



Republic of Malawi

National Social Support Policy

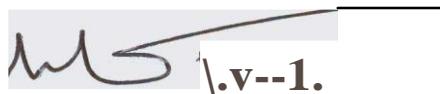
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FOREWORD

It is recognized that there is need to further improve the programmes that have been instituted to enhance the welfare of the ultra-poor people in Malawi. This group of Malawians has not fully benefited from the economic development that the country has experienced for the past forty years. The ultra poor are vulnerable to risks and lack appropriate means of engaging in higher economic return activities that could move them out of chronic poverty. Their plight is worsened when they are struck by natural disasters such as floods and drought.

In this regard, the Government has developed the National Social Support Policy that encompasses public and private programmes which aim at providing income and consumption transfers, to protect this segment of the population against vulnerabilities and to enhance their social status and rights. Social Support, together with Disaster Risk Reduction, constitutes the third theme in the 2011-16 Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, namely, Social Support and Disaster Risk Management.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all stakeholders for their commitment in developing this Policy. As Social Support interventions are linked to other economic and social policies, the Government calls upon all stakeholders involved for concerted efforts to implement the Policy.



Goodall Gondwe, MP

MINISTER OF ECONOMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

PREFACE

The formulation of this policy has evolved over a long period of time through an elaborate participatory process. It presents an opportunity for proper coordination of programmes by Government that will target the ultra-poor for welfare support and the moderately poor to enhance their productivity.

The policy is set to support the formulation and execution of programmes and projects that have long lasting positive impact for the ultra and moderately poor. Commitment from all stakeholders is therefore required for the successful execution of the policy.

This policy has been developed through the contributions of public and private institutions and individuals, the Social Support Steering Committee, the Technical Committee, the Working Group and consultants. These wide consultations have been very helpful in enriching this policy.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADC	Area Development Committee
AIDS	Acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSSC	Community Social Support Committee
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CONGOMA	Council for Non-Governmental Organisations in Malawi
DA	District Assembly
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
DoDMA	Department of Disaster Management Affairs
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IHS	Integrated Household Survey
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MK	Malawi Kwacha
MoA&FS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MEP&D	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MGDS II	Malawi Growth and Development Strategy II
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoGC&SW	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare
MoI	Ministry of Information
MoLG&RD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MPRS	Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy
MVAC	Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee
NAC	National AIDS Commission
NSNP	National Safety Nets Programme
NSSSC	National Social Support Steering Committee
PWP	Public Works Programme
SSF	Social Support Fund
UDHR	Universal Declaration on Human Rights
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VDC	Village Development Committee
WB	World Bank
WMS	Welfare Monitoring Survey

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Social Support Policy is a medium term policy that has been formulated to contribute towards the reduction of poverty and vulnerability, in line with Theme Three of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS II): Social Support and Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Policy has been developed as a prelude to programme development and provides a holistic framework for designing, implementing, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating Social Support interventions. It is envisaged that the implementation of a comprehensive Social Support Policy, integrated with other pro-poor development policies, would also contribute significantly to Malawi's economic growth. The Policy has linkages to sectoral policies, the MGDS, Vision 2020, the Malawi Constitution and relevant international conventions.

The programmes developed from the Policy will be implemented through the National Social Support Steering Committee, with the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development as its coordinating ministry and secretariat. At the local level, the District Executive Committee, the Area Development Committees (ADCs) and the Village Development Committees (VDCs) will work with Community Social Support Committees (CSSCs) to oversee targeting and implementation of Social Support activities. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) will complement Government in its efforts to reduce extreme poverty and vulnerability to risks for many Malawians.

Social Support interventions have strong positive linkages with other economic and social policies and with disaster risk reduction interventions. These interventions will not infringe on or duplicate the established policies and programmes in the fields of social development, economic development and disaster risk management, but will complement these programmes.

The Policy has four policy priority areas, each of which outlines the policy problem and policy statements. The objectives set in the Policy will provide guidance in the formulation of the strategies.

Government will lead the development of the National Social Support Programme (NSSP) together with a monitoring and evaluation system for the effective implementation of the Policy.

SECTION ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

It has been recognized in Malawi that the programmes being implemented by Government and major stakeholders designed to achieve sustainable economic growth and development will not, in the short to medium term, translate into improved quality of life for the ultra and moderately poor. The process of economic growth and development, due to its complex and competitive nature and insatiable demands for resource endowments to create wealth, invariably excludes a certain sector of the population from taking full advantage of the benefits of economic growth.

