensifying environmental degradation.

Smallholder farmers and livestock keepers are therefore at the centre of Malawi's climate challenge. Their resilience determines not only household food security but also the long-term health of the country's natural resource base. Recurrent climate shocks have eroded assets, reduced yields, and undermined livelihoods, disproportionately affecting women, youth, and persons with disabilities. Women, in particular, face additional burdens due to their roles in water and fuel collection, caregiving responsibilities, and limited access to productive resources and information.

SCRIP responds to these interlinked challenges by supporting the transition from unsustainable land and water use toward integrated and climate-resilient landscape management. The project promotes an approach that couples ecosystem restoration and sustainable resource management (Component 1) with resilient and diversified smallholder production systems (Component 2), underpinned by enhanced access to climate information for decision-making (Component 3).

- Under **Component 1**, SCRIP will restore degraded watersheds and enhance the services they provide to downstream farming communities. Participatory planning processes will identify and implement priority measures (such as reforestation, assisted natural regeneration, soil and water

<sup>98</sup> World Bank (2018). Climate Change Management Portal for Development Practitioners and Policy Makers. <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/malawi/extremes>

<sup>99</sup> Department of Disaster Management Affairs (2015). Post Disaster Needs Assessment Report. Lilongwe, Malawi.

<sup>100</sup> WFP (2024). Reliefweb: <https://reliefweb.int/report/malawi/wfp-urges-global-support-malawi-faces-looming-food-crisis-triggered-el-nino>

conservation structures, and protection of riverbanks) while strengthening local governance through VDCs and VNRMCs.

- Under **Component 2**, the project will enhance the resilience of farming and livestock systems by promoting climate-smart agricultural practices through Farmer Field Schools, introducing improved crop and livestock management techniques, and investing in small-scale irrigation and post-harvest storage infrastructure. These activities will be complemented by targeted support for women and youth to reduce vulnerability and promote equitable participation in the local economy.
- Finally, **Component 3** will strengthen national and local systems for climate information and early warning, improving the accuracy, accessibility, and usability of agrometeorological and disaster risk management data. By linking the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services (DCCMS), the Department of Agricultural Extension Services (DAES), and the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA) within a coordinated framework, the project will ensure that reliable, actionable climate information reaches farmers, extension officers, and local institutions in a timely and trusted manner.

Through this integrated approach, SCRP will enhance the resilience of both ecosystems and livelihoods, ensuring that rural communities in Malawi can adapt to a changing climate while safeguarding the natural resource base on which their future depends.

## II. Screening and categorization

### i) ESP Screening and categorization

SCRP is expected to have an overall positive environmental and social impact, particularly through its focus on restoring degraded catchments, enhancing ecosystem services, and supporting inclusive climate-resilient livelihoods. The project applies a landscape-based, participatory approach to catchment and community development, with strong attention to social inclusion and governance. Key interventions with positive environmental and social impacts include: nature-based and climate-smart infrastructure such as small-scale water harvesting and erosion control structures; productive restoration activities such as afforestation, fodder woodlots, and compost-based soil improvement; participatory catchment governance, with support to implement 70 climate-resilient Village Level Action Plans (VLAPs); capacity building for inclusive adaptation planning using the GALS and GCVCA methodologies; and gender-sensitive support to agroecology, agroforestry, and seed systems through Farmer Field Schools and seedbanks and demonstrations. The project also promotes inclusive access to early warning and climate information services under Component 3, ensuring that vulnerable households (including those headed by women, youth, and persons with disabilities) are equipped to make proactive adaptation decisions.

Following the risk assessment detailed in section III below, the project corresponds to a **Category B** project, equivalent to a **Moderate Risk** under the IFAD SECAP (see part II. ii) hereunder). While the project does not involve activities with high potential for harming people or the environment and the locations are not environmentally or socially sensitive, there are some potential minor adverse impacts are largely predictable and expected to be temporary or reversible. The scale of interventions is modest and primarily involves community-based activities such as sustainable land management, soil and water conservation, afforestation, and the promotion of climate-resilient pastoral and agricultural practices, all of which are site-specific with a low likelihood of impacts extending beyond the project lifecycle. The risks and impacts associated with SCRP are manageable and can be mitigated in a predictable manner through the measures elaborated in the ESMP for the project

**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. Specific catchments were identified with geographical coordinates associated, so that the project intervention could be screened and mapped to identify all site-specific environmental and social risks (in particular with regards to ESP 9, 10 and 14). As such, the project is not considered to include USPs.

Checklist of environmental	No further assessment	Potential impacts and risks – further assessment and management required for compliance
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and social principles	required for compliance	
ESP 1. Compliance with the Law	X	<b>LOW.</b> The project, as formulated, complies with all national laws and standards. The project will be executed by a team hired under the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry's departments and staff. Risk of non-compliance could come from service providers that will be contracted during implementation for (i.e. for pesticide handling, small-scale watershed infrastructure works, and seed systems). Compliance by service providers will be ensured through contractual arrangements and procurement systems driven by the Ministry of Agriculture.
ESP 2. Access and Equity	X	<b>LOW.</b> The identified risk is low and fully mitigated by the project's approach, including its targeting strategy and its gender strategy and action plan, building on the experience of IFAD and other partners in the country. The project's participatory and inclusive approach will enable fair and equitable access to project benefits to all participants, including marginalised and vulnerable groups, who meet the project eligibility criteria. Affirmative action to ensure women and youth participation will be taken to ensure 50% of the beneficiaries are women and 30% are youth. Direct risks could arise from an improper targeting approach, leaving out most vulnerable groups including women, youth, People with Disabilities (including with HIV/AIDS). 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. Participation of the project target groups will be closely monitored through the M&E system. The Grievance Redress Mechanism is also an avenue in case individuals and/or communities who feel excluded or marginalized from project benefits.
ESP 3. Marginalized and Vulnerable Groups	X	<b>LOW.</b> 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). Direct risks could arise from improperly engaging most vulnerable groups including women, youth and PWDs. Their limited voice and decision making may render their engagement difficult resulting in insufficient tailoring of activities to their specific needs. The project includes a dedicated Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy (Annex 4), and introduces Disability Inclusion Facilitators to engage vulnerable groups in FFS and PSP activities. In this way, the project will ensure participation and equal access to resources. Additionally, this project will respect land, property and customary rights.
ESP 4. Human Rights	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> 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	X	<b>LOW.</b> Direct risks could arise from an improper targeting approach and engagement or pervasive cultural norms, 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. Key considerations have been taken into account through the Gender Assessment 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 SCRCP specifically for their potential to reduce women workloads.
ESP 6. Core Labour Rights	X	<b>LOW.</b> The project will ensure respect for international and national labour laws and codes, as stated in IFAD's policies, including through provisions in contracts with service providers (e.g. adherence to workers code of conduct and sensitization on GBV). The project will approach production with a subsistence rather than commercial perspective. The project does not operate in sectors or value chains where child labour was evident in the past. SCRCP will be bound by ILO Regulations, the Malawi Labour Act (GoM 2000) and Malawi Employment Act (2014). The project will raise awareness and forbid children's work among beneficiaries. Complaints if any will be addressed through the Grievance redress mechanism
ESP 7. Indigenous Peoples	X	<b>NOT APPLICABLE.</b> 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. Minorities will be engaged in all project activities through its participatory processes.
ESP 8. Involuntary Resettlement	X	<b>NOT APPLICABLE.</b> 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. 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	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> Project activities are conceived to restore ecosystems, thereby enhancing their climate resilience, and will benefit natural habitats as a result. Each project site was mapped to confirm there is no 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. VLAPs will be screened to ensure the suggested investments comply with Malawi National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management (2016) (avoiding encroachment into ecologically sensitive zones; maintaining natural vegetation along protected area boundaries, and ensuring upstream restoration does not lead to human pressure inside protected areas.)
ESP 10. Conservation of Biological Diversity	X	<b>MODERATE RISK.</b> The activities of this project will not adversely impact the conservation of biological diversity. The activities are designed to restore and support the conservation of biological diversity and natural resources. There is a small risk that reforestation activities (but also antierosive measures relying on revegetation and reseeded) are 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 the Seed Act. It will also abide by the Standards & Guidelines for Participatory Forestry in Malawi, which specify species to be promoted. It will only use native or proven locally adapted and non-invasive species of trees and crops.
ESP 11. Climate Change	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> The project's interventions do not involve large scale agriculture, construction works, nor large afforestation requiring extensive land preparation. Only livestock supported are small stock. Additionally, the project was designed to contribute to reduced GHG emissions, through net sequestration benefits thanks to climate resilient agriculture practices that

		improve soil fertility and afforestation activities, both increasing carbon capture. The project also avoids further emissions by promoting clean energy technologies such as solar (in storage, ARCs, etc) and improved cookstoves that contribute to reduce deforestation rates.
ESP 12. Prevention and Resource Efficiency	X	<b>LOW RISK.</b> Release of pollutants to the environment in significant quantities is not expected to result from the project, as fertilizers and pesticides are not widely used in these areas (only 2-5% of target group implement pest control). SCRIP will also promote agroecology practices, including integrated pest management, composting and manure management. Resource efficiency for water, timber and non-timber forest products as a result of the combined activities planned under the project should improve. As the project focuses on refurbishing existing infrastructure and focuses veterinary activities on small livestock, only minimal waste pollution is expected.
ESP 13. Public Health	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> The project is expected to have an overall beneficial impact on public health with the restoration of the physical environment, enhanced food security thanks to climate resilient practices, possible diet diversification thanks to increased incomes and NWFP value chains providing nutritional benefits, reduced aflatoxin thanks to improved storage structures, reduced exposure to smoke thanks to improved stoves and reduced risk of zoonosis thanks to improved animal health and access to veterinary services resulting from the demonstrations in livestock management. The project will improve all the determinants of health as listed by the World Health Organization (WHO) FFS facilitators will be trained in safe tool/chemical handling. PPE and first aid for field staff will be provided.
ESP 14. Physical and Cultural Heritage	X	<b>NO RISK.</b> The project is not expected to have negative impacts on the physical and cultural heritage of Malawi. A mapping of targeted villages confirms no site of cultural significance are at risk in the project area.
ESP 15. Lands and Soil Conservation	X	<b>LOW RISK.</b> 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. Erosion is also expected to be limited through improved vegetation cover in micro-catchment and on the field, reducing soil loss. Only small and localised impacts may occur if the practices promoted are not adopted successfully. Even then, impacts are not expected to be different than the baseline scenario without the project.

## ii) Alignment between ESP/AF and SECAP/IFAD

IFAD's Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) were approved by the Executive Board and became effective in 2015. They were updated in 2017 and 2021. These procedures defined an improved course of action for assessing social, environmental and climate risks to enhance the sustainability of country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs), country strategy notes (CSNs), programmes and projects. SECAP along with its 9 Social, Environmental and Climate Standards, sets out the mandatory requirements and other elements that must be integrated throughout the project life cycle. The 2021 updated version (i) draws on lessons learned in SECAP's implementation since 2017; (ii) clarifies the mandatory and non-mandatory requirements applicable to IFAD-supported investments; (iii) further aligns IFAD's environmental and social standards and practices with those of other multilateral financial institutions; (iv) reflects IFAD's complementary policies<sup>101</sup> and climate mainstreaming agenda; (v) enables IFAD's continued access to international environment and climate financing; and (vi) accounts for IFAD's new commitments and upgraded internal processes. All IFAD projects entering the pipeline are subject to an environmental, social and climate risk screening, and are assigned a risk category for environment and

<sup>101</sup> Including, but not restricted, to policies on targeting (2006), gender equality and women's empowerment (2012), indigenous peoples (2009). Available at: [www.ifad.org/operations/policy/policydocs.htm](http://www.ifad.org/operations/policy/policydocs.htm)

social risks (High, Substantial, Moderate or Low), and for climate risks (High, Substantial, Moderate or Low). These findings, along with subsequent analysis and assessments, must be reflected in the project's SECAP review note and project documents. Projects with "**Low environment and social Risk**" and "**Low**" climate risk do not require any further analysis.

**Moderate Risk** projects require: (i) the final SECAP review note and ESCMP, indicating how potential risks and impacts can be avoided or mitigated; and (ii) an environmental and social monitoring programme. Projects classified Moderate Risk for climate require a basic climate analysis.

For projects with **High and Substantial environmental and social risks and impacts**, the due diligence process entails a critical review of the documentation provided by the borrower/recipient/partner. This should involve site visits and interviews with project representatives and other stakeholders by independent environmental and social specialists. These specialists should gain first-hand knowledge of the project and meet with representatives of affected groups to discuss environmental and social concerns, and information needs. This provides IFAD with a more holistic view of the project's major environmental and social risks and impacts, and the project's mitigation resources. For Substantial Risk projects, a formal SECAP review note or abbreviated ESCMF is required. For High Risk projects, an Environmental, Social and Climate Management Framework or Environmental and Social Impact Assessment are required. These should also incorporate an ESCMP. In addition, thematic studies or plans can be required for substantial and high risk projects. These can include a Resettlement Action Framework or Plan (RAF or RAP), Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP), FPIC implementation Plan, Pesticide Management Plan (PMP), etc.

For projects that are screened as "substantial" for climate risks, a Targeted Adaptation Assessment is required. For projects classified as "high", a detailed vulnerability impact and adaptation assessment is required. These assessments aim to quantify risks, identify related adaptation options and ways to integrate them into the project design.

IFAD SECAP includes 9 Standards, for which detailed guidance is provided in 9 corresponding Guidance Notes (GN) with: (i) an introduction to each subject, (ii) key steps, roles and responsibilities, objectives and background, (iii) criteria for environmental screening in IFAD projects; (iv) potential mitigation and adaptation plans and measures for controlling adverse impacts, (v) monitoring project implementation. The SECAP also includes a 10<sup>th</sup> guidance note that provides an overview of the importance of IFAD's mainstreaming commitments and highlights entry points for promoting mainstreaming along the project cycle. IFAD's mainstreaming commitments are related to environmental sustainability, climate finance, gender equality, women and youth empowerment and improved nutrition.

The following table provides some information about the relation between AF ESP Principles and IFAD SECAP (for further information, visit <https://www.ifad.org/topic/gef/secap/overview>).

AF ESP Guidance Principle	IFAD SECAP Standards, Guiding Values and Principles
<b>ESP 1 Compliance with the Law</b>	SECAP requires that activities in the framework of the IFAD financed projects or programmes meet IFAD's safeguard policy guidance, comply with applicable national laws and regulations (labour, health, safety, etc.) and international laws and treaties, and the prohibited investment activities list produced by the International Finance Corporation is adhered to. Project design should review: (i) current national policies, legislation and legislative instruments governing environmental management health, gender and social welfare, climate change (mitigation and adaptation) and governance with their implementation structures, identify challenges, and recommend appropriate changes for effective implementation; (ii) all relevant international treaties and conventions on the environment, climate change, health, gender, labour and human rights to which the country is a signatory.
<b>ESP 2 Access and Equity</b>	Access and Equity is a cross-cutting issue in all the 9 SECAP standards. SECAP requires that projects and programmes ensure the participation of target groups and equitable distribution of benefits. When projects result in physical or economic displacement (affecting access and user rights to land and other resources), the borrower or grant recipient should obtain FPIC from the affected people, document stakeholder engagement and consultation process and prepare resettlement plans or frameworks. The documents must be disclosed in a timely and accessible manner at the QA or relevant implementation stage.

	<p><b>Standard 2 – Resource efficiency and pollution prevention</b> highlights that Sustainable management requires that people who are dependent on these resources are properly consulted, enabled to participate in development and share equitably in the benefits of that development, and indicates that IFAD promotes an integrated water resources management approach that seeks the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximize economic and social welfare in an equitable manner and without compromising the sustainability of ecosystems.</p> <p><b>Standard 3 – Cultural Heritage</b> includes the following objective: promote the equitable sharing of benefits from the use of Cultural Heritage.</p> <p><b>Standard 4 – Indigenous People</b> includes the following objective: ensure indigenous peoples obtain fair and equitable benefits and opportunities from supported activities in a culturally appropriate and inclusive manner.</p> <p><b>IFAD’s mainstreaming themes in the project cycle guidance note</b> highlights that projects should aim at Expanding women’s economic empowerment through access to and control of productive assets and benefits.</p>
<b>ESP 3 Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups.</b>	<p>Marginalized and Vulnerable Groups is a cross-cutting issue in all the 9 SECAP standards, as such groups are also the primary target of IFAD interventions. A robust SECAP process requires attention to social dimensions such as land tenure, community health, safety, labour, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, and historical factors, particularly in relation to natural resource management. It not only looks at compliance (e.g. managing potential negative impacts), but expected positive impacts and ways to maximize opportunities. To assure a good contribution to the quality of SECAP, project design should assess the socio-economic and cultural profile, including key issues relating to disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, conflict, migration, employment and livelihoods. Consultation with communities and stakeholders must be maintained throughout the project lifecycle, especially in high-risk projects. For investment projects with a projected high sensitivity to climate hazards, IFAD requires a climate vulnerability analysis which can help to improve the targeting of investment actions to include the most vulnerable and least resilient target groups.</p> <p>Other IFAD policies that support and complement this principle are: Improving Access to Land Tenure Security Policy, Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Policy, Engagement with Indigenous Peoples Policy, Targeting Policy, Youth Policy Brief, Climate Change Strategy, Rural Enterprise Policy, Rural Finance Policy, Private Sector Strategy.</p>
<b>ESP 4 Human Rights</b>	<p>Human Rights is a cross-cutting issue in all the 9 SECAP standards. Among the Guiding Principles and Specific Requirements for IFAD’s Social Environmental Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP), is the principle to “<i>support the efforts of borrowers/recipients/ partners to respect human rights, avoiding infringement on any human rights and addressing adverse human rights risks and impacts caused by clients’ business activities</i>”.</p>
<b>ESP 5 Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment</b>	<p>Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment is a cross-cutting issue in all the 9 SECAP Standards.</p> <p><b>IFAD’s mainstreaming themes in the project cycle guidance note</b> provides an overview of the importance of IFAD’s mainstreaming commitments (including gender equality, women and youth empowerment); highlights entry points for promoting mainstreaming along the project cycle; proposes the use of assessments which – even if they may be focused on risk assessment and management – are opportunities for mainstreaming; and provides an overview of inventories of key sources of data, tools, methods and approaches that have been found useful.</p>
<b>ESP 6 Core Labour Rights</b>	<p>Core Labour Rights is a cross-cutting issue in all the 9 Standards. A robust SECAP process requires attention to social dimensions such as land tenure, community health, safety, labour, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, and historical factors, particularly in relation to natural resource management. One of the guiding values and principles for SECAP is to minimize adverse social impacts and incorporate externalities. Avoid and mitigate any potential adverse impacts on health and safety, labour and working conditions and well-being of workers and local communities.</p> <p>The requirements set out in <b>Standard 5 – Labour and working conditions</b> are designed to achieve the following objectives:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Promote direct action to foster decent rural employment;</li> <li>(ii) Promote, respect and realize fundamental principles and rights at work through preventing discrimination and promoting equal opportunity of workers; supporting freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; and preventing the use of child labour and forced labour;</li> <li>(iii) Protect and promote the safety and health of workers;</li> <li>(iv) Ensure projects comply with national employment and labour laws and international commitments; and</li> <li>(v) Leave no one behind by protecting and supporting workers in disadvantaged and vulnerable situations, including a special focus, as appropriate, on women workers, young workers, migrant workers, workers in the informal economy and workers with disabilities</li> </ul>
<p><b>ESP 7 Indigenous People</b></p>	<p><b>Standard 4 – Indigenous People</b> is a cornerstone to IFAD’s goal to design projects not only with the full, effective and meaningful participation of indigenous peoples but also in a manner that aligns with their distinct vision and development priorities, building sustainable partnerships with indigenous peoples. Standard 4 seeks to ensure that projects are designed and implemented in a way that fosters full respect for indigenous peoples and their human rights, livelihoods and cultural uniqueness as they define them. The need for the standard is an acknowledgement of a history of discrimination and exclusion of indigenous peoples that has limited or prevented them from directing the course of their own development and well-being. The requirements set out in Standard 4 are designed to achieve the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(vi) Promote indigenous peoples ability to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development;</li> <li>(vii) Ensure that programming is designed in partnership with indigenous peoples, with their full effective and meaningful consultation and participation, with the objective of seeking their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC);</li> <li>(viii) Ensure indigenous peoples obtain fair and equitable benefits and opportunities from supported activities in a culturally appropriate and inclusive manner; and</li> <li>(ix) Recognize and respect the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources that they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used.</li> </ul> <p>Implementation of the requirements of Standard 4 also aims to avoid adverse impacts on indigenous peoples, their rights, lands, territories and resources and – together with affected indigenous peoples – to mitigate and remedy any adverse impacts that cannot be avoided.</p> <p>According to SECAP, when impacting indigenous peoples, the borrower or the grant recipient must seek FPIC from the concerned communities, document stakeholder engagement and consultation process and prepare an indigenous plan (IP). Whenever FPIC is not possible during project design, the FPIC implementation plan should specify how FPIC will be sought during early implementation. The FPIC plan and related documents must be disclosed in a timely and accessible manner at the Quality Assurance (QA) or relevant stage during implementation. IFAD SECAP promotes the Indigenous Peoples Plan as a tool to ensure that the design and implementation of projects foster full respect for indigenous peoples’ identity, dignity, human rights, livelihood systems and cultural uniqueness, as defined by the indigenous peoples themselves. It also ensures that the affected groups receive culturally appropriate social and economic benefits, are not harmed by the projects, and can participate actively in projects that affect them. Other IFAD policies that support and complement these principles: Indigenous People’s Policy; Targeting Policy; Gender Policy; Climate Change Strategy.</p>
<p><b>ESP 8 Involuntary Resettlement</b></p>	<p><b>Standard 7 – Physical and economic resettlement</b> recognizes that increasing investments in the rural sector may at times involve project-related land acquisition and restrictions on land use – actions that, if improperly managed, may have adverse impacts on communities and persons, including physical displacement (relocation, loss of residential land or loss of shelter), economic displacement (loss of land, assets or access to assets, leading to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood) or both. The term “involuntary resettlement” refers to these impacts. Resettlement is considered involuntary when affected persons or communities do not have the right to refuse land acquisition or restrictions on land use that result in displacement.</p>

	<p>Throughout the process of identification, planning, implementation and evaluation of the various elements of resettlement or economic displacement and their impacts, adequate attention will be paid to gender concerns: specific measures addressing the needs of female headed households, gender-inclusive consultation, information disclosure, and grievance mechanisms will be put in place in order to ensure that women and men will receive adequate and appropriate compensation for their losses and to restore and possibly improve their living standards. Other IFAD policies that support and complement this principle are: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, Engagement with Indigenous Peoples Policy, Targeting Policy, Land Policy, ENRM Policy, Youth Policy Brief, Climate Change Strategy.</p>
<b>ESP 9 Protection of Natural Habitats</b>	<p><b>Standard 1 – Biodiversity conservation</b> requires identification of habitat type and applies increasingly stringent requirements based on an areas' biodiversity values. Where natural habitats are affected, IFAD-funded/supported projects and programmes will proceed only after putting in place appropriate mitigation measures to achieve no net loss, and preferably a net gain of the associated biodiversity values over the long term. This must be accompanied by a robust long-term biodiversity action plan or equivalent that describes conservation outcomes and implementation, monitoring and evaluation actions.</p> <p>Other IFAD policies that support and complement these principles are: Environment and Natural Resources Management (ENRM) Policy; Land Policy; Climate Change Strategy.</p>
<b>ESP 10 Conservation of Biodiversity</b>	<p>The requirements set out in <b>Standard 1 – Biodiversity conservation</b> are designed to achieve the following objectives: (i) maintain and conserve biodiversity; (ii) preserve the integrity of ecosystems; (iii) maintain and enhance the benefits of ecosystem services; (iv) adopt the use of a precautionary approach to biodiversity conservation and ensure opportunities for environmentally sustainable development; (v) ensure the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the utilization of genetic resources; and (vi) respect, preserve, and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous peoples, and local communities relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and their customary use of biological resources.</p> <p>The main role of this safeguard standard is to avoid or, if avoidance is not possible, minimize and mitigate potential adverse social and environmental impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem services associated with project-related activities. This can be seen through the promotion and requirements on the "use of a precautionary approach" as outlined throughout standard 1. Requirements of Standard 1 address risks to biodiversity and ecosystem types, with increasing stringency depending on risk levels and biodiversity values of project areas.</p> <p>Mitigation activities to eliminate or reduce the negative impacts of a project on biodiversity should follow the following order of preference: (1) Complete avoidance of adverse impact; (2) Reduction of impacts on biodiversity where unavoidable; (3) Restoration of habitats to their original state; (4) Relocation of affected species; (5) Compensation for any unavoidable damage.</p> <p>Other IFAD policies that support and complement these principles are: Environment and Natural Resources Management (ENRM) Policy; Land Policy; Climate Change Strategy.</p>
<b>ESP 11 Climate Change</b>	<p>SECAP asks to incorporate climate change risk analysis into projects, which are subject to an environmental, social and climate risk screening, and are assigned a risk category for climate vulnerability (substantial, high, moderate, low).</p> <p>The requirements set out in <b>Standard 9 – Climate change</b> are designed to achieve the following objectives: (i) ensure alignment of IFAD-supported projects with targets and priorities of countries' Nationally Determined Contributions and the goals of the Paris Agreement and other international frameworks; (ii) ensure that proposed activities are screened and assessed for climate change and disaster risks and impacts both of and to projects; (iii) apply the SECAP risk mitigation hierarchy principle of applying a hierarchy of risk management measures in project design; (iv) strengthen the climate resilience of communities and their adaptive capacity to address risks of climate change impacts and climate-related disasters; and (v) increase the ability of communities to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, and foster climate</p>

	<p>resilience and low GHG-emitting projects that do not threaten without compromising food production.</p> <p><b>IFAD's mainstreaming themes in the project cycle guidance note</b> provides an overview of the importance of IFAD's mainstreaming commitments (including Climate change); highlights entry points for promoting mainstreaming along the project cycle; proposes the use of assessments which – even if they may be focused on risk assessment and management – are opportunities for mainstreaming; and provides an overview of inventories of key sources of data, tools, methods and approaches that have been found useful.</p>
<b>ESP 12 Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</b>	<p><b>Standard 2 – Resource efficiency and pollution prevention</b> includes requirements that aim at ensuring that IFAD-supported projects and programmes minimize, mitigate and manage any risks and potential adverse impacts that may be related to resource use and pollution, with the following objectives: (i) avoid, minimize and manage the risks and impacts associated with hazardous substances and materials, including pesticides; (ii) avoid or minimize project-related emissions of short-and long-lived climate-change related pollutants; (iii) promote sustainable use of resources, including energy, land and water; and (iv) identify, where feasible, project-related opportunities for resource-use efficiency. Standard 2 outlines a project-level approach to mitigating, minimizing and managing any risks and potential adverse impacts that may be related to resource use and pollution. IFAD requires that key principles are applied. These include a precautionary approach to addressing significant environmental and social risks and impacts through the mitigation hierarchy; the "polluter pays" principle (whereby the cost of mitigation is borne by the polluter, where relevant); and adaptive management techniques (whereby lessons are learned from past management actions and are proactively utilized to predict and improve management as the project implementation progresses).</p>
<b>ESP 13 Human Health</b>	<p>The requirements of <b>Standard 6 – Community Health and Safety</b> aim to ensure that IFAD-supported programs and projects avoid or minimize the risks and impacts to community health, safety and security. The requirements are designed to achieve the following objectives: (i) to anticipate and avoid adverse impacts on the health and safety of project-affected communities during the project life cycle from both routine and non-routine circumstances; (ii) to ensure that measures are taken to avoid or minimize community exposure to hazardous materials that be used during project activities; (iii) to promote quality and safety, and considerations relating to climate change, in the design and construction of infrastructure, including dams; (iv) to avoid or minimize community exposure to project-related traffic and road safety risks; (v) to minimize community exposure to diseases; (vi) to ensure that projects abide by the principles of "do no harm to nutrition"; (vii) to avoid risks of project-related gender-based violence, including risks of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and abuse, and human trafficking to project-affected people and communities; (viii) to avoid or minimize adverse impacts on ecosystems services that may arise from project activities; (ix) to have in place effective measures to address emergency events; and (x) to ensure that the safeguarding of personnel and property is carried out in a manner that avoids or minimizes risks to the project-affected communities</p>
<b>ESP 14 Physical and Cultural Heritage</b>	<p>The requirements set out in <b>Standard 3 – Cultural heritage</b> are designed to achieve the following objectives: (i) preserve and safeguard Cultural Heritage; (ii) ensure that effective and active measures are taken to prevent IFAD-supported projects from altering, damaging, or removing any tangible or intangible Cultural Heritage; (iii) promote the equitable sharing of benefits from the use of Cultural Heritage; (iv) promote meaningful consultation on matters relating to Cultural Heritage.</p> <p>Other IFAD policies that support and complement ESP 14 are: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy, Engagement with Indigenous Peoples Policy, Targeting Policy, ENRM Policy, Climate Change Strategy.</p>
<b>ESP 15 Lands and Soil Conservation</b>	<p><b>Standard 2 – Resource efficiency and pollution prevention</b> includes a specific focus on soil conservation, stating that <i>sustainable soil management is an essential element of sustainable agriculture and is central to sustainable intensification, climate -change resilience and safeguarding ecosystem services and biodiversity. The updated World Soil Charter lists nine guiding principles that guide all actions to ensure that soils are managed sustainably and that the functions of degraded soils are rehabilitated or restored. IFAD will integrate these principles</i></p>

<p>into its projects, as appropriate, to ensure sustainable soil management and to promote restoration of degraded soils</p> <p>Other IFAD policies that support and complement these principles: Land Policy; Targeting Policy; ENRM Policy; Climate Change Strategy.</p>
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### III. Environment and Social Impact Assessment

#### Principle 1: Compliance with the Law

The project will comply with national technical standards as outlined in its laws and regulations. A review of relevant standards for SCRCP compliance, including Environmental Impact Assessment Act, is provided below, with clear description of how the project will comply.

a) **The Environmental Management Act (EMA 2017)** incl. **The Generic Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines (2017)**<sup>102</sup> provides the basic legal framework for environmental planning including the preparation of environmental management plans for projects likely to have negative impacts on people and the environment. The Act makes provisions for protection and management of the environment and the conservation and utilization of natural resources.