Such groups of people include: the elderly, the chronically sick, orphans and other vulnerable children, persons with disabilities, and destitute families. These categories of people are vulnerable to risks and lack appropriate risk management instruments. This constrains them from engaging in higher return economic activities to enable them to move out of chronic poverty (MGDS 2011-2016). Given this scenario, it has therefore become necessary to design special programmes to address the plight of the ultra and moderately poor to allow them to fully participate in economic development and hence take advantage of the benefits of growth. Prior to the current efforts, Government together with stakeholders, have previously developed several safety net programmes to address the various risks affecting the most vulnerable groups. The efforts did not reduce poverty and vulnerability due to coordination problems, insufficient commitment by implementers and poor funding. These efforts were compounded and aggravated by natural disasters such as flooding, dry spells, and droughts. Such occurrences have worsened the vulnerability position of the ultra and moderately poor.

In view of these circumstances, the Government, in collaboration with the donor community, civil society organizations, and the private sector will formulate an improved and comprehensive Social Support Programme. The Social Support Policy will provide a holistic framework for designing, implementing, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating Social Support interventions.

Section One of the Policy provides the background, details of poverty and vulnerability in Malawi, the rationale, linkages with other policies and strategies and key challenges. Section Two provides broad policy directions. Section Three details the four policy priority areas and Section Four provides implementation arrangements. The glossary which defines technical terms in

the policy appears under Appendix 1, followed by an outline of the implementation plan in Appendix 2.

1.2 Poverty and Vulnerability in Malawi

The 2010 Integrated Household Survey (IHS3, 2010), shows that the poverty head count has slightly reduced to 50.7 percent from 52.4 percent in 2005. The IHS 2010 also indicates that the rural and urban distribution stands at 56.2 percent and 17.3 percent respectively. The poverty head count is expected to decline over the next years with continued implementation of the current socioeconomic policies.

The nation faces problems of both chronic poverty and vulnerability. A poor household is defined as a household that fails to attain a minimum acceptable consumption level of food and basic needs as defined by the poverty line (IHS 2004). According to the Malawi Poverty and Vulnerability Analysis 2006, the key factors affecting the level of household poverty are household size, education, access to non-farm employment, access to irrigation, proximity to markets and trading centers, and access to good roads. However, none of the factors that characterize poverty in Malawi work in isolation. In addition to these, limited access to larger land holdings and failure to engage in cash crop production also results in household poverty.

1.3 Rationale

In order to address chronic poverty and vulnerability, the Government developed the National Safety Nets Strategy in 2000 and the National Safety Nets Programme (NSNP) under the Malawi Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2002. The NSNP consisted of four sub programmes: the Public Works Programme, the Targeted Nutrition Programme, the Targeted Inputs Programme and Direct Welfare Transfers Programme.

The key objective of the NSNP was to reduce poverty and vulnerability of the poor and most vulnerable. However, it encountered a number of shortfalls that include; ad hoc and uncoordinated implementation of programmes, inadequate funding, inherent programme design problems and capacity constraints which did not effectively contribute to reducing poverty and vulnerability. These shortfalls were compounded by the lack of a policy to guide stakeholders in implementing programmes and projects to reduce poverty and vulnerability.

To address these weaknesses, the Government and other stakeholders agreed on the need to shift from safety nets to Social Support. Social Support and Disaster Risk Reduction is the third theme in the MGDS II. The MGDS II represents a nationally owned strategy for investing in both economic growth and social development and serves as the basis for coordinating all socio-economic and development activities.

The National Social Support Policy provides a holistic framework for designing, implementing, coordinating, monitoring and evaluating Social Support interventions. It also;

- Takes a broad perspective, and looks at addressing poverty and vulnerability in an integrated and coordinated manner;
- Gives priority to reducing ultra-poverty;
- Emphasises long term, predictable interventions;
- Contributes to asset creation and support;
- Strengthens human capital, thereby helping to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty;
- Increases economic activities through market strengthening and income generation;
- Is redistributive and reduces income inequality;
- Provides transfers to those that cannot support themselves, thereby directly tackling destitution;
- Fosters social and political stability; and
- Supports fulfilment of human rights and freedoms.

The implementation of a comprehensive Social Support Policy, integrated with other pro-poor development policies, will contribute to Malawi's economic growth. In addition to reducing poverty, a sound Social Support Policy promotes equity, stimulates growth and ensures better use of fiscal resources.

The purpose of the Social Support Policy is to:

- Define strategies to improve the socio-economic status of the poor and vulnerable;
- Provide reference guidelines to all stakeholders in the design, implementation and monitoring of Social Support programmes and processes;
- Provide guidelines for cost-effective, predictable, and sustainable interventions to the benefit of beneficiaries, implementers and financiers;
- Provide guidelines for resource mobilisation and allocation; and
- Establish an institutional framework with the mandate to initiate, coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate national Social Support programmes.

1.4 Linkages with Other Relevant International Conventions, National Policies and Strategies

1.4.1 Links with Relevant International Conventions

Malawi is a signatory to a number of international instruments, conventions and declarations that promote principles of Social Support. These include the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Livingstone Call for Action on Social Protection (Zambia).

1.4.2 Links with the Constitution of Malawi

Social Support has bearing in the Malawi Constitution under articles 30, which provides for “right to development” and stipulates that;

“All persons and people have a right to development and therefore to the enjoyment of economic, social, cultural and political development and women, children and the disabled in particular shall be given special consideration in the application of this right.” It further states that *“the state shall take all necessary measures for the realization of the right to development”* and *“the state shall take measures to introduce reforms aimed at eradicating social injustices and inequalities”*.

1.4.3 Links with Malawi Growth and Development Strategy

At national level, Social Support is the third theme of the MGDS II with a long term goal of *“improving resilience and quality of life for the poor to move out of poverty and vulnerability”*, while the medium- term expected outcome *“is to increase the asset base and productive capacity of the poor through improved Social Support interventions”*

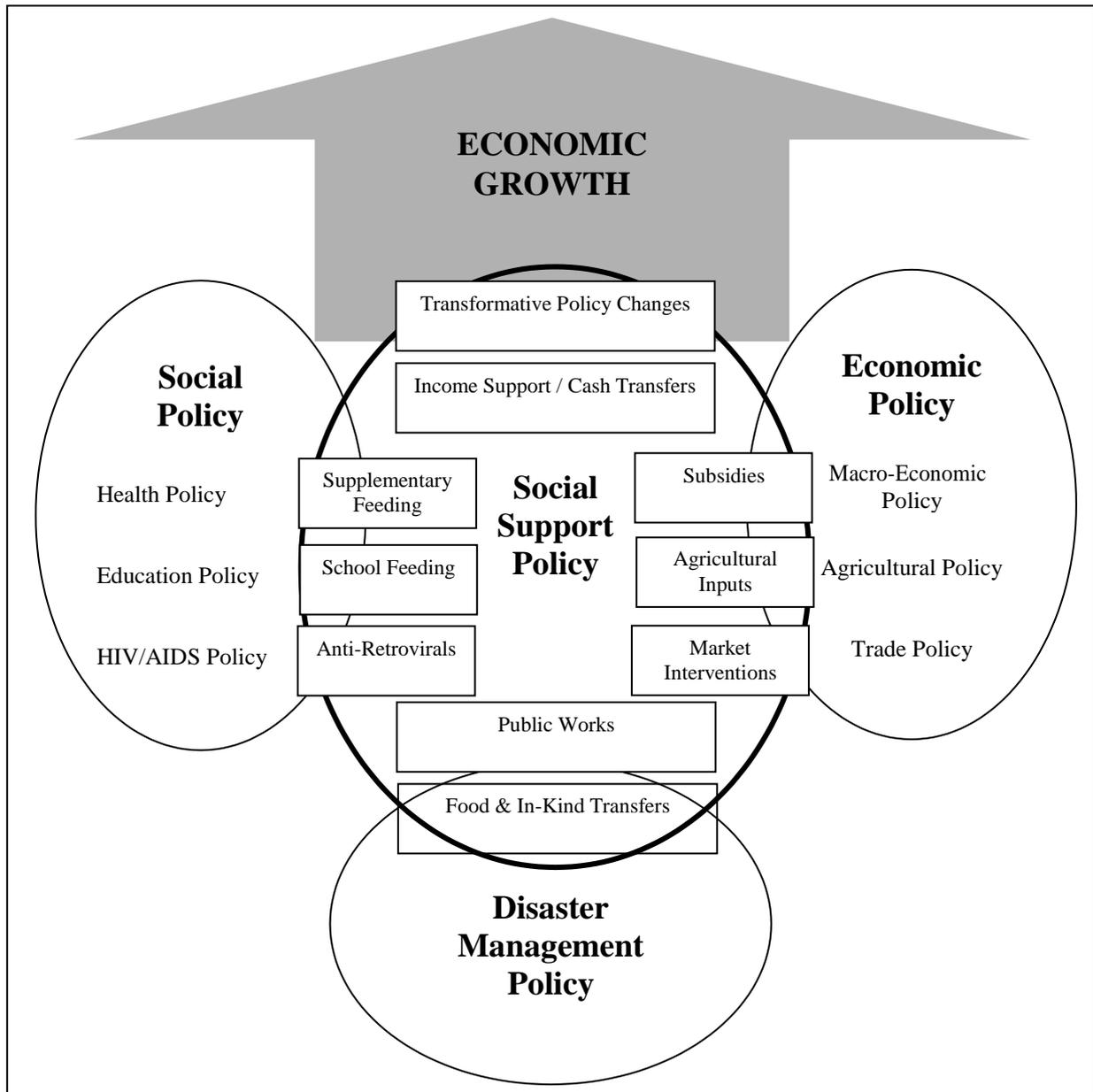
1.4.4 Links with other Sector Policies

Social Support interventions have strong positive linkages with other economic and social policies and with disaster risk reduction. These policies include: HIV; Youth; Food Security; Gender; Orphans & Vulnerable Children; Reproductive Health; Early Childhood Care and Development; Environment; Land; Equalisation of Opportunities (Disability); Decentralisation; and other relevant programmes in agriculture, education, health and labour. Through synergies with these policies, Social Support will contribute to asset creation, asset protection and income generation; strengthen human capital and stimulate economic activities; promote social empowerment, reduce income inequality and break the intergenerational cycle of poverty; ensure social and political stability and fulfilment of human rights and freedoms.

It is important to note that the Vision and Goal of the Social Support Policy will

only be achieved through a combination of policies that complement and reinforce each other. The Social Support Policy will not infringe on or duplicate the established policies and programmes in the field of social development, economic development and disaster risk reduction, but will complement them as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Social Support Programmes in Malawi



1.5 Key Challenges and Barriers

This Policy is bound to face several challenges and barriers in the course of implementation. One existing challenge is the unavailability of adequate data that could be used for planning interventions for ultra-poor and vulnerable households. This is partly due to weak institutional set ups. This challenge will

be addressed through strengthening of institutional set-ups at national and district levels.

In addition to this, limited funding poses a great challenge and risk. Social Support programmes require a substantial amount of financial resources which Government may not be able to fund alone. Government would be required to negotiate with the donor community, the private sector and civil society organisations to mobilize adequate financial support.