The specific thresholds requiring EIAs to be produced in the sectors relevant to SCRCP include:

- **Agriculture:** (i) Agricultural drainage projects of more than 1 ha; (ii) Irrigation schemes designed to serve more than 10 ha; (iii) Land development for the purposes of agriculture on greater than a 20 ha land holding; (iii) Agricultural projects necessitating the resettlement of 20 or more families. (iv) Any change from one agricultural land use to another on greater than a 20 ha land holding; (v) Use of more than 1 ton of fertiliser per hectare per annum on greater than a 20 ha landholding, except for lime applications; (vi) Use of the following concentrations of pesticides on greater than a 5 ha holding, more than 5 l/ha of ultra-low-volume pesticides per application more than 1 l/ha of aerial application of pesticides or more than 20 kg/ha for each application of granular pesticides; (vii) Construction of fish-farming or ornamental pond(s) where the capacity is greater than 100 m<sup>3</sup> or where there is any direct discharge from a fishpond to a receiving water body; and (viii) Any proposal to introduce fish species in an area where they do not presently exist. **SCRCP does not include activities beyond these thresholds. Irrigation schemes will be designed to serve no more than up to 10ha. Only an environmental and social screening will be required as a result, as per the template provided in Appendix 1. Ponds will not focus on fish farming or ornamental purposes.**
- **Water resource development:** (i) Construction or expansion of groundwater utilisation projects, where the utilisation will be greater than 15 l/s or where the well is 60 m or deeper; (ii) Construction of new water pipelines or canals longer than 1 km, or expansion to existing water pipelines or canals by longer than 1 km, where the cross-sectional area is greater than 20 m<sup>2</sup> and the volume of water to be carried will be greater than 50 m<sup>3</sup> per second; (iii) Water pumping stations adjacent to lakes, rivers and reservoirs that withdraw more than 2 m<sup>3</sup> per second; (iv) Drinking water supply schemes to serve a population of greater than 10 000 people, or expansions of existing schemes to serve such a population, or water reticulation networks with more than 10 km of pipeline; (v) Area of greater than 100 ha, or expansions of existing reservoirs by greater than 500,000 litres or greater than 100 ha; and (vi) Construction or expansion of dams with a height of 4.5 m or higher. **SCRCP does not include activities beyond these thresholds. All irrigation schemes will use surface water runoff collection. Impoundment dams will not exceed 2 meters in height.**
- **Forestry:** (i) Establishment or expansion of logging operations covering an area of greater than 50 ha; (ii) Establishment of or expansions to existing logging operations on hillsides with a slope of greater than 10%, covering an area of greater than 10 ha, or any conversion of forested land with

<sup>102</sup> <https://www.dbsa.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2021-05/Chapter%2015%20Malawi.pdf>

a slope of greater than 10% to another land use on greater than 10 ha; (iii) Establishment of logging or conversion of forested land to another land use within the catchment area of reservoirs and 4. Establishment of forest plantations of greater than 50 ha. **SCRP does not include activities beyond these thresholds. No logging activities and conversion of forest area will take place. Forest plantations and woodlots are not expected to exceed 10ha**

- **Remedial flood and erosion control:** (i) Construction of breakwaters, seawalls, jetties, dykes and groynes of greater than 2 m in height or 1 km in length to remedy shoreline erosion or flooding; (ii) Construction of dams or weirs with a height of greater than 2 m, or which divert more than 20 m<sup>3</sup> per second, or any bypass channels or channel realignments to remedy riverine erosion or flooding; and (iii) Shoreline stabilisation projects where the shoreline involved is greater than 50m. **SCRP does not include activities beyond these thresholds. Impoundment dams will not exceed 2 meters in height.**

For its investments in forestry, water and irrigation not meeting the thresholds, SCRPM will seek a certificate of exemption from the EAD based on the project screening form detailed in Appendix 1.

b) **The Land Act (2016) and Land Acquisition Act (2016)** 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.

In compliance with Land Act, Sections 19–25, SCRPM will formally engage local traditional authorities and Village Headpersons (VHs) to identify, assess, and record the land to be used under the Village Development Plans consultations in Component 1. Where land is communally held (e.g. for irrigation), a community agreement or MoU will be signed, clearly stating use conditions and dispute resolution mechanisms. If exclusive or long-term use (above one-year) will be required by the community, such as in the case of community woodlots, land might be converted from “communal land” to “customary estate” and the VDCs will be supported to obtain a “certificate of customary estates” from the District Land Registrar, in accordance with Sections 30-33 of the Land Act. Should erosion infrastructure under component 2 (spillways, terraces, checkdams) cause involuntary displacement or land loss, compensation in-kind will be provided reflecting land value, crops, structures, or livelihoods affected (Land act Section 44, 45, 60; Land Acquisition Act). Group-based structures supporting the project (including VDCs) will include inclusive governance structures and respect gender equality (in compliance with Sections 32, 34, 36).

c) **The Pesticides Act (2018)** establishes the legal framework for the registration, importation, use, handling, and disposal of pesticides in Malawi. It mandates that only pesticides registered by the Pesticides Control Board (PCB) may be procured, distributed, or applied, and requires licenses or permits for manufacturing, storage, importation, and sale.

In line with these provisions, SCRPM will ensure that only PCB-registered pesticides are procured and applied across all components involving agricultural production or natural resource management. The PMU will conduct verification of registration status for all pesticides and suppliers as part of the procurement process, and provide training to extension workers, farmer groups, and agro-dealers on safe handling, application rates, and disposal procedures. Farmers will be trained on safe pesticide storage according to PCB requirements for secure, ventilated, and clearly labelled facilities. Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided to applicators, and pesticide use will be recorded through FFS logbooks and field diaries. In accordance with the Act’s provisions on environmental protection and health safeguards, the project will support the safe disposal of used containers and expired products, and prohibit any pesticide application in or near environmentally sensitive areas. Finally, the project will promote integrated pest management and biological alternatives, in line with IFAD’s SECAP standards and national pesticide risk reduction strategies.

d) **Irrigation Act (2001) and Irrigation Code of Practice and Equipment (ICoP) (2018)** provide Malawi’s regulatory and technical framework for the sustainable development, operation and management of irrigation schemes. The Act mandates that irrigation development be guided by the national irrigation policy, establishes the National Irrigation Board and an Irrigation Fund, and requires that schemes involve and

empower local irrigation management authorities (e.g., farmer cooperatives) under formal agreements. The ICoP complements the Act by specifying standards, design procedures, construction and equipment quality, operation and maintenance protocols, and performance indicators for irrigation systems in Malawi.

Under SCRPM, irrigation interventions will consist of 70 small-scale schemes, each covering up to 10ha. These schemes will be designed to utilize harvested rainwater and floodwater, without reliance on direct abstraction from rivers or aquifers. In this context, while the scale and water source may not trigger formal irrigation licensing or classification as major irrigation works, the project will nonetheless adhere to the principles and good practices outlined in the Act and the ICoP. Each scheme will be developed with farmer groups operating as informal or semi-formal irrigation management units, supported to manage operations and maintenance, cost-sharing, and equitable access to water. Design, layout, and equipment selection will follow the ICoP standards to ensure technical appropriateness, resilience to climate variability, and long-term maintainability. The SCRPM PMU will also promote efficient water use, soil moisture conservation, and safe drainage within each scheme, while ensuring that community-based irrigation management structures are inclusive, gender-responsive, and linked to catchment-level planning frameworks.

**e) Forest Management Act (1997 and Amended 2019)** The Forestry Act (1997) as amended by the Forestry (Amendment) Act (2019) establishes the legal framework for the sustainable use, protection and management of forests and forest produce in Malawi. It mandates that all forest resources (including trees, timber, fuel-wood, charcoal, non-timber forest produce) are managed under authorisations, licences or formal agreements, and empowers the Department of Forestry to enter into forest management or plantation agreements with communities, NGOs or private partners.

In compliance with these instruments, the SCRPM PMU will ensure that any tree planting and woodlot establishment activities under the programme are only initiated after formal agreements or licences have been secured; community natural resource committees will be formed, consulted and engaged; planting sites in eco-sensitive or catchment zones will be screened, management and harvesting plans prepared, and data on intervention stored and shared to meet transparency obligations. Additionally, no harvesting or charcoal production will proceed, and the project will embed community awareness and monitoring systems to ensure that forest produce use aligns with the law's strengthened enforcement regime and benefit-sharing requirements.

**f) Standards & Guidelines for Participatory Forestry in Malawi (2005)** sets out to guide the practice of promoting participatory forestry management, or PFM, but also establish standards for forestry extension service delivery and improved forest management as a means to support poverty alleviation in Malawi. This covers: community-based forest management on customary estate (afforestation and indigenous forest management), co-management of forest reserves, community involvement in the management of State plantations and other forest extension activities. The guidelines contained within this document are primarily 'process' guidelines to support planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of participatory forest management.

The SCRPM PMU will ensure that afforestation and natural regeneration activities in subcomponent 1.2 are planned and established and explored in compliance with these guidelines. Community bylaws will be monitored by each VNRMC, and their institutional building/strengthening will follow the PFM process, which includes: (i) Building awareness and consensus of key local stakeholders, interest groups, and functional community institutions; (ii) Identifying needs, priorities, and opportunities, such as livelihoods and Income Generating Activities (IGAs); (iii) Assessing resource availability, user rights, and tenure; (iv) Negotiating roles, responsibilities, accountability, benefit sharing, and conflict resolution mechanisms; and (v) Identifying and forming appropriate locally accountable institutions (VNRMC).

**g) The Water Resources Act (2013)** provides the legal framework in Malawi for the management, conservation, and sustainable use of water resources, including provisions for licensing of water abstraction, the establishment of catchment management structures, and protection of water quality and aquatic ecosystems.

Although irrigation interventions under SCRPM are small-scale (limited to 70 schemes serving up to 10ha of irrigated area) and are primarily designed to rely on rainwater and floodwater harvesting rather than direct abstraction from rivers or groundwater sources, the project will still comply with the spirit of the Act. In particular, the SCRPM PMU will consult with the National Water Resources Authority and relevant Catchment

Management Committees to confirm whether the planned water use requires registration or exemption under existing licensing frameworks. For impoundment sites, the service provider will seek clearance from the Water Resources Department. In each catchment, the project will promote equitable and sustainable water management by supporting the formation or strengthening of water user groups, ensuring that water harvesting structures are technically sound, located to avoid interference with environmental flows, and maintained to reduce risks of water loss or downstream impacts. Monitoring of water availability, storage use, and drainage will be incorporated into scheme design, and the project will coordinate with local authorities to ensure consistency with catchment management strategies and protection of water quality.

h) **The Seed Act (1997)** provides the legislative framework in Malawi for regulating the production, sale, importation, exportation and certification of seed for sowing, including minimum standards of purity and germination, inspection and testing requirements, labelling and packaging, and offences for non-compliance.

In compliance with this instrument, the SCRPMU will ensure that all seed inputs supported under the project (including certified seed for the 19 seed-multiplier groups, 19 nurseries and 19 community seed banks) are sourced from certified producers or tested to meet the standards of the Act, properly labelled and documented. Seed importation (if any) will only be through registered importers, with test reports and compliance with labelling and packaging requirements. The project will provide training for extension staff and farmer groups involved in seed multiplication and nurseries on seed quality assurance, certification processes, and legal obligations under the Act. Registers of seed producers, varieties supplied and certification status will be maintained by groups managing the seed banks and nurseries. Distribution of seed by the PMU for FFS will avoid any uncertified or sub-standard seed.

i) **The National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure (2016)** provide a national framework for the design, implementation and monitoring of land-, water- and infrastructure-based interventions within defined catchments, emphasising participatory planning, institutional governance, ecosystem restoration and resilient rural infrastructure.

In compliance with these Guidelines, the SCRPMU will ensure that each micro-catchment covered under the programme is guided through a participatory planning process led by VNRMCs and VLAPs, mapping catchment conditions, prioritising interventions (such as afforestation of 2,450ha, soil-water conservation on 2,800 ha, and small water-storage tanks for rain/flood harvesting) and designing infrastructure in alignment with the technical standards provided in Volume II of the Guidelines. Infrastructure investments (terraces, ponds and impoundments, water tanks) will be sited, designed and maintained such that they integrate with natural resource management, avoid unintended erosion or downstream impacts, and contribute to the resilience of ecosystem services for smallholder farmers. Training, community mobilization and governance strengthening (through 70 VNRMCs, village involvement, inclusive youth and PWD engagement) provided in the budget will focus on operationalising the institutional and participatory dimensions of the Guidelines. Monitoring protocols, maintenance budgeting and adaptive management processes will also be incorporated in the training, thereby ensuring that the catchment-based interventions are sustainable, cost-effective and aligned with national standards for integrated catchment management and rural infrastructure.

j) **The Occupational Safety, Health and Welfare Act (1997)** governs safety standards in workplaces in Malawi, including construction, agricultural, and field-based operations. While SCRPMU does not involve large-scale construction or industrial activities, it does engage community members, contractors, and extension staff in small works and farm-based demonstrations with exposure to machinery, tools, agrochemicals and minor physical hazards.

In compliance with the Act, the SCRPMU will adopt a proportionate occupational safety protocol by ensuring that all contracted civil works (e.g. installation of 780 water tanks, terraces, small dykes, storage structures) include basic worker safety requirements in contracts (such as the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE), safe handling procedures, and first aid kits). Field staff and farmer facilitators will receive safety training on pesticide application, equipment handling, and fieldwork health precautions. Where appropriate (e.g. during construction or machinery use), the project will monitor adherence to basic site safety practices and maintain records of any incidents.

k) **The Disaster Risk Management Act (2023)** establishes Malawi's legal regime for comprehensive disaster risk management, covering risk reduction, preparedness, early warning, response, and recovery. It mandates the development and maintenance of a database of disaster risk management information, in collaboration with stakeholders, to be made accessible to all stakeholders at no cost. Additionally, the Act requires the establishment of an integrated early warning system for hazards, along with the development and dissemination of multi-hazard early warning system protocols and standards (IFRC Disaster Law, 2024). The collaborative nature of information collection, processing, and analysis indicated in the Act aligns with the broader goal of mainstreaming DRM into sustainable development policies, thereby fostering a culture of knowledge sharing and collaboration across stakeholders.

In compliance with this Act, SCRIP Component 3 interventions are specifically designed to strengthen local and institutional capacities for climate-informed disaster preparedness and response. Through targeted training of District and EPA-level staff (DAES, DoDMA, DCCMS), the project will improve the understanding, communication, and application of early warning information in line with the national disaster risk management framework. Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP) sessions will enhance farmers' anticipatory capacity, while the distribution of manual weather instruments and collaboration with DCCMS supports community-led data collection and monitoring. SCRIP will ensure that climate information services developed under the project are socially inclusive, timely, and actionable, with a focus on translating forecasts into adaptive decisions at household and catchment level. Feedback loops between farmers, extension, and national climate services will be formalised to ensure dynamic risk communication. By linking community-level planning (VLAPs, VNRMCs) to national disaster risk governance structures, SCRIP aligns fully with the DRM Act's principles of decentralised preparedness, local risk reduction, and integrated climate-disaster planning.

l) **The Communications Act (2016)** governs all broadcasting, electronic communications, postal services, and content regulation in Malawi.

In compliance with this Act, SCRIP activities under Component 3 that involve the dissemination of climate information and early warning messages (such as radio broadcasts, SMS alerts, and collaborations with local media) will ensure full adherence to MACRA regulations. This includes verifying that any partner organisations (e.g. local FM stations, NGOs like Farm Radio International) hold valid broadcasting licenses, and that communication content meets approved standards for accuracy, non-discrimination, and accessibility. SCRIP will also ensure that agreements with service providers include references to consumer protection, local language use, and responsiveness to community information needs, as required under the Act. By embedding compliance with the Communications Act into its climate information delivery system, SCRIP ensures that adaptation and disaster preparedness messaging reaches smallholders in a lawful, inclusive, and technically sound manner.

m) **The Malawi Labour Act (2000)** together with the Employment Act and Child Care, Protection and Justice Act, establishes the legal framework for fair and safe labour practices in Malawi. It regulates working conditions, prohibits child and forced labour, ensures fair remuneration and non-discrimination, and mandates basic occupational health and safety measures.

In compliance with these provisions, SCRIP will ensure that all labour engaged through the project (whether for construction of small-scale infrastructure (e.g. terraces, tanks, ARC upgrades), participation in demonstration plots, or facilitation of Farmer Field Schools) is implemented in accordance with national labour laws. MoUs and contracts with service providers, project partners, and NGOs will include standard labour clauses, including commitments to fair wages, prohibition of child labour, and adherence to basic health and safety standards. Where infrastructure works or pesticide handling is involved, workers and community members will receive appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), first aid support, and training on safe handling and basic hazard prevention. Labour-related complaints will be tracked through the project's Grievance Redress Mechanism, and any field-level employment grievances can be escalated to the AEDOs and District Officers. In this way, SCRIP ensures that project delivery not only strengthens climate resilience but does so in a manner that upholds the dignity, safety, and rights of all individuals engaged in implementation.

In summary, compliance with GoM National Standards and Environmental and Social Policy will be enforced throughout SCRIP in accordance with the below table:

Concern	Law / Legislation	Enforcing Agencies	Enforced Regulation / Item
Verification of need for EIA for afforestation, catchment infrastructure, and irrigation	Environmental Management Act (EMA 2017); EIA Guidelines (2017)	Environmental Affairs Department (EAD)	Environmental and Social Screening for Certificate of Exemption
Rainwater and floodwater harvesting infrastructure, including small dykes and tanks	Water Resources Act (2013)	National Water Resources Authority (NWRA); Catchment Management Committees	Notification or no-objection for water harvesting structures; registration if required Environmental and Social Screening for Certificate of Exemption
Smallholder irrigation development (non-abstraction schemes)	Irrigation Act (2001); ICoP (2018)	Department of Irrigation; District Agriculture Offices	Compliance with ICoP standards; documentation of scheme governance and O&M planning
Land use for woodlots, erosion control infrastructure, and restoration areas	Land Act (2016); Land Acquisition Act (2016)	Ministry of Lands; District Land Registrars	Customary Estate Certificate (if exclusive use >1 year); MoUs with communities; compensation where required
Use, training, and disposal of pesticides in IPM packages	Pesticides Act (2018)	Pesticides Control Board	Only registered products procured; PPE and training mandatory; disposal in line with PCB rules
Seed multiplication, distribution, and sale in FFS and nurseries	Seed Act (1997)	Ministry of Agriculture – Seed Services Unit	Certified seed only; labelling and documentation required; registration of multipliers
Tree planting and sustainable use of forest resources (e.g. woodlots, fodder trees)	Forestry Act (1997, amended 2019)	Department of Forestry	Forest Management Agreement or registration for woodlots; no unauthorized harvesting allowed
Participatory planning and governance of community woodlots, afforestation, and forest restoration on customary land	Standards & Guidelines for Participatory Forestry in Malawi (2005)	Department of Forestry; District Forest Officers; VNRMCs	Community forest management under SCRPF will follow PFM standards: awareness-building, tenure/resource assessment, institution formation (VNRMCs), and bylaws; roles and benefit-sharing mechanisms will be co-developed; VNRMCs will monitor compliance and guide local forest use plans.
Design and integration of rural infrastructure into catchment-level planning	National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management and Rural Infrastructure (2016)	Department of Water Resources; District Technical Teams	Use of participatory planning (VLAPs, VNRMCs); compliance with design & siting standards. Clearance from the Water Resources Department for impoundment sites
Basic worker safety in small civil works, pesticide application, and agroecological demos	Occupational Safety, Health and Welfare Act (1997)	Ministry of Labour; Occupational Safety and Health Department (DOSHS)	Include safety clauses in construction contracts; provide PPE and first aid for field staff; train FFS facilitators in safe tool/chemical handling; monitor incident reporting informally
Alignment of local climate information services with disaster preparedness and early warning	Disaster Risk Management Act (2023)	Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DoDMA); District Civil Protection Committees; DCCMS	Train DAES and DoDMA officers on climate-risk integration; Conduct Participatory Scenario Planning with farmers; Establish local monitoring

Concern	Law / Legislation	Enforcing Agencies	Enforced Regulation / Item
			systems; Link VLAPs to DRM structures
Use of communication platforms and community-radio outreach for climate information	Communications Act, 2016	Malawi Communications Regulatory Authority (MACRA)	Ensure any radio/ICT services used by SCRCP (e.g., farmer radio, mobile SMS alerts) are licensed or approved; adhere to content and broadcast service regulations; verify agreements with community broadcasters comply with Act's licensing and consumer-protection provisions.
Fair working conditions and prevention of child/forced labour in works, trainings and ARC upgrades	Malawi Labour Act (2000); Employment Act; Child Care Protection and Justice Act	Ministry of Labour	All contracts and MoUs for works (e.g., terraces, tanks, ARC refurbishment, seed banks) will prohibit child labour, mandate fair wages, and ensure OSH provisions. Labour clauses will be included in NGO/service provider contracts. GRM will receive labour-related complaints. First aid and PPE will be provided where relevant.

## Principle 2: Access and Equity

There is a low risk that SCRCP may face challenges in ensuring full inclusion of the most marginalized populations (particularly women, youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and ultra-poor households) due to prevailing rural gender norms, limited asset ownership, mobility restrictions, and the historical exclusion of some groups from public planning processes. However, SCRCP has been designed to actively mitigate these risks and promote equitable access to all project benefits, in alignment with the Adaptation Fund's Access and Equity Principle. The project arises from extensive participatory and consultative processes. During the consultation process the design team ensured the voices of women and vulnerable communities were included, including through focus groups discussions disaggregated by gender and age.

The process of allocating project benefits is participatory, impartial, and transparent, and draws on a multi-tiered approach to targeting and service delivery. Specifically:

- Gender and youth inclusion targets are integrated across all activities: at least 50% of all direct beneficiaries will be women and 30% youth, with disaggregated monitoring in VLAPs, FFS, seed banks, irrigation schemes user committees, VNRMCs.
- The project deploys GALS (Gender Action Learning System) in 2,000 households to enable joint decision-making, resource control, and benefit sharing within families, and to identify context-specific barriers to participation.
- 19 Disability Inclusion Facilitators are engaged to promote physical and procedural accessibility, especially in Farmer Field Schools, community planning, and livestock demonstrations.
- SCRCP uses geographic targeting based on climate vulnerability, poverty, and exposure to environmental degradation, ensuring that the 195 selected villages across 70 micro-catchments reflect the most vulnerable landscapes and communities.
- The project supports inclusive VLAPs, ensuring that interventions such as woodlot allocation, irrigation access, and small-scale infrastructure are planned with and for the whole community, based on gender-responsive, participatory mapping and decision-making processes.
- Customary land rights are formalized in collective use cases (e.g., community woodlots), with legal support to register Customary Estates where exclusive use or long-term investment is required, helping secure tenure for marginalized groups, especially women farmers.