Furthermore, human capacity limitations also pose a great risk with regard to planning and implementation. Government, with support from development partners, would need to ensure that all key positions at national and district level are filled and that consultants and analysts are hired as needed.

1.6 Guiding Principles

1.6.1 Leadership

Government is the custodian of the Policy. Government should therefore ensure that there is coordination and alignment by all partners and that there is long-term support, including contributions from non-state actors.

1.6.2 Needs and evidence-based

Social Support must be based on evidence and analysis of who needs what type of assistance, when, for how long, where and why, and the impact it would have on peoples' lives and livelihoods. Social Support programmes should be designed based on peoples' needs and not by instruments and should include an analysis of the effectiveness of alternative interventions.

1.6.3 Beneficiary preferences prioritised

Beneficiaries should be consulted and involved in the design, planning and implementation of Social Support interventions.

1.6.4 Support and promotion of secure livelihoods

Social Support should encompass provision for the ultra-poor, as well as support and promotion of interventions that aim at helping the poor graduate out of poverty, and reduce their vulnerability to risks and livelihood shocks.

1.6.5 Tackling social exclusion and marginalisation

Social Support should address social as well as economic vulnerabilities, by protecting disempowered individuals such as vulnerable women, men and children, people with disabilities, the elderly and households affected by HIV against discrimination and exploitation.

1.6.6 Timely, harmonised and reliable

Social Support interventions should be delivered across the country in a timely, reliable, well-coordinated and sustainable manner.

1.6.7 Rights and responsibilities

Social Support should promote the progressive realisation of human rights as articulated in Malawi's constitution (Cap 4, Sec 30, 37, 43) and other relevant national and international legal instruments.

1.6.8 Accountable and transparent

Social Support should be transparent, incorporating principles of accurate and timely dissemination of information by ensuring; publicity of instances involving abuse of the system, disclosure of the contract terms and unit costs of Government, NGO or private agencies selected to administer Social Support interventions, and transparency in the procurement of Social Support services.

1.6.9 Common financial management, reporting and monitoring and evaluation guidelines

Government agencies and partners involved in Social Support should commit to a common set of financial management, audit, progress, monitoring and evaluation and reporting processes, consistent with national and international guidelines and indicators.

1.6.10 Sustainable, long-term funding

Government and partners should be committed to reliable funding of Social Support, using appropriate funding mechanisms that provide predictable and institutionalised funding under Government which can be sustained over the long term.

SECTION TWO

2.0 BROAD POLICY DIRECTIONS

2.1 Vision

Enhanced quality of life for those affected by poverty and hunger, and improved resilience for those who are vulnerable to risks and shocks.

2.2 Mission

To provide and promote productivity-enhancing interventions and welfare support for the poor and vulnerable, thereby facilitating movement of people out of poverty and reducing the vulnerability of those at risk of falling into poverty.

2.3 Policy Goal

The overall goal of the Policy is to reduce poverty and enable the poor to move out of poverty and vulnerability.

2.4 Policy Outcomes

The expected outcomes are as follows:-

- Human Capital formation promoted and the productivity of labour among the poor raised
- Resilience to asset erosion among the poor and vulnerable enhanced and their long-term income generating potential protected
- Local enterprises in rural areas supported leading to economic multipliers
- An effective and secure state created through fostering social cohesion and promoting a sense of citizenship

2.5 Objectives of the Policy

The objectives of the Policy are as follows:

- To provide welfare support to those that are unable to construct a viable livelihood;

- To protect the assets and improve the resilience of poor and vulnerable households;
- To increase the productive capacity and asset base of poor and vulnerable households to move them above the poverty line; and
- To establish coherent and progressive Social Support synergies by ensuring strong positive linkages to influence economic and social policies and disaster risk reduction.

SECTION THREE

3.0 POLICY PRIORITY AREAS

The Policy is built around four key Policy Priority Areas that have consolidated the aspirations contained in the vision, mission and guidelines. These policy priority areas are as follows:

- Provision of Welfare Support
- Protection of Assets
- Promotion through Productivity Enhancement, and
- Policy Linkages and Mainstreaming

3.1 Policy Priority Area 1: Provision of Welfare Support

Welfare Support constitutes interventions designed to meet the most pressing needs of the very poorest members of society such as the elderly, infirm, persons with disabilities, chronically ill, and Orphans and other Vulnerable Children (OVC) living in households with no adults fit for productive work. Such support should ensure access to the basic goods and services required for their survival and some human capital investment. In addition, some households require access to home based care and psychosocial support.

The principal difficulty is that the poorest households are often unable to provide labour for productive activity and are, therefore, unable to earn a living. Most of the interventions targeting such households do not reach them. The poorest are socially excluded due to, among other factors, shyness, sickness and extreme poverty. They usually cannot find time to attend community meetings since they are always looking for food and other necessities. The few interventions that reach them are by chance and only for a short period of time. This policy area will ensure that direct assistance is provided to the intended beneficiary households. It is expected that the number of beneficiary households will decline over time.

3.1.1 Policy Statement

Welfare support will be provided to uplift the livelihoods of those who are unable to support themselves and have limited factors of production and lack family and community support.

3.2 Policy Priority Area 2: Protection of Assets

This policy area will focus on supporting poor and vulnerable households to protect their assets from depletion and erosion thereby building resilience over time. Given adequate support, some of these households will graduate out of poverty and can eventually start to contribute to socio-economic development.

The ability of poor households to cope with shocks such as death, illnesses like HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis, floods, drought and pestilence among others, largely depends on the resources that a household has. When poor households are faced with a shock of this kind, they usually resort to coping mechanisms that are destructive and often irreversible which destroy their future earning potential.

3.2.1 Policy Statement

A considerable proportion of Social Support effort is concerned with preventing the erosion of assets that occurs when families or communities are hit by shocks. The policy will provide households in this category with fall-back positions when they run into difficulty. It will also provide them with sufficient income to ensure that they do not compromise their future ability to prosper due to short-term shocks.

3.3 Policy Priority Area 3: Promotion through Productivity Enhancement

This policy theme will target poor and vulnerable households who need support that will enable them to increase their income and accumulate assets. These households, which have labour and productive assets, need productivity enhancing interventions that significantly add value to their assets and improve their income. They have the potential to be integrated into a well-functioning economic and social environment.

Poor households have inadequate livelihoods opportunities and every venture they might decide to go into is faced with low productivity mostly as a consequence of inadequate resources, knowledge and imperfect markets.

3.3.1 Policy Statement

On-going social and economic interventions that aim at increasing the productive capacity and asset base of moderately poor households to move them above the poverty line will have to be complemented initially by Social Support interventions aimed at the poor and vulnerable, to ensure that such households graduate out of poverty, and contribute positively to economic development.

3.4 Policy Priority Area 4: Linkages and Mainstreaming

Some causes of poverty and certain forms of vulnerability are related to social exclusion and marginalisation, rather than only to livelihood shocks such as drought or illness – though economic and social vulnerabilities often act to reinforce each other. For groups affected by social exclusion and discrimination, changes in policy, rights-based campaigning or enforcement of socially progressive policies might be sufficient to transform the conditions of their lives. This has the advantage of addressing the underlying causes of vulnerability, while being more cost-effective and more sustainable than relying on economic interventions alone.

Due to uncoordinated programme design and disjointed implementation the impact on poverty has tended to be minimal. This has also resulted in interventions targeting a particular group of poor people wrongly targeting undeserving individuals and households.

3.4.1 Policy Statement

The policy area will support initiatives that aim at transforming the living conditions of those who are socially excluded and marginalised. This will empower them through systems, legislative and administrative means that protect such disempowered groups against discrimination and exploitation.

The aim will therefore be to establish coherent and progressive Social Support synergies by ensuring strong positive linkages to influence economic and social policies, and disaster risk reduction.