- All activities will be designed and implemented to avoid restricting access to essential services such as clean water, safe land, decent work, or education. VLAPs will be screened to ensure this. On the contrary, activities like rainwater harvesting, erosion control, and afforestation are expected to enhance these services.
- To ensure transparency and accountability, the project will operate a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) accessible at community, district and national levels, enabling anyone who feels excluded or wronged to lodge a complaint and seek redress.

### Principle 3: Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups

SCRIP has been explicitly designed to avoid any disproportionate adverse impacts on marginalized and vulnerable groups, while proactively working to ensure their meaningful inclusion, participation, and equitable share of benefits. These groups include, but are not limited to, women, youth, persons with disabilities (including people living with HIV/AIDS). The project does not include any interventions that would restrict access to basic services or exacerbate existing inequities. Rather, it integrates targeted interventions, safeguards, and delivery models that prioritize the resilience and empowerment of those most at risk of exclusion.

A Targeting, Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist was engaged during design to lead a participatory vulnerability assessment in all targeted districts, forming the basis for the project's targeting strategy (Section I.A). This informed the inclusion of dedicated activities, quotas, tools, and institutional arrangements for addressing intersecting vulnerabilities, described below, and the project targeting strategy presented in section I. A.

**Targeting.** The project is expected to directly benefit over 150,000 persons, targeting 50% women, 30% youth, and 5% People with Disabilities. All these households are highly vulnerable to climatic hazards and face high levels of poverty. The projects primary target groups will be:

- Rural food insecure households who have very little land around their dwelling and few productive assets. A significant proportion of these households are likely to be women-headed, household and individuals vulnerable to malnutrition (women of reproductive age and children under five years of age), youth, elderly, persons living with HIV/AIDS and other vulnerable groups;
- Moderately food insecure households involved in low-productivity subsistence crop and livestock farming and also vulnerable to climate change and in need of support to increase their resilience.

The project will rely on a mix of targeting approaches, in line of best practices from other initiatives in Malawi. Beneficiary identification and registration will be facilitated by government extension workers at EPA and Section levels, acting as project facilitators (AEDOs and AAEDOs) with technical guidance and policy direction provided by district, ADD, national, and building on other IFAD project's experience in the country. The project will also adopt an inclusive outreach strategy, combining community-based, self-targeting, and direct targeting measures to ensure most vulnerable groups are effectively reached. In addition, direct targeting measures will use government social registries and poverty indicators to ensure the inclusion of women, youth, and persons with disabilities (50%, 30%, and 5%, respectively). Rural communities will actively participate in defining selection criteria, aligned with the needs, priorities, capacities, and opportunities of smallholder farmers.

**Gender.** Women face multiple vulnerabilities as highlighted in Annex 4. The intersection of gender inequality, care responsibilities, limited assets, and exposure to climate shocks makes female-headed households, young women, and mothers of young children disproportionately vulnerable economically, socially, and nutritionally. Women in Malawi shoulder unpaid care responsibilities, have limited land rights, and face restricted access to extension services, financial capital, and time-saving technologies. Female-headed households are more likely to cultivate smaller, less fertile plots, with yields up to 25% lower than male-managed plots, and they own fewer productive assets (e.g. cattle, goats, sprayers, carts). Additionally, female plot managers cultivate smaller, less fertile, and shallower plots than male plot managers.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>103</sup> Adane Hirpa Tufa, Arega D. Alene, Steven M. Cole, Julius Manda, Shiferaw Feleke, Tahirou Abdoulaye, David Chikoye, Victor Manyong, [Gender differences in technology adoption and agricultural productivity: Evidence from Malawi](#), World Development, Volume 159, 2022.

Livestock ownership also differs significantly by gender. MHHs report higher ownership across all species, particularly cattle (14%) and goats (59%), compared to FHHs, who own only 5% of cattle and 17% of goats. Across Malawi, women have minimal access to labour-and time-saving technologies.

SCRIP responds with the following targeted measures: 50% of all project beneficiaries will be women, across VLAPs, Farmer Field Schools, and community planning processes; 2,000 households will receive GALS training to support equitable intra-household decision-making, benefit sharing, and labour division; New seed banks and storage systems will target women; Agroecological logbooks will be rolled out in FFS to account for gendered contribution to land, even when not reflected in a HH balance-sheet (unpaid labour); Fuel-efficient cookstoves (3,900 units) and composting training will reduce women's labour and health burdens from fuelwood collection and improve food security. Women will be prioritized in the distribution of rainwater harvesting tanks and income-generating activities from restoration value chains (e.g. beekeeping, fodder).

**Youth.** Youth (aged 15–35) make up nearly half of Malawi's population but face high levels of unemployment, exclusion from land ownership, and pressure to migrate due to climate-related livelihood loss. Many are at risk of engaging in unsafe or unsustainable coping strategies.

SCRIP addresses these constraints by ensuring 30% of all direct project beneficiaries will be youth, with youth represented in VNRMCs, water user groups, ARC committees and training programmes. Youth will be trained in agroecology, ecosystem restoration, climate information management, and digital tools (e.g., GIS), with tailored support through Farmer Field Schools. The project will promote youth entrepreneurship in climate-resilient value chains to ensure long term sustainability of ecosystem restoration efforts (e.g., fruit trees, fodder processing, mushroom cultivation).

**People with Disabilities.** 10.4% of the population is classified as disabled (about 1,556,670 people) (Malawi Government, 2018). These individuals experience functioning difficulties in at least one domain considered by the 2018 census such as visual, hearing, physical and mental impairment. Household surveys established that 12% of the sample households had at least one member with physical disability. Particularly, the distribution of disabilities within the sample were 22% for sight, 15% for hearing, 27% for mobility challenges, 5% for speech and 32% for other disability issues. Addressing barriers to participation in agricultural and economic activities for people with disabilities will be critical to ensuring inclusivity and equitable opportunities for all household members.

To address this, SCRIP will employ 19 Disability Inclusion Facilitators (DIFs) to identify and address barriers to participation across all activities and support their access to FFS. Training delivery will be made accessible to the group (e.g., rest breaks, inclusive materials, physical access) and inclusive targeting will ensure access to time- and labour-saving technologies (e.g., cookstoves, water tanks). 5% of all direct project beneficiaries will be PwD.

**People living with HIV/AIDS.** In Malawi, HIV prevalence remains high at around 7–9% among adults aged 15–49, with approximately one million people living with HIV. Despite strong progress in testing and treatment coverage, people with HIV remain particularly vulnerable due to a combination of health, social, and economic challenges. Many face weakened immunity, food insecurity, and limited access to consistent healthcare—especially in rural areas. Stigma and discrimination continue to hinder treatment adherence and social inclusion, while poverty and gender inequality deepen vulnerability among women, young people, and marginalized groups. These overlapping risks make sustained support, inclusive health services, and targeted social protection essential for improving resilience and quality of life for people living with HIV in Malawi.

SCRIP ensures that PLHIV are targeted through community-based identification mechanisms that respect confidentiality. Those unable to participate in physically demanding works (e.g. check dams, terracing) can engage in alternative roles (e.g. nurseries, record keeping, storage monitoring). PLHIV-headed households are prioritized for cookstoves and water tanks.

**Ethnic groups:** 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. 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).

SCRIP PMU will include an M&E specialist, M&E assistant as well as a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist. The M&E assistant and Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist will be charged specifically with ensuring that the system collects gender and age disaggregated data, produces gender knowledge and monitors investments in poor and climate vulnerable regions, and that the Grievance Redress Mechanism is well-functioning and successfully addresses any issue raised. The gender perspective will be systematically mainstreamed at individual and organisational levels into PMU management from the start via quantitative and qualitative participatory monitoring and evaluation, ad hoc studies, and workshops. As per AF gender policy, during implementation the Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist will ensure project compliance with the gender policy guidelines.

#### **Principle 4: Human Rights**

The project is designed to respect and adhere to the requirements of all relevant conventions on human rights in compliance with the ESP. Among the Guiding Values and Principles for IFAD's Social Environmental Climate Assessment Procedures, is the principle to "support borrowers in achieving good international practices by supporting the realization of United Nations principles expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the toolkits for mainstreaming employment and decent work".

Malawi has ratified: The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming to the abolition of the death penalty; Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; Convention on the Rights of the Child; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children child prostitution and child pornography; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Malawi has not been the subject of any country-specific Special Procedure mandate of the Human Rights Council. However, Malawi has been raised in thematic special procedures in relation to children's rights and other issues. The project acknowledges the risk of child labour and commits to operating within established legal boundaries: ILO Regulations and national legislation, specifically the Malawi Labour Act (GoM 2000) and the Malawi Employment Act (2014).

The project held community consultations throughout SCRIP targeted districts. Consultations focused on the rights to livelihood, access productive resources, and land use. Women's cooperatives and youth groups raised concerns about access to productive assets and infrastructure and lack of small livestock (i.e. goats) among others. The project design now includes provision of inputs and planting materials, and support alternative livelihood options to safeguard these rights.

Any observed human rights violations will be reported through the project grievances procedure. Vulnerable groups, including women-headed households and persons with disabilities, may not have sufficient knowledge of project entitlements or complaint mechanisms. To mitigate this, the project will establish a transparent grievance redress mechanism (GRM), accessible in local languages and through community facilitators. The project's communication strategy will emphasize awareness-raising on rights, entitlements, and available support channels.

#### **Principle 5: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

As detailed in Section II.K and Annex 4, the project has undertaken a Gender Assessment, Strategy, and Action Plan in line with the AF Gender Policy and IFAD's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy. The assessment analysed gender dimensions related to access to land, control over productive resources, labour division, participation in decision-making, social norms, and exposure to climate risk in the targeted districts. It also examined vulnerabilities among specific groups, including female-headed

households, women living with HIV, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWD). Findings from this analysis informed project design and the formulation of a gender-responsive results framework, ensuring that both women and men have equitable opportunities to participate in and benefit from project activities and that no group suffers disproportionate adverse impacts.

**Analysis.** Malawi ranks 155th of 162 countries on the UN Gender Inequality Index, reflecting persistent disparities in access to education, income, land, and decision-making power. Despite a relatively strong legal framework—including the Gender Equality Act (2013), the Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Act (2015), and the National Gender Policy (2015)—implementation remains constrained by entrenched patriarchal norms, early marriage, and gender-based violence. Although Malawi's population is majority female (51.2%), women own only about 17% of documented land, and their access to productive resources, credit, and extension services remains limited. In rural areas, women spend on average 8.7 hours per day on unpaid domestic and care work, leaving little time for income-generating activities. At the same time, women play a central role in agriculture, producing over 70% of locally consumed food, yet female-managed plots remain 25% less productive than male-managed ones due to reduced access to inputs, information, and labour.

**Differentiated climate impacts.** Climate change exacerbates these gender inequalities. Droughts, floods, and erratic rainfall increase women's workloads and expose them to greater risks of malnutrition, gender-based violence, and loss of livelihoods. With limited access to irrigation, inputs, and climate information, women's capacity to adapt is constrained. During times of crisis, male migration further increases the care and production burden on women, while adolescent girls face heightened risks of early marriage or transactional sex to cope with household shocks. The project recognises that advancing gender equality is essential for achieving long-term resilience and sustainability.

**Design and measures.** IFAD's poverty targeting and gender sensitive design and implementation guidelines were applied for the design of the project. A targeting and gender specialist was part of the design team and conducted a poverty, targeting and gender assessment in the project areas and ensured relevant measures were included to give women central role in the project. The SCRPs integrates gender equality and women's empowerment across all components through three strategic pathways:

- (i) promoting economic empowerment to enable women and men to participate in and benefit equally from climate-resilient livelihood opportunities;
- (ii) ensuring voice and decision-making, by enhancing women's leadership in rural institutions and policy processes; and
- (iii) promoting workload balance and wellbeing, through time- and labour-saving technologies and household methodologies such as the GALS.

Specific measures include:

- Adapting training schedules, materials, and locations to women's needs (e.g., literacy levels, mobility, caregiving responsibilities);
- Ensuring women's representation in VDCs, VNRMCs, and WUAs;
- Promoting women- and youth-led nurseries, seed multipliers, and cooperatives;
- Supporting female Assistant Veterinary Officers and GALS facilitators;
- Including awareness-raising on gender-based violence (GBV) and HIV prevention in community training programmes.

**Inclusion and monitoring.** SCRPs targets at least 50% women and 30% youth across all its activities. A dedicated Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist within the PMU will oversee implementation of the gender strategy, coordinate training, and monitor compliance. Gender-disaggregated data will be collected across all outputs, and progress will be tracked through indicators such as: (i) percentage of women in leadership roles in local institutions, (ii) percentage of women adopting resilient agricultural practices, and (iii) number of women benefiting from labour- and time-saving technologies. The project also includes explicit capacity-building for implementers and facilitators on gender-responsive planning and communication.

**Safeguards and prevention of adverse impacts.** The project is not expected to cause any gender-differentiated adverse effects. Instead, it will contribute to gender-transformative outcomes by challenging discriminatory norms and improving women's economic status and agency. All staff and service providers

will comply with IFAD's Policy on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation, and Abuse (2022).

### **Principle 6: Core Labour rights**

During project formulation, the team reviewed the most recent assessments and reports by ILO and related bodies concerning the application of labour standards in Malawi. Malawi became a Member state of the ILO in 1965. Since then, Malawi has ratified a total of 32 ILO Conventions as well as the Forced Labour Protocol. It has ratified all 10 of the ILO fundamental conventions (Forced Labour (2), Freedom of Association, Collective Bargaining, Equal Remuneration, Discrimination, Minimum Age, Occupational Safety and Health (2), Child Labour) as well as three out of the four priority governance conventions. Malawi has not ratified Governance instrument C122 - Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122). The Malawi Labour Act (2000) together with the Employment Act and Child Care, Protection and Justice Act, establishes the legal framework for fair and safe labour practices in Malawi. It regulates working conditions, prohibits child and forced labour, ensures fair remuneration and non-discrimination, and mandates basic occupational health and safety measures.

There are ongoing ILO observations and reform recommendations regarding trade union rights, governed under (ILO Convention No. 87 & 98). Malawi has faced repeated observations from the ILO Committee of Experts for failing to fully protect freedom of association and collective bargaining. Concerns include government interference in trade union activities, weak enforcement of anti-union discrimination provisions, and limitations on the right to strike. Ongoing "Direct Requests" and "Observations" ask Malawi to amend relevant laws and improve union protections, especially in the public and informal sectors. **The project approaches production from a subsistence rather than commercial perspective. While labour and trade unions have no direct relevance to SCRP, the Grievance Redress Mechanism will provide an avenue to address complaints from individuals of groups.**

Malawi has been under long-standing scrutiny for child labour, especially in the tobacco, tea, and informal agriculture sectors. Malawi is participating in ILO-IPEC (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour), but the Committee continues to urge improved enforcement and education alternatives. A National Action Plans exist, but enforcement is weak. **The project will raise awareness and forbid children's work among beneficiaries through the household approaches, procurement and contract clauses, and continuous monitoring of the ESMP and the GRM.**

Malawi has been implicated in international advocacy reports (and one legal claim in the UK) for the use of forced or bonded labour in its tobacco supply chains, particularly involving children and indebted farmers. Farmers allege exploitative arrangements with leaf buyers and multinational tobacco companies, and that working conditions contravene ILO Convention No. 29 on Forced Labour. **SCRP will not be working in these supply chains, nor in any export-oriented value chain.**

IFAD has a longstanding partnership agreement with ILO dating back to 1979. IFAD is also an equal opportunities employer and as such it works to ensure that all its projects are free of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. The project design ensures quotas for women and youth participation and transparent processes for recruitment as well as raising awareness raising about women and youth participation in decision-making processes. SCRP will also ensure that all labour engaged through the project (whether for construction of small-scale infrastructure (e.g. terraces, tanks, ARC upgrades), participation in demonstration plots, or facilitation of Farmer Field Schools) is implemented in accordance with national labour laws. MoUs and contracts with service providers, project partners, and NGOs will include standard labour clauses, including commitments to fair wages, prohibition of child labour, and adherence to basic health and safety standards. Where infrastructure works or pesticide handling is involved, workers and community members will receive appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), first aid support, and training on safe handling and basic hazard prevention. Labour-related complaints will be tracked through the project's Grievance Redress Mechanism, and any field-level employment grievances can be escalated to the AEDOs and District Officers. In this way, SCRP ensures that project delivery not only strengthens climate resilience but does so in a manner that upholds the dignity, safety, and rights of all individuals engaged in implementation.

### **Principle 7: Indigenous Peoples**

Intensive consultations with government, NGOs and communities confirmed that there are no people categorized as indigenous in Malawi. This aspect is hence not applicable and does not require further assessment for ESP compliance.

The targeted districts of intervention include various ethnic groups, which repartition is very varied across the national territory, as illustrated in the targeted area who will be engaged in all project activities through its participatory processes.

#### **Principle 8: Involuntary resettlement**

This aspect is not applicable to SCRP and does not require further assessment for ESP compliance. 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.

IFAD's grievance procedures will be widely promoted, providing a means for anyone who believes they have been wronged to seek appropriate remedies.

#### **Principle 9: Protection of Natural Habitats**

Project sites were mapped to confirm there is no 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. Mapping was done using The World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA), the largest assembly of data on the world's terrestrial and marine protected areas, containing more than 260,000 protected areas as of August 2020, with records covering 245 countries and territories throughout the world. Project activities are conceived to restore ecosystems, thereby enhancing their climate resilience, and will benefit natural habitats as a result.

No areas identified as critical natural habitats have been identified in project districts of intervention during the design consultations, and if this were to change during implementation, the sites would be excluded from project site selection. VLAPs will be screened to ensure the suggested investments comply with Malawi National Guidelines on Integrated Catchment Management (2016) (avoiding encroachment into ecologically sensitive zones; maintaining natural vegetation along protected area boundaries, and ensuring upstream restoration does not lead to human pressure inside protected areas.) Project activities are conceived to restore ecosystems, thereby enhancing their climate resilience, and will benefit natural habitats as a result.

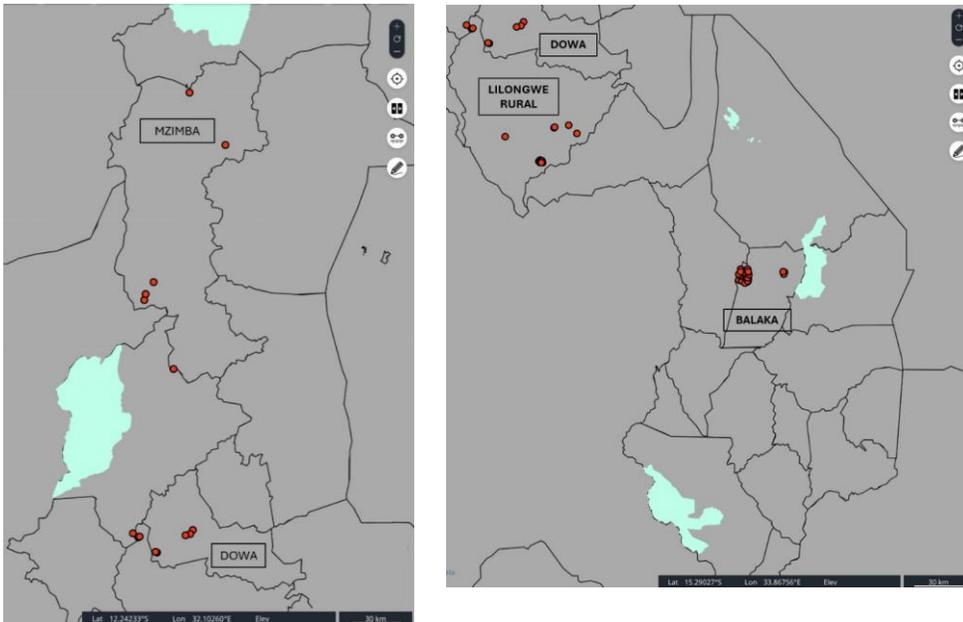


Figure 3 - Mapping of project site areas to natural habitats

- National Park
- Natural Monument or feature
- Habitat/species management area
- Strict Nature Reserve
- Wilderness area
- Not fit the standard definition of a protected area
- IUCN Protected Area Management Categories Not Used
- IUCN category is unknown
- Protected landscape/seascape
- Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources

### Principle 10: Conservation of Biological Diversity

The project is not expected to have any negative impact on critical biological diversity. The project will ensure that no activities endanger any fauna or flora habitats, particularly endangered endemic species. The table below lists some of the endangered endemic species in the targeted regions.

List of Endangered Endemic Fauna and Flora

Description	Class and name
Fauna red list of endemic endangered species	Fishes: Sulphur Head Aulonocara, Metriaclima koningsi; Pseudotropheus brevis, Chambo Birds: Secretarybird
Flora red list of endemic endangered species	Marsdenia exelii

The Marsdenia exelii's habitat is rocky areas, usually inland cliffs and mountain peaks, where SCRIP is not going to be implemented. Other than the Secretarybird, all fauna endangered species are fishes. The project is not taking place in proximity to water bodies hosting these species (i.e. Lake Malawi). Secretarybird's population decline is mostly reported in Mali, Niger, and Burkino Faso), Cameroon, Kenya, Botswana, Estwani and South Africa. Threats reported include habitat conversion, including for

commercial purposes, excessive burning of grassland, capture, trade, hunting and power lines collision<sup>104</sup>. SCRP is not engaging in any of the activities causing threats to the species. The activities are designed to restore and support the conservation of biological diversity and natural resources.

The project will not promote any invasive plant or animal species. To prevent any involuntary introduction, spread and to address damages from pests, the project will also develop, implement and monitor an integrated pest management plan (outline in Appendix 2). It will abide by the Pest act and the Seed Act. It will also abide by the Standards & Guidelines for Participatory Forestry in Malawi, which specify species to be promoted. It will only use native or proven locally adapted and non-invasive species of trees and crops. By adhering to these measures, the project will contribute to the protection and promotion of biodiversity in Malawi.

### **Principle 11: Climate Change**

**GHG emission.** Malawi is a signatory to the Paris Agreement and has committed to addressing climate change and promoting resilience. Its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) affirms the government's commitment to fully addressing climate change issues and responding to adverse effects and impacts in accordance with the Paris Agreement provisions. The updated NDC (2021) identifies agriculture, forestry, and land use as both major sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and critical sectors for mitigation action. While Malawi's total contribution to global emissions is negligible (estimated at approximately 0.03% of global GHG emissions) the country has committed to a 51% reduction in GHG emissions by 2040, conditional on international support. The NDC highlights mitigation actions in the areas of sustainable land and forest management, renewable energy, waste management, and climate-smart agriculture, to be pursued in the broader context of poverty reduction and sustainable development.

**GHG offsetting.** SCRP directly supports Malawi's NDC objectives by implementing activities that both sequester carbon and reduce emissions from land degradation and unsustainable farming.

Under Component 1, the project promotes large-scale ecosystem restoration through afforestation, reforestation, and assisted natural regeneration (ANR) in degraded micro-catchments. Approximately 2,450 hectares of woodlots will be restored and managed under community-based systems, while soil and water conservation measures such as contour bunds, trenches, and vegetative barriers will stabilize slopes, prevent erosion, and increase soil carbon retention. The project will also support sustainable management of village forests and the establishment of 19 community tree nurseries producing native and multipurpose species for replanting, thereby enhancing both biomass and soil carbon stocks. Through the promotion of improved household stoves in 3,900 women-led households, SCRP will also reduce fuelwood consumption and associated emissions from traditional biomass use. These efforts are expected to generate significant emission reductions by decreasing deforestation rates and improving energy efficiency at the household level.

Under Component 2, the project introduces a range of climate-smart agricultural practices that will contribute to GHG mitigation while enhancing smallholders' resilience. Through 150 FFS, farmers will be trained in conservation agriculture, integrated soil fertility management, and agroforestry, which enhance soil carbon sequestration and reduce the need for land expansion. Integration of nitrogen-fixing trees, crop rotation, and mulching will reduce emissions from fertilizer use and improve soil organic matter. SCRP will also promote improved livestock management through better feed conservation, fodder production, and health, helping reduce methane emissions from overstocking and poor-quality feed. Use of gravity for small-scale irrigation systems or solar energy for agriculture resource centres will avoid inefficient or fossil-fuel-based pumping systems, contributing to avoided emissions.

### **Principle 12: Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency**

Release of pollutants to the environment in significant quantities is not expected to result from SCRP activities. The project does not promote chemical-intensive agriculture, and the use of fertilizers or pesticides in the targeted areas remains very limited—estimated at only 2–5% of farmers. Instead, the

<sup>104</sup> <https://datazone.birdlife.org/species/factsheet/secretarybird-sagittarius-serpentarius>

project promotes agroecological and climate-smart practices that inherently reduce pollution risks and enhance resource efficiency.

**Pollution prevention and safe input management.** Under Components 1 and 2, SCRIP will promote Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and Integrated Soil Fertility Management (ISFM) as part of the FFS curricula. These approaches reduce or eliminate reliance on synthetic fertilizers and pesticides by emphasizing biological pest control, crop rotation, intercropping, use of compost and organic manure, and pest-resistant varieties. In addition, farmers will receive training on safe handling, storage, and disposal of any agricultural inputs that may be required for demonstration purposes, in line with Malawi’s Pesticides Control Act (2002) and the Environmental Management (Waste Management and Sanitation) Regulations (2008). The providers of fertilizers and pesticides contracted by the PMU will be required to operate in line with the specifications in IFAD SECAP VOL 1 Annex 3 and the WHO-FAO codes for safe labelling, packaging, handling, storage, application and disposals of pesticides.

**Resource efficiency.** The project will actively promote the efficient use of water, timber, and non-timber forest products, improving the sustainability of natural resource use across targeted landscapes. Water resource efficiency will be enhanced through: Small-scale irrigation systems that use gravity-fed or solar-powered pumps to reduce energy consumption and minimize water loss; Soil and water conservation measures, including contour bunds, check dams, and mulching, which reduce runoff and increase infiltration; and Rainwater harvesting systems at household and community level to improve water availability and reduce pressure on groundwater sources. Timber and non-timber forest product efficiency will improve through community woodlots, natural regeneration, and improved cookstoves, reducing fuelwood demand and the associated degradation of natural forests.

**Waste prevention and management.** No major waste streams are expected from project activities. Refurbishment of existing infrastructure such as small storage facilities and irrigation systems will be prioritized over new construction to reduce material demand, energy use, and waste generation. Minor waste (e.g., packaging, construction materials, animal waste from livestock demonstrations) will be managed through the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMP). Organic waste will be reused for composting where feasible. Veterinary activities will focus primarily on small livestock (goats, poultry), with limited use of veterinary pharmaceuticals and minimal risk of hazardous waste generation.