SECTION FOUR

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Institutional Arrangements

4.1.1 Cabinet Committee on Social Development and HIV/AIDS

The Cabinet Committee on Social Development and HIV/AIDS will discuss Social Support issues before they are presented to the Cabinet for decisions.

4.1.2 National Social Support Steering Committee

The Ministry of Economic Planning & Development will be the coordinating agency and secretariat for the National Social Support Programme (NSSP). The Ministry will strive to harmonise the implementation of the Policy and programme with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development through the establishment of integrated institutions at the Local Authority and community levels.

The National Social Support Steering Committee (NSSSC) comprising Principal Secretaries from the key line ministries, heads of missions for the development partner institutions, and civil society will be responsible for matters of policy and resource mobilization. The NSSSC is chaired by the Chief Secretary to the Government. Other members are as follows:-

1. Secretary to the Treasury
2. Secretary for Agriculture and Food Security
3. Secretary for Transport and Public Works
4. Secretary for Education
5. Secretary for Water Development and Irrigation
6. Secretary for Local Government and Rural Development
7. Secretary for Gender, Children and Social Welfare
8. Secretary for Labour
9. Secretary for Health
10. Secretary for Disability and Elderly Affairs
11. Secretary for Nutrition, HIV and AIDS
12. Secretary for Youth and Sports
13. Secretary and Commissioner for Disaster Management Affairs
14. Country Manager, World Bank
15. Head of Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
16. Country Representative, UNICEF
17. Executive Director, Council for Non-Governmental Organization in Malawi (CONGOMA)
18. Secretary for Economic Planning and Development (Secretary)

4.1.3 National Social Support Technical Committee

The National Social Support Technical Committee (NSSTC) will be responsible for providing technical direction and recommendations on programme implementation. The NSSTC comprises of Directors and is chaired by the Secretary for Economic Planning and Development. Other members are drawn from:-

1. Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (Chair and Secretariat)
2. Office of the President and Cabinet
3. Ministry of Finance
4. Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
5. Ministry of Education
6. Ministry of Transport and Public Works
7. Ministry of Water Development and Irrigation
8. Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
9. Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare
10. Ministry of Disability and Elderly Affairs
11. Ministry of Labour
12. Ministry of Health
13. Ministry of Industry and Trade
14. Ministry of Youth and Sports
15. Ministry of Information
16. Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS
17. Department of Disaster Management Affairs
18. Local Development Fund
19. Council for Non-Governmental Organisations in Malawi
20. The World Bank
21. Department for International Development (UK)
22. UNICEF
23. World Food Programme
24. Malawi Vulnerability Assessment Committee
25. Elderly People Association
26. Network of Organisations working with Vulnerable and Orphaned Children
27. Chairperson, NGO Gender Network
28. Centre for Social Research
29. National AIDS Commission
30. Action Aid
31. OXFAM
32. Plan Malawi

4.1.4 Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (Local Authorities)

The Local Authorities will be responsible for coordinating and implementing Social Support activities at the district level, together with Civil Society Organisations. The Local Councils will therefore, coordinate all the implementing partners including government sectors and the Civil Society. At the local level, Area Development Committees (ADC) and Village Development Committees (VDC) will work through Community Social Support Committees to oversee targeting and implementation of Social Support activities.

4.1.5 Ministry of Economic Planning & Development

The Ministry will provide leadership in the programming and coordination of Social Support programmes. However, all programmes will envisage partnerships between Government, civil society and the private sector at all levels. CSO, NGO and other public institutions will complement Government efforts in the implementation of the Policy and programmes.

4.1.6 Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare

This ministry has the responsibility to plan and manage some aspects of Social Support through the planning, social welfare, child development and community development directorates. The following functions will be observed:

- Provide technical support and capacity building to Local Authorities to ensure that Social Support programmes, especially the Social Cash Transfer Programme are implemented effectively;
- Leverage more resources and additional donor contributions for the Social Cash Transfer Programme;
- Link Social Support programmes such as school meals, social cash transfers, public works, village savings and loans to relevant national policies and strategies; and
- Reinforce implementation of the Social Cash Transfer Programme through learning, setting standards, regulation, linkages, coordination and monitoring.

4.2 Funding Arrangements

A Social Support Fund (SSF) will be created, using a basket funding mechanism. The sources of funding will include but not be limited to:

- The Government budget;
- Long-term, guaranteed contributions from development partners; and
- Private sector contributions.

The NSSSC will approve all programmes for funding. Disbursement of funds to implementers, for example Local Authorities, will be done directly by the Ministry of Finance. Other institutions that are not allowed to put their resources in a basket fund will be allowed to implement projects as long as they adhere to implementation plans and design for Social Support programmes and do not duplicate other efforts.

4.3 Implementation Plan

Social Support programmes are implemented by a number of stakeholders amongst which are; Government institutions, NGOs, the private sector, UN Organisations, Development Partners and Civil Society Organisations.

The implementation plan for the Policy appears as an Appendix to the Policy and presents an outline of the National Social Support Programme (NSSP). The Government, led by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development will develop the NSSP in consultation with the members of the National Social Support Technical Committee and all relevant stakeholders.

The NSSP will operationalize the policy statements contained in the Policy by aiming to achieve the overall goal and objectives, and by implementing the strategies and actions in line with the MGDS II. Within the context of available resources, design and implementation of Social Support interventions shall prioritise the poorest. Existing informal community initiatives shall be taken into account when designing the programmes.

As one of the themes of the MGDS II, progress made in the domain of Social Support will be reviewed annually. At the end of the MGDS II in 2016, an independent evaluation of the NSSP will be carried out to assess the impact of the NSSP on the lives of the poor and vulnerable.

Since formal Social Support is new to Malawi, some Social Support instruments may need to be designed, piloted, and evaluated, before being brought to full scale if proven viable.

4.4 Information, Education & Communication

Promotion of Social Support programmes will be based on an Information, Education and Communication (IEC) strategy that will guide how the population will learn about Social Support and respective programmes. Information will be shared through collaboration with the Ministry of Information (MoI), the electronic and print media, and presentations at national, regional and global fora. Education and information sessions will also be held at district and community levels.

4.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

4.5.1 Means of monitoring

The Government commits to implementing a robust monitoring and evaluation system for monitoring the implementation of the Social Support Policy. In particular, this system will address:

- (i) Efficient use of available resources (cost-effectiveness);
- (ii) Effective coordination of relevant partners to implement Social Support programmes;
- (iii) Sufficient capacity for key stakeholders and implementing partners to carry out monitoring and evaluation activities; and
- (iv) Monitoring progress in reducing vulnerability to hunger and poverty by assisting the ultra-poor in graduating from their condition, protecting the moderately poor and the non-poor from falling into poverty and ultra-poverty – the specific objectives described in Section 2 of this Policy – using the following instruments with additional indices and analyses to include references to the different poverty groups:
 - Integrated Household Survey;
 - Core Welfare Indicator Survey;
 - Welfare Monitoring Survey;
 - VAC analysis and reports; and
 - Annual and monthly reports from relevant programmes.

The Government will coordinate and lead the monitoring and evaluation process and ensure timely reporting and dissemination of results. A Social Support Monitoring and Evaluation Report covering the above assessment areas will be published annually. All agencies implementing programmes related to this Policy will report periodically to the respective coordinating body.

The Government will commission an independent assessment of implementation of this Social Support Policy following publication of the annual Monitoring and Evaluation Report. The findings of the independent assessment will be discussed at an annual Stakeholders Meeting.

The Monitoring and Evaluation results will be used to inform policymakers, programme implementers and donors and directly influence programme planning and design processes as well as resource management. Monitoring and Evaluation tools for respective Social Support programmes will be harmonised, utilising a common reporting format. The Government will devise this common reporting format based on the National Monitoring and Evaluation System Master Plan.

4.6 Review of the Policy

This Policy will be reviewed in 2016 as part of the MGDS II review, taking into consideration key milestones and targets. This will be coordinated by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Glossary

Conditional/unconditional transfers:

In this context **conditional** transfers are provided to beneficiaries on condition that they fulfil some requirement, such as participating in public works programmes or cash/food for work, or attendance at health clinics or schools. **Unconditional** transfers are provided to beneficiaries without any such requirement. Both conditional and unconditional transfers may be targeted or universal.

Consumption transfers:

Transfers such as food, clothing, blankets, soap, shelter, water and sanitation, basic health services and transport

Hazard:

A shock such as drought, flood, conflict or market dysfunction, which is likely to have a negative impact on people's **livelihoods**

Household:

A group of people, each with different abilities and needs, who live together most of the time, contribute to a common economy, and share the food and other income from this.

Livelihood:

The sum of the ways in which people make a living and meet their basic needs.

Poor:

Households that fail to attain a minimum acceptable consumption level of food and basic needs as defined in the Integrated Household Survey (IHS 2010). In general, the poverty incidence or headcount has slightly reduced to 50.7 percent from 52.4 percent in 2005. Using income as a proxy, the poverty line is set at a daily expenditure of MK101.4 per person, (using 2010 prices). It will be observed that, those falling below the poverty line will be seen to be consuming more Malawi Kwacha per person per day in nominal terms in 2012 than they would have consumed in 2010. This will be attributed to the recent devaluations and annual cumulative inflation over the last two years.