**Principle 13: Public Health**

The WHO explains that many factors combine together to affect the health of individuals and communities. Whether people are healthy or not, is determined by their circumstances and environment. To a large extent, factors such as where people live, the state of their environment, genetics, income and education levels, and relationships with friends and family all have considerable impacts on health, whereas the more commonly considered factors such as access and use of health care services often have less of an impact. The main overarching determinants of health are: (i) the social and economic environment; (ii) the physical environment, and (iii) the person’s individual characteristics and behaviours.

Public health is not the primary focus of the project, which aims at building the resilience of agropastoral and pastoral ecosystems and livelihoods to climate change. All proposed interventions will align on the governing laws and procedures in Malawi. The project is expected to have an overall beneficial impact on public health with the restoration of the physical environment, enhanced food security thanks to climate resilient practices, possible diet diversification thanks to increased incomes and NWFP value chains providing nutritional benefits, reduced aflatoxin thanks to improved storage structures, reduced exposure to smoke thanks to improved stoves and reduced risk of zoonosis thanks to improved animal health and access to veterinary services resulting from the demonstrations in livestock management. The project will improve all the determinants of health presented in the screening table below and as listed by the WHO.

Determinants of health	Health risk	Mitigation measures	Impact on health
Income and social status	Lower income and social status are linked to worse health	Under Component 1 the project will support the diversification of livelihoods and the development of Non-Wood Forest Product and nurseries value chains primarily benefitting women. Through improved farming practices and support to livestock pass-on,	Positive

		SCRIP works to improve productivity, translating into increased income and assets. As such, the project will reduce the risk on health posed by low income and social status.	
Education	Low education levels are linked with poor health, more stress and lower self-confidence.	Under component 1, training and education is provided, including training targeted to improving gender balance and recognition of women's work, increasing self-confidence.	Positive
Physical environment	Hazards in the physical environment can lead to health risks (e.g. toxic fumes from forest fires) Employment and working conditions – people out of employment are less healthy.	The project will also reduce unemployment and increase livelihood possibilities. Components 1 and 2 include a focus on supporting the alleviation of women's workloads. Under the first component, through afforestation and under the second component through small scale water infrastructure providing stabilisation and irrigation the project will increase water availability and filtration. Health risks are expected to decrease thanks to reduced exposure to smoke from improved stoves and reduced risk of zoonosis thanks to improved animal health and access to veterinary services resulting from the demonstrations in livestock management.	Positive
Social support networks	Greater support from families, friends and communities is linked to better health	The project will rely on community-based participatory approaches by concentrating its activities in clusters of villages, and working directly with VDCs and VNRMCs. The project will promote conflict resolution mechanisms and household methodologies (GALS) reinforcing local dynamics and social capital. These actions are expected to strengthen solidarity among the families and the communities.	Positive
Health services	Access and use of services that prevent and treat disease influences health	Through improved livelihoods, the beneficiaries will have improved access to healthcare that will be beneficial for their health.	Positive
Land use	Changes in land use, soil quality, choice of crop have impact on health	The project will support the restoration of ecosystems, thereby increasing their resilience. The project will not promote any land use change but rather restore degraded land. The project will only choose native and locally adapted crop/tree species	Positive
Unsustainable farming	Unsustainable farming including chemical and energy use, biodiversity, organic production methods, and diversity of foods produced	The project will support climate-resilient, low-input practices in line with the principles of agroecology	
Water	Irrigation use and its impact on river/water-table levels and production outputs can have negative impacts on health.	Project practices will enhance water conservation, retention and infiltration. The project will directly support 70 small-scale irrigation schemes up to 10ha.	Positive

#### Principle 14: Physical and Cultural Heritage

Malawi has ratified the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1982 and accepted other related conventions, such as the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage in 2022. As of 2025, there are three World Heritage Sites in Malawi: Lake Malawi National Park

(Mangochi District and Salima District), Chongoni Rock-Art Area (Dedza District), Mount Mulanje Cultural Landscape (Mulanje and Phalombe Districts). **SCRIP does not operate in any of the districts where these sites are located.**

In addition, Malawi presents five properties on its tentative list. The tentative list is an inventory of those properties which each State Party intends to consider for nomination. They include Nyika National Park (Chitipa, Karonga, and Rumphu Districts), Khulubvi and Associated Mbona Sacred Rain Shrines (Nsanje District), Malawi Slave Routes and Dr. David Livingstone Trail (Karonga, Nkhotakota, Mangochi, and Phalombe Districts), Lake Chilwa Wetland (Machinga, Phalombe, and Zomba) and Vwaza Marsh Wildlife Reserve (Rumphu District). **SCRIP does not operate in any of the districts where these sites are located.**

No other areas identified as Physical and Cultural Heritage have been identified as included in project districts of intervention during the design consultations, and if this were to change during implementation, the sites would be excluded from project interventions. As such, every effort will be made to avoid impacting Physical and Cultural Heritage sites.

### **Principle 15: Lands and Soil Conservation**

Project sites include landscapes with fragile soils, specifically steep slopes, degraded hillsides, and riverbanks prone to erosion. Left unmanaged, these areas suffer from topsoil loss, sedimentation, and declining fertility due to intense rainfall and deforestation. SCRIP directly addresses these vulnerabilities by integrating soil and water conservation (SWC) and sustainable land management (SLM) measures in all VLAPs. Key SCRIP interventions with positive impacts to land and soil conservation include:

- Physical structures: contour bunds, terraces, infiltration pits, and impoundment to reduce runoff and soil loss.
- Biological measures: grass strips, vetiver hedgerows, live barriers, and agroforestry belts that stabilize soils and improve infiltration.
- Soil fertility restoration: promotion of composting, manure management, intercropping with legumes, and incorporation of crop residues to build soil organic matter.
- Training and awareness: FFS and Village Natural Resource Management Committees (VNRMCs) will be capacitated on erosion-control design, soil fertility mapping, and adaptive maintenance of SWC structures.

All interventions will follow design standards issued by the Department of Land Resources Conservation (DLRC) and the Ministry of Agriculture's Conservation Agriculture Guidelines. Soil conservation is also mainstreamed in Component 2 through demonstration plots and FFS curricula.

**Avoidance of degradation and conversion of valuable lands.** The project deliberately avoids any conversion of natural forests, wetlands, or other ecologically sensitive areas. Site selection for community infrastructure (e.g., small irrigation systems, storage facilities, or water harvesting structures) and rehabilitation efforts target degraded catchments and marginal lands, not intact ecosystems.

Through the participatory VLAP process, communities (guided by DLRC, VDCs, and VNRMCs) will identify and map areas providing critical ecosystem services such as water recharge zones, riverbanks, and forest patches. These zones will be designated for protection or assisted natural regeneration rather than cultivation. By stabilizing these areas, SCRIP will help maintain downstream water quality, reduce sedimentation in irrigation schemes, and preserve soil productivity for future use.

**Cumulative and indirect benefits.** Beyond preventing degradation, SCRIP will generate measurable positive outcomes for land and soil conservation:

- At least 2,800 ha under anti-erosive soil and water conservation measures;
- 2,500 ha of community woodlots and reforested slopes reducing erosion and landslides;
- 70 VNRMCs strengthened to monitor land use and enforce by-laws against unsustainable cultivation or tree cutting;
- Reduction in downstream siltation benefiting an estimated 16,000 ha of productive farmland.

These measures will increase soil moisture retention, organic carbon content, and overall land productivity, thereby strengthening the resilience of smallholder systems to climate variability.

#### **IV. Environment and Social Management Plan**

##### **i) Safeguards and Screening Procedures**

The project has been designed in full compliance with relevant Malawian laws, ensuring that all necessary safeguards are integrated into the project selection and implementation procedures. The formulation process has verified that the project does not overlap with protected natural and cultural heritage sites, as well as areas of critical biodiversity within its intervention areas, and regular verifications of the absence of such sites will be performed during implementation. These elements will be systematically reported in the Project reports, ensuring transparency and accountability.

As part of the project reporting, the project will monitor and report on all relevant indicators, including those related to gender and youth. For any indicators that do not meet their targets, the PMU will propose and implement mitigation measures.

-The consolidated ESMP table below synthesizes the project's safeguards for each priority area of the Adaptation Fund's Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) along with the corresponding reporting plan. This approach ensures that all environmental, social, and cultural safeguards are thoroughly addressed and integrated into the project's operations.

[The costs of implementing the ESMP safeguards are directly embedded in SCRIP budget, within the activities listed below for relevant mitigation measures. An additional 48,000 USD is budgeted \(in addition to standard monitoring costs\) to monitor and report on the project's compliance with all ESMP and GAP's mitigation measures, as presented in Table 16Table 16.](#)

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ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN							
Component /Output	Environmental & social risks	Mitigation measures	Indicators	Person responsible	AF ESP	Verification	Costs
<b>Component 1. Resilient ecosystems sustainably providing services to smallholder farmers</b>							
Output 1.1. Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed	Cultural norms prevent vulnerable groups, including women and PwD from contributing to planning process	Quotas of at least 50% women, 30% youth and 5% PwD GALS process and Disability Inclusion Facilitators will promote women participation and empowerment Disability Inclusion Facilitators will ensure accessibility and participation from PwD Location and scheduling will ensure accessibility for all	% of women, youth and PwD implicated in planning process	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist	ESP 2. Access and Equity ESP 3. Marginalised and Vulnerable groups ESP 5. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	Reports from planning processes including list of participants	<a href="#">Activities 1.1.2 (Community mobilisation) and 3.1.2 (PSPs)</a>  <a href="#">111,000 USD for a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist</a>  <a href="#">Disability Inclusion Facilitators (DIF) (47,500 USD)</a>
	Women are exposed to GBV as a result of backlash further to their inclusion in the project	Use of household methodologies (GALS) to directly address and fight GBV in communities	Trends in reported cases of GBV	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist	ESP 5. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment ESP. 6. Core Labour Rights ESP.1 Compliance with the Law	GRM records; monitoring reports on Gender Action Plan	<a href="#">GALS (152,000 USD)</a>  <a href="#">111,000 USD for a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist</a>  <a href="#">DIF (47,500 USD)</a>
	Elite capture or exclusion of most vulnerable households within communities (e.g. by village leaders or landowners)	Communicate targeting criteria transparently to all community members during community meetings Ensure verification of beneficiaries profile Integrate grievance redress mechanism at VDCs and EPA levels Occasional audits and verifications on targeting	Complaints filed and resolved  Spot check results from targeting audits.	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist; M&E Assistant	ESP 2: Access and Equity ESP 3. Marginalised and Vulnerable groups	GRM records; VDC minutes; Supervision report's assessment on targeting	<a href="#">Mainstreamed in all community facilitation, M&amp;E, communication and knowledge management budgets,</a> <a href="#">Activities 1.1.2 (Community mobilisation) and 3.1.2 (PSPs)</a>

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<b>Output 1.2.</b> Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level	Inequitable benefit sharing from community woodlots, beekeeping and restoration value chains	Develop and enforce community by-laws with benefit-sharing clauses. Use GALS and DIF to ensure all household types are represented in planning.	By-laws include benefit-sharing clauses. Complaints filed and resolved	Agronomist; Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist	ESP 2. Access and Equity ESP 3. Marginalised and Vulnerable groups ESP 5. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	Copy of by-laws; GRM records; monitoring reports on Gender Action Plan	<a href="#">Activities 1.2.2, 1.2.3 and 1.2.4</a>
	Lack of clarity over land tenure for sites used in afforestation	Formalize land access via MoUs or customary estate certificates in line with Land Act 2016.	Community interventions with signed land use MoUs or certificates.	DLRC; Rural Infrastructure Specialist; Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist	ESP 1: Compliance with the Law	Copies of MoUs; land documentation on file	<a href="#">Activity 1.2.2</a>  <a href="#">Mainsteamed in all contracts, supervision and M&amp;E budgets.</a>
	Sites prioritized for interventions overlap with newly created/found protected areas, habitats of IUCN Red List species or other critical biodiversity, or physical and cultural heritage sites	VLAPs will be screened against all ESPs to ensure no new site-specific risk arises  Changes to the status of natural or cultural sites will be monitored	No site triggers ESP 9, 10 or 14	Rural infrastructure specialist and DLRC	ESP 9. Protection of natural habitats ESP 10. Conservation of biological diversity ESP 14. Physical and Cultural Heritage	VLAPs Screening	<a href="#">Activity 1.2.1</a>
	Proliferation of invasive species in sites targeted for NAR	The project will monitor that no invasive species proliferate in sites targeted for NAR using GiS and site visits.	No invasive species in NAR sites	DLRC; Agronomist	ESP 10. Conservation of Biological Diversity	Site visits reports	<a href="#">Activity 1.2.2</a>  <a href="#">Activity 1.1.1 for site visit support.</a>
	Revegetation activities do not prioritize indigenous/local species	Any species used for afforestation and restoration activities will be screened against Malawi's Forestry and Malawi's Catchment guidelines	100% of species used are local and present no risk of becoming invasive	DLRC; Agronomist	ESP 10. Conservation of biological diversity	List of plant species for seeds/seedlings procured for restoration activities	<a href="#">Activity 1.2.1</a>
	Vulnerable groups including women and PwD are not accessing incentives from SCRCP	Prioritise targeting women, youth and DIF for incentives' distributions at HH level Use GALS and DIF to ensure all	% women, youth and PwD accessing incentives from SCRCP	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist; M&E Assistant	ESP 2: Access and Equity ESP 3: Marginalized & Vulnerable Groups	M&E reports	<a href="#">GALS (152,000 USD)</a>  <a href="#">111,000 USD for a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist</a>

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		households are aware of incentives' targeting strategy					DIF (47,500 USD)
	Child labour instances for rural infrastructure works beneficiary contribution	Contractors compliance with the law enforced in contracts clauses DLRC sensitises and monitors communities' compliance with the law	No instances of child labour	DLRC; Project Manager	ESP 1. Compliance with the Law ESP. 6. Core Labour Rights	Number of grievances against service providers (target: 0); Number of contracts terminated (target:0)	<a href="#">Mainstreamed in all contract management.</a>
	Soil erosion and land degradation on steep and erosion prone areas	Avoidance of cultivation or infrastructure on steep slopes and erosion-prone areas; community by-laws regulating land and water use; promotion of Assisted Natural Regeneration and indigenous species	Number of VLAPs implemented in erosion-prone areas Visual identification of worsening erosion	DLRC; Agronomist; Rural Infrastructure Specialist; DAES	ESP 15. Lands and Soil Conservation	VLAPs in erosion prone areas (target: 0) Photos and GIS tools showing increased erosion every year, before and after rainy season	<a href="#">Activity 1.2.2</a> <a href="#">Activity 1.1.1 for site visit and GIS support.</a>
<b>Component 2. Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi</b>							
Output 2.1. Adaptive capacity of smallholder farming systems supported	Service providers do not comply with the law	Contract will include termination clauses in case of non-compliance Contractors will be periodically audited to verify compliance (at least once a year)	Law is respected	Project Manager	ESP 1. Compliance with the Law	Number of grievances against service providers (target: 0); Number of contracts terminated (target:0)	<a href="#">Mainstreamed in all contract management.</a>
	Targeted communities use pesticides and other chemical inputs to mitigate climate impacts	Support the adoption of agroecology and other climate-resilient practices. Where chemicals' use cannot be avoided, promote precise application techniques and timing.  Pest Management Plan implementation	Training records and adoption of practices	DAES; Agronomist and M&E assistant	ESP 12. Pollution Prevention and Resource efficiency ESP 10. Conservation of biological diversity ESP 15. Lands and Soil Conservation	Pest Management Plan; Monitoring of FFS implementation; Adoption surveys	<a href="#">Activities 2.1.1 and 2.1.2.</a>

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	Vulnerable groups including women and PwD are not properly represented in agricultural capacity building activities	Quotas of at least 50% women, 30% youth and 5% PwD  GALS process and Disability Inclusion Facilitators will promote women participation and empowerment Disability Inclusion Facilitators will ensure accessibility and participation from PwD  Location and scheduling will ensure accessibility for all	% of women, youth and PwD included in FFS and demonstrations	DAES; Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist; M&E assistant	ESP 2. Access and Equity ESP 3. Marginalised and Vulnerable groups ESP 5. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	Report of trainings and activities	<a href="#">GALS (152,000 USD)</a>  <a href="#">111,000 USD for a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist</a>  <a href="#">DIF (47,500 USD)</a>
	Minor waste release to the environment following infrastructure work, demos and FFS	Focus on ARC refurbishment rather than new infrastructure Waste management requirements on contracts' clauses Training on safe disposal for pesticides and veterinary equipment	Adoption of safe disposal and waste management measures	DAES; Agronomist; Rural Infrastructure Specialist; and M&E assistant	ESP6. Core labour rights ESP 12. Pollution Prevention and Resource efficiency	Training records; annual supervision mission reports; ESI screenings; adoption surveys from demos and FFS participants	<a href="#">Activities 2.1.3 and 2.1.5</a> <a href="#">Mainstreamed in all contract management.</a>
<b>Output 2.2.</b> Adapted inputs and climate-resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers	Sites prioritized for interventions overlap with newly created/found protected areas, habitats of IUCN Red List species or other critical biodiversity, or physical and cultural heritage sites	VLAPs will be screened against all ESPs to ensure no new site-specific risk arises Changes to the status of natural or cultural sites will be monitored Exemptions and permits will be obtained from the Water authority	No site triggers ESP 9, 10 or 14	Rural infrastructure specialist and DLRC	ESP 9. Protection of natural habitats ESP 10. Conservation of biological diversity ESP 14. Physical and Cultural Heritage	VLAP screenings; Annual supervision reports on compliance with the law; Exemptions and permits	<a href="#">Activity 1.2.1 and 1.2.2</a>
	Introduction of pests and diseases from seed banks	Compliance with Pest Act and the Seed Act	No pest outbreak	Agronomist; DLRC	ESP 9. Protection of natural habitats	Pest Management Plan; Audit reports; List of seeds procured	<a href="#">Activity 2.2.1</a>

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		enforced through regular audits Pest Management Plan implementation Only certified seeds will be used			ESP 10. Conservation of biological diversity		
Vulnerable groups including women and PwD are not represented in Water Users Associations	Quotas of at least 50% women, 30% youth and 5% PwD  GALS process and Disability Inclusion Facilitators will promote women participation and empowerment Disability Inclusion Facilitators will ensure accessibility and participation from PwD  Location and scheduling will ensure accessibility for all	% of women, youth and PwD included in WUAs	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist; DLRC; Rural infrastructure specialist	ESP 2. Access and Equity ESP 3. Marginalised and Vulnerable groups ESP 5. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	Charters and statutes listing committee members and stakeholders	<a href="#">GALS (152,000 USD)</a>  <a href="#">111,000 USD for a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist</a>  <a href="#">DIF (47,500 USD)</a>	
Vulnerable groups including women and PwD are excluded from livelihood diversification activities	Prioritise targeting women, youth and DIF for incentives' distributions at HH level Use GALS and DIF to ensure all households are aware of incentives' targeting strategy	% women, youth and PwD with diversified livelihoods through SCRP	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist	ESP 2. Access and Equity ESP 3. Marginalised and Vulnerable groups ESP 5. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	Activities report and statistics from equipment/inputs distribution	<a href="#">GALS (152,000 USD)</a>  <a href="#">111,000 USD for a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist</a>  <a href="#">DIF (47,500 USD)</a>	
Child labour instances for rural infrastructure works beneficiary contribution	Contractors' compliance with the law DLRC sensitises and monitors communities' compliance with the law	No instances of child labour	Project Manager	ESP 1. Compliance with the Law ESP. 6. Core Labour Rights	Number of grievances against service providers (target: 0); Number of contracts terminated (target:0)	<a href="#">Mainstreamed in all contract management.</a>	
Lack of clarity over land tenure for sites used in irrigation	Formalize land access via MoUs or customary estate	Community interventions with signed	DLRC; Rural Infrastructure Specialist	ESP 1. Compliance with the Law	Copies of MoUs; land documentation on file; exemptions and permits	<a href="#">Mainstreamed in all contract management.</a>	

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		certificates in line with Land Act 2016. Exemptions and permits will be obtained from Water Authority	land use MoUs or certificates.				<a href="#">Activity 1.2.3 and 2.2.1</a>
	Overuse or conflict over rainwater harvesting structures in dry periods (e.g. irrigation vs. domestic use)	Develop local water use rules with VNRMCs and WUAs. Prioritize domestic use. Raise awareness on sustainable use and catchment recharge.	and % of sites with local water use plans.	Rural Infrastructure Specialist; DLRC	ESP 1. Compliance with the Law ESP 15. Lands and Soil Conservation	Water use rules on site; minutes of VNRMCs; number of grievances related to water use (target: 0)	<a href="#">Activity 1.2.3 and 2.2.1</a>
<b>Component 3. Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi</b>							
<b>Output 3.1.</b> Climate information for decision making available at local level	Vulnerable groups including women and PwD are not accessing climate information	GALS facilitators training on climate information services hold climate circles  PSP set at suitable time and location for access by PwD and Women	% women, youth and PwD accessing climate information services	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist; DAES; Meteorologist	ESP 2. Access and Equity ESP 3. Marginalised and Vulnerable groups ESP 5. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment	M&E reports; number of climate circles held; GALS training reports	<a href="#">GALS (152,000 USD)</a>  <a href="#">111,000 USD for a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist</a>  <a href="#">DIF (47,500 USD)</a>
	Exclusion of illiterate or non-Chichewa speakers from information channels	Use pictorial, oral, and radio-based dissemination strategies. Translate key materials into local languages.	% of project materials available in local languages	Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist; DAES	ESP 2. Access and Equity	Material repository; Surveys on persons with access to climate information services	<a href="#">111,000 USD for a Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist</a>
<b>Output 3.2.</b> National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector	Service providers do not comply with the law	Contract will include termination clauses in case of non-compliance Contractors will be periodically audited to verify compliance (at least once a year)	Law is respected	Project Manager	ESP 1. Compliance with the Law ESP. 6. Core Labour Rights	Number of grievances against service providers (target: 0); Number of contracts terminated (target:0)	<a href="#">Mainstreamed in all contract management</a>

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While ESIA's are not required, the project will ensure rapid screenings of VLAPs against the 15 ESP are conducted as part of their preparation and to raise awareness on Environmental and Social Safeguards within targeted communities (template is provided in Appendix). This will also comply with screening requirements in Malawi ESIA Regulations, and facilitate the obtention of clearance by the Water Authority and the Environment Protection Agency for small micro-catchment infrastructure. The adoption of a General Environment and social Policy by the project in line with the provisions and eligibility restrictions presented in the table below.

Policy issue	Project General Environmental and Social Policy
<b>ESP 1 Compliance with the Law</b>	The project interventions will comply with relevant national environmental laws, policies and regulations. The PMU will ensure service providers and contractors comply with relevant laws by including dedicated provisions in their contracts.
<b>ESP 2 Access and Equity</b>	The project will ensure equal access to training, equipment and services. Gender equity, integration of youth and environmental sustainability were pursued as key cross-cutting themes in the project design.
<b>ESP 3 Marginalised and Vulnerable Groups.</b>	The Project will not fund any intervention that could have a negative impact on marginalize and vulnerable groups.
<b>ESP 4 Human Rights</b>	The project will ensure to respect and adhere to all the relevant conventions on human rights
<b>ESP 5 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment</b>	The project recognizes the different impact that project investments might have according to gender, and will only finance gender-responsive measures to address the needs and constraints of women and men, such as quotas for trainings and access to equipment, support of women led value chains and promotion of household methodologies.
<b>ESP 6 Core Labour Rights</b>	The project interventions directly or indirectly supporting job opportunities will ensure compliance with relevant laws guided by the ILO standards.
<b>ESP 7 Indigenous People</b>	Not applicable
<b>ESP 8 Involuntary Resettlement</b>	The project will not fund any intervention that leads to or gives rise to possibility of involuntary resettlement.
<b>ESP 9 Protection of Natural Habitats</b>	The Project will not fund any intervention that encroaches into any declared or proposed protected area of natural habitats or that result in the conversion of natural habitat to other purposes.
<b>ESP 10 Conservation of Biodiversity</b>	The project will not fund any intervention that negatively affects wild species populations and conservation status.
<b>ESP 11 Climate Change</b>	The project will not fund approaches and techniques that are not compliant with the mitigation and adaptation priorities detailed in Malawi updated NDC and Adaptation communications to UNFCCC and other governmental documents.
<b>ESP 12 Pollution Prevention and Resource Efficiency</b>	The project will not fund any intervention that overexploits, damages and/or degrades key resources such as freshwater, soil, vegetation cover, and agro-biodiversity such as local breeds and crop species and varieties.
<b>ESP 13 Human Health</b>	The project will not adversely affect human health in, among other, areas of income and social status; education; physical environment; social support networks; health services; land use; unsustainable farming; and water.
<b>ESP 14 Physical and Cultural Heritage</b>	The project will not fund any intervention that displaces, damages, makes it inoperative and/or inaccessible any physical and human resource that is of historical or cultural significance.
<b>ESP 15 Lands and Soil Conservation</b>	The project will not fund measures and technologies that increase the risk of land degradation.

### iii) Consultation

**Design consultations.** The formulation of the SCRIP project was conducted in two phases: the preparation of the Concept Note from June 2023 to March 2025, and the preparation of the project proposal from September to November 2025. Both the CN and PP preparation adopted a highly consultative process with stakeholders at different levels which included:

At the national level, consultations engaged technical departments under the Ministry of Agriculture (Planning, Crops, Research, Livestock, Land Resources Conservation, Extension Services), the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services, the Department of Disaster Risk Management Affairs, and the Ministries of Gender, Finance, and Disability Affairs, along with UNDP, WFP, UNAIDS, UN Women, the World Bank, and the Malawi Red Cross Society. At the district level,

discussions involved District Councils, ADDs, NGOs, and civil society organizations, including Total Land Care, Tiyeni, CADECOM, Find Your Feet, CRECCOM, CARD, and others.

At community level, the team conducted Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in seven EPAs, engaging Village Development Committees (VDCs), Village Natural Resource Management Committees (VNRMCs), Area Civil Protection Committees (ACPCs), Area Agriculture Stakeholder Panels (AASPs), lead and follower farmers, and other smallholder representatives. Priority issues raised included recurrent droughts and floods, declining soil fertility, deforestation, limited extension coverage, unreliable climate information, post-harvest losses, and inadequate livestock health services. Participants also highlighted constraints in market access, irrigation infrastructure, and women's access to land and productive resources. Stakeholders emphasized the need for strengthened early warning systems, Farmer Field Schools, youth engagement, and sustainable land management measures.