Poverty:

In general, Malawians characterise poverty “...as a state of continuous

deprivation or a lack of basics of life."¹ Basic needs include economic, social, psychological and physiological requirements. Poverty, therefore, has many dimensions including income poverty and human or capability poverty. Poverty exists, and is observable, at various levels: at the individual, household, community and national levels, and has a gender dimension. Qualitative², information from the poor themselves also defines poverty in terms of lack of felt basic needs at household and community level.

Risk:

The likelihood of a **shock** or **hazard** that results in **vulnerability**

Social Support:

Social Support describes all public and private initiatives that provide income or **consumption transfers** to the poor, protect the vulnerable against livelihood risks, and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalised, with the overall objective of reducing ultra-poverty as well as the economic and social **vulnerability** of poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups.

Ultra-poor:

Households that fail to attain a minimum acceptable consumption of food, and are not able to purchase essential non-food items such as soap, clothing, and school accessories, as defined by the ultra-poverty line in IHS 2010. In Malawi, this ultra-poverty line was set at a daily expenditure of MK62.9 per person. On this basis the ultra-poverty headcount has risen to 24.5 percent in 2010 from 22 percent in 2005. This certainly presents a challenging state of affairs in the fight against poverty.

Vulnerability:

The inability of households to deal with shocks to their **livelihoods**. Rising vulnerability implies an increasing likelihood of **hazards** taking place (risk), or a declining ability to overcome shocks without experiencing **livelihood** collapse.

¹ Government of Malawi and United Nations Development Programme (1993) *Situation Analysis of Poverty in Malawi*

² Government of Malawi (2000) *Qualitative Impact Monitoring of poverty Alleviation Policies and Programmes: World Bank (1999) Voices of the Poor.*

Appendix 2: Implementation Plan

Policy Area 1: Provision of Welfare Support

Goal	Specific objective	Strategy	Responsibility for implementation	Timeframe
3.1.0 To provide welfare support to those who are unable to construct a viable livelihood.	3.1.1 To provide welfare support to uplift the livelihoods of those who are unable to support themselves, have limited factors of production, and lack family and community support.	3.1.1 1. Provide predictable transfers such as cash, shelter or food.	MoGC&SW MoLG&RD MoI District Councils Civil Society	2012-2016

Policy Area 2: Protection of Assets

Goal	Specific objective	Strategies	Responsibility for implementation	Timeframe
3.2.0 To protect the assets and improve the resilience of poor and vulnerable households.	3.2.1 To prevent asset erosion of poor and vulnerable households.	3.2.1. 1. Public works, at a wage indexed to the cost of living, consolidated eventually into a national employment guarantee scheme; 2. Social insurance schemes	MoGC&SW MoLG&RD MoI DCs Civil Society	2012-2016

Policy Area 3: Promotion through Productivity Enhancement

Goal	Specific objective	Strategies	Responsibility for implementation	Timeframe
3.3 To increase the productive capacity and asset base of poor and vulnerable households to move them above the poverty line.	3.3.1 To enable households to lift themselves out of poverty by increasing their productivity and building their assets	3.3.1. 1. Vouchers/cash transfers to enable the poorest (agricultural) households to access agricultural inputs; 2. Public works programmes –longer term, inflation-adjusted wage, predictable and guaranteed, based on creation of valuable community / household assets; 3. Village savings and loans programmes; 4. Conditional cash transfers	MoGC&SW MoLG&RD MoI DCs Civil Society	2012-2016

Policy Area 4: Policy Linkages and Mainstreaming

Goal	Specific objective	Strategies	Responsibility for implementation	Timeframe
3.4 To establish coherent and progressive Social Support synergies by ensuring strong positive linkages to influence economic and social policies, and disaster risk reduction.	3.4.1 To ensure that the poor and the vulnerable have access to social services.	3.4.1. Collaboration with key ministries and other stakeholders in the social sector to ensure that all the poor and vulnerable access social services e.g. child care support, protection from abuse and exploitation, access to justice, access to school, access to treatment for people living with HIV, Early Childhood Development, treatment for malnutrition.	MEP&D, Key Ministries and other stakeholders	2012-2016
	3.4.2 To ensure that the poor and the vulnerable engage in economic activities.	Collaboration with key ministries and other stakeholders in the economic sector to provide opportunities for all the poor and vulnerable to participate in economic activities and contribute to economic growth	MEP&D, Key Ministries and other stakeholders	2012-2016

	<p>3.4.3 To ensure that disaster risk reduction initiatives give priority to the needs of the poor and the vulnerable.</p>	<p>Collaboration with key ministries and other stakeholders in the disaster risk reduction sector to ensure that all the poor and vulnerable benefit from improved access to disaster risk management strategies.</p>	<p>MEP&D MoI DoDMA</p>	<p>2012 - 2016</p>
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