All stakeholders confirmed the relevance and timeliness of the proposed project and validated its focus on agroecology, catchment restoration, inclusive livelihood diversification, and localized climate services. Feedback from the Departments of Land Resources Conservation and Meteorology informed design refinements on soil and water conservation and automatic weather station investments. Gender and disability focal points provided recommendations to integrate the GALS and ensure disability inclusion facilitators at EPA level.

Special attention was given to ensure a gender and youth focus in these consultations. As such, institutions dealing with gender and youth issues, both public and from the civil society, were consulted. Male and female potential beneficiaries and stakeholders were consulted both separately and in mixed groups. Moreover, the appropriateness of time and location of consultation meetings, especially for women, was taken into account. The consultative process (including lists of stakeholders consulted) is detailed in Annex 1: Stakeholder consultation process.

**ESMP Consultations.** Project consultations will at all times be gender-sensitive and inclusive of vulnerable and marginalised groups, including as part of any screening and mitigation measures that could be needed for ESP 9, 10, and 14, should new relevant areas pertaining to these principles be identified during implementation. The project will have regular consultations with beneficiaries throughout the project, and its implementation will rely on AAEDOs already trusted within the community. In particular, the project stakeholder engagement and consultative process will be continuous throughout project implementation and entail:

- Participatory definition of Village-Level Action Plans (VLAPs) with VDCs, ADCs, and traditional leaders;
- Community validation of VLAPs micro-catchment management plans and restoration measures;
- Regular dialogue with vulnerable groups, including women, youth, HIV-affected households, and PWDs facilitated by Disability Inclusion Facilitators;
- Establishment of Committees to guide natural resource use, specifically forest and water, by-law formulation, and conflict resolution;
- Farmer-led extension approaches through FFS and Peer-to-Peer Learning;
- Collaboration with Extension Planning Area and District staff for ongoing monitoring of safeguards and environmental and social management measures.

This participatory process (conducted across planning, implementation, and monitoring) ensures that project activities are locally grounded, socially inclusive, and environmentally sound, while enabling continuous feedback and adaptive management of environmental and social risks throughout the SCRPF lifecycle.

### iii) Grievance Mechanism<sup>105</sup>

The project will utilize the existing IFAD grievance mechanism to allow those affected to raise concerns in case the project is not complying with its social and environmental policies or commitments, first by establishing a grievance mechanism at project level, drawing from the existing mechanisms used by IFAD in Malawi.

**Local and project-level GRM.** The consultative process that will be conducted with the communities and beneficiaries in Component 1 aims to ensure prevention of grievances that might arise from the

<sup>105</sup> The redress mechanism is described in section III. D.

project activities. However, some grievances may still arise including unfair treatment of communities by the project.

In such cases, project affected persons (PAPs) may raise grievances at the following levels: Site Specific Grievance Redress Management Committee (SSGRMC), Community Grievance Redress Management Committee (CGRMC), District Grievances Redress Management (DGRMC) at District level and Project Management Unit Grievances Redress Management Committee (PMUGRMC) at project coordination level.

- **Site specific.** The Site-Specific Grievance Redress Management Committee (SSGRMC) shall record, vet and hear cases submitted by PAPs. If the PAP is satisfied with the resolution, the case is closed. If the PAP is not satisfied the case shall be referred to CGGRMC.
- **Community level.** The Community Grievance Redress Management Committee (CGRMC) shall record, vet and hear cases submitted by PAPs and referred by SSGRMCs. If the PAP is satisfied with the resolution, the case is closed. If the PAP is not satisfied the case shall be referred to DGRMC.
- **District level.** The District Grievances Redress Management Committee (DGRMC) shall record, vet and hear cases submitted by PAPs and cases referred by CGRMC. If the PAP is satisfied with the resolution, the case is closed. If the PAP is not satisfied, the case shall be referred to PMU Grievances Redress Management Committee (PMUGRMC).
- **Project Level.** The Project Management Unit Grievances Redress Management Committee (PMUGRMC) shall record, vets and hears cases submitted by PAPs and cases referred by three lower-level committees namely DGRMC, CGRMC and CSGRMC. If the PAP is satisfied with the resolution, the case is closed. If the PAP is not satisfied and the case is not closed at PMUGRMC, the PAP shall be directed to seek justice from any court of law and final decision shall be made by the court.

At each level, the following steps will be followed. All written or verbal complaints received will be registered in a database by the project representative. After registration, the complaints will be assessed and forwarded to the relevant teams. After that, the parties will investigate the legitimacy of the complaint and plan future directions. Fact-finding will be conducted with the PAP, village/community leader, and PMU officer. Suggestions on how to resolve the complaint will be discussed and the complainant will be advised accordingly. Once the PAP approves and the remedy is implemented, the complaint is approved as resolved. M&E for remediation measures will be undertaken alongside other monitoring and evaluation exercise of the project, using copied of registers kept by the various committees.

**IFAD level GRM.** There are special cases where complainants may send their concerns directly to IFAD. This option is available to individuals or groups who believe that their grievances have not been adequately addressed by the established committees or that the process has been compromised, delayed, lacks impartiality or fear of retaliation. In such cases, complaints can be raised by submitting the complaints form: through IFAD webpage (<http://www.ifad.org/en/accountability-and-complaints-procedures>) by email (SECAPcomplaints@ifad.org) or by post (SECAP complaints, Programme Management Department, IFAD, Via Paolo di Dono 44, 00142 Rome, Italy). This ensures that affected parties retain the right to seek recourse and reinforces IFAD's commitment to accountability, transparency, and the protection of vulnerable communities.

**The Ad hoc Complaint Handling Mechanism (ACHM) of the Adaptation Fund** can be directly used in cases where the Parties have failed to reach a mutually satisfactory solution through the implementing entities' grievance mechanism within a year. The Adaptation Fund Board Secretariat independently manages all aspects related to the ACHM, under the oversight of the Ethics and Finance Committee of the Board. Guidance to ACHM are available at this link: Ad Hoc Complaint Handling Mechanism - Adaptation Fund.

Grievance redress mechanisms will be shared with the community during the project inception workshop and subsequent meetings with the beneficiaries. As part of the grievance redress mechanism, the contact details of the project partners (Project Manager) will be made available to stakeholders including project beneficiaries and the community. Contact numbers would be displayed at common or predominant places along-with the project details. This is expected to promote social auditing.

## V. Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

As described in section III. E of the project proposal, SCRIP will have a comprehensive monitoring and reporting system that will include quarterly reports, technical reports, annual project reports, the AF PPR tracking, annual IFAD supervision mission reports, a Mid-term Evaluation and a final evaluation and completion survey.

The monitoring and reporting of the ESMP will be commensurate with the limited ESMP required for the project. ESP compliance for risks identified under section III.C) will be reported on through the annual PPR and supervision missions to verify that all relevant mitigation measures are being effectively implemented based on identified means of verification.

### i) Implementation schedule

The implementation schedule of ESMP will be as follows:

Activities	Time				
	PY1	PY2	PY3	PY4	PY5
Development of technical guidelines for the project, including the PMP and GRM committees	Q3				
Capacity building of project team and communities	Q3 – Q4				
Environmental and Social Screenings for VLAPs and rural infrastructure	Q3 – Q4	Q1 – Q2			
Environmental and Social Screenings for rural infrastructure		Q2 – Q4	Q1 – Q4	Q1 – Q4	Q1 – Q4
Implementation of project ESMP	Q3 – Q4	Q1 – Q4	Q1 – Q4	Q1 – Q4	Q1 – Q4
Monitoring and reporting of project ESMP		Q1-Q4	Q1-Q4	Q1-Q4	Q1-Q4

### ii) Cost for ESMP

The implementation of ESMP and its regular monitoring and review will have costs that have been built into the project budget. The cost implications and their source of funds will be as follows:

ESMP related activity	Source of funding to cover costs
Development of technical guidelines for the project, including the PMP	Built-in the Project Costs
Capacity building of project team and communities	Built-in the Project Costs
Environmental and Social Screenings for VLAPs and rural infrastructure	Built-in the Project Costs
Environmental and Social Screenings for rural infrastructure	Built-in the Project Costs
Implementation of project ESMP	Built-in the Project Costs
Monitoring and reporting of project ESMP	Built-in the Project Costs

### iii) Institutional arrangements

The institutional arrangements include the distribution of roles and responsibilities in the preparation of Screening and in the implementation of ESMP. The key players and their responsibilities will be as follows:

Organisation/designation	Responsibility
Project Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of ESMP budgeting and monitoring</li> </ul>
IFAD/PMU – Project Manager, Gender and Social Inclusion specialist, M&E assistant, Rural infrastructure specialist, Agronomist; Meteorology expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consolidation of information from monitoring at district level</li> <li>Verification of compliance with relevant laws</li> <li>Verification of any update related to ESP 9, 10 and 14 (if new areas of interest are identified, and proposition of corresponding mitigation solutions)</li> <li>Monitoring of targeting and inclusion of women and vulnerable groups across activities</li> <li>Monitoring of GRM resolutions and escalations where required</li> <li>Verification of ESMP-related clauses in procurement processes and contracts (pesticides, gender, etc)</li> </ul>
DLRC, DAES and DCCMS through AEDOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Screening of VLAPs</li> <li>Screening of rural infrastructure</li> <li>Monitoring of ESMP mitigation measures implementation</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verification of compliance with relevant Laws</li> <li>• Support to register customary estate certification where required and obtention of permits.</li> <li>• Awareness raising and facilitation of GRM process</li> </ul>
Other implementation partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Service providers</u>: compliance with the law, appropriate screening and obtention of exemptions for works under their contract</li> <li>• <u>VDCs</u>: screening of VLAPs, compliance with the law, escalation of grievances where required</li> </ul>

## Appendix 1 – Indicative Format of ESI Screening

### 1. Project Description

- 1.1 Description of the proposed operations and capacity building activities
- 1.2 Risk exposure maps of project intervention zones (watersheds) and interrelation diagrams of project stakeholders
- 1.3 Territories covered by economic stimulus (clusters, better accessibility)
- 1.4 Landscape areas for which intervention improved resilience to climate risks
- 1.5 Socio-demographic description of Settlements that will be affected

### 2. Baseline Condition

- 2.1 Description of existing environmental and social condition
- 2.2 Maps and other data that has been collected

### 3. Screening criteria

The screening should verify (in compliance with Malawi ESIA regulation) that:

- VLAP implementation will not substantially use a natural resource in a way that pre-empts the use or potential use of that resource for any other purpose;
- Potential residual impacts on the environment are likely to be minor, of little significance and easily mitigated;
- The type of investments in the VLAP, their environmental impacts and measures for managing them are well understood;
- Reliable means exist for ensuring that impact management measures can and will be adequately planned and implemented;
- VLAP implementation will not displace significant numbers of people, families or communities;
- VLAP activities are not located in, and will not affect, any environmentally sensitive areas, such as: National parks; Wetlands; Productive agricultural land; Important archaeological, historical and cultural sites; Areas protected under legislation; Areas containing rare or endangered flora or fauna; Areas containing unique or outstanding scenery; Mountains or developments on or near steep hill-slopes; Dry tropical forests (e.g. *Brachystegia* woodlands); Developments near Lake Malawi or its beaches; Developments providing important resources for vulnerable groups, such as fishing communities along the lake shore; Developments near high population concentrations or industrial activities where further development could create significant environmental problems, and Prime groundwater recharge areas or areas of importance for surface run-off of water.
- VLAP implementation will not result in:
  - Policy initiatives that may affect the environment, such as changes in agricultural pricing subsidies or tobacco liberalisation
  - Major changes in land tenure, and/or
  - Changes in water use through irrigation, drainage promotion or dams, changes in fishing practices.
- The project will not cause
  - An adverse socio-economic impact
  - Land degradation
  - Water pollution
  - Air pollution
  - Damage to wildlife and habitat
  - An adverse impact on the climate and hydrological cycle
  - Air pollution, or
  - The creation of by-products, residual or waste materials that require handling and disposal in a manner that is not regulated by existing authorities.
- VLAP implementation will not cause significant public concern because of potential environmental changes. The following are guiding principles:
  - Is the impact positive, mainly benign or harmful?

- What is the scale of the impact in terms of area affected, numbers of people or wildlife?
- What is the intensity of the impact?
- What will be the duration of the impact?
- Will there be cumulative effects from the impact?
- Are the effects politically controversial?
- Have the main economic, ecological and social costs been quantified?
- Will the impact vary by social group or gender?
- Is there any international impact due to the proposed projects?
- VLAP implementation will not necessitate further development activity that is likely to have a significant impact on the environment.

#### **5. Analysis of Alternatives**

Description of alternatives that were identified and their Screening in terms of:

- (a) Direct and Indirect Environment and Social Impact
- (b) Opportunities for enhancing environmental and social benefits

#### **6. Recommendations Risk Management options in terms of:**

- (i) Preventing Risk
- (ii) Avoiding Risk
- (iii) Mitigating Risk
- (iv) Transferring Risk
- (v) Absorbing Risk

#### **6. Process Note for the preparation of ESI Screening**

- 6.1 Consultations held with different stakeholders in the community
- 6.2 Consultations held with women and youth
- 6.3 Consultations held with settlement representatives
- 6.4 Consultations held with relevant municipal authorities and services

## Appendix 2 – Integrated Pest Management Plan Outline

A Pest Management Plan (PMP) is a concise implementation plan for the pest management aspects of a given project/programme, which is used to communicate with relevant stakeholders to ensure that they are informed about important details of the pest management strategy and are given the opportunity to react. The PMP includes the results of a given impact assessment but also describes the full rationale of, and justification for, the application of biocides or other pest management techniques, and the respective institutional and regulatory framework. It provides a comprehensive description of the proposed technique, associated risks and appropriate measures to minimize or mitigate those risks.

The PMP needs to be disclosed and discussed in at least two steps. A draft version of the plan must be shared at the earliest possible stage with potentially affected parties and other stakeholders, in a form and language understandable to them, and their views must be taken into account during revision of the draft. The final version of the plan must be publicly disclosed prior to project approval, including on the IFAD website.

For projects that involve the use of synthetic or natural biocides (or bio-pesticides) adherence to the following requirements should be demonstrated:

- i. Evidence that available options to avoid the use of biocides have been rigorously considered, such as biological or physical means, and that none is viable for the specific context and objective.
- ii. Any use of biocides or bio-pesticides must be guided by the associated technical guidelines provided by the manufacturers of the respective product and the respective national regulatory authority and comply with recommendations and minimum standards as described in the WHO and FAO (2014) and associated guidelines.<sup>106</sup>
- iii. Preference should be given to products that are less hazardous and persistent in the environment, and to methods of application and equipment that minimize the risks to users, local communities and the environment.

The following 6 steps should assist in effective pest management planning:

1. Understand the pest issues
2. Develop a draft pest management plan
3. Consultations
4. Finalize and implement the plan
5. Monitoring
6. Evaluate and review the overall results

An annotated outline/template of a PMP that meets the requirements of the IFAD SECAP is provided below:

- 1. Overview/Background on the intended project/programme:** This section should present a brief overview of key project/programme information. This section should include the following elements:
  - 1.1 Title of the project/programme.
  - 1.2 Countries/regions/territories where the pest management technique will be implemented/applied.
  - 1.3 Name of the executing entity (with the name, position, title, contact information of the main project personnel responsible for the PMP).
  - 1.4 Summary of the project/programme.
  - 1.5 Date of preparation of the PMP.
- 2. Rationale and objectives of the Pest management Plan:** This section should outline the main objectives and rationale behind the choice of pest management technique. It should include a detail description of the following elements:

<sup>106</sup> WHO and FAO, 2014. *International Code of Conduct on Pesticide Management*. Available at <http://www.fao.org/agriculture/crops/thematic-sitemap/theme/pests/code/en/>

- 2.1 Current impacts caused by the pest (which is being proposed for management by the project/programme), and anticipated future changes to said impacts.<sup>107</sup>
  - 2.2 Current management measures/practices applied to the pest, if relevant, and rationale behind the proposed changes
  - 2.3 Grant recipient's experience with pest management.
- 3. Description of Pest Management Practice:** This section should outline the specific pest management technique that has been chosen. If the application of biocides is being proposed, the following elements must be addressed and included as part of the PMP:
- 3.1 Identity, class, and application rate/quantity of biocides/pesticides that are to be used by the project.<sup>108</sup>
  - 3.2 The form and method used for the given pest management practice.<sup>109</sup>
  - 3.3 The specific geographic range where the pest management practices will be applied (GIS Coordinates).
  - 3.4 Name and address of the supplier of selected biocides, or information on the facilities where the products will be stored.
- 4. Institutional, Legislative and Regulatory framework:** This section should provide a concise description of the legal and regulatory framework that the biocide or other pest management technique will be used in.
- 4.1 National regulatory framework and the legal status of the product or technique. This should also outline/address any required documentation and standards that would be required under national law and Good International Industry Practice (GIIP), and international agreements/conventions.
  - 4.2 Where a biocide is not regulated under national law, the PMP should identify international laws for either the actual product or similar products, that could be used as a guide. In such cases, the PMP should also explain why this given biocide/technique is necessary despite the absence of national standards/regulation.
  - 4.3 Analysis of institutional capacity for control of the distribution, use and disposal of biocides, in particular the product selected by the project and the institutions responsible at the project site.
  - 4.4 Any measures proposed to strengthen regulatory frameworks and institutional capacity, where relevant.
- 5. Technique/Practice Risk Assessment:** This section of the PMP should assess potential environmental and social risks of undertaking the chosen pest management practice/technique. It should also outline potential mitigation measures that will be used to minimize identified risks. It should include the following:
- 5.1 Assessment of risks to communities and individuals that are related (both directly and indirectly) to the use of a given pest management product/technique. The assessment should take the real circumstances of application into account, including the capability of operators to handle products within acceptable risk margins and their access to and use of protective gear and appropriate application equipment.
  - 5.2 Assessment of risks posed to the environment, based on the use of a given technique/product (based on the expected levels of use of a given biocide/product). The assessment should include potential impacts to all components of the biophysical environment, including but not limited to soils, surface waters, groundwater, marine runoff, habitats, plant communities, and non- target species, particularly native, endemic and threatened species.
  - 5.3 Assessment of risks that could be posed prior to and after the use/application of the chosen technique/product. This could include assessments of the transport, storage,

<sup>107</sup> Such a those caused by climate change and other planned interventions

<sup>108</sup> Including chemical, trade and common names, likely dilution rates, application rates per ha etc

<sup>109</sup> For example; pellet, liquid, paint-on, back-pack or aerial spraying, rodenticides dropped from aircraft, permanent bait stations etc

- handling and disposal of such products/chemicals. It should consider the capacity of the "handling entity" to undertake the requisite tasks.
- 5.4 Effective measures should be identified to reduce and mitigate the risks, such as training for workers applying biocides and for people coming in contact with the substances, effective personal protective equipment, development of standard operating procedures, upgrading of storage facilities etc. Mitigation measures should include activities for monitoring effectiveness of application and early identification of needs for corrective actions (e.g. tracking of damage to and/or deaths of non-target species).
  - 5.5 An assessment of potential alternatives (i.e. to the use of the chosen technique) should be presented. This should establish that there is no less risky alternative to the one being proposed by the project/programme.
  - 5.6 The assessment should conclude with a comparison of the selected approach and its expected result with the current situation, and provide clear evidence of the benefits justifying the selection of the approach.
6. **Mitigation and Emergency Preparedness Actions/Plan:** This section of the PMP should outline, in detail, the recommended mitigation measures as established in the Technique/Practice Risk Assessment. It should include the specific resources required for such actions, with a detailed schedule and the responsible party being nominated. It should outline an emergency preparedness plan for unforeseen events with negative environmental or social/health/pandemic impacts. The Emergency preparedness plan should include: planned responses to unforeseen natural events; procedures for first aid and medical attention cases; and, include a mechanism to observe and record any such unforeseen impacts/events.
7. **Consultation, Disclosure, and Grievance:** This section should outline where, when and how the PMP will be disclosed. Consistent with the requirements of IFAD SECAP and AF ESPs the PMP should be disclosed in a timely and culturally appropriate manner to project affected parties. This section should also specify the dates, results and feedback that were received during consultation with local communities and owners of land adjacent to the project/programme area. It should also provide evidence of consultations held with relevant authorities (indicating who and when) and evidence that appropriate EIA procedures were followed and licenses and permissions, where relevant, were obtained.

## Annex 3: Climate Vulnerability analysis in Malawi

### I. Selection of district of intervention based on a rapid vulnerability assessment at Concept Note stage

1. 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 (also see below) encompassing exposure, sensitivity, and 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, while some districts might be very vulnerable, the number of immediate past and ongoing climate change interventions was also considered to avoid duplication of climate-related interventions in some districts.

2. **Exposure.** The selected districts have medium to very high exposure to climate change risks as highlighted in [Table 23](#)[Table 24](#)[Table 24](#) 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.

Table 23/24 - 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 in some areas	High in some parts	High in some parts

Data source: Malawi Hazards and Vulnerability Atlas - DoDMA (2016)

3. By 2040, temperatures are expected to increase by 1.08 °C in Balaka, and around 1.04 °C 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, while Mzimba and Lilongwe are expected to 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).

4. 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. The underlying causes of degradation in soil, land, and natural resources are often closely linked with maladaptive and unsustainable management practices, while climate change impacts such as droughts and floods accelerate and exacerbate these issues.

5. **Sensitivity.** [Table 24](#)[Table 25](#)[Table 25](#) 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 24/25 - 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

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Population in agriculture	High	High	High	High
Data source: Malawi Hazards and Vulnerability Atlas - DoDMA (2016)				

6. **Adaptive capacity.** Table 25 Table 26 Table 26 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 climate change information to guide decision-making.

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Table 2526 - 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)				

## II. Detailed vulnerability assessment

7. **Climate Vulnerability:** The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defines vulnerability as “the propensity or predisposition to be adversely affected,” adding that it “encompasses a variety of concepts and elements including sensitivity or susceptibility to harm and lack of capacity to cope and adapt.”<sup>110</sup> For the proposed project, climate vulnerability was defined as a function of climate exposure, climate sensitivity (two components to represent susceptibility to harm) and climate adaptive capacity (a component to express the capacity to cope and adapt). More specifically, climate exposure consists of type and intensity of climate hazard affecting a system, climate sensitivity represents predisposition of a system to suffer from harm, loss or damage as a consequence of climate hazards, and climate adaptive capacity is “the ability of a system [human or natural] to adjust to climate change [...] to moderate potential damages, to take advantage of opportunities, or to cope with the consequences.”<sup>111</sup> In order to identify the areas most vulnerable to climate change in Malawi, a climate vulnerability analysis was conducted for the whole country. This targeting process was based on Malawi government data,<sup>112</sup> supplemented by data from other sources.<sup>113</sup> The indicators shown below were used to define the three Indices of climate vulnerability: Exposure Index; Sensitivity Index; and Adaptive Capacity Index. The results of three Indices were aggregated to obtain Climate Vulnerability Index values. The parameter values of each index were standardized using the software R Project before summing them up as a value of the index.

### Indicators of Climate Vulnerability Indices

EXPOSURE INDEX	SENSITIVITY INDEX	ADAPTIVE CAPACITY INDEX
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual Mean Maximum Temperature Change (near century, RCP 8.5)</li> <li>February Dry Spell Length (near century, RCP 8.5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Average Revised Universal Soil Loss –RUSLE (based on Precipitation (1981-2020), Vegetation Index (NDVI), Soil types and Slopes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literacy Rate</li> <li>Access to Markets</li> <li>Youth Presence</li> <li>Emigration Rate</li> </ul>

<sup>110</sup> IPCC 2014. Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part A: Global and Sectoral Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

<sup>111</sup> McCarthy, J. J. *et al.* (eds.), 2001. “Climate Change 2001: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability.” New York: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>112</sup> DCCMS, 2018 Census, and LUANAR 2021.

<sup>113</sup> Remote sensing analysis was undertaken by FAO Investment Centre.

- Trends of Standardized Precipitation (1981-2020)

- Population Density
- Poverty Rate

9. **Catchment, Watershed, Water Resources Area and Water Resources Unit.** *Catchment* is the word used for Water Resources Areas (WRAs) and Water Resources Units (lower-level catchments of WRAs), which are defined for water resources management purposes by Malawi government. Various policy documents also employ the term *watershed* for the same concept. Given this situation, the funding proposal and associated documentation considers the two words, *catchment* and *watershed*, as interchangeable. Where WRAs and WRUs are concerned, however, the government has consistently used *catchment*, and the proposal follows this rule. A catchment can almost always be subsumed into a larger one or divided into smaller catchments; a catchment can be a sub-catchment at the same time of a larger catchment. WRUs are smaller than Districts and their sizes vary from 18,000 ha to 380,000 ha. WRUs are the smallest catchments officially delineated by the government.

10. **Sub-Catchment and Micro Catchment.** When the proposal refers to a sub-catchment, it means a sub-catchment of a WRU catchment. Under SCRП, the boundaries of sub-catchments are determined by hydrology (more specifically stream order), using the Hydrological Tool of Arc GIS 10.4.1 so that each sub-catchment consists of 3,000-40,000 ha of land with some exceptional cases outside the range. Sub-catchment delineation in Malawi has been carried out by various technical and financial partners, and SCRП will ensure that the WRU sub-catchment delineation is at the same scale as the common technical and financial partners' practice in the country. The wide range of catchment size results from the variety in hydrological conditions in the country. Micro-catchment (sub-catchment of WRU sub-catchment) is also a hydrological concept, delineated with a stream order lower than that for sub-catchments so that each micro-catchment consists of up to about 12 villages or 500-3,000 ha. In exceptional cases where village density or river flow is quite sparse, the surface area may be larger. Sub-catchment delineation is still being done by the Malawi government for this project, therefore for this assessment EPAs (Extension Planning Areas) were used for targeting. EPAs are district sub-divisions which are smaller than catchments (WRUs) but bigger than sub-catchments.

11. **Geographic Targeting.** The project bases its intervention on integrated landscape management of watersheds, applying climate resilient techniques. A landscape approach prevents dispersion of activities and has the potential for greater impacts on the beneficiary population. Geographic targeting of watersheds/catchments consists of several stages. The multi-stage selection process is necessary to scale-down the smallest government defined catchments (WRUs) and EPAs into sizes at which the project can effectively intervene. For the most effective choice of intervention sites, hydrologically coherent areas (sub-catchments and micro-catchments) were considered, and the selection was based on climate change vulnerability, supplemented by socioeconomic and cultural factors.

12. SCRП will be implemented in the districts of Balaka, Lilongwe Rural, Dowa, and Mzimba, previously identified by poverty and food insecurity levels. Rural poverty in these districts is very high, especially among the most vulnerable groups, such as women and youth. In addition, there is a very high correlation between poverty rates and food insecurity incidences, with Lilongwe Rural being worse off, with over one and a half million people categorized as being chronically food insecure. All the participating districts are also severely affected by climate change, which impinges on their agricultural productivity.

## SCRP Districts: Mzimba, Dowa, Lilongwe & Balaka

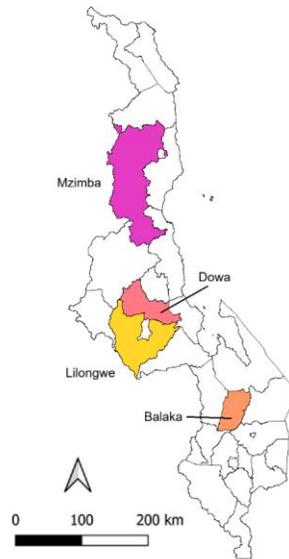


Figure 4 - SCRPs Districts

13. The stages of targeting after the identification of district intervention described above include: (i) identification of target EPAs within target Districts based on climate vulnerability (which includes socioeconomic potential as exposed below); (ii) delineation of selected EPAs into WRU sub-catchments and micro-catchments based on hydrology or number of villages contained, and in line with the sub-catchment delineation of other technical and financial partners in Malawi; and (iii) identification of target WRU micro-catchment boundaries based on hydrological, ecological and social considerations. Stage (ii) of the targeting is currently ongoing with support of IFAD/SAPP II, and stage (iii) will be carried out during project implementation to ensure participation of local stakeholders, interest and consent.

14. **Stage 1 - Identification of Target EPAs: Exposure Index.** Exposure Index was defined as a composite of: annual mean maximum temperature change for the near century (2040) under RCP 8.5; February dry spell trends for the near century (2040) under RCP 8.5; and trends of standardized precipitation (1981-2020). Figure 5 shows the mean-maximum temperature change for the near century (2040) under RCP 8.5. The areas colored yellow to red show significant increases of temperatures in the near future.

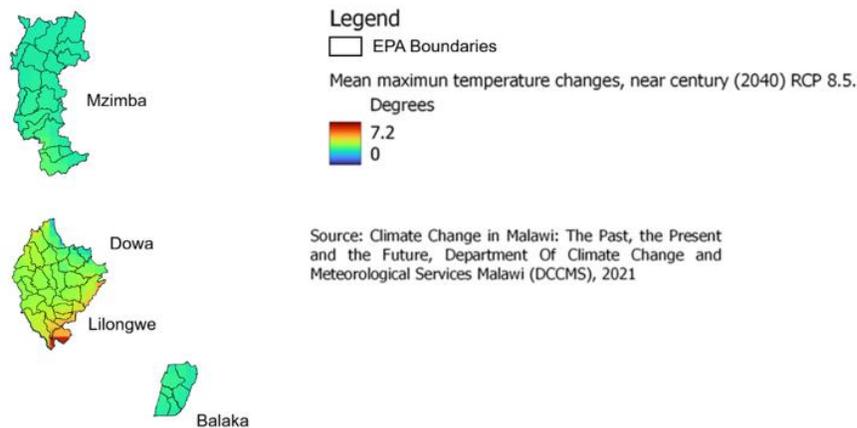


Figure 5 - Projected Changes in: Annual mean maximum temperature (between trend (historical and near century future for the Representative Concentration Pathway (RCP) is 8.5)

15. Figure 6 shows the estimated trends of dry-spell length in February, one of the months which historically has been characterized with above average monthly precipitation. Increase in the number of dry days is apparent in almost all districts, with particular intensity in Balaka.

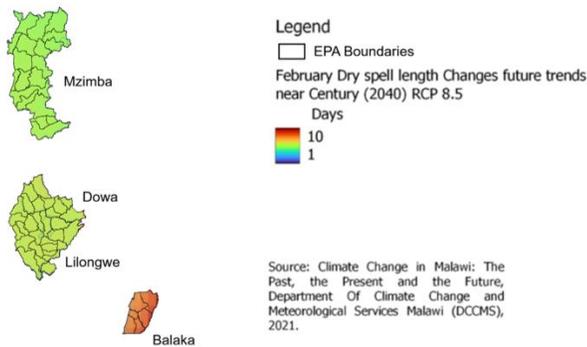


Figure 6 - Projected Changes in Mean Dry Spell Length in February (between historical and mean longest dry spells future trend for the near century Representative Concentration Pathway 8 (RCP8.5)

Source: Climate Change in Malawi: The Past, the Present and the Future, Department Of Climate Change and Meteorological Services Malawi (DCCMS), 2021.

16. Figure 7 shows the trends of standardized precipitation (1981-2020). Northern Mzimba and Southern Balaka show important decreases in precipitation, while the central region is expected to experience increases in rainfall.

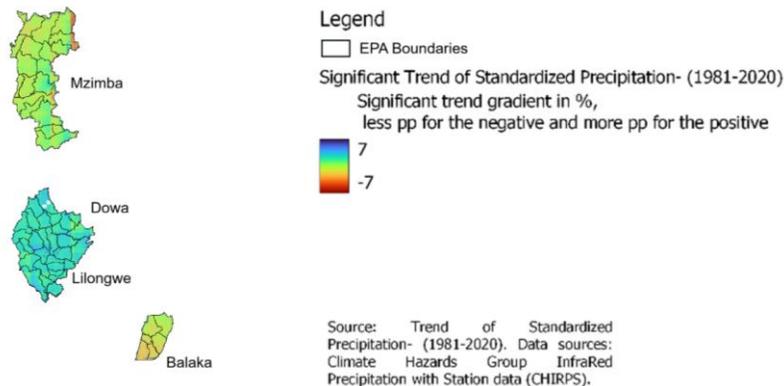


Figure 7 - Standardized Precipitation Trend- (1981-2020)

Source: Climate Hazards Group InfraRed Precipitation with Station data (CHIRPS) <https://www.chc.ucsb.edu/data/chirps>.

17. Figure 8 shows the geographical distribution of Exposure Index values, composed of projected changes in: annual mean maximum temperature change (near century, RCP 8.5); February dry spell length (near century, RCP 8.5); and standardized precipitation (1981-2020). It indicates higher exposure in the southern Lilongwe region and in Balaka District.

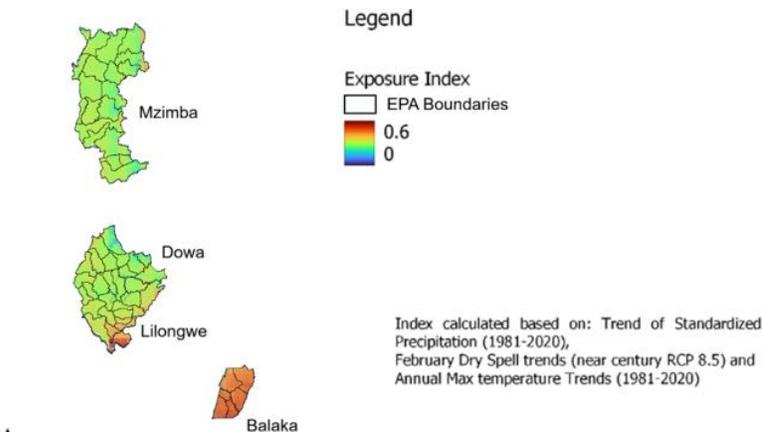


Figure 8 - Exposure Index Values in SCRPs Districts

18. **Stage 1 - Identification of Target EPAs: Sensitivity Index.** The sensitivity Index was defined by: the Average Revised Universal Soil Loss (RUSLE, which is based on precipitation during 1981-2020, Vegetation Index (NDVI), and soil types and slopes); population density; and poverty rate. [Figure 9](#) shows the RUSLE results expressed in tons soil/ha/year. Darker areas correspond to higher soil loss. Mzimba and Dowa are particularly affected.

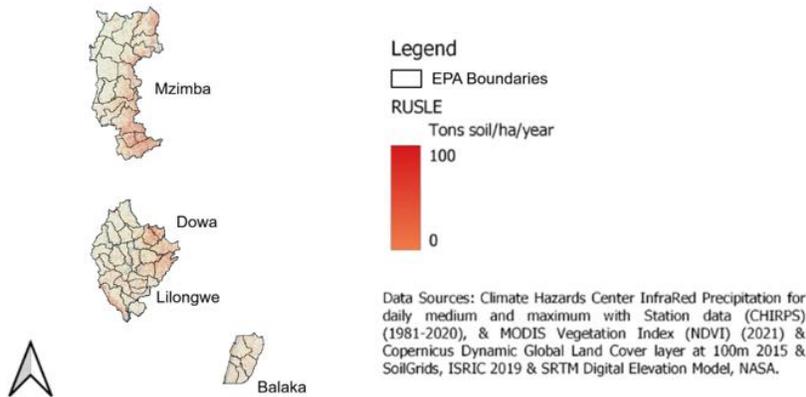


Figure 9 - Soil Loss based on: Average Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE)

Source: Climate Hazards Center InfraRed Precipitation for daily medium and maximum with Station data (CHIRPS) (1981-2020), MODIS Vegetation Index (NDVI) (2021), Copernicus Dynamic Global Land Cover layer at 100m (2015), SoilGrids, ISRIC (2019) and SRTM Digital Elevation Model, NASA.

19. Population density was considered as an indicator of climate sensitivity; rural areas with higher density are more prone to severe degradation and low resilience due to higher pressure on resources. [Figure 10](#) shows high population densities in most rural areas.

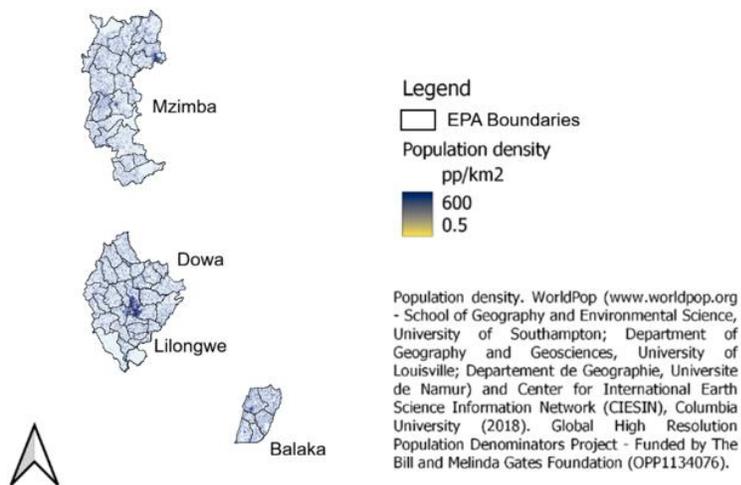


Figure 10 - Population density (Source: WorldPop www.worldpop.org, 2018)

20. Figure 11 shows the poverty levels by location in Malawi. Particularly high poverty is seen Balaka, Mzimba and Lilongwe.

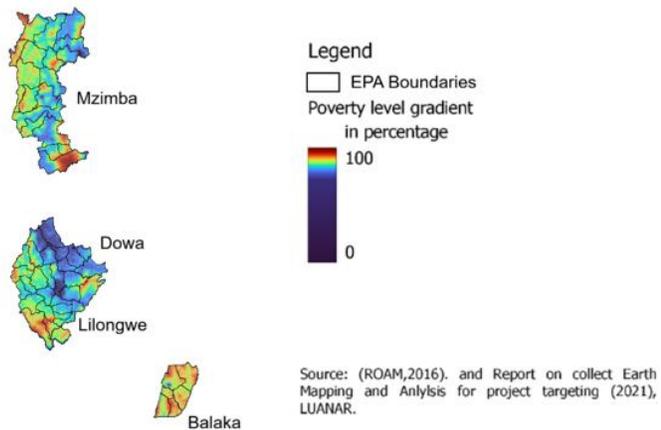


Figure 11 - Poverty Levels

Source: ROAM (2016) and Report on collect Earth Mapping and Analysis for project targeting (LUNAR, 2021).

21. Figure 12 aggregates the results of three indicators and reveals that the most climate sensitive areas are Mzimba, Lilongwe and Balaka.

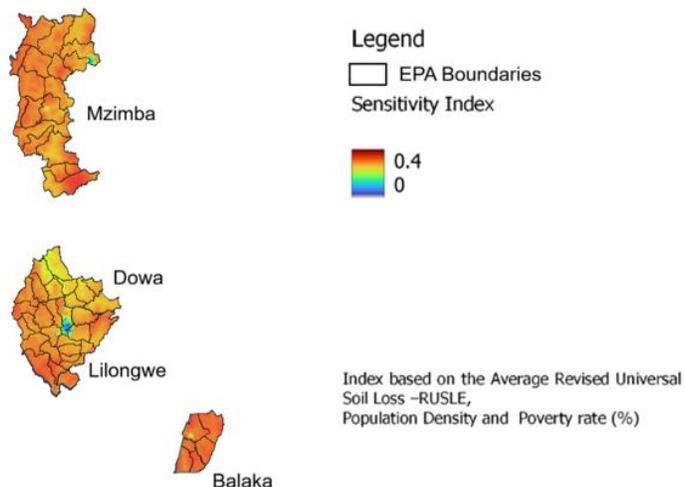


Figure 12 - Sensitivity Index Values

22. **Stage 1 - Identification of Target EPAs: Adaptive Capacity Index.** Adaptive Capacity is defined by: literacy rate; access to markets; youth presence; and emigration rate. Figure 13on literacy rate by District shows that the urban areas are in general more literate.

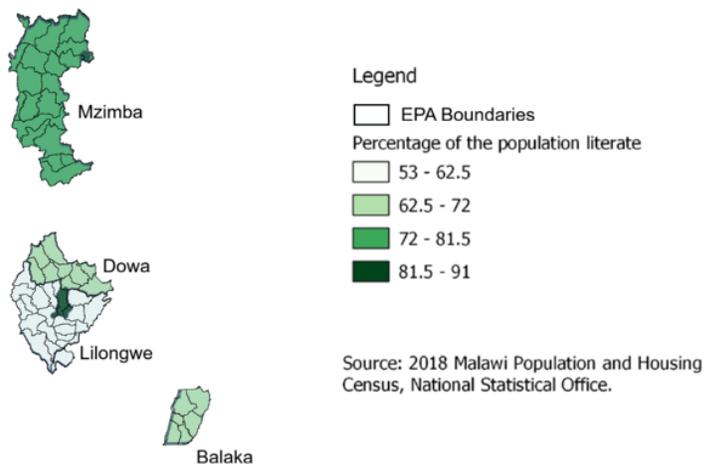


Figure 13 - Literacy rate by SCRPs District  
Source: 2018 Malawi Population and Housing Census, National Statistical Office.

23. Market accessibility is considered an important indicator not only for adaptive capacity, but also for sustainability of project interventions. The project targets climate vulnerable areas, while taking into account the significance of market accessibility for development of SMEs and 4Ps which support SCRPs adoption. Figure 14 shows that access to markets is highly dependent on transportation infrastructure.

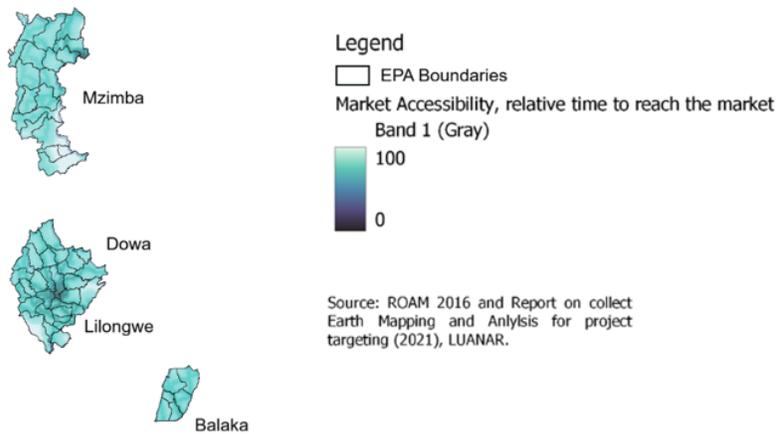


Figure 14 - Market Access  
Source: ROAM (2016) and Report on collect Earth Mapping and Analysis for project targeting (LUNAR, 2021)

24. The presence of youths (age 15-35 years) in rural areas increases opportunities for innovation, employment generation and rural development. The national population is very young; according to the

2018 Household Census, the median age of the population in Malawi was 17 years old. Comparing the maps of population density and presence of youth, they appear positively correlated.

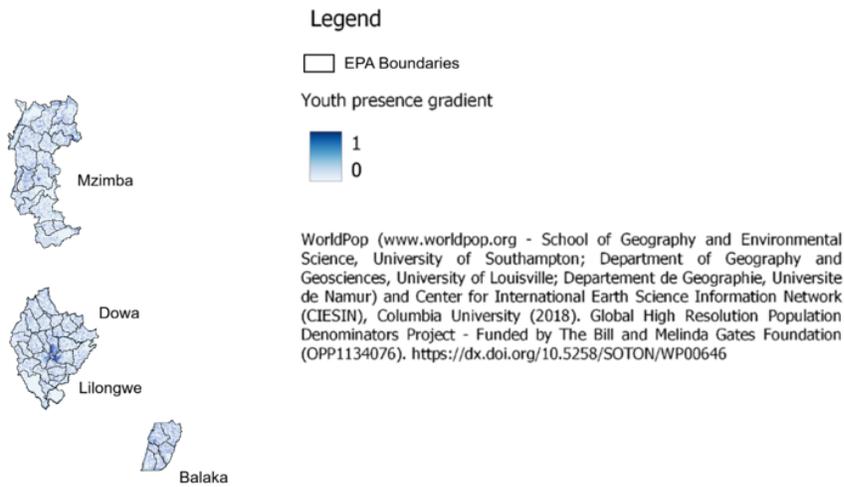


Figure 15 - Youth Population

Source: WorldPop (www.worldpop.org, 2018). <https://dx.doi.org/10.5258/SOTON/WP00646>.

25. According to Figure 16, the emigration rates are the highest in Mzimba, implying considerable lack of livelihood opportunities for the Districts' population.

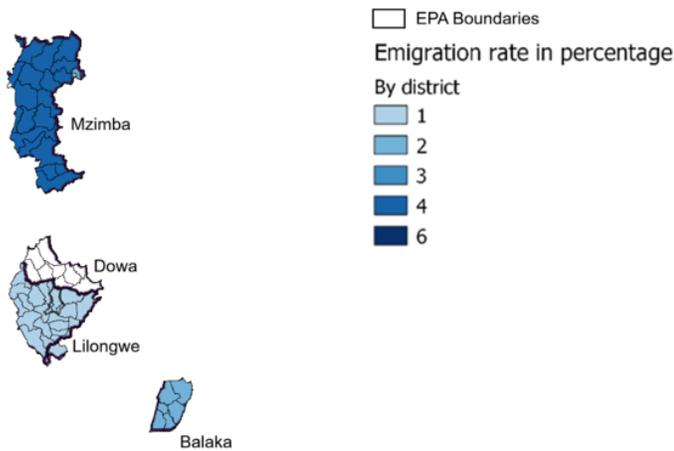


Figure 16 - Emigration rate

Source: 2018 Malawi Population and Housing Census, National Statistical Office.

26. Figure 17 shows the distribution of Adaptive Capacity Index values defined by the four indicators examined above. The areas with high adaptive capacity are characterized by high literacy rate, good market accessibility, high presence of youths and low emigration rate.

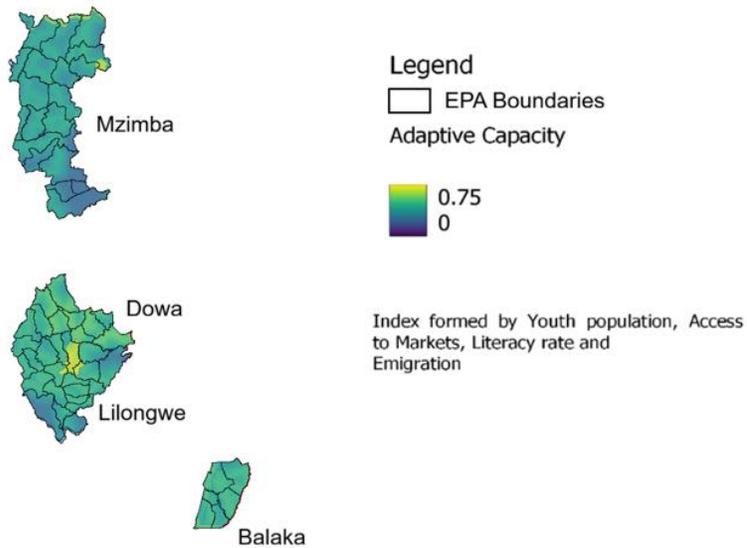


Figure 17 - Adaptive Capacity Index Values

27. **Stage 1 - Identification of Target EPAs: Climate Vulnerability Index.** The values of three indices (Exposure, Sensitivity and Adaptive Capacity) were aggregated to generate Climate Vulnerability Index values (Figure 18).

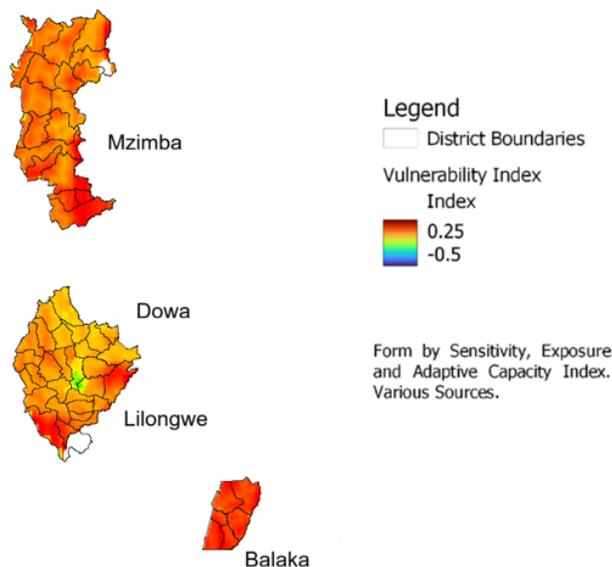


Figure 18 - Climate: Vulnerability index Values

28. **Stage 1 - Identification of Target EPAs: Climate Vulnerability with Emphasis on Exposure, Soil Degradation and Socioeconomic Potential.** The target EPAs were chosen based on the Climate Change Vulnerability Index values. In order to give sufficient considerations to land degradation in the selection process, an additional step was undertaken, further analysing RUSLE values. Indeed, Mzimba watersheds have the highest degradation rate among SCRPs Districts (Figure 9), which makes them particularly vulnerable to climate change. In line with the project's local and overall watershed management approach, these watersheds received particular consideration. The main determining factor for targeting remained high Climate Vulnerability throughout the process, but other vulnerability criteria, mainly socio-economic, were also considered after several consultations with national stakeholders.: (i) Access to produce markets for the selected crop value chains/availability of off-takers, (ii) Availability of functional farmer organizations such as cooperatives, associations and clubs, (iii) Relative production levels of the selected crop-based value chains, (iv) Relative production levels of the selected livestock-based value chains, (v) Relative population distribution of the farming households, (vi) Area of cultivatable land, (vii) Land degradation level, (viii) Vulnerability to climate-related or environmental shocks, risks, extreme weather events and disasters, (ix) Opportunities for climate adaptation and environmental sustainability, (x) Potential for irrigated farming, (xi) Relative availability of extension workers, (xii) Opportunities for social inclusion (opportunities for socio-economic empowerment of women, youths and PWDs), (xiii) Food and nutrition insecurity situation; vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity, (xiv) Opportunities for nutrition-sensitive agriculture promotion, (xv) Opportunities for complementarities or synergies with other similar programmes or projects, (xvi) Equity considerations - Opportunities for avoiding unnecessary duplications in service delivery across similar projects or programmes, and (xvii) Farmers' willingness and receptivity to SCRPs interventions.

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29. In total, 16 EPAs were selected, covering about 19 micro-catchments, and 195 villages.

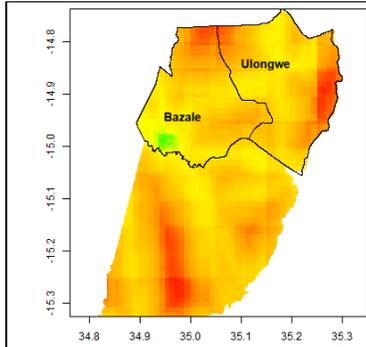


Figure 19 - Vulnerability levels for Balaka, showing selected EPAs

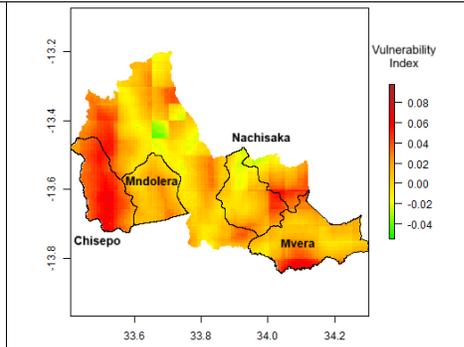


Figure 20 - Vulnerability levels for Dowa, showing selected EPAs

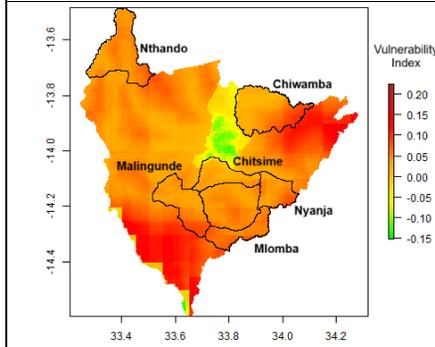


Figure 21 - Vulnerability levels for Lilongwe, showing selected EPAs

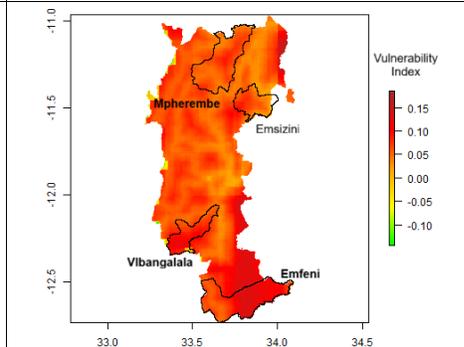
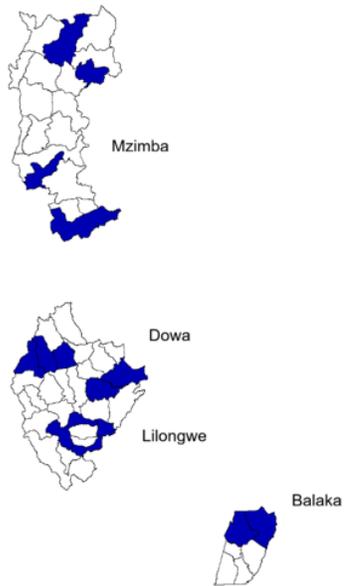


Figure 22 - Vulnerability levels for Mzimba, showing selected EPAs



**Targeted EPAs of SCRPs**

Figure 23 - Targeted EPAs

30. A full list of EPAs and selection criteria is provided below:

District	EPA	Selection Justification and Vulnerability index	Area (ha)
Balaka	Ulongwe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Highest Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.099)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highly degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ Highly positive trends in the number of dry spell days in February</li> <li>○ High Exposure Index value</li> <li>○ High Poverty Levels</li> <li>○ Proximity with environmental hotspots</li> <li>○ High Availability of functional farmer organizations such as cooperatives, associations and clubs</li> <li>○ High Relative population distribution of the farming households</li> <li>○ Very High Land Degradation level</li> <li>○ Opportunities for nutrition-sensitive agriculture promotion</li> </ul>	53962.46
	Bazale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Highest Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.095)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highly degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ Highly positive trends in the number of dry spell days in February</li> <li>○ High Exposure Index value</li> <li>○ High Poverty Levels</li> <li>○ Very High Land Degradation level</li> </ul>	47697.71
Dowa	Chisepo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.044)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highly degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ Good market accessibility</li> <li>○ High youth presence</li> <li>○ High potential for irrigated farming</li> </ul>	35085.25
	Mvera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.016)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highest degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ Proximity with environmental hotspots</li> <li>○ Opportunities for climate adaptation and environmental sustainability</li> <li>○ High Availability of functional farmer organizations such as cooperatives, associations and clubs</li> <li>○ High area of cultivable land</li> <li>○ High vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity</li> </ul>	49818.38
	Mndolera	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.011)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highly degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ Good market accessibility</li> <li>○ High youth presence</li> <li>○ Very High Land Degradation level</li> <li>○ High availability of extension workers</li> </ul>	30122.82
	Nachisaka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt; 0.008)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highly degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ Good market accessibility</li> <li>○ High youth presence</li> <li>○ Very High Land Degradation level</li> <li>○ High vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity</li> </ul>	35324.04
Lilongwe	Mlomba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Very high Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.063)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highly degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ High Exposure Index value</li> <li>○ Good market accessibility</li> <li>○ Opportunities for nutrition-sensitive agriculture promotion</li> </ul>	17710.16
	Malingunde	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Very high Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.05)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highly degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ High Poverty levels</li> <li>○ Good market accessibility</li> <li>○ High availability of extension workers</li> <li>○ Opportunities for climate adaptation and environmental sustainability</li> <li>○ Opportunities for nutrition-sensitive agriculture promotion</li> </ul>	27404.88

	Nyanja	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Very high Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.05)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highly degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ High Exposure Index value</li> <li>○ Good market accessibility</li> <li>○ High potential for irrigated farming</li> <li>○ High availability of extension workers</li> <li>○ Opportunities for social inclusion (opportunities for socio-economic empowerment of women, youths and PWDs)</li> <li>○ Opportunities for nutrition-sensitive agriculture promotion</li> </ul>	16193.62
	Nthando	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.048)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highly degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ High Poverty Levels</li> <li>○ Good market accessibility</li> <li>○ Opportunities for social inclusion (opportunities for socio-economic empowerment of women, youths and PWDs)</li> </ul>	36901.52
	Chiwamba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.044)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highest degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ High Poverty Levels</li> <li>○ Good market accessibility</li> <li>○ High Availability of functional farmer organizations such as cooperatives, associations and clubs</li> <li>○ High Relative population distribution of the farming households</li> </ul>	39870.72
	Chitsime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.028)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highly degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ Good market accessibility</li> <li>○ High youth presence</li> <li>○ High potential for irrigated farming</li> <li>○ Opportunities for social inclusion (opportunities for socio-economic empowerment of women, youths and PWDs)</li> </ul>	18803.52
<b>Mzimba</b>	Emfeni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Highest Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.094)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highest degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ High Poverty Levels</li> <li>○ High emigration rates</li> <li>○ Proximity with environmental hotspots</li> <li>○ High Availability of functional farmer organizations such as cooperatives, associations and clubs</li> <li>○ High Relative population distribution of the farming households</li> <li>○ Very High Land degradation level</li> <li>○ High vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity</li> </ul>	87313.13
	Vibangalala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Very High Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.082)</li> <li>○ Significant presence of highest degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>○ High Poverty Levels</li> <li>○ High emigration rates</li> <li>○ Proximity with environmental hotspots</li> <li>○ Good market accessibility</li> <li>○ High Availability of functional farmer organizations such as cooperatives, associations and clubs</li> <li>○ High Relative population distribution of the farming households</li> <li>○ Very High Land degradation level</li> <li>○ High Potential for irrigated farming</li> <li>○ Opportunities for social inclusion (opportunities for socio-economic empowerment of women, youths and PWDs)</li> </ul>	39658.05

Mpherembe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Very High Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.057)</li> <li>o Significant presence of highest degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>o High Poverty Levels</li> <li>o Good market accessibility</li> <li>o High emigration rates</li> <li>o Area of cultivable land</li> <li>o Opportunities for climate adaptation and environmental sustainability</li> </ul>	82933.88
Emsizini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o High Climate Vulnerability Index value (mean&gt;0.045)</li> <li>o Significant presence of highest degraded areas, according to soil loss analysis (RUSLE)</li> <li>o Good market accessibility</li> <li>o High youth presence</li> <li>o High emigration rates</li> <li>o Proximity with environmental hotspots</li> <li>o High availability of extension workers</li> <li>o Area of cultivable land</li> </ul>	37001.43

31. **Stage 2 - Delineation of selected EPAs into WRU sub-catchments and micro-catchments** based on hydrology or number of villages contained is currently ongoing, being implemented by the Department of Land Resources Conservation. The following table summarizes the various catchment levels and their characteristics.

Catchment Unit	Indicative Size (ha)	Responsible Party for Delineation	Primary Stakeholders	Government Defined Management Tools	SCRIP Interventions
<b>Catchment (Water Resources Unit)</b>	18,000-400,000	Malawi Government	Communities, farmers (including pastoralists), other land users  Local government officials, including higher-level officials than those for sub-catchments  Traditional authorities, NGOs, private sector, etc.	Catchment Management Committee (CMC)  Catchment Management Plan (CMP)	None
<b>Sub-catchment (WRU sub-catchment)</b>	1,500-45,000	Department of Land Resources Conservation	Communities, farmers (including pastoralists) Other land users  Local government officials, including higher-level officials than those for micro-catchments  Traditional authorities, NGOs, Farmers organisations, private sector, etc.	Sub-Catchment Management Committee (SCMC)  Sub-Catchment Management Plan (SCMP)	Integration and collaboration of VNRMCs and VLAPS at Sub-Catchment level.
<b>Micro-catchment (sub-catchment of WRU sub-catchment)</b>	500-1,500	SCRIP	Communities (farmers, pastoralists, etc.) Other land users Local government officials and traditional authorities	Village Natural Resources Management Committee (VNRMC)  Village Level Action Plan (VLAP)	Strengthening/ Formation VNRMCs and formulation of VLAPs

32. **Agricultural Vulnerability.** Overall, climate impacts affect agricultural productivity in all the selected districts. The figures below show the potential climate impact on crop yield in 2050 (based on 2020 baseline), under a pessimistic scenario (current trajectory), using the CARD tool. 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.

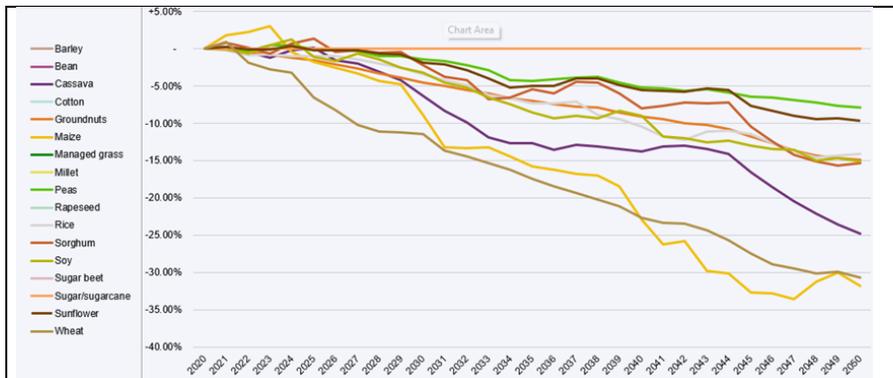


Figure 24 - Crop yield change for Balaka  
 Source: Crop Impact Assessment (CARD 2018)<sup>114</sup>  
[https://d.docs.live.net/305bc18b7824b1df/Documents/Malawi IFAD/Input/NOTES OF TEAM DISCUSSIONS/Project background and context.docx](https://d.docs.live.net/305bc18b7824b1df/Documents/Malawi%20IFAD/Input/NOTES%20OF%20TEAM%20DISCUSSIONS/Project%20background%20and%20context.docx)

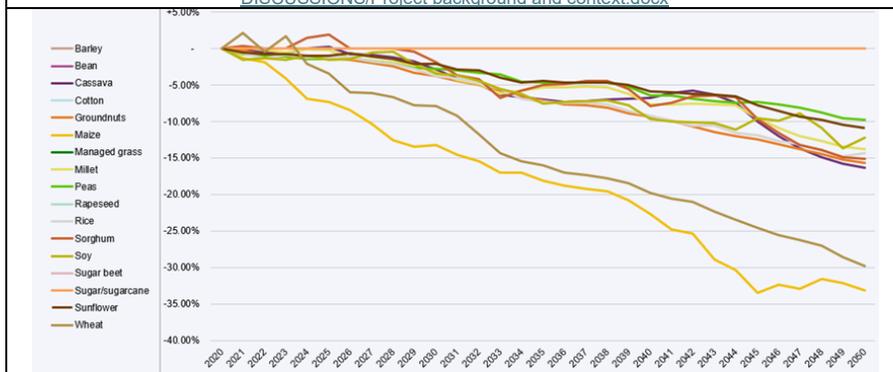


Figure 25 - Crop yield change for Dowa (CARD 2018)

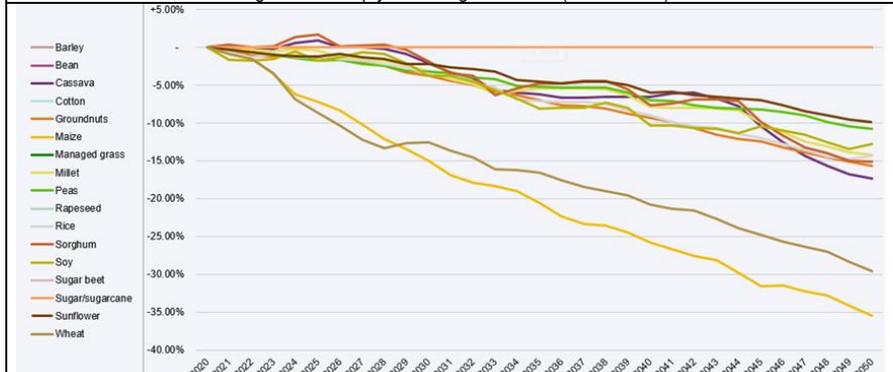


Figure 26 - Crop yield change for Lilongwe

<sup>114</sup> IFAD (2019). Climate Adaptation in Rural Development Assessment Tool. Available at: <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/>



## Annex 4: Gender Assessment, Strategy and Action Plan

### Situational analysis

1. **Performance according to international gender equality indices.** Life for women and girls in Malawi is challenging. Malawi's social cultural patterns and structures perpetuate gender inequality. Malawi ranks 155th of 162 countries on the United Nations Gender Inequality Index<sup>115</sup>. On the Gender Development Index, Malawi scored 0.925, which means women's overall well-being (in health, education, and income) is significantly lower than men's. This score puts Malawi in Group 3, which includes countries where women are 5–7.5% behind men in terms of opportunities and development. Women with multiple vulnerabilities – youth, women headed households, those with HIV, face particular challenges

2. Over the past two decades, attitudes and narratives regarding gender equality, women's representation and participation have been improving in the public sphere in Malawi, with the development of several key frameworks including the Gender Equality Act 2013, National Gender Policy 2015, and National Plan of Action to Combat Gender Based Violence (2014 – 2020). However, women's participation in leadership and decision-making roles remains low, both in public and political spheres at all levels— national, state, local.

3. **Demographics.** In 2024 the population size of Malawi is 21 million.<sup>116</sup> 51.2 per cent of the population are female.<sup>117</sup> Malawi's national youth policy defines youth as a person aged between 10 and 35 years. Over 51 per cent of Malawi's population is 18 years and younger.<sup>118</sup> As of 2018, 80% of the population is under 35.<sup>119</sup>

4. **Discriminatory social norms.** Despite the occurrence of matrilineal systems in Malawi, society remains dominated by patriarchal gender norms. Strong patriarchal systems affect women's access to and agency in decision making at all levels. Culture and norms associated with the male-dominated system equate a low social status to women and constrain their access to productive resources, jobs, and social services. Due mostly to women's care responsibilities and differences in educational attainment between men and women, women are less likely to participate in the labour market, and have access to lower-quality employment opportunities than men.<sup>120</sup> Overall men are more likely to own a bank account (17 per cent) and mobile phones (52 per cent) than women (10 per cent and 33 per cent, respectively).<sup>121</sup> 28 percent of urban women use a bank account compared with 5 percent of rural women.<sup>122</sup>

5. **Education.** The share of children unable to read and understand an age-appropriate text by age 10, is estimated at 89 percent.<sup>123</sup> Educational attainment is particularly low among girls, with attrition increasing as girls approach adolescence, due in large part to high rates of early marriage and childbearing. The weakness of Malawi's institutions has driven the privatisation of the sector (and particularly secondary education), which has, in turn, reduced accessibility for the poor. The primary school completion rate was at 76 percent in 2019 for boys and 85 percent for girls. The lower secondary completion rate was at 24 per cent for boys and 22 per cent for girls in 2018.<sup>124</sup> In 2018, enrolment in higher learning was higher among males (58.7 per cent male, 41.3 per cent female).<sup>125</sup> Children in rural areas (27.0 percent) attended school

<sup>115</sup> UNDP, [Gender Inequality Index \(GII\)](#), 2023

<sup>116</sup> World Bank, UN Population Division, [World Population Prospects](#), 2024

<sup>117</sup> World Bank, UN Population Division, [World Population Prospects](#), :2024

<sup>118</sup> United Nations Development Coordination Office, [Towards the Future: Youth Leadership and UN 2.0 in Malawi](#), 2024

<sup>119</sup> National Statistical Office (NSO) of Malawi. *Children and Youth Report*, 2018 Population and Housing Census. Malawi NSO. Section 2.2: "Total Population of Children and Youth". According to this, the population of children and youth aged 0-35 in 2018 was **13,963,823**, representing **79.5%** of the total population

<sup>120</sup> UNDP, [Gender Inequality Index \(GII\)](#), 2023

<sup>121</sup> GCF, Gender Assessment, FP238: Ecosystems-based Adaptation for resilient Watersheds and Communities in Malawi (EbAM), P74

<sup>122</sup> GCF, Gender Assessment, FP238: Ecosystems-based Adaptation for resilient Watersheds and Communities in Malawi (EbAM), P74

<sup>123</sup> UNESCO, [Malawi: Education Country Brief](#), 2024.

<sup>124</sup> World Bank, [Primary Completion Rate](#), 2023.

<sup>125</sup> GCF, Gender Assessment, FP238: Ecosystems-based Adaptation for resilient Watersheds and Communities in Malawi (EbAM), P50

less than in urban areas (47.3 percent). There is a gender gap in school attendance: only 4.4 per cent of the female population (25+) have some secondary education, in comparison to 12.9 per cent of the male population.<sup>126</sup> 8 Data from the 2018 National Census shows that in Malawi, female literacy rates (65.9 percent) remain lower than male rates (71.6 percent).<sup>127</sup>

6. **Women's political participation.** Despite Malawi's national commitments and gender quotas, women's political representation and participation remain low. As of 2023, women hold only 9.3 per cent of seats in parliament,<sup>128</sup> while men occupy around 60 percent of decision-making positions in the public sector.<sup>129</sup> Some progress has been achieved in recent years. During the 2019 tripartite elections, women's representation in the National Assembly increased to 23 per cent, and in Local Government to 11 per cent.<sup>130</sup>

7. **Sexual and reproductive health and rights.** Although not negligible, maternal and infant mortality rates in Malawi remain very low compared to that of sub-Saharan Africa. Malawi's maternal mortality ratio equals to 349 deaths per 100,000 live births. The country's adolescent birth rate is 132.7 births per 1,000 women aged 15-19.<sup>131</sup>

8. Early and forced marriage are deeply entrenched practices in Malawian society. Malawi has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world, with approximately half of girls married before their 18th birthday and 12% married before age 15.<sup>132</sup> A significant gender gap exists in the age of first marriage, with women marrying at an average age of 18.2 years compared to 23 years for men. World Development Indicators (WDI) show that Malawi has one of the highest rates of adolescent fertility in the world, with 132 births per 1,000 women between the ages of 15 and 19 in 2018.<sup>133</sup> Cultural practices also play a role. Many girls undergo initiation rites into adulthood upon reaching puberty, a tradition often linked to the encouragement of early sexual activity. Economically, child marriage can function as a form of financial security for families through the payment of a dowry to the bride's family. In this way, it may act as a coping strategy in response to economic shocks or social stresses.

9. Early marriage has significant and long-term consequences for girls and women. It often leads to school drop-out, which can result in: (i) early childbearing, increasing the risk of pregnancy and childbirth complications, and raising the likelihood of having more children over a lifetime. (ii) limited education and economic opportunities, leaving women more dependent on their husbands. (iii) reduced decision-making power within the household and a higher risk of experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV).

10. 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. Despite strong progress in testing and treatment coverage, people with HIV remain particularly vulnerable due to a combination of health, social, and economic challenges. Many face weakened immunity, food insecurity, and limited access to consistent healthcare—especially in rural areas. Stigma and discrimination continue to hinder treatment adherence and social inclusion, while poverty and gender inequality deepen vulnerability among women, young people, and marginalized groups. These overlapping risks make sustained support, inclusive health services, and targeted social protection essential for improving resilience and quality of life for people living with HIV in Malawi.

11. **Violence against women and girls.** Despite the number of interventions the Government has taken to address GBV, the four main types of GBV (physical, sexual, emotional or psycho-social and economic) are still prevalent in varying degrees in Malawi. Several factors influence the relatively high prevalence of GBV including early child and forced marriage, patriarchal systems, rigid gender roles,

<sup>126</sup> UNDP, [Gender Inequality Index \(GII\)](#), 2023

<sup>127</sup> National Statistical Office of Malawi, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Malawi Population and Housing Census, 2018.

<sup>128</sup> UNDP, [Gender Inequality Index \(GII\)](#), 2023

<sup>129</sup> GCF, Gender Assessment, FP238: Ecosystems-based Adaptation for resilient Watersheds and Communities in Malawi (EbAM), P76

<sup>130</sup> Commonwealth, [Malawi election is big win for women, says gender expert](#), 2019

<sup>131</sup> UNDP, [Gender Inequality Index \(GII\)](#), 2023

<sup>132</sup> National Plan of Action to Combat Gender-Based Violence in Malawi 2014-2020, Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, July 2014

<sup>133</sup> World Bank, [World Development Indicators: Adolescent fertility rate](#) (births per 1,000 women ages 15–19) – Malawi. World Bank Group, 2019

religious beliefs, illiteracy and low education levels, low economic empowerment of women and imbalance of power in intimate relationships among others.<sup>134</sup> According to the 2021 Malawi Demographic and Health Survey, 11% of women aged 15–49 had experienced sexual violence in the past year.<sup>135</sup> With regards to sexual violence, the Gender Based Violence Survey reported unwanted touch, marital rape, sex deprivation, forced early marriage, attempted rape, incest, defilement and the exchange of sex for coupons as the most common form of sexual violence in Malawi in 2013. Even though Malawi has referral guidelines on child protection and gender-based violence developed in July 2020, victims of domestic violence demonstrate a continued preference for seeking help through informal channels rather than reporting to formal authorities, such as the police.<sup>136</sup>

12. **Women and work.** Although women in Malawi carry a significant share of household responsibilities, this does not prevent them from participating in income-generating activities alongside their husbands. In rural areas, women often pursue diverse and multiple livelihood strategies—including crop production, livestock rearing, and wage work in agriculture or other rural enterprises—to increase household income and improve well-being. As a result, women’s daily working hours far exceed those of men. However, they are more likely to work fewer hours in paid employment and to accept lower-quality jobs in exchange for the flexibility needed to balance domestic and economic responsibilities. This time poverty significantly limits women’s economic productivity and, in turn, reduces their bargaining power within the household. It is estimated that there are 11 percent female owners of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in Malawi as compared to 89 percent male.<sup>137</sup> Women are under-represented in the formal labour force but they actively engage in the shadow economy through informal employment opportunities.

13. **Unpaid domestic responsibilities.** Malawian women spend, on average, 8.7 hours per day on unpaid care and domestic work.<sup>138</sup> Women disproportionately shoulder unpaid domestic responsibilities, encompassing tasks such as house cleaning, meal preparation, laundry, and the collection of water and firewood. These duties are compounded by societal expectations that assign women the role of primary caregivers for children, the elderly, and ill family members. Consequently, rural women often experience significant time poverty, which restricts their participation in income-generating activities and hinders their economic empowerment. From an early age, children are socialised to view household tasks as the responsibility of women and girls, while financial management and decision-making roles are assigned to men, often with the assistance of boys. Increasingly, women in Malawi are assuming the role of head of household due to rising male unemployment or the abscondment of men in times of crisis. Consequently, women face a ‘double burden’, balancing both paid and unpaid work on a daily basis.

14. **Land and property.** Data on women’s land ownership is scarce but a 2015 report by the U.S. Agency for International Development found that women owned only 17 percent of documented land in Malawi.<sup>139</sup> Most land in Malawi is under customary tenure (i.e. held, used or managed under customary law) rather than formal, statutory titles. Under customary rules, inheritance and ownership practices often discriminate against women. Rights to land through marriage and inheritance are governed by one of two existing family systems in the country: the patrilineal system predominant in the Northern Region and two southern districts (Nsanje and Chikwawa), and the matrilineal system prevalent in most of the central and Southern Region districts. A mixed system borrowing from the two systems is practiced in some areas. 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. Although women tend to have better access to land in matrilineal systems, men often remain the decision makers regarding access and control over land in both systems. Widows are

<sup>134</sup> National Plan of Action to Combat Gender-Based Violence in Malawi 2014-2020, Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, July 2014

<sup>135</sup> World Bank, [Malawi GBV Assessment](#), March 2022.

<sup>136</sup> 78

<sup>137</sup> FinMark Trust, Imani Development and AESA. [FinScope Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises \(MSME\) Malawi Survey 2019](#), 2019.

<sup>138</sup> UN Women, [Forecasting time spent in unpaid care and domestic work](#), 2023.

<sup>139</sup> U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Property Rights and Resource Governance: Malawi Profile. Washington, DC, 2015

particularly vulnerable. Relatives often seize land or household property after the death of a husband. Women participate less in formal land rental markets.

15. **Agriculture and the rural sector.** Women play a key role in agriculture in Malawi, producing 70% of food that is consumed locally and more than 80 per cent of subsistence crops. Female-managed plots are, on average, 12% smaller than those of their male counterparts and 25% less productive as a result of differing levels of knowledge and access to inputs for improving farming efficiency.<sup>140</sup> Additionally, female plot managers cultivate smaller, less fertile, and shallower plots than male plot managers.<sup>141</sup> In addition to land, women's role in agriculture is typically constrained by a combination of four key factors: lower education levels, lesser control over natural resources, reduced labour availability (due to gender roles which govern their role in caretaking) and minimal access to financial resources.

16. Consultations confirmed that both matrilineal and patrilineal landholding systems are practiced across the districts earmarked for the project. However, even in matrilineal districts in which the majority of women are landowners, men exercise the actual control over the use of land and the proceeds from agricultural production. The baseline study for SAPII found Male-headed households (MHHs) hold larger land sizes—2.72 acres on average, compared to 1.9 acres for female-headed households (FHHs). Similarly, MHHs rent more land (3.2 acres) than FHHs (2.35 acres). Beyond limited control over land, women face restricted access to agricultural extension services, institutional credit, and decision-making platforms in development, planning, and policymaking.

17. Both men and women contribute their labour in farming, but their roles are highly gendered. Women's contributions are labour-intensive, under-recognised, and oriented toward household food security. Women dominate subsistence farming, food processing, and household nutrition tasks. They dominate subsistence farming, food processing, and nutrition-related activities, typically managing kitchen gardens and cultivating crops such as maize, beans, soya, cassava, cowpeas, pigeon peas, and groundnuts. Women also engage in small-scale livestock farming, including goats, chickens, ducks, and pigs. Men's roles are more asset-based and market orientated. Men are primarily responsible for cash crops, large livestock, and land clearing, and they generally control land, key assets, agricultural technologies, and revenues from crop sales.

18. Differences in technology adoption further highlight gender disparities. Male-headed households are more likely to use inorganic fertilizers (92%) and improved seed varieties (67%), compared to female-headed households (88% and 55%, respectively).<sup>142</sup> Female plot managers tend to adopt intercropping and minimum tillage practices, which reduce labour demands and promote crop diversity.<sup>143</sup> Male plot managers, on the other hand, are more likely to practice crop rotation and crop residue retention using improved crop varieties.<sup>144</sup>

19. Livestock ownership also differs significantly by gender. MHHs report higher ownership across all species, particularly cattle (14%) and goats (59%), compared to FHHs, who own only 5% of cattle and 17% of goats.

20. Across Malawi, women have minimal access to labour- and time-saving technologies. MHHs dominate ownership of farm assets such as sprayers, wheelbarrows, ox-carts, ploughs and poultry houses. Most women rely on manual land preparation for family farming. Traditional methods to enhance productivity and improve climate resilience are employed, including manure application, crop diversification, and in-situ rainwater harvesting techniques such as swales and box ridges. Potential labour- and time-saving interventions for women include: i) machinery for improved productivity i.e. treadle pump, shovel, watering cans ii) energy-saving stoves – reduce time spent and mitigate security risks associated with

<sup>140</sup> University of Leeds, [Gender, Agriculture and Climate Change in Malawi](#), 2017

<sup>141</sup> Adane Hirpa Tufa, Arega D. Alene, Steven M. Cole, Julius Manda, Shiferaw Feleke, Tahirou Abdoulaye, David Chikoye, Victor Manyong, [Gender differences in technology adoption and agricultural productivity: Evidence from Malawi](#) v, World Development, Volume 159, 2022.

<sup>142</sup> SAPP II – Targeting, Gender Equality, Youth and Social Inclusion Strategy

<sup>143</sup> Adane Hirpa Tufa, Arega D. Alene, Steven M. Cole, Julius Manda, Shiferaw Feleke, Tahirou Abdoulaye, David Chikoye, Victor Manyong, [Gender differences in technology adoption and agricultural productivity: Evidence from Malawi](#) v, World Development, Volume 159, 2022.

<sup>144</sup> Adane Hirpa Tufa, Arega D. Alene, Steven M. Cole, Julius Manda, Shiferaw Feleke, Tahirou Abdoulaye, David Chikoye, Victor Manyong, [Gender differences in technology adoption and agricultural productivity: Evidence from Malawi](#) v, World Development, Volume 159, 2022.

fuelwood collection, iii) water-harvesting technologies – to decrease time spent collecting water for household and agricultural use.

Table: Farm Tasks Carried Out by Females, Males, or Both

Female tasks	Male tasks
Crop production for home consumption – soya, maize, ground nuts, cassava, sweet potato	High value crop production – tobacco, maize, soya
Water collection	Large livestock (cattle)
Wood collection for fuel	Purchase and re-sale of fish
Kitchen gardens	Purchase and application of chemical inputs, such as fertilizers and pesticides
	Charcoal burning and selling
Shared tasks	
Small livestock (goats, chicken, pigs, ducks)	
Crop production – soya, maize, ground nuts, cassava, sweet potato	
Selling produce at markets	
Manure making	
Purchase of farm inputs and implements	

21. **Climate change.** Malawi is facing increasingly frequent and severe droughts, floods, and related diseases. These climate-related shocks pose significant risks for women and girls, heightening their vulnerability to gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, and forced child marriage as they struggle to secure food and income for their families. Women are more likely than men to live in poverty and often have limited access to information, livelihood resources, extension services, improved technologies, income, and decision-making power needed to cope with climate stresses. Differences in social status further affect access to resources: women and men experience unequal access to physical resources like land, social resources such as networks, and financial resources including income-generating activities and credit.

22. Since water security is essential for agricultural production with around 9 out of 10 people in the country depending on rain-fed agriculture<sup>145</sup> and since women generally have lower levels of access to water technologies, such as irrigation, than men; women are more likely to be affected by the country's critical water stress.

23. 86% of the women in Malawi report that their mental health and wellbeing had been affected by climate change.<sup>146</sup> Women are responsible for food within households. Women and girls (especially pregnant and nursing women) are the first to face malnutrition in times of food scarcity. In times of crisis, men may depart from the household permanently, forcing women to take on all roles. Droughts can exacerbate risks of gender-based violence in all its forms. Walking increased distances in search of water puts women at greater risk of violence. Women might be forced to exchange sex for food, and girls forced into early marriage. Intimate partner violence and verbal abuse has been seen to increase in times of drought.<sup>147</sup>

### Policy and institutional framework

24. **International treaties.** Malawi ratified the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights in 1989.<sup>148</sup> Additionally, Malawi ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (commonly known as the Maputo Protocol) on 20 May 2005. Additionally, Malawi ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1987.

25. The United Nations System Wide Gender Equality Acceleration Plan 2024 provides a framework for the promotion and institutionalization of gender mainstreaming in the implementation of UN assistance

<sup>145</sup> Climate Change is Putting Women & Girls in Malawi at Greater Risk of Sexual Violence, Relief web, OCHA, August 2022

<sup>146</sup> Glasgow Caledonian University, [The Inter-relationship between Climate Change, Mental Health and Gender-Based Violence in Malawi](#) v, 2022. P.30

<sup>147</sup> Glasgow Caledonian University, [The Inter-relationship between Climate Change, Mental Health and Gender-Based Violence in Malawi](#) v, 2022. P.34

<sup>148</sup> United Nations Treaty Convention, [8. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#)

and cooperation frameworks.<sup>149</sup> The strategy responds to gender inequalities and related developmental challenges and offers practical tools and guidance on how to achieve gender results with greater accountability.

26. **Legislative framework.** The following Ministries govern social inclusion issues in Malawi: (i) Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare (ii) The Ministry of Youth and Sport, (iii) Malawi Council for Disability Affairs (MACODA) (iv) The Ministry of Labour. In recent years significant progress has been made in the development of action plans for women, youth and people with disabilities, including: 1) [Malawi National Action Plan \(NAP\) 2021–2025](#) for the implementation of the Malawi Women's Charter and United Nations Security Council, 2) [Malawi National Youth Policy, 2023 – 2821](#), 3) [National Disability Report, 2024](#).

27. **Strategies and Policies.** 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"<sup>150</sup>. 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".

28. 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).

29. Relevant **partners and projects** promoting gender equality in Malawi include, among others:

- **UN Women**, a variety of relevant programmes including: [Women's Resilience to Disasters Programme \(WRD\)](#), [Women Farmers Greenhouse Programme \(Kambuku Cooperatives\)](#), [Women Leaders and Women-Led Organizations leading in Building Disaster Resilience](#).
- **GIZ**, [Agriculture Technical Vocational Education & Training for Women \(ATVET4W\)](#) (GIZ) Supporting gender-transformative approaches in agricultural vocational training (formal and non-formal), targeting women smallholders, micro-entrepreneurs, linking training providers and private sector.
- **Coalition for the Empowerment of Women and Girls (CEWAG) & Girls Not Brides**: Networks focused on ending child marriage and empowering adolescent girls; useful for scaling community-level prevention efforts.
- **CARE Malawi**: Programmes with strong gender focus aiming to provide decent living and access food, medicines and information about health risks such as HIV.

### Project's gender strategy

30. **Strategic pathways.** By specifically focusing on gender equality and women's empowerment, the project will deepen the impact and strengthen the sustainability of its efforts to reduce the vulnerability of

<sup>149</sup> United Nations, [Gender Equality Acceleration Plan](#)

<sup>150</sup> Malawi Constitution – Chap.I (Fundamental principles) - Section 12 (Constitutional principles) Al. 1.d

livelihoods and ecosystems to the negative impacts of climate change in micro-catchments of Balaka, Lilongwe Rural, Dowa, and Mzimba.

31. The project will use a combination of complementary gender practices that facilitate changes in gender roles and relations. The project will improve women's access to resources and opportunities, in combination with promoting practices to enhance women's and men's awareness and consciousness. In addition, it will engage in policy dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment.

32. This project is closely aligned with IFAD's own mandate and UN Women's Malawi Strategic Note 2024–2028.<sup>151</sup> IFAD aims to catalyse country and global progress for rural people to overcome poverty and achieve food security through remunerative, sustainable and resilient livelihoods. The activities within the project will support beneficiaries, and particularly women, to improve resilience and livelihoods. The UN Women's Malawi Strategic Note 2024–2028 addresses deep-rooted gender inequalities, climate vulnerabilities and governance challenges. It aims to advance women's rights, leadership and economic resilience across humanitarian, peace and development contexts.

33. Three strategic pathways for gender equality and women's empowerment will be followed:

- 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.

34. More precisely, landscape planning and investment will be informed by a Gender-Sensitive Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis, which will take an intersectional approach and explore the roles and relationships between people of different genders, as well as gender- and youth-specific opportunities, barriers, and decision-making power. With this knowledge, actions can be planned and implemented in ways that recognise gender and age roles and dynamics while tackling discriminatory norms and practices.

35. The planning of actions will follow a participatory process that brings together all relevant stakeholders. This includes national institutions such as DLRC, DAES and DCCMS, local authorities, and community members. The leaders of planning processes will actively work to create opportunities for meaningful participation by women, youth, persons with HIV, persons with disabilities and others whose voices are often left out of decision making. This will require targeted consultations, capacity building, and engagement of facilitators from the excluded groups.

36. Targeted landscape actions that address gender- and age-specific needs and capacities will be included. These actions might be needed to reduce vulnerability of livelihoods, recognising gender specific roles, to overcome gender-based barriers to resource access and control or to channel resources on a priority basis to groups that are typically excluded, such as women's and youth groups (but also persons with HIV and disabilities), to ensure that they can meaningfully participate in the planning and implementation of actions. As actions are implemented, it will be important to engage with decision makers at different levels to raise awareness of discriminatory policies and practices, and to promote a governance of ecosystem services that is gender-equitable and inclusive.

37. The project will support Village Level Natural Resource Management Committees, as well as community participatory processes to improve landscape governance and management. Therefore, throughout its implementation, specific attention will be given to participatory reflective monitoring of the inclusiveness of landscape management.

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<sup>151</sup> <https://open.unwomen.org/en/country-results/MW>

38. The pathways for gender equality in the project are represented in the figure below.

Goal	The project's objective is to reduce the vulnerability of smallholder farmers and the ecosystems they depend on to the negative impacts of climate change through support to gender equality and women's empowerment.		
Outreach	At least 50 percent of beneficiaries will be women		
Outcomes	Economic empowerment	Voice and decision-making	Workload balance and wellbeing
Activities	<p>Creating new income opportunities for women (e.g. nurseries)</p> <p>Providing women with productive assets and inputs (high value seedlings, support to pass-on schemes, etc.)</p> <p>Creating opportunities for income generating activities linked to ecosystem restoration (NWFP and other tree based VCs)</p> <p>Supporting financial literacy and business skills through FFS and agroecological logbooks</p> <p>Timely climate advisories enabling better farming decisions</p>	<p>Landscape planning purposely considering women's needs and aspirations</p> <p>Including quotas in Governance structures, ensuring representation of women in landscape decision-making</p> <p>Providing leadership training at FFS and pass-on schemes support</p> <p>Arrangements will be made to ensure that needs and aspirations of women are considered in policy engagement activities</p> <p>Promoting household methodologies (GALS)</p> <p>Supporting inclusive processes (VLAPs, PSPs, etc.)</p>	<p>Promoting time- and labour-saving technologies</p> <p>Incorporating gender sensitive tools (notably addressing gender-based stereotypes) throughout project activities</p> <p>Raising awareness on gender-based violence</p> <p>Supporting access to resilient infrastructure</p> <p>Ensuring inclusive scheduling and community participation</p> <p>Facilitating access to information for decision-making</p> <p>Supporting economic empowerment as a pathway to well-being (see pillar 1)</p>
	Including a gender-dimension in all policy engagement activities		
M&E	Sex- and age-disaggregated data		

## Activities per output

<b>Component 1: Resilient ecosystems sustainably providing services to smallholder farmers</b> <b>Outcome 1. Improved climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers</b>	
Output 1.1. Participatory and resilient Village Level Action Plans based on climate information developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of Gender Action Learning System (GALS) to promote inclusive household and community planning.</li> <li>Application of Gender-Sensitive Climate Vulnerability &amp; Capacity Analysis (GCVCA) to ensure women's concerns are integrated into VLAPs.</li> <li>Quotas and measures for women inclusion in VNRMCs, DIFs and planning processes to ensure representation.</li> </ul>
Output 1.2. Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address gender-specific needs and capacities identified during the planning process into climate-resilient landscape management activities</li> <li>Support for women-led households with labor-saving equipment (e.g., stoves, water storage).</li> <li>Prioritize opportunities to link afforestation/reforestation efforts with income-generating activities for women via tree-based value chains (e.g., fruits, medicinal plants, NWFPs).</li> <li>Use local radios and community meetings to recognize women's contributions and promote visibility.</li> </ul>
<b>Component 2. Resilient smallholders' farming systems in Malawi</b> <b>Outcome 2. Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systemst</b>	
Output 2.1. Adaptive capacity of smallholder farming systems supported	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate GALS methodology into Farmer Field Schools (FFS) to promote inclusive decision-making and gender equity.</li> <li>Ensure women participation in FFS both as attendants, lead farmers and trainers (and scheduling FFS sessions to accommodate women's time constraints and caregiving roles)</li> <li>Ensure gender sensitive dimensions are mainstreamed in FFS (e.g. distribute agroecological logbooks to 3,000 households (especially women-led) to document labour, income, and climate-resilient practices.</li> <li>Promote women's leadership in livestock pass-on schemes and train them in climate-resilient animal husbandry.</li> <li>Use peer learning and exchange visits to amplify women's voices and showcase their innovations.</li> <li>ARC staff training on gender transformation and social inclusion.</li> </ul>
Output 2.2. Adapted inputs and climate-resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support women-led seed multiplication, nurseries, and seed banks.</li> <li>Prioritize women in access to and leadership of water infrastructure and storage facilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Component 3. Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi</b> <b>Outcome 3. Climate information solutions for decision making in agriculture enhanced at local and national level</b>	
Output 3.1. Climate information for decision making available at local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train GALS and DIF facilitators to interpret and share climate advisories.</li> <li>Ensure women's access to climate information and contribution to its improvement</li> </ul>
Output 3.2. National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build Capacity for Gender-Sensitive Climate Advisory Development</li> </ul>

39. **Implementation arrangements.** Gender and Social Inclusion aspects of the project will be managed by the Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist, who will be responsible for gender and social inclusion issues (overseeing the implementation of the gender strategy, building the capacity of staff and helping colleagues to address considerations related to gender equality and women's empowerment in their operations, including knowledge management, M&E, indicators and measurement of results). Dedicated

budget has been allocated to address these issues, as well as to ensure the mainstreaming of gender considerations into all project activities. The following arrangements will guarantee that gender is taken into account in the implementation of the project:

- A dedicated staff will be recruited for gender and social inclusion aspects.
- A strategy and project-type action plan will be established at project start-up.
- Budget has been allocated for specific gender- and youth-related activities
- Quotas have been set for women (50%), youth (30%) and PwD (5%) as a percentage of beneficiaries, and all collected and analysed data will be disaggregated by gender and age.
- Information campaigns and outreach events targeting women and youth will be carried out during project implementation
- Female, youth and PwD trainers and facilitators will be mobilized.
- Studies undertaken by the project will include a gender and age perspective
- Gender parity in the PMU will be encouraged.
- Responsibility for gender mainstreaming will be included in the terms of reference of all key project staff.
- Responsibility for gender mainstreaming will be included in the terms of reference of service providers.
- Accommodations will be made under all components to ensure widespread women participation. This may include scheduling engagements separately with women, men and marginalized groups in places acknowledged as safe spaces for sharing information. Confirm that meeting times are convenient for participants, recognizing and accommodating those with other responsibilities such as child-care.
- Considerations for gender-based violence will be integrated into all community-consultation activities as well as through household methodologies (GALS): involving men and boys in capacity strengthening to promote advocacy against gender-based violence will be of critical importance.
- In all its activities, compliance with IFAD's policy on preventing and combating sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse will be sought. This will be reflected in the terms of reference of all key project staff and service providers.

**Gender action plan and results framework**

40. The costs of implementing the GAP activities are directly embedded in SCRIP budget, within the activities listed below for relevant mitigation measures. An additional 48,000 USD is budgeted (in addition to standard monitoring costs) to monitor and report on the project's compliance with all ESMP and GAP's mitigation measures, as presented in Table 16Table 16.

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<b>Gender-related project objective:</b> Reduce the vulnerability of over 75,000 women's livelihoods & the ecosystems they depend on to the negative impacts of climate change in four districts of Malawi					
<b>Outcome 1. Improved climate resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to smallholder farmers</b>					
<b>Output 1.1. Participatory climate-resilient landscape investment plans developed</b>					
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Use of Gender Action Learning System (GALS) to promote inclusive household and community planning.	# of GALS facilitators trained and actively supporting planning processes	34	Y 1-2	PMU Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist (GSIS); service provider Agriculture Extension Development Officers (AEDOs/AAEDOs);	Activity 1.1.3
	# of households trained in GALS tools (e.g., Vision Journey, Gender Balance Tree)	2,000	Y 1-5	PMU GSIS; AEDOs/AAEDOs	
	% of VLAPs developed using GALS methodology	100%	Y 1-2	PMU GSIS; AEDOs/ AAEDOs, VNRMCs	
	# of community-level gender dialogue sessions conducted using GALS (including community theatre)	1 per year per micro-catchment	Y 1-5	PMU GSIS; AEDOs/ AAEDOs, VNRMCs, VDCs	
Application of Gender-Sensitive Climate Vulnerability & Capacity Analysis (GCVCA) to ensure women's concerns are integrated into VLAPs.	# of AEDOs/AAEDOs trained in GCVCA methodology	34	Y 1	PMU GSIS; AEDOs/ AAEDOs	As part of activity 1.1.5
	% of VLAPs incorporating GCVCA findings	100%	Y 1-2	PMU GSIS; AEDOs/ AAEDOs, VNRMCs	
	# of gender-sensitive climate vulnerability assessments conducted	70	Y 1	PMU GSIS; AEDOs/ AAEDOs, VNRMCs	
	% of women participating in GCVCA consultations	50%	Y 1	PMU GSIS; AEDOs/ AAEDOs, VNRMCs	
Quotas and measures for women inclusion in VNRMCs, DIF and planning processes to ensure representation.	% of women represented in Village Natural Resource Management Committees (VNRMCs)	50%	Y 1-5	PMU GSIS, DLRC, AEDOs/AAEDOs	As part of 1.1.2
	% of women represented in VDCs	30%	Y 1-5	PMU GSIS, VDCs	

	# of Disability Inclusion Facilitators (DIFs) trained and deployed	19 DIFs trained (1 per micro-catchment), with at least 50% being women	Y 1-5	PMU GSIS, DAES	As part of 1.1.3
	% of women participating in VLAP planning consultations	50%	Y 1-5	PMU GSIS, AEDOs/AAEDOs, VDCs, VNRMCs	As part of 1.1.4 and 1.1.5
<b>Output 1.2. Priority ecosystem resilience measures implemented at community level</b>					
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Address gender-specific needs and capacities identified during the planning process into climate-resilient landscape management activities	% women and youth participating in afforestation and community woodlots	50% women 30% youth	Y 2-4	PMU	As part of activity 1.2.2 and 1.2.3
	% women and youth participating in soil and water conservation	50% women 30% youth	Y 2-4	PMU	
	% of women and youth represented in development of participatory management plans	30%	Y 2-4	PMU	
Prioritize opportunities to link afforestation/reforestation efforts with income-generating activities for women via tree-based value chains (e.g., fruits, medicinal plants, NWFPs).	% of women-led households receiving high-value tree seedlings	At least 50% of 11,700 households receiving seedlings are women-led.	Y 2-4	PMU GSIS and agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	As part of activity 1.2.4
	Women linked to project supporting tree-based value chain development	500 women	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS and agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	As part of activity 1.2.3 and 1.2.4
Use local radios and community meetings to recognize women's contributions and promote visibility.	Number of radio episodes aired highlighting women's roles in restoration, seed systems, and farming innovations	At least 5 episodes per year aired across targeted districts	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS and agronomist and KM assistant, AEDOs/AAEDOs	As part of activity 1.2.3 and 1.2.4
	Number of community meetings or events held to showcase women's contributions to project activities (e.g., nurseries,	Minimum 2 events per micro-catchment per year (152 total over 4 years).	Y 2-4	PMU GSIS and agronomist and KM assistant, AEDOs/AAEDOs	As part of activity 1.2.3 and 1.2.4

	seed banks, restoration).				
	Number of women-led initiatives (e.g., seed banks, nurseries, tree-based enterprises) featured in public outreach materials (radio, posters, community theatre).	At least 1 initiative per micro-catchment featured annually	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS and agronomist and KM assistant, AEDOs/AAEDOs	As part of activity 1.2.3 and 1.2.4
Support for women-led households with labor-saving equipment (e.g., stoves, water storage).	% of women-led households receiving fuel-efficient stoves	At least 50% of 3,900 HH	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, AEDOs/AAEDOs, DLRC	As part of activity 1.2.4 (72,587)
	% of women-led households receiving water harvesting and storage equipment	At least 50% of 780 HH	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, AEDOs/AAEDOs, DLRC	As part of activity 1.2.4 (995,495)
	% of women reporting reduced time spent on fuel and water collection	At least 70% of recipients in follow-up surveys	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS and M&E Team	Included under activity 1.2.4.
	# of training sessions on use and maintenance of labor-saving equipment	19 (one per micro-catchment)	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, AEDOs/AAEDOs, service providers	Included under activity 1.2.4.
<b>Outcome 2. Improved resilience of smallholders' farming systems</b>					
<b>Output 2.1. Adaptive capacity of smallholder farming systems supported</b>					
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Integrate GALS methodology into FFS to promote inclusive decision-making and gender equity.	% of FFS applying GALS tools and principles	100%	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in costs of implementing FFS (Activity 2.1.2)
	# of households engaged in GALS through FFS	2,000 HH	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in costs of implementing FFS and GALS
	# of lead farmers trained in GALS methodology	120 lead farmers (50% women)	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in costs of implementing FFS and GALS
Ensure women participation in FFS	% of women participating in FFS	50%	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in costs of implementing FFS (Activity 2.1.2)
	# of women trained as lead farmers through FFS	60 out of 120 lead farmers (50%)	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in costs of implementing FFS (Activity 2.1.2)

	% of FFS sessions scheduled to accommodate women's time constraints	100%	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in costs of implementing FFS (Activity 2.1.2)
Ensure gender sensitive dimensions are mainstreamed in FFS	% of FFS curricula integrating gender-sensitive modules (e.g., labor roles, decision-making, nutrition, GBV)	100%	Y 1-5	DAES, PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in the cost of Activity 2.1.1.
	# of FFS facilitators trained on gender-sensitive facilitation	40	Y 1	PMU GSIS, DAES	As part of training of facilitators (80,000 USD)
	Number of FFS participants using agroecological logbooks to track farming practices and decision-making	3,000 households (with priority given to women-led, youth-led, and households with persons with disabilities)	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in costs of implementing FFS (Activity 2.1.2)
Promote women's leadership in livestock pass-on schemes and train them in climate-resilient animal husbandry.	% of women trained as lead farmers in livestock pass-on schemes	At least 50% of lead farmers trained (approx. 188)	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, Assistant Veterinary Officers (AVOs), AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in Activity 2.1.3 costs
	% of women participating in livestock pass-on schemes	50%	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, Assistant Veterinary Officers (AVOs), AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in Activity 2.1.3 costs
Use peer learning and exchange visits to amplify women's voices and showcase their innovations.	# of women participating in peer learning and exchange visits	At least 500 women per year across micro-catchments	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in budget for FFS delivery/ demonstrations and field days
	# of exchange visits organized with a focus on showcasing women-led innovations	Minimum 1 visit per micro-catchment per year (19 total annually)	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS, PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs	Included in budget for FFS delivery/ demonstrations and field days
ARC staff training on gender transformation and social inclusion	# of ARC staff trained on gender transformation and social inclusion	Staff from all 4 supported Agriculture Resource Centers (ARCs) trained	Y3	PMU GSIS, DAES	Included in the budget for ARCs Activity 2.1.5
<b>Output 2.2. Adapted inputs and climate-resilient community infrastructure available to smallholder farmers</b>					
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Costs</b>

Support women-led seed multiplication, nurseries, and seed banks.	% of women-led seed multipliers, nurseries, and seed banks established.	60%	Y 1-2	PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs, supported by GSIS and service providers	As part of activity 2.2.1.
	% of women trained in seed handling, nursery management, and climate-resilient practices.	50%	Y 1-5	PMU Agronomist, AEDOs/AAEDOs, supported by GSIS and service providers	As part of activity 2.2.1.
Prioritize women in access to and leadership of water infrastructure and storage facilities.	Percentage of women among beneficiaries of small-scale water infrastructure (ponds, impoundments, irrigation schemes).	At least 50% of beneficiaries across 70 supported schemes.	Y 1-5	PMU Rural Infrastructure Specialist, AEDOs/AAEDOs, GSIS, Water User Associations (WUAs).	As part of activity 2.2.2.
	Percentage of women among beneficiaries of small-scale storage infrastructure	At least 50% of beneficiaries across 70 infrastructure	Y 1-5	PMU Rural Infrastructure Specialist, AEDOs/AAEDOs, GSIS, Water User Associations (WUAs).	As part of activity 2.2.2.
	Percentage of women in leadership roles in Water User Associations.	50% of leadership positions in WUAs across all micro-catchments.	Y 1-5	PMU GSIS, WUAs.	As part of activity 2.2.2.
<b>Component 3 - Enhancing the use of climate information for decision making in the agriculture sector in Malawi</b>					
<b>Output 3.1. Climate information for decision making available at local level</b>					
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Train GALS and DIF facilitators to interpret and share climate advisories	# of GALS and DIF facilitators trained in climate advisory interpretation and dissemination	38 facilitators trained (19 GALS + 19 DIF, one per micro-catchment)	Y 1	PMU GSIS and Meteorologist, DAES, DCCMS, supported by service providers with experience in participatory climate communication	As part of activity 3.1.4 (66,250 USD)
Ensure women's access to climate information and contribution to its improvement	% of women receiving climate advisories through inclusive formats (radio, SMS, climate circles)	At least 50% of recipients of climate advisories are women across all micro-catchments	Y 2-5	PMU GSIS and meteorologist, DAES, DCCMS, AEDOs/AAEDOs, GALS facilitators	As part of activity 3.1.3
	% of women participating in Participatory Scenario Planning (PSP) workshops and climate circles	Minimum 40% women participation in PSP workshops and climate circles.	Y 1-5	DAES, DCCMS, PMU GSIS and Meteorologist, AASP chairs, GALS facilitators.	As part of activity 3.1.2

	# of PSP workshops and climate circles incorporating women's feedback into seasonal advisories	All PSP workshops (2 per EPA per year) and climate circles (2 per micro-catchment per year) include documented input from women	Y 1-5	DAES, DCCMS, PMU M&E team, GALS facilitators	As part of activity 3.1.2
<b>Output 3.2. National stakeholders capacitated to mainstream climate information solutions for decision making in the agriculture sector</b>					
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Build Capacity for Gender-Sensitive Climate Advisory Development	PSP guidelines developed with gender-responsive provisions, low-literacy tools, and translation	Guidelines finalized and disseminated in Chichewa and Chitumbuka	Y 2	DAES, DCCMS, PMU GSIS and meteorologist, service provider with expertise in inclusive communication	As part of activity 3.2.2
	Number of national staff trained in gender-responsive climate data use and advisory development	40 staff trained (minimum 40% women) across DAES, DCCMS, and DoDMA	Y 3	AES, DCCMS, PMU GSIS, national training institutions or contracted service provider	As part of activity 3.2.1
	Percentage of women represented in national climate coordination platforms (DAES, DCCMS, DoDMA)	Minimum 30% women representation in national technical taskforces and PSP coordination bodies	Y 4	DAES, DCCMS, DoDMA, PMU GSIS and Meteorologist	As part of activities 3.2.3 and 3.2.4